



AgRefresh

STAGE 3 REPORT | EXCERPT
AGRI-INDUSTRIAL /
AGRI-INNOVATION



2.15 Agri-Industrial/Agri-Innovation

Define and appropriately accommodate agri-industrial/agri-innovation in the ALR

Agriculture is continually evolving to innovate and improve efficiency as the industry adapts to changing economies, evolving practices, and consumer preferences. Abbotsford is well positioned to maintain a strong base of conventional farming, while also fostering innovation that supports a thriving and adaptive agricultural sector into the future.

The important role of agri-industrial (agritech) in the food security farm-to-table continuum features prominently in the 2020 “Findings and Recommendations Report from the BC Food Security Task Force”. More specifically, report Recommendation 4 seeks to “ensure there is a place to grow food and support emerging agritech industries by examining land use policies and other regulatory considerations.” This recommendation promotes allocation of up to 0.25% of the Provincial Agricultural Land Reserve for a broader use “categorized as agricultural-industrial”.

Consistent with the Provincial report, AgRefresh acknowledges that farmers and industry stakeholders may look to push beyond the boundaries of current ALC and City permissions to pursue innovative activities that strengthen the future of agriculture and food security.

2.15.1 Decision Makers

ALC	ALC approval required for new uses in the ALR
Council	Council approval required for OCP and/or Zoning
Ministry	Minister of Agriculture approval for Zoning Bylaw amendments impacting farming

2.15.2 What we heard in Stage 3

‘Early Ideas’ explored through Stage 3 engagement

- Shift the focus from agri-industrial to agri-innovation
- Explore key locations for agri-innovation
- Identify activities/uses considered to be agricultural innovation

Stage 3 engagement feedback highlights*

- 89% of respondents agreed or somewhat agreed with early ideas
- Some respondents felt uses should be confined to industrial lands
- Others wanted to see more flexibility and consider Fraser Highway

*A full summary of Stage 3 engagement material and feedback is available in the “Stage 3 Winter 2017-18 Engagement Results” report.

2.15.3 Draft Recommendations

DRAFT POLICY UPDATE

New
(OCP)

Support Agricultural Innovation and Agri-tech

Foster agricultural innovation by exploring strategic land use opportunities for agri-industrial within the Agricultural Land Reserve to develop, demonstrate and deploy emerging agri-technologies, facilitate advanced agri-education and research, increase farm commodity processing capacity, and effectively manage agricultural by-products.

Advance this policy in collaboration and coordination with the senior government agencies to identify strategic opportunities and locations for this use in Abbotsford.

