

Media Release



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North Peace Looks to Horticulture Sector for Economic Growth and Diversity

FORT ST. JOHN, British Columbia, May 25, 2017 - The North Peace region has long been recognized for its ranching and agricultural production in grain and seed crops. This spring, the North Peace Economic Development Commission (NPEDC) is leading a business case and marketing strategy to support this tradition and expand on opportunities for horticulture businesses in the region.

The project will engage horticulture stakeholders in the region to identify challenges and opportunities, develop a sector-wide business case and recommend specific initiatives to support growth of the horticulture sector throughout the North Peace.

“The NPEDC has identified the need to research the opportunity to increase food security and diversify our local economy,” said District of Taylor Mayor Rob Fraser, the current Chairperson of the NPEDC. “The Peace River area has the potential to feed the north with a growing horticultural sector. Developing a business case for the development of this industry is the first step.”

Economic development consulting firm EcoTactix is working with the Commission to formulate an evidence-based business case that assesses the commercial viability of the sector. The business case will also identify business support models that would be appropriate for the region and make recommendations on marketing strategies for regional horticulture businesses. While the project will explore all horticulture opportunities, the emphasis will be on food production.

According to District of Hudson’s Hope Mayor Gwen Johansson, “Many people in the North Peace look for locally produced fruits and vegetables. Many others are interested in making a living by producing that food. We want this study to show us what is needed to satisfy those two groups. What infrastructure, organization, or policies are needed to develop a viable, sustainable horticulture industry in the North Peace?”

The project will be completed by mid-summer and includes opportunities for local input. Residents and business owners interested in the growth of the horticulture sector can participate in a brief online survey. The survey link is- <http://ca.surveygizmo.com/s3/50002097/North-Peace-Horticulture-Sector-Survey>

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