



November 4, 2020

File: 0280-30

Ref: 193216

Judy Stafford
 Cowichan Green Community Society
 360 Duncan Street
 Duncan, BC V9L 3W4
 Email: judy@cowichangreencommunity.org

Dear Judy,

I am writing to you today with regards to the BC Food Hub Program, which is supporting the development of a series of regional Food Processing and Innovation Hubs (“food hubs”) across the province. The key objective of food hubs is to reduce the barriers often resulting from the need for land and a building in order to expand. Food hubs offer regionally tailored, shared use facilities to provide small and medium scale processors access to equipment, technology, technical services and business supports. More information on the program is available in the attached background materials.

Through the BC Food Hub Program, the Province provides a one-time funding commitment to support the start-up of a regionally owned and operated food hub, in collaboration with local government and partners interested in developing and operating a food hub. On September 17, 2020, Premier Horgan announced the Stronger BC Economic Recovery Plan, which included a commitment to fund additional regional food hubs during this fiscal year. **The key performance metric for these newly funded hubs will be the ability to show significant progress this fiscal year.** Given the level of interest in food hubs, we are hoping to be able to fund additional regional food hubs early next fiscal year as well, although specific details are not yet confirmed.

In the past, Cowichan Green Community Society has expressed an interest in the BC Food Hub Program through sharing your plans to develop a food hub in your region. Ministry of Agriculture staff recently reached out to gather further information about the status of your regional food hub project and its potential to advance to the next stage of implementation. We are now requesting further written information about your food hub project. Please note that in order to be eligible for the Food Hub Program Economic Recovery funds this fiscal year, your project will require a confirmed local government partner who would be the recipient of the funds, and it is your responsibility to confirm your local government partnership.

To confirm interest in pursuing the development of a food hub project in your region this fiscal year (before March 31, 2021), we are requesting that you and your local government partner complete and return the attached template with local government endorsement to Allison Witter, Director, Innovation (Allison.Witter@gov.bc.ca) within 14 days (no later than November 18th, 2020). Please note that the response must be submitted by the local government partner on their letterhead.

We recognize the time constraints associated with this request and that you may not be able to provide complete information but would welcome the most up to date information you are able to provide.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Allison Witter.

Sincerely,



Arif Lalani
Assistant Deputy Minister

Attachments:
BC Food Hub Program - Overview
BC Food Hub Program - Response Template

cc: Barry O’Riordan
Manager, Economic Development
Cowichan Valley Regional District
Email: Barry.Oriordan@cprd.bc.ca