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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## IAF ANNOUNCES FARMLAND ADVANTAGE

**July 6, 2021 – Victoria, B.C.** The Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC (IAF) is pleased to be delivering the Farmland Advantage program to support BC farmers and ranchers improve ecosystem goods and services on their land.

Farmland Advantage is a payment for ecosystem services program that works with farmers to protect and conserve critical, natural lands, streams and wildlife habitats in British Columbia. The program helps farmers identify sites that can be protected and enhanced and develops recommendations and plans to preserve them. These plans can include actions such as water or stream setbacks, strategic fencing, reforestation, or rangeland enhancement. Farmers then carry out the recommendations and receive modest financial compensation from Farmland Advantage for doing so.

“We are thrilled to bring this forward-thinking program under the IAF umbrella,” says IAF Board Chair Jack DeWit. “Farmland Advantage started when farmers identified a challenge in their industry and spearheaded a pilot to make a difference. It has proven its worth in the province and we are eager to take the program to the next level by working with farmers, local governments, regional districts and First Nations to improve the land for all British Columbians.”

Farmland Advantage has been present in British Columbia, in one iteration or another, since 2009. Most recently, Farmland Advantage had pilot project sites in the Lower Mainland, Kootenays and Okanagan regions. The purpose of these pilots was to execute effective demonstrations in the hopes of proving the program model and encouraging broader adoption throughout the province.

### Funding Model

Farmland Advantage is a departure from IAF's traditional funding model of delivering government programs. Funding agencies and partners interested in contributing to the program can specify certain areas of the province or habitat-types where they would like their funding to go. Once the funder priorities are established, the program engages local experts and industry partners to identify high priority ecosystems and the farms and agricultural operations located in these areas. These farmers are then asked if they would like to participate in the program.

For 2021 and 2022, Farmland Advantage is being funded in part by the Governments of Canada and British Columbia through programs delivered by the Real Estate Foundation of BC and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC, and the Township of Langley (for projects within their municipal boundaries).

Program funding and support has also been provided by Environment & Climate Change Canada and other partners. IAF is actively working to secure additional funding for the program over the short and long-term.

### Additional Quotes

**George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy:**

"Investing in healthy watersheds and ecosystems create a better, safer future for people and communities across B.C. By working with partners on around 70 projects across the province, we are restoring and enhancing habitat to help ensure B.C.'s watersheds and ecosystems stay resilient in a changing climate."

**The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Environment and Climate Change:**

"Farmers are important partners addressing the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss and the Government of Canada is pleased to support the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC to continue that important work. By working with the agricultural sector, we can conserve important habitat and protect biodiversity here in British Columbia and across Canada."

**Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries:**

"Farmland Advantage helps farmers and ranchers raise the natural value of their land by increasing support for the different species and ecosystems that are part of it," said Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. "B.C. farmers are well known for their stewardship of the land they live and work on, and this program supports that connection through improved water quality, vegetation management and carbon sequestration, all of which will enhance the natural values on our farmland for years to come."

### Background

For more information about the Farmland Advantage Program: [www.farmlandadvantage.ca](http://www.farmlandadvantage.ca)

### Program Funding

Support for this program has been provided through the Healthy Watersheds Initiative, delivered by the Real Estate Foundation of BC and Watersheds BC, with financial support from the Province of British Columbia.

The project was undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada through the federal Department of Environment and Climate Change.

Additional support has been provided by the Township of Langley, and programs, delivered by IAF, with funding provided by the Governments of BC and Canada.

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The BC Investment Agriculture Foundation is an industry-led, not-for-profit society that creates funding opportunities to support a thriving BC agriculture and agri-food sector through the effective delivery of programs.

[www.iafbc.ca](http://www.iafbc.ca)

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