

NEWS RELEASE

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Genome BC and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC partnering to support food innovation and security

Vancouver, BC — Our province is home to world-class agricultural research and innovation. In a time when climate change compounds concerns related to food security, Genome BC and the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC (IAF) are partnering to co-create and deliver the *Genomic Innovation for Regenerative Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Program* that will invest in projects to provide genomic solutions that enhance the agriculture, food and fisheries sectors, increasing resiliency and sustainability in BC.

This program will leverage IAF's experience as an industry-led organization and Genome BC's expertise in connecting academic researchers, industry partners, and public policy priorities to deliver sustainable benefits for BC.

"Adopting agri-tech and regenerative farming practices will be key to increasing food security for future generations," said B.C. Minister of Agriculture and Food, Lana Popham. "In addition to increasing production, these practices will increase environmental sustainability, mitigate the effects of climate change and increase profitability and market opportunities for BC farmers."

Genome BC and IAF will each invest program funding of \$1M to jointly fund a competitive program that together will offer a \$2M funding envelope to provide up to \$250,000 for projects that help drive growth, competitiveness, and sustainability for BC's agriculture, food, and fisheries sectors. The \$1M IAF contribution to the Genomic Innovation for Regenerative Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Program is funded by the Governments of Canada and British Columbia.

"This program will develop and deploy novel genomic technologies to support food security," said Federica Di Palma, Chief Scientific Officer and Vice President, Sectors at Genome BC. "We will also leverage innovative genomic solutions to improve the health of crops, livestock and ecosystems impacted by climate change."

In July 2021, the BC Government announced the forming of a Regenerative Agriculture and Agritech Network, a strategic four-year plan combining agri-tech and regenerative agriculture to help benefit farmers, food system resiliency, and the environment. The Network will facilitate partnerships between government, industry, academia and the private sector to address major challenges such as the increased cost of resources for food production labour shortages, and the impacts of climate change. Funded projects through the Genomic Innovation for Regenerative Agriculture, Food and Fisheries Program will inform and address some of these challenges.

“IAF is delighted to be able to provide funding to this important program,” said Jack DeWit, Chair, IAF Board of Directors. “Leveraging program dollars to create a resource for agriculture and agri-food in BC is a priority for our organization. Working together with Genome BC, IAF will create a lasting impact towards solving climate change and protecting the environment.”

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About Genome British Columbia:

Genome BC is a not-for-profit organization supporting world-class genomics research and innovation to grow globally competitive life sciences sectors and deliver sustainable benefits for British Columbia, Canada and beyond. The organization’s initiatives are improving the lives of British Columbians by advancing health care in addition to addressing environmental and natural resource challenges. In addition to scientific programming, Genome BC works to integrate genomics into society by supporting responsible research and innovation and foster an understanding and appreciation of the life sciences among educators, students, and the public. genomebc.ca

About IAF:

The Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC (IAF) 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. With 25+ years of experience, IAF is recognized as the leading provider of high-quality and cost-effective program delivery services for the agriculture and agri-food sector in British Columbia. IAF has delivered nearly \$250 million to industry on behalf of the federal and provincial governments. iafbc.ca

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