



YOUNG AGRARIANS

FARMING IN CENTRAL & NORTHERN B.C.

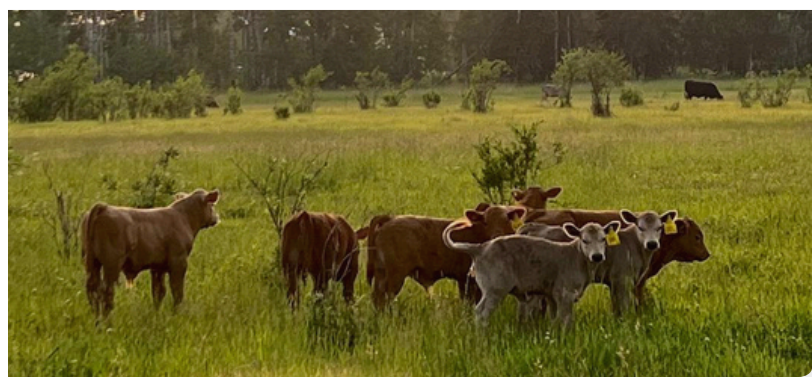


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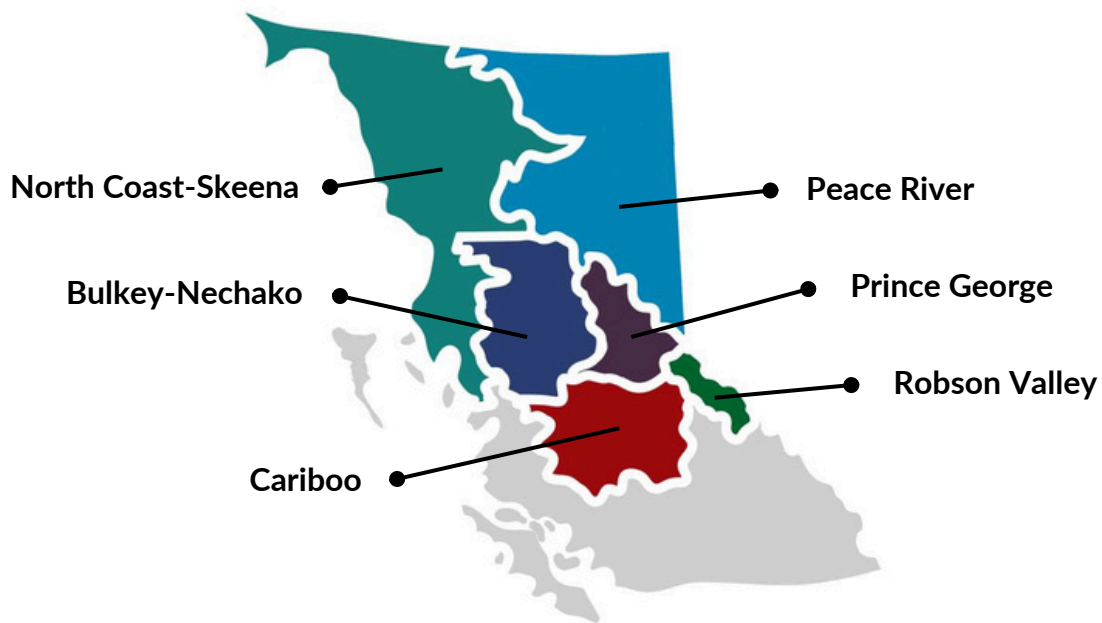


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INDIGENOUS LANDS

This guide was produced by contributors living and working on unceded Indigenous lands and territories, including: Skwxwú7mesh, shíshálh, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm, səlilwətał and Dakelh.

Young Agrarians recognizes the unresolved Indigenous land title and rights in the diverse territories in what is today called Canada. As we live and work in the context of and in response to a colonial system of laws and policies, it is important to acknowledge the historical and ongoing impact of agriculture and land enclosure on Indigenous lands and food systems. In this context, we acknowledge our collective responsibility to position Indigenous Peoples and their experiences with colonization in a narrative of reconciliation that places ecology, land stewardship and Indigenous land title and rights at the forefront if we are to sustain the Earth's ecosystems in today's rapidly changing climate.

The regions of Central and Northern B.C. (Central-North) identified in this guide represent the majority of the landmass of the province of British Columbia. Each of the regions detailed below, like the province itself, are defined by the colonial government, but represent lands and waters that have been stewarded since time immemorial by specific First Nations communities. First Nations have managed these lands and waters as plentiful sources of food since long before colonization and the arrival of European agricultural practices. In sharing some of the traditional foodways of Nations and language groups in these regions, this guide aims to provide a picture of food systems in the Central-North beyond the scope of settler agriculture. Young Agrarians believes Indigenous land stewardship and food sovereignty work is imperative to create a more just food system.

The information gathered and presented here about traditional foodways across the Central-North is incomplete; the erasure of both written and oral knowledge by colonial processes has led to an unreliable and gap-filled archive, and the land and food traditions of these communities are still unfolding and changing day-by-day. We hope that what we share here serves to spark your interest to learn more, build relationships and connect to the land where you eat and harvest. These traditional food systems and the communities who steward them are part of what makes this part of the world such an incredible place to live, work, eat and share community!

ABOUT THE B.C. LAND MATCHING PROGRAM

The B.C. Land Matching Program (BCLMP) provides personalized land matching and business support services to farmers looking for land to start or expand their farm, and landholders interested in finding someone to farm their land. The advantage of working with a Land Matcher is free hands-on support to understand regulations, evaluate opportunities, access resources, and ultimately find a land match.

The program is delivered by Young Agrarians (YA) and addresses the high cost of land as a significant barrier for those seeking to enter the B.C. agriculture industry. There is no cost to participate, and our services are available to farmers and landholders of all ages across B.C.

To connect with the Central-North Land Matcher and learn more about opportunities to farm in the Central-North visit youngagrarians.org/bc-land-matching-program or reach out to andrew@youngagrarians.org.

To view land opportunities and other Central-North YA content, visit:

- youngagrarians.org/category/canada/british-columbia/centralnorthbc
- maps.youngagrarians.org



The B.C. Land Matching Program is funded in Central & Northern B.C. by the Government of Canada and the Province of British Columbia under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.



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WHY FARM IN CENTRAL & NORTHERN B.C.?

Looking to combine big farming dreams with an affordable lifestyle? Central and Northern B.C. is where it's at: wide open spaces, big skies and traffic jams that only happen when a moose crosses the road. With average housing prices at 42% lower than the Fraser Valley, starting your farm in the Central-North allows you to expand your dreams beyond what may be possible in more densely-populated southern areas. Growing crops and livestock can take a bit more skill and planning due to short seasons and cold temperatures, but most find it's well worth it for the larger parcels and diverse opportunities.

You may want to get a bit more flannel and wool layers for the winter if you're not used to -40°C, but the long days of summer and all the beauty that the landscapes offer more than make up for the shorter cold days of winter. For the winter-loving outdoor enthusiasts, there are plenty of affordable options for skiing majestic mountains or pulling trout and kokanee out of a frozen lake.

This guide is intended to help familiarize you with all that the Central-North has to offer, from soils and agronomic potential to market opportunities and community events. Come farm with us in the Central-North!



TYPES OF FARMING IN CENTRAL & NORTHERN B.C.

Whether you are an indoor specialty mushroom grower or a Bison rancher, there is a spot at the table for you in the agricultural industry in the Central-North. From apiculture to zinnia farming, it's happening here, with a wealth of knowledge from the older generations looking to retire and pass the torch. Big generational shifts and growing populations mean more demand for farm products with less competition for market space than other regions of B.C., offering a unique environment for a new farming business.

NORTH COAST - SKEENA

The North Coast-Skeena Region, with a population of just under 90,000, comprises most of northwestern BC. The region contains parts of the Skeena and Liard watersheds and offers varying and extreme topography, meaning that the area's climate and growing conditions differ considerably over short distances. The region has both coastal and interior western hemlock and w-

estern red cedar forests. Mountain hemlock, alpine communities and glaciers occur at higher elevations on the coast. The economy is based around fishing, forestry, energy, transport and tourism with agriculture forming a smaller part. **As an emerging sector, agriculture in the North Coast-Skeena region welcomes new farmers to serve the growing community.**

CLIMATE



Summer Mean Temperature: 10°C



Frost Free Days:
134 to 224 days



Annual Precipitation:
600 to 1,400 mm

SOIL

Skeena soils occupy well-drained terraces along the Skeena river, covering about 7,300 acres. These terraces vary from fine sandy loam to sandy loam. South of the Skeena River in Terrace offers some Kitsumgallum gravelly sandy loam or Lakelse clay with adequate to high drainage. Pockets along the Skeena river also have Remo soil, which is typically alluvial clay loam with excellent fertility.



Farmer Cam's Foods grows nearly 20 different crops in Terrace, BC. Photo Credit: Farmer Cam's Foods

EVENTS

Riverboat Days offer Skeena Valley residents a community festival that showcases the history, culture and beautiful natural setting of Terrace and the surrounding region.

Hidden Acres Farm & Treehouse Resort along the Skeena River offers a delightful, family-friendly Farm Fest with live music, local artisans, food vendors and northwestern B.C.'s best locally brewed beer!

MARKETS

Skeena Valley Farmers' Market

Hazelton Farmers' Market

Salmonberry Farmers' Market

FARMS IN NORTH COAST - SKEENA

TEA CREEK FARM

Indigenous-led Tea Creek Farm is dedicated to food sovereignty, cultural revitalization and economic resiliency for and with Indigenous communities. Located in Kitwanga, Tea Creek delivers land-based employment and trades training in addition to growing local food in pursuit of Indigenous self-sufficiency.

teacreek.ca



FARMER CAM'S FOODS

Farmer Cam's Foods grows mixed vegetables, herbs, roots, and fruiting crops at Hidden Acres Farm & Treehouse Resort. They sell through a CSA, a farm stand, wholesale and the Skeena Valley Farmers' Market.

farmercamsfoods.ca

THIMBLEBERRY FARM

Thimbleberry Farm is a no-till, small-scale regenerative farm promoting local food security in Terrace, BC. They produce a mix of vegetables, eggs and humanely-raised rabbit meat for sale at the Skeena Valley Farmers Market as well as a farm stand with bulk sales.

thimbleberryfarm.org



WOODGRAIN FARM

Woodgrain Farm is a small-scale diverse organic farm in the Kispiox Valley producing vegetables, seed, grain and garlic salts. They sell primarily through retail and direct to customers with bulk and online ordering.

woodgrain.ca

COMMUNITY IN NORTH COAST - SKEENA

The North Coast-Skeena region is on the traditional territories of Coast Ts'msyen, Haida, Tlingit, Nisga'a, Gitksan and Tahltan peoples. First Nations communities make up the majority of the population of the region. Small communities dot the beautiful course of Highway 37 up to Atlin, home of the Taku River Tlingit First Nation, while major population centres such as Prince Rupert, Terrace and Kitimat are situated along the southward coast, intersecting with Highway 16.

Further from urban areas, the North Coast-Skeena region offers coastal wonders like bird- and whale-watching as well as renowned trout and salmon fishing in interior waters. Kayaking, heli-skiing, camping and remote outdoor lodge destinations all make the North Coast-Skeena a great place to adventure with family and friends.

At the westernmost end of Highway 16, Prince Rupert offers the seaside beauty and amenities

of popular Southern B.C. cities, along with the charm of a close-knit community. Unique waterfront dining makes Prince Rupert a special destination for North-Coast Skeena residents, and locally caught seafood is unparalleled in quality. The Prince Rupert Sunken Gardens, a popular destination, reflect the region's love for gardening and regenerative agriculture.

Terrace is home to an airport, railway station and several deep water ports, making it a nexus point for not only the province but also the rest of the world. Several public art galleries, a movie theatre, a heritage museum and the stunning community recreation and aquatic centre offer year-round gathering spaces for Terrace community members. The local Sherwood Mountain Brewhouse is a fan favourite, and don't forget to check out the hip Fix Cafe and Cyclery, where you can admire local art, grab a tasty cup of joe and get your bike fixed up all in one go.



The Skeena Valley Farmers' Market, open Saturdays from May to October in Terrace, features 70+ vendors selling prepared foods, baked goodies, produce and meats. Photo Credit: Farmer Cam's Foods

Prince Rupert and Terrace are located on unceded Ts'msyen territory, where traditional foods come mostly from the sea. Salmon, crab, clams, cockles, prawns, oolichan, herring eggs and many other marine food sources are complemented by hunting of small and large game and collection of berries and plants for food and medicine. Throughout the North Coast, First Nations communities have generations of knowledge on how to source, harvest and prepare the foods of the landscapes and waterways; you can find all kinds of delicious recipes, like crab fried rice or fish stew.

North of Ts'msyen territory in Gitksan territory, the Gitanyow Independent School near Kitwanga recently undertook an initiative to serve more traditional Gitksan foods in their school, including traditional preparations of salmon, moose and oolichan. Students enjoy traditional f-

lavours and learn traditional harvesting and hunting practices taught by local hunters. East of Gitksan territory in Nisga'a territory, you'll find even more wonders of the sea, where traditional foods include salmon, crab, snapper, halibut, shellfish and most of all, oolichan.

If you are passionate about conservation, community development and food security, a great way to get involved is to support the work of local First Nations, who are at the forefront of visioning ecological futures in the region. In the northernmost parts of the Skeena region, the Tahltan Stewardship Initiative has a number of projects centred around preserving traditional ecosystems, food and knowledge. Projects range from maintaining the Tahltan Nation's seven caribou herds to teaching Tahltan youth how to harvest and prepare traditional foods.



Based in Kitwanga, Tea Creek's mission is to revitalize the culture of economic interdependence and food production that was a central part of life for Indigenous peoples throughout the Americas.

Photo Credit: Tea Creek Farm

BULKLEY-NECHAKO

The Bulkley-Nechako region is located west of Vanderhoof and east of Smithers. If you like wide open spaces for recreation, you're heading to the right place. The region covers 77,000 square kilometers and has a population of 37,737 (2021 census) with a diverse agriculture industry. The c-

entre of the Bulkley-Nechako and Fraser-Fort George region is a Sub-Boreal Spruce biogeoclimatic zone with a continental climate characterized by significant annual variation in temperature (hot summers and cold winters).

CLIMATE



Summer Mean Temperature: 14°C



Frost Free Days:
80 to 120 days



Annual Precipitation:
450 to 859 mm



Lost Farm is a vendor at the Bulkley Valley Farmers' Market in Smithers. Photo Credit: Lost Farm

EVENTS

The Bulkley-Nechako region boasts the annual **Music on the Mountain** festival, a three-day music and arts festival featuring original and indie music and art from all over B.C., Canada and around the world.

The region is also host to the **Kispiox Valley Music Festival**, a community-oriented festival that takes place annually on the last full weekend in July along the spectacular Kispiox River.

SOIL

On the Nechako River system west of Prince George, soils range between Giscome gravelly/sandy loam, compact Chilako stony sandy loam, Vanderhoof clay, Braeside loamy sand and in the northwest end of Fraser Lake, a highly organic muck soil. As you travel westward along the Bulkley River toward Houston and Smithers, soil types are typically a Barrett Sandy Loam that is slightly calcareous. North sides of the Bulkley include large areas containing Driftwood Loam that is slightly calcareous, compact and has slow permeability but is well-to moderately well-drained. While there are patches of heavy clay north of Smithers, most arable soil in the region along the Bulkley, Kispiox and Skeena region is a loam or sandy loam.

MARKETS

Smithers Farmers' Market

Vanderhoof Farmers' Market

Hazelton Farmers' Market

Burns Lake Farmers' Market

Houston Farmers' Market

Vanderhoof Livestock Auction

Bulkley Valley Farmers' Market

FARMS IN BULKLEY-NECHAKO

HIGH SLOPE ACRES

High Slope Acres produces flowers, vegetables and eggs for sale at the Bulkley Valley Farmers Market and Bulkley Valley Wholesale. They produce beautiful fresh and dried flower arrangements and offer floral workshops and farm tours.

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100057482888402>



LOST FARM / QUALITY HARVESTS

Lost Farm produces microgreens, herbs, and vegetables for sale through a CSA, Bulkley Valley Farmers Market and at their out-of-hand store in Smithers. They were matched to land through the B.C. Land Matching Program and were then supported to grow their farm through the Young Agrarians Business Mentorship Network.

lostfarm.ca

HAPPY PIG ORGANIC FARM

Happy Pig Organic Farm produces certified organic pork, beef, chicken, eggs and turkey with sales from Prince Rupert to Prince George and everywhere in between.

happypigorganicfarm.com



COMMUNITY IN BULKLEY-NECHAKO

The Bulkley-Nechako region is located on the traditional territories of Dakelh-, Babine-Witsuwit'en and Tse'khene-speaking peoples (Northern Athabaskan/Dene), including at least 14 distinct First Nations today. Traditional economies of these communities are based on fishing (including salmon and lake fish) using weirs, a type of sophisticated fishing technology which traps fish along river mouths. Hunting small and large game, including bear, marmots, beaver, caribou and moose supplements fishing throughout the rest of the year, in addition to the gathering of berries and plants. Traditionally, Dakelh and Babine-Witsuwit'en-speaking peoples have used trade routes along the coast to exchange meat, fish and plant products between communities. Weirs, the backbone of food sovereignty for these communities, were banned across B.C. by the colonial government in the early 1900s. Potlatch governance and ceremony, which connected land, food and people, was also banned across Canada during this time. In recent years, important work by First Nations in the region, including T'sil Kaz Koh First Nation, is being conducted to bring salmon weirs back to the lands and waters – the Endako Weir project is a collaboration between the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council and the Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance to restore both traditional land and water practices and Chinook salmon populations.

Waterways are a key feature of the Bulkley-Nechako region, which is a wilderness paradise punctuated by stunning lakes and rivers. Complementing wilderness splendour and iconic views of the aurora borealis, the Bulkley-Nechako is home to vibrant communities. Smithers is a gem of a mountain town, full of diverse food and drink experiences, more events than weeks in the year and summers filled with music and performing arts. The town's two craft breweries and multiple local-roasted coffee shops are thriving cultural hubs, while local bakeries offer heavenly morning treats before a

long day of skiing at the Hudson Bay Mountain Resort. Throughout the winter, Smithers' recreation facilities and movie theatre keep weekends full of fun, and residents can also enjoy the services of Smithers' many wellness practitioners and offerings. Coast Mountain College also maintains a campus in Smithers, drawing in interesting figures from around the world, and the town also has an airport with direct service to Vancouver.



The region's waterways offer excellent boating and fishing. Photo Credit: CC [Headshatter on Pexels](#).

Along Highway 16 from Smithers to Vanderhoof, a smattering of villages including Telkwa, Houston, Burns Lake and Fraser Lake are known for gorgeous, affordable waterfront properties and warm-hearted residents. Farmers in the area are supported by organizations like the Bulkley Valley Groundbreakers, which focuses on local food education, economy and community development. Vanderhoof also has a passionate theatre and arts community in addition to a commitment to conservation education at the Nechako White Sturgeon Conservation Centre and the local campus of the College of New Caledonia. In the town of Vanderhoof, find a beloved pizzeria, delicious Filipino, Indian, and Japanese food and a delectable European bakery. Finally, stop by the Vanderhoof Community Museum, Tourism and Cultural Centre, designed in collaboration with the Saik'uz First Nation.

CARIBOO

The Cariboo region is located in the central interior of British Columbia, which is situated between the Cariboo Mountains to the east and reaches west across the Fraser River plateau to the Coast Mountains. Major cities in the Cariboo region include 100 Mile House, Williams Lake and Quesnel. The Cariboo region covers 13,128,585 hectares. Approximately 10.1% of th-

is land is in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), representing nearly 30% of all ALR land in B.C. **Agriculture has long been an important industry in the Cariboo region with its fertile soil along rivers and extensive natural grazing opportunities for ranchers.** The climate – cold winters, hot summers and low precipitation – is suitable for growing many crops.

CLIMATE



Summer Mean Temperature: 14°C



Frost Free Days:
85 to 120 days



Annual Precipitation:
250 to 630 mm



*Big Rock Ranch grows a wide variety of produce for the Buffalo Creek community and beyond.
Photo Credit: Big Rock Ranch*

EVENTS

The **South Cariboo Garlic Festival** is an annual August festival in Lac La Hache featuring local vendors, including hot sauces, mushrooms, fresh vegetables and flowers, chocolates, homemade goods and most importantly, garlic.

SOIL

The river bench soils of the Cariboo are sandy or silty loams, which are excellent for producing alfalfa, potatoes, cabbage, turnips, cauliflower and carrots. Other areas of land with ancient glacial lake bottoms contain a high clay content, but with appropriate soil management, they are very good for producing forage crops such as timothy, brome grass, alsike and red clover, as well as grain crops.



The Horse Lake Community Farm Cooperative runs a mixed operation in Lone Butte. Photo Credit: Horse Lake Community Farm Cooperative

MARKETS

South Cariboo Farmers' Market

Sprout Kitchen

Quesnel Farmers' Market

Williams Lake Farmers' Market

FARMS IN CARIBOO

HORSE LAKE CO-OP

The Horse Lake Community Farm Cooperative in Lone Butte promotes a vision of community land stewardship while securing long-term food production on the land. In addition to their mixed crop and livestock operation, they offer retreats and agricultural workshops.

horselakefarmcoop.ca



BIG ROCK RANCH

Big Rock Ranch, located in Buffalo Creek, sells their produce and meat at the South Cariboo Farmers Market, local restaurants and grocery stores throughout the growing season. They also offer a CSA, which can be pre-purchased at the beginning of the season and is delivered straight to your door.

bigrockranch.ca



SODA CREEK SWEET CORN

Another Soda Creek region standout, this farm has offered U-Pick vegetables and sweetcorn with grass-finished cattle for the past 60 years.

sodacreeksweetcorn.com



PUDDLE PRODUCE FARM

Puddle Produce Farm is a 1.5-acre market garden farm in Soda Creek, BC. All of their crops are grown without chemical inputs, and they do most of their farming by hand! Puddle Produce sells direct to customers through their CSA program and at the Williams Lake Farmers Market, as well as retail sales and bulk orders.

puddleproduce.ca



COMMUNITY IN CARIBOO & CENTRAL COAST

The Cariboo (and Central Coast) region is located on the traditional territories of Wakashan-, Tsilhqot'in-, Dakelh- and Secwepemctsin-speaking peoples, representing at least 20 First Nations, autonomous bands and communities today.

For the Heiltsuk, who are Wakashan-speaking peoples of the Central Coast, key traditional foods include marine and river species like sockeye, chum and coho salmon, oolichan, halibut, herring and other fish products like roe and grease, in addition to coastal plant (especially seaweed), bird and mammal species. Heiltsuk food sovereignty movements also showcase Heiltsuk farming practices like stewarding springbank clover and rice lily root patches or growing clam gardens. Try your hand at cooking a delicious Heiltsuk clam fritter recipe: raventrust.com/traditional-heiltsuk-clam-fritter-recipe.

Further inland, a large portion of the Cariboo region is on the territory of the Tsilhqot'in Nation. Traditionally, Tsilhqot'in families move around the landscape in accordance with the seasons based on food availability. These seasonal patterns include the hunting, fishing and gathering of important animal species like moose and salmon in addition to the harvest of tubers like mountain potatoes for food, and other plant parts for fibre. Relatively nomadic periods of food harvesting are punctuated by time spent in winter homes and pithouses for ice fishing, or in the summer, community gathering periods for salmon runs. Tsilhqot'in people also often complement seasonal, subsistence food harvesting with small-scale farming and are well-known for small-scale horse and cattle ranching, in addition to wild horse preserves.

Logging, mining and ranching continue to form part of the story of Tsilhqot'in lifeways and traditions, which have remained strong despite the pressures of colonization; the Tsilhqot'in Na-

tion never entered into a treaty with the Crown, and in response to logging efforts, the Tsilhqot'in First Nation won a rights & title case in 2014 with the Supreme Court of Canada for more than 1,700 square km of their land, marking the first such case of non-reserve Indigenous land title in Canada.

Traditional trade routes, called grease trails because of the predominance of oolichan grease, connect the coastal and southern regions of the Cariboo with territory of Dakelh-speaking peoples in the north of the Cariboo. Further inland, the easternmost part of the Cariboo falls on the traditional territories of Secwepemctsin-speaking peoples.

Land use patterns on Secwepemc territory, similar to other First Nations communities throughout the region, were and are dictated by the availability of food on different parts of the landscape throughout the year (seasonal rounds). Practices like periodic burning to encourage berry production, use of medicinal and food plants and wide-scale movement on the land encourage the preservation of traditional ecological knowledge about animal migration, climate and harvesting times. This complex knowledge has been maintained over millennia through oral traditions held in community.

Not only a region rich with cultural diversity, long-standing traditions across wide swathes of land and active stewardship by First Nations communities, the Cariboo is also home to some major cities, including Quesnel, Williams Lake and 100 Mile House. The campuses of the University of Northern British Columbia, the College of New Caledonia and Thompson Rivers University draw thousands of students and faculty to the region.

The city of Quesnel offers a mix of eclectic, community-driven restaurants and cafes featuri-

ng local artists and a diversity of cuisines. Quesnel Live Arts, running for almost 60 years, brings dance, music and theatre entertainment experiences to the community while also nurturing local talent. All three cities are home to thriving recreation, athletic and arts facilities, and the Cariboo Regional District Library offers community events and programming throughout the region. Quesnel also recently joined 100 Mile House and Williams lake in hosting a junior league hockey team, so residents can enjoy cheering on their favourite teams.

The former gold rush city of 100 Mile House is home to a very active Nordic skiing community, punctuated by log cabin heritage buildings. In the summers, the wetland and riparian habitats of 100 Mile House come alive with bird species and

lakefront beachgoers and bird watchers alike, while Centennial Park reverberates with live music and arts performances. Williams Lake is home to the Museum of the Cariboo Chilcotin, including the BC Cowboy Hall of Fame, and the city also hosts the yearly Williams Lake Stampede. The Central Cariboo Arts & Culture Society puts on incredible performances in the park, with an emphasis on the voices of Indigenous, people of colour and equity-deserving creators.

Recreation in the region is as diverse as the landscape, including hiking, biking, boating, horseback riding, fishing and big sky camping. Winter brings fun in the form of snowshoeing, skiing, snowmobiling and ice fishing.



Big Rock Ranch is one of many vendors at the South Cariboo Farmers' Market, which is held on Fridays from May through September. Photo Credit: Big Rock Ranch



The Williams Lake Stampede, an iconic B.C. rodeo event, has taken place annually for nearly 100 years! Photo Credit: CC [Province of British Columbia](#) on Flickr

PRINCE GEORGE

At the confluence of the Fraser and Nechako rivers as well as the crossroads of Highway 16 and 97 is Prince George, the centre of the Bulkley-Nechako and Fraser Fort George regions. Prince George is in the Sub-Boreal Spruce biogeoclimatic zone with a continental climate characterized by significant annual variation in temperature (hot summers and cold

winters). Prince George's main industries are construction, forestry and gas, with a vibrant and growing agricultural presence. **With excellent transportation corridors that make it a hub for Northern communities, Prince George is poised to become a thriving agricultural production and shipping region for the province.**

CLIMATE



Summer Mean Temperature: 14°C



Frost Free Days:
80 to 120 days



Annual Precipitation:
400 to 700 mm

EVENTS

Boasting a thriving restaurant scene that is keen on sourcing local products, Prince George has much to offer in terms of agricultural community.

The **BC National Exhibition**, running for over 100 years now, offers 4-H auctions, animal exhibits, produce and food vendors, baking contests and carnival-style rides in addition to teaching about the region's agricultural history.

The **Cold Snap Festival** is a nine-night festival that features artists in evening concerts across multiple theatre, music, and dance venues.

Finally, **Downtown Fallfest** happens every October – find both the Prince George Farmers' Market and Wilson Square Community Market set up outdoors on 3rd Avenue with a variety of fun fall activities and local food.

SOIL

The Prince George area can be classified into three major soil type groupings: fluvial, ancient glacial lake basin clays and glacial till. Land in close proximity to the Fraser River will have the Fraser soil complex, which is derived from fine textured post-glacial deposits of rivers and streams. These soils include silty loams, sandy loams and clay loams. They are of fine growing texture agriculturally.

Owing to their natural fertility, most soils used for agriculture in the Prince George area are in the ancient glacial lake basins and are fine-textured clay with moderate to poor drainage. The glacial till soils west and southwest of Prince George between the Nechako and Fraser Rivers range from sandy loam to clay loam. These soils are mostly distributed on the Nechako Plateau and are of poor quality for cultivation.

MARKETS

Prince George Farmers' Market

Eastline Market

Community West Market

Wilson Square Community Market

Pineview Community Market

FARMS IN PRINCE GEORGE

OCTOBER FARMS

October Farms raises grass-fed bison and sells their products on Saturdays at the Prince George Farmers' Market.

facebook.com/octoberbisonfarm

WILD AT HEART FARM

Wild at Heart Farm produces vegetables, preserves, eggs and fresh baking for home delivery and the Prince George Farmers Market.

wildatheartfarm.ca



HOPE FARM ORGANICS

Hope Farm Organics produces certified organic vegetables, berries and tree fruit. Hope Farm Organics sells primarily through wholesale distribution and case lot home delivery in Prince George.

hopefarmorganics.com

PG URBAN SHROOMERY

PG Urban Shroomery produces gourmet mushrooms and sells primarily at the Prince George Farmers market and through local restaurants. They specialize in gourmet mushrooms in addition to at-home grow kits.

facebook.com/pgurbanshroomery



AURORA VIEW FARMS

Aurora View Farms produces certified organic grass-fed beef and sells their products through online sales, home delivery and markets throughout the province.

auroraviewfarms.com

COMMUNITY IN PRINCE GEORGE

Prince George is located on the traditional territory of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation (Dakelh). Traditional Lheidli T'enneh land and food stewardship is and always has been dictated by the movement of community members across the landscape in accordance with seasonal rhythms. Springtime means lakeside fish camps and hunting small game and birds. Early summer is for gathering roots, bulbs and edible plants for food and medicine, and for preparing fibrous plants like willow, nettle and birch bark to make fish nets, rope, baskets and roofing material. Summertime is for salmon, especially Kokanee salmon, in addition to whitefish, Dolly Varden trout and rainbow trout. Blueberries, raspberries, soapberries and many more berry varieties are harvested throughout summertime as well. Come autumn, elk and moose hunting is accompanied by drying and smoking meat and fish. Hides and other products like twine are made from animal skins and parts. In the winter, many families reside in family trapline cabins while beaver hunting and trapping small mammals.

With a bustling population of over 74,000 people and access to plentiful services, Prince George has plenty to offer farming families. The Prince George Agricultural and Historical Association, running for over 100 years now, works to support the agricultural community in the region in addition to hosting the yearly British Columbia Northern Exhibition. Home to the University of Northern British Columbia and the College of New Caledonia, Prince George is an intergenerational city with several key industries including natural resources. For sports fans, Prince George has two junior league hockey teams and a junior league football team, in addition to an abundance of indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities for residents, such as the OVERhang indoor climbing gym, the city's gymnastic club, roller rink and endless alpine and watersports opportunities. The city is also a great place for music and theatre lovers, home to the Prince George Conservatory of Music, the Prince

George Symphony Orchestra, two cinemas, two theatre playhouses and several recording studios. The city has a thriving arts scene, replete with museums and galleries, classes and local businesses featuring local artists' work. The David Douglas Botanical Garden is complemented by two other gardens in the city, and several stunning urban parks. For food-lovers, Prince George offers standard Canadian fare in addition to a variety of cultural foods, several craft breweries and distilleries and a visitor-friendly estate winery north of the city for special occasions. The city is home to a variety of Indigenous-owned businesses, from the Smokehouse Restaurant to House of Ancestors Café to several art galleries and fitness and hair studios.



Wild at Heart Farm is one of the local vendors at the Prince George Farmers' Market, which runs every Saturday year-round. Photo Credit: Wild at Heart Farm

ROBSON VALLEY

The Robson Valley is located east of Prince George in the Rocky Mountain Trench and comprises approximately 15,000 square kilometers. Made up of a collection of villages tucked against the backdrop of the Rocky Mountains, the valley offers easy access to major cities of Prince George (2.5 hours) and Jasper (1.5 hours), including a rail stop in Dunster. The region is known for abundant sunshine during the long days of summer and fertile soil ideal for short-season crops. The climate of the Robson

Valley is distinct from the rest of the Fraser-Fort George region and is characterized by the Interior Cedar Hemlock zone, commonly called the Interior Wet Belt. The valley has long, warm summers and cool, wet winters. Although summers are relatively dry in most of this zone, the slow-melting snowpack generally helps keep soil moisture levels high during the summer. From massive gardens to massive trees, the Robson Valley is the place to grow.

CLIMATE



Summer Mean Temperature: 16°C



Frost Free Days:
80 to 120 days



Annual Precipitation:
700 to 1176 mm

SOIL

Near the Fraser River, a McGregor sandy loam and loamy sand can be found on very gently sloping land. South of the Fraser River, a mix of loamy sand and fine sandy loam/silt loam changes into a stony/loamy sand. North of the river is often a Toneko Loamy sand which changes into a stony/loamy sand. All of these soil types are excellent for growing a wide range of crops and forage for livestock.

EVENTS

The **Robson Valley Music Festival** is a family-oriented three-day celebration of music, art and community. The music festival takes place every August in Dunster.

MARKETS

Valemount Farmers' Market

McBride Farmers' Market

Jasper Farmers' Market

Dunster Farmers' Market



*Roots 'n Thyme grows vegetables and bakes artisan sourdough bread for the Robson Valley community.
Photo Credit: Roots 'n Thyme*

FARMS IN ROBSON VALLEY

ROOTS 'N THYME

Roots 'n Thyme is run by a young family nestled in the Robson Valley who grow vegetables and bake sourdough bread for nearby communities. They grow chemical-free, biodiverse food as a form of activism based on the belief that small-scale, locally produced food is vital for a sustainable future.

rootsnthyme.com



GRAZING PATCH FARM

Grazing Patch Farm raises regenerative, pasture-raised and grain-fed animals with the goal of creating resilience in climate extremes, building quality soil, and forest-livestock integration. Animal health and contentment and climate resilience work together to produce the most delicious and nutritious meat and eggs you can have!

grazingpatchfarm.ca

BALSAM RANCH

Balsam Ranch produces vegetables, fruit and beef using biodynamic principles. They sell their products through farmers' markets in the Robson Valley and home delivery.

facebook.com/BalsamRanch



COMMUNITY IN ROBSON VALLEY

The Robson Valley is located on the traditional territories of Dakelh-, Tsilhqot'in-, Syilx- and Secwepemctsin-speaking peoples. Represented by at least eight First Nations, autonomous bands and communities today, the Robson Valley falls primarily in the territory of the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation (Dakelh). The Lheidli T'enneh Nation maintains the 11,000+ hectare Chun T'oh Whudujut Provincial Park (Ancient Forest) within their traditional territory, which protects some of the only inland temperate rainforest in the world. The park is a must-see for visitors, replete with thousands of years old cedars and mosses and lichens galore. In addition to the beautiful rainforest hiking available to Chun T'oh Whudujut Provincial Park visitors, recreation in the varied terrain of the Robson Valley brings excellent mountain biking, boating and camping during the summer and cross country skiing, heli-skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling during the winter.

The Robson Valley also hosts a fabulous local arts and music scene: the Whistlestop Gallery in

McBride is a popular destination to see the work of over 90 local artists and artisans, many of whom pay tribute to the stunning beauty of Mount Robson overlooking the valley. Also in McBride is the Valley Museum and Archives and the McBride & District Public Library, which offers all kinds of exciting programming for adults, teens and children. Lovingly curated local news sources, The Little McBride Paper and The Rocky Mountain Goat Community Newspaper, offer readers the latest scoop on civic developments, upcoming events and community groups. If you are a sports enthusiast, you might find your home at the Robson Valley Recreation Centre, the very active McBride Curling Club or the Falling Star Ranch Horsemanship Academy.

For farmers, organizations such as the Three Valleys Community Development Cooperative, the McBride Farmers Institute (one of the oldest in the province!), the Robson Valley Growers Co-op, the Robson Valley Cattlemen's Association and Community Futures all work together to support farmers and local food security.



The 450 m universal access boardwalk in Chun T'oh Whudujut Provincial Park provides the opportunity for people of all abilities to experience the park. Another 2.3 km of boardwalk provides access to the magnificent "Big" Tree, as well as Tree Beard, Radies Tree, and a beautiful cascading waterfall.

Photo Credit: CC [Province of British Columbia on Flickr](#)

PEACE RIVER

The Peace River region is the largest of BC's regions, representing 22% of the land area of the province and 1.5% of the population. It stretches from the Rocky Mountains along the Alberta border to Jasper National Park, and west to the Spatsizi Plateau. The terrain is generally flat in the north and east and mountainous in the south and west. The central part of the region extends westward beyond the Rockies into the remote Omineca Mountain range. The region is a crucial agricultural production centre for the economy of

both the area and the province. There are nearly 743,857 hectares of land farmed in the region, which accounts for around 32% of land farmed in B.C., focused on beef, grains and oilseeds. In 2021, the 1,419 farms in the region generated sales of more than \$235 million, from a capital investment of about \$4 billion in land, livestock, buildings and machinery. **If you are looking to participate in a thriving agricultural community with an established economy, the Peace River region is the place to grow in Northern BC.**

CLIMATE



Summer Mean Temperature: 14°C



Frost Free Days:
80 to 120 days



Annual Precipitation:
450 to 859 mm

EVENTS

The Peace Region is full of events of every kind:

Fort St. John's High On Ice Winter Festival in February is a winter-themed event including ice carving and ice slides and dog mushing.

The **Chetwynd International Chainsaw Carving Championship** in June is a unique event offering the opportunity to behold skilled craftspeople transforming large logs into a myriad of stunning pieces.

The **Dawson Creek Exhibition** takes place in August and showcases local agriculture, rodeo events, live music and good food.

SOIL

The Peace River region has a multitude of soil series, most abundantly clay loams that are developed upon glacial till. Clay loams vary from Grey Wooded clay loam to Low Humic Eluviated Gleysol clay loams, being slightly calcareous and somewhat saline.



The farmers at Wildwood Farm – a cooperative farm in Pouce Coupe – hope to expand their community in the coming years! Photo Credit: Wildwood Farm

MARKETS

Fort St. John Farmers' Market

Chetwynd Farmers' Market

Dawson Creek Farmer's Market

FARMS IN PEACE RIVER



CANADIAN ACRES

Canadian Acres produces vegetables, pastured pork and mountain horses as well as canned and preserved products which can be found at their website and the Peace River Region's Farmers Institute food hub.

canadian-acres.com

WILDWOOD FARM

Wildwood Farm is a vegetable, meat and eggs operation farmed collaboratively by two generations of farmers with a long-term vision of sustainable agriculture. Read about their model in the YA blog: youngagrarians.org/land-access-stories-wildwood-farm-pouce-coupe-bc

wildwood.farm



AMISK FARM

Amisk Farm produces pastured pork and vegetables that can be found at the Dawson Creek Farmers Market, Chetwynd Farmers Market and through the Peace River Region's Farmers Institute's food hub.

[instagram.com/amisk_farm](https://www.instagram.com/amisk_farm)

WHISKEY CREEK FARM

Whiskey Creek Ranch produces pastured pork, poultry and beef along with market garden produce and honey. Their products can be found on their online store.

whiskeycreekranch.ca



COMMUNITY IN PEACE RIVER

The Peace River region is on the traditional territories of Tse'khene-, Nehiyawewin-, Dane-Zaa- and Kaska/Dene K'eh-speaking peoples. On the east side of the Rockies, the Peace River region encompasses a sprawling land mass dotted with towns and cities. Much of the northern Peace is maintained by First Nations communities, reaching up to the Northern Rockies Regional Municipality, where the largest population centre is Fort Nelson. In the northernmost parts of the Peace River region, the Dene K'eh or Kaska Dene steward the largest remaining intact landscape in British Columbia, Dene K'eh Kusan ("Always Will Be There"), which is an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA) representing four million hectares of land and water. Moose and caribou, among other game species, are an important cultural food and source of materials for Kaska communities, and you can learn more about modern ecological stewardship and foodways in the film *Always Will Be There*: denakayeh.com/denekehkusan.

Tse'khene communities in the southwest Peace have traditionally traveled along the many waterways in the region and by dogsled to hunt caribou and other important game species. Caribou population restoration efforts are an important part of continuing traditional Tse'khene foodways and passing along cultural knowledge. To the east, neighbouring Cree (Nehiyawewin) and Dane-Zaa communities also have food systems rooted in large game like caribou, bear, moose and bison. Beaver has always been important to Dane-Zaa people (who are often called Beaver people), and members of the Doig River First Nation continue to carry out yearly beaver hunts and preparation of the animal in accordance with ceremony and tradition in order to pass knowledge down to youth members.

In this region of the southeast Peace, cities of Fort St. John and nearby Dawson Creek offer a high standard of living with affordable housing,

and for farmers, a long history of agriculture in the region. Fort St. John, with a population of over 20,000 residents, is booming with business development focused on urban sustainability and community planning. The city houses state-of-the-art infrastructure for the arts, recreation and athletics and is also home to two university campuses, drawing in quaint coffee shops and lively evening events. Residents can enjoy local meat and produce at Fort St. John's numerous and varied restaurants, or enjoy a picnic in the city's more than 29 parks and public green spaces. Dawson Creek, with over 12,000 residents, offers more small town charm with easy access to outdoor adventures, whether hiking, fishing or skiing and snowmobiling in the winter.



Peace River offers excellent ice fishing in the winter!
Photo Credit: Amisk Farm

Outside of its cities, the Peace River region is dominated by ALR land, meaning that farming is a key driver of the economy and that farmers in the region have access to long-standing supports and services. Bustling farmers' markets, access to key distribution channels and land availability make the region a great place for outdoor-loving farm families to make a living. From hiking to boating to dinosaur fossils and everything in between, the Peace River region has it all, with plenty of provincial parks for family fun.

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