

PROPOSED AGRICULTURE POLICY

**THE DEPARTMENTS OF RENEWABLE RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY
AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES ARE PLEASED TO PRESENT THE
DRAFT AGRICULTURE POLICY FOR PUBLIC REVIEW.**

ALL INTERESTED PARTIES ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT THEIR

WRITTEN COMMENTS

BY

SEPTEMBER 30, 1990.

TO

AGRICULTURE POLICY REVIEW

AT

GOVERNMENT OF YUKON

P.O. Box 2703

WHITEHORSE, YUKON

Y1A 2C6

OR

YOUR LOCAL TERRITORIAL AGENT

JOINT INITIATIVE OF

DEPARTMENT OF RENEWABLE RESOURCES

AND

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

**ART WEBSTER
MINISTER OF RENEWABLE RESOURCES**

**MAURICE BYBLOW
MINISTER OF COMMUNITY & TRANSPORTATION
SERVICES**

FEBRUARY 1990

APPENDIX 1

Agriculture Policy Statement of Purpose

The Yukon's agricultural sector has the potential to expand and develop as an important part of the territorial economy. Through the use of conventional as well as innovative technologies, the opportunity exists to replace a portion of imported foods with made-in-the-Yukon products. The government's agricultural programs are designed to promote a sustainable, self-sufficient (market driven) and economically viable industry in the territory.

Objectives of the agriculture programs include:

1. To encourage the development of an agricultural sector which produces food and other products that replace imported goods to the greatest possible extent. Future agricultural development should also include finding the right crops and products that can be grown and produced in the Yukon which may find a place in the export market.
2. To ensure that the development of the agricultural sector occurs in a manner which:
 - (i) provides for the maintenance of the resource base for agriculture (soil productivity, water quality, genetic diversity of crops); and
 - (ii) protects the habitats of wild plants and animals, particularly those used for subsistence purposes and those valuable to other economic sectors.
3. To provide of suitable lands for agricultural purposes in a manner which:
 - (i) ensures a fair and open process for obtaining land;
 - (ii) balances the demand for agricultural land with competing land uses;
 - (iii) minimizes the negative effects of converting land to agricultural use;
 - (iv) allows for a reasonable diversity of opportunity and lifestyle for individuals interested in agriculture; and
 - (v) ensures that agricultural land once allocated to that use will continue to be available for agricultural uses by present users and future generations.

Three Yukon government departments have responsibility for major components of the agriculture program.

The Department of Renewable Resources (Agriculture Branch) is responsible for a variety of agricultural development services (research and development, extension, marketing, farm management etc.). These programs are described in the Agriculture Development Policy brochure.

The Department of Community and Transportation Services (Lands Branch) administers the land application and approvals process. The details of the process are described in the Agriculture Land Policy.

The Department of Economic Development is responsible for a variety of business development programs. Information on these programs is available from the Business Development Office.

Industry participation in agriculture policy and programs is provided by the Agriculture Planning Advisory Committee.

APPENDIX 2

Agricultural Development Policy

The Agriculture Branch of the Department of Renewable Resources will provide the following services to aid in the development of the sustainable agricultural industry in the Yukon.

1. Extension Services

The primary function of the Agriculture Branch is to offer an extension service to Yukon farmers and the agricultural industry. This service will be provided to farmers and people in the industry using on-site calls, office interviews, extension courses and programs as well as newsletters, publications and research/demonstration reports on work being carried out by the Agriculture Branch.

Extension services and advice will be provided in all areas of agricultural production and development. This includes land development, soil conservation, irrigation, building design, regulatory services and programs, equipment uses, grazing management and control, fertilization, as well as all types of production methods in producing crops, forages, pastures, livestock, game farming, etc. It is intended that the expertise will be provided by the Agriculture Branch on a direct basis or by the use of outside expertise which will be obtained and presented through the Agriculture Branch.

2. Research

The Agriculture Branch will support and coordinate research, innovative development, demonstration and field scale projects, designed to improve our understanding of agricultural production in the Yukon. Emphasis will also be placed on the research necessary to solve the problems that limit the production, processing and/or marketing of Yukon agricultural products.

It is not yet the intention of the Agriculture Branch to be directly involved in research which would develop new varieties of crops, new breeds of livestock, new weed control chemicals, etc. Thus, the research and demonstration work carried out would be that which would provide the quickest and most profitable returns to the primary producers and primary industry sector. In the future, as resources permit, more extensive basic research on new cultivars and breeds may be undertaken.

For the testing and demonstration work to be most effective, multiple location projects will take precedence over single location projects.

3. Regional Development

The Agriculture Branch will encourage the development of the various sectors (livestock, forages, grain, vegetables, etc.) of agriculture that are appropriate for each region of the Yukon based on the following considerations:

- a. climatic factors
- b. soil
- c. economic factors
- d. markets/infrastructure
- e. land use planning
- f. research/new technology

4. Conservation Services

The Agriculture Branch has a mandate to ensure that agriculture resources are conserved and managed properly. Conservation and agriculture resource development programs must be in place to protect agricultural soils and to ensure that water is developed and used to maximize its potential in irrigation systems where most appropriate. Protecting our agricultural resources will guarantee agricultural productivity for future generations.

The Agriculture Branch will thus assist in the designing of conservation measures for farms. In some instances conservation measures for land development may be designed into grazing leases, as well as agreements for sale.

5. Marketing Support

A major objective of the Agriculture Branch will be to improve Yukon farm incomes by assisting primary producers in determining the most suitable and marketable crops for their particular soils, climate and production capability.

Ideally the development of agriculture will be market driven and market oriented in all areas of the territory. The Agriculture Branch, when appropriate, will work in close cooperation with other government departments to ensure the development of markets and infrastructure for Yukon livestock, crops, food products and related technical services. Marketing support will be provided by advising on distribution, packaging, advertising and displaying of merchandise. In addition, the Agriculture Branch will encourage high standards of food quality and hygiene.

6. Farm Finance and Farm Management

The Agriculture Branch is committed to providing farm management advice, counselling and services to primary producers in order to ensure safe, orderly and steady growth and development of agriculture in the Yukon. Since agriculture is still a relatively young industry in the Yukon, it is an ideal time to stress the need for proper farm management, record keeping, etc. This will also enhance the industry's capability to obtain farm financing if so required.

7. Veterinary Services

Animal husbandry is recognized to have an important role to play in the development of the agricultural industry and the overall economy of the Yukon. Methods should be developed to enable and encourage the most economically efficient output from the food animal sector. Veterinary services offered on a permanent basis are essential to the production and growth of the food animal sector. The Agriculture Branch of Renewable Resources will provide the following support to veterinary services:

- a) Seek ways and means to improve veterinary services to Yukon farmers.
- b) Promote herd health programs in the Yukon.
- c) Consider incentive programs to both producers and veterinarians in order to provide a consistent service throughout the Yukon.
- d) Through extension programs, seminars, and conferences, continue to educate the farming public in areas of herd production, health and management.

8. Public Health and Safety

a) Product Inspection

The Agriculture Branch will encourage safe, wholesome food production. The Branch in cooperation with agriculture industry representatives will be responsible for:

- (i) Development of the necessary policies and regulations needed to ensure safe, healthy products are available to the public;
- (ii) Development of the necessary infrastructure and services needed to provide for the inspection of agricultural products to ensure adequate implementation and enforcement of the policies and regulations.

b) Livestock Control

Livestock found at large are a serious public safety hazard and can cause property damage. The mandate of the Agriculture Branch in relation to livestock control will be as follows:

- (i) Administer the necessary programs needed to ensure the control of stray livestock;
- (ii) Review, revise, and develop new regulations or policies as required to ensure the control of stray animals on Yukon highways and in Pounds Districts;
- (iii) Where necessary, share in joint programs/ legislation with other government branches to ensure the safety of highway users.

9. Agriculture Branch Development

It will be the responsibility of the Agriculture Branch to provide fast, reliable and consistent support to the agriculture industry. In order to accomplish this, branch support should parallel the growth of the industry.

The Agriculture Branch will recognize the need to provide sound input to the Department of Renewable Resources on policy and administrative matters, while still providing the necessary services and support to the industry.

10. Technology Transfer

A key role for the Agriculture Branch will be to provide leadership and direction to the public and private sectors as well as to the industrial and non-governmental institutions in the transfer and explanation of new farm-related technology and technological developments in agriculture.

11. Federal/Territorial Cooperation

The territory's agricultural sector benefits greatly from the interest and involvement of federal agencies in various extension, research, and support services. In particular Agriculture Canada plays a prominent cooperative role in support of the agricultural industry. The Yukon government will undertake to foster and promote this cooperation.

12. Public Involvement

All aspects of agricultural development shall be undertaken while providing opportunities for extensive public involvement. It is the intention of the Agriculture Branch to work in cooperation and partnership with the private sector develop a sound agricultural industry in the Yukon.

13. Agriculture Data Base

It will be the responsibility of the Agriculture Branch to establish and maintain a data base on agriculture in the territory. This will include statistics on agricultural inventory, value of production, costs of production, land area in production and trends in the industry.

The Agriculture Branch will work in close cooperation with appropriate government departments and branches (Statistics Branch, Economic Development) in order to plan and carry out the surveys required to obtain the necessary information to maintain the data base.

APPENDIX 3

Agricultural Land Policy

1. Objective

To provide for the conservation, utilization and management of Yukon lands for agricultural uses.

2. Agriculture Definitions

Agricultural Land - land for the purpose and pursuit of agricultural production, excluding the primary use of the land for processing or equipment sales.

- (a) Extensive Agricultural Land Use - for administrative purposes, is land, normally in a 65 ha. contiguous parcel, for enterprises that normally require larger land holdings for economic viability. A minimum of 80% of an extensive agricultural land parcel must be arable. Examples of extensive agricultural land include lands used for forage or grain production.
- (b) Intensive Agricultural Land Use - for administrative purposes, are land holdings up to 65 ha. (no minimum parcel size). Intensive agricultural land may be considered for non-soil based or soil based enterprise. Normally, this will include small holdings intended for uses such as vegetable production, greenhousing, and apiaries.
- (c) Grazing Land Use - is defined and managed under the grazing policy.
- (d) Aquaculture - is not covered under this policy. Submerged lands will not be developed or disposed of under this policy.

3. Orderly Development

- (1) The emphasis in development and disposition of agricultural land will be on designated and planned agricultural areas.
 - (a) In areas where district plans exist, the plans will be used to guide development and disposition for agricultural land.
 - (b) Assistance will be given in directing applicants for agricultural land toward lands that are appropriate of agricultural uses.
 - (c) Agricultural land will be identified through soil surveys and a planning process.
 - (d) Processing of existing agricultural applications will continue with no change in the procedure or the priority.
- (2) Spot agricultural applications will be accepted subject to the following:
 - (a) Areas with high demand or land use conflicts may be closed to spot agricultural applications.
 - (b) Where appropriate areas for agriculture can be identified, these may be designated for spot applications.
 - (c) There may be areas requiring protection of particular natural resources designated and closed to agricultural development and disposition. A designated area may be identified during an application review.

- (3) Applications will be accepted to expand existing farming operations. Applicants must show the need for additional land through a farm development plan. The expanded farm land base including the original parcel will be designated for agricultural land use.
- (4) The restrictions on available Crown land for agricultural use, as with other classes of land, may be adjusted to reflect community needs through land use plans and area development regulations.
- (5) Soil classification will be a factor in determining land disposition for agriculture.
 - (a) Agriculture will normally be allowed on lands with agronomic soil classification of Class 5 or better.
 - (b) Agriculture will be allowed on non-arable land, but only the first 6 ha. may be titled. The remainder will be leased. The primary use of the land must be for agricultural production. Residential use may be allowed where appropriate as a secondary land use.
 - (c) Non soil based agricultural enterprises and grazing will be encouraged to locate on land with soil agronomic classification of Class 6 or 7.
 - (d) Soil conditions such as salinity, drainage, texture and slope may result in a decision against agricultural land use.
- (6) Infrastructure services to agricultural properties may be provided during development of planned agricultural areas.
 - (a) Infrastructure services provided by the Government of Yukon will be fully cost recoverable.
 - (b) Utility easements will be planned and retained in all agricultural dispositions.
- (7) Access to agricultural land and to adjacent lands will be required.
 - (a) Agricultural parcels must have provision for reasonable access. Access by land will be the norm. Access to the agricultural parcel by water may be considered.
 - (b) Road construction will normally be the sole responsibility of the purchaser. Access provided by the Government of Yukon will be fully cost recoverable from the agreement holder.
 - (c) In consideration of any agricultural land disposition, provisions must be made for public access to adjacent hinterlands, rivers lakes and other properties adjoining the parcel.

4. Land Protection

- (1) It is important that the limited Crown land suitable for cultivation in the Yukon be protected from uses that are incompatible with the development of a viable and self-sustaining agricultural industry.
- (2) Agricultural land under Agreement for Sale or in agricultural use will be protected from encroachment.
 - (a) Areas designated for agriculture will be used primarily for that purpose and existing operations will be guaranteed the right to continue to farm.
 - (b) Land use controls, including zoning, may be used to separate uses incompatible with agriculture (eg., high density residential) from designated agricultural areas.

- (3) Lands designated for agriculture will be protected from non agricultural uses.
 - (a) Lands disposed for agricultural purposes will not be subdivided.
 - (b) Area development regulations, restrictive covenants on land titles, the form of land tenure and development agreements may be used to encourage sustained agricultural land use and development.
- (4) Conservation of soil is a key component in the continued development and economic stability of agriculture in the Yukon.
 - (a) Soil management and conservation practices will be practiced to sustain the productivity of Yukon soils. All agriculturalists will be encouraged to practice sound soil conservation measures.
 - (b) Title will not be given to lands requiring special soil management for successfully sustained operation. These lands may be developed under a lease agreement where appropriate.

5. Agricultural Land Applications

- (1) To be eligible to apply for agricultural land in the Yukon, a person must meet the following criteria:
 - (a) Be a Canadian citizen, or have the status of a permanent resident of Canada.
 - (b) Has resided in the Yukon for one continuous year prior to application. Has maintained residency in the Yukon for one year prior to entering an Agreement for Sale on agricultural land.
 - (c) Be 19 years of age or older.
 - (d) Has not sold a titled parcel or assigned an agreement for sale of land acquired under the agricultural land program in the previous 10 years.
 - (e) A company incorporated under the laws of the Yukon or Canada where the majority of shares are held by Yukon residents qualifying under (a, b, c) above and will utilize the agricultural land for the exclusive benefit of the shareholders.

or,

 - (f) A non-profit Society registered in the Yukon.
- (2) The two methods for allocating public land for agricultural dispositions are:
 - (a) advertising the land for sale and selecting the purchaser from the eligible applicants by a public draw system.
 - (b) spot land applications.
- (3) Applicants for unadvertised agricultural land are responsible for:
 - (a) completing the application for land, including accurate maps and plans, in as much detail as possible;
 - (b) updating the application with new or additional information as it is developed or is requested;
 - (c) ensuring that a farm management plan is complete and that the enterprise proposed is considered viable in the Yukon context;
 - (d) being available for consultation and discussion of the application and the specific agricultural enterprise being considered when the

application is being reviewed by the agencies involved in the decision-making process; and

- (e) providing an explanatory sketch, prepared by a surveyor, prior to the issuance of an Agreement for Sale.
- (4) Applicants for advertised land are responsible for ensuring that a farm management plan is completed and that the enterprise proposed is considered viable in the Yukon context.
- (5) Applicants will be encouraged to apply for the type (soil class, fertility, drainage) and amount of land required for the proposed agricultural enterprise. Land applications are not transferable.
- (6) Applications for agricultural land will be limited to a parcel up to 65 ha. in size.
- (7) One additional parcel of land up to 65 ha. may also be applied for under separate application at the same time as the initial parcel. The second parcel will be contiguous to the first and must be essential to the development of an economic farm unit. If accepted, the second application will protect the land from other agricultural land applications. The government reserves the right to terminate the application at any time after consulting the applicant.
- (8) A second parcel will be consolidated with the first.
- (9) Unless specifically stated otherwise, all costs of survey, legal description and servicing will be the responsibility of the Applicant/Agreement for Sale holder.
- (10) Applications for agricultural land in the Yukon are administered by the Lands Branch, Department of Community and Transportation Services.
 - (a) Application forms and information on applications and the review process can be obtained from the Lands Branch.
 - (b) Standard Lands Branch land application procedures, fees and practices will apply to applications for agricultural land.
- (11) The Agricultural Application Review Process has a number of major components as follows:
 - (a) The application is received and reviewed for completeness and acceptability by the Department of Community and Transportation Services.
 - (b) A review of soil suitability is conducted by the Department of Renewable Resources. Field soil surveys, if required, will be done during the summer.
 - (c) Native Land Claims interests are examined by the Land Claims Secretariat and/or the relevant First Nation.
 - (d) Applications will be available for public review and comment for a minimum 20 day period.
 - (e) The Departments of Community and Transportation Services and Renewable Resources conduct reviews of land use and competing resource interests.
 - (f) The Department of Renewable Resources conducts a management review of the proposed agricultural project.
 - (g) Consideration, adjustments and decisions on applications are undertaken by a review committee having representation from all departments with responsibility for land and resource management.

- (h) Final decisions are the responsibility of the Minister responsible for the Lands Act or his/ her designate.
- (12) The following time constraints will be applied to the review and consideration of agricultural land applications:
 - (a) Applications will be reviewed for completeness and quality of information presented to meet the minimum requirements for further consideration and notification will be sent to the applicant indicating the status of the application within 10 working days of receipt by the Lands Branch.
 - (b) Subject to the availability of the applicant and additional information that may be required, the Land Claims Secretariat, Renewable Resources and Community and Transportation Services management reviews will be conducted within 90 days of formal receipt of a complete and acceptable application by Lands Branch.
 - (c) At the end of the 90 day review period, the applicant will be informed of the status of the application. Options are:
 - (i) approval of application (Note: if on lands administered by the federal government, this approval is subject to federal government approval of a land transfer);
 - (ii) denial of application;
 - (iii) deferral of application for a period of up to 12 months for completion of soil surveys, further consultation and discussion of the application with the applicant, other interested parties, or other factors required for full review and consideration of the application.
- (13) Reasons for denial or deferral decisions on an application will be given to the applicant at the time a decision is made.
- (14) The applicant may appeal denial of an agricultural land application to the Minister responsible for the crown lands.

6. Agricultural Land Dispositions

- (1) An individual may not hold more than one agreement for sale at any time.
- (2) Land will be released for agricultural use under two forms of tenure:
 - (a) Fee Simple Tenure will be the dominant form of tenure. In the majority of cases it will be desirable to transfer land in this way.
 - (b) Farm Land Lease will be used to grant exclusive possession and use of land requiring special management, game farming, or lands where the pursuit of agriculture will have potential conflict with other desirable land uses. Lease terms may be up to 30 years.
- (3) Agreements for Sale and Farm Land Leases will include Farm Land Development Conditions. Normally, farm land development conditions will include:
 - (a) 80% of land in any parcel of extensive agricultural land must be arable;
 - (b) Progressive development of agricultural lands may be incorporated into farm land development conditions. Progressive annual development of the agricultural operation may be required to ensure development is completed at the end of the agreement term;

- (c) Farm Land Development Conditions for Intensive Agricultural smaller holdings, will be designed on a case by case basis in view of the enterprise being proposed;
- (d) The following items are suggested for consideration and inclusion as appropriate in a Farm Land Development Conditions:
 - (i) Fencing
 - (ii) Clearing and use of merchantable timber
 - (iii) Crops
 - (iv) Farm Buildings
 - (v) Water supply and drainage
 - (vi) Shelter Belts
 - (vii) Farm Yard Sites
 - (viii) Other capital expenditures not including farm implements and equipment.

NOTE: Specific variations will be considered for game farming operations.

- (4) Yukon residency must be maintained throughout the term of the agreements for sale on agricultural land.
- (5) The provisions of the Yukon Lands Regulations and Lands Branch procedures for sale of land will apply to all agricultural land dispositions.
- (6) Agricultural Agreements for Sale and Farm Land Leases may be assigned to another eligible individual with consent of the Minister responsible. New Farm Land Development Conditions may be required as a condition of an assignment. A reasonable level surety that the terms of the agreement will be met must be evident.

7. Land Pricing

- (1) Agricultural land will be priced in the following manner:
 - (1) Farm land lease rental will be a percentage of the appraised raw undeveloped land value per year, established by regulation.
 - (2) (a) Agriculture land will be sold on a fee simple basis under a 5 year Agreement for Sale.
 - (b) In order to promote the development of an Agriculture industry in the Yukon, the Government of the Yukon may enter into a special development agreement with purchasers of Agricultural land. The Land Development Agreement will form part of the Agreement for Sale. The following guidelines apply to an Agricultural Land Development Agreement.
 - (i) the first 4 ha. of the lot will be deemed for the purpose of land pricing to be the residential portion of the lot and will not be covered by the Agricultural Land Development Agreement. None of the cost of the rural residential portion of the land will be forgiven due to agricultural development work.
 - (ii) where an expansion to an agricultural lot is granted and the parcels are consolidated into one title, all

of the expansion area will be deemed to be for agriculture.

- (iii) up to one half the value of approved development work (capital improvements) on the land may be applied to the cost of the agricultural portion of the land. In other words, for every two dollars of development work done, one dollar of the cost of the land (except YTG development costs) may be forgiven.
- (iv) the development work which may be used to offset the cost of the land will be specified in the Development Agreement. The Agreement may be amended at any time with the mutual consent of both parties.

(c) Determination of Sale Price:

- (i) The sale price will be the market value of the land, taking into account the class of land use, and the effect on the value of the land of any restrictive caveats or zoning restrictions which limit its use.
- (ii) Transaction costs for a fee simple sale will be included in the development costs. Recurring transactional, and other administrative costs will be paid by the buyer or lessee as an administrative fee. Examples of such recurring costs include the administration of a lease or a multi-year Agreement for Sale.
- (iii) Interest shall be charged on the balance owing against development costs only on an Agreement for Sale.

(d) Determination of Market Value:

- (i) Market value will generally be determined by appraisals carried out by the Property Assessments Section of the Department. On occasion, the services of a private sector appraiser may be used. The market values of finished land held in inventory will be updated from time to time to reflect current market values.
- (ii) Where there is insufficient data to carry out an appraisal based on private land sales; other generally accepted appraisal techniques, or competitive bidding may be used to establish the market values; subject to a reserve bid equal to development costs.

(e) Appeals:

- (i) Where there is a dispute over the price of a specific parcel of land, which was not developed by the Yukon Government, the purchaser may arrange for an independent appraisal at his or her expense. This provision does not apply to lots which the Government of the Yukon offers for sale to the general public.
- (ii) The Government of the Yukon may use the appraisals as a basis of negotiations with the client.
- (iii) Disputes not resolved through negotiation may be submitted to an independent appraiser acceptable to both parties. The cost of the appraiser will be shared between the Yukon Government and the client.
- (iv) Only one appeal will be allowed on any application for land.

8. Land Taxation

An agricultural land tax rebate program will be implemented which will encourage farm production. The rebate program will allow farmers who produce a minimum of \$3,000 gross value of farm products to claim a 100 percent refund of taxes paid on the farm land and specified specialized farm buildings. Residential land and improvement tax will not be included in the refund. The minimum gross product value will increase to \$5,000 in two years.

9. Land Inspection

- (1) Regular inspection of agricultural parcels will be conducted to evaluate progress toward successful completion of the Agricultural Agreement for Sale, and to facilitate provision of agricultural extension services.
 - (a) Progressive development strategies should lead to a high success ratio for agricultural enterprises.
 - (b) Observation and comments by the inspector should assist both the applicant and the Agricultural Branch in ensuring development of a strong agricultural sector.
- (2) Lengthening of the term of an agreement for sale will only be considered in very extra ordinary circumstances.
 - (a) A case by case assessment for the extension of terms of an agricultural agreement for sale will be conducted by the Lands and Agriculture Branches following guidelines prepared by the Departments.
- (3) Remedies under the Lands Act will be taken against agreement holders who do not fulfill the terms of Agricultural Land Agreements.

10. Public Involvement

- (1) The Agricultural Planning Advisory Committee will continue to make recommendations to the Minister of Renewable Resources on any agricultural matter it has considered.
- (2) The Lands Branch may consult local governments, Yukon first nations, and other interested parties as part of the application review process.
- (3) Agricultural applications under active consideration will be advertised, in a local newspaper.
- (4) Written comments will be received by the Lands Branch during a 20 day period following the first public advertisement.
- (5) At the discretion of the Chair, interested parties will be provided the opportunity to make an oral submission to the Land Application Review Committee.

APPENDIX 4

Criteria For Consideration in Reviewing Agriculture Land Application

1. Climate and Soils Capability. In areas where agriculture is generally known not to be feasible agriculture land applications will not be received. In areas where agriculture is generally understood to be feasible the application will be reviewed for its site specific technical feasibility, particularly with respect to climatic and soils capability.
2. Economic Feasibility. Applications will be reviewed for their economic feasibility and those which, after consultation with the applicant, remain infeasible will not be approved.
3. Access. Where the agricultural operation is economically dependent on efficient access and where access either by water or road is not available, the application may not be supported. Land development with water access only will be discouraged.
4. Compliance with Regional and Sub-Regional Plans. Applications will be checked for compliance with any existing regional or sub-regional plans. In the event of non-compliance a special review will be undertaken to determine the significance of the change in land use. This will be factored into the final decision on the application.
5. Wildlife and habitat protection. Applications to acquire land for agriculture will be reviewed by the Fish and Wildlife Branch to safeguard wildlife interests. Encroachments on key wildlife habitats will be kept to a minimum by evaluating the elements of risk in each instance where an allocation of land is proposed.

Measures will be taken to avoid overlap between allocation of lands for agriculture and key wildlife habitat. In particular, key wildlife habitat will be excluded from agricultural disposition except where the Fish and Wildlife Branch determines that adverse effects upon wildlife interests can be successfully mitigated.

The location of all livestock production - whether of established domesticates or of new domesticates - will be controlled to avoid risk of transmission of disease or genes to rare or vulnerable wild populations.

6. Forestry. Areas that provide accessible domestic wood supplies for communities will not be disposed of for agriculture unless provision has been made for alternative supplies that are equally accessible. Where this is not possible, disposition of the land for agriculture may be delayed until such time as the wood has been removed or arrangements have been made to harvest the wood in an effective manner.
7. Environmental protection.

Water. In the disposition of agricultural land the effect on water resources will be evaluated. Agricultural development that may pollute the water supply of a community will not be supported.

Air. Agricultural operations that may cause extreme odors and that may negatively affect existing residential areas may not be supported (e.g. piggeries, poultry farms, slaughter operations will not be supported adjacent to existing or planned residential areas).

Land. Agricultural operations should not occur in areas with unstable soils or should be designed to minimize erosion and soil loss.

8. Subsistence. Where an area has high subsistence use, disposition for agricultural use may not be supported if it is determined that the agricultural disposition will detract significantly from the subsistence activity.

9. Parks and recreation. Agricultural land dispositions will not normally be allowed in areas reserved or under consideration for territorial parks or recreation areas.
10. Cultural heritage considerations. Agricultural applications will not be supported in areas with significant archeological, historical or other cultural heritage resources. Where only a small site is involved, special protection measures may be designed and the application supported with appropriate redesign and/or restrictions.
11. Fisheries.
Agriculture operations and farm management planning will be designed to ensure that fish and fish habitat are not directly or indirectly hurt by the development.
12. Open space in and around lands occupied by or planned for future rural residential housing will not normally be released for extensive agriculture. Small holdings (intensive) agriculture may be considered where it is deemed appropriate within the community/area plan.
13. Parcel shape and boundaries must meet reasonable land planning and management considerations.
14. The principle of "highest and best use" of a public land resource will be a major consideration in the decision to approve a land application.