

CANADA'S CAPITAL GREENBELT:

Moving Towards Sustainable Agriculture

*Strengthening Agriculture at the
Heart of Canada's Capital*

PROJECT LEAD

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A vision and strategic actions to support viable farms,
protect rural landscapes, and build a sustainable agricultural future.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Canada's Capital Greenbelt represents one of the country's most distinctive agricultural landscapes—over 5,000 hectares of productive farmland surrounding the Nation's Capital and stewarded by the National Capital Commission. This research project explored how the Greenbelt could evolve into a nationally recognized model of sustainable agriculture while continuing to support viable farm businesses, environmental stewardship, and the rural heritage of Canada's Capital.

Drawing upon international research, agricultural trend analysis, extensive consultation with Greenbelt farmers, and collaboration with National Capital Commission staff, the study examined the challenges and opportunities facing agriculture in an increasingly urban environment. The project developed a long-term vision supported by seven guiding principles and twenty strategic actions designed to strengthen agricultural viability, protect rural landscapes, encourage innovation, and improve connections between agriculture and the public.

The research emphasized that agriculture should be viewed as a defining feature of Canada's Capital—not simply as land awaiting future development, but as an active contributor to food production, environmental sustainability, education, recreation, tourism, and national identity. Recommendations addressed farm diversification, local food systems, environmental stewardship, heritage conservation, communications, and partnerships that would position the Greenbelt as a national showcase for sustainable agriculture.

KEY CONTRIBUTIONS

-  Developed a long-term vision for agriculture within Canada's Capital Greenbelt
-  Identified seven guiding principles for sustainable agricultural development
-  Recommended twenty strategic actions supporting agricultural viability and environmental stewardship
-  Integrated farmer perspectives through focus groups and stakeholder engagement
-  Linked local agricultural planning with broader global trends, including food security, urbanization, and climate change
-  Helped inform both the National Capital Commission's Greenbelt Master Plan review and the preparation of an Agricultural Management Plan

PROJECT IMPACT

This research helped establish a strategic framework for strengthening agriculture within one of Canada's most significant public landscapes. The project demonstrated how productive agriculture, environmental conservation, rural heritage, and public access can coexist within a protected greenbelt, offering lessons that continue to inform agricultural planning and greenbelt management across Canada.



FUNDING

Prepared for the
National Capital
Commission

*Advancing agriculture.
Protecting landscapes.
Building a sustainable future.*



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For the full report and additional research, visit www.waynecaldwell.ca/projects/