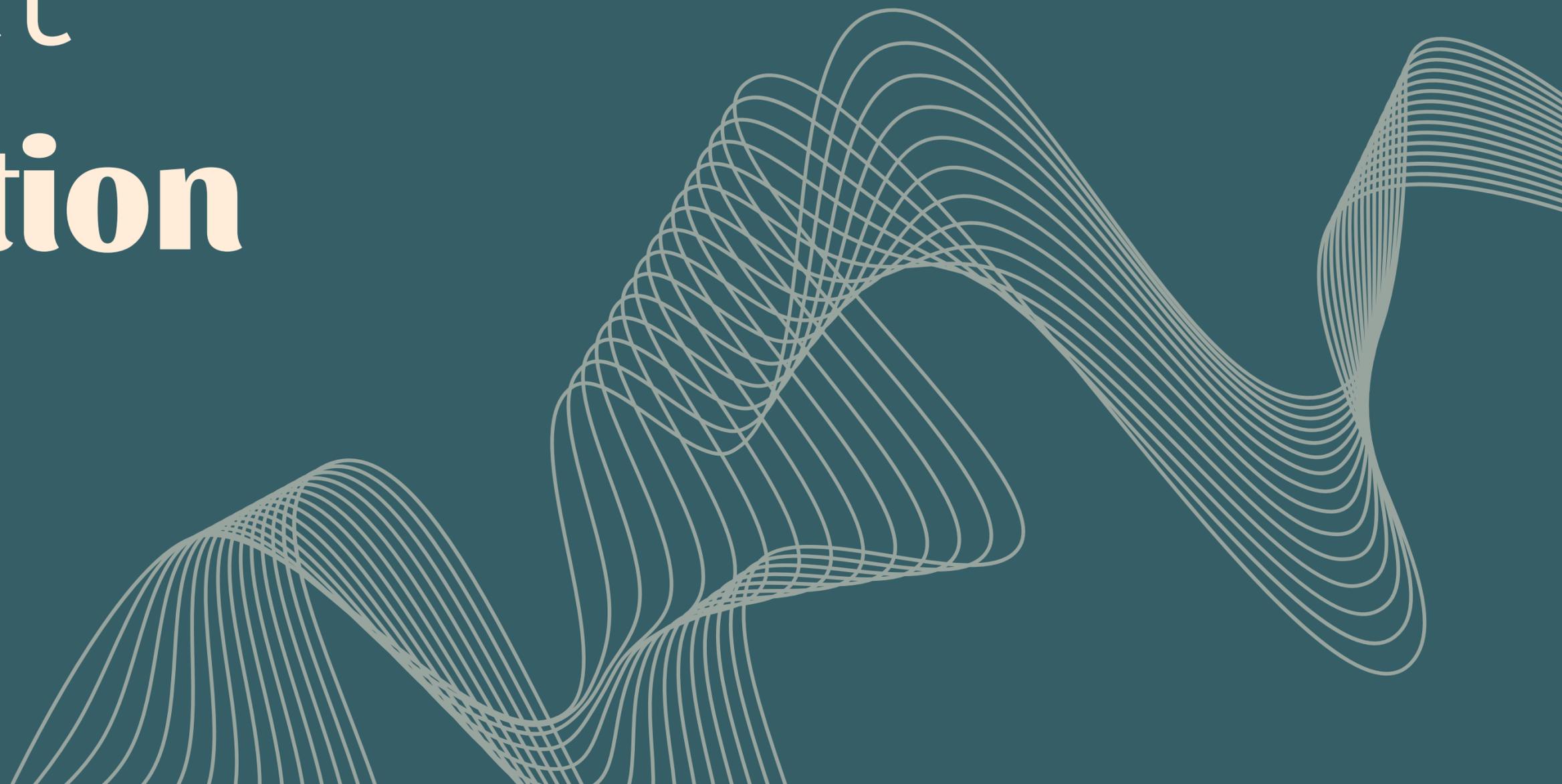


# System Change Project **Evaluation**



**This evaluation project aims to generate evidence about the value of Regional Agricultural Support organizations (RAS) as it relates to food harvest within their respective regions. It also aims to illustrate why and how RAS' are an important link and the structural component of BC's agricultural support system.**



**Previous Phase:**

The Metrics Framework currently being drafted creates a picture of common RAS achievements, separated by theme, then offers examples of related indicators and measurement tools.



**Current Phase:**

We will use the final Metrics Framework as the basis for a simple survey that can be distributed to food producers and harvesters across the Province to generate data about how RAS has impacted their harvests and operational viability.



**Desired outcome:**

a clear demonstration of the important role RAS play in expanding local food harvests and markets, and thereby an expansion of opportunities for core funding and governmental support.

**RAS help to support Provincial mandates at a regional level. This evaluation project will help them to be better recognized for their contributions.**

# Outcomes Map



**Food harvests are sustainable or regenerative and support adaptation to climate**

Supports ecological diversity and protection

**Increased farm economies/capacities**

Producers have skills, resources, and market opportunities that ensure their businesses are viable

**Food Harvest Vision**

**Producer voices contribute to the development of supportive policies and programs**

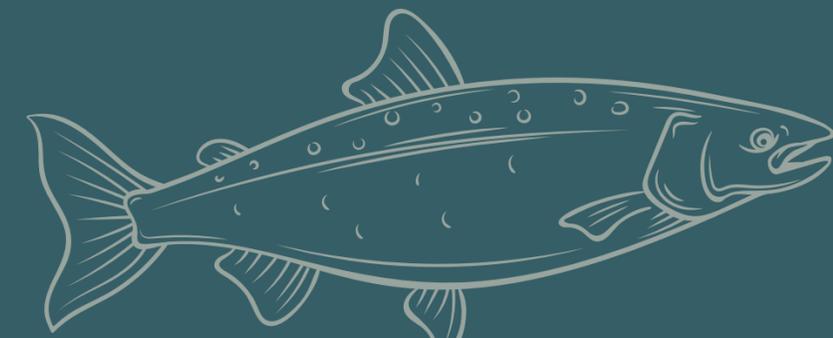
Robust and impactful relationships between producers and decision makers

**Increased equity and access to culturally-appropriate foods**

Meeting regional and cultural needs in relation to food harvest and consumption

**Increased production and consumption of local food**

Lowered reliance on foods imported from outside the region



# Definitions

## Equity:

Equity means treating everyone fairly by acknowledging their unique situation and addressing systemic barriers.

## Producer:

For the purpose of this table, we use the term producer as being inclusive of all who engage in food harvest.

## Food Harvest:

All that encompasses the gathering of food from the land, including but not limited to agriculture, Indigenous food gathering, marine harvests, and gardening.

## Regional Agriculture Support Group (RAS):

For the purpose of this project, Regional Agriculture Support (RAS) is defined as: Any organization that: (1) Seeks to provide general supports for agriculture from within a specific and defined area in BC, and; (b) Leads and determines priorities, management, and structure from within its specific region

## Resilience:

the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; the ability to grow or shift with opportunity

## Policy:

when used in this document, the term policy refers to policy at all levels of government including at the regional, provincial and federal government

## Culturally appropriate foods

Culturally appropriate food refers to foods that allow individuals and communities to maintain cultural integrity in their diets

# Outcome 1: Increased farm economies/capacities

## Outcomes

How does RAS impact local food harvests and market development?

- Producers have skills, resources, and market opportunities that ensure their businesses are viable
- Farm businesses successfully transition to new management/ownership when farmers retire

## Indicators

What helps gauge those outcomes?

- Changes in farm profitability
- Number of farms connected to new or larger markets
- Producer networks and connections
- Farm business expansion or growth
- Number of Farmers' Markets and vendors
- Amount of local food in local markets
- Number of farm successful farm management/ownership transitions

## Measurement

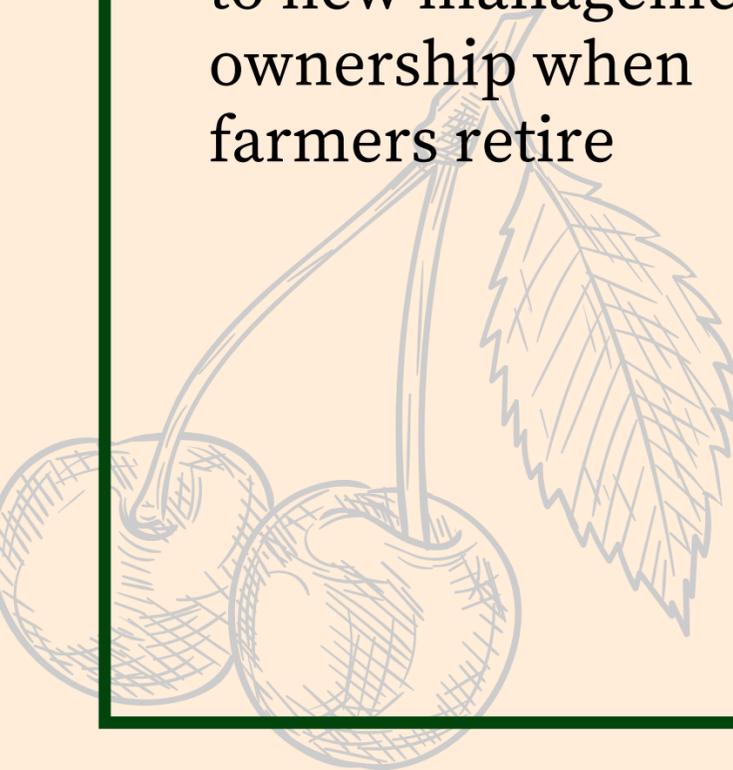
How can we measure movement on those gauges, as it relates to RAS?

- Tracking statistical data about each indicator over time
- Tracking quantitative feedback from producers
- Tracking number and types of RAS programs that support new marketing initiatives or increased business viability
- Tracking RAS activities connecting producers and consumers
- Number of farms selling to local/regional grocery stores

## Tools - Survey

What data could we collect within a SIMPLE producer survey?

- Number of survey responses (# of RAS-engaged producers)
- The primary methods producer was supported by RAS (via checklist/ratings)
- Qualitative feedback about the value of RAS to producers (business growth, increased harvest, access to markets, skill development, general networks)
- Quantitative data about business skills and capacity, current & over time
- Specific areas where RAS helped increased producer knowledge and skills (ie: business, marketing, technology, crop production)



# Outcome 2: Increased production and/or consumption of local food

## Outcomes

How does RAS impact local food harvests and market development?

- Lowered reliance on foods imported from outside the region
- Higher production levels and economic contribution of the industry

## Indicators

What helps gauge those outcomes?

- Number of food producers in the region
- Amount of land in production
- Amount of food being harvested
- Amount of money being spent on local food
- Number of urban or other food production initiatives
- Amount of food imported from out of region
- Number of locations that local food can be purchased by consumers
- Number of new farms in region'

## Measurement

How can we measure movement on those gauges?

- Tracking statistical data about each indicator over time
- Tracking quantitative and qualitative feedback from producers
- Tracking number and types of RAS programs that support increased production skills and resources
- Tracking number and types of RAS programs that make local food more accessible (both physically and financially)
- Amount of RAS supportive infrastructure available and in use

## Tools - Survey

What data could we collect within a SIMPLE producer survey?

- RAS programs accessed that supported increase in production or local distribution (checklist)
- Other governmental (Provincial/Federal) programs accessed
- Did producers experience an increase in interested consumers because of RAS programs?
- Quantitative production and sales data, current and over time
- Qualitative data about how RAS has helped to increase their production and distribution and the general local food economy
- Producer expectations about future yields and markets



# Outcome 3: Increased equity and access to culturally-appropriate foods

## Outcomes

How does RAS impact local food harvests and market development?

## Indicators

What helps gauge those outcomes?

## Measurement

How can we measure movement on those gauges?

## Tools - Survey

What data could we collect within a SIMPLE producer survey?

- Meeting regional and cultural needs in relation to food harvest and consumption

- Amount of land accessible and used for hunting and gathering
- Amount of culturally-significant or wild foods available in local markets
- Number of BIPOC harvest businesses
- Diversity of people and cultures involved in RAS
- Number of programs available for non-conventional agriculture or harvests
- The amount of barriers are in place that restricts traditional harvesting or selling this harvest.

- Tracking statistical data about each indicator over time
- Tracking quantitative and qualitative feedback from producers, consumers, and equity organizations
- Tracking number and types of RAS programs that support equity and access to culturally-appropriate foods

- Are producers working with any BIPOC organizations, markets, or consumers?
- Do you have equal access to agricultural support resources for all your types of harvesting and production?
- Number of BIPOC or culturally diverse respondents
- Qualitative feedback about RAS impact on ensuring a just and diverse agricultural community



# Outcome 4: Food harvests are sustainable or regenerative and support adaptation to climate change

## Outcomes

How does RAS impact local food harvests and market development?

- Supports ecological diversity and protection

## Indicators

What helps gauge those outcomes?

- Amount of information available locally about climate change resilience and adaptation measures
- Number and type of local programs to support climate change adaptation, ecological diversity, and protection of harvest lands
- Consistency in local food growth despite changing climate conditions
- The number of farmers involved in programs to support climate change adaptation.

## Measurement

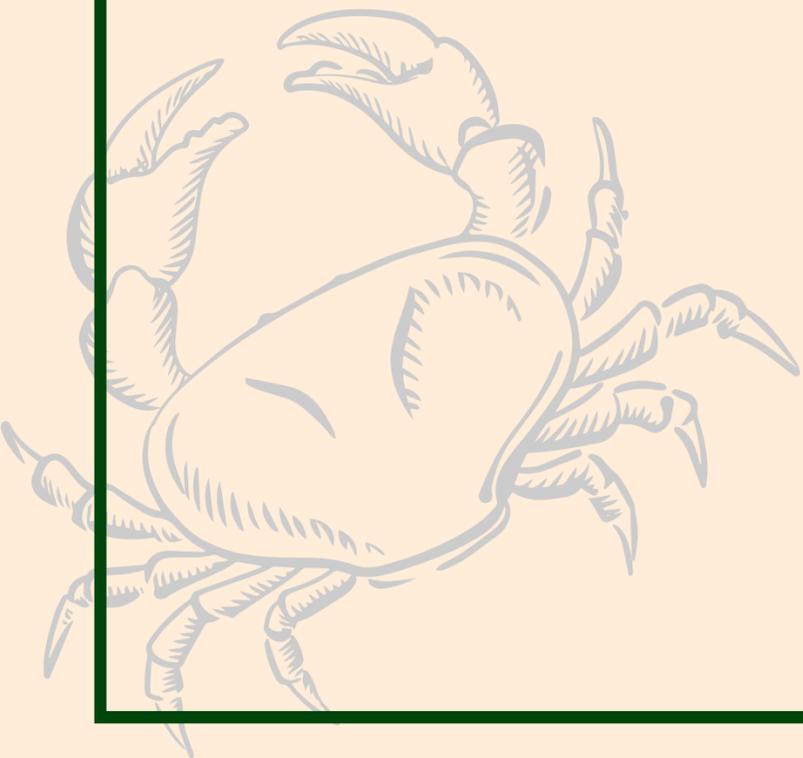
How can we measure movement on those gauges?

- Tracking statistical data about each indicator over time
- Tracking quantitative and qualitative feedback from producers
- Tracking RAS knowledge-sharing activities about climate change and adaptation strategies.

## Tools - Survey

What data could we collect within a SIMPLE producer survey?

- Ways that RAS has helped producers to understand climate change projections and implement mitigation strategies
- Qualitative feedback about how RAS has influenced the biodiversity and ecology of their farmlands and operations
- Quantitative data about any adaptation strategies the producer has undertaken with support from RAS
- RAS programs accessed that supported climate change adaptation or on-farm biodiversity



# Outcome 5: Producer voices contribute to development of supportive policies and programs

## Outcomes

How does RAS impact local food harvests and market development?

- Robust and impactful relationships between producers and decision makers

## Indicators

What helps gauge those outcomes?

- Number of producers engaged in consultative processes
- Number of policy/program amendments in response to producer feedback
- Level of producer participation in programs
- Level of producer support of policies
- Quality of relationships and level of trust between producers, RAS organizations, government

## Measurement

How can we measure movement on those gauges?

- Tracking statistical data about each indicator over time
- Tracking quantitative and qualitative feedback from producers, RAS, and government
- Tracking outcomes and longevity of policies and programs
- Tracking number of networks and committees with producer participation
- Tracking info-sharing activities and responses
- Tracking number of consultative engagements with producers
- Tracking growth of formal partnerships between producers, RAS, and government

## Tools - Survey

What data could we collect within a SIMPLE producer survey?

- Qualitative feedback about producer level of trust and quality of relationships with RAS and various levels of government
- Number of consultative processes producers have been engaged in, and their qualitative feedback about the results
- Specific policy and programs where RAS has helped ensure producer feedback is heard
- Policy and program areas where producers would like RAS support in ensuring appropriate development

