



NATIONAL CAPITAL COMMISSION
COMMISSION DE LA CAPITALE NATIONALE

Sustainable Agriculture and Food Strategy

Board of Directors

June 29, 2017



Purpose

- To inform the Board of Directors of the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Strategy and the important contribution NCC farms play for the sustainability and resiliency of the National Capital Region.



Context

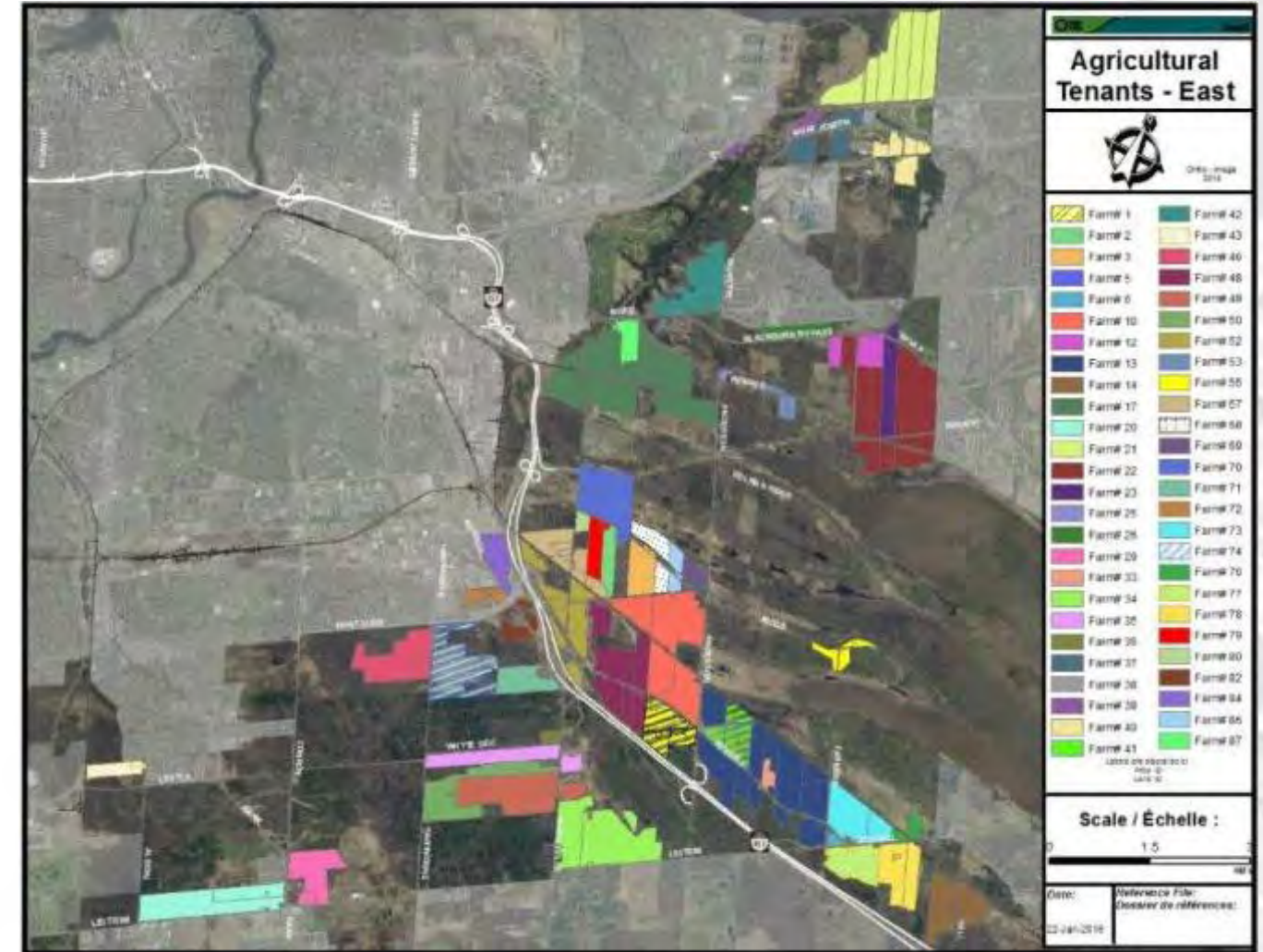
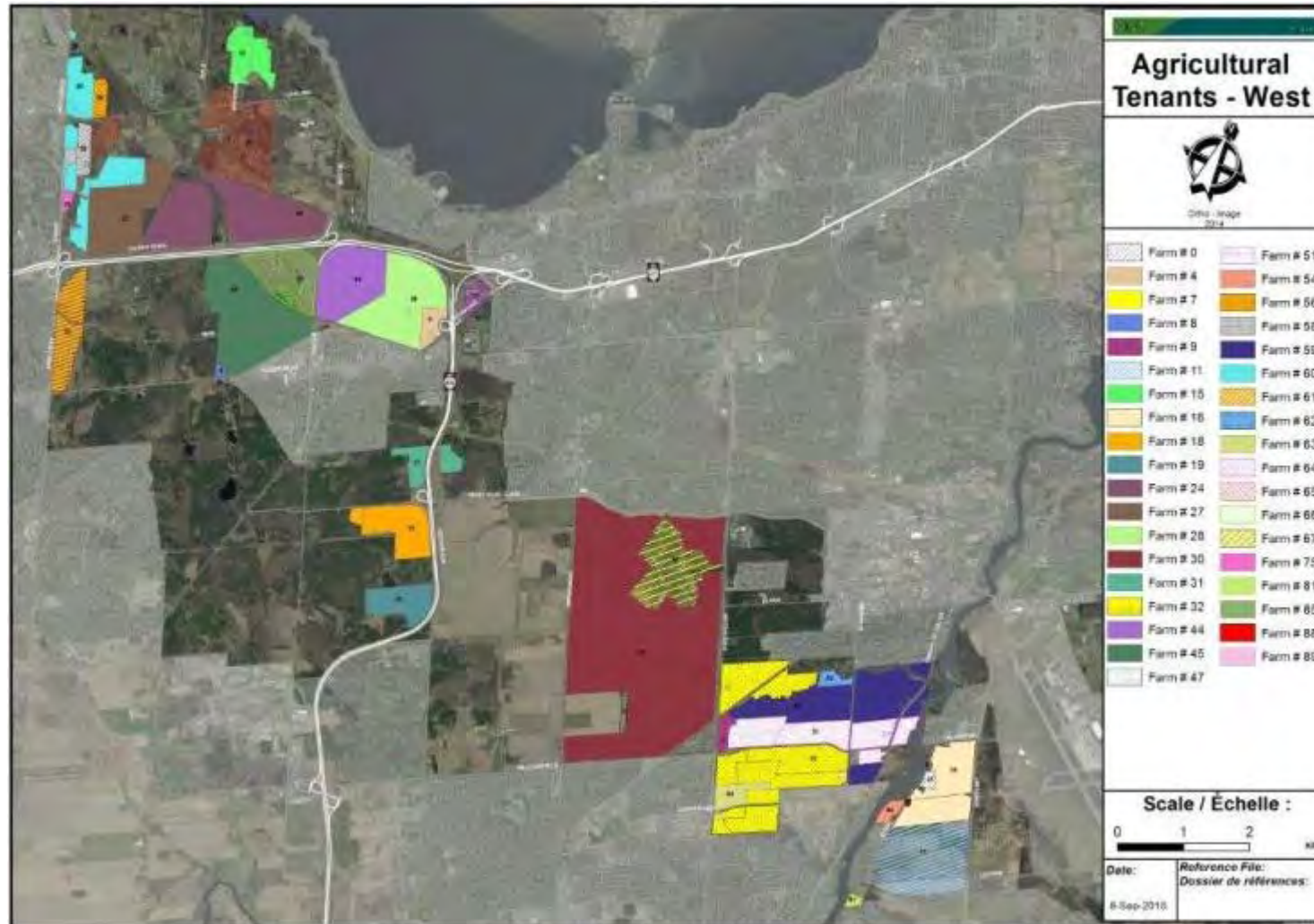
- Many major cities recognize the importance of agriculture and protect and integrate farmlands in the network of services offered to citizens.
- Major trends in urbanization and population growth reveal that food needs are growing and land and soil is becoming increasingly scarce.
- Through the Strategy the NCC has an exciting opportunity to be a model in integrating food and agriculture in planning the Capital.

Interesting Facts

- By 2050, the global population will grow from 7.3B to 9.7B (2/3 will live in cities).
- Today, only 28% of the Greenbelt is for agriculture compared to 50-60% when first created.
- Since 2012, the NCC has reduced its vacant agricultural farmland from a high of 16% to its current rate of 0%.



Farms in the Greenbelt and Urban Lands



Strategic Links

The strategy supports:

- The Plan for Canada's Capital;
- Greenbelt Master Plan;
- Barn Rehabilitation Strategy that was presented to the Board in November 2016.



Our Vision

- “An enhanced contribution to food security and regional resiliency while ensuring a sustainable use of soil and water resources while providing a suitable economic return for Farmers and increasing visibility and relevance to the community and be a model for all citizens as the Capital city”



What is the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Strategy

Main strategic concepts	Definitions	Strategic Goals & Directions	Examples
Sustainability	Using the resource now in function of keeping its capacity for future generations	Enhance sustainable use of resources	Conserve soil health and water resource through best management practices
Resiliency	Capacity of a system to continue providing a function in the face of disturbance	Strengthen regional food resiliency	Support the establishment of farms that contribute to the regional food supply
Diversity	A diversified and relevant system/portfolio is more resilient and sustainable	Increase diversification of farms and products	Provide new family farms opportunities by linking NCC's houses back to productive lands
Connectivity	Visibility, relevance to the community, branding, marketing, outreach, agricultural legacy, better appreciate the present with our past, etc.	Increase visibility and connectivity (synergy)	Share with the public the farms and products grown in the Greenbelt Develop partnerships with local communities

What is Sustainable Agriculture?

Less sustainable

Continuous annual crops
No winter soil cover

Annual tillage

Open ditches

Large open fields

No environmental planning

Full range of chemical
treatments for pests

Intensive confined livestock
Housing

No food safety plan

No business plan

Better

Crop rotations several crops

Reduced tillage

Grassed waterways

Hedgerows

Limited planning

Integrated pest management –
reduced chemical inputs

Pastured livestock

Partial implementation

Partial planning

Sustainable

Longer rotations of multiple crops
including forages

No-till, zone tillage

Drainage control system

Strategically placed windbreaks

Environmental farm with a nutrient
management plan

Organic

Rotational grazing, Certified humane
rearing

Certified on-farm food safety plan

Complete business plan for profit

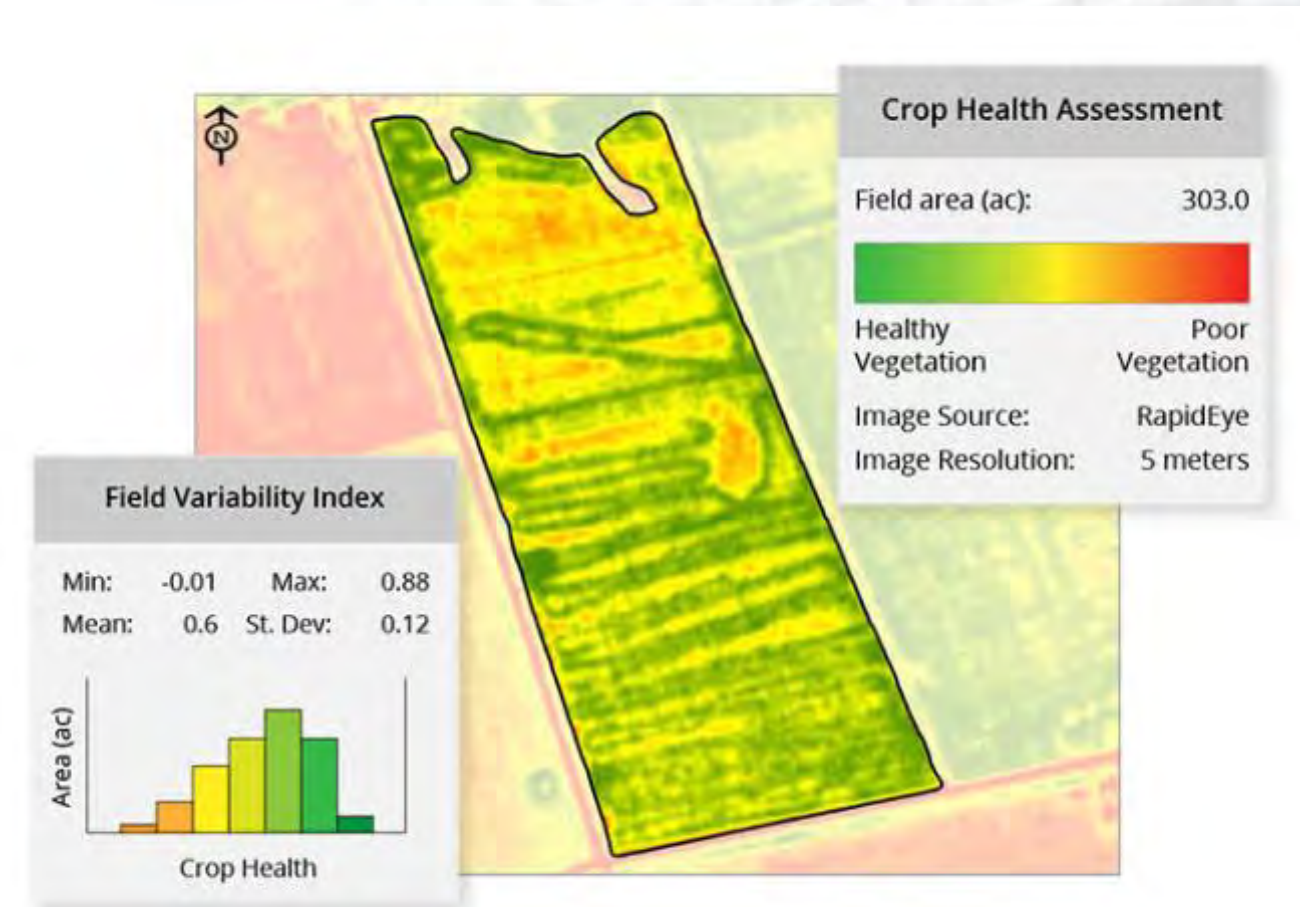
Precision agriculture

Organic Farming

- The NCC encourages organic agriculture throughout the Greenbelt.
- We currently have five farms with organic certification. Expect to have around ten once they obtain certification.
- Many of our farmers, who are not organic producers are minimizing the use of pesticides by using Integrated Pest Management practices.

Precision Agriculture

- Uses the satellite and geographic information system (GIS) technology for agricultural applications on the field.
- Increases sustainability by minimizing required inputs and maximizes yield/productivity.
- Many of our field crop farmers are already using this technology.



Crop health assessment using in-season aerial field Imaging

Partnerships

- Rouge Park, Just Food and Moore Farm.
- Savor Fall and Epicurean Dining Tour.
- Official Residences.
- NCC restaurants (i.e. integrated food supply chain).

Advantages

- Provide access to new and experienced farmers
- Lead in integrating food and agriculture in planning the Capital.
- Contribute to enhance sustainability, diversity and resiliency at the regional scale (enhanced stewardship).
- Healthy local products for citizens to consume.
- Promote our rural cultural landscapes (i.e. early settlers).

Challenges

- Finding balance between type of crops and livestock that are grown/raised without alienating existing tenants:
 - 65% of farms is currently field crops.
- Minor financial impact (small-scale farming requires increased irrigation).
- Finding the right tenants.



Next Steps

- Continue to implement the Strategy and stewards of farmland.
- Key performance indicators
- Return every two years to the Board to update them on “Farming with the NCC”.
- Continue to deliver customer service excellence to NCC farm tenants.
- Explore indoor farming at the Greenbelt Research Farm and potential for food production on NCC lands in the urban core.