

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy Texts in Canadian Agriculture: A Patchwork Quilt

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Abstract

This study explores Canadian agriculture's diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policy texts from a policy-as-information perspective. Public policy is a powerful form of information in shaping citizenship behaviour and identity. Borrowing theory from social constructionism and using "policy texts" as data, this article enables us to understand the discursive framework constructing under-represented groups in agriculture. The article finds a patchwork quilt approach with DEI agricultural policy in Canada: federal, provincial and territorial governments and non-governmental organizations are individually pursuing DEI agendas. The conclusion calls for future information research on DEI agricultural policy in Canada, with contributions from academics, practitioners, policymakers, industry, and farmers. The contribution of this article is twofold: it provides policy practitioners with a snapshot of current DEI policies in agriculture across Canada, and it attempts to stimulate research and discussion among policy scholars through suggestions for future research.

Keywords: agriculture; Canada; diversity; equity; inclusion; policy

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Introduction

The experience of under-represented groups¹ in Canadian agriculture has recently gained attention from mainstream and agriculture-based media. Media outlets have featured stories that have called on industry to address sexism and racism (e.g., Gowriluk & Korschuh, 2021; Lammers-Helps, 2021), increase diversity on agricultural boards (Hannam, n.d.), and address barriers to promote inclusion for under-represented groups (Lammers-Helps, 2017), such as Black people, Indigenous Peoples, and people of colour (Abduli, 2021; CBC London, 2020; Clark, 2020a, 2020b; Jiang, 2021). Articles have focused on the racialization of temporary foreign work and food insecurity (Fraser, 2020), the precarious legal status of migrant farmworkers (Cameron, 2020), and the discursive intersections of rurality, race, and agriculture (Alonso, 2020).

In Canada, the media has provided a means for farm women to speak out against the patriarchal structure of farming (Nichols, 2020), with articles noting the barriers women face in the industry (Brekveid, 2020; Clark, 2021; Russell, 2020), the importance of increasing opportunities for female family members to contribute to farms (Wright, 2020) and instances where women succeeded with increasing industry leadership roles (Rogers, 2019). Articles on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+)² farmers (e.g., White, 2018) have reiterated the

importance of providing space for LGBTQ+ narratives in Canadian agriculture (Latimer, 2020). Research also shows how queer farmers must “remain strong” in the face of adversity (Hatley & Birnbaum, 2014), aided by the support of formal networks to support one another, overcome feelings of isolation (MacArthur, 2017), and ultimately remain in the agriculture industry (Shergill, 2021). Similarly, attention has been paid to the absence of Indigenous³ agricultural history in mainstream discourses (Noakes, 2021), the impact of Canada’s colonial legacy on Indigenous agricultural traditions (Carreiro, 2017; Fawcett-Atkinson, 2020), First Nations projects to self-determine agricultural priorities (Lee-Young, 2019) and the contributions of Black farmers to Canadian agriculture (Hunter, 2020; Issa, 2021; Ito, 2009).

This insertion of the agricultural experiences of under-represented groups into public discourses is part of a much more significant shift in the Canadian agriculture policy landscape. Media attention reflects how Indigenous Peoples, women, newcomers⁴, disabled people⁵, people of colour, and LGBTQ+ people are traditionally under-represented in their participation in agriculture and cultural imaginings of what constitutes a farmer. Researchers have cited that colonial logic, which maintains racially ordered narratives in Canadian agriculture (Perry, 2012; Rotz, 2017; Rotz et al., 2019), has promoted the idea of the white and heterosexual family farm, effectively excluding under-represented groups (Linton, 2020a, 2020b). While food sovereignty has emerged as a counter-narrative in Canadian agriculture—promoting social justice and diversity with the ultimate goal of an equitable food system (Desmarais & Wittman, 2014)—the fact remains that statistics show the Canadian agricultural sector is comprised of a population that is, in many ways, demographically homogenous.

Recently, however, a confluence of factors has led to increased calls for more diversity, equity, and inclusion in Canada’s agriculture sector. Mainstream discussions about equity (strategies and actions to compensate for disadvantages) and equality (equal outcomes for all) have undoubtedly encouraged social movements such as *Me Too* and *Black Lives Matter*. These movements have made government, industry groups, and Canadian citizenry more seriously consider the equity dimensions of agriculture. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed inequities in Canada’s food system (Larue, 2021; Haley et al., 2020). At the same time, Canada’s longstanding agriculture labour shortage has meant that agricultural employers are being encouraged to recruit from “non-traditional” labour sources to ensure the sustainability of their industries (Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council, n.d.). Currently, what is emerging are uncoordinated but intentional policy-level efforts among governments, industry groups, and other stakeholders promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in agriculture.

It is essential to understand how policy has responded to recent public discourses advocating for more DEI in Canadian agriculture. Agriculture is a shared jurisdiction between federal, provincial, and territorial governments in Canada. Furthermore, Canada has a multifaceted network of agricultural non-governmental organizations that create information and public policies for their respective members and influence Canada’s public policy agenda for agriculture. As such, documenting the public policies “policy texts” that national governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have in place for DEI in agriculture provides insight into the collective response of the state and how information theory is manifested in the field.

This article serves as a foundation for future critical analysis of the Canadian state’s response to DEI in agriculture. It addresses an information problem in that there is information missing on the general structure and nature of DEI policy in agriculture in Canada. This gap is filled by the study’s systematic review of DEI policy texts.

This article begins by providing an overview of the participation of under-represented groups in Canadian agriculture by articulating key findings from scholarly research. It then documents and describes key government and NGO policies that address DEI in agriculture. The article concludes with recommendations for future critical analysis of DEI policy in agriculture. This article's contribution is twofold: 1) it provides practitioners with a snapshot of current DEI policies in agriculture across Canada, and 2) it attempts to stimulate research and discussion among policy scholars. The article may serve as a resource for future research and policy development.

Under-Represented Groups in Canadian Agriculture

Statistics show that the structure of agriculture in Canada has changed significantly over the past several decades.⁶ The number of farms, the farm population, and the number of operators tended to decrease between 1996 and 2016. In 1996, there were 276,548 farms; this number dropped to 193,492 farms in 2016, a reduction of approximately 30% (Statistics Canada, 2012a). The reasons for this substantial decline may be attributed to technological advances, off-farm economic opportunities, the increasing amount of land operated by large farms, and the rise in corporate farming⁷ (Goddard et al., 1993). There were similar declining trends in the farm population⁸ and the number of operators.⁹ Between 1996 and 2016, the farm population in Canada decreased by 30.4%, falling from 851,410 to 592,975 persons. Over that same period, farm operators decreased from 385,610 to 271,935 (Statistics Canada, 2018a; Statistics Canada, 2018b; Statistics Canada, 2003). Table 1 summarizes national demographic data for Canadian agriculture in 1996 and 2016.

Table 1. Canadian National Demographic Data for Canadian Agriculture (1996 and 2016)

Indicator	1996	2016	Percentage change
Total population	29,569,875	36,052,413	21.92
Population 15 years and over	22,959,500	29,587,100	28.87
Female population 15 years and over	11,704,000	15,011,400	28.26
Male population 15 years and over	11,255,500	14,575,700	29.50
Farm population	851,410	592,975	-30.35
Farm operators	385,610	271,935	-29.48
Labour force (total)	14,848,500	19,440,500	30.93
Female labour force	6,725,700	9,198,800	36.77
Male labour force	8,122,800	10,241,700	26.09

Source: Statistics Canada (1996; 2016)

Analysis of Canadian national data on under-represented groups' participation in agriculture indicates a modest increase in participation levels between 1996 and 2016 (see Table 2). While the overall number of farms and operators decreased by 30 and 29.5%, respectively, the proportion of farm operators who are women increased from 25.2 to 28.6% (note that the absolute number of female farm operators decreased from 97,345 to 77,970) (Statistics Canada, 2018d). Although the number of female farm operators increased, men are still statistically over-represented in the agricultural industry, comprising approximately three-quarters of total farm operators. Similarly, the total number of Indigenous farm operators noticeably increased over that same period: 3,357 in 1996 (0.87%) to 5,160 in 2016 (1.9%). This increase could be the result of an overall rise in Indigenous Peoples in the agricultural population (21.4% higher in 2016 than in 1996). Statistics Canada cited three factors behind the increase in the number of Indigenous Peoples in the agricultural population: more have chosen agricultural careers, there has been a higher natural growth rate in the Indigenous population, and more people have self-identified as Indigenous in the Census of Population (Statistics Canada, 2019b).

Data on immigrants as farm operators show an opposite trend. While immigrants represented 10.2% (39,620 operators) of total Canadian farm operators in 1996, they represented 8.6% (23,440 operators) in 2016. Data further reveals a significant shift in countries of birth of Canadian immigrant farm operators over time, which gradually moved from European countries to the United States and China (Statistics Canada, 2019c). By comparison, between 1996 and 2016, the overall number of farm operators decreased by 29.5%. In contrast, immigrant farm operators decreased by 41% over that same period, thus experiencing a steeper decline.

Table 2. Percentage of Under-represented Groups of Total Farm Operators (1996 and 2016)

Group	1996	2016	Percentage change
Women	25.24	28.67	3.43
Men	74.76	71.33	-3.43
Indigenous	0.87	1.90	1.03
Immigrants	10.27	8.62	-1.65

Source: Statistics Canada (1996; 2016)

Taking a more holistic perspective beyond farm population and operators, we see that women are under-represented in industry leadership roles in Canadian agriculture. In 2015, a survey conducted by the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council showed that only 28% of 65 agricultural associations surveyed had at least one woman who sat on their board of directors. In contrast, only eight had a woman in the role of board chair or president (Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council, 2015).

Examining available demographic data and statistics on under-represented groups' participation in Canadian agriculture shows that although women and Indigenous Peoples' participation in agriculture have improved over the past 20 years, they are still under-represented in their respective proportions of the labor force and population. In 2016, although women represented 47.3% of the total labour force, they only accounted for 28.67% of all farm operators. Indigenous

Peoples accounted for 2.7% (15,765) of the total farm population but represented 1.9% of total farm operators in that same year. Overall, nominal data shows an improvement in the participation of women and Indigenous Peoples in Canadian agriculture. Finally, data revealing participation for disabled people, LGBTQ+ people, and people of colour is incomplete or unavailable.

Historical Context: A Literature Review

Information about the experiences of under-represented groups on Canadian farms and in the food system more broadly can be gleaned from an interdisciplinary body of literature. Overall, research on the experiences of Indigenous Peoples, women, disabled people, newcomers, people of colour, and LGBTQ+ people in Canadian agriculture is limited. The body of research shows a history of significant structural barriers to the entire social, economic, political, and cultural participation of under-represented groups in Canadian agriculture. A noteworthy exception is the relatively recent local food movement.

Concerning the local food and food sovereignty space movements, the literature includes examples of where wild food procurement can work towards improving Indigenous Peoples' food security (Wesche et al., 2016). Additionally, community gardening has been used to empower racialized people (Datta, 2019a; 2019b), help to improve the food security of immigrant and refugee families (Eggert et al., 2015; Lucas & Li, 2020), and foster a sense of connection among newcomers (Shan & Walter, 2014; Jacob & Rocha, 2021).¹⁰

The following is a cursory synthesis of the history of under-represented groups' experiences in Canadian agriculture. It provides background to the description of policies, programs, and projects for under-represented groups.

Indigenous Peoples

Although the history of Indigenous Peoples and agriculture is often overlooked (Carter, 1993), farming practices among First Nations societies predates the arrival of European settlers by several hundred years (Dawson, 2003). Evidence shows that some First Nation societies lived in agricultural settlements, cultivated land, and effectively farmed (Boyd et al., 2014; Carter, 2014). Here, research shows the historical and contemporary importance of companion planting the complementary crops of corn, beans, and squash—the “Three Sisters” (e.g., Bodirsky & Johnson, 2008; Ngapo et al., 2021; Norman, 2015).

Research has shown that Indigenous farmers today are often qualitatively “othered” through racially ordered narratives among the dominant farming population (Rotz, 2017). These narratives are reinforced by and result from a long history of structural Indigenous exclusion from equal participation in the Canadian agriculture industry.¹¹ Sommerville (2021) and Mrazek (2017) both posit that settler societies employed Eurocentric agricultural methods as a civilizing apparatus. Sommerville stated that “[a]griculture would nurture industry and diligence, lifting First Nations above primitive, pre-capitalist ways into economic rationality whether First Nations struggled or succeeded at farming arbitrated on the intransigence of their essential character” (2021, p. 648). Eventually, the reliance on First Nations' labour to fill jobs in the agriculture industry would be eclipsed by policies to employ temporary foreign nationals (Rotz et al., 2019).

Efforts to counteract Indigenous exclusion from agriculture have included partnerships between investment firms and First Nation bands. Training programs and jobs were explicitly created for Indigenous Peoples, in part through attracting private sector investments (Magnan, 2012; Sommerville, 2021). Formed in 1867, the Six Nations Agricultural Society in Ontario was the first Indigenous agricultural society in Canada. Its activities to explore the needs of Indigenous agriculture and hold exhibitions continue to the present day (Norman, 2015). Others, such as Arcand et al. (2020), argue that increasing Indigenous control of land may lead to the greater involvement of Indigenous Peoples in agriculture and ultimately improve economic outcomes. Nevertheless, today First Nation farmers encounter significant barriers when attempting to gain a foothold in Canadian agriculture: financial constraints, lack of access to farming technology, and a lack of an agricultural land base are some of the factors cited (Nickels, 2014).

Women

The real and potential contributions of women to agriculture has been undervalued in Canada since the earliest days of organized national land settlement (Binnie-Clark, 1914; Carter, 2016; Corman, 2005). The gendered nature of farm work means that women are often excluded from agricultural resources and therefore do not benefit from the business of farming as do men (Leckie, 2010). Even in sub-sectors such as organic agriculture, which is argued to be more inclusive of alternate ways of thinking about agriculture, it has been found that gender issues have been largely ignored (Sumner & Llewelyn, 2011). Rural networks for farm women created by women are evidence of attempts to overcome a marginalized status in the industry (Teather, 1996) and increase the recognition of female farm labour (Shortfall, 1994). The increasing percentage of female farmers in developed countries (Ball, 2020) is perhaps indicative that barriers from limited resources, lack of access to agricultural information and inheritances, and harmful narratives about the place of women on the farm (Leckie, 1993 1996) are slowly being undone and overcome.

Newcomers

Throughout the first century of Canada's national history, policymakers worked with the assumption that farmers would be of European ancestry (Chilton, 2013a; Kelley & Trebilcock, 2010). Canada was founded on the assumption that immigrants would be recruited to settle and farmlands from which Indigenous populations would be removed. Approaches in recruiting agriculturalists have changed over time according to which political party is in power and to the orientations and understandings of key policymakers¹². At the federal and provincial levels of government, attracting and holding onto capable agriculturalists has been an ongoing concern since at least the middle of the nineteenth century, with competition between regions for farmers and agricultural laborers sometimes becoming heated. Collaboration between government and transportation companies has been an essential factor in recruiting and managing agriculturally destined newcomers since the late nineteenth century, with mixed results for migrants' rights and land development (Chilton, 2013b).

While there is a body of research on the history of immigrants' contributions to, and interactions with, Canadian agriculture (e.g., Loewen, 2002), less is known about the experiences of contemporary newcomers. A notable exception is temporary foreign or migrant workers, who have been comparatively well studied. Temporary foreign agricultural workers fill positions that many Canadian nationals choose to avoid (Perry, 2012). They have a precarious residency status, which limits their access to legal frameworks to protect their rights (Gabriel & Macdonald, 2019).

Hennebry (2021) writes that the immigration and legal structure within which foreign workers exist is complex and underpinned by racialization and a preoccupation with filling labour gaps as opposed to honouring the human rights and wellbeing of the workers. Foreign farmworkers are often racialized and othered in day-to-day farm business and mainstream agricultural narratives (Rotz, 2017). Within the agrarian farmworker population, female migrant agricultural workers face additional challenges, particularly related to health and safety. There is relatively little formal research on the health needs of temporary foreign workers who are women in Canada. Migrant farm women have reported being subjected to intense surveillance and sexual harassment (Cohen & Caxaj, 2018), making them a particularly vulnerable sub-population within the already marginalized group of foreign workers.

The efforts of support networks for TFWs often fall short, as the systemic barriers to their full participation in Canadian agriculture (and life) are cited as being insurmountable (Caxaj & Cohen, 2020). Some have argued for dismantling the temporary foreign worker program (Binford 2019; Kanchana 2019). Conversely, others have cautioned against dismantlement as the temporary foreign worker program provides workers with opportunities for economic development that may not be achievable in their home countries (Ramsaroop, 2019; Weiler & McLaughlin, 2019). Appeals have been made to provide agricultural foreign workers with permanent residency (Otero, 2019), citizenship (Bauder, 2012), and to improve employer adherence to legislation protecting agricultural labour (Preibisch & Otero, 2014). Others have pointed to the importance of unionization as a mechanism to allow foreign workers to contest both their employers and the state (Vonk & Holmes, 2019; Hanley et al., 2020).

Disabled People

The experience of disabled people who work in agriculture is understudied (Friesen et al., 2010b). Farmers with disabilities have unique health care needs and face additional financial and economic issues to work productively on the farm (Friesen et al., 2010a). As such, researchers have argued that government funding structures, and entitlements to such funding, are extremely important for farmers with a disability (Molyneaux-Smith et al., 2011).

People of Colour

Non-white individuals and communities in Canada have long experienced discrimination at the hands of predominantly white settlers. There is a well-documented history of purposeful exclusion by the Canadian state of American Black farmers from the state of Oklahoma in the United States, who sought to settle in the Prairie Provinces in the early twentieth century. The Oklahoma case highlighted the racist underpinnings of state agendas in relation to land settlement (Kelley & Trebilcock, 2010; Shepard, 1983). Like other groups discussed previously, the body of scholarly work on people of colour in Canadian agriculture remains underdeveloped.

LGBTQ+ People

Unlike U.S. scholarship, where there is empirical research on the experience of LGBTQ+ farmers (e.g., Brewer, 2018; Dentzman et al., 2021; Hoffelmeyer, 2021; Leslie, 2019; Wypler, 2019; Wypler & Hoffelmeyer, 2020), the experience of Canadian LGBTQ+-identified farmers is understudied. Scholars have argued that LGBTQ+ farmers in Canada challenge historical and contemporary heteronormative and masculine assumptions that underpin the agriculture system

in Canada (Edward, 2018; Korinek, 2018a, 2018b) as well as the belief that LGBTQ+ people would prefer to live in cities as opposed to rural areas (Baker, 2016).



Methodology

The DEI policy landscape in agriculture was examined using information from policy texts available on government and NGO websites. ‘Policy’ was considered to be the result of choices of actors—in this case, governments and NGOs—to respond to problems (Yildiz et al., 2011). Policy texts included written statements such as policy positions, program descriptions, and organizational vision and mission statements. This type of information embodies authority and the attempts of actors to define how issues are to be understood, debated, questioned and solved (Woodside-Jiron, 2004). As a form of information, policy texts enable organizational responses to problems through information transmission and signaling (Stewart, 2013). Therefore, they are essential data sources to understand the general landscape of a policy domain or issue.

Furthermore, as part of a larger discursive framework, policy texts and other policy-related information influence how an individual’s identity is constructed. Here, policy texts are viewed as a form of information (Stewart, 2013) and are found to be instrumental in socially constructing target populations. Policy texts also impact a range of phenomena, including agenda setting, legislation, policy design, conceptions of citizenship (Schneider & Ingram, 1993), and the public’s policy preferences towards the deservingness of target groups (Bell, 2019). Some strands of social constructionism espouse that while individual actors have the agency to have unique interpretations, these interpretations are conditioned by socially constructed rules, ideas, language, and institutions that collectively provide a “social force”, “norm circle”, or “structure”, which often elicits common patterns of behaviour (Elder-Vass, 2012; Engelke, 2009). As such, a primary assumption of this research was that policy-as-information contributes to social forces, norm circles and structures. They also indicate institutional decisions and are powerful in shaping the identity of under-represented groups.

Policy texts were identified through internet searches in English in March of 2021. The following key terms were used in various combinations to identify relevant policy texts for inclusion: “diversity” OR “equit*” OR “inclusion” AND “agriculture” OR “farming” AND Canada. The websites for major national, regional, and provincial agriculture organizations¹³ were also mined for relevant policy texts, using the following search operator: “diversity” OR “inclusion” OR “equit*” AND “site:[organization’s website]”. Other keyword terms used in combination with “agriculture” OR “farm*” AND “Canada” during searches included “Indigenous”, “First Nations”, “Aboriginal” “racial*”, “BIPOC”, “gender”, “women”, “disability”, “LGBT*”, “gay”, “queer”, “Black”, “Black Lives Matter”, “newcomer”, “immigrant”, “disability”, “homophobia”, “transphobia”, “heterosexism”, “racism”, “sexism”, and “ableism”. In addition to Google, these same search terms were entered into AgPal, an online database listing agriculture programs and services across Canada (<http://www.agpal.ca>).

For the study, agriculture was defined as a network to mean a complex system of practices and activities related to the cultivation, processing, transportation, marketing and distribution of plants and livestock (food). Policy texts were included in the sample when they were found to include substantive, explicit messages regarding DEI or a particular under-represented group. Texts were excluded when they were found not to be communicating a substantive policy message about DEI or an under-represented group. For example, policy texts related to DEI training offered by an organization, conferences, or texts that employed the term ‘diversity’ outside of the context of equity and inclusion were excluded. Also excluded were online forums, such as Facebook groups, that had been developed to provide a space for discussions regarding DEI in agriculture.

Policy texts included in the sample were categorized in Excel by geographic location (national, region, or province or territory), organization type (i.e., government, crown corporation or NGO), and document type (i.e., policy, program or project). The target group of each policy text was also captured. The categories were Indigenous Peoples, women, person with a disability, newcomers/immigrants, LGBTQ+ people, and people of colour. These demographic groups were chosen as categories since academic, policy, and media discourses have recently focused on these identity characteristics in agriculture. Other demographic groups that could be included in the future are identities constructed from religious belief, educational background, and socio-economic status. A “general” category was also created for those policy texts that did not focus on a specific under-represented group but communicated broad statements on equity, diversity or inclusion. This categorization allowed the entire corpus of data to be viewed as a whole and by specific variables such as location or target group.

Limitations

The methodology used data that was available online. As such, there may be DEI policies that were not included in the sample. Only data available in English were included. Therefore, the methodology was limited in its access to texts published in French or, for example, ethno-cultural organizations that publish information in languages other than English. The degree to which this limitation impacts the results is unknown, as there may be texts published in different languages that were missed. The authors recognize that this may be seen as problematic for an article that is examining inclusion policies. As such, a primary recommendation is that methods capable of accessing data in multiple languages should be used in the future. Furthermore, the methodology was limited to identifying only those DEI texts that explicitly used one or more keyword search terms. Implicit policy decisions, for example, the choices of organizations to fund one group over another, were therefore not able to be accessed using the methodology adopted by the study. To reduce this limitation, interviews with members of organizations and other groups should be considered in the future. Finally, since agriculture is a shared jurisdiction between federal, provincial, and territorial governments, the methodology excluded policies, programs, and initiatives that may be in place at the municipal level of government in Canada. Therefore, this article does not claim to be encompassing of all evidence that would be required to fully understand the Canadian state’s response to DEI in agriculture.

Results: The Current Policy Landscape

After applying the various search parameters, search operators, and inclusion criteria, 57 policy texts from 39 organizations were included in the sample (shown in the appendix). Organizations that were found to have DEI policy texts are:

National organizations:

- Ag Women’s Network
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- Agriculture in the Classroom
- Agri-Food Innovation Council

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- Canadian Agricultural Economics Society
 - Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council
 - Canadian Agricultural Safety Association
 - Canadian Centre for Food Integrity
 - Canadian Farmers with Disability Registry
 - Canadian Federation of Agriculture
 - Equestrian Canada
 - Farm Credit Canada
 - Farmers for Climate Solutions
 - National Farmers Union
 - Rainbow Chard Collective
 - United Food and Commercial Workers Union

Provincial and Territorial organizations¹⁴:

- Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Fisheries (BC)
- Young Agrarians (BC)
- Ag Women Manitoba (MB)
- Women in Agriculture and Food (MB)
- Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Fisheries (NB)
- Beef Farmers (ON)
- Black Creek Community Farm (ON)
- Black Farmers and Food Growers Collective
- Ecological Farmers Association (ON)
- Grain Farmers (ON)
- Growing in the Margins (ON)
- Indian Agriculture Program (ON)

- Marchés d'Ottawa Markets (ON)
- Six Nations Agricultural Society (ON)
- Cooper Institute (PE)
- Department of Agriculture and Land (PE)
- Women's Institute (PE)
- Agricultural Society for Indigenous Food Products (QC and ON)
- Fierté Agricole (QC)
- Agricultural Producers (SK)
- Ministry of Agriculture (SK)
- Agricultural Association (YK)

Collectively, these organizations have transmitted information to Canadian society in the form of DEI policy texts. Through describing these policy texts, we can begin to understand the discursive framework constructing Indigenous People, women, newcomers, disabled people, people of colour and LGBTQ+ people in Canadian agriculture.

General Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy

The federal department of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada maintains policies and programs that promote DEI. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's diversity and inclusiveness policy statement confirms the organization's support for encouraging "the participation of under-represented groups in the agricultural field" (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2019a). The Government of Canada (2021) affirmed that

advancing diversity and inclusion in the agricultural sector remains a priority, and the Government continues to explore ways to enhance diversity by supporting under-represented groups' participation across the agricultural value chain. To do so, the Government is working to better understand the participation, barriers, and opportunities that under-represented groups face in the sector. (p. 9)

The federal Minister of Agriculture has stated that "diversity and inclusion are integral to creating an economy that works for everyone" (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2019b). The federal government's Food Policy for Canada is explicit in its intention to make decisions related to food "after considering diverse interests and perspectives" and in a way that recognizes the country's "distinct cultural preferences and norms" (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2020c). Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's AgriDiversity Program provides funding to groups to support their farming and business ventures in agriculture. The program aims to incorporate "the views of a more diverse set of industry players" (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2020a). Farm Credit Canada (FCC), a federal crown corporation, has also established programs to provide financial support to organizations that promote diversity (FCC, n.d.a; n.d.b).

At the provincial and territorial level of government in Canada, some fewer policies and programs promote DEI broadly across the industry. The Prince Edward Island Department of Agriculture and Land's (Prince Edward Island Department of Agriculture and Land) Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is perhaps the most comprehensive DEI policy statement from a provincial department of agriculture in Canada. The policy statement reads:

Gender, diversity, and inclusion (GDI) are important for the Department. The inclusion of diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and identities in decision-making can increase opportunities for creativity and innovation, which are important for solving complex problems. Activities aimed at increasing the participation of under-represented groups in industry are important for equality, equity, and labour. The Department is committed to a principled approach to promoting GDI activities within the Department and across industries and sectors. This will be accomplished through dialogue, thoughtful inquiry, and the performance monitoring of commitments. (Prince Edward Island Department of Agriculture and Land, 2020)

The Department also maintains the Community Food Security and Agriculture Awareness Program, which provides funding to organizations to connect under-represented groups to the food system (Prince Edward Island Department of Agriculture and Land, n.d.). This outreach is in addition to other DEI initiatives included in its public-facing gender, diversity and inclusion report (Prince Edward Island Department of Agriculture and Land, 2020).

Among national, regional, provincial, and territorial NGOs in Canada, the following organizations have policies that promote DEI broadly: United Food and Commercial Workers Union, the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity, the Agri-Food Innovation Council, Agriculture in the Classroom, the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council, the Ag Women's Network, the Canadian Agricultural Economics Society, Farmers for Climate Solutions, the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan, Beef Farmers of Ontario, Young Agrarians (British Columbia), and the Black Creek Community Farm Ontario.

For example, the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity's 2020 policy "foster[s] an inclusive Canadian food system through listening, learning, communicating, and championing" (para. 2). The Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council policy states that they "will set an industry standard that values inclusiveness and diversity to ensure that the sector realizes its full potentials" (2019a, para. 21). Beef Farmers of Ontario commits to being "an ally against discrimination based on race, sexual orientation, gender, religion, and ability (visible and invisible), as well as linguistic discrimination" (n.d., para. 1). The Agri-Food Innovation Council's policy position is that "equality be fostered in the sector through continuing discussions and research. Diversity in farms, labs, academia, and boardrooms must be promoted and encouraged" (2021). Policy developed by Farmers for Climate Solutions includes "solutions that reduce barriers for BIPOC, youth, women, 2SLGBTQ+ [two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer/questioning, and other identities] farmers and ranchers are essential to the future of the sector and the vibrancy of rural communities and landscapes" (n.d.). Finally, the Black Creek Community Farm's vision is "an urban agricultural centre that engages, educates, and empowers diverse communities, through sustainable food" (2021, para. 5).

Indigenous Peoples

There are public policies, programs, and projects led by the federal government, provincial and territorial governments, and NGOs that aim to increase the participation of Indigenous Peoples in Canadian agriculture and support Indigenous Peoples with remaining in the industry. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Food Policy for Canada recognize that First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities have "distinct food systems" (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2020c). The Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Indigenous Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative and Indigenous Pathfinder Service assists Indigenous entrepreneurs in implementing agriculture and food projects (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2019a; 2021b). During the COVID-19 pandemic, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada provided increased funding to Indigenous-owned farms through the Emergency On-Farm Support Fund (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2021a).

Provincially, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture states that "Indigenous voices ... around the table [are] key to Indigenous engagement and relationship strengthening and building" (Indecdevadmin, 2020). In British Columbia, the Ministry of Agriculture completed 47 meetings with First Nations to identify Indigenous priorities for agriculture development (British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture, n.d.a). The provincial departments of agriculture in New Brunswick and British Columbia both maintain an Indigenous Agriculture Development Program (New Brunswick Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries, n.d.; British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Fisheries, n.d.; British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture, n.d.b). The programs provide financial assistance to Indigenous clients to support agricultural projects.

There are also policies, programs, and projects for Indigenous agriculture maintained by Canada's NGO sector. For example, the Agricultural Society for Indigenous Food Products works to promote products from Indigenous lands and provides assistance to Indigenous farmers (<http://asifp.ca/>). The Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council has undertaken projects to explore ways to increase the participation of Indigenous Peoples in agriculture (Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council, 2019b). According to the *Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations Act*, the Six Nations Agricultural Society in Ontario aims to encourage an awareness of agriculture and promote improvements in the quality of life of agriculturalists (<https://www.snfallfair.com/>). The Indian Agriculture Program of Ontario (<http://indianag.on.ca>), Ecological Farmers of Ontario (<https://efao.ca/>), and Marchés d'Ottawa Markets (2021) in Ontario provide various services for Indigenous agriculture, ranging from financing and advisory services to mentorship and online discussion forums.

Furthermore, First Nations communities have established various types of plans to pursue self-determined objectives for agriculture. The *Lil'wat First Nation Agricultural Plan* in British Columbia aims to protect and enhance farmland, increase agricultural land, improve agricultural skills, support existing farming operations and develop agricultural planning capacity (Zbeetnoff & McPhee, 2014). The *Squamish Valley Agricultural Plan* in British Columbia promotes traditional and innovative practices to help ensure knowledge transfer of Indigenous agriculture between generations (District of Squamish & Squamish-Lillooet District, 2020).

Women

When looking at policies, programs, and projects specifically for women in agriculture, there are federal and NGO-based policies, programs and projects, and few provincial and territorial initiatives. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada has committed to the "greater inclusion of women

in the agriculture and agri-food sector” (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2020). The FCC has planned for \$500 million in expenditures to support lending to women and developing resources for women in agriculture to begin or enhance their agri-businesses (FCC, n.d.c). Its policy commits the organization to “empowering women in agriculture, agribusiness and food” (FCC, n.d.c).

Organizations such as the Ag Women’s Network focuses on connecting women in agriculture (<https://www.agwomensnetwork.com>), as does the Manitoba Women in Agriculture and Food (<https://www.mwaf.ca/>), and Ag Women Manitoba (<http://agwomenmanitoba.com/>). The Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council’s (2019) AgriWomen policy includes that “Women play an important role in Canadian agriculture, but they are still underutilized. The Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council supports women in agriculture by connecting them to career resources, sponsoring original research, and producing profiles and case studies to highlight the significant contribution women make to the sector.”

The National Farmers Union has a relatively long history of advocating for women in agriculture (e.g., Desmarais, 2005), and maintaining a policy promoting their participation, which includes a Women’s Advisory Committee (National Farmers Union, n.d.). Finally, in Prince Edward Island, as per legislation, the Women’s Institute’s purpose includes “stimulat[ing] and develop[ing] leadership” and “promot[ing] a greater understanding and appreciation of the social and economic problems, influence and importance of farmers and the agricultural industry in the province” (*Women’s Institute Act*, 2012). Also, in this province, the Community Food Security and Agriculture Awareness Program funds projects that aim to promote the inclusion of women in the food system (Prince Edward Island Department of Agriculture and Land, n.d.; 2019).

Newcomers

There are comparatively very few policies, programs and projects devoted specifically to newcomers to Canada in agriculture. This observation holds when looking at federal and provincial governments and NGOs at the national, regional, and local levels. A resolution from the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (2019) communicated that

Agriculture’s ability to attract and retain new Canadians is paramount to the long-term vibrancy of rural communities and Canada’s immigration must be flexible enough to accommodate the diverse and unique skill sets required by Canadian producers. Be it resolved that CFA, in collaboration with CAHRC, work with the federal government to establish an agriculture and agri-food skills development and training program for in-demand upskilling and career opportunities, and that the program be available and promoted to citizens and new Canadians.

Work completed under the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council’s AgriDiversity initiative has included commissioning studies and developing reports on options for attracting newcomers to the agriculture industry (Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council, 2019a).

Disabled People

There are few policies, programs, or projects specifically for disabled people in agriculture compared to the other groups reviewed here. The Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council’s AgriDiversity policy states that “attracting and retaining non-traditional labour sources

including ... persons with disabilities is critical to ensuring that the sector can meet its labour needs” (2019a). The organization’s research agenda also included studying barriers and enablers to increasing the participation of disabled people. The Canadian Farmers with a Disability Registry provides a network for farmers living with disabilities or illnesses (<http://wethrive.info>). The organization aims to “connect all disabled farmers across Canada.” The Canadian Agricultural Safety Association provides financial grants to farmers with a disability to purchase specialized equipment that will allow them to return to work. Finally, smaller initiatives, such as Growing in the Margins (<https://www.sundanceharvestfarm.com/gitm>) and Marchés d'Ottawa Markets (2021) in Ontario, provide examples of local NGO efforts to support disabled people to participate in Canadian agriculture.

People of Colour

In the sample, there were fewer policies, programs, and projects aimed at people of colour. At the federal level of government, the Emergency On-Farm Support Fund provided increased funding to operations owned by “visible minorities” to lessen the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on farms (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2021a). Among NGOs, Farmers for Climate Solutions (n.d.) aims to reduce barriers for BIPOC to participate in agriculture. As expressed in their “anti-racism in farming” statement, the Ecological Farmers of Ontario (2021) explicitly name ‘BIPOC’ as a target group and commit to pursuing activities to meet their needs in agriculture. The group provides an online platform for racialized farmers to connect and network. Other local NGO initiatives in Ontario include Growing on the Margins, which offers agricultural mentorship to BIPOC youth, Marchés d'Ottawa Markets, which provides support to BIPOC vendors; and Black Farmers and Food Growers Collective, which “seeks to foster sustainable community development by improving community lead [sic] initiatives and supporting local farmers and products” (n.d.).

LGBTQ+ People

Finally, Farmers for Climate Solutions (n.d.) has adopted principles to reduce barriers for LGBTQ+ people to participate in agriculture. The United Food and Commercial Workers Union “has worked diligently to support LGBTQ2S inclusion” and “ensures its LGBTQ2S awareness strategy is aligned across jurisdictions” (2021). Growing on the Margins supports LGBTQ+ youth through agricultural mentorship. The Rainbow Chard Collective in British Columbia and Fierté Agricole, (n.d.) in Quebec both operate to provide a forum for queer farmers to connect and increase awareness of LGBTQ+ farmers in the industry.

Discussion and Conclusion: Future Critical Research and Policy Development

From an information perspective, the collection of DEI policies in agriculture across Canada reflects what has been described in the literature on the information and policy process. DEI policies demonstrate *information as a constitutive force in society*, as discussed by Braman (1989) and Rowley (1998). In this way, Canada’s DEI agricultural policies are embedded within and maintain a structure that frames under-represented groups as a target audience. In this sense, under-represented groups are socially constructed by DEI policy in a way that “impact the lives, identity and perceptions of the group” (Schneider & Ingram, 2017). DEI policies in Canadian agriculture reflect Stewart’s (2013) interpretation of public policy as information: it conveys authority, creates contexts and practices and institutional pattern-making. Here, the messages

embedded within policy information are received by citizens and ultimately affect how they participate in society (Schneider & Ingram, 1993).

More research is needed to determine if a coordinating body or a central forum is needed to address DEI in Canadian agriculture collectively. On the one hand, such a centralized body could assist with collecting and distributing necessary resources and information to address structural barriers to increasing the representation of under-represented groups. On the other hand, there will likely always be a need for community-level DEI approaches that are responsive to the local context. Furthermore, centralizing DEI through institutionalization may risk obfuscating significant social justice efforts, as corporate interests can conflict with this type of work (Cukier et al., 2017). In addition, this article identified that no studies exist on the collective impact of DEI agricultural policies across Canada, in terms of the collective impact of policy to increase the representation of under-represented groups or address root-cause issues. The following offers preliminary considerations for DEI policy research and practice in Canadian agriculture.

In the future, critical research of the DEI agricultural policy landscape is needed. Such research is needed to identify the explicit and underlying motivations and goals driving DEI policy development in agriculture. This research should also look at how current DEI policies in agriculture construct and impact under-represented groups: What are the structural barriers that are preventing certain groups from entering and remaining within the industry to begin with? Are DEI policies in agriculture making a difference in increasing the representation of under-represented groups? Do DEI policies create unintended or contradictory outcomes and, if yes, for whom?

Researchers can draw on a body of work critiquing DEI policies in fields such as education and management to deconstruct DEI policy in agriculture. For example, key terms and concepts related to DEI are often fluid and have been invoked to signal an organization's change with a specific practice, to larger and more complex transformation pertaining to philosophy and values (Artiles et al., 2006; see also Köllen et al., 2018). Wrench (2005) notes that institutions can leverage DEI discourses and policy to avoid making difficult choices regarding root-cause and structural issues related to racism and discrimination. Empirical research has also shown that discourses of DEI policy can benefit corporate interests more than the individuals who are the intended benefactors of such policies (Cukier et al., 2017).

In the educational setting, diversity policy has been found to have a powerful impact on how marginalized groups are constructed, namely as outsiders, at-risk victims, commodities and change agents (Iverson, 2007). The idea of promoting discourses of diversity and "harnessing difference" automatically leads to equality without structural change has been questioned (Bagshaw, 2004; Tomlinson & Egan, 2002). Furthermore, some have argued that organizational diversity initiatives can make discrimination more challenging to identify since it becomes hidden under discourses of equality, equity, fairness, and the like (Dover et al., 2020). To be effective, meaningful yet complex change needs to be made at the individual, organizational, and societal levels. Jayne and Dipboye (2004) posit that this includes ensuring that senior management commits to diversity interventions, understands the local context through needs assessments (which includes identifying "subtle and systemic issues"), connects diversity strategy to business goals, emphasizes that team-building is important, and establishes a framework with metrics to monitor diversity interventions (p. 416).

In summary, to ensure a permanent change in agriculture, the focus of policy practitioners and researchers should be inclusive of the impact of DEI policies, as opposed to merely policy objectives (see Moysiuk, 2019). Discourses of DEI in agriculture may indeed “be constructed within a powerful othering framework”, as has been found in other studies of inclusion (Dunne, 2009, p. 52). More research and analysis are needed. Researchers can help practitioners understand the impact of their DEI policy work in Canadian agriculture by drawing on Schneider and Ingram’s (e.g., 1993; 2017) theories of the social construction of target populations.

In answering these questions, there is a role for academics, practitioners, policy-makers, industry and marginalized farmers. Academics can contribute to this area of research by applying theories, concepts and models to critically investigate DEI policy. Practitioners, particularly evaluation practitioners, are needed to assess DEI policies’ performance, relevance, and impact. Policy-makers can be interviewed to learn more about the DEI policy development process in agriculture in Canada. Industry has a critical role in developing DEI policy for their industries and collaborating with academics and practitioners to better understand barriers and enablers for increasing the representation of under-represented groups.

Future qualitative research and policy development for DEI in agriculture should seek to include the perspectives of under-represented groups. Interviews with Indigenous Peoples, women, newcomers, disabled people, people of colour, and LGBTQ+ people can be used to understand the experience of individuals currently working in the industry as well as the experience of those who attempted unsuccessfully to enter the industry. Such research is a complex undertaking. Many factors need to be considered, including researchers’ own biases and assumptions and positionality in relation to marginalized people (Moree, 2018). Furthermore, the extent to which “under-represented groups” is a useful analytical category needs to be questioned. There is a broad range of diversity among and within the identities often included in the under-represented category. Here, intersectionality draws our attention to the social location of an individual and how this interacts with various systems of inequality, subjective experiences, and multi-dimensional situations based on identity (Clarke et al., 2017; McKinzie & Richards, 2019). It leads to qualitative research questions such as, how do multiple identity factors, in combination, inform individuals’ experiences within the agricultural sector in Canada? In what ways do systems of oppression and inequality impact this experience? In what context and under what circumstances? It is a more complex and nuanced way of understanding the human experience and oppression. Research and policies need to be conscious of the inherent diversity, intersectionality, and exceptionalism associated with an individual’s experience and the problematic nature of generalization. Finally, interviews with farmers who belong to the representative population can be used to investigate discourses and assumptions regarding barriers and enablers to increased DEI in agriculture.

Policy practitioners need to be conscious that policy texts as data reflect a theory that these texts, made available by organizations to the public vis-à-vis websites, socially constructs under-represented groups as “target populations” (Schneider & Ingram, 1993). Schneider and Ingram point out that “[t]he agenda, tools, and rationales of policy impart messages to target populations that inform them of their status as citizens and how they and people like themselves are likely to be treated” (1993, p. 340).

Policy texts communicate messages to the public and ultimately shape and organize society (Wedel et al., 2005; Woodside-Jiron, 2004). They represent “artifacts” with underlying values and beliefs (Yanow, 1996, p. 10). As a form of rhetoric, policy texts express “principles and

priorities, hopes and ideals, and beliefs about citizens' responsibilities to each other" (Asen, 2010, p. 127). At the same time, organizations use these types of texts strategically to influence outcomes and, as Cheney et al. (2004) state, "the rhetorical situations they might face by influencing popular attitudes and public policies" (p. 88). Thus, it follows that increasing policy practitioners' awareness of the unintended impacts of DEI policy texts will lead to more effective public policies.

For academics involved in researching DEI in agriculture, it is important to note that policy texts alone do not provide a complete picture of an organization's position towards a particular issue. Policy texts can be interpreted differently by readers, the meaning of such texts can shift depending on the context, and the same policy text can have different meanings within and outside an organization (Ball, 2006). Therefore, DEI policy texts in agriculture are only one element of a larger discursive framework that is keen for future critical analysis.

We have reviewed the current DEI agricultural policy landscape among governments and NGOs in Canada and have found that there is essentially a "patchwork quilt" approach to DEI; uncoordinated decision-making is occurring with respect to DEI: federal, provincial, and territorial governments and NGOs are individually pursuing DEI agendas. In doing so, an information gap has been lessened, namely that we now know more about the general structure and nature of DEI policy in agriculture in Canada. This article identifies future research questions for academics and provides practitioners with a snapshot of the current policy landscape.

Endnotes

¹ The authors have extended their best efforts to write about individuals and groups in an inclusive manner. The inherent problems associated with universalizing labels— limiting discussions of intersectionality and individual experiences— and the material consequences of the former are recognized (see Addy, 2015).

² In this article, 'LGBTQ+' is used acknowledging that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, queer, intersex, pansexual, two-spirit (2S), androgynous and asexual people have different individual and group identities and, therefore, different experiences in the world.

³ 'Indigenous' is used in this article as a universal term, inclusive of First Nations (status and non-status, on and off-reserve), Métis and Inuit.

⁴ In this article, 'newcomer' and 'immigrant' are used interchangeably.

⁵ Dunn and Andrews (2015) write that "disability culture advocates and disability studies scholars have challenged the exclusive use of person-first language. They recommend also using identity-first language (i.e., "disabled person," "amputee") to characterize disability and to refer to people with disabilities" (p. 256). Essentially, this "identity-first" terminology falls within what has been called the "minority model" or "diversity model", whereby disability is recognized as a diverse cultural, social and political experience which better prevents disability from being overlooked as such (Dunn and Andrews 2015).

⁶ It is important to note that these statistics do not account for the entire contribution that all individuals in Canada make to agriculture.

⁷ In 1996, 87.8 per cent of agricultural operations in Canada were reported as sole proprietorships or partnerships (with or without a written agreement). Corporations (family or non-family)

represented 11.8 per cent of agricultural operations. In 2016, sole proprietorships and partnerships in Canada (with or without a written agreement) accounted for 73.6 percent of all agricultural operations, while agricultural operations corporations (family or non-family) increased to represent 25.8 per cent of total agricultural operations (Statistics Canada, 2012b).

⁸ ‘Farm population’ consists of farm operators and other people in their households (Statistics Canada, 2020).

⁹ ‘Farm operators’ are defined as individuals involved in day-to-day management decisions in operating a census farm (Statistics Canada, 2018c). The Canadian labour force increased by 30.93 per cent from 1996 to 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2019a).

¹⁰ However, it is important to note that Burt et al.’s (2020) systematic review of community gardening research found that the effectiveness of community gardening in working towards an equitable food system “remains unclear” and Lowan-Trudeau et al. (2020) found that community gardens in Calgary were located in neighborhoods with fewer racialized people.

¹¹ See Carter 1989, for a review of the peasant farming system imposed on First Nations in the later part of the 19th century; see Laliberte & Satzewich, 1999, Laliberte, 2006 and Regular, 2009 for the history of First Nations agricultural labour in Alberta; see also Eyford, 2016.

¹² The turn-of-the-twentieth century was particularly notable for the strong differences of opinion amongst ministers responsible for immigration and land settlement on how to approach this subject. Minister for the Interior Clifford Sifton established a large-scale program of recruitment from central and eastern Europe, and Frank Oliver immediately reoriented the program to favour British immigrants when he took over the portfolio a few years later.

¹³ This included, but was not limited to: the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, Agricultural Alliance of New Brunswick, Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan, Alberta Federation of Agriculture, British Columbia Agriculture Council, Canadian Young Farmer’s Forum, Equestrian Canada, Keystone Agricultural Producers (Manitoba), Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Prince Edward Island Federation of Agriculture, Yukon Agricultural Association and others.

¹⁴ Provincial abbreviations are used as follows: BC British Columbia; NB New Brunswick; MB Manitoba; ON Ontario; PE Prince Edward Island; QC Quebec; SK Saskatchewan; YK Yukon

Appendices

Table 3. Federal Government Public Policies

Organization	Source	Group(s)	Description
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	Diversity and inclusiveness	All	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is strongly committed to diversity and inclusion and continues to support the participation of under-represented groups in the agricultural field.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	Food Policy for Canada	All	All people living in Canada are able to be part of an ongoing dialogue on food issues. Decisions are made after gathering and considering diverse interests and perspectives. Culturally diverse approaches to food and nutrition are important in recognizing our distinct cultural preferences and norms.
Farm Credit Canada (Federal Crown Corporation)	Corporate Social Responsibility Report / Corporate Plan Summary	All	FCC will continue to support the Government of Canada's focus on diversity and inclusion by increasing its commitment to under-represented groups in Canadian agriculture.
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	Food Policy for Canada	Indigenous	First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities in Canada have distinct food systems that have been nurtured and developed over many generations. Reconciliation begins by acknowledging how historic Government policies have disrupted these food systems.
Farm Credit Canada (Federal Crown Corporation)	Women Entrepreneur Program	Women	FCC is committed to empowering women in agriculture, agribusiness and food.

Table 4. Federal Government Initiatives, Programs and Projects

Organization	Source	Group(s)	Description
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	AgriDiversity Program	All	The program will strengthen the sector and build its capacity by helping diverse groups to take a greater leadership role, building the entrepreneurial capacity and business skills of under-represented groups, facilitating the sharing of industry experience, best practices and

			knowledge, help under-represented groups to manage transformation, and strengthen the sector by incorporating the views of a more diverse set of industry players.
Farm Credit Canada (Federal Crown Corporation)	Corporate Social Responsibility Report / Corporate Plan Summary	All	FCC provides financial support to organizations that promote diversity.
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	Indigenous Pathfinder Service	Indigenous	An Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Advisor will provide help to navigate information, tools and supports.
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	Indigenous Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative	Indigenous	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada will support Indigenous communities and entrepreneurs who are ready to launch agriculture and food systems projects.
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada	Emergency On-Farm Support Fund	Indigenous Women Racialized Disability Youth	The Fund provides \$35 million to increase protections for domestic and temporary foreign workers and address COVID-19 outbreaks on farms. For farms owned primarily by women, Indigenous peoples, visible minorities, persons with disabilities and youth owners, the federal government will cover 60% of the costs, with the applicant providing the remainder.
Farm Credit Canada (Federal Crown Corporation)	Women Entrepreneur Program	Women	FCC has dedicated \$500 million over the next three years in lending, enhancing events and creating resources specifically for women entrepreneurs to start or grow their businesses.

Table 5. Provincial and Territorial Public Policies

Organization	Source	Group(s)	Description
Department of Agr. and Land (PE)	Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives Report and Plan	All	Gender, diversity, and inclusion (GDI) are important for the Department. The inclusion of diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and identities in decision-making can increase opportunities for creativity and innovation, which are important for solving complex problems. Activities aimed at increasing the participation of under-represented groups in industry are important for equality, equity, and labour. The Department is committed to a principled approach to promoting GDI activities within the Department and across industries and sectors. This will be accomplished through dialogue, thoughtful inquiry, and the performance monitoring of commitments.
Ministry of Agr. Saskatchewan	Creating Opportunities in the Saskatchewan Agriculture Sector	Indigenous	Inviting Indigenous voices is key to Indigenous engagement and relationship strengthening and building.

Table 6. Provincial and Territorial Initiatives, Programs and Projects

Organization	Source	Group(s)	Description
Department of Agr. and Land (PE)	Community Food Security and Agr. Awareness	All	Provides funding to projects aimed at including under-represented groups in the food system.

Department of Agr., Aqua. and Fisheries (New Brunswick)	Indigenous Agriculture Development Program	Indigenous	Supports the development of new and existing markets by providing financial assistance to Indigenous clients with viable agriculture projects.
Ministry of Agr., Food and Fisheries (British Columbia)	Indigenous Agriculture Development Program	Indigenous	Services include providing Indigenous Peoples with feasibility analysis, financial and business planning and skills development for agriculture and food production and processing activities, including for community food security.
Ministry of Agriculture (British Columbia)	First Nations Agriculture Needs Assessment	Indigenous	A record of process and responses provided by First Nations in British Columbia indicating needs to support First Nations agriculture business development.
Ministry of Agriculture (British Columbia)	Planning for agriculture in First Nations Communities	Indigenous	A resource to assist communities to plan for current and future use of agricultural land.

Table 7. National NGO Public Policies

Organization	Source	Group(s)	Description
Ag Women's Network	What is the AWN?	All	Vision is an inclusive agriculture industry which celebrates diversity and allows individuals to reach their full potential. A goal is to attract and retain top talent with the skills required to advance the agriculture industry.
Agri-Food Innovation Council	Equality, Equity and Inclusiveness	All	The Agri-Food Innovation Council is recommending that equality be fostered in the sector through continuing discussions and research. Diversity in farms, labs, academia and boardrooms must be promoted and encouraged.

Canadian Agricultural Economics Society	Presidential Address	All	It is important to foster a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the Canadian agricultural economics profession. The Society will benefit from integrating equity, diversity and inclusion into its core mission and key activities.
Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council	A way forward on diversity and inclusion in agriculture	All	By working together, we will create a skilled, diverse and inclusive workforce with the experience and capabilities to meet workforce needs in the future. We are committed to working together to build a modern workforce with the capacity to meet the needs of a growing world. We will set an industry standard that values inclusivity and diversity to ensure that the sector realizes its full potential.
Equestrian Canada	Diversity, Inclusion and Equality Community Feedback Forums	All	Equestrian Canada aims to become a more diverse, inclusive and equitable organization, with the long-term goal of fully integrating these values into Canadian equestrian sport at large.
United Food and Commercial Workers Union	Human Rights, Equity and Diversity (HRED) at United Food and Commercial Workers Union Canada	All	At United Food and Commercial Workers Union Canada human rights, equity and diversity is about empowering by creating space. It's about valuing diverse viewpoints and actions. Advancing an agenda that promotes human rights, equity and diversity means incorporating the distinct needs of each equity-seeking group into our union's structure and mission.

Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council	AgriDiversity	Indigenous Women Newcomers Disability	Key policy statement includes: Women play an important role in Canadian agriculture, but they are still underutilized; increase Indigenous participation in the agriculture population; Attracting and retaining non-traditional labour sources, including immigrants, and persons with disabilities, is critical to ensuring that the sector can meet its labour needs.
Farmers for Climate Solutions	Short-term recommendations toward long-term resilience in Canadian Agriculture	Indigenous Black Women Racialized LGBTQ+	Solutions that reduce barriers for BIPOC, youth, women, 2SLGBTQ+ farmers and ranchers are essential to the future of the sector and the vibrancy of rural communities and landscapes.
National Farmers Union	Women's Advisory Committee	Women	Women are active and equal participants in the National Farmers Union, supporting each other, organizing, formulating and articulating policy and serving as elected officers.
Canadian Agricultural Safety Association	Back to Ag Program	Back to Ag Program	Provides financial assistance to farmers with a disability to purchase specialized equipment to allow them to return to work.
Canadian Farmers with Disability Registry	Vision	Disability	Goal is to provide a support system for farmers living with disability or illness.
Canadian Federation of Agriculture	Funding for Disabled Farmers of Canada	Disability	Be it resolved that the Canadian Federation of Agriculture assist the Disabled Farmers Association in obtaining full funding in order

			to continue providing services to farmers and farm families dealing with physical and mental health issues arising from injury.
Canadian Federation of Agriculture	International Labour	Newcomers	Agriculture's ability to attract and retain new Canadians is paramount to the long-term vibrancy of rural communities and Canada's immigration must be flexible enough to accommodate the diverse and unique skill sets required by Canadian producers. Be it resolved that the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, in collaboration with CAHRC, work with the federal government to establish an agriculture and agri-food skills development and training program for in-demand upskilling and career opportunities, and that the program be available and promoted to citizens and new Canadians.
Canadian Federation of Agriculture	Temporary Foreign Worker Program	Newcomers	Be it resolved that the Canadian Federation of Agriculture support the creation of a single office within the federal government dedicated to processing agricultural immigration applications and coordinating the promotion of Canadian agriculture and maple production as a source of employment for new immigrants.
United Food and Commercial Workers Union	Supporting LGBTQ2S Rights	LGBTQ+	United Food and Commercial Workers Union Canada has worked diligently to support LGBTQ2S inclusion in our union. We stand strongly with LGBTQ2S members in eliminating workplace discrimination.

Table 8. National NGO Initiatives, Programs and Projects

Organization	Source	Group(s)	Description
Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council	Indigenous Agriculture	Indigenous	Activities include exploring with the Indigenous community ways to increase Indigenous participation in the agriculture.
Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council	Non-traditional Agricultural Labour Sources	Indigenous Newcomers Disability	A series of research reports that examine the potential of non-traditional labour sources, which include Aboriginal people, immigrants, and persons with disabilities.
Ag Women's Network	What is the AWN?	Women	A forum for members to share their experiences and learn from one another, thereby fostering relationships and empowering women to push themselves further.
Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council	AgriWomen	Women	Supports women in agriculture by connecting them to career resources.
Canadian Farmers with Disability Registry	National Disabled Farmers Entrepreneurs hip and Leadership Network	Disability	The network is designed to allow persons with a disability the opportunity to find support from other disabled farmers across Canada.

Table 9. Regional and Provincial and Territorial NGO Public Policies

Organization	Source	Group(s)	Description
Agricultural Producers (Saskatchewan)	About us	All	The organization commits to conducting itself in an inclusive manner that is respectful of diversity.

Beef Farmers (Ontario)	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statement	All	The Ontario beef industry is an ally against discrimination based on race, sexual orientation, gender, religion, and ability (visible and invisible), as well as linguistic discrimination. We recognize that we are not always a diverse industry, but we believe in fighting racism and discrimination in all its forms.
Black Creek Community Farm (Ontario)	Vision	All	An urban agricultural centre that engages, educates, and empowers diverse communities, through sustainable food.
Black Farmers and Food Growers Collective	About / Our Story	All	Individual choices are affected by socioeconomic factors, which are an important aspect of environmental sustainability. Environmental issues are directly related to inequality and social justice concerns. Therefore, community empowerment strategies should be put in practice in order to address more effectively these matters.
Grain Farmers (Ontario)	Twitter thread	All	Grain Farmers strategic plan includes inclusiveness and diversity.
Young Agrarians (British Columbia)	Focus Areas	All	Agro-Ecology, Capacity Building, Collaboration, Community, Diversity, Equity, Food Sovereignty, Inclusion, Workers & Migrant Rights, Land-Access, Mentorship, Participatory Frameworks, Reconciliation, Support for Start-Ups
Six Nations Agricultural Society (Ontario)	About	Indigenous	The objects of an agricultural society are to encourage an awareness of agriculture and to promote improvements in the quality of life of persons in an agricultural community (e.g., researching needs, holding

			agricultural exhibitions, promoting conservation, encouraging beatification, enriching rural life, and conducting/promoting horse races).
Agricultural Association (YK)	Mission Statement	Indigenous	Foster the involvement of Yukon First Nations in agriculture.
Ecological Farmers Association (Ontario)		Indigenous Radicalized	Board and staff are committed to increasing their understanding around anti-racism towards Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC), and to better meeting the needs of farmers and members who are currently under-represented in the organization and the ecological farming movement at large.
Ag Women (MB)	Mission Statement	Women	Connecting, supporting, and fostering growth of all women in Manitoba's diverse agricultural community.
Women in Agr. and Food (MB)	Mission Statement	Women	To inspire and support women to achieve their career and business aspirations.

Table 10. Regional and Provincial and Territorials NGO Initiatives, Programs and Projects

Organization	Source	Group(s)	Description
Agricultural Society for Indigenous Food Products (Quebec and Ontario)	About Anti-Racism in Farming	Indigenous	Promote the products of Indigenous land from their own processing plants and to provide assistance to future Indigenous farmers and harvesters in Quebec and Ontario.
Indian Agr. Program (Ontario)	About us	Indigenous	Assistance with financing, advisory services, training, and workshops (includes First Nations 4-H).

Ecological Farmers of Ontario (Ontario)	BIPOC Farmer Network	Indigenous Racialized	Online forum for racialized farmers to connect with one another and receive updates on meet-ups and events.
Growing in the Margins (Ontario)	Mentorship Program	Indigenous Racialized Disability LGBTQ+	Mentorship is provided for BIPOC, LGBTQ+ youth (18-25) and youth with a disability who would like to start their own urban farm.
Marchés d'Ottawa Markets (Ontario)	BIPOC Farmers' Initiative	Indigenous Racialized Disability LGBTQ+	Provides access and support for vendors of Black and Indigenous descent as well as People of Colour including those who identify as trans, disabled, queer, and/or have marginalized religious identities
Women's Institute (PE)	Object of the Institute	Women	Goals include: Stimulating and developing leadership; promoting a greater understanding and appreciation of the social and economic problems, influencing the importance of farmers and the agricultural industry in the province.
Cooper Institute (PE)	Migrant Worker Program	Newcomers	Activities include education and advocacy for migrant workers.
Fierté Agricole (Quebec)	Mission Statement	LGBTQ+	Goal is to promote a better knowledge of LGBTQ+ realities in agricultural areas and facilitate the integration of people of gender and sexual diversity who share an interest in agriculture.
Rainbow Chard Collective	About	LGBTQ+	Exists to build community and create awareness of queer farmers.

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