

Australia – the concept of sustainable growth does not seem to have happened here. Remember in Pillars Of Sand the outcome of failing water and food supply. This really sets a very dangerous precedent that it is ok to rely on food sources that have to be purchased on the foreign markets and then shipped long distances.

Hunter slide

Technological improvements, particularly with understanding Crop Water Demands and water delivery, are allowing farmers to move into more productive and sustainable food production.

Food is the basis of a community's economy and viability. For every farm there are up to 10 related jobs in processing, distribution, sales, and food preparation. The Agriculture industry province wide produces 19 billion in revenues and over 270,000 jobs.

#4 BC Food Supply slide

B.C. farms produce less than 50% of our food needs. A secure food supply does not rely on large amounts of imports to meet our needs. Low cost imports do not always reflect the full environmental and social costs associated with their production. Globally, as a result of competition for land and water, traditional food exporting countries may become net importers. Currently, with access to a seemingly endless supply of cheap imported food products, local agriculture is left to balance the cost of production with market demand.

#5 Irrigated slide

In B.C. it is estimated that by 2025, farmlands with irrigation will need to increase by 98,000 hectares. This is 45% higher than what was irrigated in 2005. Commodities that use irrigation make up only 4% of the land while accounting for 40% of farm gate receipts.

#6 farm land

Food self reliance and the resources they influence - land and water, must be linked with sustainable development. Most productive farmlands are typically near urban centers. These properties are increasingly targeted for other development as they are the cheapest to develop and currently have water access. B.C. producers have been squeezed by ridiculous land prices, rising costs, falling commodity prices, a failure of disaster support programs, and low priced imports. Without viable farms, there will be no local food production. Farm viability is the foundation of Food Security. With recent detrimental decisions by the ALC's regional panels to exclude, subdivide and/or allow non-farm uses on prime farmlands, a dangerous precedent is being set. Rather, the decisions made by the ALC must send a message to local governments and others, that they must plan for their urban growth needs in a sustainable manner without sprawling

onto our critically limited, highly productive farmlands. This will also stop fuelling speculation on the ALR. The OK lost 14,000 hectares of farmland from 1974 – 2003.

AFFORDABLE, ASSURED, & ADEQUATE

#7 ALR

#8 ALR

In 3 to 4 generations in North America we have gone from societies where almost everyone worked the land, to fewer than 2% who do so today. As we lose our farms, farmers, and food elders, we lose those who can teach us the art of growing, harvesting, preserving, and cooking our own food.

As population growth and domestic demands increase in the OK Valley, availability of affordable, assured and adequate water supply for irrigation will become strained. Climate change could drastically alter the methods we have historically been able to use for water storage.

Water used for food production must be recognized to be for the common good and the future generations food security. Capital cost of water treatment to provide safe water for drinking, must also be identified as a common good, and must be available for agriculture within its ability to pay. AFFORDABLE, ASSURED, & ADEQUATE

We live in an artificial environment in the basin. Empty semi-arid plains have been irrigated and transformed into what we see today. Agriculture's use of water has come a long way from flood irrigation, to present delivery systems incorporating automatic timers, moisture sensors, a huge range of irrigation products that can be targeted for the CWD, and irrigation scheduling. I can see in the future that the info collected thru Ted's project will be invaluable in improving efficiency not only in water use but food supply.

#9 Controller

#10 backflow

All these improvements come with a price tag, and play a major role in production systems. A significant amount of ag lands are share cropped. These tenant farmers often are only allowed short term leases with the owners often unwilling to spend any money on improvements in technology. Ag can and will continue to improve production and delivery systems. There is a reluctance to spend the extra money, if the resulting water savings are given away to future residential or commercial development, and not targeted for food supply. The more people that live here --- the more food we will need.

#11 High density

#12 Weather station

Jack Wilcox and others started looking at Crop Water Demand and irrigation systems since the early 40's here at PARC, and led the way to our present concept of irrigation scheduling. Information on soil types (infiltration rates), root structures, ET data, and irrigation systems is the key to the most beneficial and sustainable of water. We have the

technology. It's a team effort by researchers, farmers, and purveyors. Summerland growers have been asking for a comprehensive scheduling program for years. We did have a voluntary program in the 80's. I operated over 100 acres of irrigation systems this way. It took away the guessing of when it was necessary to irrigate. We need these programs valley wide for all commodities. Similarly the Landscape Irrigation Calculator has been developed for homeowner use. A component of scheduling that must be built into Water Use Plans is drought management - simply defined as the ability to provide an adequate water supply to maintain an economic return. In years of high demand and low supply, even though sound water management may have been practiced, growers may have to make difficult decisions about where to cut and where to apply water.

We do have the ability to reverse the current trends of losing farmers and their lands with progressive provincial agricultural policy that focuses on farm viability and food sustainability. This will involve all levels of government, producers, and consumers. Regional planning needs to value land for its food production capacity rather than its tax base potential.