



BC WINE GRAPE INDUSTRY
TASK FORCE

Strategic Plan

2025 - 2027

Prepared by the BC Wine Grape Industry Task Force Advisory Committee

April 30, 2025

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Strategic Plan would not have been possible without the invaluable contributions of the Wine Grape Industry Task Force Advisory Committee. Comprising members from five key industry groups—BC Grapegrowers Association (BCGA), Winegrowers BC (WGBC), BC Wine Grape Council (BCWGC), Wine Island Growers Association (WIGA), and the BC Wine Authority (BCWA)—their dedication, expertise, and collaboration have been instrumental in shaping the vision for BC's Task Force for the coming two years and beyond. We extend our deepest gratitude to all committee members for their hard work and commitment to this process.



The Wine Grape Industry Task Force gratefully acknowledges the financial support by the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

2	Background & Context
5	Phase I: Strategic Planning
6	Phase II: Implementing Strategic Priorities
7	Operational Priorities
14	Cross-Cutting Priorities
16	Looking Ahead

ACRONYMS

AC	Advisory Committee
AF	Ministry of Agriculture and Food
BC	British Columbia
BCGA	BC Grapegrowers Association
BCWA	BC Wine Authority
BCWGC	BC Wine Grape Council
WGBC	Winegrowers BC
WGITF	Wine Grape Industry Task Force
WIGA	Wine Island Growers Association

BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The BC wine industry has experienced remarkable growth over the past 30 years. With a growing number of international awards and an increasing global reputation, local wineries have positioned British Columbia as a world-class wine region. This success has translated into meaningful economic impact with the industry generating more than \$3.75 billion¹ in economic activity, including over \$750 million in wages and \$440 million in tax revenue in 2019.

Today, the industry stands at a critical crossroads. The effects of climate change, grapevine disease, and shifting market forces are presenting complex and urgent challenges to the sustainability of viticulture in BC. Without a coordinated, future-focused strategy, the long-term prosperity and resilience of the wine grape ecosystem and the communities it supports could be at risk.

In response, the BC Wine Grape Industry Task Force (WGITF) was created by the industry, for the industry. In the summer of 2024, the Task Force received approval in principle, along with \$1.1 million of funding from the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Food, allocated over three fiscal years. Planning was carried out in 2024–25, with implementation scheduled for 2025–26 and 2026–27.

The Task Force unites leaders from five key industry groups—BC Grapegrowers Association (BCGA), Winegrowers BC (WGBC), BC Wine Grape Council (BCWGC), Wine Island Growers Association (WIGA), and the BC Wine Authority (BCWA)—alongside winery representatives, growers, and strategic stakeholders. Together, industry is working towards a sustainable future for the sector. At the heart of the Task Force's mission are collaboration, adaptability, and a commitment to transparent communication.

¹ Wine Growers British Columbia (2019). British Columbia Wine and Grape Industry Economic Impact 2019 Fact Sheet.



We are farmers, growers, winemakers, and stewards of British Columbia's beautiful agricultural land. Rooted in the diversity of our land and our people, we seek to create a vibrant, sustainable wine grape community. Through collaboration and creativity, we aim to build an inclusive and thriving future for BC's wine grape industry.

Our Vision

A prosperous and sustainable BC wine grape ecosystem that nurtures our diverse and thriving agricultural lands, fostering success for generations to come.

Our Mission

The BC Wine Grape Industry Task Force unites a collective of industry experts who strategically drive BC's vibrant wine industry to create and leverage opportunities through investments in people, place and product.

Our Values



Collaboration

We believe in the power of working together and sharing knowledge and resources.



Trust

We act in the best interests of industry and foster a culture of mutual respect.



Transparency

We value honesty and consistently create open lines of communication.



Adaptability

We embrace change to ensure the success and vitality of the industry.

PHASE I

STRATEGIC PLANNING

During Phase I, from December 2024 to March 2025, the Task Force established its Advisory Committee (AC) and associated Terms of Reference. The committee worked in conjunction with the Program Delivery Team to develop a Strategic Plan for implementation over two years. Key deliverables of the Task Force during Phase I included:

Theme	Deliverables	Timeline
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program Delivery Team Recruitment AC approved workplan and budget 	Dec 2024 Jan 2025
Advisory Committee (AC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AC recruitment / membership established AC approved Terms of Reference 	Jan 2025 Feb 2025
Strategic Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry and stakeholder scan Vision, mission and values development Working Group goal and opportunity setting 	Jan 2025 Feb 2025 Mar 2025
Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website developed and launched E-newsletter launched Networking at key industry events 	Feb 2025 Feb 2025 Ongoing

PHASE II

IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

During Phase II, from April 2025 to March 2027, the Working Groups (WG) will be focusing on the implementation of key strategic priorities for the BC wine grape industry. Key deliverables of the Task Force will include:

Theme	Deliverables	Timeline
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year 1 AC approved workplan and budget Year 2 AC approved workplan and budget 	May 2025 May 2026
Advisory Committee (AC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine governance model for allocation of project funding to WG activities Determine exit strategy for execution in Year 2, Q4. 	Jun 2025 Oct 2026
Working Groups (WG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create WG Terms of Reference and recruit members Set Strategic Priorities and Action Plan for each WG Implementation of WG priorities in alignment with action plan Coordinate and facilitate quarterly meetings 	Jun 2025 Aug 2025 Ongoing Ongoing
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly reporting on WG activities to AC & Industry Year 1 mid-term report: review WG progress and report adjustments to strategic priorities and action plans. Year 1 report: report WGITF progress against goals and operational priorities. Year 2 mid-term report: review WG progress and report adjustments to strategic priorities and action plans. Final report: report WGITF progress against goals and operational priorities. Detail outcomes, successes, challenges and recommendations for the future. 	Per AC Meeting Oct 2025 Apr 2026 Oct 2026 Apr 2027
Comms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create Communications Committee Terms of Reference and recruit members Develop process for constructive comms between WGs and internal and external stakeholders Communicate reporting deliverables internally / externally as applicable Maintain WGITF website and other digital communication platforms 	Jun 2025 Aug 2025 Ongoing Ongoing

OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

There are **six operational priorities** that will guide the work of the WGITF over the next two years. These priorities were first identified during the initial development of the Task Force and further refined through consultation with the Advisory Committee (AC) and industry stakeholders. This collaborative process has ensured that the priorities reflect both the immediate needs and long-term vision of the sector.

Each of the six operational priorities will be advanced through a dedicated Working Group (WG) in Phase II. These groups will play a central role in shaping the strategic direction within their respective themes, ultimately defining the strategic priorities, tactics, and outcomes. To support this process, the AC has identified a **goal** and a number of **key opportunities** per theme. These elements are intended to offer a strategic frame for implementation.

While each WG has a specific area of focus, it's recognized that not all issues will fall neatly within the boundaries of a single operational theme. Some will span multiple priority areas and will require **cross-collaboration between WGs** to ensure cohesive and effective solutions. Further, a number of **cross-cutting priorities**—such as sustainability, inclusivity, and longevity—will be integrated across all WGs. These priorities are essential to building a resilient, future-focused sector and will be intentionally woven into the development of each WG.

While WG activities may be concentrated in certain regions, the work of the Task Force reflects **a province-wide approach**, reinforcing its commitment to supporting the full geographic and operational diversity of British Columbia's wine industry.



OPERATIONAL PRIORITY 1:

DATA STRATEGY

Context & Rationale:

A lack of consistent, reliable data limits the industry's ability to adapt quickly and plan strategically. A centralized and trusted data infrastructure with a reporting structure will support evidence-based decision making from vineyard management to market positioning.

Goal:

Data-driven decision making by industry.

Goal Statement:

By 2027, the BC wine grape industry will have developed an integrated data infrastructure that supports informed decision-making, improves operational efficiency, and enables insights at every stage of the value chain.

Key Opportunities:

1. **Audit and enhance existing data platforms** (e.g., the BCWA/BCWGC system) to assess functionality, integration potential, and user feedback, and to determine whether they can serve as the foundation for a centralized, industry-wide system.
2. **Develop a centralized, integrated data infrastructure** that enables stakeholders to enter information once and share it across systems (e.g., vineyard, winery, regulatory reporting), reducing duplication and improving grower and winemaker accessibility.
3. **Establish mandatory core data reporting standards** (e.g., acreage in production, water use, waste management) to ensure consistency and completeness across the industry, drawing from best practices from other wine regions.
4. **Standardize key metrics, definitions, and protocols** across associations and regulatory bodies to support a “single source of truth” for both operational and strategic decision-making.
5. **Improve data literacy, access, and usability** through training and intuitive decision-support tools tailored to the needs of growers and wineries of different scales and capacities.
6. **Leverage emerging technologies** such as AI, predictive modeling, and real-time data collection (e.g., weather stations, soil moisture sensors) to enable proactive vineyard and winery management.
7. **Address privacy, governance, and data-sharing protocols** to foster trust and encourage broad industry participation in data initiatives, ensuring alignment between trade associations, regulators, and technology providers.

OPERATIONAL PRIORITY 2:

CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Context & Rationale:

Climate change is significantly reshaping the conditions under which BC wine grapes are grown. From extreme heat and drought to unpredictable cold events, smoke exposure, and shifting disease pressures, producers are facing increased uncertainty and risk. There is an opportunity to lay the groundwork for long-term research and development planning that will benefit the industry beyond the two-year mandate of the Task Force.

Goal:

Improved climate resiliency and adoption of sustainable practices.

Goal Statement:

By 2027, the BC wine grape industry will have adopted sustainable practices and innovations that enhance resilience to climate variability and extreme weather, safeguarding long-term viability.

Key Opportunities:

1. **Identify key climate challenges and establish corresponding “innovation clusters”** that bring together researchers, industry, government, and others to co-develop relevant solutions.
2. **Develop a framework for prioritizing long term research, mid term applied technologies and, short term qualitative and quantitative analysis**, aligned with relevant funding programs, institutional partners and priority needs of industry. Communicate priorities to inform policy, regulatory frameworks and funding mechanisms.
3. **Leverage and align existing research on climate-resilient grape varieties and rootstocks** by prioritizing industry-identified challenges and coordinating ongoing and future research funding opportunities to ensure outcomes are relevant and scalable.
4. **Improve industry access to clean plant material and varietal diversity** through working collaboratively with the Canadian Grapevine Certification Network (CGCN) and other partners.
5. **Enhance regional climate monitoring and risk forecasting tools** to support proactive and localized decision-making.
6. **Implement precision agriculture, adaptive viticulture practices and advance sustainable vineyard management practices**, including water-use efficiency, drainage, soil health, and biodiversity that improve vineyard-level resilience to climate change.
7. **Develop a coordinated knowledge and technology transfer (KTT) strategy** to ensure research is shared widely and translated into practical, on-farm actions.

OPERATIONAL PRIORITY 3:

MARKET DEVELOPMENT

Context & Rationale:

Consumer preferences are evolving rapidly. The BC industry must respond with strategic storytelling, market intelligence, and a proactive approach to positioning local wines in high-potential markets. A unified, values-based marketing strategy is essential to regain market share, increase competitiveness, and ensure BC wine resonates with the next generation of consumers.

Goal:

Collectively adapt to changing market and consumer trends.

Goal Statement:

By 2027, the BC wine grape industry will be aligned with current and emerging consumer trends, with a unified approach to domestic and export market development that builds brand value, competitiveness, and demand.

Key Opportunities:

1. **Develop and promote a clear, compelling BC wine narrative rooted in place, sustainability, and quality.** Build emotional connection and trust with consumers.
2. **Strengthen marketing partnerships and coordinated promotional efforts,** within industry, and within the hospitality and tourism sector at provincial and national level.
3. **Create mechanisms to track, analyze, and share market insights,** improve industry accessibility and include data on consumer trends, pricing, and category performance.
4. **Diversify market strategies,** including growing direct-to-consumer channels and expanding export opportunities (intra-provincially and internationally).
5. **Respond proactively to emerging trends,** such as low/no alcohol, sustainable and regenerative production, wellness, and experiential tourism.
6. **Strengthen transparency and industry-wide buy-in for collective marketing efforts,** by exploring funding models that support shared benefit, improve coordination, and increase participation across all scales of producers.
7. **Use sustainability as a market differentiator,** weaving themes of land stewardship, people care, and community values into consumer engagement and storytelling.

OPERATIONAL PRIORITY 4:

ORGANIZATIONAL ALIGNMENT

Context & Rationale:

Fragmentation across industry organizations can lead to duplication, inefficiencies, and diluted impact. While a fully unified structure may not be realistic, there is a clear need to improve alignment, clarify mandates and reduce unnecessary overlap. This includes assessing whether the current organizational structure is sustainable and fit for purpose. There is opportunity to enhance service delivery, reduce costs, and better position to seize opportunities and navigate shared challenges.

Goal:

Industry group collaboration delivering service excellence.

Goal Statement:

BC's wine grape industry organizations will work together to find alignment and opportunities for collaboration for the betterment of the industry.

Key Opportunities:

1. **Conduct a gap and overlap analysis** to evaluate how well the current organizational structure serves industry needs, and where opportunities exist for improved efficiency or streamlining.
2. **Assess the long-term sustainability and capacity of industry organizations**, including staffing, governance, and funding models, to ensure each is equipped to deliver value and evolve with industry needs.
3. **Clarify and align the mandates of key industry organizations**, identifying where roles and responsibilities can be better coordinated or shared.
4. **Explore collaborative governance and funding models**, such as shared levy structures or coordinated administrative services, to improve cost-efficiency and reduce duplication.
5. **Strengthen internal communication and coordination**, ensuring consistent messaging, aligned service delivery, and improved responsiveness across organizations.
6. **Build shared capacity for planning, coordinated crisis response, and long-term strategy development**, including stronger collaboration between Industry Group Boards and alignment across provincial Ministries.
7. **Establish inclusive mechanisms for stakeholder engagement**, ensuring industry-wide input into future governance decisions and building broad consensus on a long-term organizational structure.

OPERATIONAL PRIORITY 5:

BUSINESS & ECONOMICS

Context & Rationale:

Sustaining vineyard and winery operations requires more than passion, it demands sound business models, access to capital, and the ability to adapt to shifting economic realities. Producers face growing pressure from rising costs, labour challenges, regulatory complexity, and changing consumer expectations. Supporting business acumen, access to funding, and scalable, efficient practices is essential to ensuring long-term industry sustainability.

Goal:

A grape growing and winemaking industry with the capacity to thrive.

Goal Statement:

By 2027, the BC wine grape industry will have the operational capacity, financial tools, and business intelligence needed to thrive sustainably through improved productivity, risk management, and long-term profitability.

Key Opportunities:

1. **Expand business management supports for growers and wineries**, including practical tools, mentorship, and training focused on operational planning, financial literacy, cost tracking, and access to funding.
2. **Support the development and adoption of scalable technologies**, such as automation, that increase productivity and reduce operational costs—especially for smaller acreages.
3. **Facilitate access to shared services and cooperative models** to improve economies of scale, reduce duplication, and support businesses in adapting to ongoing cost and margin pressures.
4. **Improve access to financing, insurance, and risk mitigation tools**, through partnerships with sectors that supply industry and support its functionality.
5. **Surface regulatory challenges and work with industry groups and regulators**, to support and coordinate communication.
6. **Promote adoption of economic benchmarking and performance metrics**, (e.g. labour efficiency, margin tracking, and cost comparisons) to support informed decision-making.
7. **Position economic sustainability as a core industry pillar**, encouraging broader adoption of certifications like Sustainable Winegrowing BC, and integrating economic, environmental, and social metrics into operational planning and reporting.

OPERATIONAL PRIORITY 6:

LONG-TERM INDUSTRY STRATEGY

Context & Rationale:

The evolving landscape of the wine grape industry demands a cohesive long-term vision that ensures sustainable growth. By creating a long-term industry-wide strategy, the sector can maintain focus, drive innovation and effectively respond and evolve to change.

Goal:

A sustainable and actionable long-term strategy for the BC wine grape industry.

Goal Statement:

By 2027, the BC wine grape industry will have a comprehensive long-term strategy with clearly defined priorities, responsibilities, and measurable outcomes for continued long-term growth and success.

Key Opportunities:

1. **Leverage the outcomes and momentum of the five operational priorities** to inform the long-term strategy, ensuring that key strategic pillars and corresponding initiatives are integrated and used to guide the industry's future direction.
2. **Develop a long-term strategy** that defines industry-wide priorities, unites shared goals, and aligns the sector. This includes exploring a broader BC wine ecosystem strategy that leverages the industry as a catalyst for a "supercluster" of world-class wine, tourism, hospitality, and an agricultural economy that delivers a greater economic impact beyond wine alone.
3. **Embed sustainability at the heart of the strategy**, integrating economic, environmental, and social goals into long-term planning, and backing them with sustained funding and resources.
4. **Assign stewardship for each strategic priority** to clearly identified lead organizations, ensuring ongoing accountability, momentum, and progress.
5. **Embed the long-term strategy within industry organizations** by aligning structures and governance, and creating inclusive, ongoing engagement channels to ensure coordinated implementation and continuous stakeholder input.
6. **Define pathways for sustainable funding and resource mobilization**, ensuring that long-term priorities are supported through sustained funding and resources.

CROSS CUTTING PRIORITIES

During the development of the framework in Phase I, several critical cross-cutting priorities were identified. These priorities are key to ensuring the long-term viability and impact of the BC wine grape sector and must remain central to the work of all WGs as the WGITF moves through Phase II.

Education & Professional Development

The industry faces a fragmented landscape when it comes to training and professional development. Education programs are offered across various institutions, each tackling only part of the picture. To build long-term sustainability, we must focus on growing the people in place. That means creating regional, BC-based programs that meet the specific needs of our geography and workforce realities. We need to build our own skilled labour pipeline, from vineyard to cellar, and explore pathways that support both attraction and retention, ensuring up-and-coming industry members are given both training and mentorship opportunities to ensure the viability of future generations. Washington State's coordinated viticulture and enology training model serves as an example of how this can be done strategically.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) must be built into every layer of the Task Force. That includes ensuring a variety of regions, growers and wineries of all sizes, and diverse voices are not only represented, but meaningfully engaged. Our WG Terms of Reference reflect this by valuing contributions equally, DEIA also applies to generational and cultural representation and ensuring that information distributed can be accessed by all groups. We recognize that diversity will look different within each WG, and that's not only acceptable, but it's necessary to reflect the realities of our industry.

Longevity & Exit Strategy

While the WGITF is currently framed as a two-year initiative, we know the work must outlast the timeline. Phase II is about building momentum, but we must also think critically about what comes next and what success looks like in the longer-term.

As part of the long-term strategic planning and exit strategy, our aim is to create not just a plan, but a living strategy that can be integrated into organizational mandates and sector-wide collaboration moving forward.

WG Expertise & Industry Representation

To ensure this process results in meaningful, actionable change, we need to recruit the right voices. That includes those with technical expertise, lived experience, and influence across the sector. We also need to bring in the critical thinkers, the ones who will challenge the work and make it better. Everyone should have an opportunity to shape the outcomes, especially those who may not have been engaged before. Representation isn't just about participation, it's about making sure this work reflects and serves the full spectrum of our industry and that we have the support of all industry, not just those engaged in the groups.

Sustainability

Every element of the Task Force's strategy must be grounded in long-term sustainability, both environmental and economic. Whether we're talking about climate adaptation, land stewardship, or business viability, sustainability needs to be woven throughout every WG's goals and deliverables. It's not a standalone item, it's a foundational lens that ensures the resilience and relevance of everything we build together.

Knowledge Translation & Transfer

The Task Force recognizes that many important initiatives, research projects, and programs have already been undertaken across the wine grape sector. To maximize impact and avoid duplication, we are committed to ensuring that insights are effectively translated and transferred across the industry. This means not only sharing findings once projects are completed, but also creating intentional pathways for collaboration and knowledge exchange. By aligning efforts, amplifying what already exists, and ensuring research leads to real-world application, we can drive meaningful, measurable outcomes that benefit the entire industry.

Regulatory Environment

While direct policy change is outside the Task Force's current scope, we see tremendous value in bringing together stakeholders to foster better collaboration. This includes building stronger ties between the industry and key government offices. Opportunities exist to streamline communication, clarify responsibilities, and reduce duplication through improved coordination. Even if regulatory reform itself isn't something we lead, we can still act as a catalyst for alignment and insights for the industry organizations to shape future regulations.

LOOKING AHEAD

The BC Wine Grape Industry Task Force (WGITF) was implemented to support meaningful collaboration, align industry efforts and establish priorities for the success and viability of the industry. It is our goal that WGITF will create the framework and act as a catalyst and container for strategic conversations and activations in the short, medium and long-term.

In 2025, the Task Force is focused on enabling action and delivering results through the creation and coordination of six strategic WGs. These groups, made up of diverse voices from across the sector, are where dialogue meets direction. Their role is to identify and prioritize the operational goals that matter most, supported by clear action plans, defined budgets, and shared metrics for success.

The Task Force will:

- Establish and support the WGs with the resources, structure, and guidance needed to thrive;
- Help define short-, medium-, and long-term deliverables aligned to each operational theme;
- Track and report progress, offering a transparent view of impact through milestone updates and a Year 1 status report;
- Foster trust and collaboration by ensuring every WG is a space where industry members—regardless of background or scale—feel heard, respected, and part of something bigger.

This year is about momentum and making the work visible. Through thoughtful communication, shared leadership, and cross-sector engagement, the WGITF is laying the groundwork for a more resilient, coordinated, and forward-looking BC wine grape industry.

Together, we're not just shaping a strategy, we're enriching the soil of our industry with collaboration, insight, and intention, so the work can thrive for seasons to come.



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**BC WINE GRAPE INDUSTRY
TASK FORCE**



CONTACT:

 info@bcwinegrapeindustry.com

 bcwinegrapeindustry.com