Situation Analysis

Report

Edmonton Metropolitan Region Board,
August 9, 2018
“The key to a robust agricultural industry is the same everywhere: the protection of the land base on which to farm and to carry our farm related activities”...A fresh perspective is needed of farmland...one that sees agriculture as a permanent feature of the regional landscape and farming as an essential component of our economy and cultural heritage”

Source: Farmland at Risk: Why land-use planning needs improvement for a healthy agricultural future in the greater Golden Horseshoe, November 2015. Ontario Federation of Agriculture and Environmental Defense
Simply... one of the richest agricultural regions in Canada!

1. Replete with prime agriculture lands/soils
2. Favourable climate and prevailing weather patterns
3. Productivity that is 42% higher than the Alberta average
4. Total annual revenues in excess of $4.5 billion
5. Over 10,500 directly employed
Global Trends

• Growing Global Demand for Food
• Industry and Sector Consolidation
• Technology and Automation
• Changing Food Economy
• Climate Change
• Land Use and Conservation of Agricultural Lands
Agriculture in the EMR

Source: Statistics Canada
We have the Soils
..and a vibrant food processing sector
EMR has skilled people
….and leading R & D infrastructure
What’s more…

1. Global demand for food and agriculture products will increase 70% over the next 30 years
2. Supply of prime farm lands is on the decline
3. Canada (and Alberta in particular) will be one of 6 net food exporting countries in the world
4. The EMR is ideally positioned to respond
Schematic of the EMR

Sturgeon County
- Largest total gross sales
- Largest canola producer
- Largest poultry producer
- Largest fruit, nut, and berry area
- U of A Research Farm

Strathcona County
- Urban ag strategy

City of Edmonton
- 6,000 jobs
- U of A Faculty & Research Farm
- 25% of AB food processing sector
- Agri-Food Discovery Place
- Est. $3.75 B in annual shipments/sales

Parkland County
- Smallest total gross farm sales
- Largest number of vegetable farmers
- 2nd largest cattle population
- Largest potato acreage
- U of A Botanical Garden

Leduc County
- Largest county by area
- Largest number of farms
- Largest livestock populations: cattle, dairy, horses
- Largest nursery products area
- Food Processing Development Centre
Critical Success Factors

1. **Agriculture as a priority** - there is a need to elevate and support the entire sector.

2. **Supportive Land Use Policies** - uncertain long term future due to rapid urban growth, annexations and pressures on the regional land base from sub-division and land fragmentation in rural areas.

3. **Conservation of Agricultural Lands** - there is a need to ensure the long-term availability of land, ability to assemble land parcels and the mitigate the rising costs requiring more definitive land use policies.
Focus of the RAMP

1. Establish a clear vision that elevates agriculture & food and assures an long term agricultural land base
2. Implement effective agricultural zoning and land use policies
3. Provide mitigation measures to manage expectations embedded in land values
4. Develop supportive and targeted economic development programs
Next Steps

1. **Vision for the EMR** - led by Task Force; draft to be completed in fall of 2018
2. **Land Use Policies** - LESA process underway; regional meetings to be held in October; draft framework by spring of 2019.
3. **Economic Development** - input from range of industry players; collaboration with Edmonton Global - draft by fall of 2019.
Creating a New Future