

# THIS SMILE IS SUSTAINABLE.

4500 B.C. Farmers & Ranchers  
have an ENVIRONMENTAL FARM PLAN  
Don Hladych of Vale Farms is one of them.

Don Hladych beams with pride when he talks about how the Environmental Farm Plan has helped his family farm renew itself sustainably.

Don Hladych of Vale Farms in Lumby, B.C., is no stranger to being a steward of the land. He and his family are proud of the work they have done on their 1,100 acre ranch to lessen their impact on the environment.

“We did our first **Environmental Farm Plan** in 2005. They last five years, so we renewed again for 2011. If you are looking at your impact on the land and ecology around you, the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) workbook is the ideal tool. Even if you don’t know what you want or should do, the workbook will show you.”

## WORK WITH AN ADVISOR

The EFP workbook was designed to help farmers recognize areas where the farm is environmentally sustainable, and identify areas where improvements could be made. They don’t have to do it alone either; every farmer is assigned an advisor who will schedule a confidential, complimentary visit to help complete the workbook. Part of completing the plan includes consideration for funding through Beneficial Management Practices (BMP).

“There is money available to assist you and the way I see it, we are avid money collectors,” laughs Hladych. “My wife and I are the

next generation. Our farm right now is being renewed and we’ve added the dairy. It’s been great to get help doing this through the Environmental Farm Plan program.”

## FINDING FUNDING

Hladych toured his operation with his advisor, Peter Spencer, who has over 30 years’ experience in the cattle industry. It was discovered that the irrigation system on the farm would benefit from upgrades.

“Don and I went through the workbook and decided to apply for a certified irrigation plan through the EFP,” said Peter. “They brought in a certified designer to design the system and put together a budget. Then Vale Farms applied for funding on the project itself. It was a very expensive undertaking and they got the maximum the program was allowing at that time.”

The upgrade to the creek crossing and irrigation system was, in Hladych’s words, “A one thousand per cent improvement.” He explains, “Our pipes used to be above ground and we had a 20 per cent water loss in the pumping. Now the pipes are underground and we have a proper creek crossing. It used to take 90 minutes to get up to full pressure, now it takes less than five minutes. When our system was above ground we used a



Having an  
Environmental Farm  
Plan sign can bring  
credibility to your  
farm business.

150 hp pump. Now we use two 50 hp pumps and get better results and a significantly lower electricity bill.”

An unexpected surprise came from the smolt pond Hladych created in an old bull pasture near the creek. “After we put in some Coho, heron started coming to fish in the creek. Now we have six nesting herons on the farm. When fish are low they hunt moles and mice in the fields. It’s an added bonus we didn’t anticipate.”

## ORGANIC FARMERS BENEFIT FROM EFP

Vale Farms is currently going through the Environmental Farm Plan’s nutrient management program. “They are working on nutrient applications to get optimum crops,” explains Spencer. “They are already organic, but it helps to have another set of eyes looking at their operation. There are things available through the EFP that can help them achieve environmental and economic sustainability. Having an EFP sign to display also adds another layer of credibility.” Vale Farms is already working towards the completion of their next EFP project with Spencer’s guidance – an on-farm composter.

## LEASED LAND

The Environmental Farm Plan is also available for those who lease land. “As long as you have at least a five-year lease and are managing the property, you qualify,” explains Spencer. “If you have a long-term government lease for grazing etc., and have to protect the riparian areas, you can apply for funding to complete projects, even on crown land.”



Don and EFP Planning Advisor, Peter Spencer, discuss the benefits of the program.



Vale Farms’ upgraded irrigation system is a “1000% improvement” according to Don Hladych.



Duteau Creek Smolt Imprinting Pond stabilizes coho stocks and attracts herons, an added bonus.

Become an #EFPchampion. Call 1-866-522-3447, or visit [www.bcefp.ca](http://www.bcefp.ca)

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