

Growing BC's Cannabis Economy

A Plan for Jobs, Investment and Global Growth

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CANNABIS CULTIVATORS OF BC
British Columbia, Canada

CANNABIS
CULTIVATORS OF B.C.

CANADA

About CCBC

The Cannabis Cultivators of British Columbia (CCBC) is the leading voice for BC's licensed cannabis producers and processors, representing companies responsible for the majority of cannabis production and production-related employment in the province. We work collaboratively with licensed producers of all sizes, retailers and other industry partners to advance a strong, competitive and responsible legal cannabis sector.

Our members have invested in British Columbia, created jobs in communities across the province and built businesses that increasingly compete in global markets. This strategy reflects our view of what is needed to unlock the industry's next phase of economic growth — creating more BC jobs, attracting investment, expanding exports and generating greater economic value for the province.

An Economic Development Strategy for British Columbia

British Columbia has an opportunity to build on one of its fastest-growing industries as a significant source of private-sector jobs, exports, investment and economic growth.

In 2025, BC's licensed cannabis sector contributed **$2.65 billion to provincial GDP, an increase of approximately 49% in a single year.**[1] Cannabis generated approximately **$667 million in farm cash receipts, making it BC's most valuable crop.** The sector supports approximately **5,300 jobs**, generates approximately **$190 million in tax revenue annually**, and includes more than **200 federally licensed producers and cultivators**, with established strengths in cultivation, processing, product innovation and genetics. [2]

This economic contribution has been achieved despite significant regulatory and tax burdens, barriers to accessing some traditional agricultural and economic development programs, and continued competition from an illicit market that accounted for an estimated **39% of cannabis consumed in BC in 2024**.

BC has already built a globally competitive cannabis industry. The opportunity for the next government is to build an economic development strategy around it, one designed to grow investment and exports, strengthen BC businesses and double the number of jobs supported by the legal sector.

With a focused economic development strategy, BC can build on an industry that already exists at scale and turn cannabis into a larger engine for private-sector job creation, exports and regional economic growth.

CCBC recommends that government establish a **BC Cannabis Economic Development Strategy**, built around five priorities.

1. RECOGNIZE CANNABIS AS A PRIORITY BC ECONOMIC SECTOR

Move beyond managing cannabis primarily as a regulated substance and recognize it as an established and contributing BC agricultural, manufacturing and export industry.

Cannabis businesses should have equitable access to the economic development, agriculture, innovation, workforce, investment and export supports available to other major BC industries. This should include designating a dedicated cannabis sector lead within the Ministry of Jobs and Economic Growth, responsible for advancing the industry's economic development priorities, coordinating across government, and providing a clear point of accountability for investment, trade, competitiveness and job creation.

Government should establish measurable targets for GDP growth, private-sector employment, investment, exports and legal-market capture and report annually on progress.

2. REDUCE THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS IN BC

The cost of building, operating and scaling a business in BC is increasingly challenging. Cannabis producers face rising costs for construction, energy, labour, property and capital, compounded by cannabis-specific taxes, provincial markups and government fees. Together, these costs constrain investment, expansion and job creation and affect BC's ability to compete for new investment.

Government should examine the total cost environment for cannabis businesses operating and investing in BC, including both broader business costs and cannabis-specific government charges, and identify opportunities to improve the province's competitiveness as a place to build, produce and scale.

The objective should be straightforward: BC should be a competitive place to invest, build and grow a cannabis business.

3. MAKE BC CANADA'S CANNABIS EXPORT LEADER

Global medical cannabis markets are expanding and BC already has the cultivation expertise, infrastructure and reputation to compete.

Yet BC has historically captured a smaller share of Canadian cannabis exports than its share of domestic production. That gap represents an economic opportunity.

Government should make cannabis a priority within BC's trade diversification agenda by providing equal access to export programs, trade missions, international market development and investment attraction initiatives.

BC should also advocate federally for faster, more predictable export permitting and regulatory systems that allow Canadian producers to compete effectively in global markets.

4. BUILD A STRONGER BC MARKET

Economic development begins at home.

Government should modernize wholesale and distribution policies to improve opportunities for BC producers of every size, enhance Direct Delivery, strengthen farmgate opportunities and improve the visibility and competitiveness of BC-grown and craft products in the provincial market.

At the same time, government should continue efforts to move consumers from illicit to regulated cannabis. Every purchase shifted into the legal economy supports legitimate BC businesses, employment, public revenues and regulated product standards.

5. REDUCE RED TAPE AND CHAMPION NATIONAL REFORM

Nearly a decade after legalization, cannabis businesses continue to operate within a complex system of federal and provincial requirements that too often duplicate administration, add unnecessary complexity and divert resources away from productive economic activity.

BC should take a national leadership role in modernizing cannabis regulation, working with the federal government and other provinces to reduce duplication, improve regulatory efficiency and remove unnecessary barriers to growth. Priorities should include a single national excise stamp, streamlined reporting and administration, modernized branding and packaging rules, more efficient approvals and greater interprovincial alignment.

Regulation should be proportionate to risk and evolve as the legal market matures. Reducing unnecessary administrative burden does not mean reducing appropriate oversight. It means ensuring regulation is efficient, effective and supports a competitive legal industry.

The Opportunity

BC's next phase of cannabis policy should be about more than legalization.

It should be about **economic development.**

A $2.65-billion legal industry growing at 49% annually deserves the same strategic attention government gives other sectors capable of generating exports, investment and good private-sector jobs.

With a coordinated strategy across agriculture, economic development, trade, finance and regulation, British Columbia can build on an advantage it already possesses and establish itself as the world's leading jurisdiction for responsible, innovative and economically competitive cannabis production.

The opportunity is already growing here. Now is the time to build on it.

Sources:
[1] Statistics Canada, provincial GDP by industry and 2025 farm cash receipts data.
[2] Statistics Canada international merchandise trade data; CCBC 2026 Policy Paper.