

## Democratizing farmland ownership, regenerating ecosystems, and rebuilding rural communities in Canada.

Common-Lands.ca is a hybrid land ownership platform designed to address Canada's converging crises of farmland succession, food insecurity, ecological degradation, and rural decline. It enables everyday Canadians to co-invest in farmland that is stewarded by new, regenerative farmers through transparent, community-aligned ownership models.

The platform blends land trusts, cluster-farmstead ownership models, and investment structures to ensure farmland remains productive, human-centred, and locally owned.

### Vision and Mission

**Vision:** A future where Canadian farmland is democratically owned, ecologically stewarded, and embedded in thriving, local, community-based food systems.

**Mission:** To make farmland accessible to the next generation of farmers by enabling Canadians to co-invest in land that grows food, regenerates ecosystems, and revitalizes rural communities.

### The Problem

- Most Canadian farmers are over 55, with no succession plan.
- Young farmers are priced out of land ownership and burdened by debt.
- Farmland is increasingly financialized and consolidated by corporations.
- Food systems are fragile, export-oriented, and vulnerable to global shocks and inflation.
- Rural communities are hollowing out, a trend accelerated by automation and AGI.
- Large, chemical-based farms have environmental issues (soil degradation, water pollution, chemical dependency, climate vulnerability), economic issues (thin margins and high risk, consolidation, financialization, local economic leakage), community issues (rural depopulation, loss of farm autonomy, erosion of farming knowledge), and food system issues (fragility, nutritional ..., land-food-people disconnection) and health issues (chemical exposure, pollinator collapse, soil microbiome loss) and systemic issues (reduced resilience, labour displacement, loss of public control).
- Monoculture produces less calories and less local income per acre than small, diverse farms.
- Urban families desire rural, agrarian lifestyles with connection to land and community
- Typical agriculture zoning is based on 1950's version of small family farms and not up to solving any of the issues above
- AI-driven workforce displacement will mean millions of people may not need, or want, to live in cities.

### The Solution

Common-Lands creates a new ownership and stewardship model for farmland. The platform purchases land at fair market value using pooled capital, places it into long-term stewardship structures, and leases it to new farmers under equity-building agreements. Investors receive stable returns and transparent impact reporting, while communities benefit from local food production, jobs, and ecological regeneration.

### Platform & Operating Model

Stage one:

- community-based land ownership projects
- Land-holding entities (trusts, co-ops, or mission-aligned corporations)

Stage two:

- Digital investment and land-matching platform
- Farmer access and stewardship services

The platform connects land, farmers, investors, communities and land-owners, manages legal and financial structures, and provides ongoing impact reporting on soil health, food production, and community outcomes.

### Key Stakeholders

- New & Aspiring Farmers – secure land access with paths to ownership
- Participatory Investors – community-aligned capital with food and land benefits
- Portfolio Investors – stable, ESG-aligned farmland exposure
- Retiring Farmers – dignified exits that preserve land legacy
- Municipalities & Food Hubs – strengthened local food systems and rural economies
- Farmstead cluster participants - agrarian-lifestyle connection to a working farm

### Business Model Overview

**Revenue Streams:**

- Asset management fees (0.5–1.5% AUM)
- Farmer leases or crop-share agreements
- Land appreciation and equity buybacks
- CSA subscriptions and food credits
- Grants, philanthropy, and public infrastructure funding

### Pilot Project:

#### Sunrise Acres – Cluster Farmstead.

Sunrise Acres is the first flagship project under the Common-Lands model. Located on an agricultural parcel, it is designed as a cluster farmstead combining multiple small regenerative farms with shared infrastructure. The site includes diversified vegetable production, orchards, small livestock, shared storage and processing space, and a CSA-oriented distribution model serving nearby communities.

#### Sunrise Acres Objectives:

- Lower barriers for 3–6 new farmers through shared land and infrastructure
- Improve farmland, local community and livelihood
- Demonstrate regenerative practices at a community scale
- Provide participatory investors with food credits and local engagement
- Act as a replicable template for future cluster farmsteads across Canada

### Governance and Stewardship

Land at Sunrise Acres is held in a long-term stewardship structure that prevents speculation and limits resale. Farmers operate under regenerative land-use agreements, with soil health, biodiversity, and water metrics tracked annually. Community and investor representation is embedded through reporting and limited governance rights.

### Scalability and Growth

Common-Lands will scale through regional hubs, beginning with 2–5 pilot sites, expanding to provincial clusters, and ultimately forming a national commons of stewarded farmland. Growth is enabled through blended finance, partnerships with land trusts and municipalities, and a standardized digital platform.

### Long-Term Impact

By 2040, Common-Lands envisions hundreds of thousands of acres held in trust, revitalized rural towns, and a generation of farmers who see agriculture as dignified, viable work. Investors become partners in ecological and social renewal, not extractive landholders.

### Conclusion

Common-Lands.ca represents a structural shift in how farmland is owned, financed, and stewarded in Canada. By aligning capital with community and ecology, and by starting with tangible projects like Sunrise Acres, the initiative offers a realistic, scalable path toward food sovereignty, rural renewal, and shared prosperity.