

**KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE**  
**Agriculture Strategy Support**  
**Committee of the Whole—2018-2019 Operating Budget Review**  
**Dept. of Health and Social Services—February 28, 2018**

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Okay, I appreciate the help with that. Where in the department is the agricultural strategy funding located? Thanks, Mr. Chair. Is this the right section? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. I shall note that we are reviewing the summary on 171 to 173. I'm sure if you looked beyond that you may find what you're looking for. Have you got another question to this summary activity?

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I'm trying to determine where in the departmental budget the -- well the agricultural strategy implementation is in this section, at least \$50,000 of it, from schedule 3 of the business plan, but I think the Minister talked about there being \$498,000 for the agricultural strategy. So can he tell me what the \$50,000 in this activity is for and where the rest of money is found? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the bulk of the money for the agricultural strategy and the positions that are being created is on page 178. There is \$50,000 that appears in this section, but it's mostly for some of the contract work we're doing up front to get the work done to make this go live. So it's for subcontracting services that we have. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Minister Abernethy. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes. So the Minister said that the \$50,000 in this activity is for contract services. Can the Minister tell us what that money is going to be used for? Thanks Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Abernethy.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the \$50,000 for a jurisdictional review of public health legislation and regulations and identification and development of the NWT regulatory changes under the Public Health Act that are harmonized with federal and GNWT legislation related to public health and agriculture. It's a contract of \$50,000. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

...later...

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I think this section of the budget is where the Minister indicated there were going to be three people hired to help with implementation of the agricultural strategy. Can the Minister tell us what those individuals are going to do generally? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson):** Thank you. Minister.

**HON. GLEN ABERNETHY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, there are a couple of things happening. The first thing that we are doing is we are looking forward to putting regulations in. We are almost done getting those regulations ready to go for the sale and distribution of low-risk foods, so that is things like vegetables and other things that can be grown, potatoes, this, that, and the other. If those items are going to be sold by local producers, we need to make sure that the food is inspected, the food is safe, and that it is meeting certain criteria. Those would be outlining the regulations.

To operationalize that, we need a few people to make that happen, which includes an epidemiologist in Yellowknife, an environmental health officer in Hay River, and I am forgetting the title, but an environmental protection officer, I think, in Yellowknife, so three positions that will be doing that work. They will be helping our producers make sure that the food is meeting standard so that it can be sold in stores. They are also anticipatory as well, because in 2018-2019 we are looking at moving forward with regulations on any other work that needs to be done on higher-risk foods, which includes meat and other things that may be harvested, so it can be sold in stores as well. A couple of different things are happening; round 1, low-risk vegetables, fruits, if you can figure out how to grow them in the North, and things like that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.