

Cultivating Innovation: Agri-foodtech in the Metro Vancouver region

Agri-foodtech is transforming how we grow, process, and distribute food.

The world needs food systems that are more efficient, sustainable, and resilient to deal with challenges arising from labour shortages, climate change, and global supply chain disruptions.

Firms working on the solutions are turning to the Metro Vancouver region, with its attractive combination of diverse agricultural producers, an established food-processing base, an advanced technological ecosystem, and easy access to global markets.

Agri-foodtech refers to the innovative use of technology to improve the production, processing, and distribution of food. It encompasses on-farm technologies such as smart irrigation and crop monitoring; food processing innovations that improve efficiency, food safety, shelf life and nutritional value; supply chain and logistics platforms that improve distribution and reduce waste; new foods such as plant-based protein alternatives; and consumer-facing food-related technologies.



Global market access



Ecosystem support



Thriving tech scene



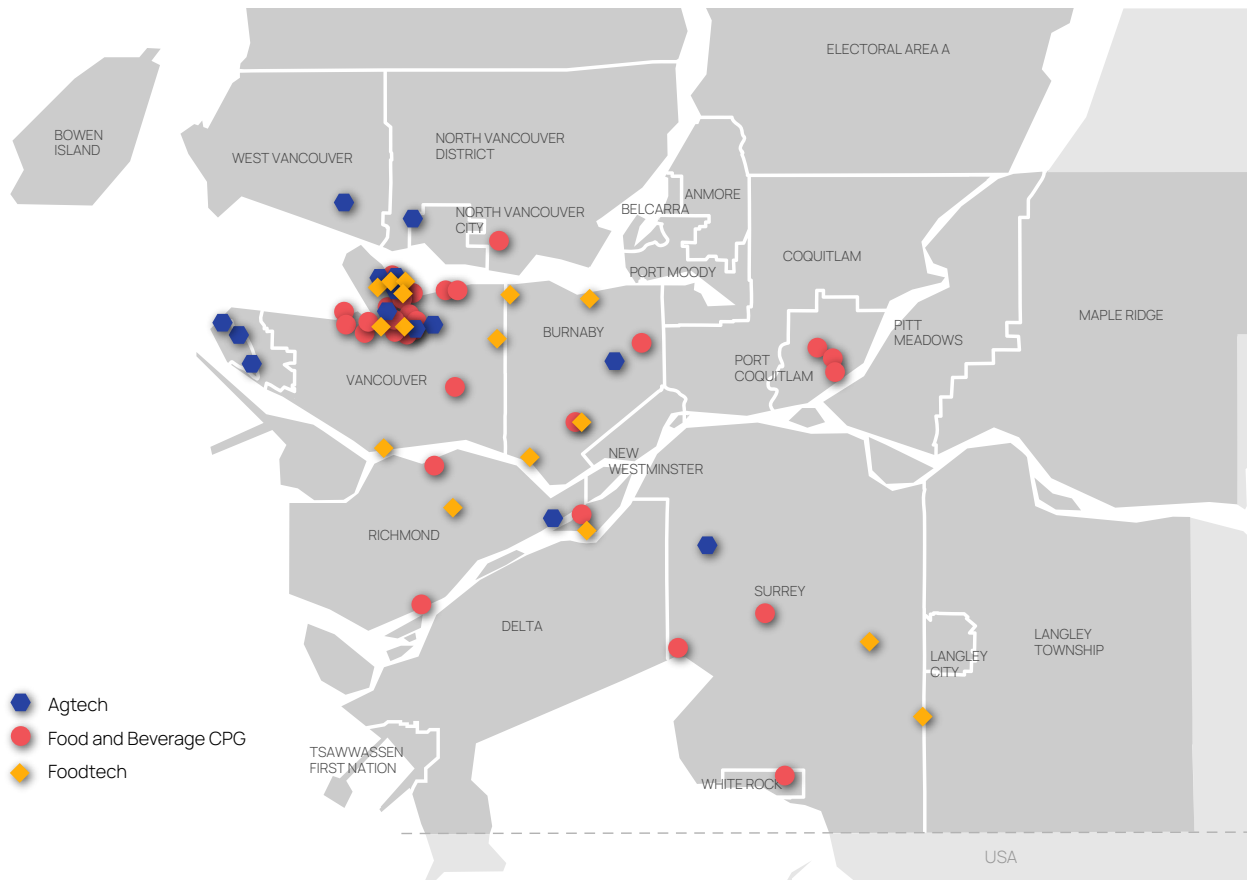
Local demand for innovation



Ideal consumer test market

The Metro Vancouver Region's Agri-foodtech Advantage

- **Growing demand for agri-foodtech innovations:** The region is an important agricultural producer – fruits, field crops, and greenhouse-grown vegetables, plus livestock, particularly dairy and poultry – and is home to most of the province's food processing and distribution activity. These producers, processors, and distributors are the customers for agri-foodtech innovation.
- **A strategic location with global access:** The region has extensive port infrastructure and acts as Canada's gateway for trade to the entire Asia-Pacific region, plus rail and road links to the rest of North America and global connectivity through Vancouver International Airport. Canada's trade agreements provide access to over 1.5 billion consumers across 51 countries, including comprehensive free trade access to the entire G7 and European Union.
- **Access to specialized tech talent:** The region has a thriving tech sector, providing agri-foodtech firms with access to world class talent in software, artificial intelligence, robotics, and biotechnology plus research centers at leading universities. A strong agricultural base plus cross-sectoral tech and innovation expertise converge in the Metro Vancouver region.
- **A supportive agri-foodtech ecosystem:** SFU's BC Centre for Agritech Innovation and the Food and Beverage Innovation Centre, managed by UBC, play a critical role in accelerating agri-foodtech development by fostering collaboration between industry, academia, and government. They provide funding, expertise, and infrastructure to support technology commercialization and workforce development.
- **A large, diverse consumer base:** The Metro Vancouver region is an agricultural producer, a key export hub for Canadian agricultural products, and home to a large, ethnically diverse population. The combination of access to raw commodities and a strong consumer base make it an appealing location for agri-foodtech development and value-added processing.



Agtech	Food and Beverage CPG	Foodtech
29 Companies  • 10 Ag Biotech • 1 Agrifinance & eCommerce • 3 Animal Ag • 6 Indoor Farming • 9 Precision AG	37 Companies  • 8 CPG Beverages • 14 CPG Foods – Fresh • 11 CPG Food - Shelf Stable • 4 Tobacco & Cannabis	21 Companies  • 5 Alt-proteins • 2 Bio-engineered Foods • 5 eCommerce • 2 Food Production • 7 Restaurant & Retail Tech



Agri-foodtech Investment Patterns

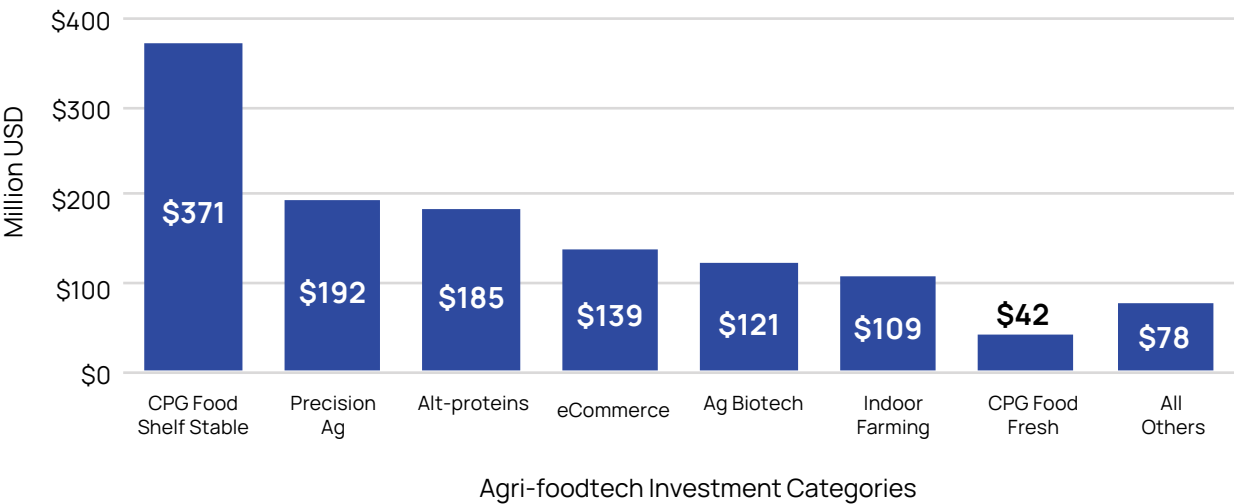
The Metro Vancouver region is emerging as a key player in Canada’s agri-foodtech landscape, with strong investment activity reflecting both national and regional strengths.

Between 2020 and 2024, firms headquartered in the region attracted \$1.2 billion USD in funding. The \$371 million raised by firms in consumer packaged goods, \$192 million by those in precision agriculture, and \$185 million in alternative proteins

underscores the region’s role in advancing innovation beyond traditional agriculture. Canada’s strong focus on agritech compared to global norms is reflected locally in our region, where investment in precision agriculture and sustainable food innovation is particularly robust, positioning the region as a hub for value-added agri-foodtech development.

Investments in Agri-foodtech Companies Headquartered in Metro Vancouver region

(2020-2024, \$US millions)



Source: PitchBook, 2024

Key Opportunity Areas

The Metro Vancouver region offers strong long-term potential for investment and growth in agri-foodtech, with opportunities across smart farming technologies, greenhouse and controlled environment agriculture, plant-based proteins and ingredients, sustainable packaging solutions, biotech and synthetic production, and health products. These segments align with global agricultural trends towards automation and sustainability, and a consumer-driven focus on healthier foods.

Field Crops and Smart Farming Innovation: Agri-foodtech firms can collaborate with vegetable and fruit growers in the region to test their solutions under real-world conditions, helping producers improve yields and boosting a firm's appeal for investors.

Controlled Environment Agriculture: The established cluster of greenhouse operators and emerging group of vertical farms present opportunities to introduce solutions for automation in harvesting and sorting, advanced food safety and traceability systems, and AI-driven crop health monitoring to reduce labour reliance and make production more cost-effective and sustainable.

Food Processing and Packaging: The region offers opportunities for automation in meat and berry processing, and innovation in health products and sustainable packaging. The presence of many farms operating under supply management combined with

the region's established processing infrastructure provides an ideal environment for the adoption of innovation in dairy and poultry production.

Plant-Based Proteins and Ingredients: Direct access to raw materials (produced locally or moving through the region enroute to export via the port) and the culturally and ethnically diverse local population are an appealing combination for the development and test-marketing of plant-based protein products.

Biotech and Synthetic Production: Through advancements in precision fermentation, alternative proteins, and bio-based materials, with emerging opportunities in cosmetics, as well as bio-resin development for sustainable packaging and coatings, innovative biotech and synthetic food solutions align with increasing demand for eco-friendly products.

Upcycled Ingredients and Food Waste: The emerging upcycled ingredients sector presents a significant agri-foodtech opportunity by repurposing food waste into value-added products, aligning with growing consumer demand for sustainable food options and promoting a more circular economy.

Health Product Food and Beverage Companies: The latest advancements in food science and biotechnology can be used to develop products that tap into the growing consumer interest in wellness and preventative health care.

Strengthening the Industry and Fostering Innovation

The Metro Vancouver region is at the forefront of agri-foodtech innovation, using technology to enhance efficiency, sustainability, and competitiveness across key agricultural and food processing sectors. With its strong technology ecosystem, diverse agricultural production, established food and beverage processing industry, and access to global markets, the region is an attractive place for agri-foodtech innovation.



Download the full industry analysis to learn more about the agri-foodtech industry

Interested in the Metro Vancouver region?
Contact us at info@investvancouver.ca

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