



Grand Opening of Nova Scotia's Newest Poultry Processing Plant

Beth and Cameron Taylor hosted the grand opening and open house of Cogmagun Poultry Processing Company Ltd. on Monday, April 11, 2011 on their farm in Centre Burlington, Hants County. The mother and son business partners have been working toward this day for two years. As owners of Mill Acre Farm, Beth and Cameron have focused on raising beef, free range pork, lamb and forage. Two years ago, they made the decision to expand their on-farm poultry processing facility by constructing a new provincially inspected poultry abattoir. They have been operating a small plant for local family producers for four years processing chickens, turkeys, ducks and geese. When the opportunity to expand presented itself to them a few years ago, they felt that the time was right to diversify their operation further. They started by making this adventure a new company, separate from their farm business.

The Taylors worked with William Feltmate, Senior Meat Inspector, over the past two years designing the floor plan, overseeing construction and finally preparing for the grand opening of the 2600 square foot facility. One of the goals for the Taylors is to provide value added options for licensed poultry producers as well as family producers. They will be offering such options as cutting, a variety of packaging, weighing, labeling and freezing. The Taylors are looking to produce free range chicken and turkey as part of their operation in the future as well. The "buy local" and "meet your



View of the new Cogmagun Poultry Processing Company building.

farmer" campaigns have taken off and the number of people interested in how and where their food is grown is expanding every year and the Taylors are part of that movement.



From left to right: Chuck Porter, MLA Hants West and Agricultural Critic, Honorable John MacDonell, NS Minister of Agriculture and Cameron Taylor, Past President of Hants County Federation of Agriculture and co-owner of Cogmagun Poultry Processing Company Ltd. Mr. MacDonell and Mr. Porter are shown offering congratulations, support and encouragement to Cameron and his family on the Grand Opening of the new provincially inspected poultry plant in Centre Burlington, Hants County, NS.

Beth and Cameron wish to thank everyone who came out to the grand opening and also those who sent congratulatory wishes their way. They wish to especially thank the Honorable John MacDonell, Minister of Agriculture; Chuck Porter, MLA for West Hants and Agricultural Critic; Paul LaFleche, Deputy Minister of Agriculture; Laurence Nason, Executive Assistant to the Minister; Leo Muise, Executive Director of Legislation and Compliance; William Feltmate, Senior Meat Inspector; Beth Densmore, President of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture; David Morse, Federal Conservative candidate for Kings Hants and Mark Rogers, Federal NDP candidate for Kings Hants for their words of support and encouragement .



Bringing Value to the National Discussion

Henry Vissers

Executive Director, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

Over the past year there has been an increase in discussion on food policy. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture has set out an ambitious course to develop a National Food Strategy; (<http://www.nationalfoodstrategy.ca/>) that is described as: "...an industry led initiative with an objective to develop a mission and long-term strategy for the Canadian food system together with all players along the food chain from primary production, input, distributors, processors, retail and consumers." The effort is to bring all the stakeholders around the table so it is a truly national strategy. An alignment of values will be necessary and the players will have to develop enough trust to share information and develop common goals. The NFS mission of ... "providing safe and nutritious food through a vibrant, competitive, responsive and sustainable farming, processing, distribution and sales sector" sounds similar to value chain statements.

It reminds me of a conference on Value Chains I attended a few years ago in Dartmouth. A speaker at this conference gave a live demonstration of how a value chain gets started. She pulled people out of the audience to represent the various parts of the value chain; she then asked them to discuss with each other what each sector needed to get the product to market. Even in this simulated situation you could see people defending their own position. It was a great demonstration of how difficult it is for different players to change the competitive culture and collaborate so all pieces of the chain retains some value.

In another recent report, David McInnis CEO of Canadian Agriculture Policy Institute (CAPI) reviewed the CAPI Report titled Canada's Agrifood Destination (http://www.capi-icpa.ca/destinations/CAPI-Destination_ExecSumm.pdf) at the April Council of Leaders meeting. In the report he called for Canada to take a strategic approach to Agriculture, that we must think longer term than 5 years, more like 15 years, and we must set targets, they suggest a few but the argument is that they must be set, not that CAPI should set them. They call it a systems based approach rather than a value chain; I think they contradict their own statement since they say in the executive summary:

"Getting the ingredient or food to the consumer's plate takes a value chain, including input providers, producers, distributors, processors and retailers. All levels of government are also part of this system, acting as policy makers, regulators, funders and facilitators. As well, scientists, researchers and entrepreneurs contribute ideas and new technologies."

Because of the interest in a National Food Strategic position from these two national organizations the media has shown an increase in interest in food. There have been a number of articles in the national press and it has been picked up in the Federal election. One gets a bit skeptical over time, but maybe this discussion will spark decision makers to take a longer term view of agriculture, beyond the annual budget process and 5 year federal provincial agreements. comment? email: hvissers@nsfa-fane.ca

April Council of Leaders Meeting Highlights - April 12 & 13

Farm Programs for 2011

The first item on the Council agenda was a presentation by the NSDA on programs to be available for the current year. The Minister, Deputy Minister and 6 – 7 Department officials were present to explain the impact of the recently announced provincial budget and what this means for the agriculture budget. It was good to see, that after a concerted NSFA lobby effort this winter, the total budget dollars available to agriculture were not cut.

Council members were disappointed, however, to learn that the Farm Investment Fund is being eliminated. It will be replaced by programs aimed at the government's key priority areas identified as: 1) Innovation, 2) Business Development and BRM, 3) Environment, and 4) Quality Assurance. Details of funding programs to be available to farmers were not provided and this left council members with a great degree of uncertainty and concern. It was made known that there will not be a tile drainage program this year, which initiated an impassioned plea from farmers to restore this to some degree or the only installer left in the province will be forced to cease operations. The Deputy Minister agreed to do more consultation on the NSDA's tile drainage position.

The Minister indicated that he is eliminating the sliding scale for maximum program dollars available in an effort to provide dollars to more farms overall. The maximum limit per farm will be \$10,000. In addition farmers can also obtain dollars from the Soil Enhancement Program. The Minister was also asked if he would look into restoring a provincial investment tax credit system for agriculture and the Minister agreed to look into this.

The meeting ended with a call to improve relationships between NSFA and NSDA and restore the consultation process. If we don't strive to communicate on a rational basis with consideration for each other's point of view, both farmers and NSDA staff will be the losers.

The Federation has a meeting scheduled with the Premier and Minister of Agriculture on May 13th (a Friday!). The program issues will be a major focus of this meeting.

Think Farm Presentation

Rebecca Sooksom and Kevin Bekkers presented information on the NSDA's Think Farm program. They are trying to help people make decisions as to whether they really want to be a farmer or not. If they decide to go ahead then Think Farm will help them network and connect to the programs and agencies which might help them.

President's Comments

Beth Densmore, in her comments, stated that "the NSDA's presentation on programs was very disappointing. Although Agriculture did not take a cut in the budget, we are unsure as to how programs are going to roll out". She promised that the Federation would take action to find out more details about the NSDA budget as soon as possible. She then thanked the individuals and groups which had supported NSFA in its lobby effort to maintain the agriculture budget with no cutbacks for 2011.

Request For Affiliation from the Christmas Tree Council

Jim Delong, President and Matthew Wright, Executive Director of the Christmas Tree Council were present to answer questions prior to the vote on their organization's proposed affiliation with NSFA. A motion to accept the Christmas Tree Council as a member of NSFA was adopted.

Farm Safety Nova Scotia

Peter Morine gave a progress report on the work which is ongoing in support of establishing the new organization for the promotion of farm safety and to provide farmers with information to assist them to be compliant with OH&S. The biggest hurdle to overcome is to find a method for continuing funding for this work.

A budget was presented for ongoing work of the FSNS and it is being proposed that it be funded through a surcharge on the Farm Registration System amounting to 14 % billed to all registrants. This would provide annual funding in the range of \$85,000. The proposed funding will have to be passed by the NSFA annual meeting and go through Order in Council prior to being implemented.



Council Highlights continued

Agricultural Land Use

Peter Elderkin made a presentation to the Council meeting explaining the situation which producers are encountering in Kings County if they try to sell land and the impact this is having on the farmers' financial situations.

Another issue identified was the fact that the Government of Nova Scotia has still not added agricultural land as a type of land eligible for coverage through the Conservation Easement Act.

After further discussion the NSFA Council agreed to forward a letter to the Minister of Service Nova Scotia with a copy to the Premier providing a copy of the NSFA Policy on Agricultural Land Use and reaffirming the fact that where agricultural land is to be protected, that it not be done at the expense of the farmers but that compensation must be paid. The letter will also remind government that the Federation is waiting for their initiatives in response to the recommendations of the Preservation of Agricultural Land in Nova Scotia.

West Nova Agro Request

A request was made for NSFA support for the West Nova Agro position on grain corn coverage through the NS Crop & Livestock Insurance Commission. The Federation decided to form a working group to address this issue and others identified as problems with effective crop insurance coverage. It was also agreed that NSFA will forward a letter of support to the NS Crop & Livestock Insurance Commission and attach a copy of the letter sent to the Federation by West Nova Agro.

Federal Election

There was discussion on the possible involvement of the NSFA in the current federal election campaign. It was noted that agriculture does not seem to be a priority in this election; it is more about a leadership debate. It was left up to each Council member to meet with their local potential MP candidates and discuss the benefits of a vibrant agricultural industry.

Workplace Training Needs For Farmers

A pilot project with the Department of Labour and Advanced Education is now taking place in the central area of the province to address the training needs of farmers in order to improve their business viability. It is hoped that the

needs will be identified this spring with the result that training programs for farmers will be ready to roll out come fall.

Lease Committee Update

The NSFA is currently looking at alternate office locations in order to reduce rental costs while still retaining adequate facilities. A prime location has been identified and the Lease Committee and Executive of the NSFA have been authorized by council to pursue a lease agreement.

Resolutions Committee Report

Information was circulated on the work that the committee has done in regard to the various resolutions passed at the 2010 AGM. This work is ongoing throughout the year.

Miscellaneous

Reports were presented on the activities of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Trade Committee, Communications, and the following commodity groups: Mink Breeders, Fruit Growers, and Potato Marketing Board.

NSFA Communications!

This issue of News and Views was mailed with your complimentary copy of Rural Delivery for the final time. The NSFA have had to look at alternate means to deliver the News and Views. We have found the most cost effective way to send our membership newsletter is through direct (publications) mail. We will deliver News and Views to our membership a minimum of 10 times per year and as always we encourage any feedback on the content and delivery mechanism. We continue to send a weekly update electronically each Friday called NSFA e-News. If you are not receiving this and would like to, please let us know. It is a great way to receive current information on events, programs and the work of the Federation. Other tools we use to communicate are the NSFA website www.nsfa-fane.ca. In the next few weeks, the site will receive a facelift. It will have a great member section, have recent reports, current news and be very easy to navigate. We look forward to offering you these improved communication services. Don't forget to look us up on facebook - www.facebook.com/NSFAMeetyourfarmer or follow us on Twitter - www.twitter.com/nsfa Email Wanda at whamilton@nsfa-fane.ca or call the NSFA office 893-2293 for details on any of our communication services!

Message from Minister MacDonell



Spring has officially arrived in Nova Scotia. While there is still snow in the woods, there are definite signs of spring in the air.

As I shared in the last issue, the sitting of the Legislature and the introduction of our government's budget are clear signs of spring in the province.

This year the Department's overall budget, excluding the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, is \$40,674,000. Of that total, our programs budget is \$14,212,400.

We recognize that the agriculture sector must focus on areas of competitive advantage through innovation, strategic public infrastructure, and business development. For the up coming year (2011-12), we have repositioned all agriculture programs into thematic areas to align with our core priorities as identified in HomeGrown Success, our 10-year plan for agriculture.

The programs are connected by themes and include Programs and Business Risk Management programs as well as other departmental development initiatives such as ThinkFarm. These changes reflect the department's business planning and policies.

While the Farm Investment Fund will no longer continue as it has in previous years, the new programs structure is more flexible and better aligns with joint funding with other funding agencies. The funding under new thematic areas is coupled with \$400,000 for the introduction of our soil amendment program, a new Infrastructure Investment program \$450,000 and additional funding of \$500,000 to support the 10-year plan for agriculture. Overall, there is a net gain of \$350,000 to programs.

The four areas under the new program structure include innovation, business development (including business risk management programming), environment, and quality assurance, which includes

food and farm safety, traceability and biosecurity.

The innovation area is about competitiveness and includes technology development, supporting the innovative capacity of farmers, commercialization of new opportunities for agri-based products, graduate research training initiatives, and strategic investment fund.

The business development area focuses on development of sound business principles and risk management. Funding is available for items such as industry business development, business risk management, a new entrant initiative, agriculture awareness and education, service delivery improvement, genetic enhancement, wildlife compensation and the strategic infrastructure investment fund. The environment theme includes energy conservation projects and assessments, beneficial management practices, environmental farm plan, soil amendment, biodiversity and agro-environmental.

Finally, quality assurance focuses on the protection of human health and market competitiveness and includes farm safety and food safety outreach projects, traceability programs and biosecurity projects.

Producers can apply for more targeted funding that reflects their needs, whether they are a primary producer or a secondary processor.

The new programs are more flexible, they align with federal agricultural objectives and outcomes, and they support business development and competitiveness of agri-businesses. They also provide flexibility to the applicant, while supporting the agriculture sector with improved programs and service delivery.

I invite all agricultural producers, processors, researchers and agri-businesses to attend an information session in your area regarding updates to the 2011-2012 programs, or contact programs staff in the Department for more information.

Sincerely,
John MacDonell
Minister of Agriculture



2021 Outlook Session

The NSFA convened the “2021 Outlook Session” as part of the April 12th Council of Leaders meeting held in Debert. The session was intended to lay the groundwork for the NSFA to prepare a Strategic Plan for Nova Scotia’s Agri-food commodity and industry groups. This plan will be designed to ensure the agriculture industry in the province operates sustainably and contributes to the future prosperity of the province.

The session was planned by NSFA staff and the proceedings were facilitated by Bob Fraser of Gardner Pinfold Consulting Inc. A series of five presentations provided participants a perspective on the history of the sector in Nova Scotia, as well as, the emerging policy framework of the Agri-food industry in both the province and Canada. An economic outlook was also provided that summarized the key economic drivers that will shape the Agri-food sector over the next number of years. During the question and answer sessions that followed each presentation participants made sure that they understood the relevant implications of the global, national and local issues addressed.

To ensure that future strategic planning will be based on the realities of producer circumstances a facilitated session was also undertaken. A formal framework guided this process to identify current challenges to industry both on an on-farm level as well as beyond the farm gate. A full discussion followed on what producers viewed as the opportunities for the

industry over the next ten years. These opportunities very clearly arose from their own operating experience as well as how they see their sector fitting into the emerging policy and priority frameworks presented during the conference.

Next steps were discussed as to how best to engage producer organizations and individual farmers in preparing a future strategy.

Watch for the Outlook Report on the NSFA’s web-site



The NSFA Council of Leaders and Commodity Group managers participated in a 2021 Agricultural Outlook Session on April 12th in Debert. Shown above (l to r) are speakers, Jean-Phillipe Gervais, Senior Economist with Farm Credit Canada; David Thibodeau, Statistics Canada; Robert Fraser, Facilitator from Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists; Dr. Greg Cameron, Professor of Political Science and Rural Community Studies, NS Agricultural College; and David McInnes, President and CEO, Canadian Agri-Food Policy Institute.

How Much Water Do You Use?

At this time of year, it usually seems like there is more than enough water around. However, it only takes a few dry weeks during the growing season for us to appreciate our water resources and start taking an inventory of the water available to us. A huge part of managing our water supplies on the farm is knowing how much water we use and need. But, how many of us really know how much water we use?? Installing water meters is one good way to determine the volume of water being used. Knowing what your average water use is will help identify any normally unidentified peaks in water demand due to waterline leaks or faulty plumbing. It also helps determine the impact of water conservation practices or changes in management practices on the farm.

Do you need a water permit?

Having a water meter will also help determine if you need

a water withdrawal permit. In order to help protect our surface and ground water supplies, NS Environment requires a permit if you withdraw more than 23,000 litres of water a day. Obtaining a permit will ensure that you have a sustainable water source. Approved withdrawals are then taken into account when considering new permit applications to ensure sustainable water resources. For more information on obtaining a water withdrawal permit, visit <http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/water/withdrawalApproval.asp> or contact your regional NS Environment office (<http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/dept/division.emc.asp>).

If you are interested in installing a water meter on your farm, contact Trevor at the NS Environmental Farm Plan Program at (902)899-5097 or tdavison@nsfa-fane.ca.

Celebrating Opportunities in Agriculture



Photo compliments of Cedric MacLeod - Shown above are some of the members listening to Justin Beck's presentation while attending the NS Young Farmers Forum Annual Meeting.

Saturday April 9, 2011 Nova Scotia Young Farmers Forum (NSYFF) held their Annual General Meeting and workshop at the Nappan Pavillion in Amherst. There were approximately 30 participants including some from New Brunswick Young Farmers.

The day started off with a business meeting highlighting the 2010 activities of the NSYFF executive and a presentation of the financial position for the year. The Atlantic Young Farmers Governance session held in Moncton in early December was discussed and sparked an in depth discussion on the importance of active committees. From this discussion 3 committees were established; Events, Sponsorship and By-law committees.

The new Board of Directors for 2011-2013 was elected as follows:

Chair - Colin Brown

Vice Chair – Phillip Keddy

Secretary/Treasurer – Kiley Cole

Eastern Director – Pamela Bailey

Central Director – Melissa Fulton

Western Director – Katie Keddy

Past Chair – Nathan Greeno

Other topics of discussion included the Canadian Young Farmers Forum upcoming Annual General Meeting to be held in Halifax in February 2012. This will be a great networking opportunity for young farmers provincially as well as nationally. This discussion ignited the interest of an Atlantic two day

Young Farmer seminar in 2013. This will be a combined Atlantic Young Farmer effort with collaboration between Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI and Newfoundland for speakers, tours, networking, etc.

In keeping with the slogan “Celebrating Opportunities in Agriculture”, Rebecca Sooksom from THINK-FARM discussed the opportunities she is working toward this year as well as some great networking opportunities for NS Young Farmers. The Nova Scotia Young Farmers membership expressed great interest in working with THINKFARM on future workshops.



Photo compliments of Cedric MacLeod - Shown above is the group of Young Farmers along with their hosts on their tour of Waalderbos' Farm.

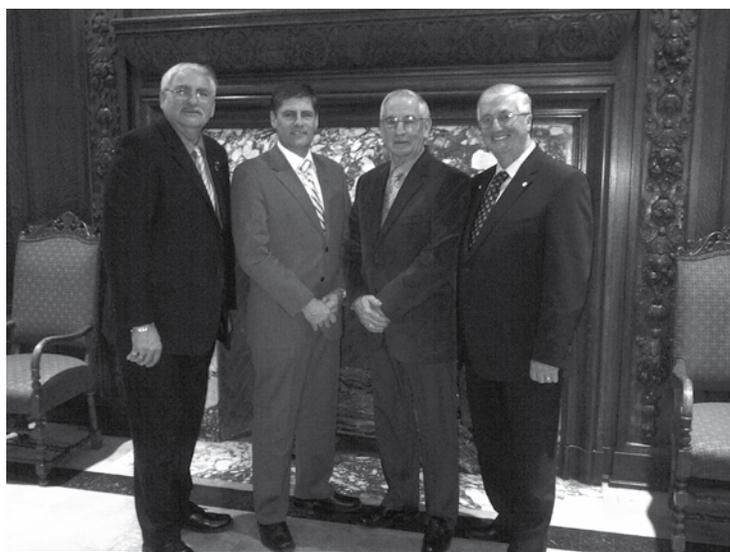
A producer panel consisting of Lacey Fisher, Phillip Keddy and Justin Beck wrapped up the morning session. These young farmers gave excellent presentations on the opportunities and future for Agriculture based on their personal farming endeavors. After a wonderful lunch of beef on a bun, salads, and banana splits hosted by the Cumberland 4-H, the group headed to tour Maritime Pride Eggs and Waalderbos' Robotic milking system. A great day was had by all!

If you are a young individual, between the ages of 18-40 in Nova Scotia and would like to find out more about this group you can email youngfarmers@nsfane.ca or contact Krista by phone at (902) 893-2293.



Now Accepting Applications for the 2011 NS Environmental Stewardship Award!

Do you know a farm that has adopted new practices or technologies or has undertaken projects to protect soil, water or wildlife habitat? The Nova Scotia Environmental Farm Plan program is looking for farms that put stewardship as a priority on their farm operation. We encourage individuals and groups to nominate farms that are contributing positively to the environment. Nominees should be involved in developing the application. As in past years, farm owners can also nominate their own farm. For more information about the award, the application process and the eligibility criteria, please see the enclosed information pamphlet, call 893-2293 or visit www.nsfa-fane.ca/EFP.



Nova Scotia Represented on National Boards

At the recent National Poultry Agencies AGMs held in Ottawa, the week ended with Three National Agency Chairs all from Nova Scotia. Liz Crouse, General Manager of the Natural Products Marketing Council said, "I think this is wonderful news for Nova Scotia and really speaks to the producer leadership here." *Left To right*

David Fuller, Chair, Chicken Farmers of Canada

Mark Davies, Chair, Turkey Farmers of Canada

Dave Davies, Chair, NS Natural Products Marketing Council,

Peter Clarke, Chair, Egg Farmers of Canada

Open Farm Day - Dates Set

OPEN FARM DAY The Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture is pleased to announce the dates for the 10th annual Open Farm Day - Sunday, September 18th, 2011. This year, through our Meet Your Farmer campaign efforts, the NSFA will be co-ordinating the event and promotions around open farm day.

This is a huge opportunity for farmers to get connected with consumers and educate the general public on the value of agriculture in Nova Scotia. For many people, this is their only chance to visit a farm. Please help provide families, tourists, and consumers, young and old, this chance for a first-hand appreciation for farming.

If you are interested in having your farm participate this year, check out more information online at www.meetyourfarmer.ca or contact Wanda Hamilton (902) 893-2293 or email whamilton@nsfa-fane.ca

News & Views

NSFA News & Views is the Newsletter of the NS Federation of Agriculture, the United, Strong & Caring Farm Organization representing the best interest of Nova Scotia's Agricultural Industry.

News & Views is provided free of charge to its members. We value comments and concerns from our members, please direct them to Executive members or the Office Staff.

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