



Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

Media Release

April 7, 2010

A promise is a promise, and then budget time rolls around

Truro – As farmers across the province read budget documents, many are left scratching their heads; where does agriculture fit in the NDP government’s plan? Agriculture not only got left behind in spending increases, the department’s Farm Investment Fund took a hit yesterday, as Minister Graham Steele delivered the 2010 budget.

The Farm Investment Fund (FIF) is available to farmers, through an application process, designed to enhance farm business skills, aid in development of marketing and value-added opportunities or improve the level of environmental management on their farm. Richard Melvin, President of Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture says, “We see the Farm Investment Fund as a necessary tool for the farm community to invest in good and necessary infrastructure.” He adds that, “When farmers are investing, it generates a sizable increase to the tax base of Nova Scotia’s economy, the reduction by 20% of available funding will be sure to have a detrimental affect on the province’s economic stimulus.”

The farm community was also surprised that yesterday’s budget did not announce an enhanced lime program. In May 2009, during pre-election ramblings, the NDP government promised a soil amendment program.

“The NDP view the maintenance of our agricultural soils as having a socio-economic and environmental benefit to all Nova Scotians. Maintaining the pH of our agricultural soils is a public good and service. The NDP will implement a soil amendment program that will assist farm businesses with the maintenance of agricultural soils” —... Better Deal 2009

Mr. Melvin commented that, “It is disappointing that this election promise didn’t find its way into the budget.” “An agricultural soil amendment program represents a cost effective approach to increase the productivity of Nova Scotia’s most valuable resources, its agricultural soils; while providing additional environmental benefits to the general public.”

Another election promise was a commitment from the NDP to work with industry to implement a 10-year strategy based on the groundwork already established by the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture and commodity groups.

Will we see proof of a 10-Year Farm Strategy to improve competitiveness and profitability for agriculture in 2011 as promised? The farm community doesn’t think it can wait!

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The Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture represents the interests of over 2500 farm families in Nova Scotia. Founded in 1895 to provide Nova Scotia’s farm community with a single voice, the NSFA is the province’s only general farm organization.