



News & Views

Canadian Agricultural Safety Week, March 14 - 20, 2010

Down time = losses

The bottom line for any business is profitability. An important part of maximizing profits is minimizing losses – and that includes losses due to injury, illness, or death of the farmer, farm family, or farm workers.

“Plan Farm Safety.” is the theme of this three-year Canadian Agricultural Safety campaign. Each aspect of the theme will be promoted over the next three years. This year the campaign will promote “Plan” with safety walkabouts and planning for safety. In the second year, the focus will be on “Farm” including implementation, documentation and training. In the third year, emphasis will be on “Safety” including assessment, improvement and further development of safety systems.

The year-long “Plan” campaign will be launched with Canadian Agricultural Safety Week (CASW), from March 14 to 20. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) and Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) deliver CASW in partnership with Farm Credit Canada (FCC) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

“Farm safety is a choice, not an act of fate,” says Greg Stewart, FCC President and CEO. “It’s up to each of us to make informed and safe choices in our workplace because in agriculture, even taking small risks can have dire consequences.”

On average, 115 people are killed and another 1,500 are seriously injured by farm-related incidents in Canada each year - and many more minor injuries are never even reported. The cost to our economy for agricultural injuries is estimated at between \$200 and \$300 million annually, shows a study by the Canadian Agricultural Injury Reporting program (CAIR).

Through provincial worker's compensation board programs and private insurance you can partially protect your business from losses incurred from injuries, illness, and death. Although it varies from province to province, most provincial worker's compensation board programs require that employees be covered for benefits that include medical aid, payment for lost time, rehabilitation, permanent disability awards, pensions to dependents, and funeral benefits. An employer's claim history is factored into premium rates with higher claims demanding higher premiums.

However, farm owner-operators and their related workers (children, siblings, and parents) do not necessarily require this coverage in all provinces. This is significant considering that in Canada, 61 per cent of farms are owned and operated by one person, 27 per cent are partnerships, 10 per cent are family corporations, and only 2 per cent of farms are non-family corporations, says Statistics Canada.



	Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture
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Back to Balance and Other Stuff...

Henry Vissers

Executive Director, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

Much has been said lately about the finances of the province and the government's efforts to bring them back to balance. Finance Minister Graham Steele upon his appointment was quick to point out that there are only two ways to do this: stop spending or bring in more income. How many times have I heard that one! The other option, borrowing our way out of debt hasn't been working so well either.

The Back to Balance document on the website identifies a funding shortfall of \$1.4 Billion from now until 2013. That's \$600 M, \$700 M, \$1.1B, \$1.4 B in each of the next 4 years starting with fiscal 09-10. The Finance Minister wants our help in identifying ways to:

1. Increasing revenues
2. Reducing spending
3. Growing the economy over the long term

Many County federations attended the Back to Balance meetings, as outlined in our report to the Balance Budget Road Show, the 2009-10 agriculture budget estimate is \$61.5 million; of that amount \$9.5 million is allocated to legislation and compliance (i.e. food inspection) and ~\$8 million is allocated to the Nova Scotia Agricultural College. These are worthwhile expenditures but when taken from the agriculture budget it leaves less than \$44 million for agriculture programs and services. When taken in context of the estimated budget expenditures of \$ 9,004,000,000 this is 0.48 percent of the overall budget for an industry that is a major driver and wealth creator of our communities. For the 2010-11 budgets we recommend:

- Increase the agriculture budget and reinstate the capacity that was lost to the industry in 2000.
- Implement an enhanced extension model to support revitalization of Nova Scotia agriculture
- Develop policies that encourage increased food and fibre production in Nova Scotia
- Hold the line on all agriculture service fees (i.e. lab fees)
- Invest in capital and infrastructure projects that support agriculture

There are two other major initiatives I should mention, the agriculture land use review committee consultation process is underway, if you can make it to a meeting it will be worth your while both as a participant in the process and to hear the presentation on land use issues. Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture position is "to support the development and implementation of a provincially operated compensation program to ensure that farm owners receive adequate compensation for land where land values are adversely affected by agricultural land use policies/restrictions, and to continue to work with county and regional planning authorities to ensure on-going land use planning meets the needs of the farm community."

It is difficult to see the development of an agriculture land use strategy without an integrated land use strategy for all Nova Scotia land; however this process is a step in the right direction and will help us to develop this overall strategy.

An additional public meeting date has been scheduled for Halifax and surrounding area for Saturday, March 13th. Check the website for details - www.nsaglandreview.com. Submissions can be made in the comment field of NS Agriculture Land Review Committee (ALRC) website at, via email to info@nsaglandreview.com or by Mail to: ALRC - PO Box 816 Kentville NS B4N 4H8

Finally CTAG, an initiative that is complete, at least the report is complete! The Competitive Transition Advisory Report has been presented to the Executives of the Federation and Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture as well as the Federation Council of leaders. The advice presented in the report comes from 22 meetings with farmers and session with industry stakeholders. I invite you to view the full report on our website at www.nsfa-fane.ca.

viewpoint



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From a business perspective, it is imperative to make an informed decision as to what a farm-related incident could cost your business, then have a plan as to how the situation could be handled. Keep in mind that it is estimated that for every one dollar of insured costs there will be five dollars of uninsured costs. Whether it is an insured employee or an uninsured family member, some of the hidden costs of injuries may include:

- Wages to the injured worker not covered and lost time wages on the day of the injury.
- Wages to uninjured workers who stopped to watch or assist the injured, or who depend on the output of the injured worker to complete their task.
- Wages to the person caring for the injured worker including stabilizing the scene and waiting for emergency medical services or taking the worker to the hospital, filling out forms and incident reports.
- An ambulance if the injured worker needs to be rushed to a hospital.
- Damage to product, property or equipment. If these are insured then a deductible may apply.
- Costs associated with instructing, training and repositioning workers, or in some cases hiring new employees.
- Cost of lost production while retraining a replacement, or when the worker returns to work.
- Cost of investigating, processing of claims and related paperwork, telephone calls and follow-up.

If you calculated the costs of each of these considerations – including the number of people and hours multiplied by the hourly wage rate – what would the total uninsured cost be?

Now consider this – if your business runs on a profit margin of five per cent, and if the total

uninsured costs were \$5,000, then your business will have to generate \$100,000 in sales to pay for this incident. Likewise, if your business runs on a two per cent profit margin, then your business will have to generate \$250,000 in sales to pay for this incident. Wouldn't it make better business sense to just prevent the injury in the first place?

As you can see, it makes good business sense to minimize losses through injury prevention. This can be achieved by doing a safety audit on your farm, keeping all machinery in good repair with safe guards in place, having adequate accident insurance coverage, training workers in safe practices, leading by example, and making safety a priority on your farm.

The CFA, FCC, CASA, and AAFC want to remind Canadian farmers to “Plan Farm Safety.”




Now it's time to give yourself a Voice . . .

The Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture is YOUR VOICE in the Agricultural Industry. When filling in your 2010 Farm Registration Form, don't forget to show your support.

Section 5 - Declaration

- I wish to be a member of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture (NSFA)
 I do not wish to be a member of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

For more information on the farm registration process and membership benefits contact,
Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture
332 Willow Street, Suite 201 Truro, N.S., B2N 5A5
Phone ~ (902) 893-2293 / Fax ~ (902) 893-7063 Email ~ info@nsfa-fane.ca Website ~ www.nsfa-fane.ca

Farm Safety Corner

The Occupational Health and Safety Act define a workplace as:

"any place where an employee is or is likely to be engaged in any occupation and includes any vehicle or mobile equipment used or likely to be used by an employee in an occupation".

If you don't have any employees, aren't planning on having employees or feel that your situation can't really be defined as a workplace, it might be assumed these factors would exempt you from coverage of the Act; however the above is only a definition and one of many definitions in the Act so therefore it must be taken in context.

For example, The Act also defines a self employed person as:

"a person who is engaged in an occupation on that person's own behalf but does not include a dependent contractor".

An occupation defined: *"means any employment, business, calling or pursuit.*

Under the Act Section 18(a) a self- employed person has a duty to:

"take every reasonable precaution in the circumstances to protect the self-employed person's own health and safety and that of other persons who may be affected by the self-employed person's undertaking".

This in particular applies to those farmers who do every job themselves, have never had employees and don't plan on having employees. It not only governs the farmer's duty to provide a safe worksite for themselves but also provides to keep family members and any visitors to the farm safe.

The OH&S Act can be found at:

http://www.gov.ns.ca/legislature/legc/statutes/ocph_s.htm

Regulations pursuant to the Act are found at:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/ohsgensf.htm>

Social Opportunity for Young Farmers!

The NS Young Farmers Forum (NSYFF) is taking part in the NSIA Curling Bonspiel at the Truro Curling Club on Saturday, March 13th with a Wagon sleigh ride to follow at Hamilton's in Onslow.

Come out and join in the fun! Please pre-register by contacting Krista by email: youngfarmers@nsfa-fane.ca or call the NS Federation of Agriculture office at 902-893-2293.



NSFA Membership/Farm Registration renewals coming soon...

Farm Registration renewals will soon be mailed to farmers across the province. If you have previously registered your farm, you should receive a form from Service Nova Scotia with your personal information already filled in. We ask that you update any information and complete the remaining sections. Check the box in Section 5 to ensure your NSFA membership and fill in your affiliated County. There is no additional charge for your NSFA membership and a portion of your fee will be returned to your local County Federation to support their work.

More detail is available on our website at www.nsfa-fane.ca/farmregistration. We also encourage you to use the online registration process on the Service Nova Scotia website, <http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/paal/agric/paal005.asp>.

What are the benefits of registering my farm?

- Access to farm assistance programs (EFP, FIF, AgriStability)
- Access to veterinary services and herd health
- No tax on marked diesel fuel
- Zero taxation on farm land

What are the benefits of being a member of NSFA?

- Newsletters and Reports
- Annual General Meeting
- Access to staff and office resources
- Services and promotions

What does the Federation do for me?

- Recognized voice of agriculture
- Public policy
- Research
- Legislative and regulatory reviews
- 'Watchdog' and advocacy group
- Linkage to National issues

To find out more about the work of Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, check out our website www.nsfa-fane.ca or call the Federation office at (902)893-2293.

Important Deadline:

The application deadline to take advantage of the Beef Interest PayDown Program for any interest paid in 2009 is March 31st, 2010. Check out details online www.nsfa-fane.ca or call the Federation Office at 902-893-2293

News & Views

NSFA News & Views is the Newsletter of the N.S. 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 & concerns from our members, please direct them to Executive Members or the Office Staff.

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