

Annual Report 2016



Reports on:
Policy
Resolutions
Committee Activities



Standing Policy Report

Rural Infrastructure Deficit

Transportation and rural road infrastructure has been a focus for the Federation. In winter of 2015 and 2016 we collected issues and concerns on the rural roads including any impact on getting products to market or impacts to your farm deliveries, equipment damage and major safety concerns. We heard about general road condition, pot holes, vegetation and visibility with sides of roads and ditches as well as how dust impacts products. All of the concerns were sent to local area managers within Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR) and follow-up surveys with farmers indicated about a 30% satisfaction rate on work completed from those that responded. We very recently received feedback from TIR on areas that they have addressed; this will be further examined. There will be ongoing dialogue with farmers expressing areas of concern for rural infrastructure and the Federation office connecting with the Department of Transportation. Another area of concern for rural infrastructure is cell and internet service; a submission was made to CRTC's 'Let's Talk Broadband Internet' consultation on the importance of having reliable service for farm businesses.




Policy Background

Farms are businesses and require quality rural infrastructure to ensure success and growth opportunity. Because of the rural nature of farm businesses, rural infrastructure deficits contribute to inefficiencies, inability to upgrade farm operations (e.g.: 3-phase power, technological advances).

Policy Statement:

It shall be the policy of NSFA to work with respective government departments to ensure rural infrastructure needs are being met. Areas of immediate concern are rural roads, cell service and high speed internet.



Regulatory Burden

Policy Background

The regulatory burden in Nova Scotia hinders our industry's competitiveness when compared to other provinces. In part, this burden is caused by unclear, conflicting regulations. Some regulations are time consuming and others require farmers to incur significant costs in order to comply.

Policy Statement:

It shall be the policy of the Federation to lobby Nova Scotia Government for reduction of red tape and regulatory burden so farmers can do business in Nova Scotia. It shall also be the policy of the Federation to work with counterparts at CFA to reduce red tape at the federal level.

It appears that reduction of regulatory burden is also on the radar of provincial government with the establishment of Regulatory and Service Effectiveness Office in 2015. We will have a presentation from Fred Crooks, Department Chair on the work of this group and plans moving forward. It will be a great opportunity for feedback from Federation members. Other initiatives that the Federation has been actively working on with regard to regulatory burden include:

- The Federation was successful in changes to the Utility Charge Fee for Seasonal Agriculture Workers in Nova Scotia.
- Request for Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission to have the authority to make changes to planting and harvest dates without an Order in Council process.
- Advocacy for modernization of Fences Act to update animal definitions and a clear mechanism for dispute resolution. This is expected to pass in the fall sitting of legislature.
- Feedback collected from commodity groups and provided on 'The Regulatory Accountability and Reporting Act'
- Pan Atlantic approach to regulatory issues with the Atlantic Federations of Agriculture including meat regulation and interprovincial trade for wine.
- Support for Bill 274 on Family Business Transfer as well as other advocacy on policy change related to labour.

Agriculture Land use, land development and protection of agriculture land are very active files for the Federation. In 2016, the Land Trust Working Group released its discussion paper, 'Land trusts and agricultural land protection in Nova Scotia'. This report will be part of a panel discussion at the Federation's Annual Meeting in December on Agriculture Land. 2016 also saw the formation of a Land Owners Working Group, a collaborative effort with Forest NS and Federation of Agriculture sharing common concerns as land owners. NSFA made presentations made to Municipal Council; Kings and Colchester with an agriculture committee resulting in the Colchester County. There was also activity with resolutions regarding developing agriculture land that is reported on later in this document. On a national level, there is provincial representation on the CFA Farmland Access Committee which will look at ownership, foreign investor interest and regulation.

Agricultural Land

Policy Background

According to the "Is Nova Scotia Running Out of Agriculture Land" discussion paper by the Agriculture Land Review Committee, Nova Scotia has a little over 29% (1.57 million hectares) of its land classed as Agriculture. Though classed as Agriculture, some of this land is not being used for Agriculture and is growing in with weeds, brush and trees. Increasing the amount of agricultural land under production in the province will have a significant impact on the economy of Nova Scotia including job creation, farm gate sales and economic spinoff.

Policy Statement:

It shall be the policy of the Federation to lobby the Nova Scotia government to implement a well-rounded program to protect agricultural land. A program would include a land bank system along with zero taxation on land owned by a registered farm or land actively maintained as farmland, access to Crown Land for agriculture use, and support for those who are bringing former and new agriculture land into production.

Energy

Policy Background

Energy consumption is inevitable when producing agricultural products. Access to affordable, environmentally responsible and sustainable energy sources is critical to the success of a farm operation. Farms produce by-products that can be used to produce renewable energy. To ensure stability of the industry, renewable, affordable and environmentally responsible sources of energy are required.

Policy Statement:

It shall be the policy of the Federation to lobby the provincial government for access to affordable energy sources and to allow fair and cost effective connection into the distribution grid without placing the burden on the farmers.

The formation of an Agriculture Energy Working group kicked off activity in 2016 with regard to energy generation, consumption and conservation. There is more on the work of this group in the committee report section of this document. There was communication around different scenarios to define the differences between small business industrial, residential and demand meter rates for farmers. The Federation has kept abreast of the activities under the Utility and Review Board (UARB), Direct to Retail hearings. There is also currently a collection of information around needs of three-phase power on farms and a tour with NS Power to visit farms with and without access to this type of power. The Federation is also pleased to provide a presentation of case studies and research of energy on Nova Scotia farms at the annual meeting.

The Federation Executive receives regular updates from Select Nova Scotia and the strategic priorities presented do align with Nova Scotia agriculture and fish products. The Federation provided support to the introduction of the Food Tax Bill, 121 'Fighting Hunger with Local Food Act' in the spring sitting of the legislature. There has been activity in the Halifax Food Policy Alliance identifying policies that impact sustainable food supply in Halifax and work on a provincial basis with a newly formed working group, Direct to Market / Small Scale farmers identifying specific challenges and opportunities for these farm businesses. Our local awareness and collaboration with the Nova Scotia AgAwareness Committee through programs like AgLiteracy week, Meet Your Farmers at the Mall, Farmer for a Day are providing on the ground awareness of agriculture to school aged children. Open Farm Day and Exhibition support are also efforts in local awareness. The Department of Agriculture is supporting research of public trust and consumer trends through the Canadian Center for Food Integrity and a presentation on the national findings of this research will be made at the Federation's annual meeting.

Local Awareness

Policy Background

Increasing awareness of the importance of buying locally produced food and agri-products and which brands are of Nova Scotia origin are major components of increasing the amount of food and agri-products sourced from local farmers.

Policy Statement:

It shall be the policy of the Federation to provide support to government in fulfilling the EGSPA goals. The Federation shall also lobby the government to provide resources for consumers so they can make an informed decision when considering local agricultural products at grocery retail stores. The Federation will also lobby government for the Select Nova Scotia brand to be exclusive to Nova Scotia Agriculture products.

Resolutions Report

The Resolutions Committee held three meetings this past year; one in January to review resolutions that were adopted at the 2015 annual meeting and prepare a report to the February Council of Leaders; a second and third meeting in April and August were held for further progress updates and recommendations. The final meeting of the year will take place in November to prepare resolutions for presentation to the 2016 annual meeting.

The following provides the information on the activity and any decisions made with regards to the resolutions; both current 2015 and the consolidated resolutions.

Tile Drainage Cost Sharing

Activity:

- Letter to Minister of Agriculture and NSDA programs requested equality and 50% cost share for the programs in Resolutions 1 and 6 along with a request to meet with NSDA Programs to discuss this and other programs for 2016/17.
- Letter received from Minister Colwell ('...exploring options to ensure all Nova Scotia farmers have equal access and support to tile drainage and land improvement...')
- Vineyard Expansion program opened with 25% assistance for tile drainage.
- Consolidated with Equal Funding for Ditching, Land Forming and Tiling resolution.




Resolution

Whereas extreme rain events are becoming more common, this can have a negative impact on crops due to drown out; and

Whereas many existing underdrainage systems need to be replaced or upgraded;

Therefore, be it resolved that Kings County Federation of Agriculture work with the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture to request cost sharing for tile drainage be 50% farmer and 50% government. This would bring all farmers up to the same level of assistance that the grape growers are already receiving.



Transportation Assistance for Trucking of CFIA Approved Woodash

Resolution

Whereas soil amendments such as lime and/or wood ash are vital for sustainable agriculture; and

Whereas wood ash contains many beneficial micro nutrients; and

Whereas transportation of lime is presently subject to financial assistance;

Therefore, be it resolved that transportation assistance should also be available for the trucking of wood ash that is CFIA approved on a limestone approved ECCE equivalent. [Effective Calcium Carbonate Equivalent]

Activity:

- Letter sent to Minister of Agriculture and NSDA Programs requested assistance for trucking wood ash be considered resulted in a letter received from Minister Colwell that there will not be support for the addition of wood ash to the Limestone Transportation Assistance program as wood ash does not comply with the intent of the program (that intent being to improve production efficiency by assisting in increasing the pH)

This resolution was modified at the time of adoption to include ECCE which does focus on the argument for benefits of wood ash. This resolution was moved to consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2016)

Up to date description of New Entrant

Activity:

- Email received from NSDA Programs with the following definition. New Entrant: For the purpose of this program, [‘this program’ would refer to programs administered by NSDA including Home Grown Success and FarmNext], an applicant is considered a new entrant for the first five years that the applicant is a registered farm. The requirement of generating \$10,000 in farm income will be waived if the applicant:
 - has registered for the first time during or after the 2011-12 registration year; and
 - must be able to show that it is an active farm, e.g., incurring commodity expenses.
- Information to help clarify the new entrant definition for various scenarios included in November News and Views

This resolution will be retained in Consolidated Resolutions. (Council of Leaders, September 2016)

Resolution

Whereas it is a government goal to achieve a 5% increase in young farmers by 2020; and

Whereas in recent years there have been questions as to what the designation of a new farmer and/or a new entrant farmer actually is; and

Whereas it has created difficulties in accessing some of the various programs designed to help these young people enter agriculture;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture consult with the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture in looking at definitions and create an up to date description of what a new entrant actually is.

Review of Agriculture Building Codes

Resolution

Whereas White Juan was a storm of the century and last winter was another perfect storm; and

Whereas climate change is making weather very unpredictable and extreme; and

Whereas the loss of Extension Services also meant the loss of engineering expertise to consult / advise the Agriculture Minister from time to time; and

Whereas the building code only requires agriculture buildings to meet 70 percent of snow load;

Therefore be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture request the Minister of Agriculture to review the building code with experts to see if 70 percent requirement of snow load fits with today's environment.

Activity:

- Building codes are national codes. There are two codes that apply to farm construction; National Building Code which is regularly updated and Farm Building Code which hasn't been updated since 1995.
- Information has also been shared with Canadian Federation of Agriculture for circulation to provincial counterparts.
- The process to have the farm building codes updated is now on a revised timeline to the year 2020. It is also expected that the farm building codes will become part of the national building codes rather than a separate document. There is provincial representation on the national committee.

This resolution will be retained in Consolidated Resolutions.
(Council of Leaders, September 2016)

Equal Funding for Ditching, Land Forming and Tiling

Activity:

- Confirmation that ditching and land forming are currently funded under BMP for Water Management (at 25%), the request is for equal funding of 50% as requested in Resolution #1.
- Activity as noted in resolution #1.

Resolution

Whereas much of the unused land is marshland; and

Whereas it is unsuitable for tiling; and

Whereas this land needs drainage to be usable;

Therefore, be it resolved that NSFA lobby to have ditching and land forming equally funded with tiling.

Consolidated Resolutions

Fair and Adequate Compensation for Ravishes of Wildlife

It was passed at the April 2016 Council of Leaders meeting that this resolution will expire upon the three (3) year mark this fall [November 2016] and any new resolutions should come forward [to the 2016 AGM] that are specifically related to the current issues.

Organic Transition Fees and Resolution A-14-06, Funding for Season Extension Costs

Programs opened, resolutions were deemed complete and deleted from consolidated resolutions. (Council of Leaders, April 2016)

Funding Program to Support the Development of Agricultural Land

Resolution

Whereas the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture has not funded land clearing activities for the past number of years; and

Whereas the number of farms have increased by 2.5% in Nova Scotia which is contrary to the rest of Canada; and

Whereas many formerly used agricultural lands are beginning to reforest;

Whereas reclaiming former agricultural lands is an effective way to develop more agricultural land;

Whereas there is also forested land that has strong potential for development; and

Whereas development and or expansion of agriculture is a priority for the Nova Scotia Government;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture lobby the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture to deliver a funding program to support development of agricultural land whether land is leased, owned or rented.

2015 Activity

- Agriculture Land Development is also a major policy initiative for the Federation as passed at the 2015 Annual Meeting that will cover land banks, land use and zero taxation of agriculture.
- Land leveling program announced in the summer of 2015, 'Lowbush Blueberry Development Program'.
- The Federation has representation on Land Trust Working Group, Agriculture Land Tax Working Group and CFA's Farmland Trust Working Group
- Project with NSBI and Innovacorp to inventory NS land for agriculture that includes representation from the agriculture community will begin its work if identification of class 4 land and what is available for use.

2016 Activity

- Agriculture land development and bringing agriculture land back into production was also an item of discussion for the government's potential growth strategy.
- The Land Trust working group has released the discussion paper on 'Land trusts and agricultural land protection in Nova Scotia.'
- There will be a panel of guests at the AGM focuses on Agriculture land, planning and trusts.
- Letter sent this fall [2016] to the Minister of Agriculture with a focus on the original intent of this resolution.

Resolution will remain in consolidated resolutions.


Committee Reports

There are three different categories of committee structure within the NSFA. There are internal committees such as the NSFA Executive Committee, Council of Leaders, Resolutions and Nominating Committees that provide the governing and operational oversight for the organization. There are also external committees that have NSFA representation. These committees include, but are not limited to, Atlantic Federations of Agriculture, Joint Executives (of NSFA and NSDA), Agricultural Activities Advisory Committee (NSFA, NSDA and NS Environment), Growing Forward 2 Advisory Committee, Agricultural Awareness, EFP Advisory Committee, ThinkFARM and many more.

The majority of our committee work is through committees and working groups that have been either established by NSFA or are considered joint industry and government committees established to tackle a particular policy, issue or initiative. NSFA generally provides the administrative support for these committees and working groups, includes an NSFA Executive representative and a reporting structure to the Council of Leaders. The following provides a report for the work of these groups in 2016.

Agriculture Energy Working Group

This working group was created this year to enable discussion of opportunities and challenges with energy generation, consumption and conservation as it relates to agriculture in Nova Scotia. There is a broad spectrum of representation from the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, Departments of Agriculture and Energy, Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture, Nova Scotia Power and EfficiencyOne. There were three meetings in 2016 to date. Some of the highlights included discussion on the Federation's energy policy and a presentation on the Farm Energy Saving Project with insight into energy savings on farm by type and technologies used. This is a forum to receive updates on Dalhousie Research projects that are applicable to energy on farms. There were a couple presentations from Nova Scotia Power; one from the Systems Operations Team on net metering generation and the other on the application of time of use tariffs in the agriculture sector. The establishment of the Energy Working group has been positive and influenced an article on power rates in the NSFA News and Views. One other important and more recent activity has been around an energy needs assessment particularly, access to 3-phase power. In mid-October, representatives from this group took part in a farm tour to look at how access (or no access) to 3-phase power impacts for farmers.



To create a forum that will enable discussion of opportunities and challenges with energy generation, consumption and conservation as it relates to agriculture in Nova Scotia.

Committee Members

Chris van den Heuvel (Chair)

Lloyd Dyck

Henry Vissers

Wanda Hamilton

Maxine MacLean

Lisa Lane

Julie Bailey


Kenny Corscadden

Nancy Rondeaux

Sarah Mitchell



Crop Insurance Committee



To provide guidance for issues related to programs administered by the Nova Scotia Crop & Livestock Insurance Commission and to make recommendations for changes to crop insurance programs which are of strategic value to the NS farm community.

Committee Members

John Quinn (Chair)

Trevor Forbes

Greg Webster

Gordon Jackson

Henry Vissers

Wanda Hamilton

Bill MacLeod



The Crop Insurance Committee has been inactive, not having met since December 2014 and no new emerging issues have been reported. During the Council of Leaders meeting earlier this year it was recommended by Soil and Crop Improvement Association that this committee be maintained for another year.

Dead Stock Collection Services Committee

The Dead Stock Committee was very active in the first quarter of 2016. After collection was suspended for care and control issues in 2015, the collection did resume and the committee was successful in finding a collector for Central Region in February. The program worked away to build its collection service in both valley and central regions and developed a business case for continued support from the government. Another challenge in April with the rendering facility no longer accepting the ruminant material hit the program with little to no options and the collection service ceased operation on April 30, 2016. This committee will meet to finalize year-end financials.

To create a forum that will enable timely communication, discussion, and decision making in regard to issues pertaining to the collection of dead stock from farms in Nova Scotia. This will be achieved through a committee which will be known as the Dead Stock Collection Services Committee. This committee provides an oversight role to the administration of the Dead Stock Collection Services Program.

Committee Members

Victor Oulton (Chair)

Dr. Shane Hood

Robert Kerr

Peggy Weatherbee

William Feltmate

Paul Taylor


Larry Weatherby

Herman Berfelo

Henry Vissers

Wanda Hamilton

Direct to Market/Small Scale Working Group



Create a forum that will enable discussion of opportunities and challenges with direct to market and small scale farm businesses.

Committee Members

Chris van den Heuvel

John Quinn

Victor Oulton

Daniel Bruce

Chris deWaal

Michelle Smith

Domenic Padula

Bryan Dyck

Colin Russel

Av Singh

Jaclyn Biggs

Keltie Butler

Marla MacLeod

Henry Vissers

Wanda Hamilton



Another newly formed Working Group this year was established to enable discussion of opportunities and challenges with direct to market and small scale farm businesses. The Working Group representation includes NSFA Executive, six small scale farm members, Perennia, ThinkFARM, Farm Markets Nova Scotia and the Ecology Action Centre. The group held two meetings in 2016; the first in May with a good discussion, round table session identifying challenges for Nova Scotia's direct to market and small scale farmers. Items identified were categorized into regulatory, technical advice, business and financial tools, marketing and distribution and policy, advocacy and governance. At the next meeting in October a presentation on how regulated marketing works in Nova Scotia as well as the function of the Natural Products Marketing Council was provided by Liz Crouse, General Manager. There was lots of questions, discussion and encouragement for continued dialogue with producers, commodity groups and Natural Products Marketing Council. Other topics for future discussion with this working group are micro-financing options, accessibility of the FarmNEXT program to other lenders and the food hub model. Representatives from the group attended the 'Aligning Action on Food Policy in Nova Scotia' event happening in October.

Labour and Skills Training Committee

Labour and Skills Training Committee has been established for some time to tackle major agriculture human resource issues that will affect industry; 2016 was no exception to its success. The committee was successful in advocating for a change to the Mexican and Caribbean contracts with Canada for Nova Scotia farmers to have the ability to charge the utility fee for Seasonal Agriculture Workers. Earlier this year, the committee set out to collect input on labour issues that farmers are experiencing and advocacy continues on simplifying the seasonal worker farm transfer process, challenges with eligibility of seasonal agriculture workers on wreath processing line and access to skilled labour. The application for a Nova Scotia Farm Apprenticeship Technician has been submitted and is currently under review by the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency. Once approved, the program will be based on the PEI Apprenticeship program which is delivered by Dal AC Extended Learning. There was good representation from the committee at the Canadian Agriculture Human Resource Council (CAHRC), 'Growing the Workforce Summit' held in March. At this meeting, the results of the Labour Market Information study were released; there are also Nova Scotia results that will be part of a presentation at the Federation's annual meeting in December. There is an application submitted for Workplace Innovation and Productivity and Skills Incentive (WIPSI) to offer 3 short courses in Post-Harvest Management, Livestock Medicine and Meat Cutting. All of these training initiatives complement the Workplace Education courses that have been delivered by the Federation for a number of years. There is a separate Steering Committee that coordinates programming, but there were of 9 courses covering topics in the areas of financial, HR and business technology in the winter of 2016 with courses in Internet Marketing and Sage 50 confirmed for this fall. There have been 554 participants since we started delivering Workplace Education in 2012.

To create a forum that will enable timely communications and discussion of major agriculture human resource issues that will affect industry.

Committee Members

Lloyd Dyck (Chair)

Charles Keddy

Greg Webster

Peter Morine

Kimberly Stokdijk

Geneve Newcombe

Henry Vissers

Wanda Hamilton

Peggy Weatherbee

Tracy Kittilsen

Land Owners Working Group

To create a forum of communication and discussion with Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture (NSFA) and Forest Nova Scotia (FNS) of common issues for land owners.

Committee Members

Chris van den Heuvel
Jim Baillie
Henry Vissers
Wanda Hamilton
Maxine MacLean
Darcy Merryweather
Debbie Reeves
Jeff Bishop

This working group was established to create a forum of communication and discussion with Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture (NSFA) and Forest Nova Scotia (FNS) of common issues for land owners. This group has met three times in 2016; including an initial meeting that identified common areas which included maintenance of K-class roads, protection of private property and liability around non-land owner access, identifying and understanding all the acts and regulation that pertain to land owners, carbon pricing, access to crown land and wildlife challenges. There has been a request to meet with Ministers of Agriculture, DNR and Environment to address some of the concerns identified.

Water Committee

To provide guidance for water related issues which are of strategic value to the NS farm community in the areas of stewardship and management and to direct the use of the NSFA water fund.

Committee Members

Victor Oulton (Chair)
Andy Parker
John vanderiet
Richard Melvin
Erin Smith
John MacMillan
Paul Brenton
Henry Vissers
Wanda Hamilton

The NSFA Water Committee was established to provide guidance for water related issues which are of strategic value to the NS farm community in the areas of stewardship and management and to direct the use of the NSFA Water Resource Program funding. The committee met to outline the objectives of the Water Resource Program and in May 2016, there was a call for proposals. A full day meeting of scoring and reviewing applications resulted in eight approved projects totaling \$270,000 that are expected to be complete by December 2017. The water committee is also investigating possibility of a future workshop themed on water that would cover a variety of information, water withdrawal approvals, navigating the guidelines, etc.

Wetlands Committee

The role of the Wetlands Committee is to focus on the major agricultural wetland issues in Nova Scotia. The Nova Scotia Wetlands Conservation Policy has been in place since October 2011 and there were some areas identified that agriculture felt needed clarification. The agriculture industry has a unique interaction with wetlands. Much of the land currently being used for agriculture, in its native state prior to draining, and potential future agriculture land would be included in the definition of Wetlands contained in the Nova Scotia Wetlands Conservation Policy. At the same time there is considerable historic agriculture land that is reverting back to its natural state with its inherent wetlands, undoubtedly adding wetlands at a much greater rate than will be removed by any new agricultural development.

There have been several attempts and the committee had a successful meeting this fall with Nova Scotia Environment's Wetlands branch to outline eight points of interest that we propose as an appendix to the wetlands policy. These recommendations will go to the ministerial level of Environment and Agriculture for sign-off as part of a Memorandum of Understanding with these two departments. The committee will continue to monitor any progress.

To create a forum that will enable discussion of major agricultural wetlands issues in Nova Scotia.

Committee Members

Chris van den Heuvel (Chair)

Andy Parker

Doug Bacon

Richard Melvin

Henry Vissers

Wanda Hamilton

Transportation Committee

To create a forum that will enable timely communications and discussion of major agricultural transportation issues that will affect industry.

Committee Members

Jim Baillie (Chair)
Wendell Purdy
Paul Taylor
Doug Bacon
Bob Wilson
Gary Holmes,
Phil Barron
Laurie Hurley
Janice Harland
Cst. Paul Bouchere
Michael Kittilsen
Jos VanOostrum
Lloyd Dyck
Henry Vissers
Wanda Hamilton

The Agricultural Transportation Committee may be one of our longest standing committees. In 2016, the committee will meet twice; once in April and the second time is currently scheduled for November and much of the discussion is on understanding compliance, interpretation of regulations, ensuring good communication and road safety messaging. Along with the Federation members, the committee consists of representation from Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR), Service Nova Scotia, Department of Agriculture, RCMP, Farm Safety Nova Scotia and a Farm Equipment Dealer.

The committee is advocating for the consideration of wheel loaders and telehandlers to be considered farm equipment, this will enable them to affix non-expiry plates and be properly insured for cross road transportation. Another item is recommendation for a regulatory amendment that if adopted would permit licensed farm equipment dealers to follow regulations of FM plates for the purpose of moving farm equipment. There is continued and ongoing requests to the committee and staff with regards to information and clarification on tarping loads, proper licence classification, endorsement testing, weight and dimensions and logbooks. The Guidelines for Nova Scotia Farmers booklet continues to be a great reference to obtain the answers to questions farmers may have, <http://nsfafane.ca/educational-resources/transportation-guidelines/>. Outside of committee work, there have been rules of the road sessions held in an effort to best communicate what the regulatory requirements are for transportation of farm equipment.

Wildlife Issues Committee

The Agriculture Wildlife Issues Committee has been an active committee and has had good collaboration with committee members at the table; including Department of Natural Resources, Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture, Perennia, Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters along with NSFA Executive representation. Through this committee and continued dialogue to work through wildlife damage, there is now a Human Wildlife Conflict (HWC) stamp program. This program is in its second year and it was recently reported that in 2016, 15 stamps have been issued, however only five have been filled. It was a similar situation in 2015 of 16 stamps issued and six filled. This program is available to farmers and hunters where there is a need for wildlife control; the first step is a visit to the regional DNR office to report you are experiencing an issue with deer or bear. The committee also received updates from the Nova Scotia Wildlife Compensation Program. In 2015 claims were reported to be higher than normal with \$170,000 paid out across the province. In a recent fall report on 2016 so far, the main compensation paid is due to raven and crow damage; noting that corn and soybean claims are still to come in. The committee continues to work on identifying partnerships and matching funds to support a Human Wildlife Conflict Research Chair position for Nova Scotia.

To create a forum that will enable timely communications and discussion of major agricultural issues which interact with wildlife.

Committee Members

Jim Baillie
Victor Oulton
Lloyd Dyck
Henry Vissers
Wanda Hamilton
Bob Petrie
Mike Bourdreau
Peter MacDonald
Mike O'Brien
Reg Newell
Ruth Grant
Bill MacLeod
Peter Burgess
Ian Avery

