



Food Banks Benefiting from Farmer Donations

Nova Scotians most in need are benefiting from farmer donations of produce to food banks under the new food bank tax credit announced in Budget 2016-17.

Agriculture Minister Keith Colwell announced on December 13, 2016, at Feed Nova Scotia in Halifax that regulations specifying the types of agricultural products eligible for the tax credit are now in place.

“Our Nova Scotia farmers have generously given to food banks for many years,” said Mr. Colwell. “This tax credit is a way for government to support the contributions farmers make to our communities while also helping ensure our food banks have fresh, local, nutritious produce.”

Individuals or corporations carrying on the business of farming will receive a tax credit equal to 25 per cent of the fair market value of their donations of fresh, surplus produce made to food banks that are registered charities. They will also be eligible for the charitable donation tax credit.



“Nova Scotia farmers for many years have graciously donated to food banks in Nova Scotia because it is the right thing to do,” said Chris van den Heuvel, president of Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture. “The Food Bank Tax Credit for Farmers and associated regulations show that govern-

ment recognizes the resources, such as time, money and labour that go into producing the safe, quality food for the Nova Scotians who need it most.”

The tax credit applies to donations of agricultural products like:

- fruits and vegetables
- grains
- pulses, including dried peas, beans, lentils and chickpeas
- herbs
- honey and maple syrup
- nuts
- mushrooms

“Farmers are playing a critical role in helping us get fresh produce to Nova Scotians in need and we’re thrilled to be seeing an increase in these donations each month,” said Nick Jenery, executive director of Feed Nova Scotia. “Having the regulations in place will encourage other farmers to give as well.”

Feed Nova Scotia has seen an increase in produce donations each month since the credit was announced. Compared to last year, there was an increase in July of more than 10,000 kilograms and an increase of almost 30,000 kilograms in August.

The tax credit is retroactive to January 1, 2016. It is estimated that the tax credit could be worth \$300,000 in the 2016 tax year.

Guidelines for the tax credit can be found at www.novascotia.ca/finance/en/home/taxation/tax101/business/tax/default.aspx.

For information about donating to a food bank, visit feed-novascotia.ca.

Shown above, Chris van den Heuvel, President of the NSFA

Welcome to 2017!



The past year has been one of ups and downs with the agricultural industry. Diverse and extreme weather conditions from one end of the province and low prices within some commodities were rounded out by good news stories such as the Food Bank Tax Credit, movement on

land owners issues and increased dialogue within various working groups. From the Federation's perspective, 2016 showed that changes are coming and that there are issues within the industry and our own organization that need to be worked through.

With that in mind we started a member engagement process in 2016 and will continue well into 2017. As you may have read in a previous News and Views edition or heard about at one of the industry meetings, NSFA is working on this project to identify the strengths and challenges of the Federation from a member perspective. We intend to use the findings from this report to steer the organization forward, to help guide us in the development of a strategic plan so we remain as a leader and a strong, unified One Voice for Nova Scotia Farmers. At the most recent Executive Meeting, we heard an update on the progress of this project. The feedback from Members thus far was welcome and we are already taking steps to ensure that we, the executive, get out and talk directly to members. The project is due to wrap up in March and from there we will determine the best next steps forward.

Another change that really moved forward in 2016 is the Carbon file. It is inevitable that Canadians will see Carbon Pricing by 2018. There are limited details on what the Nova Scotia Carbon Pricing will look like, but what we do know is it will be in the form of a Cap and Trade program. In a nutshell, Cap and Trade is a market based approach to controlling pollution. How a Cap and

Trade Program works is very detailed, but it has proven to be successful in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in many jurisdictions in Canada and throughout the USA and often includes agriculture as part of the solution.

It's understandable that there are questions and concerns within the industry as to how Cap and Trade will impact farms. I certainly have them, too. Will agriculture be one of the industries capped? Will agriculture be able to contribute to the solution through offset emissions? None of these answers are known yet. As they say, the devil (or opportunity) is in the details and we expect to know more in the coming months on how this program will look in Nova Scotia. In the meantime, we will continue our relationship with Department of Environment to promote agriculture as a key player in part of the solution through energy production as well as other avenues and to ensure that agriculture is positioned to gain rather than be penalized by any carbon pricing policy.

Regulatory changes are another hot topic. With the Safe Food for Canadians Act that came into place back in 2012, we will continue to see changes and industry consultations into 2017 and 2018. Health Canada, CFIA and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada will be streamlining processes and modernizing labels, inspections, regulations and guidelines that fall under this Act. Opportunities for consultations as applicable to the farm community will be communicated through the eNews and News and Views. More information on a recent event can be found in this newsletter.

Moving forward we have to recognize that change is inevitable. We farmers are a resilient bunch and I am most confident that we will weather the changes coming around the corner as strong as ever!

Comments?

email: president@nsfa-fane.ca

Temple Grandin: An Animal welfare game-changer

Farm Credit Canada

Dr. Temple Grandin is a designer of livestock handling facilities and a professor of animal science at Colorado State University. In North America, almost half the cattle are handled in a centre-track restrainer system that she designed for meat plants. Curved chute and race systems she designed for cattle are used worldwide, and her writings on the flight zone and other principles of grazing animal behaviour have helped many people reduce stress on their animals during handling.

Animal welfare issues have become much more important in both Canada and the U.S. What's your advice for farmers trying to build trust with consumers?

The first thing is to communicate with the public. I've looked at a lot of survey data and what that data shows is that a farmer or rancher is credible with maybe half of the consumers, whereas a food public relations thing is credible with maybe 17% or so. Farmers or ranchers should communicate directly with consumers.

The other thing is, bad stuff needs to be cleaned up. Now, handling has gotten way better. Slaughterhouse conditions are way, way, way better. There are areas that need to be cleaned up. One of them is making sure old breeding animals in really bad condition are not put into the marketing chain. Old, skinny, low body score, emaciated cows and emaciated sows just need to be euthanized on the farm. Don't put them in the marketing chain.

Why are the slaughter plants doing so well in animal welfare?

One is that customers are auditing them and regulations have become stricter. Also, there are a smaller number of plants and what a meat packing plant does is simpler so they've gotten really good, but the frustrating thing is that people don't know about it. I've worked all my life improving slaughter plants and I want people to know that things are a lot better.

Cattle handling in feed yards and ranches is another

place where things are definitely improving. I've been around for a lot of years and I can remember the bad old days of the '80s and early '90s when it was horrible. I was out all the time working on construction and people did some really bad things.

What is a center-track restraining system?

A center-track restraining system is a conveyor that holds the cattle when they are moved up to the stunning area. It's a piece of equipment I developed. It's in all the major slaughter plants. If you want to see it work, you can look up beef plant video with Temple Grandin. I've also done pork plant video tours, turkey plant and sheep plant video tours.

I've also designed stockyards. Another thing I've done is designed curved handling systems – and it's really important to lay it out right. You want it so the animal goes around the bend and then comes back. Cattle want to go back to where they came from so you want to design it that way.

More from this interview and interviews with other game changers can be found at fcc-fac.ca.

FCC Forum – Moncton

Speakers:

- Clara Huges** - Six-time Olympic Medallist & Mental Health Advocate
Rex Murphy - Social Commentator, Editorialist and Distinct Canadian Voice
Bruce Sellery - TC Host, Financial Journalist, Bestselling Author of Moolala

When:

Saturday, March 11, 2017
10:30 AM - 3:00 PM
Doors Open at 10:00 a.m. and Lunch is included.

Where:

Moncton Wesleyan Church
945 St. George Blvd.
Moncton, New Brunswick

Are you looking for workers in the Agriculture and Fisheries Sectors?

Since December 2015, Nova Scotia welcomed more than 1,500 refugees who have now settled throughout the province.

Since arriving, these newcomers have made Nova Scotia their home and have been working hard to learn English and other employment skills. Many of them are still looking for permanent, full time jobs to support their families.

Some of our newcomers have experience working in the agriculture industry and want to work in the industry here. Others have expressed an interest in learning about jobs in the seafood processing industry. We know that this is a great opportunity for both newcomers and employers in Nova Scotia but we also know that our industries are very different from those which our newcomers know. Capitalizing on this opportunity requires a coordinated response.

A Pilot Project to introduce employers in these sectors to highly motivated workers is now underway involving the Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS), the YMCA, the Departments of Agriculture, Fisheries & Aquaculture and Labour and Advanced Education, the Office of Immi-

gration together with industry associations /sector councils.

Participating in the Pilot could benefit employers through the identification of workers and with potential wage subsidies and assistance with employment related training.

For more information on this Pilot please contact:

- In Halifax

The Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS).
<http://www.isans.ca/>.

Contact

Mohja Alia at malia@isans.ca or Kyle Turner at kturner@isans.ca

- Outside of Halifax

The YMCA: YREACH

<http://www.ymcahrm.ns.ca/locations/ymcacentreforimmigrantprograms.aspx>. Contact Inhae Park at inhae_park@ymca.ca.

Thank you for supporting the refugee initiative in Nova Scotia.

Canada's Agriculture Day: Join the Celebration

We're part of a vibrant, forward-thinking industry that feeds the world. This is something to be proud of and celebrate. We have the opportunity to do that during Canada's Agriculture Day on February 16.

Canada's Agriculture Day is a time to come together as an industry to celebrate the business of agriculture and engage in positive dialogue about agriculture and food. It's a time to showcase all of the amazing things happening in the industry and help consumers draw a closer connection to where their food comes from and the people who produce it.

The theme of the day is "Let's celebrate the food we love". And there are many ways to get involved and celebrate the day. Whether you're interested in participating on social media, taking a personal ag challenge or getting your community involved, there are plenty of ways to share your love of Canadian agriculture and food. You can make it as small or as big as your imagination can make it.

Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Challenge yourself to make a meal for your family with all Canadian foods.
- Snap a pic of what you're doing and share it on

social media - include hashtags like #CdnAgDay, #IWorkInAg and #FarmLife .

- Host a potluck and encourage your friends to use all Canadian ingredients. Tweet about it with #CdnAgDay as well as hashtags to reach a non-ag audience, like #LoveYourFood and #Foodie.
- Visit AgMoreThanEver.ca and take an agvocate challenge.
- Give back to the community by volunteering at your local food bank or soup kitchen.

Visit AgDay.ca for more ideas to celebrate Canada's Agriculture Day and downloadable resources to help you out. Be sure to visit the Events page for a list of activities happening in your community - many ag industry associations, businesses and Ag More Than Ever partners are hosting their own Canada's Agriculture Day events that are open to the public. It's all about celebrating Canadian agriculture and food in engaging, fun and respectful ways.

Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture is proud to support Canada's Agriculture Day and encourages everyone involved in the industry to get involved and celebrate the day in their own way.

Broadband Internet for all Canadians

In December, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) declared broadband internet a basic telecommunications service for all Canadians. A news release issued by the commission indicated that a fund will be established to support projects in areas that do not meet these targets. The targets set out by the CRTC include:

- 50Mbps download and 10Mbps upload speeds for fixed broadband internet access services for all Canadians; and
- Unlimited data option for fixed broadband access services.

There is a 10-15 year window for these targets to be met.

Since 2014, NSFA had a Standing Policy on Rural Infrastructure Deficit. This Standing Policy covered a wide range of rural infrastructure issues including the condition of rural roads, cellular service, 3-phase power and broadband internet. Consultations, letters to government officials and committee work have all played a role in moving the issue forward. For example, NSFA was part of the working committee that established the Canadian Federation of Agriculture's Rural Policy. Related to the broadband internet issue, NSFA made a submission to CRTC during a consultation process in spring 2016 to advocate for better access to broadband internet.

To read more on Closing the Broadband Gap and funding for broadband projects, visit crtc.gc.ca/eng/internet.

Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month



March 2017 marks the 10th Agriculture Literacy Month in Nova Scotia! This is an educational initiative of the Nova Scotia Agricultural Awareness Committee made possible through the support of Farm Credit Canada.

Canadian Ag Literacy Month helps Grade 3 students across the province:

- learn about agriculture,
- connect with a farmer or agriculture industry person,
- understand the role agriculture plays in their lives.

We are searching for volunteers to share their passion and knowledge of agriculture to read in classrooms sharing "Our Food. Our Story". This Nova Scotia resource as well as other classroom resources are provided to volunteer readers to share/leave in the classroom during the visit. If you would like to volunteer to participate in this event... go to <http://novascotia.ca/agri/Documents/education/ag-literacy-week-volunteer.pdf>

#ThankaRetailer

Adama is giving four outstanding ag retailers \$15,000 each to spend on worthy causes in their community. The Truro Agromart Ltd, an NSFA Corporate Member, is part of this contest. If the Agromart wins, they will give the \$15,000 to 4H Nova Scotia!

To vote for Truro Agromart,



visit www.thankaretailer.ca/vot/details/truro-agromart-limited2

Regulatory Modernization Activities

On January 17, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Health Canada and Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture partnered to deliver a session on the regulatory modernization activities.

The session was focused on any food that will be exported to another province or country. In some instances the proposed changes are also to be applied to food sold within the province.

Safe Food for Canadians Act

An update on the status of the new food safety and regulatory compliance requirements was provided. To provide a bit of background: the Safe Food for Canadians Act (SFCA) consolidated three CFIA inspection statutes – Meat Inspection Act, Fish Inspection Act and Canada Agricultural Products Act, and the food provisions of the Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act. SFCA provides the legislative base to simplify and consolidate 14 regulations into a single set of food inspection regulations. To bring the Act into force, the supporting regulations are required. The new regulations will build on a strong foundation with new innovative approaches that will consistently manage risk and resources across the CFIA. These approaches include stronger rules, new ways to manage risk, standard inspections and new approach to service.

The Proposed Safe Food for Canadians Regulations main elements are licensing, preventive controls and traceability. CFIA has developed resources including fact sheets, decision tools, templates and guides to help farmers and producers make informed decisions regarding the main elements of the regulations. The regulations are not yet in force and are undergoing a consultation phase. To partake in the consultation, learn more about the Safe Food for Canadians Act and proposed regulations and more, visit www.inspection.gc.ca/safefood.

My CFIA and the Electronic Service Delivery Platform (ESDP)

CFIA is gradually shifting to an Electronic Service Delivery Platform. This platform will allow industry to

query and apply for export certificates online and to allow the CFIA to exchange certificates and related documents securely with importing countries. This will facilitate the necessary approval for Canadian commodities to enter foreign countries.

My CFIA launched in January 2017, with dairy establishments being able to request their dairy establishment registrations online. Through 2017, more services will be added and more industry sectors will have access to services online. The services that will be available online will be application for registration or licencing. Also, if applicable, export certificates will be able to be applied for online. To be able to access these online applications, registration or certificates a farm must register for a My CFIA account. For information on how to get started with My CFIA, visit www.inspection.gc.ca/mycfia.

Health Canada's Healthy Eating Strategy

The Healthy Eating Strategy aims to help Canadians make better food choices by improving labels, eliminating trans-fat, reducing sodium and restricting marketing to children. There are three major challenges identified by Health Canada that Canadian consumers are facing: Many Canadians do not follow a healthy eating pattern as part of a healthy lifestyle; poor diet is the primary risk factor for obesity and many chronic diseases, which places a significant burden on the health of Canadians and or health care system; and food environment make it increasingly difficult for Canadians to make healthy choices (e.g.widespread availability of inexpensive foods and beverages high in calories, fat , sodium and sugars). Following consumer consultations, Health Canada is revamping the Nutrition Facts Table found on the packaging of food. These changes include: serving size stands out more, Calories is larger and stands out more and list of minerals will have mg amounts shown. Changes have also been made to the format of the Ingredients listing for a product including the requirement to list food colours by name, minimum height requirement for the font size and grouping of sugars-based ingredients.

Regulatory Modernization Activities continued

Health Canada is also proposing mandatory front-of-packaging labelling for foods high in nutrients that are a public health concern. These nutrients are sugar, sodium and saturated fat. A consumer focused consultation closed on January 13, 2017. Recommendations from this consultation will be published in the *Canadians Gazette*, part 1 and further consultation with a proposed front of packaging plan is expected in spring/fall 2017. NSFA will communicate that this consultation is open when more information is known.

In the meantime, more information on the Health Canada Front of Package labeling can be found on the Health Canada website.

Modernizing Food Labelling

CFIA is also proposing changes to food labels. To clarify, Health Canada is responsible for administering health, safety and nutrition requirement. CFIA is responsible for non-food safety requirements and enforcement. Examples of non-food safety requirements are dealer name and address, and best before dates.

The proposal put forward by CFIA includes the following recommendations:

- the format of best before dates aligns with Codex;
- additional information to contact a company;
- changes to Origin of Imported Food labeling to be in line with Codex;
- consistent requirements for font;
- any ingredient listed on the front of package to be quantified as a percentage in the ingredients list;

The consultation process for this proposal is open until February 28, 2017. A link to the discussion paper and online questionnaire can be found by searching for “food labelling modernization” in the search bar at inspection.gc.ca. Additionally, there will be face to face sessions in Winter 2017. CFIA and HC are working closely together to align and integrate food labelling modernization activities including en-

agement activities and the implementation of any labelling changes to minimize impact on industry.

The presentations used during this session will be made available. Once they are, you will be able to find them in the NSFA enews. Every presenter at the session emphasized how important it is for everyone impacted by the regulatory changes to express their concerns and identify how these changes will impact their business and their industry.

Ag Equip Registration Exemption

Regulation exempts number plates on farm equipment, including trailers and it also allows farmers to haul loaded wagons with farm truck.

The Agricultural Equipment Registration Exemption and Number Plates Regulations were created and last amended in the 70's but still exist to exempt registration of your farm wagon, farm trailers or farm implements. This means that you do not require a number plate on your livestock trailer, for example, as long as it is towed by a truck displaying FM plates and/or registered to a bonafide farmer, but if you are traveling more than 40 km/hr, the trailer does need to be inspected.

Within this same regulation it states that your farm truck can tow the wagon, trailer or implement whether it is loaded or unloaded. There is work currently being done to look into amending definitions that have caused past confusion with regard to traffic stops. The Motor Vehicle Act uses the definition ‘implement of husbandry’ which is not consistent with the above mentioned regulation. As the Department of Transportation works through any definition amendments, it has been agreed that farmers can haul all loaded wagons with farm trucks (e.g. loads of hay), provided they are meeting the rules of the road and following safe practices including the display of a slow moving vehicle sign.

Might be a good idea to print the regulations and keep a copy in your farm truck if you need to reference it on a traffic stop. If you have any questions or encounter questions regarding this regulation, please contact the NSFA Office.

Upcoming Events

February 15, Truro

NSFA Council of Leaders Meeting

February 16, Bible Hill

Greenhouse NS Annual Meeting

February 16

Canada's Agriculture Day

March 7, Truro

Egg Farmers of NS Annual Meeting

March 8, Greenwich

Turkey Farmers of NS Annual Meeting

March 8, Greenwich

Chicken Producers Association of NS Annual Meeting

March 11, Moncton

FCC Forum

March 17 - 18, Truro

Maritime Beef Conference

March 18, Truro

NS Cattle Producers Annual Meeting

March 21, Truro

Pork Nova Scotia Annual Meeting

March 25, Truro

Wild Blueberry Producers Winter Information Meeting

May 29, Debert

WBPANS Twilight Meetings

May 30, East River Saint Mary's

WBPANS Twilight Meetings

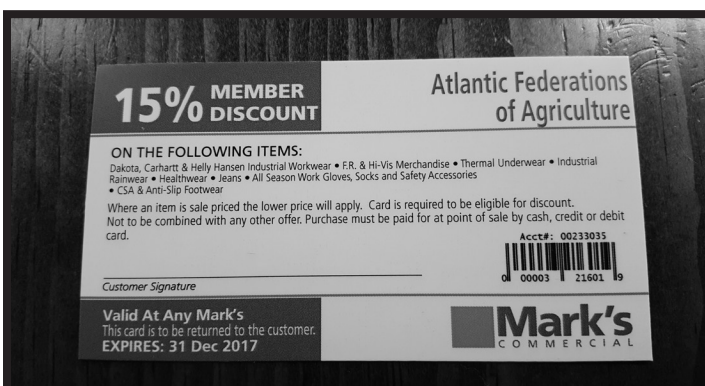
June 1, Parrsboro

WBPANS Twilight Meetings

July 15, TBD

WBPANS Field Day

Mark's Cards have Arrived



Crop & Livestock Insurance Commission Board Openings

There have been vacancies on the Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission for quite some time. This is a non-adjudicative position therefore applications are accepted at any time when positions are available.

The board oversees the crop and livestock insurance programs and applicants should have strong background in current agricultural production practices and experience in community-related activities, such as serving on boards and/or active involvement in industry organizations.

There is more information on the skills, remuneration and time commitments for the vacancy on board for the Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission, click here as well as the application process on the Executive Council webpage, http://novascotia.ca/exec_council/abc/current-opportunities.asp?#NAdj

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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