



NSFA Senate Club Tours Lunenburg County

By: Donna Langille, Operations Manager

The Federation's Senate Club (consisting of NSFA Past Presidents and Honorary Members) toured several spots in **Lunenburg County** for their annual summer tour on Saturday, August 11th. Don Cox, Princeport, Colchester County (President in 2004), current Chairman of the group, welcomed the guests from around the province who came to renew old acquaintances and visit some of the unique spots in this county. Don also thanked the Organizing Committee (Martin Vissers, Don Downe, Robert Rhodenizer, and John Vissers) for the excellent job they had done in arranging the points of interest for the group.

The tour began at **Joanne's Deli** in Mahone Bay with coffee and baked goods and a chance to catch up on the happenings in the lives of old friends.

Our next stop was at **Terra Beata Farms Ltd.**, Monk Point Road where owners David and Evelyn Ernst grow and market fresh and processed cranberries. Our group was particularly interested in the Ernst's experience in establishing a new cranberry farm from the ground up and



"Those enjoying the dinner at the Wile's Lake Farm Market greenhouse included: (l to r) Bernie Wile, Elvin Falkenham, Ken Streach, Martin Vissers, and Case Van Dyk."

how they have changed their marketing strategy over the years. First, they were involved in selling cranberries as a fresh and frozen product but later moved to the strategy of selling the cranberry rhizomes to other farmers as well as developing new products such as dried cranberries and cranberry juices. They have concentrated on cranberry products with sugar content adjusted so that they are not in direct competition with the larger scale vendors. As a smaller size participant in the marketplace they are focusing on filling niche markets, i.e. health foods.

Our next stop was at the **Lunenburg Waterfront** where the tour group enjoyed lunch and had the opportunity to visit some of the downtown shops.

A highlight of the afternoon tour was the opportunity to take a horse and buggy ride with **Trott and Time Buggy Ride** around the downtown area of Lunenburg with a driver who was also an excellent tour guide. We saw some fantastic stained glass windows, and marveled at how the architecture of past years is maintained in this waterfront town. We were told that there is a by-law which prevents the use of vinyl siding on homes and buildings, in favour of the older style clapboard siding or shingles. This trip was an amazing look back in time!

The day ended with a planked salmon and prime rib roast of beef dinner hosted by Elspeth and Peter Wile, **Wile's Lake Farm Market** in their new greenhouse. Their farm market business continues to expand to meet ever increasing demand for their products. Local farmer guests invited to join the group for dinner included Marion and Elvin Falkenham, Case van Dyk, and Bernie Wile. Robert Rhodenizer, Barss Corner, Lunenburg County was the most senior President attending the dinner having served as NSFA President in 1970 and 71. Other Presidents from the 70's in attendance were: Kenneth Streach (President in 1972) and Martin Vissers (President in 1974).



On the Road to GF2

Henry Vissers
Executive Director, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

In mid-September the provincial Ministers of Agriculture and Federal Minister Gerry Ritz will meet in Whitehorse to complete their discussions on the next version of the growing forward agreement, working title Growing Forward 2 or GF2.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture will also host a roundtable with the Federal and Provincial Ministers as well as representatives from national commodity organizations and provincial federations. NS will be represented by Dennis Boudreau, 1st Vice President of NSFA and our CFA representative. This will be the last opportunity for this group to express its views on GF2.

The current agreement is set to expire on March 30 2013. Earlier on there had been quite a bit of discussion on tacking a year onto the current agreement, but that is looking very unlikely as we grind our way toward a new agreement.

Much of the discussion has been about the Business Risk Management (BRM) part of the agreement. Rumors abound on how the formulas will be changed; the most persistent is that the goal is to cut \$430 million from the program with a portion of the savings going to non BRM and the remainder to budget reductions. The changes are expected to be made by changes to the formula reducing the trigger from 85% to 70% possibly with caps attached to payouts as well.

When questioned about this at a recent meeting with Minister Ritz he said that there was not a \$430 million dollar goal and that the trigger was originally 70% but was increased in hard times to 85%. We are at a time when grain crops are at an all-time high; with the western focus of the current federal government they see this as an opportunity to reduce funding to agriculture in order to meet their budget reduction goals.

Along with concern about the reduction in the AgriStability trigger, NSFA has identified issues

around the timely processing of AgriStability files and the need for regional or provincial delivery of the program, we have also expressed concern that the program does not work well for diversified farms. Persistent margin declines for specific sectors has also been a concern, we hoped would be addressed in the GF2 round.

As I write this article in mid-August, time seems to be running out for any input to changes in the BRM side of GF2. Ministers have met in July without coming to agreement and later have had a further conference call to try and come to a final agreement.

Next step is Whitehorse where they will probably sign a framework agreement. My understanding is that this will be the broad strokes, a funding formula for AgriStability and AgriInvest and a broad agreement on the non-business risk management side that lays out the funding envelope (themes) and the federal provincial contributions (i.e. 60% federal 40% provincial.)

Then the process will go back to Federal and Provincial staff to iron out the details. On the non-BRM side, NS Department of Agriculture with cooperation from NSFA has been holding a series of consultation session with the farm community. This industry engagement will be used to develop the non BRM programs post March 2013. NSFA expects to have further input as the process moves forward.

The non-BRM funding is in a number of programs delivered by NSDA for example many of the funding lines in the Homegrown Success Programs include non BRM funding. Also the Environmental Farm Plan program is delivered by NSFA through a service agreement with NSDA and is funded through Growing Forward.

I think the unintended consequence will be more volatility for farms cash flows, an increase in demands for ad hoc funding during crisis and a further reduction in the number of farms enrolled in AgriStability. In terms of a win/loss its sounds like a loss for BRM and a gain for non-BRM both in funding and flexibility of the funding.

Any questions, comments?
email: hvissers@nsfa-fane.ca



NSFA Executive Policy Session Held in Truro

The Executive of the Federation held their annual policy session in Truro on August 13th and 14th. This is the meeting where policy and operating details for the coming year are compiled for presentation and discussion at the September Council of Leaders meeting.

A Communications Plan for 2012-13 was proposed which moves a bit away from educating the public to providing information to the membership, including the members' benefits program being offered by NSFA. In addition the Federation plans to do more targeted mailings as well as attending more commodity group meetings. The Federation will also take the initiative to put out more media releases on current issues, describing how farmers are handling various situations and the impact, and explaining how this could have a future impact to the public through local food availability and cost.

The budget for the NSFA for the coming year (2012/13) was worked on in detail. The Executive hopes to present an accurate balanced budget which reflects adequate funding to carry out the duties of the Federation, while holding steady on overall operating costs. The move to the newly renovated office facility in Perennia Park will result in considerable savings in operating costs in the coming year. The Federation does have a committee which is currently taking a look at the Farm Registration System with a view to considering the fees for registration for the next five year period, which will commence in 2014. Until then it is business as usual with the existing FRS fees.

The Executive reviewed several projects which were presented for the organization's support and the following were approved:

- 1) Optimizing resources to foster agricultural innovation research in the Maritimes,
- 2) Proposal for a Water Chair position at NSAC.

The Executive met with representatives from the Patterson Law firm to discuss the requirements for county federations under the Federations of Agriculture Act. Problems have been incurred by the county federations which own real property (exhibitions, farm machinery, etc.) in adjusting their bylaws to the new Act. There was also discussion on the Volunteer Act and how this would impact on liability protection for organization members. Details will be provided to the county federation representatives at the September Council of Leaders meeting.

The action taken on resolutions adopted at the 2011 annual meeting of NSFA was reviewed by the Executive. The consolidated resolutions from previous years were also reviewed and it is being suggested that several of these be added to the Policy Paper. The Resolutions Committee is meeting in late August to review action taken on resolutions to date and decide whether other avenues should be pursued.

Representatives of the local district Federation were invited to join the NSFA Executive for dinner at Saltscapes Restaurant for an informal discus-

sion of the issues facing farmers today. The Executive appreciated the turn-out and interest shown by the delegation from the Clifton District Federation of Agriculture and plan to follow up on several concerns identified by this group.



Top photo: (l to r) Sharon MacDonald, Andrew McCurdy, Beth Densmore, Collin Kent, Donna Langille, Dennis Boudreau, Krista Vroegh Bottom photo: (l to r) Charles MacDonald, Trevor Forbes, Chris van den Heuvel, Lloyd Yuill, Jim Burrows, Edna Foster, Duncan McCurdy and Henry Vissers.



A proposed Policy Paper for 2012 was discussed. The Executive members added their comments and the draft is now ready to present to the September Council meeting.

A committee involving Colchester Municipality, Perennia, the NS Dept of Agriculture, and the Federation has been working on a set of Guidelines for the Fencing of Livestock in N.S. The Executive reviewed the draft and could not identify any issues, other than a few typos. The draft now goes back before a larger committee for final perusal. During this process it was identified that there is need to update the two Acts which currently deal with farm animals at large in N.S.

The Executive met with three new representatives from Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada who are transferring to Nova Scotia: 1) Dr. Christian Deslauriers, Regional Director General for Atlantic Coastal, 2) Dr. Felicitas Katepa-Mupondwa, Science Director and 3) Jake Eelman, Senior Advisor, with AAFC's Science & Technology Branch for a discussion on how AAFC research fits into our organization's priorities. AAFC in future is to direct all science related activities through one group, but, will recognize regional differences in its delivery.



Soft Rush: A growing concern!

By: Brent Jackson
Environmental Farm Plan Coordinator

A common question I am often asked when on farm visits is “What do I do to get rid of this weed?”. Almost always the culprit is Soft Rush, a native plant species that is invading farmers’ fields. Soft Rush is found growing in bunches of rounded dark green stems. Although Soft Rush is easily identified, getting rid of it is much more complicated. The waxy nature of the plant and the thick matt of roots make established Soft Rush plants difficult to remove.



There are no simple solutions and some farmers have tried ploughing, digging it out by hand, spot spraying, mowing, and grazing with varied degrees of success. It may take a combination of techniques and commitment to rid fields of this less than desired plant. In many cases, fields that have Soft Rush are also fields that are “running out”. Soft Rush is known to grow best on moist, open sites, with low pH. We can do little to control moisture in our climate, but fields that have not been re-seeded nor had lime in many years are perfect targets for Soft Rush. Depleted forage stands leave voids for Soft Rush seeds to germinate and low pH conditions allow them to out-compete desired plant species. It might be worth getting the upper hand on Soft Rush by protecting fields that have not yet or not heavily been “invaded”. (You can focus on problem areas after protecting your remaining fields.) That’s right, it’s time to dust off the plough and order some lime. If the thought of picking rocks or broken

equipment makes you shiver there are some alternative methods. Frost seeding is a technique where the seed is broadcasted on top of the frozen ground in the late winter/early spring. The freeze thaw action of the ground allows the seed to be incorporated in the soil. This method works best with legumes. Another method is using a no-till seeder. A no-till seeder is available for rent within Nova Scotia through Perennia (formerly Agrapoint). Liming will increase soil pH and allow desired species better access to available nutrients. The desired pH range for most forage crops is between 6 and 7. Increasing soil pH and the density of desired forages will help forages outcompete Soft Rush while improving yields. Although this may not be the answer you were looking for it will help protect fields from further invasion by Soft Rush while researchers look for better techniques to control its growth. Who knows, maybe with increased yields from replenished forage stands you won’t even need those less productive sites where Soft Rush seems to flourish. Just don’t forget, re-seeding and liming may last for several years, but don’t let the field “run out” because seeds of the Soft Rush will be viable in the soil for another 60 years. The no-till seeder can be booked through Perennia by phoning 896-0277. More information on liming, overseeding legumes, and no-till seeding are available on the Nova Scotia Environmental Farm Plan website: nsfa-fane.ca/efp/fact-sheets

In this issue...

We have included a flyer from Office of the Employer Advisor Nova Scotia (OEANS). NSFA has a seat on the board of directors of this non profit organization that provides advocacy and advice for employers in all sectors across the province.



Trouble with Coyote Kills?

The coyotes and other wildlife are once again braving the pastures and property of Nova Scotia farmers. The Province of Nova Scotia has a program to address some of the concerns around wildlife predation and wildlife damage to crops. This program compensates registered Nova Scotia farmers who experience damage to specified agricultural products caused by specific wildlife species. It will compliment crop insurance plans that list wildlife as an insurable peril as well as operate on its own for farmers who do not currently have insurance.

Damage caused by dogs is not eligible for compensation.

For more information about the Wildlife Compensation Program or to apply for compensation, please contact Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission:

Toll Free: 1-800-565-6371

Truro office: (902) 893-6370

Kentville office: (902) 679-6015/6028

Website: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri/ci/>

To be eligible for compensation:

Registered farmers must notify the Commission as soon as possible and not later than 72 hours after the damage has occurred. The cause or probable cause of loss or death must be confirmed by the Commission. Farmers must follow industry production and protection standards. For crop compensation the farmer must incur a loss of at least \$250 or 2 acres. For livestock compensation farmers may claim for the loss or injury of one or more animals.

The compensation amounts are set by Crop and Livestock commission; these values along with a list of eligible livestock/crops can be found on the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture's website.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri/ci/>

Livestock damage must be caused by one of the following species of wildlife to be eligible for compensation:

- black bear
- fox
- coyote
- raven or crow
- birds of prey

Workplace Education - An Opportunity for Farmers

Skills Advancement for Farm Businesses

The Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture in partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education and the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture is pleased to offer the following 40 hour training programs **free of charge**:

- | | | |
|---------------------|---|---|
| 1) Cape Breton Area | - | Basic Computer Skills |
| 2) Kentville Area | - | Basic Computer Skills |
| 3) Truro Area | - | Basic Computer Skills |
| 4) Cape Breton Area | - | Financial Management for your Farm Business |
| 5) Truro Area | - | Financial Management for your Farm Business |
| 6) Kentville Area | - | Financial Management for your Farm Business |

Additional courses can be set up in other areas where interest is expressed so be sure to let the Federation know of your interest, regardless what area of the province you are in.

Space is limited to 12 participants per course

Remember - the contents of the courses will be adjusted to meet the needs of the farmers in the group.

The Basic Computer Course will start at the very beginning of how to turn a computer on and will advance according to the progress of the class participants. The Financial Management Program will include basic accounting practices, decision making, budgeting, project accounting, succession planning, etc.

The exact meeting location and times for the courses will be fixed once we know the needs of the farmers who sign up.

If you would like to sign up to take one of these programs please contact the NSFA office at 893-2293 or email info@nsfa-fane.ca and advise us of the course you would like to take and when you would be available (day or evening). It is hoped some classes will start in September 2012, so please **register today**.



A Meeting with Minister Ritz

On August 10th, representatives of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture and provincial commodity groups had a chance to sit down with Honourable Gerry Ritz, Federal Minister of Agriculture. This Industry Engagement session, held in Bridgewater, was organized as an opportunity to talk about concerns for Nova Scotia Agriculture and to address opportunities for the new suite Business Risk Management and non-BRM programs.

There was a good turnout of farmers and some of the top asks from the Federation included maintaining the current funding envelope for AgriStability and the rest of the current BRM Suite of programs. Any adjustment in the trigger below its current levels will deem the program ineffective for Nova Scotia farmers. It was highlighted that Nova Scotia is very diversified and that a look should be taken at how these programs can work for

multi-commodity farms. We also need to have regional input into the development of Growing Forward 2.

The Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture asked for continued support of the Non-BRM programs offered in our province. We would like to see continuation of Environmental Farm Planning program with the addition of a similar model for Farm Safety Nova Scotia. Representatives also reiterated the importance of having a local approval process for the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP) and the detrimental effect of proposed changes to the Employment Insurance program on the agricultural industry. It was made clear that agriculture in Nova Scotia is different from Western or even Central Canada and that it is important to have consultation with Atlantic farmers and to develop programs that are flexible.

Federation is pleased to introduce our newest Corporate Member

Atlantic

CAT[®]

The Federation welcomes Atlantic Cat to the elite list of 2012 Corporate/Business members of NSFA.

Atlantic Cat has expressed interest in getting more attuned with the Agriculture Industry and would like to showcase their equipment and product lines to the farm community. In August you should have received a brochure from Atlantic Cat with a couple of their current promotions.

The Federation offers a mail-out service to our Corporate/Business Members that wish to connect with the farmers. By providing the service, we are protecting the privacy of our membership list while still being able to provide some special discounts, promotions and information to our membership.

More from the Senate...



“Who said that hairnets are no longer in style?”

Pictured at Terra Beata Cranberries during one of the stops of the NSFA Summer Senate Tour is (l to r): Ken Streach, Don Downe, John MacDonell, Dick Huggard, and Don Cox.



Nova Scotia Hosts 11th Annual OPEN FARM DAY

OPEN FARM DAY

Supported by the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

Climb on a tractor, milk a goat, and enjoy fresh local produce as farms across Nova Scotia welcome visitors for Open Farm Day, Sunday, September 16th.

60 farms across Nova Scotia are opening their doors to the public, giving everyone the opportunity to experience life on the farm.

OPEN FARM DAY is a real backstage pass to “meet your farmer”. It’s a chance to taste local produce, get to know the animals, and really see where our food comes from.

“This event provides a platform for our farmers to share their stories and their passion with members of their community.” says Wanda Hamilton, Communications Officer of The Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture. “Farmers are doing some great work in this province and this is the perfect opportunity to get a first-hand glance at their hard work and dedication to top quality products and services.”

This Maritime event, with a total of 124 farms participating, is being supported by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, So-beys, provincial governments and the agricultural organizations in each of the Maritime Provinces.

The agriculture and food industry is a leading industry in Nova Scotia with about 3,900

farms employing roughly 5,200 people. In 2010, the industry generated \$538.5 million in farm cash receipts and \$229 million in international exports. Dairy is the top revenue-generating sector, followed by fur and chicken. Eggs, cattle, blueberries, vegetables, floriculture, Christmas trees and apples each generated more than \$10 million in farm gate revenues in 2011.

Visit www.meetyourfarmer.ca/openfarmday for a complete list of participating farms in Nova Scotia and experience OPEN FARM DAY on Sunday September 16th.

Follow us on [Twitter.com/NSFA](https://twitter.com/NSFA)

Like us on facebook.com/NSFAMeetYourFarmer

Vote for your favourite video in the 4H video contest

www.meetyourfarmer.ca



Shown in the photo is Luke Ettinger, son of Wanda Hamilton, NSFA Communications Officer, with the Open Farm Day display at the Incredible Picnic held in Halifax on August 19th. Luke helped launch the promotions with enthusiasm as he invited people into the booth to “get the scoop on your farmer” while offering them one of our promotional ice cream scoops!

It was a busy day to spite the damp weather (and much needed rain). We talked to lots of people about Open Farm Day and encouraged them to enjoy this fun filled family day!



Federation office is MOVING

The offices of the NSFA, Agri-Commodity Management Association (ACMA) and Agri-Futures are moving. Effective September 7, 2012 we will be located at Perennia Innovation Park (formerly AgriTECH Park) in the Annapolis Building

Our telephone numbers, fax number and email addresses will all remain the same.

Our new address is
60 Research Drive, Perennia Innovation Park,
Bible Hill Nova Scotia, B6L 2R2

We apologize for any inconvenience and disruption of service to our membership during our move to the new location.

Butternut Squash and Apple Soup

A simple, satisfying soup perfect to make in the fall when squash and apples are at their best. Makes 4-6 portions.

Ingredients:

- 1 butternut squash; peeled & cubed (seeds scooped out)
- 4 apples; peeled, cored & diced
- 1 onion; sliced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Water, to cover
- Salt & pepper
- 1 tbsp summer savory
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tbsp maple syrup

Method:

In a heavy bottomed pan, add the olive oil and sauté the onion for 2-3 minutes or until soft. Add the squash and salt and pepper. Cook for 4-5 minutes and add the apple and then cover with water. Add the summer savoury, bay leaves and maple syrup. Cook until soft and then puree half of the soup in the blender and return to the remaining half. Check for seasoning and add more if needed. Optional - Serve with thinly sliced aged gouda on top.

Recipe taken from selectnovascotia.ca

Succession Planning

What you need to get started?

- three years of historical financial data (balance sheets and income statements)
- list of current assets of the business and current market value
- list of current debts of the business
- production data (# of units sold annually) for the same three years
- how much money the current operators need from the business for retirement
- list of personal investments/assets outside the business
- other sources of future income
- timeline for business transfer of labour, management, ownership
- immediate money needs upon retirement for a house? a vehicle?
- decisions on how to treat all children (successors and non-successors)

That's a lot to think about along with the day to day farm operations. As a part of our communications moving forward, we hope to bring our readers expert advice and columns on various topics like farm succession, business management and much more. Is there something you'd like to see featured in an "Expert Column"? Let us know - email your suggestions to info@nsfa-fane.ca or call the office 902-893-2293.

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.

2012 Executive Members:

President:	Beth Densmore	Phone: 369-2876
1st Vice President:	Dennis Boudreau	Phone: 769-3501
2nd Vice President:	David Young	Phone: 543-8748
CFA Director:	Dennis Boudreau	Phone: 769-3501
At Large:	Edna Foster	Phone: 661-4366
At Large:	Chris vandenHeuvel	Phone: 631-1884
At Large:	Charles MacDonald	Phone: 564-2080
At Large:	Jim Baillie	Phone: 657-2256
Past President:	Richard Melvin	Phone: 582-7939

Staff: Executive Director: Henry Vissers; Operations Manager: Donna Langille; Financial Services Officer: Krista Vroegh; Administrative Officer: Shelly MacKenzie; Communications Officer: Wanda Hamilton; Farm Safety Coordinator: Trevor Davison

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