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# ANNUAL REPORT

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2017

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**Reports on:**  
Policy  
Resolutions  
Committee Activities





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# STANDING POLICY REPORT

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## Agricultural Land

### Progress

- Presentation at the AGM - David Connell, Agriculture Land Use and Farmland Protection.
- A meeting with Forest NS and NSFA was held in December with Ministers of DNR, Environment and Agriculture to review common issues with land access.
- Farmlands project with Dal Law, 'Governing Farmland Commons' looking to identify various models to encourage land access, shared access models, and ownership arrangements. NSFA to help identify participants in the research.
- Drafted TOR for Agriculture Land Use Committee presented to Council of Leaders.
- Submission to Minister's Round table for EGSPA goals.
- First meeting of the Agriculture Land Use Policy Committee - goal to work through the 60 recommendations of Williams Report.
- Met with DNR Trails staff regarding trails, OHV task force recommendations, and damage by ATV.
- Second meeting of Land Use Policy Committee, Presentation from PVSC, AVL. Committee will begin to tackle review of land use recommendations.

### POLICY BACKGROUND

Farmers collectively own 30% of the privately-owned land in Nova Scotia. Pressures such as increasing farmland values and urban encroachment are creating concerns around the availability of agricultural land for future generations. With regards to governance, land use planning for agricultural land and agriculture classed soils is minimal and not effectively taking place across Nova Scotia.

#### 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. This program would include a land bank system along with zero taxation of farm land, 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 without negatively impacting other industries. 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.*

## Progress

- Presentation at the AGM - Julie Bailey - Energy on NS Farms.
- Continued work of the Agriculture Energy Working Group.
- NSFA met with NS Power; there is a willingness to work on a case by case basis to support the needs of agriculture.
- NSFA Energy committee met in June. Discussion on converter technology as option for access to 3-phase power. Discussion with Efficiency one on Roving Energy Manager for Agriculture.
- Article on converter technology was in September News and Views.
- Introduction of Roving Energy Manager, Kraig Porter, to support the agricultural sector in identifying opportunities to save on their energy bills.

## Progress

- Presentation at the AGM - Debra Hauer, CAHRC - Labour Market Information.
- We have provided additional courses to Workplace Education through Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive (WIPSI) in post harvest management, livestock medicine and basic meat cutting.
- Resolutions submitted to CFA and support letter to CHC for same resolutions.
- Presentation on WCB for agriculture at June Labour Meeting, working through issues with SAWP out of country billing rates.
- Representation at the CAHRC Agri-Workforce Round Table in June.
- Sub-Committee to work on training needs of NS farm community. Proposal to Thinkfarm for Needs Assessment.

## POLICY BACKGROUND

Skilled labour is critical to any farm operation. The Canadian Agriculture Human Resource Council (CAHRC) conducted a study across Canadian farms and the agriculture industry to identify the gaps and associated costs. Presently, the labour gap in Nova Scotia is 600 people and is expected to increase to 3500 by 2025.

Standing Policy:

*It shall be the policy of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture to lobby provincial and federal governments to establish programs and policies that provide relevant training and encourage employment on farms.*

# 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. Two food goals are identified as part of the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperities Act (EGSPA): 20% of our food spending from local farms by 2020 and increased local procurement by government; and a 5% increase of new farmers to the Nova Scotia Farm Registration System by 2020.

Standing Policy:

*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.*

## Progress

- Presentation at the AGM - Farm and Food Care, Center for Food Integrity, David Smith.
- Participation in workshop on institutional procurement highlighting ways to get local food into NS Public Institutions.
- Work with Cattle Producers, Dairy Farmers in response to activity at Atlantic Stockyards.
- Letter of support for a project submission by Cape Breton Food Hub, 'Innovative Solutions for Accelerated Industry Growth'.
- Working on a proposal to Thinkfarm for an analysis of Nova Scotia Food Hub model.
- Participation in Grow Nova Scotia steering committee.
- Continued participation in Open Farm Day, Meet your Farmers at the Mall and Agricultural Awareness Committee.
- Regular presentations and updates to NSFA Executive from Select Nova Scotia.

# Regulatory Burden

## Progress

- Presentation at the AGM - Fred Crooks, Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness.
- Attended workshop on proposed changes to food related regulations including labelling and the Safe Food for Canadians Act. Newsletter article published with information (Jan/Feb edition).
- Monitoring the Health Canada Front of Package Labeling.
- Monitoring of the Safe Food for Canadian Act, note to commodity managers and collection of input.
- Navigator roles with Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness, shared in enews.
- Participating on a CFA Carbon Pricing Working Group to identify the cost that Carbon Pricing will have on farms across the country.
- Continually monitoring the development of the Cap and Trade program in Nova Scotia.
- Attended consultations and briefings on NAFTA.

## 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 while others require farmers to incur significant costs in order to comply.

### Standing Policy:

*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.*

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# RESOLUTIONS REPORT

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The resolutions committee met twice this year on February 6<sup>th</sup> and August 30, 2017 and will also meet in November to review any new resolutions for presentation to the 2017 Annual General Meeting. Resolutions adopted at the 2016 Annual General Meeting have been categorized and are presented with the 2017 activity.

## FINANCIAL (Executive)

### Increase in the Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board's Lending Limit

*Therefore, be it resolved that, the NSFA lobby the NS government and or the NS Farm Loan Board to have its lending limit increased to \$7 million before needing approval from council.*

#### 2017 Activity

- Resolution was amended at March 2017 Council of Leaders to increase to the funding limit request from 5 to 7 million dollars before needing approval from Order in Council.
- Request made in the form of a letter (April 2017) to Minister Colwell for consideration of this regulatory change.

**This resolution was moved to consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2017).**

## DEVELOPMENT (Executive)

### Abattoir Development in Eastern NS and Cape Breton

#### 2017 Activity

- Action from Council was for more information on abattoirs and the NSDA study a few years ago on abattoir development.
- NSDA is reviewing the current state of abattoir and meat processing capacity.
- NSDA met with NSFA, Agri-Commodity Management, Sheep Producers and Cattle Producers in July.
- Pretty much every region is underserved in terms of inspected meat processing.
- Custom slaughter and Direct to Market sales were identified as the markets not being met. The seasonality of wildlife slaughter indicates a need for seasonal processors.
- Reasons for abattoir shortage: seasonality of processing; Labour/skill set due to rural location of abattoirs; and storage for carcass hanging.
- Clarifying regulations on what can and can't happen was suggested.

*Therefore, be it resolved that, the NSFA consult with NSDA and the Minister on the feasibility of abattoir development to service these areas.*

**The committee is awaiting an update on the status of the review.**

**This resolution was moved to consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2017).**



# PROGRAMS (Executive)

*The next six (6) resolutions have been categorized as Programs*

## Increase Seasonal Extension Assistance in the Growing Forward Program

*Therefore, be it resolved that, NSFA lobby the NS government for an increase to the Seasonal Extension Assistance in the Growing Forward Program from 25% to 50% assistance.*

## Return the Funding for Generators in Growing Forward Program

*Therefore, be it resolved that, the NSFA request the return of the funding at 50% cost shared for generators and installation in the Growing Forward Program.*

## Access to Multiple Year Funding

*Therefore be it resolved that, the NSFA lobby the Provincial Government and the Department of Agriculture to commit 5 year support and funding to the Home Grown Success Program, so farmers can access multiple year funding in one year for larger scale projects that will help lead to organized progressive development of their farms.*

## Keep NSDA Programs Open for Twelve Month Period

*Therefore be it resolved that the NSFA lobby the Minister of Agriculture to review how these approvals are being handled and consider having programs open for the twelve month period so farmers can submit their yearly program application when time allows and all needs are assessed. Appropriate steps should be taken to ensure that the delivery of all programs under his department be done in a timely fashion.*

## Removal of Accredited Food Safety Plans as a Requirement for Food Safety Equipment Funding

*Therefore, be it resolved that, the NSFA lobby the NS Department of Agriculture to remove the requirement for farms to have accredited food safety plans to access funding for food safety equipment relevant to their operations and improving food safety for consumers*

## Funding for Windbreak Solutions

*Therefore, be it resolved that, the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture lobby Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture to reintroduce measures of funding for windbreak design, implementation, and purchase of appropriate natural windbreak and buffer zone solutions for agricultural lands.*

## 2017 Activity

- NSDA programs adjusted the open period from programs which provided better timing for farm applications and leaving less time for discussion of program changes and these resolutions. In addition to a provincial election, and the negotiations for Next Policy Framework, 2017/18 programs were very much status quo.
- Participation in the consultation process, promotion of sessions and survey participation including a separate Council of Leaders survey for Next Policy Framework.
- All program resolutions have been submitted to NSDA for consideration in the Canadian Agriculture Partnership (CAP).

**These resolutions were moved to consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2017).**

# TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

## UTV recognized as a farm vehicle

### 2017 Activity

- Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Act restricts any operation of an OHV on a highway.
- Body classification of Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV) is currently the same as OHV.
- Recognition of UTV as a farm tractor would require change of definition in Motor Vehicle Act (MVA).
- Clarification of definitions under Transport Canada are currently being investigated.

*Therefore, be it resolved that the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture lobby the provincial government to recognize Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTV) as farm tractors and be plated as such.*

## Visibility on Roadways

*Therefore, be it resolved that, the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture lobby the Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal to have roadsides cleared of such vegetation on a timely annual basis.*

### 2017 Activity

- Ongoing conversations with Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal to improve rural road conditions.
- Effort continues through the NSFA Transportation Committee to hold government accountable to the Liberal platform promises of road repairs (community infrastructure), implementing a gravel road plan.

**The resolutions in the transportation committee section were moved to consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2017)**

## ONGOING POLICY (Executive)

### Cell Phone and High-Speed Internet

#### 2017 Activity

- Ongoing conversations as part of improving rural infrastructure and the Liberal government's promise to continue investment in rural broadband connectivity for Nova Scotians.
- The Canadian Radio-Television Consortium ruled in December that all Canadians will have access to broadband internet.

*Therefore be it resolved that, the NSFA lobby the Minister of Agriculture, the Premier of Nova Scotia and the appropriate provincial departments involved in business development and communications to request their involvement in resolving this lack of services that are essential to businesses in this province.*

**This resolution was moved to consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2017).**

## RESEARCH

### Industrial Burn Permit

#### 2017 Activity

*Therefore be it resolved that, farmers can maintain existing burn piles when it is prohibited from starting new piles.*

- This resolution would require regulatory change.
- The regulations clearly indicate that industrial burning is carried out for land clearing, more than two piles, wider than 3 m in diameter or taller than 2 m and that the fire is not extinguished by 8:00 a.m. the following morning.
- Permission is required from the Wildfire Management Group on the day of the burn regardless of any possession of an approved Industrial Burn Permit.
- Highly unlikely that if a Fire Weather Index is high and a provincial ban on fire or suspected red days are near, that any approval to start the burn would be granted.
- Letter sent to Nova Scotia Cattle Producers requesting any further action. (17July17)

**This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, September 2017).**

# Consequences of Brain Worm Infestation

## 2017 Activity

- Preliminary research has been collected on brain worm. White tailed deer are a natural host and livestock such as sheep and goats can carry the larvae, but they do not reach maturity in these hosts.
- Llamas and alpacas seem to be particularly susceptible to brain worm infection. While research shows that cattle are not known to be affected.
- The resolution asked for a file to be started which has been completed.
- Letter sent to Pictou North Colchester Federation of Agriculture with information and request for any further action. (17July17)

*Therefore, be it resolved that, the NSFA bring this matter to the attention of the appropriate bodies and departments to determine the consequences and costs that it will bring to the industry,*

*And further be it resolved that, the NSFA maintain a file on this matter to ensure these bodies and departments develop policy to mitigate the detrimental effects of this pest.*

**This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, September 2017).**

## NATIONAL SCOPE

### Agri-Stability (Executive)

Therefore be it Resolved that, NSFA petition the appropriate federal and provincial government authorities, to have *the Agri-Stability Program trigger mechanism returned to the 85% level and re-instate the method of calculating margins to the method originally used under Growing Forward I,*

*And Further be it Resolved that, the NSFA request that the provincial Department of Agriculture take over administration of the Agri-Stability Program at the provincial level, or coordinate its administration on a Maritime Regional level.*

## 2017 Activity

- A return to an 85% trigger for Agri-Stability, has been incorporated into advocacy of Canadian Federation of Agriculture and NSFA during the Next Policy Framework consultations.
- Funding envelop in the Next Policy Framework is expected to be the same and trigger amount is not expected to change.
- There are existing capacity and synergies within the production insurance and programs department and if the Agri-Suite of programs was delivered locally, it would improve the participation.
- Requests have been made for regional delivery of Agri-Suite of programs; through meetings and election material.

**It was determined that any activity on the first part of the resolution has been exhausted and there is ongoing work for provincial delivery. This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, September 2017). New, revised resolution specific to provincial delivery of the Agri-Suite of programs could be brought to the 2017 AGM.**

# CONSOLIDATED RESOLUTIONS

*Funding Program to Support the Development of Agricultural Land* – This resolution will become part of the other requests for NSDA Programs and will become a focus of the newly formed Agriculture Land Use Policy Committee

**This resolution is three (3) years old and has become part of ongoing policy/committee work. This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, September 2017).**

*Increased Cost Sharing for Tile Drainage, Ditching and Land Forming* – This resolution will become part of the other requests for NSDA Programs.

**This resolution will remain in consolidated resolutions for continued monitoring (Council of Leaders, September 2017).**

*Transportation Assistance for Trucking of CFIA approved Wood Ash* – A letter has been sent to the Minister of Agriculture, March 3, 2017 with the requested additional details.

**This resolution will remain in consolidated resolutions for continued monitoring (Council of Leaders, September 2017).**

*Up to Date Description of New Entrant* – The last action was to publish a newsletter article in hopes of providing scenarios for various situations of new entrant. The article was published in the November newsletter.

**This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, September 2017).**

*Review Agriculture Building code* – The current provincial regulation on farm buildings is the 1995 Farm Building Code as referenced within the Nova Scotia Building Code. The National Research Council (NRC) is undergoing a review and plans are to include the requirements for farm buildings within the National Building Code and not as a standalone Farm Building Code. This is expected by 2020 with Farm Buildings given a separate occupancy classification. The code development work will be done by a Joint Task Group on Farm Buildings; although it is unknown if Nova Scotia will have representation.

**This resolution will remain in consolidated resolutions for continued monitoring (Council of Leaders, September 2017).**

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# COMMITTEE REPORTS

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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 Awareness, Environmental Farm Plan 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 2017.

## Agriculture Energy Working Group

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)  
Tim Marsh  
Henry Vissers  
Wanda Hamilton  
Maxine MacLean  
Lisa Lane  
Julie Bailey  
Nancy Rondeaux  
Sarah Mitchell

Although the Agriculture Energy Working Group doesn't meet often, there have been great strides in agriculture energy in 2017. Introduction of converter technology was a result of meetings and conversations to address access to 3-phase power. Converter Technology is an economical solution of converting single phase electrical power to three phase power supply. The converter box goes by the motor (per motor) and size of the converter is dependent to the size of the motor; it runs similar to variable drives. Converters are typically 95% efficient, the downfall is 5% more electricity is used for the conversion process. There was a newsletter article in September with more detail.

Another highlight for Agriculture energy was the introduction of a roving energy manager for agriculture. A need for farm energy specialist was identified as a gap and through funding of NSDA and EfficiencyOne, Kraig Porter was introduced to the members at the September Council of Leaders. Kraig will provide technical support related to energy management in the agricultural sector in Nova Scotia, as well as work with Department of Agriculture, commodity groups/industry associations, third-party engineering firms, and contractors to direct energy management activities within the Agricultural sector.

The Working Group also received updates from NS Power on a request for rate review and other technologies; Intelligent Feeder Project and Advanced Metering Infrastructure. The group also keeps abreast of the activities of Julie Bailey's thesis project, 'Incorporating Sustainable Energy Decisions in Agriculture' was presented as phase 2 of the project.

The NSFA Energy Working Group will continue to identify and address the energy needs of farmers in Nova Scotia.

# Agriculture Land Use Policy Committee

The Agriculture Land Use Policy Committee was established in 2017 and held their inaugural meeting in July. The committee objective was set to develop a provincial land strategy for agriculture land use in Nova Scotia. The Agriculture Land Policy that is developed must have an authentic statement around agriculture land use and protection thereof and further include transfer of land, accessing land, land bank, taxation, registration and migration.

The committee has held two meetings this year which included an overview of land statistics in Nova Scotia and the status of the land protection / preservation recommendations. The committee has also had great discussion on the Statement of Provincial Interest for Agriculture Land. At the most recent meeting in October, there was a guest presentation from Property Valuation Services Corporation (PVSC) on the assessment process, appeals, statement of use, change of use, and deed transfer tax. Also on the agenda was an update from Annapolis Valley Land Trust and land issues at the Cape Mabou Community Pasture. This committee will meet again in November and will tackle the synthesized report of 31 land recommendations in detail and identify actions and next steps that can be addressed.

To develop a provincial land strategy for agriculture land use in Nova Scotia. The Agriculture Land Policy must have an authentic statement around agriculture land use and protection thereof and further include transfer of land, accessing land, land bank, taxation, registration and migration.

## **Committee Members**

Chris van den Heuvel (Chair)

Victor Oulton

Henry Vissers

Wanda Hamilton

Alan Howell

Brian Newcombe

Gordon Smith

John Eikelenboom

Jonathan Wort

Lyle Goldberg

Melanie Camerson

Michael Devanney

Richard Melvin

## 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  
Sylvestre Dion  
Daniel Bruce  
Chris deWaal  
Michelle Smith  
Domenic Padula  
Bryan Dyck  
Sarah Wood  
Jaelyn Biggs  
Keltie Butler  
Nancy Anningson  
Henry Vissers  
Wanda Hamilton

This working group was established in 2016 to identify challenges and opportunities for small scale and farmers marketing directly to consumers. In 2017, the group met three times and began the year by identifying goals or a path for the group. Education, awareness and information dissemination as well as the financial needs of small producers, advocacy of small farms, and understanding regulation and inspections were all noted as important paths for the group to investigate.

This group provided input on the impact that Safe Food for Canadians Act will have on direct to market farmers under \$30,000 in sales. The group has been updated on the progress of Agri-Futures Nova Scotia, Grow Nova Scotia project and various food policy events. Presentations from financial lenders; Scotiabank, Farm Credit Canada and Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board on small loan financing options were also received. One big win was better understanding of small scale farm financing needs and the development of a microfinance loan; more details to be announced soon. FarmWorks Investment Co-operative Limited shared their success with the working group during the October meeting as well as results from the 2016 survey on the economic and social impact that FarmWorks has had on food related businesses in Nova Scotia.

The Direct to Market / Small Scale Farm Working Group will continue to identify challenges and opportunities for their sector; with education on financing underway, the group hopes to tackle information and awareness around regulations; particularly challenges with food safety regulations for small scale farmers.



# Labour and Skills Training Committee

The Labour and Skills Training Committee continues to work on issues regarding labour; most recently being billing rates for Seasonal Agriculture Workers needing hospital care under Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA), Workers Compensation for farm family members and Nova Scotia Farm Apprenticeship Training.

Seasonal Agriculture Workers are an integral part to the success of having farm labour available. With the amalgamation on the health authorities it seems that billing policies may have changed. It came to the committee's attention that some SAWP are being charged higher out of country rates when accessing service for illness or health (and not related to workplace). The committee is awaiting a review of these policies and whether the out of country rates which have been charged to the SWAP patients are appropriate based on current NSHA policies and procedures.

The committee received a presentation from Workers Compensation to address questions around special protection, WCB and family members as well as reports on agriculture statistics with regard to WCB.

The Labour Committee continues to attract the attention of Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency to recognize Farm Apprenticeship as a blue seal trade similar to PEI. The next phase of this process is a needs assessment on the commitment from Nova Scotia farmers to support employees in the program.

The committee also keeps a watchful eye on training programs delivered by NSFA including Labour and Advanced Education programs such as Workplace Education and Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive (WIPSI). To date NSFA has been able to serve 618 participants in essential skills training that is delivered in 40 hour in class training. The NSFA also offered technical skills training in basic meat cutting, livestock medicine for beef and dairy as well as post-harvest management through the WIPSI program. The courses were delivered by Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture Extended Learning to 57 participants. An application for funding in courses in basic and advanced meat cutting along with leadership and facilitation is currently in process, watch for details.

To create a forum that will enable timely communications and discussion of major agriculture human resource issues that will affect industry. This will be achieved through the establishment of the Labour & Skills Training Committee.

## **Committee Members**

Chris deWaal (Chair)  
Charles Keddy  
Greg Webster  
Peter Morine  
Geneve Newcombe  
Tracy Kittilsen  
Jaclyn Biggs  
Henry Vissers  
Wanda Hamilton

## 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 has been created to bring together Forest Nova Scotia and NSFA to identify common land owner issues. The group met with Ministers of DNR, Environment and Agriculture in December 2016; topics included issues with access and damage to property, liability, carbon pricing and land use policies. One of the activities of this group has been to look at access to privately owned land, policies for permissions, Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) damage and the OHV task force. A meeting will be facilitated with the various OHV associations and Federation of Anglers and Hunters to discuss a collaborative effort for education and awareness for both riders, hunters, and land owners.

## 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  
Kevin Mitchell  
Cst. Blake Decoste  
Michael Kittilsen  
Jos VanOostrum  
Lloyd Dyck  
Henry Vissers  
Wanda Hamilton

The Transportation Committee could very well be our longest standing joint committee and it continues to be faced with ongoing transportation issues especially with changing technologies with farm equipment that no longer fit in legislative definitions and rules of the road.

The committee continues to push for policy for non-expiry plates for telehandlers, wheel loaders and now Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTV). This farm equipment is used on many farms and doesn't fit within the definition of farm tractor and therefore cannot be registered, plated, and insured like farm tractors.

The committee has also pushed for a regulatory amendment for licensed farm equipment dealers to have the ability to move farm equipment under the Agriculture Equipment Registration Exemption. This request is currently awaiting signoff at Order in Council.

The Agriculture Transportation Committee also keeps informed of farm safety training, tractor courses and endorsement testing through the Farm Safety Nova Scotia representation on the committee.

Other topics around the transportation table include visibility of roadways, highway maintenance schedules, protocols and procedures in the event of an accident or emergency involving a livestock trailer and the use of 50 km/hr tractors in Nova Scotia. These topics will continue to build future agendas.

## Other Committees

NSFA still has other committees which have not been fully active, but do remain with some open issues or items.

### **Water Committee**

There are eight approved Water Resource Program projects underway. These projects are wrapping up for completion in December 2017 and the work of these projects will be communicated thereafter.

### **Wetlands Committee**

The Wetland appendix to the Nova Scotia Wetlands Policy is currently with the Department of Environment Wetlands Branch for review and consideration.

### **Wildlife Issues Committee**

In 2016, the committee members agreed that this committee would meet annually to review management zones, updates from Wildlife Compensation program, and any emerging wildlife issues. Through this committee there have been great strides in developing programs to mitigate wildlife issues and the creation of a network of resources for human wildlife conflict.