

News & Views

Vol. 30 No. 3

May/June 2018

In this Issue...

NSFA Donates \$1500 to Feed Nova Scotia. 1

Viewpoint,
NSFA Executive Director . 2

2018 NSIA Distinguished Farm Award. 3

10th Annual Nova Scotia Environmental Farm Plan Stewardship Award 3

Updates to Pesticide Certification Renewal. 4

Opening Eyes and Minds with Open Farm Day 5

Atlantic Immigration Pilot 5

Workplace Education Closings. 6

Single to Three Phase Converters. 6

Mapping Soil Digitally. 7

Mapping Soil Digitally continued 8

Who we are. 8

Upcoming Events 8



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Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture Donates \$1500 to Feed Nova Scotia

According to Feed Nova Scotia, farmers across the province donated more than 320,000 kilograms of fresh fruit and vegetables, and poultry and dairy products to the charitable organization in 2017 – an increase of 30% over the previous year. These donations represent one third of all the perishables that Feed Nova Scotia distributed to its network of 146 food banks, shelters and meal programs from one end of the province to the other.

“The real impact of farm donations can’t be measured in dollars or kilograms,” said Nick Jennery, Executive Director of Feed Nova Scotia. “Nova Scotia has the highest rate of food insecurity among all the Canadian provinces, and every donation we receive from the farming community means so much. It’s about the smile on a kid’s face when they

have a hot meal to serve their family; and the nourishment and comfort that thousands of Nova Scotians are able to receive.”

In addition to the countless fresh produce donations given by farmers, the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture added to that contribution – presenting Jennery with a cheque for \$1500 at their April Council of Leaders meeting.

“After our ‘Beef Up the Food Bank’ initiative ended, we still had a sum of money remaining and one of our council members suggested that we donate the remaining funds to Feed Nova Scotia. We felt this was a great idea and a good way to continue supporting the organizations mission to feed Nova Scotians,” said Victor Oulton, President of Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture.

Thanks to food donations and almost 1,000 volunteers, a donation of \$2 allows Feed Nova Scotia to distribute enough food for three meals.

“What that means is that your donation today of \$1,500 equates to about 2,200 meals; that’s amazing. I’m going to put a lot of smiles on faces when I go back to the office and they see this because they know how critical it is for so many people in our province,” said Jennery.



Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture President Victor Oulton, right, presents Feed Nova Scotia Executive Director, Nick Jennery with donation.

Viewpoint

Recent program announcements of Canadian Agriculture Partnership (CAP) programs that are being delivered by the Department of Agriculture have affected the program availability for farms under the 30,000 gross income threshold. As of this writing we have not yet met with the Minister of Agriculture to discuss the changes.

We have received numerous calls about the changes mostly concern about what isn't in the program, like the new entrant program, season extension, genetic improvement. There is also concern about the environmental part of the program and the proposed cap on program availability, limiting the access dollar amount to 5% of gross income.

As mentioned a number of times we are working with the same \$37 million over 5 years as with the last agreement. There are also more demands on the amount available in CAP with the increased focus on Public Trust as well as other priorities. Federal Government sets the priorities (6 pillars or themes) and provides the funding amount, but remember it is 60/40 federal/provincial funding we are talking about, just because the feds kept the funding at 2013 levels there is nothing stopping the province from adding back investment into agriculture.

The environmental programs that are offered directly to farmers in Nova Scotia are capped at \$15,000 per year and 25% of the project cost with an additional cap of 5% of gross income. That requires a large investment by farmers in order to jump through the hoops and access 25 cents on the dollar. That's a significant investment in rural NS, regardless of whether it's a large farm investing back in their operation or

a small farm investing their off farm income. Also if it's an environment project it's an investment in public good with no expectation of return on investment.

The direct farm programs mentioned above are something like 10% of the entire CAP program. There are other programs such as AgriStability and crop insurance as well as research marketing and other elements of the agreement available for innovation and sector growth.

Based on the April program announcement there is also potential changes in the gross income threshold for farms to access programs. This threshold amount hasn't changed for many years and perhaps it's time to have that discussion. For the most part, farmers have understood each other's needs and have accepted that all of us are stronger together. Large commercial farms are an important part of the rural economy of our province. We value them and lobby on their behalf and there are issues that are unique to them such as BRM programs, Agriculture Labour and Seasonal Ag Worker Program.

We are also equally supportive of small farms who also have issues that are unique to them such as support for farmers markets, provincial marketing regulations, and access to provincial abattoirs.

Of course there are many issues that are just farm issues regardless of size, such as climate change, environmental stewardship, access to markets, transportation, right to farm, access to capital, health Canada regulation changes to name a few. Our policy positions, resolutions process and governance al-



Henry Vissers

Executive Director, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

low us to reflect the needs of the entire farm community.

Many more are rural issues that affect us all and are really a partnership in rural sustainability. Access to health care, good schools, communication like cell service and internet, decent roads. These are all things that are easier to attend as a collective, if we work together.

We are in this together; on a Canadian and certainly on a world scale we are a small unique agriculture community working together and reflecting each other's strengths. This has been the vision of Federation presidents and agriculture leaders for many years. This is reason for our success, let's keep our voice united.

Comments?

hvissers@nsfa-fane.ca

2018 NSIA Distinguished Farm Award

Melvin Farms Ltd. was the winner of the 2018 NSIA Distinguished Farm Award. Very deserving of this award, Richard Melvin and Melvin Farms have made significant contributions to the industry and their community.

Melvin Farms Limited is a fifth-generation family farm located in the Annapolis Valley. The farm consists of nearly 600 acres of prime agricultural land and employs 45 seasonal workers and two full time employees. The VitaBite logo is their registered Trademark, so be sure to keep an eye out at the grocery store!

Richard is President and co-owner of

Melvin Farms Ltd. A graduate of the NSAC, Richard holds a diploma in Agricultural Engineering. In 1983 he was awarded a Nuffield Farming Scholarship during which he studied Vegetable Production and Marketing as well as agricultural policy in Europe.

Richard's passion to the industry is second to none. A conversation with Richard leaves you wanting to learn more and

give more. Richard has given back to the industry in many ways and has served as a Director and President on many industry organization. Richard's ability to think about the industry as a whole, outside of his operation, is truly inspirational. Congratulations to Richard and his family on winning this award!



Left to right: Heather, Ryker, Allan, Richard, Jacqueline and Rebecca.



10th Annual Environmental Farm Plan Stewardship Award
Now Open for Applications, Deadline: August 6, 2018

To be considered, your farm must:

-  Have a current Environmental Farm Plan
-  Have a current farm registration
-  Be a member of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

Award winners will receive:

- \$2000 Cash**
- A painting of your farm**
- by a local artist**

For more information visit: www.nsfa-fane.ca/efp

Updates to Pesticide Certification Renewal

Nova Scotia Environment is changing how pesticide applicators and vendors renew their certificate of qualification.

Pesticide Continuing Education Points Program

Nova Scotia Environment has clarified and posted the requirements for the pesticide continuing education points program at www.novascotia.ca/nse/pests/cep-program.asp. There is also information here to support event organizers as they plan their courses/seminars.

Exam Schedule

There are changes to how to take the exam. You must register for one of the exam writing sessions by contacting the appropriate phone number listed in the table below.

Upon looking at the schedule, there aren't any exam dates in July, August or September creating a significant gap. The exam schedule that was sent to current Pesticide Certificate Holders is below. The booking phone number is also included in the table.

Once your registration is booked, you must mail a completed Application for Pesticide Certificate (which can be found at <https://novascotia.ca/nse/pests/docs/pesticidecertificationapplicationform.pdf>) and the fee noted on the application form to the Department of Environment office where you will be writing the exam. This must be received by Nova Scotia Environment in advance of the exam session. Mailing addresses can be found on their website <https://www.novascotia.ca/nse/dept/regional-office-locations.asp>.

Important Change!

Department of Environment will no longer be issuing renewal notices! If you hold a certificate, it is your responsibility to know when it will expire and to keep track of the re-certification points you have accumulated. The expiry date for your certificate is indicated on the certificate itself. If your certificate has expired and you have not accumulated sufficient points, you will be required to write the exams again.

Farmers can contact the Nova Scotia Environment offices below to determine the number of pesticide points they have:

- Amherst (902) 667-6205
- Sydney (902) 563-2100
- Kentville (902) 679-6086

Location	Exam Date(s) for 2018	Contact Number for Registration
Kentville	June 13, November 14	902-679-6086
Bridgewater	May 23	902-543-4685
Yarmouth	June 27	902-742-8985
Bedford	June 20, November 7	902-424-7773
Truro	June 6, November 21	902-893-5880
Amherst	October 29	902-667-6205
Sydney	May 23, November 28	902-563-2100
Port Hawkesbury	May 30	902-625-0791
Antigonish	June 20	902-863-7389

Opening Eyes and Minds with Open Farm Day

By: Katherine Doyle, Member Engagement Coordinator

As the days get shorter, nights get colder and fall gets closer, Open Farm Day is on the horizon. Falling on the third Sunday in September – September 16th this year – this event is a chance for you to help educate the public about agriculture in Nova Scotia. Within recent years, the divide between farmers and the public has become increasingly evident. Research conducted by the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity has shown a serious divide between consumers and farmers. Did you know that 9 out of 10 Canadians have never been on a farm? Or that 93% of Canadians know very little or nothing about farming practices?

In an age where consumers want to know the backstory of their food, this is your chance to ensure they are getting the right information directly from the source. For the past 16 years, farmers have welcomed the public on to their farm and provided them with hands-on learning experiences and a better

understanding of farming and commodity practices.

"We want people to see and learn about what happens on the farm, see the work involved, the time and commitment required and to develop an appreciation for the wonderful things grown in Nova Scotia."

An opportunity to educate and excite, Open Farm Day is an excellent tool to help improve the public's trust when it comes to farming. Studies show that people trust farmers but not farming – trusting the person not the process – it's time we change that.

"I know I've nailed it when the kids cry that they don't want to go home."

We hope you will join us for the 17th Annual Open Farm Day, September 16th 2018. Registration forms can be found inserted in this News & Views issue or online at www.nsfa-fane.ca/openfarmday.



Open Farm Day provides farmers with the opportunity to educate and excite Nova Scotian's young and old. While providing them with the right information, and creating lasting memories, you will also be able to connect with your customers and promote your farm to people across the province.

As a participating farm you must offer activities that will provide an opportunity to educate the public on how agriculture impacts their daily lives. For a full list of requirements, see the registration form. To ensure your farm is included in promotional material, please submit your application by June 30th.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to:

Katherine Doyle
kdoyle@nsfa-fane.ca
(902) 893-2293

Atlantic Immigration Pilot

Employers in Nova Scotia are now able to use the Atlantic Immigration Pilot to hire foreign workers.

As labour shortages continue, farm businesses, along with other employers, in Nova Scotia will have the opportunity to fill the gap with the Atlantic Immigration Pilot. The program is intended to bring skilled workers to Atlantic Canada to help fill the labour demand.

Farmers looking to fill persistent

labour gaps, like those experienced in many agriculture commodities, must be approved for eligibility by being designated and then endorsed by the Province. To become designated, a business must complete the Employer Designation Form demonstrating good operating standing, need for labour and commit to working with a service provider organization on settlement and retention. While a Labour Market Impact Assessment isn't required, the employer must demonstrate the inability

to fill employment needs by posting on three job posting sites including one national site for a minimum of four consecutive weeks. Providing the form is complete and no additional information is required, the designation process takes about four weeks.

For more information on the Atlantic Immigration Pilot visit the website at <http://nsfa-fane.ca/2018/04/13/atlantic-immigration-pilot>

Workplace Education Closings



This past winter there were three Workplace Education Courses sponsored by the Department of Labour & Advanced Education and the NSFA. Areas of study were Sage 50, Microsoft Office and Internet Social Media Marketing. Shown at the right are graduates of two of these courses.

Comments from Workplace Education past participants

Positive impact on our business....

The lessons guided me systematically to learn and understand the multiple features of the program...

Sessions were not only informative but timely....

Insight for improving the business structure and financial direction of our family farm....



Single to Three-Phase Converters

Operational expansion at your farm or business requires larger motors to power your processes. Most motors above 5 horsepower are designed to function off of a three-phase power supply. Larger three-phase motors are more efficient, require less maintenance and therefore, can cost you less over the lifecycle of the equipment.

Not all businesses have access to three-phase power lines and the cost to extend them to reach your site can

impact any business case, however, there is a solution:

Single Phase to Three-Phase Converter

- Converts single phase electrical power supply into three-phase power supply
- Three-phase power supplied from a converter is indistinguishable from utility 3-phase power
- Converters are typically 95% efficient where the converter itself will

only consume approximately 5% of the connected load

Some example scenarios on the use of converters can be found here: <http://www.northamericaphaseconverters.com/faq>

For more information on converters or additional energy needs, contact the Nova Scotia Power Commercial Solutions Team. Visit nspower.ca or call 1-855-412-7264.

Mapping soil digitally

As a unique soil mapping system consistently gains popularity across Canada, a new researcher at Dal's Faculty of Agriculture is thrilled to be able to bring his expertise on the subject to Atlantic Canada.

With the ever-growing need to better understand the world's soil resources, the field of digital soil mapping (DSM) is rapidly growing. Brandon Heung, an assistant professor in geospatial informatics, primarily focuses his research on digital soil mapping and is excited for the field to become more widely recognized across Canada.

"Although the field of digital soil mapping has been very active around the world over the last 25 years or so, it has really started to emerge in Canada over the last 10 years," Dr. Heung explains. "I think that there are many opportunities to do digital soil mapping research in Canada and the upcoming years are going to be very exciting."

Creating soil maps

A soil map is a geographical representation of soil types and properties, such as textures, organic matter, and depths of horizons. There are a number of uses but soil maps are used largely by farmers, land users and policy makers. Digital soil mapping is essentially a method of creating soil maps using a number of computerized methods to better understand the characteristics and variability of soils.

A combination of soil science, statistics and geographical information systems (GIS), a computer system that calculates data related to positions on the Earth's surface, is used to create DSMs. These precise calculations generate accurate DSM's that can be used for land evaluation, spatial planning, agricultural extension, environmental protection and much more.

"Maps of soil types and their attributes can be used for a whole host of different applications such as precision agriculture, forest resource inventory, carbon monitoring, soil assessments and so forth," says Dr. Heung (left).

Conventional methods of soil mapping saw soil scientists taking aerial photos of land and using a number of manual tools in the field to create a soil survey. Now, these time-consuming methods have been replaced with digital methods, making soil mapping much more time-efficient and accurate.

"DSM takes advantage of the advances in computing power, GIS software, statistics and the availability of digital datasets like satellite imagery, drone-acquired data, climate models and more," says Dr. Heung. "I honestly think that in the next five to seven years Canadians should start to see national soil mapping products. Those maps will be crucial inputs for hydrologic, climate and land-use models in the future."

Across the country

Born and raised in Vancouver, B.C., Dr. Heung began his academic journey at Simon Fraser University. He completed his B.Sc (Hons.) in 2011 and later received his PhD in April 2017. Since the completion of his PhD, he has been working as a postdoctoral fellow with Natural Resources Canada at the Great Lakes Forestry Centre in Ontario.

Although now conducting his research at Dal AC, Dr. Heung has many ongoing projects across the country under the broad theme "Digital Soil Mapping Across Scales." At the farm-scale, Dr. Heung is involved with a precision



Shown above is Dr. Brandon Heung, assistant professor in geospatial informatics at Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture.

agriculture project with the University of Saskatchewan. This project uses drone-acquired Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) data, a surveying method using pulsed laser lights to create 3D image maps.

Dr. Heung also has ongoing projects in BC (Simon Fraser University and BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations) where he works with colleagues to develop and test various mapping approaches for provincial-scale mapping of soils. They recently completed maps of soil classes and organic carbon stocks and are hoping to transfer some of these methodologies to Atlantic Canada in the near future.

Additionally, Dr. Heung contributes to the forested sector through the Great Lakes Forestry Centre and Natural Resources Canada to develop DSM techniques for forestry activity inventories in Ontario. Finally, he works closely with the Canadian Digital Soil Mapping Working Group, a network of mappers from various federal and provincial agencies in partnership with researchers across a number of academic institutions, on a national-scale DSM initiative.

"Through my educational background, I've gained a real interest in the diverse landscape that Canada has to offer

CONT'D ON PAGE 8

Upcoming Events

MAY 28 DEBERT

WBPANS Twilight Meeting

MAY 29 MONASTERY

WBPANS Twilight Meeting

MAY 31 PARRSBORO

WBPANS Twilight Meeting

JUNE 21 BERWICK

Hort NS Annual Golf Tournament

JULY 5, 6 & 7 BIBLE HILL

Sheep Classic

JULY 12 PARRSBORO

Maritime Wild Blueberry Field Day

AUGUST 8 NAPPAN

2018 Forage Field Day

SEPTEMBER 9 - 12 HALIFAX

Canadian Biosolids & Residuals Conference

SEPTEMBER 11 TRURO

NSFA Council of Leaders Meeting

SEPTEMBER 16 ACROSS NS

Open Farm Day

OCT 15 & 16 NIAGARA FALLS

Advancing Women in Agriculture Conference

NOV 16 & 17 TRURO

WBPANS Annual Meeting

NOV 29 & 30 TRURO

NSFA Annual Meeting

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.

2018 EXECUTIVE MEMBERS:

Victor Oulton	President	902-798-4440
Tim Marsh	1 st Vice President	902-798-7924
Chris deWaal	2 nd Vice President	902-582-7756
Chris van den Heuvel	CFA Director	902-631-1884
Kimberly Stokdijk	Director at Large	902-895-4817
Amanda Eisses	Director at Large	902-662-3811
Sylvestre Dion	Director at Large	902-664-6781
Lauren Park	Director at Large	902-292-5160
Past President:	Chris van den Heuvel	902-631-1884

STAFF: Executive Director: Henry Vissers; Associate Director: Wanda Hamilton; Financial Services Coordinator: Krista Vroegh; Administrative Services Coordinator: Shelly MacKenzie; Communication & Research Coordinator: Maxine MacLean; Member Engagement Coordinator: Kathrine Doyle; Farm Safety Manager, Carolyn Van Den Heuvel, EFP Staff, Kathryn Bremner, Paul Brenton, Trevor Davison and Cory Roberts



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

Mapping Soil Digitally....

and having an appreciation for how the climate, geology, vegetation, and soil all interact together," says Dr. Heung.

The power of collaboration

With his extensive knowledge and experience, Dr. Heung looks to expand DSM within Atlantic Canada by beginning to refine all the soil surveys using DSM techniques. He also hopes to continue developing ways of producing DSM's for agricultural and forested landscapes. As for his new position at Dal AC, Dr. Heung is excited to share his passion with students and faculty on campus.

"I really enjoy collaborating with others in developing projects and also having the academic freedom that allows me to pursue my own interests," Dr. Heung says. "I am also very excited to have the opportunity to supervise graduate students and help guide them through their research projects."

It is also Dr. Heung's hope that DSM will become even more popular among students, something that he hopes to help facilitate.

"I think that given the demand for people that know how to use GIS for DSM and other environmental modelling applications, I am looking forward to the opportunity of developing academics programs to that regard."