

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Progress and update on Policies,
Resolutions and Committees.



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STANDING POLICIES



Agricultural Land

Policy Statement

“It shall be the policy of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture to address land issues through a joint committee and collaborative effort. The Federation will advocate for a comprehensive land use strategy that will include an agricultural land bank, 0% taxation on land owned by a registered farm or land actively maintained as farmland by a registered farmer, access to Crown Land for agriculture use, and support for those who bring land into agriculture production. The Federation will also use the appropriate avenues to request at minimum that 5,000 acres of agriculture land be placed under easement within the five-year review of EGSPA.”

- Regular meetings of Land Use Policy Committee working through recommendations of land use reports. These recommendations are broad and include agricultural land planning, protection of top-soil, reduced soil erosion and establishment of a land bank.
- Participation in Cumberland County (Municipality, Chamber and Agriculture) land presentation meeting.
- Assisted Kings County Federation with consultation on local land policy.
- Ministerial meeting with Minister Mombourquette in April with regards to adoption of amended SPI.
- The province amended the Municipal Governments Act to make planning mandatory across all Nova Scotia. This is a step required to move forward with strengthening the Statement of Provincial Interest on Agricultural Land.
- The Agricultural Land policy has been a long-standing policy of the Federation. Progress on this policy in earlier years can be requested.

Labour and Skills Training

- Workplace Education Courses continue. Winter programming included Sage 50 and Microsoft Office in Central and Internet Marketing in Annapolis Royal
- WIPSI Courses for Basic (Feb 28 - March 2) and Advanced Meat Cutting (March 6-8)
- Needs Assessment focus groups for Farm Apprenticeship Technician Program - ThinkFARM funding
- In Phase 3 for development of the Farm Apprenticeship Technician program with applications to the Trade Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Continued participation on Canadian Agriculture Human Resource Council
- Resolution adopted at the AGM regarding support for SAWP / TFW
- Meeting with Deputy Minister of Labour and staff to discuss addressing Labour Gap and provincial support for improvements to the SAWP labour program.

Policy Statement

“It shall be the policy of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture to work with the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency to implement an agriculture apprenticeship program. NSFA will study the training needs of the agriculture industry and will continue to offer Workplace Education courses and any applicable Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive training. NSFA will also continue its relationship with Canadian Agriculture Human Resource Council as a member and participant in projects. NSFA also commits to working with appropriate organizations and governments to ensure successful programs for accessing foreign labour.”



Programs

Policy Statement

“It shall be the policy of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture to play a meaningful role in the implementation of programs in any policy framework for Canada’s agriculture and agri-food sector.

NSFA will advocate for a long-term growth strategy, changes to successor programs and for policies and programs that address the specific needs of Nova Scotia’s primary agricultural industry. The Federation recognizes the need for greater investment in the agricultural industry so that programs can play a meaningful role in farm development on a continual basis.”

- Various resolutions on programs submitted to NSDA for consideration in CAP. An update on the individual resolutions can be found in the Resolutions sections of the Annual Report.
- Discussion on Environmental Farm Plan and Small Farm Acceleration Program.
- Maintenance of NSFarmSuccession.ca website
- NSFA corresponded with Minister of Agriculture on FarmNEXT to look at policies around lending and interest application.
- NSDA made a Presentation at Council of Leaders on CAP in February.
- Federal programs released and seem to have addressed many assurance, traceability, 3rd party audit items from the Next Policy Framework document that NSFA produced.
- NSFA issued media releases and statements with regards to the originally released programs being unsatisfactory.
- NSFA supported farms that were experiencing difficulties with the new programs process and lobbied to have dates extended and processes changed.



Public Trust

Policy Statement

“It shall be the policy of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture to advocate for a collaborative approach for Public Trust during the Canadian Agriculture Partnership negotiations and Public Trust Activities to be farmer driven. NSFA will also work with the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture on regular benchmarking of public perceptions of agriculture.”

- Continued participation in Grow Nova Scotia steering committee
- Project which is surveying Open Farm Day participants on challenges associated with participating in public trust events
- Atlantic Meeting with Deputy Ministers on regional collaboration of public trust. Next meeting to take place in November 2018.
- Member Engagement Coordinator position will assist with public trust initiative.
- Meet Your Farmer at the Mall event was led by NSFA this year.
- Open Farm Day was held on September 16th.

Regulatory Burden

- Participation 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; regulations expected soon.
- Continued briefing on Trade and associated barriers for agriculture.
- Monitoring of Canada's Healthy Eating Strategy; Canada Food Guide and front of package labeling and Safe Food for Canadians Act/Regulations.
- Requests to Minister of Agriculture to review sonic device regulations.
- Request Minister of Agriculture to increase the lending limit for Farm Loan Board.
- Presentation to the Direct to Market Working Group on Business Navigation by Office of Regulatory Affairs.
- Review amendments to the Weed Control Act and Regulations.
- The Safe Food for Canadians Regulations require any farm grossing over \$100,000 to have a written Preventive Control Plan. This was increased from the proposed \$30,000 and was a lobby effort actioned by the NSFA Direct to Market Working Group.

Policy Statement

“It shall be the policy of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture to continue to monitor, participate and communicate changes to regulations at the provincial and federal levels that will impact agriculture. NSFA will also advocate for an increase in the lending limit for Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board, and for the NSCLIC Board to determine key reporting deadlines.”

RESOLUTIONS



Organic Certification Fees

Resolution Statement

Therefore, be it resolved that, the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture will lobby the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture for continued support at 70% funding of organic inspection fees incurred during the first five years of operation.

2018 Activity:

- Previously Home Grown Success program offered 70% funding for these organic fees for 2 years
- It has been reported that no one applied in 2017-18 and in the prior year 9 applied and only 3 claimed
- From programs, No program to support Organic Certification Fees is expected (there was no uptake in GF2, with very few enquiries and no claims)
- It is expected that the Small Farm Accelerator program, if part of the approved business plan, would support these costs for cost share.

This resolution was moved to consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2018)



Support to Cash Flow Program Funding

Resolution Statement

Therefore be it resolved that, the NSFA request that Programs either pay the supplier(s) directly for goods and/or services provided to complete the project or request that the Farm Loan Board approve a microloan to the amount of assistance, the Farm Loan Board pay the supplier and get reimbursed from Programs.

2018 Activity:

- Preliminary discussion on whether the new microloan from farm loan board would be suitable to meet the needs of this resolution
- Small Farm Accelerator program may be an option for small farms
- It was also suggested that Credit Union loans be investigated as a viable option to cash flow projects.

This resolution was moved to consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

Funding to County Federations

2018 Activity:

- Amount changed in financial records, payment made in summer 2018.
- The delegate fund account should cover expenses for delegates at the 2018 AGM
- This expense will require budgeting for 2019 fiscal.

This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, February 2018)

Resolution Statement

Therefore be it resolved that, the NSFA raise the level of funding to county federations by \$5 to \$15 per registered farm, while continuing to pay for county delegates to attend the provincial AGM.

Blueberry Pricing

2018 Activity

- Meeting with NSFA officers and WBPANS was held on May 7th
- Competition Bureau is investigating pricing

This resolution was moved to consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

Resolution Statement

Therefore be it resolved that, the NSFA raise the level of funding to county federations by \$5 to \$15 per registered farm, while continuing to pay for county delegates to attend the provincial AGM.



Resolution Statement

Therefore be it resolved that, the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, in partnership with Horticulture Nova Scotia and any other applicable commodity groups, lobby the Province of Nova Scotia to provide translation and adaptation support services for Spanish speaking Agricultural Workers that can be accessed by farmers to assist with health care, provincial services, and occupational health and safety support and training.

Provincial Support for Spanish and Translation Services for Agricultural Workers

2018 Activity

- Early dialogue with Farm Safety NS regarding Spanish translation of OHS and safety training; needs have been identified as general office signage and forklift training.
- Spanish First aid with a translator held in May 2018
- Discussion at the Labour Committee meeting around partnerships, promotion of the translation service that exists (distribution of language cards), and recognition that training in various areas needs improvement for all workers
 - Language Cards have been made available and circulated to committee
 - Nova Scotia Health Authority (NSHA) policy is to provide Interpretation and Language Services for patients who speak little or no English.
 - There is a broad and on-going communication plan within the entire Nova Scotia Health Authority.
 - The patient, ideally when registering will identify their language (and this is captured at registration).
 - When the patient enters any of NSHA facilities and is in need of language service, staff members are aware of how to contact Interpretation and Language Services for the patient.
- From the transportation committee, any person who is able to translate (spouse, friend, acquaintance, etc) is permitted for the written test portion. During the driving portion of the test the examiner uses hand signals to inform the driver where they want them to go, so no translation is actually needed. This is done almost daily at the Halifax Access office where they see a lot of people who don't speak English.
- Request for driver's handbook translation into Spanish

This resolution was moved to consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

Premises Identification

2018 Activity:

- Met with NSDA Traceability and ACMA regarding the proposed regulations and voluntary Premise identification (PID)
- Currently 681 total PID's issued in Nova Scotia
- Check box on NSDA Program Funding Application 2018 asking if applicant has a Premise Identification #
- NSDA Registrar willing to consider incorporating changes to the Farm Registration Form for April 2019 as this would require regulatory change.
 - Efforts underway to remove the form from the regulations

This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, February 2018)

Resolution Statement

Therefore be it resolved that, the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture work with commodity groups and the Department to explore the possibility of incorporating the Premises Identification Application with the Farm Registration Application.

Field Crop Specialists

2018 Activity

- At Joint Executives meeting it was reported that there is some planning within production and education extension services between Perennia and NSDA
- Recommendation to support extension was part of the recommendation through the Small Farm Acceleration Working Group
- Included in the Ministerial briefing at the March breakfast meeting
- There will be a presentation at the 2018 NSFA AGM in response to this resolution.

This resolution was moved to consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

Resolution Statement

Therefore be it resolved that, the NSFA lobby the Department of Agriculture to maintain the positions of two Field Crop Specialists in the province.

Sale of Forest Products

Resolution Statement

Be it resolved that, the NSFA lobby the NSDNR to ensure that private land-owners have a fair chance to sell forest products to all buyers.

2018 Activity

- Meeting held with Nova Scotia Woodlot Owners and Operators and NSFA Officers on May 7th
- Independent review of forest practices, “Lahey Report’ provided recommendations to government
- NSFA received a letter from 12 organizations representing private woodland owners supporting the recommendations of the Lahey Report.

This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

Review of Description of Farm Vehicle

Resolution Statement

Therefore be it resolved that, the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture lobby the Nova Scotia government to allow for an application process for non-traditional farm vehicles to be registered as farm vehicles.

2018 Activity

- Discussed at TIR meeting (February 1st)
- Current FM Plate regulations indicate;
 - 5 (1) An FM number plate may be issued only to a farmer or fisherman.
 - 5 (2) An FM number plate may be displayed only on (a) a commercial truck that is owned or leased by the farmer or fisherman who was issued the plate; or (b) a passenger van with a minimum seating capacity of 7 that is owned or leased by the farmer or fisherman who was issued the plate
- Information requested from Service NS on the process regarding body type codes
 - Vehicle must be a Class 20 to get an FM plate.
 - Eligibility is determined if the client indicates he meets the requirements as being a bona fide farmer and if the vehicle that is being registered also meets the regulation requirements, commercial truck or Van with seating of 7+
 - Possible system changes and training required
- Requested change in TSA and regulatory re-write (May 2018)

This resolution was moved to consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

Consolidated Resolutions

PROGRAMS

Increased Cost Sharing for Tile Drainage, Ditching and Land Forming

Drainage, ditching and land forming are eligible activities under the Soil and Water Sustainability program, however only at financial assistance of 25% to the lessor of 10% of their gross farm income.

This resolution is three (3) years old and was deleted (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

Transportation Assistance for Trucking of CFIA approved Wood Ash

The Minister of Agriculture continues to not support this resolution. *This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, February 2018)*

Increase Seasonal Extension Assistance in the Growing Forward Program

In CAP, there is no specific program however, assistance for season extension could be applied for under Advancing Innovative Technologies or Small Farm Accelerator Program.

This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

Return the Funding for Generators in Growing Forward Program

There is no program expected under CAP

This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

Access to Multiple Year Funding

Multiple year funding has been identified as a budget challenge for program administration, applications are being accepted on a per year basis

This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

Keep NSDA Programs Open for Twelve Month Period

Of the programs opened, Soil and Water Sustainability, Missions and Travel, and Business Advisory have 2 intake periods, others are by letter of intent and Small Farm Acceleration is intended to be left open.

This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

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

In general, NSDA Programs are not offering Food Safety Equipment through programming. It is possible that within Technologies for Value Added Agriculture (TVA) an applicant may request something related to food safety. There is no requirement in the program for a food safety plan.

This resolution will remain in consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

Funding for Windbreak Solutions

Buffer establishment is an eligible expense under Soil and Water sustainability for riparian areas only. There will be more investigation into the level of impact wind on soil erosion.

This resolution will remain in consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

FINANCIAL (Executive)

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

It is our understanding that this regulatory change is making its way through the government process.

This resolution will remain in consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

DEVELOPMENT (Executive)

Review Agriculture Building code

This activity is taking place on a national level with the review of farm building code, expected in 2020.

This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, February 2018)

Cell Phone and High Speed Internet

There is ongoing public policy both provincially and federally and part of NSFA rural infrastructure position.

This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, February 2018)

Abattoir Development in Eastern NS and Cape Breton

The Feasibility Study by NSDA was received (June 18, 2018). Meat Inspection and processing capacity is also part of 2019 proposed policy direction for NSFA.

This resolution will remain in consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Visibility on Roadways

Continued conversations with Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR) to improve rural road conditions.

This resolution will remain in consolidated resolutions (Council of Leaders, September 2018)

UTV recognized as a farm vehicle

TIR is not willing to actively look into amendments to the Acts at the current time.

This resolution was deleted (Council of Leaders, February 2018)



Land Use Policy Committee

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 Huvel (Chair)

Victor Oulton

Henry Vissers

Wanda Hamilton

Maxine MacLean

Brian Newcombe

Gordon Smith

John Eikelenboom

Jonathan Wort

Melanie Cameron

Michael Devanney

Richard Melvin

Betty MacDonald

Jamie Baxter

Jason Brown

2018 Activity

- Project update on Agricultural Land Inventory Project (ALIP)
- Looking into the change of use tax and if municipalities are applying it
- Look at Farm Registration data as useful tool for Property Valuation Services
- Jurisdictional scan on guidelines or regulations regarding topsoil removal
- Request to meet with Minister of Municipal Affairs regarding Statement of Provincial Interest (SPI) and municipal planning strategies
- Reviewed a draft of the Crown Land Agricultural Ranking Identification Tool (CLARID). The tool provides ranking of crown properties by variables of: size of parcel, classification of land, location to agriculture, or major road, and encroachment of residential / commercial land
- Discussion on cost of easements in the Annapolis Valley Land Trust
- Continue to work through the land use recommendations
- Comparative look at ALIP over 20 years on changes to agriculture land in Annapolis, Kings and Colchester counties
- Presentation of EFP program and information on the collection of data related to risk ratings on soil erosion
- Highlights on the amendments proposed to Municipal Government Act and participation of NSFA in law amendments

Direct to Market/Small Scale Working Group

2018 Activity:

- Updates from ThinkFARM and Farm Markets Nova Scotia Cooperative
- Presentation from Office of Regulatory Affairs and Service Effectiveness and introduction of business navigators <https://novascotia.ca/regulatoryopportunity/business-navigators.asp>
- Perennia's role in Food Safety and discussion of e-learning tools <http://www.perennia.ca/foodsafety/onlinelearning/>
- The working group encouraged NSFA to provide support for Food Safety Outreach and Extension at Perennia

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

Committee Members

Chris van den Heuvel

John Quinn

Victor Oulton

Sylvestre Dion

Daniel Bruce

Chris deWaal

Michelle Smith

Domenic Padula

Bryan Dyck

Sarah Wood

Keltie Butler

Henry Vissers

Wanda Hamilton

Labour

2018 Activity:

- Request from the committee for NSFA advocacy on policy change for SAWP not to fall under the out of country hospital billing rates
- Discussion on Farm Apprenticeship Needs Assessment information and whether it is an apprenticeship or certificate program, further occupational analysis was suggested
- Discussion on future NSFA labour policy to be inclusive of advocacy for all workers (local, SAWP) and discussion on separation of labour and skills training policies
- Discussion on resolution (reported in resolutions report)
- Request to meet with Ministers of Agriculture and Labour in regard to the integrity audits by Service Canada on SAWP
- Presentation from LAE Workforce Consultant on Labour Sector Council Funding and agreement to move forward with an application
- Lobby effort for SAWP in the MSI program
- Call for applications to the Trade Advisory Committee for Farm Technician Apprenticeship
- Discussion on challenges with labour standards for foreign and domestic labour

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

Committee Members

Kimberly Stokdijk (Chair)

Chris deWaal

Charles Keddy

Peter Morine

Geneve Newcombe

Tracy Kittilsen

Ann Millen

Henry Vissers

Wanda Hamilton

Transportation Committee

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

Committee Members

Amanda Eisses (Chair)

Wendell Purdy

David Newcombe

Paul Taylor

Doug Bacon

Bob Wilson

Gary Holmes

Phil Barron

Laurie Hurley

Kevin Mitchell

Cst. Blake Decoste

Michael Kittilsen

Jos VanOostrum

Henry Vissers

Wanda Hamilton

2018 Activity

- Discussion on Emergency Preparedness for cases involving livestock
- Investigation on the resolution regarding driving tests for Seasonal Agriculture Workers
- Action to develop a best practice for hauling tandem to address the section in MVA that restricts this activity.
- Meeting with Deputy Minister and Senior staff of TIR
- Presentation to TIR Area Managers
- Action to advocate for exemption to wearing a helmet on ATV while performing farm tasks
- Discussion on compliance (and Service NS) issues around recognition of licensing – particularly endorsement 23 and international licence.
- Best Practice for hauling tandem will become an information sheet for hauling tandem, RMV does not have authority to make blanket statement on hauling tandem
- Reviewed tractor safety course
- Provided highlights on introduction of new Traffic Safety Act and participation in law amendments
- Update on meeting with Policy and Planning of TIR and Lands and Forest regarding helmets, farm plated UTV and access to land by OHV's

Other Committees

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

Energy Committee

The Energy Committee convenes to address the evolving energy issues that farms face.

Water Committee

There were eight approved water resource program projects that were completed in 2018.

Wetland Committee

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

Wildlife Issues Committee

The committee meets annually to review management zones, updates from Wildlife Compensation program and any emerging wildlife issues.

