

News & Views

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Farmers across the province Celebrated Canada's Agriculture Day!

Farmers across Nova Scotia celebrated Canada's Agriculture Day with their local communities.

Canada's Agriculture Day is a time to showcase all of the amazing things happening in the agricultural industry across Canada and in Nova Scotia. The goal is to create a closer connection with consumers about where their food comes from and the people who produce it.

This year, farmers hosted free screenings of the film "Before the Plate" which follows young farmers and industry experts in order to show the general population what a modern Canadian farm operation looks like, and answer the most pressing questions consumers have about their food. The film follows food staples of the Canadian diet all the way from the farm to the harvesting and processing operations, and showcases the final product at Canoe, one of Toronto's most prestigious restaurants.

"This was an opportunity for farmers and the public to get together and have a discussion about the food produced in Nova Scotia," said Victor Oulton, NSFA President. "Many of the screenings had a panel discussion



Shown above are the panel participants after the showing at Dal AC, (l to r) Alex Crouse, Susan Sipos and Rebecca O'Connell

with local farmers following the showing. We always support these types of events as it allows for questions to be answered, concerns to be addressed, and good conversation to be had."

With 14 screenings taking place in 13 communities throughout Nova Scotia, this was an excellent opportunity to get out and meet your farmer.

Thank-you to participating Federations and Dal AC for helping to make these events successful!



@NSFAFANE

We are Moving!

Starting in April 2019, you will find NSFA offices at 7 Atlantic Central Drive in East Mountain – just off Exit 17 on the 104. The build out has been a process – but definitely something we are looking forward to! Below are a few photos highlighting the changes along the way.



“Before the Plate” Screenings



We Want You to #SpeakUp4SchoolFood

We know that what our kids eat at school matters and that's why GROW NS- a project of Agri-Futures NS, and the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture has been working on a campaign asking for a federal investment in a universal, cost-shared healthy school food program. Nourish NS and the Ecology Action Centre have been working for several years on this initiative alongside the Coalition for Healthy School Food, CHSF.

Evidence shows that when students are well-nourished through the day, their health, classroom behaviour, and learning outcomes improve. Universal healthy school food programs contribute to food literacy and establishing healthy eating patterns now and into the future.

There are many reasons students come to school hungry, including long commutes, early morning practices, not being hungry when they wake up, busy family routines, and household food insecurity. Students spend most of their day in school. Our schools provide a perfect opportunity to offer nourishment, and support healthy eating patterns and increase food literacy, regardless of household income.

Yet, Canada is the only G7 country without a national school food program. With this in mind perhaps it's no surprise that Canada was ranked 37th out of 41 countries when it comes to providing access to healthy food for kids.

You will find a postcard included in this newsletter. We want you to send this postcard to your Member of Parliament (MP) or to a Senator. No postage is required if you send it to the House of Commons address for your MP or Senator. Contact info for Politician's can be found at: www.agri-futures.ns.ca/politicalcontacts.

Your voice as farmers is particularly important as you have dedicated your lives to producing high quality, nutritious food. Please join us and #SpeakUp4SchoolFood. More information, resources and a link to the National petition please visit: www.nourish.ca/speakup

#SPEAKUP4SCHOOLFOOD

Visit: <https://www.nourishns.ca/speakup/>
to sign the petition and learn more!



Canada is the only G7 country without a national school food program

It's time to let our MP's and senators know that healthy food in school matters. Please sign up for the #SpeakUp4School Food campaign to access resources, learn of easy ways to take action, and see the latest news. Let's send a strong message to Ottawa that school food matters.

UNICEF's 2017 Report Card ranked Canada 37th of 41 rich countries in regard to children's food access



Working together: Ecology Action Centre



And others!

Farm Registration New in 2019

NSFA received word that Farm Registrations are expected to be mailed in early March. Considering that renewals are usually sent out in early February, members can likely expect longer delays than usual when receiving their new card. One of the best ways to reduce delays and ensure a quicker turn around on receiving your card is to complete your farm registration as soon as you receive it in the mail.

Also as a reminder - Farm Registration fees are increasing starting Spring 2019. This review has been a lengthy process with direct input from membership throughout the various stages.

NSFA would not increase fees without providing additional benefits to members. With the fee increase, we are able to support the industry by enhancing out Public Trust efforts. We will also be increasing support for our County/Regional Federations. A resolution passed at our 2017 AGM increased the fees paid to County/Regional Federations from \$10 to \$15 and NSFA continue to cover the delegate expenses to NSFA's AGM. While NSFA is excited to be able to further support County/Regional Federations, this additional cost per member will have budget implications. These benefits to members are in line with what we've heard directly from members during the strategic planning exercise we are presently going through.

Keeping in line with governments' efforts to reduce red-tape, the fee structure itself has been reduced to five categories from nine. This change has sparked a lot of discussion among membership as it did mean a greater

increase for some farmers as categories were re-aligned. It is because of this reducing number of categories, that we were not simply able to apply an overall percentage increase to all fees.

The Farm Registration Review Committee looked at cash flow projections and federation strategic initiatives over the Spring/Summer of 2018. This committee has member representation from NSFA Executive Committee, Council of Leaders and general membership. The fee increase was passed by Council of Leaders in September 2018 with much discussion and deliberation. The changes were then presented at each of the County/Regional Federations that took place throughout Fall 2018. The recommended changes were presented to and passed by membership at the 2018 NSFA AGM.

NSFA has a process to review Farm Registration Dues every five years. The last increase took place in 2014. Over the last five years, NSFA has dedicated support for farm safety which has increased the organizations ability to support safety initiatives for farmers, their families and employees.

NSFA looks forward to providing additional support to our members directly as well as indirectly through the County/Regional Federations.

FARM REGISTRATION RENEWAL INFORMATION

What are the benefits of registering my farm?

- Access to farm assistance programs (EFP, AgriStability, Homegrown Success)
- Access to veterinary services and herd health
- No tax on marked diesel fuel
- Zero taxation on farm land

What are the benefits of being a member of NSFA?

You can become a member of NSFA by selecting the box in Section 5 of your Farm Registration.

- Newsletters and Reports
- Annual General Meeting
- Access to staff and office resources
- Services and promotions
- A voice on industry issues

What does the Federation do for me?

- Recognized voice of agriculture
- Public policy
- Research
- Legislative and regulatory reviews
- 'Watchdog' and lobby group
- Linkage to National issues

Give yourself a voice... Check the Box to be a member

The Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture is **YOUR VOICE** in the agriculture industry.

When filling in the Farm Registration Form, don't forget to show your support — there is no additional charge to become a member!



Contact us to find out more on becoming a Member of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

nsfa-fane.ca | 902.893.2293 | info@nsfa-fane.ca

Out and About!

NSFA Executive and staff have been on the road over the last couple of months speaking at commodity meetings, attending trade shows and meeting with government officials. Pictured below from left to right are Victor Oulton speaking at the HNS Conference, our new trade show booth display and NSFA Executive Committee before meeting with Minister Colwell on January 25.



Policy Corner

Land

After thoroughly reviewing recommendations in land reports over the last year, the Agriculture Land Use Policy Committee will be preparing recommended next steps for NSDA's role in agriculture land planning.

Labour

Labour Symposium

On February 26, departments of the Nova Scotia government will be hosting a labour symposium. This symposium is to focus on the labour needs and opportunities for the agriculture industry in Nova Scotia. Chris deWaal will provide a labour status update and will also represent NSFA on the skills development panel.

Agriculture Apprenticeship Trade Advisory Committee

The Agriculture Apprenticeship Trade Advisory Committee (TAC) has met to provide direction on an Agriculture Apprenticeship Program here in Nova Scotia. NSFA applied to the Nova Scotia Apprenticeship Agency which triggered a needs assessment that took place last winter. The TAC has only met twice to date, but have been making progress on the development of the program. Continue watching our eNews for timely updates.

Funding opportunity with Labour and Advanced Education

NSFA has submitted an application and strategic plan to Labour and Advanced Education Sector Council Funding program. We have been invited to make a presentation in early March to support this application. If successful, the industry would be served with funding to support agriculture outreach for HR planning, attraction and retention and training for farmers.

CAHRC Survey

The Canadian Agricultural Human resource Council conducted a survey of farmers and their employees towards the end of 2018. Nova Scotia had an excellent response rate. NSFA is looking forward to reviewing the results – the survey is especially important in assessing progress on narrowing the labour gap and providing direction for our Labour Standing Policy.

Regulatory Burden

Meat Inspection Board

NSFA has heard from many livestock farm members and abattoir operators of varying challenges with processing. Upon review of the Meat Inspection Act, the opportunity to convene an advisory board to bring forward issues around meat inspection and abattoir operations was identified. NSFA Executive Officers brought the opportunity of reforming the

"Just like in farming, government needs to continually look at what it does and how it does it. It needs to continuously improve. The focus on burden reduction has resulted in improvements. This work, focus and progress needs to continue." – Victor Oulton, NSFA President

Meat Inspection Board forward to the Minister at a monthly meeting which has since led to the re-formation of the Board; members are selected as part of the ABC process. The Agencies, Boards and Commissions will be opening applications in the spring. NSFA encourages members being impacted and looking to make a difference to apply when applications open. Postings will be included in our weekly enews when they open.

Lending Limit Increase to Farm Loan Board

As a follow up to a flyer you received in the December/January News and Views – there were changes made to the Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board Regulations. A resolution passed at the 2017 NSFA AGM directed NSFA lobby for an increase in the amount that the Board could approve from \$2 Million to \$7 Million to reduce the amount of wait time for a loan approval. NSFA is excited to say that the changes were recently announced and the board will now have authority to grant loans up to a total of \$5 Million. In a progress report released by the Office of Regulatory Affairs, these changes also included clarified lending options and standardized fee structures which will allow for streamlined administrative processes and reduce burden by \$132,000 to farm businesses.

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#Save EFP

The last week of January, the Federation jumped into the lobby seat to #saveEFP from being removed from Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture and over to Perennia. There was an internal review which included NSDA and Perennia last fall; this review process neglected to make NSFA or the EFP team a part of any consultation or insight. The NSFA team put together the survey and membership's quick response soon confirmed we were on the right track of ensuring the delivery of Environmental Farm Plan continued under the current delivery model with the Federation. After being made aware of the possible changes, Victor Oulton, NSFA President presented the Minister with a document outlining history, highlights, and strengths to continue delivery of the EFP program. The discussion was positive and information was well received by Minister Colwell.

Since this meeting, we haven't received an update from the Minister regarding EFP being delivered by another organization. We are aware that he is away over the next couple of weeks and do not expect a decision during that time. Without a commitment from government for the program to continue with



NSFA, it is challenging to plan for long term initiatives to enhance the program (Species at Risk, Climate Change, etc.), which NSFA has been attempting to do, with push-back from government.

NSFA will be communicating regular updates on the EFP program in the eNews.

What we've heard - #saveEFP

A generous thank-you to our members for quickly replying to the EFP survey. The support for NSFA continuing to deliver the program and importance of maintaining the current delivery model has been encouraging. Some of the results from the feedback include:

- A whopping 97% of respondents said that the EFP Program should continue to be delivered by NSFA.
- Privacy is an obvious concern for EFP Program participants.
- 87% of respondents said that they

would be concerned that their information would be shared with other departments if the EFP Program were delivered by a government agency.

- 83% of respondents indicated that the privacy of their farm information contained in their EFP is important.
- 84% of respondents indicated that on farm visit model of the Nova Scotia Environmental Farm Plan Program is important.

Many members took the time to write and call in to the Federation in support of the EFP program. We are grateful to hear positive reviews from our membership on this important program.

Did you know?

**Nova Scotia's
Environmental Farm Plan
is one of a kind!**

**We are the only province in
Canada that provides an on
farm visit component to our
EFP program.**

Policy Corner

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Transportation

Ongoing

In a recent communication from TIR, the regulations for the Traffic Safety Act are expected to take two years to complete. TIR officials have said that they will communicate with stakeholders (which includes NSFA) during the regulation's

development. Ongoing progress will continue to be included in the News and Views while time sensitive consultations will be included in the eNews and on Social Media.

Climate Change

As part of NSFA's Climate Change Standing Policy, NSFA identified the importance of protecting agriculture land and fresh water resources. NSFA met with Minister Colwell and sent a letter to Min-

ister of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal identifying the need to maintain the freshwater supply with changes coming to the Windsor Causeway as part of the twinning project. An announcement is expected in the coming weeks with the province's decision; however, NSFA has verbal confirmation during a meeting with the Minister that the project will proceed with Option D which will allow increased fish passage but not compromise the fresh water supply.

Upcoming Events

MARCH 2 TRURO
NS Cattle Producers Annual Meeting

MARCH 5 TRURO
Egg Farmers of NS Annual Meeting

MARCH 5 - 7 HALIFAX
Canadian Horticulture Congress

MARCH 6 GREENWICH
Turkey Farmers of NS Annual Meeting

MARCH 6 GREENWICH
Chicken Producers Association of NS Annual Meeting

MARCH 7 - 9 MONCTON
Farm Mech Show

MARCH 8 & 9 MONCTON
Bridging the Gap - A Transition Planning Workshop

MARCH 15 & 16 MONCTON
Maritime Beef Conference

APRIL 9 TRURO
NSFA Council of Leaders Meeting

APRIL 11 BERWICK
Pork Nova Scotia 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.

2019 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
Allan Melvin	Director at Large	902-499-6968
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Lauren Park	Director at Large	902-292-5160
Past President:	Chris van den Heuvel	902-631-1884

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.

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, Paul Brenton, Trevor Davison, Jay Woodworth and Cory Roberts



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Call for Nominations NSIA Agrologist Awards

Do you work with an Agrologist who goes above and beyond in their line of work? Maybe they have made significant contributions to move the Agriculture industry forward. If so, the Nova Scotia Institute of Agrologists is accepting nominations for the following awards:

- Distinguished Agrologist Award
- Distinguished Life Member Award
- Outstanding Young Agrologist Award
- Honourary Member Award

Nominations close March 15, 2019

Visit nsagrologists.ca for more information about each award and nomination forms.