

News & Views

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@NSFAFANE

NSFA Goes to Ottawa!

The CFA AGM took place at the end February. Some highlights on the agenda include greetings from (now past) AAFC Minister, Hon. Lawrence MacAulay; Luc Berthold, the Conservative party agriculture critic; Alistair MacGregor, the NDP's agriculture critic; a panel on the Future of Canadian Farming which included Macroeconomics, Export Opportunities and Sustainabilities, and the upcoming Federal Election. NSFA's Executive Officers, CFA Director and Executive Director represented NSFA at the meeting. While in Ottawa, the representatives from the Atlantic Federations of Agriculture met with the now past Federal Minister of Agriculture (more on these changes can be found on this page). Issues touched on during the brief meeting were AgriRisk, Regional Research Fund and AgriStability.



Pictured above are: Tim Marsh, Christian Michaud, Victor Oulton, Minister MacAulay, Lisa Ashworth, Mervin Wiseman, David Mol and Robert Godfrey.

The Federal Election wasn't the only exciting election topic at the meeting. The East Coast is well represented at CFA with two officers being elected from Atlantic Canada – Mary Robinson from PEI as President and Nova Scotia's own Chris van den Heuvel as Second-Vice. Chris has been NSFA's CFA Director starting in 2017 and has been active in keeping agriculture in the minds of federal,



Chris van den Heuvel elected as first ever CFA Officer from Nova Scotia.

provincial and municipal governments. Also joining Chris and Mary in the officer roles is Keith Currie from Ontario. According to a release from CFA, the Executive team will focus on the key CFA priorities of the Producing Prosperity Campaign, ensuring the pillars of the economics, food security and the environment are at the forefront of Canadian

Viewpoint

Trade seems to be on the minds of many people these days. A few years ago we thought things were settled; we had an agreement in the TPP that would last 20 years and all we had to do was add a few countries over time and the parameters would hold for the long term. Then along came the 2016 US election and changed all that; the newly elected US president campaigned on not signing the TPP and on renegotiating or canceling NAFTA. Obama talked about that in his first campaign, however, once elected that was off the table. Not with this guy!

So now we've gone through a difficult re-negotiation of NAFTA plus a new Pacific agreement (CPTPP). Both agreements have caused Canada to make further concessions over what was originally agreed in NAFTA and TPP. We are a trading nation and do need agreements in order to have certainty required to invest in the infrastructure that we require for the future of our trade sectors. Not all commodities in Nova Scotia are a direct export concern, however as a nation we can't eat all the beef, pork blueberries and other products that we produce.

Then there is Brexit, the UK's long and torturous road to separating from the EU. Soft Brexit, Hard Brexit, Irish backstop, it's all pretty fascinating to watch - I wouldn't want to be in the middle of it. UK agriculture depends on the EU for markets and I assume the EU depends on British products as well. It's a big unknown that could spill over into other countries and may even impact our markets third hand through dumping on markets, and other trade considerations. It's not likely going to be settled at the end of March and will continue to create uncertainty for many people.

Then on to China. Since the Huawei executive was held for extradition to the US, Canada's trade relationship with China has been under threat. China recently suspended trade with Richardson International, and we are still not certain what the real reason for this is since neither China nor the company has said much. Canada also recently suspended importation of pork from China due to the African Swine Fever (ASF). They are also one of our largest trading partners for pork which adds another complexity. We do need to be very careful - ASF could devastate the pork industry. We all remember the Foot and Mouth outbreak in the UK and BSE in Canada.

Finally, I wanted to mention the Frost recovery program. NSFA was very pleased that this program has been offered. The timelines were very tight and we would have liked to see it offered earlier if it needed to be in this fiscal year. It is an important program and we applaud the provincial government for funding it.

Lastly as mentioned in an article in this newsletter we have a vice president of CFA from Nova Scotia for the first time in the history of CFA. Congratulations to Chris van den Heuvel! We also met with Ag Minister MacAulay while we were in Ottawa. We were barely home and he was shifted to Veterans affairs and we had a new Minister from Quebec. Also on the federal front - it's a positive step for the federal government to name Bernadette Jordan as Minister of Rural Economic Development. With our policy positions around rural infrastructure including broadband and cell coverage it's an acknowledgement of the importance of this issue for rural Canada.

Comments?
hvisser@nsfa-fane.ca



Henry Vissers

Executive Director, Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

WE'VE MOVED!

As of April 1st, NSFA will officially take over 7 Atlantic Central Drive! Joining us will be Farm Safety Nova Scotia, Agri-Commodity Management Association (Cattle, Pork, Sheep and other organizations) and Nova Scotia Agri-Futures. While we hope to make this transition as seamless as possible, we apologize in advance for any hiccups that we may experience with this move. Watch future issues for a "House Warming" party!

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New Federal Ag Minister

A minor cabinet shuffle took place on March 1st, shuffling Hon Lawrence MacAulay from PEI out of AAFC and over to Veteran's Affairs and Hon Marie-Claude Bibeau over to AAFC. The shuffle took place a day after CFA elected Mary Robinson, who was also from PEI, into the CFA President role.

Hon Bibeau is the MP for Compton-Stanstead, a strong Dairy riding in Quebec. These changes come in light of the recent resignation of Jody Wilson-Raybould.



Hon Marie-Claud Bibeau is the first female Minister for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

Budget Time!

Synonymous with "spring" is "budget announcement".

On the week of March 18, the Federal budget was released. CFA participated in the Federal budget lockup and conducted a preliminary analysis of the content.

According to CFA, some of the announcements that are of particular importance to the agriculture sector include the development of a National Food Policy which provides a platform through which CFA hopes will enable a whole-of-government approach to Canadian Agri-Food policy, an initiative CFA has been calling for since 2011. This policy will focus on tackling food waste, improving community access to healthy food and will shine a spotlight

on Canadian food both at home and abroad.

CFA also noted in their release that there was a call for small business deduction relief for farmers and fishers selling to affiliated corporations. These deductions will ensure farmers and fishers regain access to their small business deduction, enabling producers unduly affected by changes announced in 2016 to invest in their businesses, making them more efficient, sustainable and profitable over time.

The commitment of \$5 - 6 billion to provide high-speed internet to 100% of Canada by 2030 is vital for farmers to be able to conduct simple day to day e-commerce as well as embrace cutting-edge precision agriculture technology. It's not new news to Nova Scotia farmers the importance and necessity of high-speed internet.

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NSFA Goes to Ottawa

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Agriculture.

CFA members passed 36 resolutions that will guide its advocacy efforts in the coming year. This year's resolutions cover a range of areas, including: trade, business risk management, transportation, tax policy, sustainability, crop protection, labour, animal health, rural infrastructure, carbon pricing and other topics.

There was also the presentation of the first annual Brigid Rivoire Award for Champions of Agricultural Mental Health, an award that goes to an individual or organization that has been doing work in the field of agricultural mental health. This year's winner was the UPA's Sentinel program.

Two policy workshops prior to the AGM focused on Big Data/ Right to Repair as well as Value Creation Models for grain, followed by a consultation with AAFC and CFIA on those Value Creation Models.



Shown (l to r) Victor Oulton, President; Tim Marsh, 1st Vice; Chris deWaal, 2nd Vice; Chris vandenHeuvel, past president and newly elected 2nd Vice of CFA and Henry Vissers, Executive Director.

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Agriculture Board Opportunities!

Agencies, Boards and Commissions (ABCs) are created by government to provide advice and services in different areas, including health, policing, agriculture, education, culture, environment, transportation, professional regulation and more. ABCs include advisory committees and councils, corporate boards and adjudicative (quasi-judicial) bodies.

There are opportunities in agriculture for non-adjudicative boards and there will soon be a spring in-take of applications for the adjudicative ABCs. There are a number of board positions, 155 to be exact, across the departments and some are only open for application during a specific intake period.

There is an online process required to apply for any opportunity that interests you. A full list and application details can be found at https://novascotia.ca/exec_council/abc/

Generally speaking:

- You have to create an account with

Nova Scotia Login System

- Next, you will set up your profile; you will need basic personal information, training / skills set and a resume.
 - Yes, that's right – a resume must accompany the application. I know that many farmers haven't compiled such a thing. Someone at the NSFA office will help you through a template to create one or you can answer the online resume sections.
- Select the current opportunities, find the one of interest to you and "Apply to this ABC"

In Agriculture currently there are vacancies in the following non-adjudicative boards:

- Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board
- Weed Control Advisory Committee
- Livestock Health Services Board

Upcoming vacancies in Agriculture expected for spring intake are:

- Agricultural Marshland Conservation Commission (2 vacancies)
- Animal Cruelty Appeal Board (6

vacancies)

- Crop and Livestock Insurance Arbitration Board, Nova Scotia (2 vacancies)
- Farm Loan Board (1 vacancy)
- Farm Practices Board (3 vacancies)
- Farm Registration Appeal Committee (1 vacancy)
- Meat Inspection Board (3 vacancies)
- Natural Products Marketing Council (1 vacancy)

If you have applied already, the approval process can take some time, you could contact the Executive Council Office to check on the status of your application 1-866-206-6844

If you are interested in participating in one of these organizations and would like assistance with your application, please don't hesitate to contact Wanda at the NSFA office at (902) 893-2293.

Workplace Education Closings



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Below are graduating participants of Workplace Education Classes that took place over the winter months - (l to r) Planning for Profit, Coldbrook and Time Management, Bible Hill



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Policy Corner

TIR Meeting

NSFA Staff met with New TIR Executive Director of Maintenance and Operations, Mark Peachey who moved into the role since Barb Bailey retired. This was a great introductory meeting to continue our positive relationship with TIR. During the meeting, NSFA addressed a couple important road maintenance/decommissioning topics: 1) the policy in development which will determine when a road or infrastructure will be decommissioned is still in the works and has been slightly delayed due to staffing changes; and 2) TIR is interested in working with NSFA to develop a plan for farmers access to and maintenance of K-Class Roads. While on the topic of transportation – NSFA is preparing for the development of the Traffic Safety Act Regulations. Be sure to watch NSFA channels – we'll be sure to let you know when consultations open!

Sonic Device Policy

A couple years ago, NSFA heard from orchard and vineyard owners who were experiencing challenges with neighbours filing complaints regarding "noisemakers" used as wildlife deterrents. While the Right to Farm Act

made allowances for these sonic devices, the regulations for the use of sonic devices were restrictive, particularly to small acreages. A jurisdictional scan looking at the governance of sonic devices conducted by NSFA showed that common practice (most notably provinces with strong grape and tree fruit sectors) was to have guidelines for sonic devices rather than regulation. In February 2019, NSFA has learned that the setbacks for sonic devices has moved from regulation to policy through the Order in Council process.

Farm Registration Form Removed from Regulations

As farmers may have noticed year over year, the farm registration form didn't change much if hardly at all. NSFA has requested year over year that the commodity listings on the farm be updated and inclusive of all farm types in Nova Scotia. NSFA has learned that the farm registration form has moved from regulations and incorporated into Policy which will facilitate easier updates to the form. This request was approved through the Order in Council Process.

BRM Roundtable

The Nova Scotia Provincial Consulta-

tions for the National BRM Program Review took place this week. The cross-commodity consultation focused on solutions and necessary improvements to make the program "equitable", less complex and more timely. Many perspectives were heard around the room from single commodity farms to supply managed farms to diversified farms. Recommendations included adding family labour, equipment leases and contract work as an eligible expense and commodity based rather than whole farm based for calculated losses. Feedback from this consultation and other provinces will be taken to the National Programs Advisory Committee (NPAC) next month to direct changes for BRM Program in CAP 2 (four years from now). Each province has two representatives on NPAC; one is appointed through the Federal Government's agencies appointment process – Chris van den Heuvel is the appointee in Nova Scotia, and a Provincial representative appointee – Ian Blenkhorn was chosen for this role in Nova Scotia. NSDA also has a staff observer which is filled by Lori Kittilsen. We have also been informed that minor changes to programs may be made under CAP.

Budget Time!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

CFA also noted the support for Supply Managed sectors following the ratification of trade deals such as CETA and the CPTPP. However, the details of these provisions must be looked at more closely and CFA will work with its Supply Managed members to assess these provisions and ensure they ad-

equately respond to the loss of markets that came about through concessions made under both agreements.

Finally, CFA is pleased to see the continued push for regulatory modernization, building on announcements made in 2018's Fall Economic Statement. In pursuing regulatory roadmaps that create a more responsive, adaptive, and user-friendly regulatory system, Cana-

dian producers look forward to modernization efforts aimed at enabling more timely access to innovative products and reduced costs associated with unnecessary regulatory burden.

The provincial budget will be announced at the end of March; however the News and Views will be printing for distribution. Commentary will be found in the March 29 eNews.

Rural Infrastructure

"Build it and they will come."

Inadequate rural infrastructure is often identified by farms and other rural businesses as a barrier to growth. Challenges around three phase power, high speed internet, cell service and roads aren't lessening by any means. NSFA has been working with stakeholders to address these various areas

NSFA Members can find the cell and internet survey at nsfa-fane.ca

A resolution on Cell Phone and High Speed Internet was passed at our 2018 AGM. The lack of quality (or in some cases no service) has been on NSFA's radar for quite some time, and we are encouraged to see \$5-6 Billion in the federal budget to support high-speed internet throughout all of Canada. Much like our efforts on improving rural roads, we are regularly asked – where exactly are there shortages, what are the challenges (e.g.: dropped connections, inconsistent service), what are potential solutions, and what does this mean for your business? NSFA has put together a survey for members to complete which will support us in our lobby efforts on this topic area. We ask members to complete this survey

which can be found on our website.

CELL PHONE AND HIGH SPEED INTERNET RESOLUTION FROM 2018 AGM

Whereas, the Ivany Report noted the strong contribution potential for rural based businesses in Nova Scotia; and

Whereas, it is critical to the success of rural businesses in Nova Scotia to have access to reliable cell phone service and high speed internet; and

Whereas, both of these services are not provided in an accessible manner to all Nova Scotia businesses;

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

We certainly aren't starting from scratch on this resolution. Rural infrastructure has been an area that NSFA has watched progress on the provincial and federal fronts for ages. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture is conveying the communications technology challenges that face farmers

across Canada; NSFA was part of the working committee that established CFA's Rural Policy. In December 2016, the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) declared broadband internet a basic telecommunications service for all Canadians. Since then, a fund was established for communities and municipalities to build their own internet lines for companies to access.

Here in Nova Scotia, the rural high speed internet "solution" has been put in the hands of the Halifax Waterfront Development Commission. What city-folk know about the lack of high-speed internet coverage in rural Nova Scotia will be determined, but one can assume that it would have been best for a rural-focused committee be established to effectively administer these funds. A pot of money has been set aside from the provincial budget for this rural development project.

While we are aware and have conveyed that cell service throughout rural regions is inadequate, there seems to be less political will on this front. We will have to be strategic in our approach on this front and anticipate survey results will support our path forward on resolving this issue.

Other resolutions that NSFA is working on include limestone program open year round, inclusion of gypsum under provincial subsidy program, add wildlife controls to the CAP Program and local food procurement.



Upcoming Events

- APRIL 6** **DEBERT**
CCTPA Spring Session
- APRIL 7** **BADDECK**
Cape Breton Farmers' Market Conference
- APRIL 8 - 10** **VARIOUS**
DFNS 2019 Spring Regional Meetings
- APRIL 9** **TRURO**
NSFA Council of Leaders Meeting
- APRIL 11** **BERWICK**
Pork Nova Scotia Annual Meeting
- APRIL 11** **NAPPAN**
Atlantic Feedlot School
- APRIL 27** **NEW ROSS**
LCCTPA Pesticide Recertification Points Training
- MAY 15** **BIBLE HILL**
CTCNS Annual General Meeting
- JULY 4** **BIBLE HILL**
SMART Annual General 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.

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