

news+views

Vol. 32 Issue 4 July 2020

In this Issue...

Your Farmers, Your Nova Scotia Campaign Launched!.....	1
Viewpoint	2
Farm Family Support Line	2
Your Farmers, Your Nova Scotia launch cont'd	3
Open Farm Day 2020.....	3
Policy Corner	4
Policy Corner cont'd	5
Thank you!.....	5
One Road	6
Cover Crops	7
AgSector Update	8
Women in Agriculture & Childcare	9
COVID-19 Agriculture Response Program.....	10
NSFA Government Relations & Public Relations Work.....	10
Q&A with Minister Bibeau	11
NSFA Office Reopening.....	11
Upcoming Events.....	12
AGM Update.....	12
Forestry Transition Team Update	12



Your Farmers, Your Nova Scotia Campaign Launched!



It's important that Nova Scotians feel confident in the food they prepare at home - to know where it came from, how it was grown, and who was involved in growing and producing it. By connecting with Nova Scotia farmers, that confidence can flourish.

The team at the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture has been working on a new campaign called "Your Farmers, Your Nova Scotia." You can find the campaign at www.MeetYourFarmer.ca, where we:

- profile stories of farm families located from one end of the province to the other.
- share some favourite Nova Scotia inspired recipes of our farm families; and
- provide details on how to purchase NS products so that we can support the local economy and contribute to the efforts of sustaining our food supply.

None of us could have anticipated the global public health events of the past few months. The circumstances we faced were unimaginable, and brought significant challenges and additional stress. People across the province are understandably concerned about

providing affordable, safe, and healthy food for their families in the days, weeks and months ahead.

While acknowledging that, it's fair to say that the year 2020 has also made us stronger, more resilient, and allowed us to re-evaluate what is important to us and what we value most.

The goal of this campaign is to position Nova Scotia farmers as a safe, trusted and reliable food source for Nova Scotians at all times, but specifically during this period of uncertainty.

Head over to www.meetyourfarmer.ca to check out the campaign and a fresh, new look for Meet Your Farmer! Many thanks to Allison Garber Communications for all of their hard work on this campaign!

We are looking for farms to embrace and share this campaign with customers, neighbours, friends, suppliers, and more! The campaign logo is available for use on your social media accounts. We have prepared a resource package and want you to be able to use the resources to make connections with Nova Scotians.



Dean & Catherine Manning, Manning Family Farm

...continued on page 3

Viewpoint

Certainly, the dominant topic for the past few months has been COVID-19, and how it has affected businesses, workers, finances, and of course, our health. On a macro level, the federal funding announcements have dropped off over the past while, the last major announcement as of this writing is the further extension of the CERB for 8 more weeks. This makes me wonder what the implications will be in later budgets, as this will all have to be paid back. It's the old question we all face in our business and home finances, and time management – what do you stop doing so you can afford to or have time to do this instead?

Even with the “helicopter” policy approach of dropping cash on people to get them through the crisis, governments still don't seem to value or understand agriculture. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture has been working closely with the federal government and at their behest put together a request for funds to support agriculture. Most of what the Feds announced was a recycle of funds that were already in place, for example the \$125 million for AgriRecovery is the amount that they typically allocate for the program, and triggering the fund will be the usual dance.

Federal staff and MPs also seem focused on the funds in AgriInvest accounts, as they are urging farmers to trigger the money out of these accounts with no indication of which commodities hold the funds. Apart from saying the average account holds \$13,000 there is a dearth of information on if there are only a few accounts that hold the majority of the funding or if it is spread among the industry. This makes it difficult to advocate for changes to policy when there isn't enough shared information to inform the policy decisions.

At the same time, we are trying to make the case for supporting agriculture and Canadian farmers. It has been shown

that for every \$6 of support to Canadian farmers, the United States Department of Agriculture spends \$86. An incredible difference in support for a country that is in direct competition in many markets.

On a more local level, the issue early on was around the importance of processing capacity in the region. As I mentioned in a previous article, we gave a lot of that away over the years with sales of the businesses to outside organizations, that in turn rationalized their production outside of the region. Perhaps now is the time to take another look at that and have the province do something similar to Quebec, by developing a long-term strategy around food and farming.

The COVID journey has been an interesting and challenging one for farms and stakeholders. Navigating the changes in consumers buying patterns and its effect on marketing, the conversion of farm markets to virtual has been difficult for organizations and farms to navigate. It has heightened the awareness of mental health and farmers are embracing the supports available through Farm Safety Nova Scotia. There has also been renewed interest in local production and consumption. We have seen increased efforts to operate virtually, this has shown the need for reliable internet, something



*Henry Vissers
Executive Director, Nova Scotia
Federation of Agriculture*

not all of us have and is a basic need for farmers to operate their businesses. Let's hope that the postmortem of this pandemic looks at the needs of rural Nova Scotia in addressing the policy issues we have long advocated for around broadband internet, cell service and labour.

Here's hoping the curve stays flattened and you all have a good cropping season.

Comments?
hvissers@nsfa-fane.ca

FARM FAMILY SUPPORT LINE

A confidential, short-term counselling and advisory service - to help farmers manage and reduce the stresses in life, including mental health, legal, financial and more.

If you require more specialized or longer-term support, professionals will help you find an appropriate specialist or community service that can provide continued assistance.

Available to farmers or their immediate family members



Farm Family Support Line is managed by
Morneau Shepell as a Member Assistance
Program funded by Farm Safety Nova Scotia

**FOR NOVA SCOTIA FARMERS
SEEKING SUPPORT**

**NO COST FOR UP TO 3 HOURS OF
SERVICE PER ISSUE**

LINE IS OPEN 24 HOURS A DAY

**1-884-880-9142
TTY: 1-877-338-0275**



MEET YOUR FARMER

If you are interested in becoming involved in the campaign please contact: Janette McDonald, Public Trust Coordinator at jmcdonald@nsfa-fane.ca or 902-893-2293. Please don't be shy- we are looking for farm profiles to feature all year long!

Resource packages are available by mail or email. There are some promotional materials available for you to give away too!

#NSFARMRECIPES

MANNING FAMILY FARM SPINACH SALAD



The perfect addition to any summer gathering is a delicious salad. This spinach salad is easy to prepare and features a fresh, homemade dressing. You can layer it in your favorite baking pan or toss in beautiful salad bowl.

Catherine Manning, Manning Family Farm
Falmouth NS

For this recipe and lots more, visit:

MEETYOURFARMER.CA



"WHEN WE SIT DOWN FOR A MEAL, WE KNOW WHERE EVERYTHING COMES FROM. WE HOPE THAT OUR COMMUNITY IS ABLE TO DO THAT TOO."

– Catherine Manning
Manning Farms in Falmouth



Open Farm Day 2020 - We're Going Virtual!



Sunday, September 20, 2020 marks the 20th Anniversary for Open Farm Day in the Atlantic Provinces and it's going to look a bit different this year as we move to a virtual format due to COVID-19.

Participating farms will have the option of going LIVE on their own Facebook pages on Sunday, September 20 or recording a video and having it uploaded to the Meet Your Farmer Facebook page and YouTube channel. Participating farms will be featured on an Atlantic Google map sharing their contact info, type of farm, website, social media, and highlight of their tour. We will happily share links to online stores to drive traffic to purchase from you as well!

Ideas for your video's can include milking time, feeding time, harvesting a crop, washing and packing, a tour of your property or barns, making a meal or snack with your farm produced goods, and more! This is the chance to showcase something that isn't easy to execute with large crowds.

Open Farm Day viewers will have a chance to win a prize pack featuring NS products. If you would like to donate something to the basket please contact Janette. In order to win the prize viewers will have to complete a Bingo card filled with farm facts from our participating farms.

While nothing is like the real experience of hands on learning, we hope to reach more people and bring farms on board that have wanted to participate but were a bit unsure in the past.

Registration information will be going out to past Open Farm Day participants but if you would like to join in on the fun please email Janette: jmcdonald@nsfa-fane.ca or phone 902-893-2293.



Policy Corner

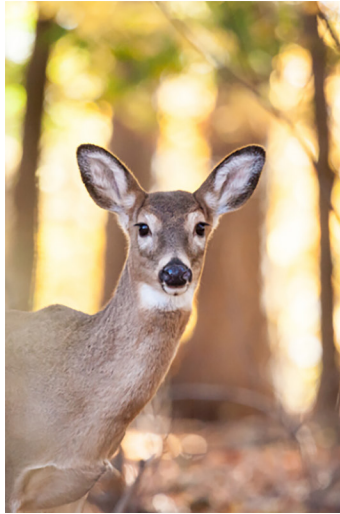
As part of NSFA's Regulatory Standing Policy, NSFA is committed to informing farmers on regulations and other legislative impacts on their farm. At a recent Wildlife Committee meeting, committee members felt farmers would benefit from knowing more about their options regarding wildlife damage. This article is to provide general information on mitigating against wildlife damage, hunting options and the Wildlife Compensation Program.

Wildlife Compensation Program

When crop or livestock losses do occur, compensation for losses resulting from wildlife damage is a possible option. The Canada-Nova Scotia Wildlife Compensation Program is delivered by the Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission. Applicants must be a registered Nova Scotia farmer but do not have to be enrolled in crop insurance. This program is provincially delivered and jointly funded between the federal and provincial governments. More information on the details of this program can be found under Wildlife Compensation Program on the Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance webpage (www.novascotia.ca/agri/cropinsurance) or by calling the Commission at 1-800-565-6371.

Wildlife Mitigation

Certain species of wildlife can be a costly nuisance for farmers. Mitigating against wildlife damage is an investment that can help reduce costs associated with wildlife damage to crops, and in some cases infrastructure on your farm. Below is information on how farms can mitigate against damages suffered from wildlife species which regularly cause damage. The following information has been adapted from information provided by the Department of Lands and Forestry on nuisance wildlife.



White Tailed Deer

The Department of Lands and Forestry website explains tactics to help mitigate against deer damage. Examples that are most practical to farms include scare devices and fencing. When it comes to deer, remember "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." It's recommended to take preventative measures before deer get a taste and take a liking to a crop.

Scare devices

Variety is important when/if using scare devices for keeping deer out of crops. Deer can become used to regular, frequent or repetitive sounds - so mix it up. Other considerations for scare devices are the size of the field. For smaller field you may want to consider all-night radio stations or gas exploders. Remember to notify your local Lands and Forestry office and your neighbours out of courtesy and keep safety in mind.

Fencing

Keeping deer out of a field in the first place is important - trying to manage returning deer is more challenging than keeping new deer out. Even a single strand of electric fence will keep deer out, but more is better. A great example is the Gallagher deer fencing system - the three-strand system was tested and proved to keep out deer. There is a requirement for maintenance such as keeping an eye on the ground quality, keeping the fence clear of weeds and



fixing downed wires are essential to the effectiveness of the fencing system. Depending on your farm, a fence 8 feet high might be practical. Pricing varies by acreage, so you'll need to do a bit of homework to determine which is best for your crop depending the amount of risk you are willing to assume.

Black Bear

Black bears are attracted to fruit and sweet flavours which probably doesn't come as a surprise to wild blueberry farmers and bee keepers. Advice to protect homeowners from unwanted visits from bears isn't always practical for farms. However, the remedy still applies - keep them out. The information below will hopefully help as you mitigate against black bear damage.

Fencing

Fencing bears out of a location is possible. Electric fencing is the most effective. However, amperage must be considered. The most determined bear will get through an electric fence if the amperage isn't high enough. Although not 100%, fencing remains the best option. Some - not all - bears will just roll through the fence to get beehive larvae. Similar to deer, it's best to fence out the bear before they get a taste of the goodies!

Lure crops

Lure crops are hit or miss. Lure crops are intended to attract a bear away from the



Policy Corner *continued from page 4*

crop the farmer is planning to harvest. Scientific studies haven't strongly demonstrated the benefits of lure crops, but some farmers swear by them.

Report Bear Sightings!

It's impractical for a Lands and Forestry officer to visit a location after just one sighting, however, if every sighting is reported and there is an obvious cluster of sightings and reports of damage, justification can be made for an officer to visit an area.

Raccoons

Like other nuisance species, keeping raccoons out in the first place is easier than trying to remove them once they've arrived. Some preventative techniques include covering opening such as doors and windows with a wire mesh. Electric fences are effective and even more so when there is a ground wire 5cm above the ground and a live wire 15cm above that. Since raccoons are nocturnal, the livewire can be turned off during the day. If you need to remove raccoons, a sturdy live trap is necessary. An appropriate trap can be purchased at some hardware stores or you can build a barrel trap using a 200L barrel. Be careful when removing raccoons – they carry many diseases and parasites which can be harmful to humans. And remember – it is illegal to drown raccoons. The Trappers Association of Nova Scotia may be able to provide information and can be reached at info@trappersassociationofnovascotia.ca.

Detailed information on wildlife mitigation for the above species and others can be found in the nuisance wildlife section of Department of Lands and Forestry website or by contacting your local Lands and Forestry office.

Wildlife Removal

Depending on the specific circumstance, there are options available to support the removal of wildlife negatively impacting farm operations.

Usual Hunting Season

Nova Scotia, through regulation, has a hunting season for a vast majority of wildlife including many species that are nuisance to farms. Farmers not interested in hunting themselves may wish to work with a member of the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters, a licensed hunter or trapper to address removal of wildlife species during regular hunting or trapping season.

Human Wildlife Conflict Stamps

For issues outside of the "normal" hunting seasons, the Department of Lands and Forestry has a process where Human Wildlife Conflict Stamps may be available to remove white-tailed deer and/or black bears. These stamps are available from the first of September until the end of April. The gap between April and September exists to reduce the risk of orphaning non-weaned cubs and fawns. These licenses can be issued in high-pressure zones across the province and are for specified locations and species. The Human Wildlife Conflict Stamps are made available in addition to any above the seasonal allocation and wildlife stamps.

Under the Human Wildlife Conflict Stamps, tags can either be purchased for \$7 and the hunter can keep the meat or the tag is issued for free and the meat is donated to Feed Nova Scotia. In the case the meat is donated, it is the responsibility of the farmer to field dress the carcass.

To be approved for Human Wildlife Conflict Stamps, a significant issue must be demonstrated, and mitigation tactics must be attempted. A Wildlife Biologist will visit the location to assess the issue and determine the quantity of stamps to be issued. Any supporting evidence such as pictures from trailcams and assessment of damages can be used to help support your application for these unique stamps.

For more information contact your local Lands and Forestry office. <https://novascotia.ca/natr/staffdir/offices.asp>

Do you only experience issues with raccoons during harvest season? While this might be the case, you may want to keep the population in check year-round. Trapping is a great way to achieve that. Contact TANS for potential trappers in your area.

info@trappersassociationofnovascotia.ca.

How do I contact hunters in my area?

Farmers interested in working with a hunter either following approval for Human Wildlife Conflict Stamps or during the usual hunting season can connect with Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters by contacting Mike Pollard at mikepollard@ns.sympatico.ca or at 902-830-4310.

Thank you!

We would like to thank all of those who have been working hard for Nova Scotia's agriculture industry during these tough times, including NSFA Council & Staff. Thank you for your dedication. We would also like to pass along a special thanks to two hard working teams, "Team COVID" and the Temporary Foreign Workers Working Group.

NSFA's "Team COVID" consists of:

- Victor Oulton
- Allan Melvin
- Chris van den Heuvel
- Henry Vissers
- Carolyn Van Den Heuvel

"Team COVID" has been advocating for Nova Scotia farms to various levels of government, tackling media interviews, and pushing for industry supports.

TFW Working Group consists of:

- Carolyn Van Den Heuvel, NSFA
- Kyla Pierik, Perennia
- Rachael Cheverie, NSDA

The TFW working group has been working on all things TFW. Established to coordinate the logistics of getting the isolation facilities, transportation and protocols in place.

These individuals went above and beyond, putting in long hours to address the sudden challenges our industry faced. Thank you for your hard work.



One Road: Safety is a Two- Way Street

It's that time of year again! A time where you see an increase in slow-moving farm equipment on the road, as they move from field to field, planting and harvesting their crops. While farm equipment is typically on the road throughout the year, they are on the roads more frequently in the spring through to fall. Just like other vehicles and road users, farm equipment has a right to be on the road, as they travel to various locations. We encourage drivers to keep in mind that farmers are out there doing a job, producing safe and quality food for our tables. Farmers don't enjoy slowing down traffic either, we typically aren't on the road for very long, moving from one field to the next, so we ask for your patience as incidents can happen very quickly.

Most common incidents include: left turn collisions, rear end collisions and passing collisions. **Left turn collisions** occur when a farm vehicle is about to make a left turn and the motorist behind the tractor decides to pass. **Rear end collisions** happen when a motorist misjudges the speed when approaching a slow-moving vehicle. This gives the motorist only a few seconds to react and slow down. **Passing collisions** result when a motorist attempts to pass a farm vehicle and may be unaware that the equipment is extra wide or long until they are in the passing lane.

Farm equipment operators and motorists have a common goal, getting from Point A to Point B safely. Responsible drivers will make the choice to protect themselves and the other motorists.

A responsible Farm Equipment Operator with the correct license class will:

- Read, understand, and follow the Motor Vehicles Act.
- Avoid high traffic times, busy roads, bad weather, and night driving.
- Conduct a pre-trip inspection of the equipment before driving.
- Use fluorescent flags or flashing lights on sides of farm equipment.
- Use amber warning light on the top of farm vehicles wider than 2.6 m or 8 ft 6 inches.
- Use a pilot vehicle at front of farm vehicle that is wider than 4.3 meters or 14 feet.
- Must use slow-moving vehicle (SMV) signs on the back of farm tractors, trailers towed by tractors, and vehicles and cannot go faster than 40km/hr (25mph) to warn drivers.
 - » When traveling 80km/hr, it will only take 6.5 seconds to close a 100m distance to a tractor traveling 25km/hr.
- Use correct hitching techniques with safety chains.
- Lock tractor brakes together when traveling on the road.
- Implements should be locked in the "travel" position when on public roads.
- Secure loads so that it stays in the same place inside the vehicle if the vehicle has a registered weight of 4500kg or less.
- Vehicles whose registered weight exceeds 4500 kg, secure loads following the National Safety Code Standard 10

which includes general and commodity specific requirements.

- Plan ahead! Use hand or turn signals when turning. Give ample warning of an upcoming turn.
- Check for passing vehicles when making left turns.
- Slow down for sharp curves and hills.
- Choose a route to avoid overhead powerlines.
- Travel on the road, never the shoulder.
- Identify hazards such as soft shoulders, narrow bridges, loose gravel, bumps, potholes & deep ruts.
- Allow traffic to pass when conditions are safe.
- Obey traffic safety laws and drive defensively.

The One Road campaign is to keep farmers, workers and commuters all safe when farm vehicles are on highways with motorists traveling at high speeds, and making sure farmers and workers are adhering to safe practices when using provincial highways and roadways.

We can prevent incidents on the road by slowing down, keeping back at least 50ft, avoiding the driver's blind spots, knowing equipment may take up more than one lane and be longer than you expect, only passing when it is legal and safe to do so, anticipating farm equipment turning off the road, looking for hand signals and turn signals, and giving them room to make a turn.

When in doubt, wait and see before you act.

For more information visit the Farm Safety Nova Scotia website (<https://farmsafetyns.ca/courses/agricultural-road-safety/>).

Cover Crops - Not Just an End of Season Conversation

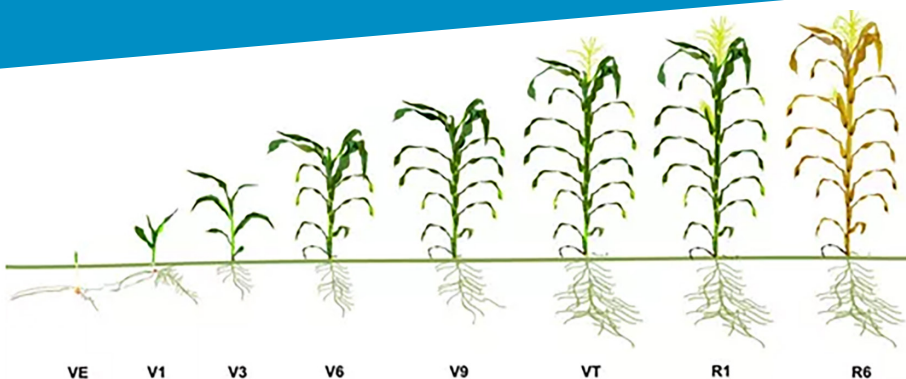


Farmers across this province, like farmers everywhere, face the challenge of producing healthy food for our communities, while at the same time striving to protect the land for future generations and reduce the negative impacts on the environment. One opportunity that is often overlooked is the value of cover crops to improve soil management and soil health.

What is a cover crop? This is typically a non-cash crop that is grown in fields to protect soil quality for the future. Cover crops have traditionally been planted primarily to slow erosion but they have also been shown to improve soil health, enhance water availability, smother weeds, help control pests and diseases and increase biodiversity.

Cover crops should be viewed as a long-term investment in improved soil health and management. They can begin to pay for themselves in the first year of use, or it may take a few years for them to lead to a net positive return. Here are a few benefits that may not be noticed directly on the bottom line from a budget standpoint when you are looking at the cost of seed.

1.) Soil Erosion: Open topsoil for any extended period of time during the



growing season is something to avoid. Wind and water can carry the soil away through erosion. It takes many years to produce organic matter that makes up topsoil but a significant amount can be lost in one weather event. If small rills are visible in a field, erosion is not only taking place, it is occurring at a rapid and unsustainable rate. Planting cover crops helps stabilize the soil and protect the topsoil layer from wind and water erosion. Interseeding corn with a cover crop is becoming increasingly popular as it allows farmers to establish a cover crop at the V6 – V8 stage. By the time the corn is harvested, the cover crop is well established. For more information, check out Perennia's CropLinks article: <https://www.perennia.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CropLinks-June-29.pdf>. Dr. Darren Robinson (University of Guelph) also discusses annual rye-grass and clover sensitivity to soil applied corn herbicides, which is an important consideration depending on your management program: <https://fieldcropnews.com/2016/04/annual-rye-grass-and-clover-sensitivity-to-soil-applied-corn-herbicides/>. There may still be time to interseed a cover crop this season, but if not, it is never too early to start planning for next year.

2.) Nutrient Management: Cover crops are a great way to add valuable nutrients when they are incorporated into the soil. Selecting a legume, such as hairy vetch, provides the opportunity to 'fix' nitrogen in the soil. A bacterial inoculant may be required to get the full benefit. Some non-legume cover crops, such as radishes and rye, also have the ability to tie up the nutrients and prevent them from being lost due to runoff or leaching.

3.) Water Quality: With nutrients in the soil also comes runoff issues. Our surface water sources are easily exposed

to nutrient runoff (e.g. nitrogen and phosphorus) and other pollution sources. Maintaining a cover crop throughout the season helps to ensure soil and nutrients remain in the field and prevent algae blooms and eutrophication of water systems.

4.) Weed Suppression: Weed control can make the difference between a good harvest and a poor one. Farmers can use cover crops as a way to manage weeds in their fields and reduce herbicide applications. Below ground, roots of cover crops extend deep into the soil competing for nutrients and available water; above ground, the leaves compete for sunlight and space discouraging weed growth.

5.) Biodiversity: By planting a cover crop, especially when interseeding, not only are farmers introducing a new plant into the field, they also introduce new interactions for insect populations. Cover crops create new habitats that can encourage pollinators and other beneficial insects or distract pests away from the intended crop (e.g. living mulches for flea beetle control in cole crops). Creating an area of diverse species is beneficial both above and below the soil surface.

These are some of the many reasons why farmers use cover crops—each reason presents an opportunity to not only improve the soil but water and habitat as well. We encourage you all to consider how to incorporate cover crops into your farm and spend some time talking to your crop advisors, nutrient management planners and EFP coordinators. For more information, check out the factsheets on the EFP website: <http://www.nsfa-fane.ca/efp/resources/factsheets/>.

AgSector Update

Labour Needs: nsagjobs.ca

On April 7, we launched our job bank in an effort to help recruit local labour, especially this season. The job bank provides the opportunity for employers, farms and agri-businesses to post jobs, for public viewing. It also allows potential employees to register and receive notifications of new job postings in their area. The job bank has received significant attention and exposure, with over 21,000 visits since it's launch.

If you have a job opportunity on your operation, posting on nsagjobs.ca will make it known to workers who have an interest in agriculture—it gives you a target audience! To support [nsagjobs](https://nsagjobs.ca) through times of low job submissions, our job bank will also be populated with postings from the Government of Canada Job Bank. This will help build the reputation of our job bank as the go-to place for employers and employees for jobs in the NS ag industry. Another noteworthy point, our job bank may be considered as an additional recruitment method for LMIA applications. ESDC is not able to predetermine any aspects of an application, including acceptable recruitment methods, but a posting on [nsagjobs](https://nsagjobs.ca) supports an LMIA application because it uniquely targets an agricultural audience.

In the next column you will find the current stats for our job bank, which highlights the number of job vacancies, job postings, employee registrations and match referrals that have been distributed since launching the job bank.

We launched a YouTube video campaign to help attract potential employees, which began airing on June 26, adding to the job bank's exposure. The ad can be viewed for fun here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQWxiZm324>



NSAGJOBS current stats

701 Job Vacancies in 48 Job Postings
88 Employees Registered
1,024 Match Referrals Distributed

Survey Says?

There was a brief survey conducted in early June to determine the actual labour needs on farms, as adjustments have been made due to the pandemic. If you missed the survey and would like to discuss your labour needs, please reach out to Heather at hboyd@nsfa-fane.ca or 902-893-2293.

Navigating BRMs Webinar!

On June 3, we delivered the Navigating BRMs webinar to give farmers an in-depth look at AgriStability and AgriInvest. If you missed the session and your farm has never considered looking at these programs before, you can still watch the webinar recording. Contact Heather to get the link.

Foreign workers make up

29%

of Nova Scotia's agriculture workforce.



NS farmers lost

\$33 MILLION

due to labour shortages in 2018.

Voluntary turnover was the lowest in Canada.

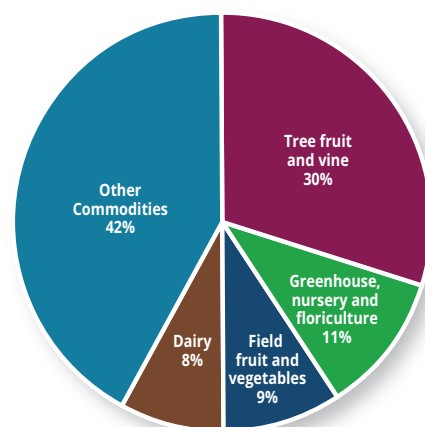


2%
NOVA SCOTIA



10%
CANADA

Nova Scotia's Agricultural Employment Profile



Agriculture is growing in NS.



The province will need a workforce of by **2029.**

7,190

Women in Agriculture & Childcare

A letter to Minister Marie-Claude Bibeau from Amy VanderHeide.

Last July I was invited by Minister Colwell to take part in the Federal Territorial Provincial Agriculture Minister's Conference to sit at your table to speak on behalf of Women in Agriculture about the barriers we often face. I cannot explain to you how it felt to prepare for that presentation thinking, "she'll get it," as many women in politics face the same barriers. Aside from the privilege of being in the room, the excitement to sit across from such an inspiration to many women striving to belong to agriculture boards, committees, etc. I was impressed that part of your platform included hearing specifically from us, along with many other underrepresented persons in the industry. As a result of that, I was also asked, again by Minister Colwell, to speak at a provincial agriculture minister's conference to speak on a panel of women in agriculture discussing the same topics. When that invitation came, I thought "Yes! We're being included as a topic in major conferences that aren't 'Women specific', people want to hear from us, to help us break the barriers," Immediately after that, COVID-19 hit and any hope of being heard has been lost. Now, I feel we're being ignored, shoved to the side. Unimportant. Again.

When asked by you and your colleagues what some of the biggest barriers are for women in agriculture, the first thing out of my mouth was childcare. During the panel discussion in March, 2/3 of us said the same thing, echoing that statement. The third person on the panel does not have children, therefore could not weigh in on that topic, but had her own challenges. For both events I was told to be speak personally and childcare has certainly been a personal barrier of mine, however, if you ask many others you will get the same answer. Guaranteed. With COVID-19 now changing the scope of

childcare how we knew it, which was not great as it was, women in ag are more desperate than ever for help with juggling that "2nd shift."

In March, schools closed for the safety of our children and to protect those most vulnerable. Many businesses and workplaces followed suit. Frontline workers did not. Essential Services did not. Agriculture is an Essential Service. While we saw stories about healthcare professionals scrambling to find childcare, or sent children to stay with loved ones until it was safe for them to be home in the same place as their parents, many farmers were doing the same, but it wasn't highlighted. Now we are into one of the busiest seasons and we need help.

With labour as short as it is right now, many parents are watching from the sidelines as our families or employees struggle to stay on top of the work, or to find more help, or spend time training people who have little to no experience, with no guarantee that they will even show up for work tomorrow. Guess who is sitting at home, with all the skills needed, all the training and licensing complete.... me, and many other women in ag. Guess who is paying out more money than ever because they've found an at home sitter due to having school aged children who wouldn't have a spot in a daycare, even if there were any available....me, and many other women in ag.

These costs are adding up and its adding stress during an already stressful time. Those of us who have found and made an agreement with someone to provide childcare in our home, are now months into paying for childcare that we didn't have time to budget for before the onset of COVID-19, yet at the same time, we can't afford to not work. It is a double-edged sword.

I am not asking for a handout, I don't think any of us are, we are asking for

support to get through COVID-19 with our children being safely taken care of instead of subjecting them to long hours, large equipment, large livestock and the many safety hazards farms work with day to day. We are asking for help to avoid burnout and damage to our mental wellness, as well as our children's, because crops need to go in, equipment needs to be maintained, livestock needs to be tended too, hay needs to get done, but also kids need 3 meals a day, snack time, nap time, stimulation, entertainment and to just be allowed to be kids. We need to be sure we won't get distracted and make a costly mistake, or a fatal one...honestly, I've just been waiting to hear of an accident involving a child because I know how easily it can happen at the best of times. It's scary and we are living with that fear. We are not intentionally putting our children in danger, but many of us are overworked and overtired from pulling double, even triple duty. We are cutting corners or taking far more time than we should be, optimal is hard to achieve with kids alongside you. We are trying to protect our relatives who may normally be helping us with our children, but they are in the high-risk categories and we don't want them to get sick. We are trying to follow the rules. We are failing - ourselves, our farms, and our children.

This is all preventable with help. With co-operation. With support.

There are solutions if the powers that be were willing to listen. We are willing to share, to help find something that gets skilled people back to work, possibly provide employment for those looking for work that isn't necessarily "on farm" but still supports the farm. A solution for both women and youth, farm families, small businesses, our economy.

I am asking you on behalf of the many families in agriculture that are struggling to afford childcare during COVID-19 to consider building a cost share program, or provide a funding opportunity to hire students to provide childcare on farms to help us get back to work and provide essential labour to our farms and businesses.

COVID-19: Agriculture Response Program

The provincial government announced new programs and support for Nova Scotia's agriculture industry. This included the COVID-19 Agriculture Response Program and an increase to the 2020 AgriStability interim benefit payment percentage from 50 to 75 per cent for producers. As well as providing a 10 per cent discount on producers' share of Crop Insurance premiums.

The COVID-19 Agriculture Response Program is designed to help Nova Scotia's agriculture industry mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the industry's competitiveness, productivity and profitability.

There are 4 streams for funding under the COVID-19 Response and Mitigation Program. The funding doesn't need to be repaid.

Stream 1: COVID-19 Mitigation and Adaptation for Health Protocol:

Applicants are eligible for 75% funding assistance on total eligible project costs to a maximum of \$50,000 per program year, to help applicants comply with recommended health protocols.

Stream 2: COVID-19 Marketing, Product Movement and Distribution:

Agriculture companies and registered Nova Scotia farms as applicants are eligible for 50% funding assistance on total eligible project costs to a maximum of \$20,000 per project.

Stream 3: COVID-19 Strategic Projects:

Initiatives at a sector or industry level will be reviewed for funding on an individual basis. If they're deemed to meet the objectives of the Program, they will be assessed on an individual merit, impact and reach basis.

Stream 4: COVID-19 Abattoir Efficiency and Development:

Applicants are eligible for 75% funding assistance on total eligible project costs to a maximum of \$50,000 per program year.

For more information contact Programs and Business Risk Management. Phone: 902-893-6377, Email: prm@novascotia.ca

We'd like to hear from you

Have you accessed the program or are in the process of applying to the program? Let us know your thoughts.

Will this program address your needs? Are there gaps that should be addressed?

info@nsfa-fane.ca or 902-893-2293

NSFA Government Relations & Public Relations Work

Leading up to the end of May and the beginning of June, NSFA was working on a government relations and public relations campaign to address the lack of government support for the agriculture industry. The announcement of the COVID-19 Agriculture Response Program and its supports, covered many of the items NSFA has been advocating for.

However, there are a few areas for improvement in the program and additional supports that would greatly benefit the agriculture industry in these difficult times. These issues were brought forward in letters to Minister Colwell, as well as the Agriculture Critics; John Lohr and Lisa Roberts.

To the right, you will find our asks.

For more information visit:
nsfa-fane.ca/covid19-support

Access to PPE

Access to PPE on farms is a growing concern as the economy across Canada begins to open. In addition to increased PPE requirements due to COVID-19, many farms required the use of common PPE like N95 masks for tasks on farm like cleaning barns to keep themselves, their workers and livestock healthy.

Ask: NSFA is asking NSDA to request that PPE in the province be prioritized for agriculture workers after the needs of health care providers are met.

Childcare

The strain of closing schools is felt by families across Nova Scotia and this is no different for farm families with school aged children at home.

Ask: NSFA is recommending that childcare be an eligible expense under the COVID-19: Agriculture Response Program.

Labour Shortage – Crop and Livestock Insurance

The labour gap is even more unpredictable this year as delays are experienced through the Temporary Foreign Worker program. Typically speaking, farms require more labour during harvest in comparison to planting and cropping. Though a farm may have enough labour to put in a crop, border restrictions may very well expand the already extensive labour gap at harvest time.

Ask: Identifying labour shortage as an insurable peril under Crop and Livestock Insurance.

Q&A with Minister Bibeau

Back in May we had the opportunity to host a Q&A session with the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau.

Minister Bibeau was joined by Members of Parliament, Kody Blois (Kings-Hants), Lenore Zann (Cumberland-Colchester) and Sean Fraser (Central Nova) to answer questions put forward by our members. We appreciate the opportunity to connect and engage with our federal government as we highlighted the challenges our Nova Scotia agriculture sector is facing. Leading up to the session we asked our members to submit questions they would like Minister Bibeau to answer. We received over 20 questions prior to the meeting and a number of questions throughout the live session. There were numerous questions around financial support and funding, labour, processing capacity, food security, women in agriculture and rural internet. When questioned about financial supports and programs for Canada's agriculture sector in the wake of

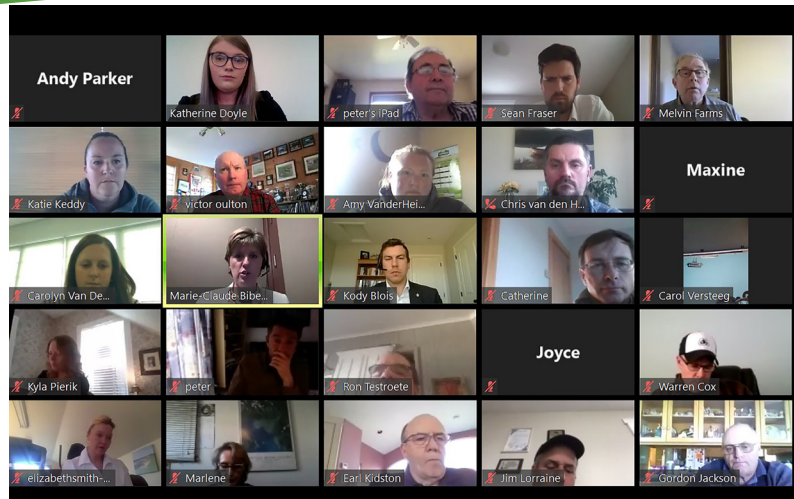
COVID-19, the Minister responded by promoting the Federal governments suite of BRM programs – especially AgriStability.

Minister Bibeau recommended that producers utilize the AgriStability benefit calculator, this tool can help you understand how the program works and how AgriStability benefits are calculated. You can find it by following this link: <https://ase-eas.agr.gc.ca/ASE-EAS/quickEstimator/form/en>

“Help me help you,” a call from Minister Bibeau, requesting that farms look into the supports offered by the BRM programs and how they would work for our unique situations. Funding

that currently sits in those programs would need to begin moving out, in order for additional funding to be considered in the future. However, the BRM programs do not work for all farms and sectors in our industry - they are not adequate supports for all. We will continue to support CFA and their work on addressing the issues with BRM programs.

Direct conversations with members of government are quite beneficial when you can express your concerns directly to the decision makers. We look forward to our continued conversations with the Federal government, where we will continue to support the efforts of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.



NSFA Office Reopening

The NSFA office has reopened to staff and tenants, as we adjust to the new normal. Staff will be working both at home and in office, and we have implemented protocols to meet public health requirements, such as: cleaning our offices twice daily and cleaning all surfaces after contact, placing occupancy limits in offices and common areas - just to name a few!

Every office is equipped with cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer from Raging Crow Distillery, we are happy to support local businesses!

Currently, non-essential work travel is suspended until further notice. This may include, farm visits, conferences, and in-person training. We will be revisiting this in the near future and looking at how we can accommodate the needs of our farmers while still respecting public health measures.

We are currently only accepting essential visitors by appointment only and will reassess this at a later date, but please don't hesitate to contact us with your questions or concerns.



Upcoming Events

September 20, 2020 - Atlantic Provinces

Virtual Open Farm Day

December 3 & 4, 2020 - Truro

125th NSFA Annual Meeting

Forestry Transition Team Update

On June 16th, the Forestry Transition Team provided an update on their work since January and highlighting the Transition Priorities which are:

1. Innovation, Diversification and Entrepreneurship

2. Workforce Development

3. Woodlot Owner Leadership

4. Supply Chain Viability

This update can be found on Forest Nova Scotia's Facebook page or by visiting the government of Nova Scotia's website:

<https://novascotia.ca/forestry-sector-support/transition.asp>



7 Atlantic Central Drive
East Mountain
NS B6L 2Z2
Ph: 893-2293
Fax: 893-7063
Email: info@nsfa-fane.ca

AGM Update

Our AGM planning committee is in full swing working on our Annual Meeting! While we know that our AGM won't look like it has in the past, we are working hard to ensure that we can still celebrate 125 years! Keep an eye out for updates in the eNews and News & Views as plans are finalized.



2020 COUNCIL MEMBERS

Victor Oulton
President
902-798-4440

Tim Marsh
1st Vice President/CFA
902-798-7924

Chris deWaal
2nd Vice President
902-582-7756

Chris van den Heuvel
Past President
902-631-1884

Allan Melvin
Corporate Secretary &
Treasurer
902-499-6968

Lauren Park
902-292-5160

Josh Oulton
902-670-4538

Peter Morine
902-527-3274

Andy Parker
902-679-8630

Jacob Mullen
902-778-0063

Joe Piotti
902-657-2308

Gordon Jackson
902-584-3205

STAFF

Henry Vissers
Executive Director

Carolyn Van Den Heuvel
Director of Outreach &
Member Relations

Tracey Otterson
Financial Services
Coordinator

Shelly MacKenzie
Administrative Services
Coordinator

Maxine MacLean
Policy & Research
Coordinator

Katherine Doyle
Communications
Coordinator

Janette McDonald
Public Trust
Coordinator

Lori Brookhouse
Farm Safety Advisor

Heather Boyd
AgSector Coordinator

Trevor Davison
EFP Coordinator

Cory Roberts
EFP Coordinator

Website: www.nsfa-fane.ca

 @nsfafane

 @nsfa

 @nsfa_fane

NSFA News + Views is the Newsletter of the NS Federation of Agriculture, the voice of Nova Scotia's agriculture industry.

News + Views is provided free of charge to its members. We value comments and concerns from our members. Please direct them to Council members or Office Staff.