



COVID-19 Advocacy & Public Relations Campaign

In the wake of COVID-19, farms across the country experienced significant impacts to their operations and everyday way of life. Throughout the past few months, we have heard from our members on the challenges they are facing as they continue to produce safe, high-quality food for Nova Scotians.

COVID-19 presented the agriculture industry with a variety of challenges and saw farmers adapting as quickly as possible to the new normal. Some of the challenges we know of include:

- The additional costs for personal protective equipment (PPE), accessing PPE and the putting the infrastructure in place to meet social distancing and other public health requirements.
- Delays and a reduction in the number of Temporary Foreign Workers arriving in the province has been a significant challenge for many farms in Nova Scotia. Without the usual complement of foreign workers our farms are experiencing an even more significant labour gap than in previous years. The delay in arrivals of TFWs has also put a burden on farming operations as they try to maintain a similar pace without the typical workforce.
- 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.
- There have also been significant shifts in markets with the closure of schools and restaurants in the early months of COVID-19 and a change in consumer demand.

Below you will find a table highlighting the items NSFA has been advocating for over the past few months on behalf of Nova Scotia farmers, and the outcome of those asks. Items marked with a **checkmark** indicate that government support was announced to address this issue. Those without a **checkmark** have yet to be addressed.

Asks	Outcome (✓ = support announced)
Transition Funding	
The provincial government deliver a COVID-19 transition funding program to support farms that have made changes to their businesses and operations due to COVID-19. Examples of eligible expenses include but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online marketing platforms - PPE and additional hygiene supplies - Facility modifications - Food packaging - Childcare 	<div style="text-align: center;"> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> <p>✓</p> </div>



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Personal Protective Equipment	
<p>Ensure farms have access to the required PPE for the 2020 seasons by supporting a bulk purchase of PPE.</p> <p>Government must identify agriculture as a priority industry for PPE equipment.</p>	
Business Risk Management	
<p>The Nova Scotia Government request AgriRecovery for COVID-19 as presented by the Federal Government and provide provincial contribution.</p> <p>NSDA to commit to AgriStability interim payment increase from 50% to 75%.</p> <p>NSDA to request AAFC increase production margin from 70% to 85%</p> <p>NSDA to commit payout of the provincial 40% of an 85% AgriStability production margin.</p> <p>NSDA also continue to advocate for removal of the reference margin limit.</p> <p>NSDA to support Nova Scotia farms by implementing a multi-year discount that is greater than the increase in premium rates over the last three growing seasons.</p> <p>NSDA to ensure the Nova Scotia Crop Insurance program follows the lead of the Federal government and includes labour shortage as a cause of loss.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p style="text-align: center;">✓</p>



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Labour Support	
Develop a wage-subsidy program for agriculture.	
Nova Scotia to include agriculture workers in the provincial plan for the wage top-up program with funding from the Federal Government.	
Interest Pay Down Program	
Acceptance of the Interest Paydown Program as presented by NSFA will support farms that have been burdened by compounding challenges.	
Retail	
Retailers to work with commodities and farms to increase the availability of local product at grocery stores.	
Processing Challenges	
Collaborate with commodity groups to develop industry supported solutions.	