

news+views

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Annual Meeting Update We're going virtual!

"A lot has changed over the last 125 years but one thing has remained constant – our passion for the agriculture industry in Nova Scotia. Change is ever constant, whether it's a change in our personal lives, on our operations, in the environment, the country or even the world. We are always changing, adapting, overcoming and celebrating. To work in agriculture, you must be open to change, be able to adapt and overcome, and to celebrate your victories – big or small."

This was an excerpt from a News + Views article published in March, shortly before things changed drastically.

If there is one thing that COVID-19 has instilled or strengthened in all of us is the ability to adapt quickly in order to overcome obstacles. Throughout the last few months, we have watched you all adapt your practices and take on every challenge that has been thrown your way as we navigate this new normal.

NSFA has undergone some changes as well when it comes to office life and how we are conducting business. Like most organizations, the vast majority of our meetings have moved online which has allowed for a great deal of flexibility for both staff and committee members. With that being said, we have some important news regarding our Annual Meeting this year – we're going **virtual!**

Due to COVID-19 public health restrictions in relation to large gatherings and taking into consideration the health and wellbeing of our members, Council

and staff – we felt this was the best decision. As much as we would like to gather in person and reconnect with you all face-to-face, we feel as though our virtual plan is quite exciting!

2020 marks NSFA's 125th year as an organization, so we will be celebrating this milestone by covering **12** topics in **5** days. In previous years our Annual Meeting has been a two-day event with a jam-packed agenda, with our meeting moving online this year we wanted to spread things out! This year our 125th celebration will run the week of **November 30- December 4**, with NSFA's business meeting taking place on Thursday, December 3. **Throughout the week we will be hosting webinars on a wide range of topics!** This includes webinars focusing on; Public Trust, Soil Health, Transition Planning and Mental Health - there's something for everyone!

There will also be three business meetings held throughout the week.

Nova Scotia Young Farmers' AGM will take place on Wednesday, December 2.

Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture's business meeting will take place on Thursday, December 3.

Farm Safety Nova Scotia's Annual Meeting will take place on Friday, December 4.

We will continue to keep you updated as we working through the planning process of our first major online event!

...continued on page 10

Viewpoint

As expected the pandemic continues to resonate through all of our lives. The dramatic number of death projections haven't materialized in Nova Scotia and we were successful in flattening the curve. As we move into fall let's hope the return to school goes well and the second wave is successfully flattened too.

Fiscally, levels of government have reported on the deficits and they are startling if not surprising. The Federal deficit for this fiscal is projected at \$343 billion and a net Federal debt hitting \$1.2 trillion. It's hard to get our heads wrapped around those numbers but on a per person basis it's an increased debt of \$32,500 per Canadian citizen, an increase of \$9,200 per person in this year alone. Even with what seemed like numerous billion dollar a day announcements there is still no progress when it comes to improving the AgriStability/AgriInvest. On a provincial level, Nova Scotia's snapshot goes from projected surplus to an \$853 million deficit with net debt going to \$16.9 billion. For agriculture the CAP funding was redirected to challenges exacerbated by COVID-19 along with a 10% discount on crop insurance.

The consensus is that we didn't have much choice but to deploy all variable financial resources into the COVID-19 battle, however there will be a reckoning down the road but it's hard to predict what that will look like. Volatile markets and interest rates as well as austerity budgets will be a part of our future.

Labour issues during COVID were and are an important concern and very stressful for farmers, NSFA is grateful for the collaboration of Minister Colwell, NSDA, Perennia staff and commodity organizations in working through all of the challenges in bringing in our seasonal workforce.

Virtual meetings have also quickly become a part of the normal routine. Most of the Federation's meetings have

been virtual with council and committees since the lockdown. It's definitely part of a learning experience and although it will be good to see you all again in person it's something we have learned can work quite well and is a serious saver of resources.

Events like exhibitions and farm markets as well as events like Open Farm Day are difficult (and for exhibitions are impossible) to shift to virtual and I'm sure we are all looking forward to resuming face to face activity in future albeit with changes to respect the reality of COVID.

Looking ahead to the fall, we see municipal elections are coming up and NSFA will be providing information for candidates and ensuring that they are aware of the Federation policy and resolutions that are influenced by decisions at the municipal level. Again, there will be a COVID effect with less face to face interaction and changes to voting processes. All politics are local and it's important that you as an individual and your county federation make sure that candidates are aware of the resolutions and policies of the Federation and how it affects you and your farm business.

Speaking of elections, the Federation election of Council members will follow the process set out in bylaws that were passed at last year's Annual Meeting. As the bylaws state, applications must be received 15 days prior to the AGM and must be signed by the nominee and 5 additional members of the Federation. We have 12 members of council and with staggered 3 year terms, which means we will have 4 Council positions up for election at our AGM this year. Additional information, application forms etc. will be included in future newsletters and correspondence. Another important piece to note from our revised bylaws is that the officers, President, VPs etc. are now elected by the Council following the AGM.

You or someone you know may be

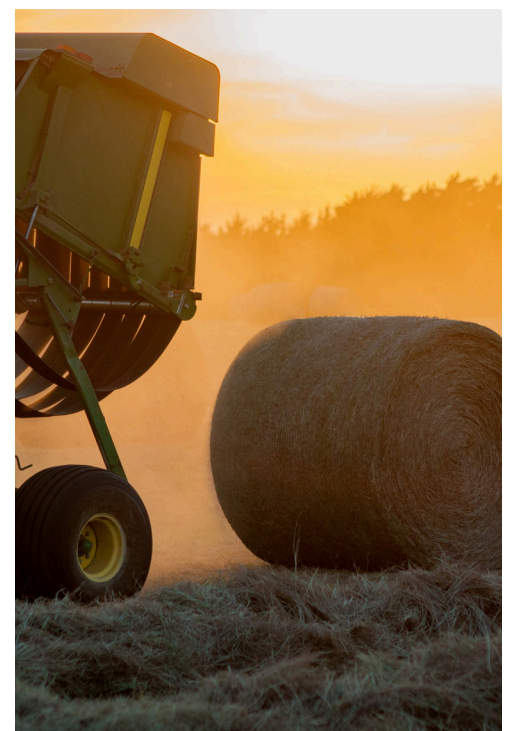


*Henry Vissers
Executive Director, Nova Scotia
Federation of Agriculture*

interested in filling this important role in our organization. It's an important way to give back to the farm community and Council members will tell you that you get back as much as you put into it, while acquiring a deeper understanding of the industry, the Federation and how it works.

Here's hoping for a good fall harvest with good weather and no storms!

Comments?
hvissers@nsfa-fane.ca





Open Farm Day is Sunday, September 20!

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. Nova Scotia is celebrating with New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador as we join forces to bring a fun and diverse virtual day!

You can find a map of all participating farms in the Atlantic at: www.meetyourfarmer.ca/events.

Celebrating 20 years in the Atlantic
Célébrons 20 ans dans l'Atlantique



OPEN FARM DAY

JOURNÉE AGRICOLE PORTES OUVERTES

September 20 septembre 2020

You can also follow along on Facebook by 'going' to the Atlantic Open Farm Day 2020/ Journée agricole Atlantique 2020 event.

There are more than 25 farms participating in this year's Open Farm Day in Nova Scotia! There is a mix of farms submitting videos and going live on their own social media accounts. The videos will be posted to the Meet Your Farmer Facebook page and YouTube Channel.

Open Farm Day viewers will have a chance to win a prize pack featuring NS products. In order to win the prize viewers will have to complete a 'Bingo' card filled with farm trivia and agricultural information from our participating farms.

A special thank you to all farms who have registered to participate and open their farms online this year! Be sure to watch Sunday, September 20, 2020 from your own farm this year!

Canadian Centre for Food Integrity releases 2019 Data

In mid-summer, the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture hosted a webinar to discuss the findings of the 2019 public trust research from the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity giving results from Nova Scotia surveying.

The research is used to gauge and track public attitudes about Canadian food, agriculture, and food system issues with comparison to U.S. data, while also creating comparisons from year to year. The research is also used to understand who Canadians trust and hold responsible and who Canadian consumers are turning to for information when it comes to food related topics. When asked what their top life concerns were, Nova Scotians indicated they are concerned about the rising cost of food, keeping healthy food affordable, and rising health care costs.

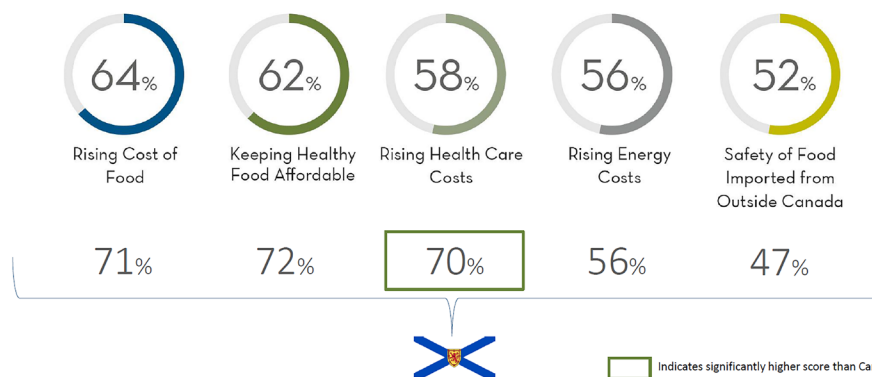
As farmers this is an important piece of information to understand as food prices continue to change, especially during the pandemic. **71% of Nova Scotians**

are concerned with the rising cost of food - that's almost 3 in 4 people! When surveyed further on this, **57% of Nova Scotians are more concerned about affordability of healthy food than a year ago** - that's up from 47% in 2018. And, **only 14% of Nova Scotians believe that Canadian food is amongst the most affordable in the world.**

Another piece of information that is important is who Canadians and Nova Scotians hold responsible to provide

credible information and who they trust in the food system. Nova Scotians hold government the most responsible for credible information at 80% and then farmers, and food processors. **When looking at who Canadians trust in the food system farmers hold the top spot at 42%.** There is room for improvement here but this means the door is open for farmers to deepen and strengthen trust with Nova Scotians around food and farming.

Life Concerns for Canadians



Policy Corner

Industry Issues Report Updates

Abattoirs



The vulnerability of our meat processing chain, particularly red meat, has been made clear during COVID-19. As the food security conversation surfaced in response to COVID-19, the ability to process our own food here in Nova Scotia is a topic that comes to light on a regular basis. NSFA has had the opportunity to highlight the barriers, challenges and opportunities that farmers know all too well when trying to get their meat processed or open their own processing facility. While there isn't a hard and fast solution to increase red meat capacity here in Nova Scotia, decision makers are beginning to understand the complexity of the issue.

Roadways

NSFA staff met with Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal staff: once on licensing and vehicle registration, and again regarding road maintenance. A challenge we are hearing from farms with Temporary

Foreign Workers is the uncertainty around international licences. When COVID-19 hit and Access NS offices closed, international licenses were extended until August 31, 2020. NSFA has been working with TIR for an interim solution since, in order to get an international license, the employees must apply for it in their home country. NSFA conducted a survey of members who have TFWs on their farm to understand the full picture of the issue. TIR has indicated that they are working on resolving the issue, but at the time of print, they have not come to a resolution.

NSFA staff met with Executive Director of Maintenance at TIR to discuss roadway repairs and maintenance. NSFA asked for progress on the issues identified in a member survey in 2016 and what we could do going forward. The survey was to inform areas that the Rural Infrastructure Maintenance (RIM) funds could be best spent. The meeting also covered ditch maintenance plans upon completion of the mowing of the 100 series highways, a couple community specific issues and of course, Spring Weight Restrictions. NSFA has been lobbying for a better process or a complete agricultural exemption for transporting farm products while Spring Weight Restrictions are in place.



Recruiting for Risk Management Committee

NSFA is recruiting members at large for our recently formed Risk Management Committee.

Objective: To create a forum to study the risk management issues affecting Nova Scotia farms including the available risk management programs (e.g. AgriStability, Crop Insurance), along with general liability and worker liability. The objective is to ensure farmers have an understanding of risk management options and to advocate for improvements to risk management programs.

Term: Three years per term, maximum two terms.

Frequency: As needed with a minimum of two meetings annually.

Members with an interest in participating on a committee will now be able to submit a short application. Be sure to indicate that you are interested in sitting on the Risk Management Committee when you apply. The application is not intended to be onerous and will provide fair grounds for NSFA to fill vacancies on committees. All applications will be vetted by the NSFA Nominating Committee with recommendation to Council for approval. Members and eligible family members will be able to apply. Visit nsfa-fane.ca/committee-applications to apply!

NSFA will consider industry diversity such as regions, commodities produced and size as well as social diversity such as age, gender, race, ethnicity and sexual orientation.

As NSFA continues to be the one voice for Nova Scotia Farmers, we will strive for an engaged membership as we work together to move the industry forward.

What's coming up:

Municipal Elections

Municipal Elections are fast approaching! NSFA is in the midst of preparing questions and conversation starters for members and agriculture industry supporters to have with you, so you can have conversations with candidates in your district. These supports will be made available on our website and in the eNews starting in September.

Watch for Policies

NSFA's draft standing policies were approved by NSFA's Council and will be prepared for distribution in the October 2020 News and Views. The 2021 Standing Policies mark the first set of policies that were prepared under our new set of by-laws which formed the Policy Advisory Committee (PAC). Members will recognize some themes that are carrying forward including protecting agricultural land, improving soil health and addressing regulatory affairs. New this year is a standing policy that will focus on lobby efforts for the upcoming Federal Provincial Territorial (FPT) Agriculture Framework which is expected to start in April 2023.

Meeting with Caucuses

NSFA is working through a government relations strategy to help enhance our relationships with provincial political parties – caucuses, critics and staff, federal caucuses and Nova Scotia MPs. You may remember NSFA had a presence earlier this year at each the Progressive Conservative and NDP conventions. Later this summer NSFA will have the opportunity to meet virtually with both the PC and NDP Caucuses. Requests have been made to present to the Liberal Caucus. Watch for highlights of these meetings in our eNews!

TRAIN YOUR BRAIN TO FARM SAFE



39-67%
of the world's workforce
is sleep deprived



ENGAGE YOUR BETTER MIND FRAME

Workplace injuries and mishaps are often the result of engaging the "Fast Brain." This is the part of the brain that relies on habit and quick-decision making. When we learn to rely more on our analytical, "Slow Brain", we can promote a safer work culture.

FAST BRAIN



THINKING: Pre-conscious, automatic reactive & habitual
ACTIVATION TIME: 4/10 of a second
GOAL: Process visual information & give feedback quickly. Fine details may be missed.
INTERFERENCE: - None, autopilot
- Subject to frequent errors.

SLOW BRAIN



THINKING: Conscious, analytical reasoned, reflective & thoughtful
ACTIVATION TIME: Min. one second. Fatigue creates slower activation.
GOAL: Consciously go through steps of a task & evaluate all angles.
INTERFERENCE: - Fatigue
- Fewer errors

**BY TRAINING YOURSELF TO ENGAGE YOUR "SLOW BRAIN"
YOU CAN BEGIN TO SUCCESSFULLY
"MIND THE G.A.P."**

F.A.R.M.



Fatigue at Risk Management

Reduce fatigue by recognizing the signs, symptoms and effects of fatigue. Include a system to mitigate and measure risk along with a reporting process to determine how fatigue played a role in an incident.

F.A.R.M.



First Always Right-Minded

Doing the job right the first time and using positive communication to increase efficiency and reduce costs related to incident and injury.

**MIND THE G.A.P.
(GOOD ANALYTICAL PRACTICE)**

F.A.R.M.



Focused Approach, Right Method

Developing clear and concise safe job procedures for hazardous tasks that show workers how to do the task and not leave any part of the task open for interpretation.



Mind the G.A.P - FARM FARM FARM

Good news, you can train your brain to “Mind” the G.A.P! by building a farm safety plan to include policies and procedures, a hazard and risk management system, and a method to positively communicate the plan to workers.

Training is an important way to give workers the tools they need to work safely and to train the brain on how to use this information first rather than rely on a worker past experiences - good or bad habits to rule their day to day decisions.

Here are three methods to FARM your way to making good decisions and preventing incidents and injury on farm.

FARM – Fatigue at Risk Management

can be used to reduce worker fatigue by recognizing the signs and symptoms of fatigue and knowing it can cause impairment. Measuring fatigue levels using a fatigue calculator and using a system to mitigate the risk, as well as having an incident reporting process to gain information on how fatigue played a role in an incident.

It only takes one 24-hour period of lost deep sleep for moderate to severe cognitive fatigue to occur.

Fatigue impairs the following (Dekra www.dekra-insight.com):

- attention to detail
- impulse and risk inhibition
- accurate memory recall
- problem analysis
- conceptual thinking
- decision making
- planning ahead

It is as simple as finding out what makes us over tired and coming up with ways to get more rest to be our best selves.



We don’t have to wear sleep deprivation as a badge of honour anymore when working on the farm. In this day and age, we have to become more creative to accommodate our fast-paced world so the demands don’t break us.

FARM – First Always Right-Minded

means doing the job right the first time. Not only will this increase efficiency but will reduce the costs related to incident and injury which increases the farms’ sustainability.

There is a clear connection between safety culture and safe work performance according to the Gallup study (“The Relationship Between Engagement at Work and Organization Outcomes,” by Harter et al, Gallup, April 2016). They found the more workers were engaged in their work, there were fewer incidents and injuries.

The study showed:

- 78% higher success rate in businesses with an engaged workforce;
- 70% fewer incidents; and
- 41% less absenteeism.

FARM - Focused Approach; Right Method

involves developing clear and concise best practices and safe job procedures for hazardous tasks that show workers how to do the task and not leave any part of the task open for interpretation. Build them to account for foreseeable hazards to give the worker methods on dealing with critical situations. For the unforeseeable, using the above two FARM methods will, in

conjunction with this FARM method, help engage the slow brain in which the worker can then make a conscious, reasoned, analytical and thoughtful decision with a good outcome.

Along with best practices and safe job procedures, build a farm safety plan that includes policies that lay out the health and safety commitment and expectations of the farm. Written policies that include health and safety expectations help communicate the safety culture on farm. Use the policies, best practices and safe job procedures during the new hire orientation and safety meetings to support health and safety expectations on farm. Posting policies, best practices and safe job procedures act as a constant reminder for expected performance but also leave the information at the finger tips of the workers which will encourage them to use them with confidence.

Other important information to include in a farm safety plan to provide a focused approach and right method to safety: inspection report forms, hazard identification, emergency phone numbers, evacuation maps, emergency response plans, and incident and investigation process.

Contact the Farm Safety Advisor if you would like help in Minding the G.A.P Farm-Farm-Farm. Call 902-957-2785 or e-mail lbrookhouse@nsfa-fane.ca. You could also join the Farm Safety Advisor on December 15, 2020 from 9am – 12pm in the Build a Farm Safety Plan webinar to learn how to develop your plan.

Managing Heavy Rainfall Events

Our climate is changing and that is having an impact on our growing seasons. This summer has been hot, humid and mostly dry with repeated heat warnings being issued and threats of thundershowers common in weather forecasts.

It's hard to know what will be in store for the rest of the season, but tropical storms and hurricanes could be around the corner. Last year, as everyone remembers, hurricane Dorian ripped through the province and caused unprecedented damage. That devastation was on the heels of Post Tropical Storm Erin that dumped over 100 mm of rain from the Yarmouth area to Parrsboro (162 mm). In comparison, Antigonish got 5 mm (picture above). Every farmer knows we are at the mercy of Mother Nature and things can change quickly. Although there is very little defense for devastating winds in a hurricane, there are a number of things farmers can do to be better prepared for heavy rainfall events at any point during the season.

In the field

In a "normal" rainfall event, raindrops range in size from 1 to 7 millimeters in diameter and can hit the ground at speeds over 30 km/hr. As a single drop, that isn't a big deal, but millions of raindrops hitting the bare soil surface can dislodge soil particles splashing them 3 to 5 feet away. This action breaks up soil aggregates, clogs soil pores reducing infiltration and increases runoff and erosion. Just slowing the raindrop down before it hits the ground is one of the easiest ways to reduce the impact of the raindrops. **Crop residue, cover crops**



and maintaining areas in permanent vegetation are all means of slowing down the rain. No-till or reduced tillage can also help as the remaining stubble provides a surface for the raindrop to contact before it hits the soil and will absorb some of the raindrop's energy and slow it down, reducing the impact.

In the farm yard

Farm yard run-off control is important throughout the year, but especially in the fall (before the ground freezes) and in the **spring** (as the ground is thawing). If possible, consider how precipitation runoff is to be managed at the planning stage of the manure storage, livestock yard or feed storage area. Earthwork and materials (e.g. concrete, fill, gravel, geotextiles required for drainage) can add a significant expense to construction, but these costs will generally be lower if incorporated in the design phase as opposed to being installed after the pad or yard is constructed.

Eaves troughs on barns or adjacent storage buildings can direct roof water away from manure storages, livestock yards and other farm structures. This water can outlet away from the storage/livestock area, be redirected to a catch basin with subsurface drainage, or stored in a bulk tank for another farm use, i.e. filling a pesticide sprayer, livestock watering or irrigating a small garden.

Constructed wetlands are engineered to pre-treat various types of agricultural waste water prior to reaching natural

watercourses. These systems are designed to mimic the functions that natural wetlands provide such as the sedimentation of suspended particles and the reduction in nutrient levels and bacteria. Various types of agricultural waste water have been shown to be effectively treated by constructed wetlands including run-off from manure storages and livestock yards, milk house wash water, tile drainage outflow, slaughterhouse wash water, and field surface runoff.

Increasing the resiliency of our farms while reducing our environmental footprint should be a goal that informs our management decisions leading into the future. Taking steps to reduce the impact of heavy rain events can protect soils and reduce run-off. Here are some resources available to assist you in planning and implementing changes;

Cover Crops Decision Tool
<http://decision-tool.incovercrops.ca/>

Constructed Wetlands Factsheet
<http://www.nfsa-fane.ca/efp/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Constructed-Wetlands-Atlantic-Committee-on-Land-and-Engineering.pdf>

NS Department of Agriculture's Soil and Water Sustainability Program is open for applications until September 15th. Funding assistance is available for farm-yard run-off control structures:
<https://novascotia.ca/programs/soil-and-water-sustainability/>

AgSector Update

Community Roots Pilot Program

The AgSector Program has been participating in the Community Roots Pilot Program that was recently launched in Valley area. The program is a joint venture between the Valley Community Learning Association, the Department of Community Services, and Department of Labour and Advanced Education. It is designed to remove barriers and provide wage support, matching local labour with local farms. Unemployed individuals are vetted, coached and ready to go to work.

There is still time to participate! If your farm is between Windsor and Middleton and needs labour for harvest season, please reach out to hboyd@nsfa-fane.ca. Hiring local supports consumers buying local!

Agriculture On-Farm Student Bursary

Don't forget about the Agriculture On-Farm Student Bursary Program, designed to help address the labour gap. The bursary provides up to \$1,000 to students who work at least 500 hours. Details are found at novascotia.ca/programs/on-farm-student-bursary/

Program opens on September 1, 2020. Application deadline is November 30, 2020.

Support the Source

Our Support the Source video campaign launched on YouTube has gotten our job bank great exposure, **with 37,500 views and reaching over 72,300 people!**

This video ad ran for the month of July, if you haven't watched it yet you can find the video on NSFA's Youtube Channel!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e0WXXiZm324>



Support the source.
Our farmers need your help now.

Discover new opportunities to work in Nova Scotia's agriculture sector:

- Full time seasonal
- Part time seasonal
- Student

[Click here for More Info](#)

COVID-19 Financial Relief Measures Guide

We continue to receive weekly updates on the Federal and Provincial governments economic response to COVID-19. Each week, MNP updates the Measures Guide to ensure the information provided is as current as possible.

You can find the guide by visiting nsfa-fane.ca/covid-19

Resource Development

We are also working on website development and building resources and content to help farms navigate labour, human resources and more.

The Workplace Education Committee plans to meet late August to develop a winter course plan. If your farm has needs or suggestions on training and resources, please reach out and let us know.

Coming up...

Keep an eye out for the **Workforce Recruitment and Financial Considerations for Agricultural Producers** webinar in the fall!

How can we support you?

As the AgSector Program develops tools and resources, please let us know how we can support the needs of your farm. Contact Heather at hboyd@nsfa-fane.ca or 902-893-2293 to discuss how we can help your farm's labour needs.



An Open Letter

On August 7th, NSFA published an Open Letter from President, Victor Oulton highlighting the challenges farmers have faced this year in regards to our Temporary Foreign Workers.

Imagine picking up someone at the airport that you haven't seen in months and not being able to give them a hug. Does the thought of that upset you? For many farmers that arrived at the airport to meet their workers, that is how they felt. Unable to hug their family. Every year Nova Scotia farms welcome over 1,500 temporary foreign workers (TFWs) onto their operations, often the same workers return to the same farm and have become a part of their family.

COVID-19 made things a bit different this year compared to years past, with new rules and regulations that both workers and employers have to follow. One of the biggest being the mandatory 14-day self-isolation upon their arrival to Nova Scotia. Farmers expecting workers had to set-up or locate facilities to house their workers for the two-week isolation, this included submitting photos of the facilities to the Department of Labour and Advanced Education for approval and receiving regular check-ins by phone. In addition, Service Canada conducted Integrity Audits where they spoke to both the employer and employees to ensure compliance. And once they went to work, all farms with temporary foreign workers received an inspection from the Occupational Health and Safety Division to ensure all protocols and processes were in place to ensure the health and safety of workers were met. We are proud of how our farms, government and regulators in Nova Scotia have come together to safeguard the health and safety of all workers on our farms.

To help their employees through the isolation, I have heard of farms that purchased iPads for their workers to use, others bought two-way radios so they had open communication channels with their workers, some would text or call throughout the day to check in and see how they were doing and if they needed anything and many worked hard to ensure the food they bought was culturally appropriate – some farmers even tried some new foods themselves! While employers were required to check-in with workers at least once per day, many were having ongoing conversations and not because they were mandated to, but because they care for their workers and recognized just how hard isolation would be. Even before workers began arriving, our office received multiple calls from farms who wanted to ensure they were doing everything right and had everything they needed for their workers arrival. This is the type of support that our farms should be known for.

When it came to government support, the federal government had announced an initial funding program to help farms cover the costs of isolating their workers. However, there was a great deal of confusion in the beginning when it came to eligible expenses that could be claimed. Since the announcement, program guidelines have been developed and distributed providing clarification on eligibility but this was weeks after workers began to arrive.

It's important to provide our employees with all of the supports they need during their employment. For years, the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture has been lobbying our government, at the request of farm employers, to allow TFWs to qualify for MSI coverage while they are in Nova Scotia. This ask has been repeatedly turned down by our provincial government, however we will continue to push for this. While TFWs are covered under WCB, OH&S regulations and our labour laws, it is important that our workers also receive MSI coverage during

their time in our province. They not only need to have this essential coverage but know how to access it and who to call if they have any concerns. We must ensure that those who are employed on our farms and are supporting our business through their hard work and dedication receive the same level of support.

For the workers, being away from family for months at a time is challenging. But knowing that the work they are doing here is helping to put their children through school and pay for their families' medical coverage back home makes the time apart worth it. Temporary foreign workers are our family, our friends, and members of our communities. They play an integral role in the agriculture industry. They represent a highly skilled, fully trained workforce that is essential for our farms to be able to continue to provide a safe, secure, and reliable source of produce and food products for Nova Scotians.

While I mentioned the requirements farmers and workers must follow, it's important to know that farmers care deeply for their workers, both local and those that come from away. Farmers want to keep their workers, their families, and their communities safe and healthy; they have and will continue to take steps to do just that. Due to COVID-19, workers have taken great risks to join our farms this year, their dedication to their work and to our food system should be recognized and celebrated.

Thank you for supporting Nova Scotia agriculture.

Victor Oulton
President
Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

Annual Meeting Update Cont'd

Council

This year we also have **four** positions on NSFA Council that are up for election! As you know, the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture is governed by a 12 person Council. The Council provides overall direction and operational oversight to the Federation. To the right you will see a handful of quotes from past and present Council members about why they got involved and what that experience meant for them.

Elections Process

This year marks our first Annual Meeting operating under our new bylaws that were approved at last years AGM!

Here is the breakdown of the new Nominations process as outlined in our bylaws:

- The Nominating Committee is established by the Council and shall be responsible for ensuring qualified nominees are presented for vote at the Annual Meeting;
- Nominations shall be accepted through application in a format determined by the Nominating

Committee;

- The application period shall open 45 calendar days prior to the 1st day of the Annual Meeting;
- Applications must be received 15 calendar days prior to the 1st day of the Annual Meeting;
- The application must be signed by the nominee and five (5) additional members of the NSFA;
- The list of qualified nominees will be communicated 10 calendar days prior to the 1st day of the Annual Meeting;
- If there is an insufficient number of applications to fill the vacancies then nominations will be taken from the floor at the Annual Meeting.

If you have any questions about joining Council, please don't hesitate to reach out!

Get Involved!

"I was happy to take on a role with the Council and give back to the industry that I love. Over the years this industry has given a lot to me and this is my chance to return the favour."
- **Tim Marsh, Marsh Farms, 1st Vice President.**

"I joined to make a positive contribution towards growing the industry and producing prosperity for all those that work directly in or affiliated with the agri-food sector."
- **Chris van den Heuvel, Fireblade Holsteins Ltd., Past President**

"As a female and a young farmer, it is very important to me to have the opportunity to contribute to a gender balanced industry as a member of the next generation of farmers."
- **Lauren Park, Forest Hill Apiary**

"The experience of being involved with the NSFA Executive was very positive and a highlight of my farming career. It allowed me to meet and to work with many good motivated people from all segments of agriculture dealing with diverse issues and always looking to make a positive difference."
- **Richard Melvin, Melvin Farms Ltd., Past President**

COVID-19 Update

As we all continue to adjust to our new normal, NSFA has been monitoring public health guidelines to ensure that the measures we implement at the office continue to meet the requirements outlined by the province.

Our office building continues to have restricted access, with visits by appointment only.

In saying this, we are excited to announce that NSFA staff is able to begin on farm visits again! Our staff will be following COVID-19 health guidelines that we have

developed which includes protocols for staff to follow as well as each vehicle being equipped with biosecurity and sanitization kits.

On-Farm Visits

When it comes to on-farm visits here are a few things to expect!

- You will need to confirm you are not experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and have not come in contact with anyone who is experiencing symptoms.
- You will also need to confirm that you have not travelled outside of the Atlantic Provinces in the last 14 days.

- Please maintain 6 feet/2 metres of physical distance at all times.
- Keep the visit outdoors as much as possible. If an indoor area must be seen, a handwashing station and hand sanitizer must be provided and physical distance maintained.
- Limit the number of people on farm visited (1 or 2 optimal).
- Greet with a wave rather than a handshake.

With that being said, we look forward to seeing you on-farm in the near future!

Nova Scotia Young Farmers

Due to COVID-19, the NSYF board has decided to waive the 2020 membership fee. Fees will be reinstated for the 2021 year.

If you would like to become a member of Nova Scotia Young Farmers or would like to renew your membership, please visit: nsyff.ca/for-members/membership



Back (L to R) Jonathan Waugh - Central Region, Alana Bent - Treasurer, Nichole van Dyk - CYFF Representative (NS/NFLD), Megan McCully - Secretary, Mandy Vosman - Eastern Region. Front (L to R) Nicolas Roy - Past President, Larry Weatherby Jr - Vice President, Rebecca Archibald - President, Jillian Bent - Western Region.

#HowNSAgs - Emma & Sandy Cole

“Be realistic. Work hard. Always strive to improve.” Three key pieces of advice from Emma and Sandy Cole of Eloc Farms.

Eloc Farms is a tie stall facility located in Middle Musquodobobit, here they milk 50 Holstein and Brown Swiss cows, grow 60 acres of corn for silage, with an additional 200 acres that is cropped for hay. Sandy works full time on the farm, while Emma runs her own fitness business called E Squared Fitness! She offers classes out of their hayloft on the farm and trains people online from across the country.

During the summer months the cows go out to pasture and are milked twice a day. Sandy’s parents help out on the farm, they also receive occasional help from high school students during the summer. The top 50% of their cattle are bred to sexed or conventional semen from the top bulls, with focus on udders, milk production and components, with show type on a select few, while the remainder are bred to beef.

“We enjoy the variety in each day’s activities. No two days are the same. It’s very satisfying to see the results of your work and knowing the impact decisions made in the past, play a part in the schematics of your operation,” said Emma. “We enjoy working with the cattle, being in the fields, and the continuous

challenge to improve the farm and the herd.”

Emma and Sandy have been married for almost two years and have a beautiful baby girl, Pippa! Having both grown up on dairy farms – Emma in Ontario and Sandy in Nova Scotia – they have both experienced agriculture first hand.

“We recognized the sacrifices our families made and the work that has to be put in to be a successful farmer,” said Sandy. “We enjoy working outside, being our own boss, working on the land and with animals. Whether it’s watching your crops grow, or a calf grow up into a cow, it’s very satisfying. Some of our fondest memories growing up are working with our families on the farms!”

When asked what they love about Nova Scotia agriculture, “The agriculture community in Nova Scotia is very close knit and supportive of each other. There are a lot of young enthusiastic farmers out there that have the same drive and passion. It’s great to connect with one another whether it’s about the day-to-day operations, plans they have for the future of their farms or the future of agriculture in general.”

Emma and Sandy plan to continue growing their operation while at the same

time becoming more efficient. Other goals for their farm include improving their land productivity, soil health, animal health, and milk quality and production.

Their final piece of advice for young farmers or those looking to get into farming?

“Set goals. Know where your dollars and cents are going. Don’t compare yourself to others; every farm is at a different stage in their journey, focus on where you want to be and how you are going to get there. Be able to adapt. Have patience. Don’t be afraid to ask for help and advice. There are many great minds, representatives and people in the field, use those resources, and listen with an open mind. Not every day is going to be a great day, don’t dwell on your mistakes, but learn from them.”



Upcoming Events

September 20, 2020 - Atlantic Provinces

Virtual Open Farm Day

September 21-25, 2020

National Farm Safety & Health Week

October 23, 2020 - Online

Progressive Agriculture Safety Day

November 21-22, 2020 - Online

Mental Health First Aid

December 2, 2020 - Online

Nova Scotia Young Farmers' AGM

December 3, 2020 - Online

125th NSFA Annual Meeting

December 4, 2020 - Online

Farm Safety NS Annual Meeting

January 16, 2021 - Online

Mental Health and Wellness in the Workplace

March 16, 2021

Gear Up for Ag



7 Atlantic Central Drive
East Mountain
NS B6L 2Z2
Ph: 893-2293
Fax: 893-7063
Email: info@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
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NO COST FOR UP TO 3 HOURS OF
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LINE IS OPEN 24 HOURS A DAY

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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.

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