

Toward Prosperity

Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

August 25th, 2000

Discussion

Agriculture:

- Agriculture industry in Nova Scotia contributes about \$1 billion annually to the provinces GDP.
- Agriculture has been growing at about 1 - 2% in real terms.
- Challenge for sector is to get government to take is seriously.
- This industry is one of the most high tech sectors.
- Cape Breton farms have disappeared.
- Farm community does not always believe in the industry.
- Industry should look to the export market first and the domestic market second.
- Except for eggs, we are not producing 100% of market in Nova Scotia. There is a tremendous opportunity in domestic market. What the industry needs is packing houses, shipping houses, Co-ops and a education system that reinforces the industry.
- Government is sending mixed messages to the sector.
- Organic growing has major potential. It has a real opportunity in export.

Attitude:

- Nova Scotians are too regional in their thinking. There is no critical mass.
- Typical Nova Scotians are not risk takers.
- The management climate towards labour is poor in this province. Labour does not take part in the decisions.

Cooperation:

- There needs to province wide cooperation on issues.
- Our neighbor (New Brunswick) is not our competitor. Competition is the global marketplace.

Incentives:

- Government should develop an incentive for everyone, not just for IMP and Sobeys.

Business Climate:

- Nova Scotia must get its fiscal situation under control. Government is a reflection of society. People hoard money in Nova Scotia. Ex: Must own a house. This a typical Nova Scotian attitude.

Brand NS:

- Brand Nova Scotia and push to buy locally contradict each other. We should be focusing on world class quality in Nova Scotia. If we identify certain products this may lead to problems down the road.

Education:

- Education does not seem to be linked to Economic Development in Nova Scotia.
- Government must address failures in education system: lack of standards and automatic promotion.

Infrastructure:

- Develop Port of Halifax.