



# AGRICULTURE

GROW • NURTURE • SHARE • EDUCATE • ENGAGE • INNOVATE



What's Inside...

VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 1

SPRING 2018

- MINISTER'S MESSAGE .....▶
- YOUR REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL OFFICES ..... 2
- AG EXTENSION HIGHLIGHTS ..... 2
- RURAL ORGANIZATIONS ..... 4
- RESEARCH & INNOVATION ..... 5
- AG EDUCATION / SELECT NOVA SCOTIA ..... 6
- PROGRAMS AND BUSINESS RISK MANAGEMENT ..... 7
- NOVA SCOTIA CROP AND LIVESTOCK INSURANCE COMMISSION ..... 7
- NOVA SCOTIA FARM LOAN BOARD ..... 8
- COMING EVENTS ..... 8

## Minister's Message

Welcome to a brand-new era for AgNews.

With this issue the department is debuting a new format for the publication that focuses on providing the most timely and topical information that can benefit the agriculture sector. Now it will be delivered right to the inbox on your smartphone, tablet or computer in a colourful and informative new design.

The message we want to send with our new format is that government and the department are continuing to work with the agriculture sector to achieve innovation and growth. We're listening to your ideas and acting on your advice so we can be successful.

Strengthening the relationship between the department and the agriculture industry has been a priority for me as Minister and something that department staff have worked very hard to do. It hinges on maintaining a strong client-centred approach to delivering services to ensure we are meeting the needs of our stakeholders and the communities we serve.

This is great time to relaunch AgNews in a new format. We've recently announced the new Canadian Agricultural Partnership with the federal government. A renewed AgNews will play an important part in letting our stakeholders know about the programs and supports that this new agreement will make possible.

As always, regional staff welcome your inquiries regarding any projects that you are interested in pursuing for your farm operation or agri-business. Don't hesitate to reach out to your regional office.

As we approach a new growing season, I extend a wish for continued progress and success as we move into 2018.

# Your Regional Agricultural Offices

## Extension and Outreach

Ruth Grant - Manager  
Becky Sooksom - Regional Coordinator

## Truro Office

East Hants, Cumberland, Colchester and Halifax Counties:  
Tel: 902-893-6575 Fax: 902-893-2757  
Marie Williams - Admin. Assistant  
Michael Kittilsen - Agricultural Resource Coordinator  
Jacqueline Hoyt - Agriculture Leadership Coordinator  
Danny Small and Christina Jones - Business Development Officers

## Antigonish Office

Pictou, Antigonish and Guysborough Counties:  
Tel: 902-863-4705 Fax: 902-863-7342  
Laureen Boyd - Admin. Assistant  
Rhonda MacDougall - Agriculture Leadership Coordinator  
Terri MacPherson - Agricultural Transition Officer  
Adam Wile - Agricultural Resource Coordinator

## Sydney Office

Cape Breton, Victoria, Inverness and Richmond Counties:  
Tel: 902-563-2000 Fax: 902-563-3435  
Catherine Plumridge - Admin. Assistant  
Gary Koziel - Agricultural Resource Coordinator  
Marina Gillis - Agriculture Leadership Coordinators  
Jeff Hennessey - Business Development Officer  
Cheryl Chandler - Resource Coordinator (Mabou)

## Kentville Office

West Hants, Kings, Lunenburg and Queens Counties:  
Tel: 902-679-6021 Fax: 902-679-6062  
Cheryl Theriau, Admin. Assistant  
Brian MacCulloch - Agricultural Resource Coordinator  
Ross MacNeil - Agriculture Leadership Coordinator, South Shore  
Colin Hirtle - Agriculture Leadership Coordinator, Valley  
Ronald Young - Agricultural Transition Officer  
Jeff Wentzell - Business Development Officer

## Cornwallis Office

Annapolis, Digby, Yarmouth and Shelburne Counties:  
Tel: 902-638-2395 Fax: 902-638-2389  
Gina Chapelhow - Admin. Assistant  
Kari Brown - Agriculture Leadership Coordinator  
Terry McKay - Agricultural Resource Coordinator  
Nicole Burkhard - Agricultural Transition Officer

# Ag Extension Highlights

## Industrial Hemp Production and Processing Workshop – 2018

There has been a significant increase in hemp production in Nova Scotia over the last several years. Currently, there are about 200 acres grown in Nova Scotia and producers are set to expand in the future.

Producers and processors are seeking unbiased agronomic information to make an informed decision on whether to enter a contract growing arrangement or to develop the industry themselves. Industrial Hemp regulations are changing and there is a growing interest in value-added products on a small scale.

Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture regional staff and specialists are receiving a lot of questions about this product. Forty-five people from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and PEI attended the workshop January 13, 2018 in Port Hawkesbury and heard presentations on production, value-adding and regulations.

Since there is currently no significant knowledge, experience or research done on this crop in Nova Scotia to respond to these inquiries, it was necessary to source expertise out of the province. Speakers were brought in from Ottawa and Ontario based on recommendations and endorsement from the Canadian Hemp trade Alliance (CHTA).

Participants were pleased with the quality of the speakers and the information presented. Sixty-three percent said the workshop met their expectations. In future, workshop participants would like to hear about a Nova Scotia hemp industry strategy, manufacturing and potential for opportunities with hemp; markets for products and funding

## Learning the scoop on dirt

A better understanding of field soil and potting mix characteristics was recently gained by about 80 workshop participants around the province.

Perennia's vegetable specialist Rosalie Gillis-Madden and soil specialist Amy Sangster paired up to deliver presentations, demonstrations and activities.

This partnership between Perennia and the Agriculture Department made 'Dirt on Dirt' sessions available in Lunenburg, New Glasgow and Iona (with the Ecology Action Centre).

Participants evaluated field soil and greenhouse potting mixes and discussed their variability, the importance of testing and the impact on transplant health for good production. They also built a soil aggregate and observed the impact of rain and tillage.

Local promotion in each community attracted strong participation. Feedback from the workshops was a valuable take-away.

- ▶ Very valuable experience. University level knowledge gained -- could be way more expensive elsewhere. Still enough time for a bit of networking!"
- ▶ AWESOME and useful to have research done based on a challenge that growers are facing. Presented in a useful way!!
- ▶ Never guess, always do a soil test!
- ▶ Knowledge of how much variation there is between potting mixes.
- ▶ Really surprised to see the variation in potting mixes -- explains why my tomato plants are not looking as great as last year. Great afternoon of info!

# Developing a red meat strategy

## Herds of cattle and flocks of sheep are on the increase in Cumberland County.

The idea is to increase the herd sizes to complement the Maritime Beef Sector Development and Expansion Strategy.



The partnership for the pilot project and strategy development includes:

- ▶ the Cumberland Business Connector
- ▶ Perennia
- ▶ Agra Commodities
- ▶ the Maritime Beef Council
- ▶ and the provincial agriculture department.

The Red Meat Strategy group began in January. Zone 3 cattle producers were invited to test forage as a way of improving quality and farm production. In March, the forage sample results were reviewed. This showed that Cumberland's farmers are doing a great job with forage production.

A discussion of opportunities and barriers followed, with many positive opportunities considered. Based on information gathered from the focus group, there is an interest in coming together to share ideas and speakers relating to increasing production on farms in Cumberland County.

If you would like more information on this, please contact Michael Kittilsen (902) 893-3645 or [michael.kittilsen@novascotia.ca](mailto:michael.kittilsen@novascotia.ca)

## Middleton hosts 'Chat and Chews'



To overcome the winter doldrums in the Western Region, a bi-weekly chat and chew was arranged at the Capitol Pub in Middleton.

Farmers from various commodities got together every second Wednesday from January through March to hear presentations by several of the Perennia Specialists.

Topics ranged from very specific commodity presentations such as Dairy Feed Costs and Vegetable Season Extension, to a session about Soils that attracted producers from several commodities.

The final session on Forage, Silage, and Pasture fell on one of Jack Van Roestel's final days – after more than 30 years of

extension work. A large group came out to hear Jack's final presentation and to wish him well in his retirement.

This session coincided with the Campaign for Kids' Burger Wars opening. Everybody purchased the Capitol Pub's entry, the Double Down burger, and \$1 for each burger purchased was donated to the Campaign for Kids Charity. The pub promoted our large group purchase and a challenge was issued to others to try and put away more burgers than the group of valley farmers.

We're looking forward to running these sessions again next year. Winter days are best spent sharing great information and planning for the next growing season, while letting somebody else do the cooking and dishes.

# Rural Organizations

## Community Engagement & Communications Highlighted Annual Youth Conference

Antigonish County 4-H Leaders Council partnered with St. Francis Xavier University to host an annual youth *Leadership Development Conference* following 4-H Canada's Leadership Development Pillars. Community Engagement and Communications is the leadership theme for 2018.

80 High school students from the four Atlantic provinces attended the conference on **May 11-13, 2018**. The sessions offered were built on core aspects of 4-H, such as developing

communication through judging, public speaking, and presenting a demonstration. Community engagement is also a core theme of 4-H, with youth serving as junior leaders and being involved in club and community initiatives. The delegates chose from a range of interactive sessions to experience various strategies for communication from art, music, dance, videography, theatre, and TED-styled talks to the use of computer programs, physical technology, and social media.



*An inspirational keynote presentation by Chris Koch who recently spoke at the Global 4-H Summit was the highlight of the conference. This keynote address was open to the public and the planning team welcomed members of the surrounding 4-H and agriculture communities to attend.*

The StFX 4-H Alumni Society was pleased to follow its motto of “Learn to Lead by Leading” by helping to plan the many activities for conference participants. This event’s goals were to offer participants a university experience during their time at StFX, staying in residence, hosting activities in campus spaces, and introducing participants to their favourite parts of 4-H in a university context. The faculty, staff, and students of StFX were pleased with how this year’s conference unfolded.

The 2018 Leadership Development Conference followed the success of an initial conference held last summer. The previous

conference focused on Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security and held exciting events such as:

- ▶ Tour of Successful Local Market Garden
- ▶ Sustainability Scavenger Hunt of StFX Campus
- ▶ A Welcome Meal – Which Participants Cooked Themselves
- ▶ Learn to Lead by Leading Activities
- ▶ Keynote by Local Gardener

# Research & Innovation

## Strengthening the honey bee industry

A unique program focuses on strengthening the honey bee industry to provide optimized pollination services for the wild blueberry sector in the Maritime Provinces.

The Atlantic Tech Transfer Team for Apiculture (ATTTA) is based out of Perennia in Truro with a strong mandate for research and extension services. The Pan Atlantic Research and Innovative Initiative provides funding along with government and industry partners, including beekeeping and wild blueberry associations.

A Steering Committee guides objectives, including:

- ▶ optimizing pollination for wild blueberry
  - stocking density
  - hive placement
  - hive strength
- ▶ improving honey bee health and nutrition
- ▶ improving pest and disease management
- ▶ improving overwintering success
  - managing spring dwindle
- ▶ And, improving biosecurity.

A close working relationship with multiple funding partners allows

the ATTTA team to ensure that work is relevant and timely for industry. This support and collaboration means concerns are quickly addressed with relevant bee expertise.

Based on funding approvals, a five-year research program could anticipate:

- ▶ A regional queen bee rearing program
- ▶ Enhancing wild blueberry pollination
- ▶ Miticide efficacy and resistance to varroa mites
- ▶ Determining a Nosema baseline and evaluating antibiotic efficiency
- ▶ Studying pollen supplementation.

Many of these projects are farmer-driven and demonstrate the strong working relationship that has been built with the industry to answer questions and respond to challenges.

Extension services will include delivering Dalhousie University's Modern Beekeeper modules, developing regional workshops, presenting at industry events, serving on industry boards and conducting farm visits, along with developing fact sheets, management guides, and newsletters.

## Truro Agricultural Dyke Realignment

Recently Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (TIR) purchased a 90-hectare agricultural marshland known as Onslow North River Marsh (NS067). Situated where the North River flows into the Salmon River, this marsh is prone to freshwater flooding and has been used historically as mostly pasture.

In partnership with Agriculture, a section of the provincial dyke system will be realigned to restore a large percentage of the land to salt marsh. The realignment of the dyke reduces the length of dyke from about 3,500m to around 1,220m.

It is anticipated that the realignment and removal of a portion of dyke will reduce flood risk and enhance resiliency for climate change impacts for the Town of Truro and the Municipality of the County of Colchester. It will also create 'habitat credits' that offset loss or damage to wetlands from TIR projects elsewhere.

In addition, a relatively large, aging aboiteau on McCurdy's Brook in Lower Truro will also be removed; lowering future maintenance costs for Agriculture.

CB Wetlands and Environmental Specialists of Bedford are responsible for the design and monitoring of the salt marsh restoration. Nova Construction Company Ltd., of Antigonish, was

awarded the construction tender.

This project is funded 50-50 by provincial and federal investment. The federal portion is being provided by the National Disaster Mitigation Program.

The total budget for the marsh and the aboiteau is \$3 million over two years.



**The North River flows into the Salmon River, creating the Onslow North River Marsh. Nova Construction will form a new section for the dyke, and top up an existing section, to manage risks posed by climate change.**



## How Can More Local Foodies Find You?

Thanks to businesses like yours, more Nova Scotians are adding locally grown and produced food and beverages to their daily lives. Your work helps them eat with the seasons, enjoy fresh products, reduce their footprint, and savour the tastes of our province.

### Now, how would you like even more of them to find you?

Thousands of people visit [Selectnovascotia.ca](http://Selectnovascotia.ca) to learn about the products and producers that make Nova Scotia a locavore's paradise.

All you need to do is put a listing on our site—and you'll be the business they find.

### Why List?

- ▶ Listing with us is easy, and FREE.
- ▶ We promote the site in all of our communications, driving traffic to the site and your listing—again, at no cost to you.
- ▶ Any business you get from your listing is 100 per cent yours. No commission. No fees. No catches.
- ▶ Best of all, your business will be highlighted in our social media. We regularly promote our listed businesses that way—just tell us about a great product, employee, or story you'd like us to use!

### How to List:

First, register with [Selectnovascotia.ca](http://Selectnovascotia.ca) and we'll send you a link to set up your listing.

Then simply fill in the information as follows:

- ▶ **Business type:** Make sure you've used the correct name of your business and checked the type of business you are, not what you sell. Add a description to make your listing more informative and creative. Include your logo!

- ▶ **Contact:** Include a name, your civic address, current email and phone number, as well as your website and any social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter). Customers like to know your hours, so be sure to include them.
- ▶ **Business sector:** Be sure to select the category of the products you carry, as well as the specific products. For example: Category: Local food and beverage. Specific product: Dairy. Also, type a more descriptive list of the products you carry in the Products field. Do you offer a specialty product, such as gluten-free foods, or offer a service such as tours? Include it here!
- ▶ **Find our products at these local retailers:** Start typing the retailer's name. If they are already in our system, this field will fill itself in, and our system will provide a link from your listing to their site. Use their proper name and check your spelling! If the field doesn't fill in, you can create a mini listing for that retailer.

Once your listing is up and running, you'll be able to make changes and update it.

There's no risk at all to list with us. And when you consider that hundreds of other local food suppliers are already on our site, the real risk is not giving yourself the same chance to get more business.

Best of all, your business will be highlighted in our social media. We regularly promote our listed businesses that way—just tell us about a great product, employee, or story you'd like us to use!

Want more information? Contact us at [select@novascotia.ca](mailto:select@novascotia.ca) or **902-893-4491**

Don't forget to check out our website, and follow us on Facebook and Twitter!  [selectnovascotia.ca](http://selectnovascotia.ca)

 [facebook.com/selectns](https://facebook.com/selectns)  [twitter.com/selectns](https://twitter.com/selectns)

## Entering the Ag Zone

About 400 junior high school students will participate in the annual Ag Zone program this May at the Dalhousie Agricultural Campus.

When students come to campus for the day, they are introduced to local producers, agricultural scientists and professionals during a mini-workshop series. A favourite with students is a lab session on DNA extraction and molecular biology in plant science.

The Agriculture Education Office offers classroom visits on a variety of topics such as soil characteristics, environmental farm practices and Nova Scotia farm sectors.

Students in grades two to six are eligible to participate in the popular chick hatch program. Staff at Agricultural Education will

work with each school for visits tailored to meet their interests and educational objectives.

This program runs from the beginning of March to the end of June. Classes are encouraged to apply early – 19 schools applied this year. Applications must be placed well in advance and a limited number of classrooms can be accepted.

This May some grade three classrooms from the Chignecto Central Regional District will have the chance to participate in the Light Garden Pilot. Teachers and students will grow plants in a three-tier light garden station. Teachers will be provided with soils, seeds, plant growth and clippings for their gardens. Feedback on the pilot project's success will be collected.

# Programs and Business Risk Management

## Announcing the Canadian Agricultural Partnership

The recently announced Canadian Agricultural Partnership will provide \$37 million for programming in Nova Scotia to strengthen agriculture and agri-food industries. All programs under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership have been placed on hold to review concerns raised by the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture.

The partnership is a five-year \$3 billion investment including \$1 billion for federal activities and programs and \$2 billion in cost-shared programs delivered by provinces on a 60-40 basis.

Programs are designed to help the industry position itself to respond to future opportunities and to realize its full potential as a significant contributor to the economy focusing on markets and trade; science, research and innovation; environmental sustainability and climate change; risk management; value-added agriculture and agri-food processing; and public trust.

Nova Scotia will re-open the first five programs under CAP for applications as soon as possible and application deadlines will be adjusted accordingly. Once released, program guidelines should be reviewed carefully for changes. Additional programs under CAP will open as they are developed. One notable program under development is a program specific to small farms to grow their businesses into commercial operations.

### Nova Scotia Cost-Shared Programs

**Advancing Innovative Technologies:** The Advancing Innovative Technologies initiative will support the adoption of new technologies, processes or specialized equipment. Through the assessment,

implementation or adoption, all projects should improve farm and industry competitiveness, productivity & profitability.

**[novascotia.ca/programs/advancing-innovative-technologies](http://novascotia.ca/programs/advancing-innovative-technologies)**

**Business Advisory Services:** The Business Advisory Services Program aims to enhance Nova Scotia farms' and agri-businesses' ability to be more competitive, manage transition, develop risk management strategies and respond to change. The business advisory services offered under this program will enable the agriculture sector to be proactive in business development decisions.

**[novascotia.ca/programs/business-advisory-services](http://novascotia.ca/programs/business-advisory-services)**

**Market Expansion and Export Readiness:** The objective of the Market Expansion and Export Readiness program is to encourage the agriculture, agri-food industries to expand their current established market share and foster economic growth.

**[novascotia.ca/programs/market-expansion-export-readiness](http://novascotia.ca/programs/market-expansion-export-readiness)**

**Soil and Water Sustainability:** The Soil and Water Sustainability program was developed to assist farms in mitigating on-farm environmental risks for soil and water. This program recognizes the important role the industry plays for healthy soil and water

**[novascotia.ca/programs/soil-and-water-sustainability](http://novascotia.ca/programs/soil-and-water-sustainability)**

**Missions and Investigative Travel:** The intent of the Missions and Investigative Travel program is to support the agriculture and agri-food industries' efforts to explore and investigate new market opportunities and innovative farm technologies.

**[novascotia.ca/programs/missions-and-investigative-travel](http://novascotia.ca/programs/missions-and-investigative-travel)**

## Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission

### Why should I have AgrilInsurance?

As a producer, you are constantly faced with factors that are beyond your control. Things like adverse weather, disease, wildlife, and insect infestations can have a serious impact on your production and your income.

AgrilInsurance, also referred to as Production Insurance or Crop Insurance adds some predictability to your business. It protects you against the effects of yield reductions and crop losses caused by insured naturally occurring perils. Last year there were more than 23,000 acres, 15,334 dairy animals, and 50 million birds insured annually in Nova Scotia.

#### AgrilInsurance helps you:

- ▶ Maintain your cash flow in poor crop years with claim payments that offset losses caused by crop damage or low yields.

- ▶ Manage your operation with a more predictable cash flow.
- ▶ Provide collateral required to secure loans.
- ▶ Stabilize your AgriStability program reference margin over time.
- ▶ Gain affordable peace-of-mind by paying a tax-deductible premium that is cost-shared with government.

For information on Crop and Livestock Insurance or Wildlife Compensation Contact us at: 1-800-565-6371 Toll Free, 902-893-6370 Truro, or 902-679-6015 Kentville, or visit our website at: [novascotia.ca/agri/programs-and-services/financial-funding/crop-livestock-insurance](http://novascotia.ca/agri/programs-and-services/financial-funding/crop-livestock-insurance).

**You can also visit our offices at:** 74 Research Drive, Suite 215, Perennia Innovation Park, Bible Hill, NS B6L 2R2. Or Agricultural Centre, Kentville, NS B4N 1J5

# Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board

## Interest Rates

As of April 3, 2018

(applicable to loans approved on or after this date while these rates remain in effect)

Length (years)	Full Term	*10-Yr. Term	*5-Yr. Term	*3-Yr. Term
1-5	4.05%	-	4.05%	3.80%
6-10	4.40%	4.40%	4.25%	3.90%
11-15	4.85%	4.70%	4.30%	4.05%
16-20	5.05%	4.95%	4.35%	4.05%
21-25	5.30%	4.95%	4.35%	4.05%
26-30	5.45%	4.95%	4.35%	4.05%

\*3, 5 and 10 year term rates available to clients meeting risk, cashflow, and collateral requirements.

**The Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board supports agricultural development such as:** property purchase / improvements, construction, machinery / quota / stock purchase, financial restructure, and farm transition. The Board is committed to helping you with your individual financial needs.

A Loan Officer will also have information concerning programs and other services offered by Nova Scotia Agriculture.

Call or visit a Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board office:

**Truro** ..... 902-893-6506  
74 Research Drive, Bible Hill

**Kentville** ..... 902-679-6009  
Kentville Agricultural Centre,  
32 Main Street

Need more information?

Visit us at [novascotia.ca/agri](http://novascotia.ca/agri)

## Coming Events:



## Progressive Agriculture Safety Days are back!

### What is a Progressive Agriculture Safety Day?

A fun-filled day of learning for children aged 7-13.

Registration fee is \$10/child or \$20/family. Pre-registration required.

Children will learn in a fun and interactive way how to stay safe on the farm. These sessions are great for kids who live, visit or work on-farms. Kids will learn about fire safety, chemicals, equipment, and more! 10 am-2 pm

**Brookville:** Saturday, June 2. Register by May 21

**Yarmouth:** Saturday, June 16. Register by June 5

#### For application forms –

visit [farmsafetyns.ca/safetysdays](http://farmsafetyns.ca/safetysdays) or contact Farm Safety Nova Scotia

#### Return application forms to –

Farm Safety Nova Scotia, 60 Research Drive, Bible Hill, NS B6L 1N2

The mission of a Progressive Agriculture Safety Day is simple—to provide education, training and resources to make farm and ranch life safer and healthier for children and their communities. It is a program delivered by the Progressive Agriculture Foundation. For more information visit [progressiveag.org](http://progressiveag.org)

## Upcoming Dates:

### Fluff n' Buff

**May 18-20**

Exhibition Grounds, Lawrencetown

### Small Fruit and Vegetable IPM Crop Scouting Field Days

**June 26**, Inverness County, TBA and  
**June 27**, Millville, Cape Breton

With Perennia Specialists, Rachael Cheverie and Sarah Wood. For more information contact Gary Koziel, 902-563-2000.

### AG Zone

**May 29-31**

Dalhousie Agriculture Campus

### EastGen

**July 13-15**

Dalhousie Agriculture Campus