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# Agriculture Services

## NEWSLETTER



December 2005 Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Volume 6 No. 5

### Environmental Farm Plan Update



The Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) program, which is open to all farm businesses, began in 1999. The stewardship program assesses the risk of contaminating soil and water resources. Today, 784 agri-businesses are participating in various stages of the program. There is no cost to participate and all interaction is confidential.

This year follow-up assessments were carried out for some of the farms that were involved in the program early on. The follow-up visit provides an opportunity for the EFP Coordinator and the farm owner/manager to assess and update the initial action plan and discuss new environmental concerns or goals. To date, 41 farms have had follow-up assessments done.

As of May 2005, a completed Environmental Farm Plan is required in order to access federal funding for the Beneficial Management Practices. As a result, a significant number of new farms have signed-up. In September, Andrew McIsaac and Erica Versteeg joined the EFP team to enable more EFP's to be completed in 2006. Erica is an EFP Information Coordinator. She graduated from the NSAC's Agricultural Business program and brings with her farm management experience in a wide range of commodities. Andrew McIsaac is working as an EFP Coordinator and as Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia Water Quality Coordinator. Andrew is a graduate of

the NSAC and has extensive on-farm experience.

The EFP Team developed some factsheets related to on-farm environmental issues: *Farm Fuel Storage and Handling, Field Sprayer Calibration and Soil Conservation Practices*. The factsheets can be found on the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture website ([www.nsfa-fane.ca](http://www.nsfa-fane.ca)).

If you are interested in an on-farm environmental review, please contact the NSFA office in Truro at (902) 893-2293.



### Orchard Renewal Agreement Signed

Nova Scotia apple growers will replace older apple trees with a new variety thanks to a \$235,000 annual investment from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Chris d'Entremont, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, and Waldo Walsh, president of the Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association, signed a five-year agreement on November 3.

"We are pleased to support the Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association and their vitalization strategy for the apple industry through this orchard renewal program," said Mr. d'Entremont. "The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries recognizes that this is a great opportunity to help sustain this important Nova Scotia industry in rural communities."

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**NOVA SCOTIA**  
Agriculture and Fisheries

For BRM information  
please call  
1-866-844-4BRM

Back issues of this newsletter are  
available on-line at  
<http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/rs/fs/arcs/>

...Orchard Renewal continued

About 240 hectares (600 acres) of honeycrisp apple trees will be planted over the life of the agreement. The Nova Scotia Fruit Growers' Association will administer the program.

"Our vitalization strategy is a long-term, integrated plan that allows the apple industry to remain sustainable for many years to come," said Mr. Walsh. "We are pleased that the Nova Scotia government is sharing our vision of a successful industry through this investment."

There are 115 members in the association with a farm gate value of \$13 million.

## Farm Registration Reminder

*George D. Burris, General Manager, Natural Products Marketing Council*

Farmers who plan to register their farms in time to prove eligibility for farm licence plates (December 31 expiry) should start early.

Registration certificates are issued by Service Nova Scotia in Halifax, and you should allow at least two weeks lead time.

Applications may be dropped off at regional agricultural offices (no cash please), and will then be forwarded to Halifax. You may also use one of the following options:

- In person at the Business Registration Unit, Maritime

Centre, 9 North, 1505 Barrington St., Halifax (cash, debit, cheque, bank draft or Visa or MasterCard);

- Drop off at any Access Nova Scotia Centre or to Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage (cheque, money order, bank draft or Visa or MasterCard);
- Mail to the Business Registration Unit, 1505 Barrington St., PO Box 1529, Halifax, NS B3J 2Y4 (cheque, money order, bank draft or Visa or MasterCard);
- Fax to the Business Registration Unit at (902) 424-0602 (Visa or MasterCard only).

## Pork Producers Offered Funding

Nova Scotia pork producers will receive \$1 million from the provincial government to help sustain them through an ongoing decline in market price, Agriculture and Fisheries Minister Chris d'Entremont announced on November 22. The program will be administered through Pork Nova Scotia and its loan program.

"The pork industry has been working on a strategic plan for long-term sustainability. This funding will help producers through this tough financial period while they plan for the future," said Mr. d'Entremont. "We have committed one million dollars. Because pork pricing is cyclical, it was important that the industry choose the best mechanism for delivering the funding to producers."

Pork prices have been below the cost of production for several years. The board of Pork Nova Scotia will use the province's non-repayable funding to increase the group's ability to provide loans to producers.

"We are pleased that the minister has provided this funding solution for the hog producers," said Herman Berfelo, chair of the commodity board, Pork Nova Scotia. "Pork Nova Scotia agrees that the best way to disperse this funding is to provide it through our established loan program. Because producers know and understand the Nova Scotia Hog Loan Support Program, it provides the most efficient way to get the money to producers."

Details regarding the funding and the Nova Scotia Hog Loan Support Program are available through Pork Nova Scotia, 339 Willow Street, Truro, Nova Scotia, B2N 5A6 Telephone: (902) 895-0581



## PROGRAMS AND BUSINESS RISK MANAGEMENT DIVISION

### Program Claiming Deadlines

#### March 1, 2006 – Farm Investment Fund

Documents Required for Approved Project Activities:

- Signed and returned copy of the *Letter of Agreement*;
- Completed Agricultural Claim Form; and
- Copies of all invoices with proof of payment to support completed approved project activities.

#### March 15, 2006 – Agri-Food Industry Development Fund

Documents Required for Approved Project Activities:

- Signed and returned copy of the Letter of Agreement;
- Completed Agri-Food Industry Development Fund Claim Form;
- Copies of all invoices with proof of payment to support completed approved project activities; and
- Project report.

*Continued on next page...*

## Technology Development 2000 Program

Second Call for Letters of Intent:  
**January 16, 2006**

### 2005–06 First Call Results

Letters of Intent Received:	39
Letters of Intent Approved:	21
Detailed Proposals Approved:	13
Detailed Proposals Pending:	5
Detailed Proposals Deferred:	4

### Approved Proposal Details:

Category	# of projects	2005–06 Funding
Livestock	1	\$18,600
Plant	9	\$141,964
Environmental	2	\$35,000
Research Chair	1	\$30,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>\$225,564</b>

### Projects Now Available on Our Website

Visit the Programs Website and check out our new Technology Development 2000 Program Project Site. This site has all approved TD research projects from 2000 to present; containing over 220 projects.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/prm/>

## How to Manage Currency Exchange

Is the high Canadian dollar causing challenges?

Are you losing sleep over currency exchange?

Wondering how to manage this variable?

If you are interested in attending a seminar in the spring of 2006 on how to manage currency exchange to protect your bottom line, call Brian MacCulloch at (902) 679-6009 or Joe McGrath at (902) 538-2808 or (902) 679-8558.

## Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization Program

### 2004 CAIS Payments and Processing

Some producers have already received a 2004 payment and Calculation of Benefits (COB). It is **EXTREMELY** important to look over your COB when you receive it as there may be processing errors. Once you receive your COB, you only have **90 days** to make appeals and adjustments.

### *You may be eligible for more 2004 CAIS benefits.*

When you file your tax information for the CAIS program, the numbers are adjusted for inventory changes that you report on the Supplementary form. The numbers supplied on inventory schedules (Part 2 and 3) can have a significant impact on your CAIS payment. Some producers in Nova Scotia may be able to receive **more funds**. There was some misinformation circulating when filling out the 2003 Supplementary forms. Producers were told not to report crop inventory if they did not hold inventory or if they used all of the crop for feeding their own livestock. In fact, all producers were supposed to report the production of all crops, including forage (hay, silage, etc.). If you did not supply this information last year, CAIS has you recorded as an ending inventory of zero for 2003. Therefore, when you report starting inventory of crops in 2004 that does not match the amount supplied as ending inventory for 2003 (zero), they will not accept it. Once you receive the COB, you can appeal to have your actual 2004 starting inventory used. Depending on the amount of forage produced, actual CAIS could be significantly different from what you have received.

### 2005 CAIS Program Year – Taking Stock

When filling out the CAIS Supplementary form, do you find it

difficult to remember what was in the barn or in storage nearly a year ago? It is a short time before December 31 2005, which signals a need to “take stock”. A fun New Year's Eve activity could be to take the family out and have them count animals or bales of hay. It is important to get accurate crop and livestock inventory numbers for your CAIS forms. You will thank yourself months later for taking the time to write it down. So — tap your grain bins and color code your livestock with spray paint — whatever you need to do to have an accurate tally of your crops and livestock. **Remember:** cattle need to be tracked according to weight classes and gender.

### Upcoming CAIS Sessions

There are federal CAIS information sessions scheduled for the new year to discuss changes to the CAIS program, including the new 2005 Harmonized form. The Harmonized form is “one-stop shopping” for CAIS submissions, whereby the T1163 (tax form) and the Supplementary form will be combined into one package. Keep your eyes open for a session in your area.

### 2005 CAIS Harmonized Forms Available

The 2005 Harmonized forms are currently available for producers with a non-calendar, tax year end. For producers who file tax as an individual (Dec 31 year end) and want to receive CAIS benefits as early as possible, CAIS Harmonized forms should be available by mid-January. Remember, forms are processed on a first in first out basis.

### 2005 CAIS Interim

Did the 2005 program year not turn out as well as you expected? You can access 50% of your final CAIS benefits in an interim payment. It also allows quick access to funds as



the interim processing standard is 30 days. CAIS has been very efficient at processing the interim applications within the allowed service standard.

### What's New At CAIS

Blueberry and cranberry growers have a new worksheet to describe the productive capacity of their operation. The worksheet accounts for tracts of land in different stages of production, including recently developed land and land in a sprouting year. The worksheet is available on the CAIS website. However, any producer who reports sales of blueberries or cranberries in 2004 will automatically receive the worksheet to fill out.

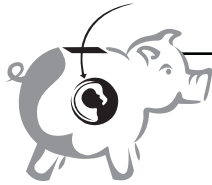
### Blueberry Top-up and Accounts Receivable

Blueberry growers should be aware that the top-up received in the spring for last year's crop is considered an accounts receivable. It should be reported as such on the CAIS Supplementary form (Part 4b). One fundamental of the CAIS program is to match the income and expenses for production of a specific crop. For example, the dollar amount received in the spring of 2005 for the 2004 crop should have been reported as an accounts receivable on the 2004 Supplementary form. In addition, the

amount received in the spring of 2004 for the 2003 crop should have been reported. ***It can make a significant impact on the value of the CAIS payment.*** The way the amount is reported for tax purposes does not change. If you did not report the accounts receivable, it is not too late. You can request an adjustment once you receive a calculation of benefits

(COB) for the 2004 program year.

For more information on any of the above information, contact the CAIS toll-free line at 1-866-367-8506, visit the CAIS website at [www.agr.gc.ca/caisprogram/](http://www.agr.gc.ca/caisprogram/), or contact Christine Moore, Programs and Business Risk Management (NSDAF) at (902) 893-6374 or toll free 1-866-844-4276.



## Managing Debt for Success

*John Murray, P.Ag., Loan Officer,  
Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board*

As a lender, the question of how much debt can be borrowed is often raised when it comes to financing a project or a farm transition. The question should be how much debt can be managed and what sort of structure should this financing be arranged? This depends on a number of factors, such as the farm's operating expenses, timing of income and the amount of money required to cover family living expenses. The amount required to cover living expenses is an important one, as it depends on whether there are contributions from off farm income, the number of children, lifestyle etc. There are, of course, other factors such as the sector and market conditions for the product(s) produced and the expected life of the asset to be financed. Factors such as variable weather conditions also play a role. Farming is not an easy business, but the main point to emphasize is no matter how much debt a farm carries, it is important to ensure cash flow is considered as a high priority. Debt that is paid back in too short a period can often cripple a business in terms of available cash flow, while debt taken out over a longer period than the life of the asset, means that you will be

paying for an asset that is no longer useful to the business. This can often limit your future capacity to borrow funds when you need to re-invest in your farm. An understanding lender is another important part of the equation.

Consider an example of a farm operation that has operating expenses that represent 70 per cent of their gross farm income. If this farm has the majority of their debt service at 20 per cent of gross sales with this debt repayable over 20 years and they need to purchase a new line of equipment in five years, there is a strong possibility they will need to restructure their long term debt in order to purchase this equipment (assuming they require 10 per cent of their gross farm income to meet family needs and their present income does not change). A better solution to this example would be to have a long and short term debt service ratio in the 15 per cent and five per cent range respectively. Under this scenario the producer would be able to retire some of this debt in accordance with the life of certain assets such as equipment and then upgrade equipment without affecting the farm's original long term debt repayment schedule.

*Continued on next page...*

### Attention all Farmers

The Registrar of Motor Vehicles has extended the deadline for farmers and their employees to obtain licence upgrades.

Applications for  
*Condition 15 Endorsements*  
*"Valid for Towing Trailers*  
*over 4500 kg"*  
*for Bonafide Farmers*  
*or Employees*

will be accepted until  
**December 31, 2005**

and are available from your  
Agricultural Resource Coordinator  
or from the NSFA office.

## Annual Horticultural Congress Offers Stellar Program

If this topic is of interest to you or you have a specific project in mind, such as a farm transition, feel free to contact one of our loan officers listed below to discuss your farm plans. Visit our website at [www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/loanboards/farmlb/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/loanboards/farmlb/) to learn more about the Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board.

Wishing you and yours all the best over the Christmas Season.

### Kentville

Robb MacMillan (902) 679-6008  
Pam Fraser (902) 679-6010

### Truro

Maria McCurdy (902) 893-6505  
John Murray (902) 893-4701  
Jim Neary (902) 893-8178  
Sandy Patterson (902) 893-6503

The annual Nova Scotia Horticultural Congress will focus on the Changing Face of Agriculture, its impact on producers and how they can take advantage of these changes. The conference will take place January 19–20, 2006 at the Old Orchard Inn in Greenwich.

Larry Martin, CEO of the George Morris Centre, who is known for his straight-talking in-your-face presentation style, will talk about the changing face of the agriculture industry and the challenges and opportunities for producers. Dr. Tim Ball, a historian and renowned climatologist will talk about water issues, climate change and the impact on agricultural production. Joining them will be Les Kletke, a writer, journalist and Nuffield Scholar, with his presentation “Chinese Food: A look at Chinese agriculture and what it means to us.” Kletke will be the keynote at the banquet.

Vegetable sessions, scheduled for day two, provide an overview of Nova Scotia's horticultural research trials, the results of fertilizer studies in Eastern Canada and a vegetable integrated pest management (IPM) workshop. The berry sessions will include an IPM workshop and a talk on greenhouse raspberry production by Kathy Demcha, senior horticulture extension associate at Penn State University. Dr. Michael Orzolek, a professor at Penn State University and Director of the Centre for Plasticulture will talk about production of vegetable and berry crops under high tunnels. Both IPM workshops are worth 1.5 pesticide certification points.

This year's door prize is an all expense paid trip for one to the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention in St. Catherines, Ontario in February. Ballots are available to farmers only at the Hort NS AGM. The winner will be announced at the banquet. Other prizes include a free conference registration and room draw for those who pre-register.

To register, or see the entire program, visit [www.hortns.com](http://www.hortns.com) or call Donna Crawford at (902) 678-9335.

## Do You Know an Outstanding Young Farmer?

Nominations are now open for the regional Outstanding Young Farmers Program. Anyone can nominate a young farmer/farm couple for the Atlantic Outstanding Young Farmer – even the farmers themselves – as long as they meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Must be between the ages of 18 and 39
- Be farm operators
- Derive a minimum of two-thirds of their income from farming

Regional winners represent the area at the 2006 national conference.

For more information, visit [www.oyfatlantic.ca](http://www.oyfatlantic.ca) or call (902) 678-7722 for an application form. Atlantic Canada has won 13 times at the national level! Participating in Canada's leading agricultural recognition/professional development program will change your life in farming! Nominations close January 13, 2006.

### Your Agricultural Resource Coordinators

**Senior Agricultural Resource Coord.:**  
**Arthur Pick** – Truro, [pickaa@gov.ns.ca](mailto:pickaa@gov.ns.ca)  
Tel: (902) 893-7314 • Fax: (902) 893-0244

**West Hants, Kings, Lunenburg, & Queens counties:**  
**Brian MacCulloch** – [macculbc@gov.ns.ca](mailto:macculbc@gov.ns.ca)  
Tel: (902) 679-6006 • Fax: (902) 679-6062

**East Hants, Cumberland, Colchester, & Halifax counties:**  
**Bill MacLeod** – [macleobj@gov.ns.ca](mailto:macleobj@gov.ns.ca)  
Tel: (902) 893-3645 • Fax: (902) 893-0244

**Pictou, Antigonish & Guysborough counties:**  
**Kevin Bekkers** – [bekkerkf@gov.ns.ca](mailto:bekkerkf@gov.ns.ca)  
Tel: (902) 863-4705 • Fax: (902) 863-7342

**Cape Breton, Victoria, Inverness & Richmond counties:**  
**Gary Koziel** – [kozielgj@gov.ns.ca](mailto:kozielgj@gov.ns.ca)  
Tel: (902) 563-2000 • Fax: (902) 563-3435

**Annapolis, Digby, Yarmouth, & Shelburne counties:**  
**Dennis Moerman** – [moermade@gov.ns.ca](mailto:moermade@gov.ns.ca)  
Tel: (902) 837-5161 • Fax: (902) 837-7696



## 50 YEARS OF 4-H EXCELLENCE

For 50 years Eva Landry has been committed to the 4-H program and has been the backbone of the Lakeside 4-H Club in St. Peter's, Cape Breton. From her days as a teacher, inspector and Superintendent of Schools, to her community volunteer work, she has influenced hundreds of young people, and improved communities.

Eva's involvement with 4-H began when she was as a young teacher at the Lakeside School in 1956. Until then, Eva had never heard of 4-H but, eager to learn, she became the sewing leader. 4-H was the only youth organization in the area so enrolment was high, with as many as 90 members completing their projects some years.

"St. Peter's has had a 4-H program for 72 years," said Eva. "The 4-H influence is readily evident when you see a community where volunteering and co-operation are hallmarks of everyday living. Organizations are properly run, the less fortunate are always cared for and there is a pride in community, which is shared by all."

Throughout the years Eva has been a leader for foods, crafts, cake decorating, heritage and a mentor for Junior Leader and Self-Determined projects. Her involvement did not stop at club level and Eva has been a general leader, president of the Richmond County 4-H Leader's Council, conducted workshops in public speaking, demonstrations, cake decorating and judging. She was instrumental in the formation of the provincial 4-H Camp, Camp Rankin, in 1972 and co-ordinated its rebuilding in 1995.

Internationally, Eva travelled to St. Kitt's and Barbados as part of the 4-H team conducting leadership seminars. "This was very rewarding as the people were so eager to learn. The children in St. Kitt's, with whom I worked directly, were absolutely wonderful and were willing to try whatever was asked of them with no inhibitions. Our whole team came away from these experiences with an even stronger commitment to the 4-H program."

A lifetime of demonstrating her dedication to youth and the desire to see each individual reach his or her potential, Eva's enthusiasm confirms her belief in the benefits and need for the 4-H program. "I have often been asked why I stayed with the program so long and why I never miss an opportunity to promote 4-H," said Eva. "It is because in my 42 years as an educator and now 50 years as a 4-H leader, I have become convinced that there is no other youth program that does as much to develop character; to help kids find their strengths and build upon them, thereby giving them a positive-self image; to develop a social consciousness in young people at an early age; and to give them the tools to help them take an active role in society – learning how to conduct a meeting, how to speak in public and how to make decisions, as emphasized in judging."

Eva has also been the recipient of the Canadian 4-H Council *Volunteer Leader of the Year* award and the *Order of Canada*.

## The Places You'll Go...

All 4-H members, ages 13 to 15, who are interested in having an unforgettable experience, making new friends and having lots of fun are encouraged to come to the 4-H Intermediate Conference on February 4 and 5, 2006 at Agri-Tech Park in Bible Hill.

*The Places You'll Go...* will give 4-H members personal and leadership skills so they will be more confident as they enter their teen years and consider their career choice. At the conference, 4-H members will hear great speakers, socialize with friends and learn lots of new things! The conference is sure to be fun and fabulous!

On Saturday, February 4, 2006, 4-H members travel to Sugar Moon Farm, a maple syrup/sugar operation that includes making sugar on snow, a farm tour and a sleigh ride! Supper will be delicious pancakes, maple syrup, sausages and beans. On Saturday evening, the delegates will go cosmic bowling and have a pool party.

On Sunday, February 5, 2006 4-H members will board buses to the Nova Scotia Agriculture College for the careers program. Chris Webb will speak on *Anything You Want*. Chris received rave reviews when he last attended the intermediate 4-H Conference and is excited to be back. We'll wrap up and head for home around 3:00 p.m.

Applications are available from your 4-H Specialist and are due by January 6, 2006 at the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Fisheries 4-H office nearest you. The registration fee is \$45 and is payable to the Nova Scotia 4-H Council.

## Pesticide Certification Courses

Pesticide Certification is designed for those individuals who do not have a license, whose license expired or is about to expire. This course covers a broad range of pesticide safety topics for land applicators. The course will help prepare to write the NSDOEL pesticide certification exam, as ongoing training, and as a refresher course on the basics of pesticide safety. Cost of this course is \$140 (includes manual and HST). The exam will be offered on the second day from 9 a.m. to noon.

ProAgri Consulting Ltd. is once again offering Pesticide Certification Courses in the area. If interested in attending one of these courses, contact ProAgri Consulting Ltd. at (902) 798-2114.

The dates for the courses are as follows:

January 26–27 – Kentville Agricultural Centre  
February 9–10 – Rodd Grand Hotel, Yarmouth  
February 23–24 – Agri-Tech Park, Truro  
March 23–24 – Kentville Agricultural Centre

## Farm Registration and Farm Vehicle Registration

Producers are reminded that farm registration can no longer be completed at the Kentville or Truro office. All registration must go through Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations in Halifax. Therefore, please plan your vehicle registration around this. **Give yourself plenty of time to get your farm registration completed before the end of December when farm plate registration is due.**

## Valley Region 4-H Update

### National 4-H Award Opportunities

The national 4-H awards provide a great opportunity for 4-H members and leaders to expand their skills base through workshops and inspirational speakers, while traveling and meeting other 4-H members from all over Canada, United States and United Kingdom. The awards opportunities include the National 4-H Conference to Washington; the National Dairy Conference to Madison Wisconsin; National 4-H Skills Conference in Manitoba; National Citizenship Seminar in Ottawa; Interprovincial Exchange Program across Canada; Garfield Weston United Kingdom Exchange; and the National Members and Volunteer Leaders Conference to Toronto. Applications in the Valley region are due November 28, 2005.

November 2–6, Rachel West from Basin View 4-H Club, Kings County, attended the National Members Conference, while Jacqueline Melvin from Cornwallis 4-H Club, Kings County, attended the Volunteer Leaders Conference in Toronto. All in attendance had a wonderful experience, leaving the conference with inspiration and great memories. Highlights included innovative speakers, workshops, tours and a trip to the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair.



## Young Speakers For Agriculture

Megan MacBride from Eastern Kings 4-H Club in Kings County attended the National Young Speakers for Agriculture Competition at the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto as Nova Scotia's 4-H representative. Megan placed second in this national speaking competition, which is held annually at the Winter Fair. It provides the opportunity for young speakers to become more involved with agriculture, express their concerns in agriculture and to present their public speaking skills at a national level. Megan's topic was "The ABC's of agriculture approach to where food comes from and why it matters." Congratulations Megan on doing a wonderful job representing Nova Scotia.

## Winter Time in 4-H

4-H clubs in this region are busy planning skating parties, fundraising activities and participating in community involvement. Clubs are encouraged to get involved in their community and volunteer at community events. Some clubs go caroling/visiting at local senior citizens homes, volunteer at food banks or local animal shelters. All of the 4-H Staff wish the 4-H families a wonderful holiday season!



## Upcoming 4-H Events

New Leader Info Session – December 5, 6 p.m., at the Kentville Agricultural Centre, Cornwallis Room

Kings County 4-H Council Board of Directors Meeting – December 5, 7 p.m., at the Kentville Agricultural Centre, Cornwallis Room.

New Leader Info Session – December 12, 7 p.m., at the West Hants Middle School.

Hants County Council Meeting – 7 p.m., at the West Hants Middle School.

Hants County Skating Party – December 27, 7 – 9 p.m., at the Brooklyn Arena

Kings County Nominating Committee meeting for Executive Meeting – January 3, 7 p.m., at the Kentville Agricultural Centre, Cornwallis Room.

Kings County Council Meeting – January 3, 7:30 p.m., at the Kentville Agricultural Centre, Cornwallis Room.

If you're looking for more information on the 4-H program, check out our Nova Scotia 4-H web site: [www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/4h/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/4h/).

***May the Peace and Joy of this Holiday Season gently fill your heart and home throughout 2006.***

## **A Message from your Agricultural Resource Coordinator**

The fact that various groups and organizations are holding their annual meetings and wrapping up activities, signals that the end of the year is fast approaching. As this holiday season approaches, I hope it provides us all with an opportunity to slow down a bit and to reflect on the year that was and the new year that is yet to come. While everyone's situation is different and the challenges and difficulties we face are not always the same, neither are the opportunities that from time to time are available to us. A unique thing about this time of year, however, is that for a short time it gives us an opportunity to reflect on the positive aspects of the past year and to be thankful for the opportunities we have had, as well as the family and friends we share. I hope during this holiday season each and everyone of you has an opportunity to do this and that the new year will bring you and your family health, happiness and prosperity.

From all the staff in the Central Region Agricultural Office, Merry Christmas and Best Wishes for a Happy New Year!



## **Be sure to Farm Safely this Holiday Season**

As we approach the holiday season farmers and their families are reminded to think about farm safety. This will help ensure you and your family have a safe and happy holiday season.

Here are a few things to consider:

- Snow will soon be upon us. Use extra care and be prepared for slippery surfaces, whether they are in barns, around the farm yard, or on the highways.
- Now is a good time to make sure equipment used during the winter months is given a maintenance check to ensure it is working properly and safely. Be sure that all safety guards are in place.
- If you haven't already done so, make sure your flue is cleaned.
- At home, use extra care with extension cords and lights, as well as candles to avoid electrical or fire hazards.
- While many people have had to use them already, check your generator and perform any necessary maintenance.
- A lot of livestock will be coming or have recently come back in the barn. Use extra caution when working with animals and use safe handling practices while both you and the animals adjust to this change.

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## **Pesticide Certification Course**

Once again ProAgri Consulting is preparing to offer Pesticide Certification Courses for farmers in 2006. A course is being proposed for the Amherst area in March.

ProAgri Consulting is open to offering a course in other areas if there is enough interest. If you or a group of your neighbors would like to have a course in your area, please contact the Agricultural office at (902) 893-3645 or ProAgri Consulting at (902) 798-2114.

## Programs Available in Business Planning

The following are some of the programs available to farmers in the area of Business Management and a brief description of each:

- Canadian Farm Business Advisory Service
  - Provides eligible farm businesses with five days of consulting to help prepare a farm financial assessment and action plan.
- Specialized Business Planning Services
  - Provides financial assistance for producers preparing specialized plans such as diversification, marketing, human resources, expansion, risk management or succession plans.
- Planning and Assessment for Value-Added Enterprises Program
  - Assistance with feasibility assessments and comprehensive business plans for specific value-added enterprises that producers are considering establishing or expanding.
- Canadian Agricultural Skills Service
  - Provides financial assistance to beginning and established farmers and their spouses to develop a learning plan and take courses to acquire on-farm skills or skills and training to pursue other income options or both.
- Farm Debt Mediation Service
  - Provides mediation services to insolvent farmers and their creditors to help arrive at mutually satisfactory arrangements. This is a private and confidential service.

For more information on these programs, contact your regional ARC office (902) 893-3645 or the Business Development and Economics Branch in Truro (902) 893-6580.



St. John Ambulance Canada

### First Aid Training for Farmers in Colchester County

The Colchester County Federation of Agriculture is planning to offer first aid courses in various areas of the county. These courses would be one day programs (eight hours) providing Emergency First Aid and CPR to meet Occupational Health and Safety requirements. Courses are being proposed for the Great Village area and/or Middle Stewiacke/Brookfield, but could be held elsewhere depending on interest. The cost of the course is approximately \$30 and would take place in February 2006.

If you, your family, or your employees are interested, contact Maxine Gourley at (902) 639-2709. Courses will be scheduled if there is a minimum of eight participants in an area.

Staff of the Cape Breton regional office of the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Fisheries would like to extend a Merry Christmas and good wishes for a new year of happiness. During this holiday season, our thoughts turn gratefully to those who have participated in the many challenges and progresses of the past year. We remind our farm owners and operators to make SAFETY a top priority while they are enjoying the five F's of Christmas: Faith, Family, Friends, Food and Fun. May the new year refresh your spirit and bring you renewed inspiration and prosperity.

## HAY FOR SALE?

The Cape Breton agricultural office is gathering a contact list of individuals who have or will have hay for sale during the 2005-06 winter season. Each year the regional office receives numerous calls from livestock owners who are looking to purchase hay and other feeds. If you would like to have your name added to the contact list please call our office at (902) 563-2000.

## Pesticide ReCertification and Certification Courses

ProAgri Consulting will be holding a **Pesticide ReCertification** course in Sydney's Civic Centre on April 19, 2006. This five hour course provides five recertification points to current holders of a pesticide applicators licence.

ProAgri Consulting will also present a **Pesticide Certification** course in Sydney's Civic Centre on April 20 and 21 for anyone wishing to prepare and write the test for the Pesticide Applicator's Licence.

For more information or to register, contact the NSDAF office at (902) 563-2000 or ProAgri Consulting at (902)-798-2114.

**PLEASE NOTE:** PRESENTATION OF THESE COURSES ARE SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION BASED ON PRODUCER PARTICIPATION.

## Food Handler's Certification Program

The purpose of this course is for you to understand the fundamentals of sanitation and safety with regard to the service of food to the public. Included in this workshop are the laws, rules, and procedures related to healthy food service and operations. Contaminated food, eaten by your customers, could cause serious illness or even death. This could be financially disastrous to your operation.

### *What Can You Do to Protect Your Reputation?*

The Foodhandler's Certification Program course provides the theory and practical information needed to ensure your food is prepared, handled, received, stored and served safely, using the HACCP Safe Food System.

Protect your customers from food-borne illness. Register now!

These courses are put on periodically throughout the year by the Quality Evaluation Food Safety Section of the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. To put your name on the registration list call (902) 563-2000.



St. John Ambulance Canada

## FIRST AID TRAINING

St. John Ambulance offers first aid courses in various locations around Cape Breton several times per month. For more information on first aid training near you, call the Sydney office at (902) 564-4189.

## 4-H

### Intermediate Conference

Just a reminder that 4-H members between 13 and 15 on Cape Breton Island should apply for the 2006 "The Places You'll Go" workshop. The deadline in the Cape Breton region is December 23. Applications have been sent to all 4-H families.

### Junior Member Workshops

Two junior member workshops are being planned for the spring. These workshops will give members between 9 and 13 the opportunity to learn new skills to make them better members and to allow them to play a stronger role in their 4-H club. "Small Steps, Big Differences" will include sessions on team building, judging and communications, along with the chance to meet other members and have fun. Watch for applications in December, which will be sent directly to 4-H families.

### Get Involved in 4-H

4-H is growing on Cape Breton Island. In addition to clubs reorganizing in all four counties on the Island, we have started a new club in Middle River. We are also working on possible clubs in Coxheath and Judique. If you would like to learn skills that last a lifetime with others who share your interests, or if you would like to volunteer as a leader, please contact Rhonda at (902) 563-2000 or (902) 945-2901.



## Pesticide Certification/Recertification

Once again Pesticide Certification and Recertification training will be offered in the new year. Please contact the Department of Agriculture in Antigonish to register (902) 863-4705.

**Pesticide Certification** is designed for those individuals who do not have a license or whose license has or is about to expire. This course covers a broad range of pesticide safety topics for land applicators and will help prepare to write the NSDEL pesticide certification exam, is ongoing training and is a refresher course on the basics of pesticide safety.

**Pesticide Recertification** is designed for those individuals who have a current license and would like to accumulate recertification points towards their new license. Individuals complete five hours of pesticide safety course topics and are issued certification points - one point for each hour of training. These recertification points (maximum five per year) are accumulated over a number of years through training courses and this process takes three to five years to complete. Please check the expiry date on your NSDEL Pesticide Certification Card before making a final decision to earn recertification points.

### Upcoming 4-H Events:

	<b>Antigonish County</b>
Christmas Skating, Antigonish arena	December 28, 2005
Bowling, Pins Bowling Center	January 15, 2006
Council Meeting	January 17, 2006
New Leader Workshop	January 24, 2006
Intermediate Conference, Truro	February 4 and 5, 2006

## Food Safety and Holiday Turkey

A fresh turkey should be purchased 1-2 days before cooking. When purchasing a turkey select it last and keep it separated from other foods to prevent its juices from cross-contaminating other foods. Proper hand washing should be practiced before and after handling raw turkey. Methods of defrosting turkeys:

- In the refrigerator – it takes approximately 24 hours for every five pounds of turkey.
- Submerged in cold water – change the water every 30 minutes to ensure it stays cold. It takes approximately 30 minutes per pound to thaw.
- In a microwave – the turkey should be cooked immediately after thawing and not held to be cooked at a later time.

### Approximate Cooking Times at 164°C (325°F)

#### Unstuffed

8 – 12 lb	2 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> – 3 hours
12 – 14 lb	3 – 3 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> hours
14 – 18 lb	3 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> – 4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> hours
18 – 20 lb	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> – 4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> hours

#### Stuffed

8 – 12 lb	3 – 3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> hours
12 – 14 lb	3 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> – 4 hours
14 – 18 lb	4 – 4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> hours
18 – 20 lb	4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> – 4 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> hours



*Best Wishes for a Happy Christmas Season!*



<http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/foodsafety/>

## *Season's Greetings*

As the holiday season fast approaches it is my sincere hope that each and everyone of you finds the joy and happiness that this time of year brings. I join everyone at the agricultural office in extending best wishes for a safe and healthy holiday season on your farm!

The new year gives us all an opportunity to reflect on the challenges and accomplishments we've experienced during 2005 as we look forward to the many opportunities that the coming year will bring. May the peace of the season be with you and may you enjoy a prosperous and happy new year.

*Best wishes for the holiday season*

Dennis Moerman P.Ag.

Annette Belliveau



## Winter Meetings

Winter is now upon us and planning is in full swing for winter meetings. In order to assist with that planning we need to know what topics you would like to see covered in educational sessions. Are you looking for information about herd health, succession planning, environmental issues, farm safety, business planning, government programs, pesticide certification, first aid, or other issues? Contact me and I will work with your local federation or commodity association, AgraPoint, department staff and others to try to address your need.

Dennis Moerman P.Ag.

Ph: 902-837-5162

Fax: 902-837-7696

E-mail: moermade@gov.ns.ca

P.O. Box 361

Weymouth, N.S.

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Some sessions we are currently planning include: overview of the farm tax system; environmental management for mink ranches; and federal and provincial government programs