


NOVA SCOTIA
Agriculture



**Accountability
Report**



for the fiscal year 2009–2010

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Accountability Statement

The accountability report of the Department of Agriculture for the year ended March 31, 2010 is prepared pursuant to the *Finance Act* and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Department of Agriculture business plan information for the fiscal year 2009-2010. The reporting of Department of Agriculture outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgements and opinions by Department of Agriculture management.

We acknowledge that this report is the responsibility of department management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the department business plan for the year.

John M^{ac}Donell
Minister

Paul T. LaFleche
Deputy Minister

Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the Department of Agriculture accountability report for 2009-2010.

The Department of Agriculture continues to support the long-term growth and ongoing prosperity of Nova Scotia's agriculture and agri-food industry with a focus on sustainable resource management, industry growth and development, responsible governance and education and life-long learning.

The department placed a major emphasis on strategic initiatives in 2009-2010. This included the development of a ten-year plan envisioning long-term profitability in agriculture so that the industry is better positioned to contribute to the province's priority goals. The department also continued to fund agricultural infrastructure, promote value-adding throughout the value-chain and support marketing initiatives for export development and buy local.

I encourage readers to visit the department's website at <http://gov.ns.ca/agri/> to learn more about Nova Scotia's agriculture industry.

Yours truly,

John M^{ac}Donell
Minister

Introduction

This accountability report is based on the goals, priorities and performance measures set out in the 2009-2010 business plan. It is organized according to the department's four core business areas: sustainable resource management; industry growth and development; responsible governance; and education and life-long learning. More information on department programs and services can be found online at <http://gov.ns.ca/agri/>.

Department Progress and Accomplishments

Core Business One: Sustainable Resource Management

Priority: Implement strategic environmental programming to support competitive transition in the agriculture industry.

Achievements:

- Continued to work with the farm community to reduce on-farm energy use and develop renewable energy alternatives. Pilot projects in 2009 included an assessment of an innovative grass pellet furnace and a program in conjunction with the Nova Scotia Community College to train energy assessors. A research chair in on-farm energy conservation was also filled and began work at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in 2009-2010. Saving energy on-farm produces environmental benefits and results in lower energy costs for producers. A number of initiatives are available under Growing Forward to support energy conservation and renewable energy projects.
- Completed 16 farm energy assessments and one farm energy audit in 2009. Assessments consisted of a full-day, high level look at an operation to identify possible energy savings, while the audit involved a more extensive analysis of a farm to produce a detailed report on energy savings.
- Participated in a national pilot project exploring an ecological goods and services program for agriculture. This work is ongoing.

Priority: Improve agricultural land use planning in the province.

Achievements:

- Completed an assessment of the provincial dyke and flood control system to identify needed improvements to strengthen the overall system and withstand anticipated sea level rise resulting from climate change.
- Provided logistical and other support to an arms-length committee reviewing issues

related to the long-term preservation of Nova Scotia's agricultural land. The committee - established by the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations - held a series of public consultations throughout the province in the winter and spring to hear from Nova Scotians on whether the province needs to take special measures to protect agricultural land from non-farm development, and what the appropriate way to do so would be. The committee is expected to deliver its final report to the ministers in summer 2010.

- Partnered with Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Environment and AgraPoint to research options and criteria for determining the full societal value of agricultural land. The results from this research will complement the recommendations made by the arms-length advisory committee appointed by the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations.

Core Business Two: Industry Growth and Development

Priority: Promote transition in the agriculture industry towards improved competitiveness and self-sufficiency.

Achievements:

- Partnered with the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture on a competitive transition framework aimed at improving government support to the industry with an emphasis on transitional support, strategic public investment and public goods and services. A working group with senior representatives from the department and the federation held 23 meetings throughout the province, hearing from almost 300 stakeholders on programs and services needed to support competitive transition. The working group also reviewed programs and services for alignment with the principles of competitive transition, and held a forum for government and non-government service providers to discuss opportunities for cooperation.
- Developed a ten-year strategic plan envisioning long-term profitability in agriculture to better position the industry to contribute to the province's economic, social and environmental goals. The framework will articulate the department's role in guiding this transition. It will complement other strategic initiatives such as competitive transition and the department's research, innovation and extension focus.
- Increased regional staff involvement in the promotion of business risk management (BRM) programs to give producers more opportunities to learn about options for income support. Regional offices are now coordinating appointments for presentations and other promotional materials. Department staff made several BRM presentations to commodity annual general meetings (AGM's) in 2009, including blueberries, maple and bee keepers.

A new promotions booth was also designed and displayed at the AGM's for the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture and the blueberry, horticulture, fruit growers and dairy industries. BRM programs were also promoted in mail-outs and updates in the Agricultural Services newsletter.

- Worked with industry stakeholders to research and develop insurance plans for stone fruit (peach) and maple products. Enabling legislation is expected to be introduced for these plans in 2010. Additions to the winter grain and dairy plans are also expected in 2010. The department also consulted with industry on a concept for an acreage loss insurance concept, but the industry chose not to proceed with it.

Priority: Expand and re-align service capacity to better meet client needs and facilitate competitive transition in the agriculture industry.

Achievements:

- Established a committee to improve service delivery and increase clients' ability to access programs, services and information. The committee commissioned a client satisfaction survey, supported the redesign of the department's website and worked with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) on the AgPal initiative, which aims to provide agricultural clients (including producers and agri-businesses) with a 'single window' making it easier to match programs and services to identified needs.
- Established service clusters in five locations throughout the province, bringing together staff in disciplines such as outreach, extension, 4-H and agricultural education. Teams made up of staff from one or more regional office have also been created in the western, central and eastern parts of the province for larger-scale issues. This model will help the department identify and address regional priorities, and will facilitate more effective networking, new partnerships and resource leveraging. The department has also committed to hiring three new industry transition officers (in addition to one hired in 2008) to be located strategically across the province to address priority issues and work closely with stakeholders on issues related to industry competitiveness.
- Established a committee to advise the minister on the re-alignment of agricultural extension services. This committee was discontinued after the competitive transition analysis group took on this role.

Priority: Attract new entrants to the agriculture and agri-product industries.

Achievements:

- Worked with government and non-government stakeholders on initiatives to attract new entrants to agriculture including a video project, educational events in Truro and Halifax,

and the development of a training site for short-term educational programs at the new Seaport Farmers' Market. The department also participated in a national online promotional campaign at www.ditchtheoffice.ca to attract youth to agriculture, and produced an article on agricultural careers for the Chronicle Herald's newspaper in education series.

- Established a working group to promote career opportunities in agriculture and encourage new entrants to the sector. The working group undertook a needs assessment to better understand ways of aligning programs and services for new entrants. A new entrants coordinator has been hired to develop and update information and fact sheets, and improve pathfinding and other online services. The department also recently launched the ThinkFarm initiative, which includes an online presence with information for new entrants such as credit opportunities, support for farm business development and innovation, educational resources and other topics.
- Developed and began implementing a three-year strategy to attract experienced new entrants to invest in Nova Scotia's agri-food and seafood industries. The strategy identifies four directions: to attract producers from out of province to farm in Nova Scotia; to increase investment opportunities for innovative, value-added businesses; to develop Nova Scotia's aquaculture sector; and to develop a communications strategy to attract foreign investors.
- Partnered with government agencies, industry associations, regional development agencies and AgraPoint to provide information and other support to prospective farmers from outside Nova Scotia. The department helped interested new entrants research key financial and production issues, find suitable areas to farm and establish business networks. These investment recruitment efforts led to \$1.3 million in new investment in Nova Scotia's agri-food and seafood industries in 2009.
- Continued to administer a loan-interest rebate program through the Farm Loan Board to help new farmers get established in the industry. In 2009-2010, the board approved grants to help 32 new entrants purchase or start new farm businesses over the next few years.

Priority: Expand investment in the agriculture and agri-product industries to capture growth opportunities.

Achievements:

- Provided cost-shared support for product quality and development projects to accelerate the commercialization of at least 28 new and improved agri-food products and technologies. Funding was also provided for a case study to examine opportunities for government and industry to work together to create awareness and demand for a specific

health food product. On average, every dollar the department invested in these projects leveraged an additional \$15 from government and non-government partners.

- Implemented the third year of the four-year Strategic Infrastructure Investment Fund to help diversify agricultural infrastructure and demonstrate the benefits of integrated production, processing and distribution throughout the value-chain. Approximately \$1 million was committed through this fund in 2009-2010, leveraging an additional \$3.94 million in direct investment.
- Continued to implement the Direct Marketing Community Development Trust Fund to help the agriculture industry and rural communities build on the momentum for the demand for local food. The department invested almost \$1.3 million in direct marketing infrastructure such as farmers' markets, farm markets and other development initiatives in 2009-2010. This is expected to leverage \$25 million overall from other partners. The economic impact is expected to be significant, generating everything from employment to infrastructure.
- Compiled statistics, market intelligence and other research to support the ongoing development of sectors such as apple, cranberry, beef and wild blueberry industries, and opportunities for renewable energy and local food. Data is being compiled for the wine industry and for international market opportunities in partnership with AAFC.
- Initiated a study to examine opportunities for local food procurement in provincially funded institutions and to identify the size and scope of the market. The results will be compiled in a report and released in 2010.
- Provided advice and support to the red meat sector (beef, sheep and pork) to develop a business plan and model for a single administrative support organization for producers. A work plan and by-laws for the organization have been developed. The department will continue to work with the red meat sector to implement the service organization in 2010.

Priority: Increase the international competitiveness of Nova Scotia's agriculture and agri-product industries.

Achievements:

- Worked with the Halifax Port Authority and Keune & Nagel on a consolidated container service to Germany. Service was underway by the summer of 2009 and the results for the first year should be available by summer 2010.
- Partnered with AAFC, the Agriculture Product and Quality Service, Taste of Nova Scotia and other organizations to promote Nova Scotia agri-food and seafood products internationally, with a major emphasis on the Anuga Trade Show, one of the world's

foremost food and beverage trade fairs. The department developed profiles of 11 Nova Scotia companies for the exhibition, forwarded 21 sales leads to Nova Scotia companies, met with trade commissioners and buyers and explored value-added development and market trends.

- Continued to implement the international trade plan with an emphasis on blueberries, apples and high-end, value-added, products in markets such as Germany, Japan and China. The department also supported the development of export opportunities in horticulture with participation at the Maritime pavilion at the Canadian Produce Marketing Association's trade show in 2009.
- Provided financial support and advice for the development of a strategic plan by the Nova Scotia Cattle Producers (NSCP) to improve the competitiveness of the industry. The strategy included a vision, long-term goals and strategic directions. The department remains committed to a successful and sustainable beef industry in Nova Scotia.
- Worked with industry stakeholders to organize business skills development workshops and conferences, including events focused on organics, farmers' markets and vendor businesses. The department also organized a skills-building trip for primary producers to attend a grass fed beef conference to help Nova Scotia's beef industry explore new opportunities.
- Developed entrepreneurship and business management tools and resources for business start-ups, focusing on topics such as business planning, business feasibility assessments and dealing with regulatory issues when starting a new business.

Priority: Increase the value of Nova Scotia's agriculture sector.

Achievements:

- Participated on the Council of Atlantic Premier's Agri-Food Action Team to increase sales of Nova Scotia and Atlantic agri-food and seafood products. This included forums with regional Ministers, Deputy Ministers and senior representatives from the region's primary and processing sectors. The action team also partnered with the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors, the Atlantic Federation of Agriculture and the Atlantic Food and Beverage Processors Association to explore the possibility of an Atlantic-wide food promotion campaign. This initiative was not pursued further due to a lack of consensus from industry stakeholders and uncertainty about feasibility and funding.
- Organized events bringing together food sellers and buyers to increase local sales of Nova Scotia agri-food and seafood products, including opportunities for Nova Scotia chefs to tour local farms and processing plants. This helped local chefs build relationships with local suppliers, learn about the local food industry and develop new menu items. It also

gave restaurant consumers in Nova Scotia more opportunities to buy local. In all, 14 chefs met with nine producers, processors and harvesters through this initiative.

- Continued to implement the Taste of Nova Scotia program to promote Nova Scotia agri-food and seafood products, and partnered with the Canadian Agri-Tourism Working Group and the Canadian Farm Business Management Council to champion agri-tourism development in Nova Scotia and Canada. The department hosted an on-farm direct marketing and agri-tourism workshop, and continued to maintain and distribute a directory of Nova Scotia's agricultural destinations and activities. The department also helped draft a funding proposal for initiatives such as a national economic impact study, a market-readiness toolkit, a risk management program, an identifiable agri-tourism product (including standards) and a resource centre. This funding was never secured.
- Implemented the third year of the Select Nova Scotia buy local campaign to increase awareness and consumption of Nova Scotia agriculture and seafood products, providing funding and resources for community events, market promotions and festivals. The campaign was expanded in 2009-2010 to highlight the availability of products year-round, highlighted by a series of 34 "incrEDIBLE" suppers hosted by community groups across the province in late winter. The month-long "incrEDIBLE" February also included public events, a seasonal eating flyer distributed across the province, newspaper and radio advertisements and online contests via Facebook and Twitter. More information can be found at selectnovascotia.ca.

Core Business Three: Responsible Governance

Priority: Enter into the new federal / provincial / territorial Growing Forward framework agreement.

Achievements:

- Implemented the first year of the federal / provincial / territorial Growing Forward agreement. The first Growing Forward programs were released in April 2009 under the Farm Investment Fund (for farmers) and the Agri-Food Industry Development Fund (for agri-businesses). The Graduate Research Training Initiative scholarship program was also released in April 2009, with the first call for applications June 1. Initiatives for new entrants, food safety, outreach, agriculture awareness, traceability and biosecurity were ready in May 2009. New programs to support research, innovation and commercialization were released in June 2009. Growing Forward commits \$14.74 million in federal and \$9.83 million in provincial funding to Nova Scotia's agriculture industry over five years to support priority areas such as innovation, commercialization, profitability, business development, food safety, the environment and risk management.
- Established a management committee with AAFC to implement the Growing Forward

agreement in Nova Scotia. The committee, co-chaired by the Executive Director of Agriculture Services and AAFC's Regional Director, met four times during the year to evaluate performance reports and oversee program budgets. Communications and industry advisory sub-committee's have been established and a financial officer has been appointed.

- Enhanced several programs with the addition of federal funding, including the Farm Investment Fund, the Agri-Food Industry Development Fund and the Innovation Fund. Department staff also participated on several national committee's to review business risk management programming and explore the development of a single window approach to accessing federal and provincial programming.

Priority: Increase regulatory compliance.

Achievements:

- Developed an online food handler course for service providers and the general public, including individuals preparing food for community events. This is offered in addition to training sessions provided throughout the year by department food safety specialists. This course was available online as of June 2010. Enrollment is already taking place.
- Developed a comprehensive food safety course for non-federally inspected meat processors. This will lead to the development and adoption of good manufacturing practices and certification of food safety plans, and will meet the demands being placed on processors by consumers and retailers. Plans are underway to begin delivering training to industry in the winter of 2010.
- Continued to work with the Department of Health Promotion and Protection and the Department of Environment on environmental health issues such as recreational camp regulations and procedures to address potable water, on-site sewage disposal and issues in public schools.
- Continued to maintain and update the online food inspection database. The site contains inspection reports for all Nova Scotia's eating establishments, with a search function for easy navigation. The site is accessible directly from the government homepage, and receives approximately 20,000 hits per month. Plans are underway to include information on meat inspection.

Priority: Maintain and improve legislative authority for industry supply and development.

Achievements:

- Developed a plan outlining the department's legislative and regulatory goals for the next

five years. The department re-designed an existing staff vacancy in 2009 to increase the policy capacity, and continues to use an analysis-based approach to legislative and regulatory development.

- Transferred administration of the Natural Products Marketing Council to the department's Legislation and Compliance branch to better reflect the council's role in providing legislative oversight to industry sectors. Efforts to review and improve the *Natural Products Marketing Act* were postponed while staff focused on other departmental priorities.

Priority: Enhance animal health and welfare services.

Achievements:

- Surveyed industry on livestock health services. Nova Scotia also funded an additional five seats at the Atlantic Veterinary College (AVC) in Prince Edward Island for a total of 16 seats, and continued to participate in recruitment efforts at AVC to help ensure Nova Scotia's livestock sectors have access to large animal veterinarian services.
- Finalized the new *Animal Protection Act*, which was proclaimed in January 2010. The new act improves on aspects of the previous legislation, providing clarity around inspections and enforcement and increased fines for offenders. Under the new act, the department assumes responsibility for investigating complaints involving farm animals with the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty continuing to handle complaints involving companion animals.

Priority: Develop new legislation and regulations to address emerging issues.

Achievements:

- Worked with industry and other stakeholders to develop the *Fur Industry Act* to manage and develop Nova Scotia's mink fur industry. The new act covers enforcement, inspection, disease management, environmental management, animal care and other aspects of the fast growing mink industry, and gives the department the authority to address non-compliance. Nova Scotia's mink industry generated about \$80 million in sales in 2008 and is especially important in the province's southwest region.
- Continued to work with Nova Scotia's commercial livestock sectors to implement a premise identification system to help identify farms of origin in the event of a disease outbreak or food safety issue. To date, the department has identified all commercial hog, dairy, poultry (including exhibition poultry) and mink sites, and has begun on beef and sheep. The next step is to issue numbers for each location to track animals moving to and from sites.

- Worked with stakeholders to develop guidelines to enhance food safety at public markets, including farmers' markets. These guidelines describe the types of food that can and cannot be sold, and the requirements that must be met. Permits are required for operators selling food such as meat products that could lead to health implications if not handled properly. Market organizers will also be responsible for keeping the department informed as to vendors selling these products. The number of farmers' markets in Nova Scotia has increased from an estimated 15 in 2003 to approximately 55 in 2010, many of which operate on multiple days of the week.

Priority: Implement a new governance model at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC).

Achievements:

- Continued the process to establish NSAC as a board-governed Crown corporation at an arms-length from the Department of Agriculture. The new governance model is similar to that of other post-secondary institutions in Canada, which will help the college recruit and retain top quality faculty and attract additional research funding. A detailed implementation plan has been developed for the transitional board of directors. One of the key features to the new governance model is the integration of AgraPoint extension services as part of the college's renewed approach to research, innovation and extension. NSAC began overseeing AgraPoint operations in 2009.

Priority: Reduce the administrative paperwork burden on industry and turnaround times for permits and approvals.

Achievements:

- Continued to review departmental legislation and regulations on an ongoing basis to ensure minimal paperwork burden for industry clients.
- Continued to participate in the government's business continuity planning initiative. An inventory of departmental programs and services has been created along with a prioritized list of those most crucial to be re-established in the event of a government-wide service disruption.

Core Business Four: Education and Life-Long Learning

Priority: Increase student enrollment at the NSAC.

Achievements:

- Overall student enrollment at the NSAC was 903 in 2009-2010, up from 832 the previous year.
- Offered a certificate program in Technology Education for the first time in 2009. Two additional programs are under development to be offered for the first time in the fall of 2011.
- Developed a proposal for a domestic research strategy in cooperation with other post-secondary institutions. The strategy was approved and implementation is set to begin this year. As well, deans from the Canadian Faculties of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine established a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with life science university organizations in Europe and the United States to research opportunities throughout the European Union and OECD countries.
- Signed agreements with other agriculture faculties in Canada and with the Czech University of Life Sciences, and renewed other MOU's for student exchange. NSAC also established funded academic exchange agreements with Dutch and French universities and undertook targeted recruitment efforts in a number of countries in South Asia and South America.
- Completed a review of student service programs at the NSAC. The position of Associate Vice-President for Students was also created at NSAC to oversee and coordinate all student service programs. National student surveys were administered to gather additional information on student engagement and satisfaction.
- Delayed efforts to renew NSAC student residences to focus on other priorities, however this remains a priority.

Priority: Increase NSAC research capacity.

Achievements:

- Created and filled the position of Vice President Research, Extension and Outreach at NSAC to help drive the renewed focus on innovation and the commercialization of research results. The new Vice President has worked closely with senior staff from AgraPoint to facilitate its transition to the research and extension arm of the college.

- Hired a new faculty member in bioproducts at the NSAC and submitted an application to establish a Canada Research Chair in the discipline. The department also worked with NSAC to recruit and hire faculty in farm energy conservation and fruit horticulture, and research is already underway in these areas. Final approval is pending for a previously submitted application for a Canada Research Chair in Agriculture Resource / Watershed Management. NSAC also established a position in managed landscapes, with recruitment for this position already in progress. The process for seeking approval of a Ph.D. program was delayed by factors related to the transition of NSAC governance. Several new doctoral students are studying on campus to provide this capacity, accomplished through registration at other universities.
- Worked with AAFC to renew and revitalize the MOU between the NSAC and AAFC's Kentville Research Station. One NSAC researcher is fully installed and working in Kentville, complementing the three AAFC researchers at NSAC. These new MOU's will be in place by the autumn of 2010. Talks have also been initiated to enhance collaboration on the use of infrastructure and equipment.

Priority: Increase NSAC technology transfer and commercialization capability.

Achievements:

- Partnered with AgriTECH Park, the Atlantic BioVenture Centre, the Colchester Regional Development Agency and the Atlantic Canadian Opportunities Agency (ACOA) to plan the Atlantic Centre for Agri-Innovation (ACAI), to be built starting in 2010-2011. The provincial government has committed \$5 million for the centre, along with \$2 million from ACOA. ACAI aims to bring together researchers, innovators and business development professionals from around the world under one roof to incubate and accelerate new ideas. Support services available through ACAI will include infrastructure and other facilities, professional support, mentorship and business coaching, investment preparation and capital financing, and networking.
- Began developing a plan to support the commercialization and sharing of NSAC research results through institutions such as ACAI and peer-reviewed research journals.

Corporate Services

Priority: Address priority areas identified in the Corporate Human Resource Strategy.

Achievements:

- Organized and hosted an orientation day for staff new to the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture. Thirty-five new staff attended the event, which included presentations on employee services, GoverNEXT, Occupational

Health and Safety, and ethics and government. This was the second consecutive year for the orientation day and feedback has been positive. The aim is to make this an annual event.

- Organized and hosted a two-day staff conference focusing on issues of work / life balance, stress in the workplace, career development, personal financial management in difficult times, and intergenerational diversity. Over 350 staff from both the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture attended the conference on the NSAC campus.
- Provided career coaching training to help managers guide employees interested in making decisions about their work / life future. Twelve managers from the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture attended the training.

Financial Results

Agriculture			
	2009-2010 Estimate	2009-2010 Actual	2010-2011 Estimate
Program & Service Area	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)
Total Department Expenses:			
Senior Management	710	687	720
Policy, Planning, Communications	811	700	835
Agriculture Services	24,577	27,907	23,971
Legislation and Compliance	9,468	9,579	8,988
Industry Development and Business	7,093	11,672	6,204
Nova Scotia Agricultural College	19,027	20,433	20,161
Total Departmental Expenses	61,686	70,978	60,879
TCA Purchase Requirements	880	107	490
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	477	469	476

Rounding

Estimates / Forecasts:

- The Department of Agriculture spent \$9.6 million (or 15.6 per cent) more than budget due to a \$5 million increase in allowance for doubtful accounts for the Farm Loan Board and increased spending of \$3.3 million in Agriculture Services for crop and livestock insurance, programs and risk management, and land protection services. The department spent an additional \$1.4 million related to the Nova Scotia Agricultural College for items such as college operations and housing services, which was offset by reduced spending of \$100,000 in policy and planning.

FTE's:

- Rounding should follow what appears in 1.17 of the Estimates book.

Measuring our Performance

Measure: Percentage of registered farms with an environmental farm plan (EFP)

What does this measure tell us? The department provides funding to help farmers implement projects to reduce the environmental impact of certain farm practices. This measure is based on approximately 2,400 registered farms in Nova Scotia, approximately half of which are full time commercial operations. The majority of farms participating in the EFP are full-time commercial operations.

Where are we now? In 2009-2010, 58 percent of the farms in Nova Scotia had either completed or had enrolled in the environmental farm plan program, up from 52 percent the year before.

Where do we want to be? The department aims to see a continued increase in the number of registered farms participating in the program.

Measure: Number of farms with reference margin protected by AgriStability¹

What does this measure tell us? This measure shows the number of producers investing in AgriStability to protect against large income declines.

Where are we now? In 2008, 710 farms were enrolled in AgriStability, down from 812 the previous year. This is consistent with the trend for Canada as a whole. In Nova Scotia, where livestock prices have trended downward over time, smaller mixed livestock farms likely opted out of participating since payouts would be relatively minor.

Where do we want to be? The department aims to have 900 farms managing on-farm risk through AgriStability by 2010-2011. The department will continue to promote the benefits of participating in business risk management programs (AgriStability and AgriInvest), particularly for sectors such as blueberry and mink.

Measure: Number of farms with allowable net sales covered by AgriInvest

What does this measure tell us? This measure shows the number of producers investing in AgriInvest to protect against small income declines.

Where are we now? In 2008, 661 producers made contributions to AgriInvest, investing a total of \$1.3 million. This is a decline from 2007, when 923 producers contributed \$1.9

¹AgriInvest and AgriStability data is up to date as of May 2010 with 94 percent of files processed.

million towards their AgriInvest accounts. This is consistent with the trend for Canada as a whole. In Nova Scotia, smaller farms likely opted out of participating in AgriInvest since benefits are paid out based on net sales. Overall, 1,180 Nova Scotia producers are enrolled in the program, with investments of \$4.5 million.

Where do we want to be? The aim is to have 1400 producers enrolled in AgriInvest.

Measure: Total Production Insurance coverage

What does this measure tell us? The Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission supports the growth and development of primary agriculture by paying indemnity to insured producers for specific production declines. This measure refers to the level of insurance coverage in Nova Scotia's agriculture industry.

Where are we now? Total insurance coverage through the commission was \$135.4 million in 2009-2010, up from \$120 million the previous year. Coverage has been steadily increasing for the past several years, mainly due to the introduction of a poultry insurance plan in 2008, the addition of weather derivative programming and improvements to existing plans.

Where do we want to be? The department expects to provide approximately \$128 million in insurance in 2010-2011. Insurance coverage is expected to stabilize now that most poultry producers are enrolled in the program.

Measure: Ratio of Product and Quality Development (PQD) program funding invested to total R&D invested through PQD projects

What does this measure tell us? The department works with private, public and non-government partners to provide cost-shared funding to Nova Scotia's agri-food and seafood industries to develop new value-added products and processes. This measure refers to the ratio of funding invested by the department (through the PQD program) as a percentage of all investment in PQD projects. A downward trend in the ratio invested by the department attests to the department's success at building relationships with stakeholders and shows a willingness on the part of other organizations to invest in the industry.

Where are we now? The department contributed just over five percent of the overall investment in PQD-related agri-food projects in 2009-2010, down from 11 percent the year before.

Where do we want to be? The department aims to increase the overall proportion of funding invested through external sources over time.

Measure: Value of new investment in the agri-food and seafood sectors directly attributable to investment recruitment efforts.

What does this measure tell us? The department continues to work with government and industry partners to encourage new investment in Nova Scotia's agri-food and seafood industries from outside the province. This measure refers to the overall value of new investment in Nova Scotia's agri-food and seafood industries directly attributable to the department's investment recruitment efforts.

Where are we now? Recruitment and retention efforts resulted in \$1.3 million in new investment in 2009-2010, up from \$1.1 million the year. The global economic slowdown nevertheless continues to slow investment from outside sources, as farmers from the European Union (a major source of new farmers to Nova Scotia) take longer than usual to sell their farms.

Where do we want to be? The department aims to increase new investment in Nova Scotia's agri-food and seafood sectors over time.

Measure: Percentage of Farm Loan Board principal in arrears

What does this measure tell us? The Farm Loan Board provides stable, long-term loans to farm businesses to support the ongoing growth and development of Nova Scotia's agriculture industry. This measure is a reflection of the board's success in monitoring arrears and providing assistance to clients in difficulty².

Where are we now? Five percent of the loan board's principal was in arrears as of March 31, 2010, up from 4.5 percent at the same time the year before due to a number of factors, including difficulties in the beef and pork sectors and lingering effects of the global economic slowdown. Several of the board's stronger clients have also transferred to short-term commercial loans, resulting in a decrease in the board's overall portfolio and a reduced average strength of clients remaining. High arrears are also being experienced in the mink and other crop sectors.

Where do we want to be? The aim is to keep arrears at 4.5 percent or lower. The board continues to work with borrowers to find solutions for loan repayment.

²The Farm Loan Board's policy is to be a patient lender for clients and sectors facing cyclical or other temporary downturns; arrears rates are therefore not kept to an absolute minimum.

Measure: Dollar value of total capital and repair expenditures in crop and animal agriculture

What does this measure tell us? Capital investment in agriculture is a reflection of investor confidence. This measure refers to the total value of capital expenditures in Nova Scotia's agriculture industry in a given year.

Where are we now? Capital expenditures totaled \$88.5 million in 2008, up slightly from \$88.4 million in 2007³.

Where do we want to be? The aim is to see an increase in capital expenditures over time.

Measure: Percentage of commercial livestock facilities identified for premise identification

What does this measure tell us? The department continues to work with Nova Scotia's commercial livestock sectors on a premise identification system to be able to trace animals to their farms of origin in the event of an animal disease outbreak or food safety issue. This measure shows progress made towards implementing farm-level traceability protocols for commercial livestock farms in Nova Scotia.

Where are we now? The department has begun the process of identifying (with GIS technology) the locations of commercial livestock operations in the province. To date, the department has identified all commercial hog, dairy, poultry (including exhibition poultry) and mink sites, and has begun on beef and sheep. The next step is to issue numbers for each location to track animals moving to and from sites.

Where do we want to be? The department aims to identify and number 100 percent of commercial sites by the end of the 2010 calendar year. Part of the challenge that remains is to fully define what is meant by a 'commercial' operation.

Measure: Total agri-food exports (less seafood products and fishing)

What does this measure tell us? The department promotes agri-food exports through participation in major international trade shows, incoming and outgoing buyer missions, media events and other initiatives. This measure includes the overall value of Nova Scotia agri-food exports (less seafood products and fishing).

Where are we now? Total agri-food exports were valued at \$175.6⁴ million in 2009,

³Source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 029-0005.

⁴Source: Statistics Canada

down from \$215.8 million the year before.

Where do we want to be? The goal is to increase the value of agri-food exports over time.

Measure: Value of agricultural production (farm cash receipts)

What does this measure tell us? ‘Farm cash receipts’ refer to a producer’s combined earnings from the sale of primary agriculture products and government program payments.

Where are we now? Farm cash receipts in Nova Scotia were \$441.6⁵ million in 2009, down from \$477.5 million the previous year.

Where do we want to be? The goal is to increase the value of agricultural production over time.

Measure: Value of sales from market development projects and tactics

What does this measure tell us? The department provides ongoing market development support to Nova Scotia’s agri-food and seafood industries, including participation in major international trade shows and domestic campaigns like Select Nova Scotia. This measure refers to the overall value of agri-food and seafood sales that are directly attributable to the department’s market promotion activities.

Where are we now? The department’s efforts resulted in \$18 million in sales in 2009-2010, up from \$16 million the year before.

Where do we want to be? The aim is to increase the value of sales over time.

Measure: Consumer awareness of Select Nova Scotia campaign

What does this measure tell us? The department launched the Select Nova Scotia buy local campaign in 2007 to increase the sale and consumption of Nova Scotia agri-food and seafood products locally. This measure refers to the overall level of consumer awareness of the campaign as determined by a consumer survey.

Where are we now? According to the survey, ten percent of Nova Scotian consumers were aware of the Select Nova Scotia campaign in 2009-2010, up from six percent from the previous survey two years before. This is considered a very good result for a campaign in its early stages and with its overall budget.

⁵Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue Number 21-011-X. Published May 2010.

Where do we want to be? The department aims to improve overall consumer awareness of the program over time through ongoing promotions and events. The aim is to have 15 percent consumer awareness by 2012.

Measure: Volunteer food handlers trained in safe food handling

What does this measure tell us? The department continues to make food handler courses available to volunteers preparing and serving food at events such as community dinners and fundraisers. This measure refers to the number of volunteer food handlers trained in a given year.

Where are we now? The department trained 600 volunteers in the 2009 reporting period at the request of community organizations. This number does not include people from community organizations who chose to take the more advanced course for industry.

Where do we want to be? The department offers this course at the convenience of community organizations, and aims to train between 500 and 1,000 people annually.

Measure: Number of food safety concerns reported

What does this measure tell us? For the purpose of this measure, a food safety concern is defined as a complaint or illness (including food poisoning) related to food products sold in Nova Scotia. The department investigates food safety concerns to determine cause and implement measures to prevent recurrence.

Where are we now? The department received 408 complaints during the reporting period, mostly via the continuously monitored online resource. This is an increase from 336 the previous year, perhaps due to an increased awareness about food safety issues. All complaints and concerns are investigated by food safety specialists.

Where do we want to be? The department aims to see a decrease in the number of complaints received.

Measure: Number of suspected food poisoning cases reported

What does this measure tell us? The department investigates suspected food poisoning cases to determine cause and put in place measures to prevent recurrence. This measure refers to the number of suspected food poisoning cases reported to the department's food safety division.

Where are we now? The department received 58 reports of suspected food borne illnesses during the reporting period, all of which were investigated. Many remain

unconfirmed. This is down from 68 in 2009.

Where do we want to be? The department aims to see a decrease in the number of suspected food borne illnesses through an emphasis on inspection and enforcement, and education for all food handlers in industry, volunteers and the general public. However, it is possible that the reporting of suspected food borne illness may increase due to public awareness on the subject.

Measure: Total value of research and infrastructure grants awarded to NSAC researchers

What does this measure tell us? This measure refers to the value of all research and infrastructure contracts signed by and awarded to NSAC researchers, and demonstrates the effectiveness of NSAC's research efforts in applying world-class science to the challenges facing the industry.

Where are we now? NSAC researchers attracted \$9.9 million in 2009-2010, up from \$9.5 million the previous year. This exceeds the target of \$9.3 million for 2009-2010 as a result of the continuation of existing contracts together with new research awards.

Where do we want to be? The aim is for NSAC researchers to secure \$10 million in research and infrastructure grants in 2012-2013. The new governance model at the NSAC will attract additional research funding and help in the commercialization of research results.

Measure: Number of students enrolled at NSAC

What does this measure tell us? This measure refers to overall student enrollment at NSAC and indicates the college's success in attracting and retaining skilled workers that will be able to contribute to Nova Scotia's workforce in the coming years.

Where are we now? Overall student enrollment at NSAC in 2009-2010 was 903, up from 832 the previous year. NSAC has seen steady enrollment growth in recent years as a result of strong marketing and recruitment efforts both locally and internationally. New programs introduced several years ago are also starting to attract new students.

Where do we want to be? NSAC aims to have 930 students enrolled in 2010-2011, and 1000 by 2013.

Measure: Number of international students enrolled at NSAC

What does this measure tell us? This measure refers to international student enrollment at the NSAC and is an indication of the success of the internationalization program. It also attests to the college's appeal in international markets.

Where are we now? International student enrollment at NSAC in 2009-2010 was 123, up from 79 the previous year.

Where do we want to be? NSAC aims to have 150 international students enrolled by 2013.