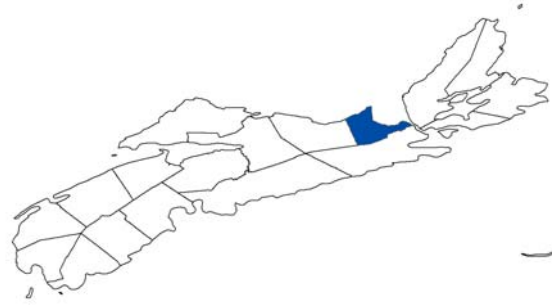


# ANTIGONISH COUNTY



## PROFILE of AGRICULTURAL LAND RESOURCES

### Overview of county land resources

Land most suitable for agricultural production (Canadian Land Inventory (CLI) classes 2,3 and 4<sup>i</sup>) covers almost two-thirds of Antigonish County (see Table 1). Antigonish has 4 percent of the province's CLI 2 soils, 7 percent of CLI 3 and 4 percent of CLI 4.

Antigonish has approximately 14,500 hectares in agricultural production. This amounts to over 6 percent of Nova Scotia land in agriculture. Farming in Antigonish uses about 10 percent of the county land area.

**Table 1. Agricultural land statistics- Antigonish County**

	Hectares	Percent of provincial total	Percent of county land area
CLI 2,3,4 TOTAL	89,499	5.7	61.7
CLI 2	6,875	4.2	4.7
CLI 3	65,597	6.6	45.2
CLI 4	17,027	4.1	11.7
Agricultural land (ALIP)*	13,924	5.9	9.6
Agricultural land (DNR)**	14,542	6.4	10.0
Blueberry land (DNR)**	534	3.2	0.4

\* As indicated by the NSDA Agricultural Land Identification Project.  
 \*\* Based on forest coverage files from NS Natural Resources (blueberry land is low-bush/ wild)  
 Source: Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Canada, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources.

Antigonish also has 534 hectares of wild blueberry production. This amounts to 3 percent of the Nova Scotia total.

**Figure 1a. Agricultural lands in Antigonish County**

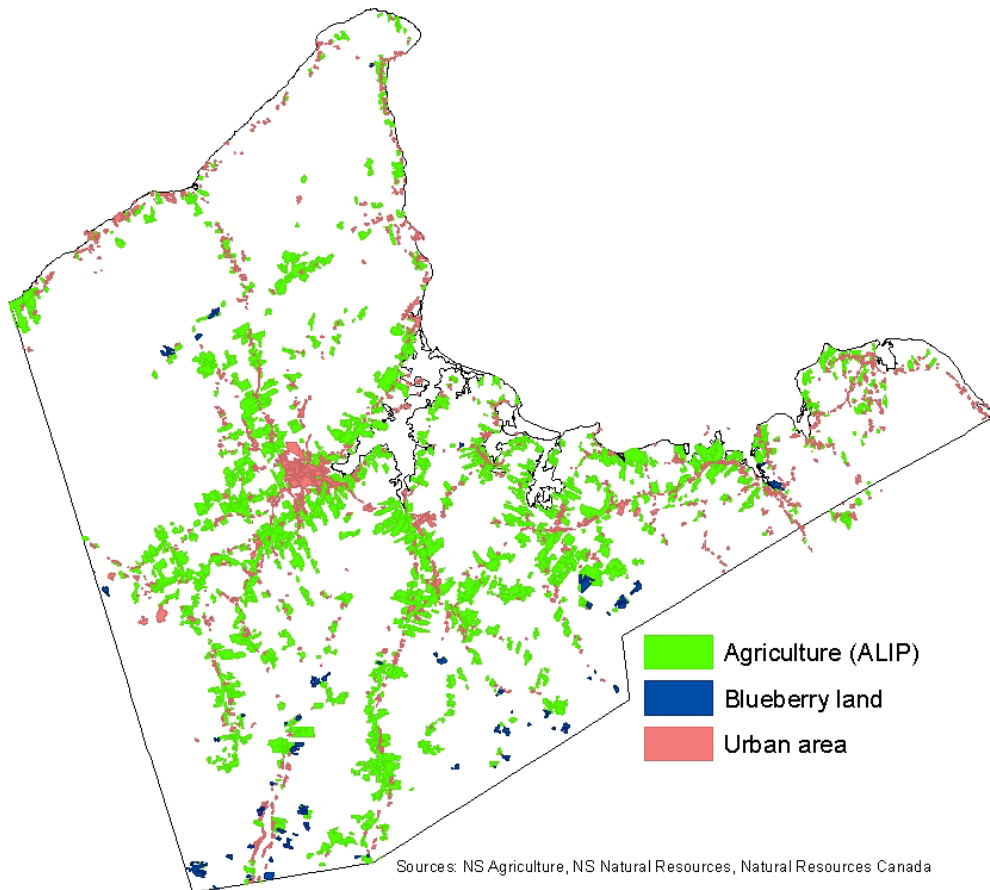
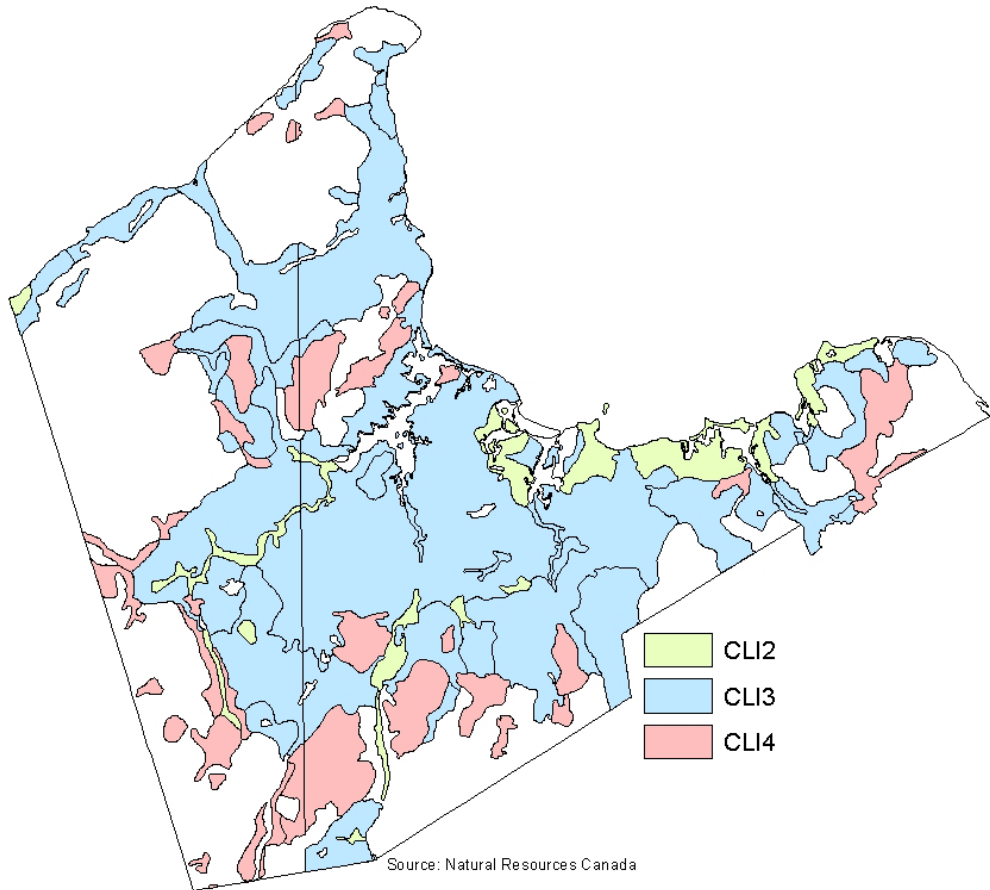
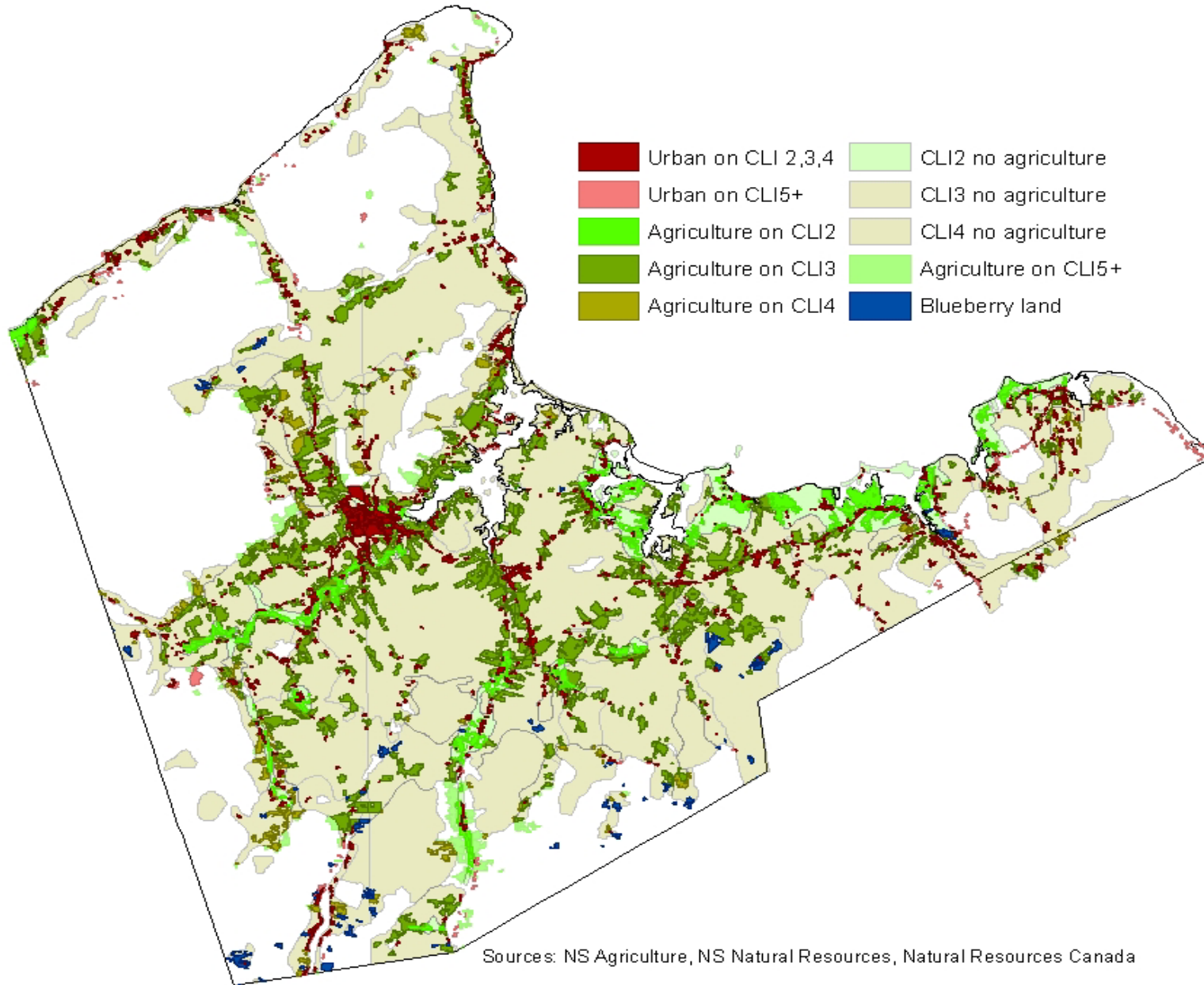


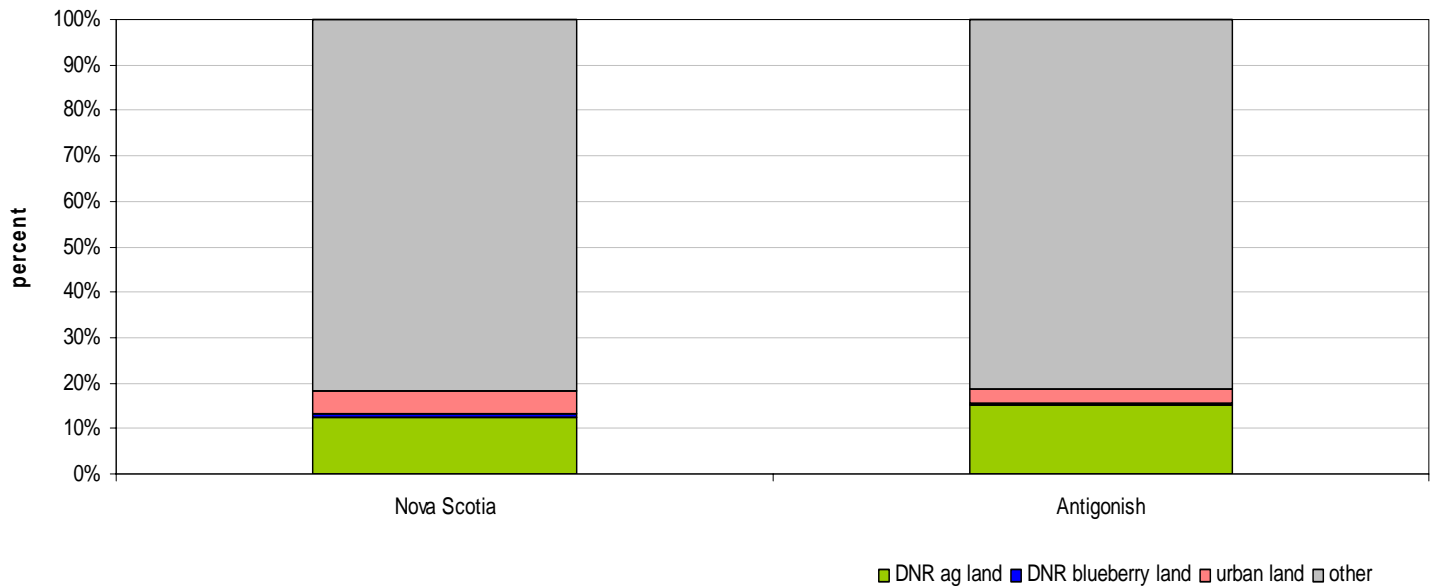
Figure 1b. Agricultural lands in Antigonish County (overlay)



## Usage of arable land and composition of farmed land

Land most suitable for agricultural production (CLI classes 2, 3 and 4) are used for agriculture in Antigonish County at a rate slightly higher than the provincial average (see Figure 2 and Table2). About 15 percent of suitable agricultural land is used for agricultural production in Antigonish compared with 13 percent provincially. This places Antigonish 3<sup>rd</sup> among the 18 counties in terms of utilization of arable land for farming.

Figure 2. Utilization of soils suitable for agriculture- Antigonish vs Nova Scotia



Premium agricultural land (CLI 2) is moderately utilized for farming in Antigonish with approximately 31 percent in agriculture (3<sup>rd</sup> out of 14 counties with class 2 land). This is slightly higher than the Nova Scotia average of 29 percent of CLI 2 lands used for agriculture.

Antigonish has about 3 percent of its good agricultural soils under urban development ranking Antigonish 16<sup>th</sup>. This compares to the provincial average of 5.4 percent. The relatively low urban encroachment on good agricultural soil can be attributed in large part to the large endowment of arable land in the county.

**Table 2. Use of agricultural soils (CLI classes 2,3,4) in Antigonish County and Nova Scotia**

	CLI 2		CLI 3		CLI 4		TOTAL CLI 2,3,4	
	Antigonish	Nova Scotia	Antigonish	Nova Scotia	Antigonish	Nova Scotia	Antigonish	Nova Scotia
	Percent							
Agricultural land (DNR)*	32.3	29.3	15.1	12.0	7.8	7.9	15.1	12.7
Blueberry land (DNR)*	0.2	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.9	1.8	0.5	0.7
Urban area	5.7	6.9	3.3	5.4	2.0	4.6	3.2	5.4
Other	61.8	63.3	81.2	82.3	89.3	85.7	81.3	81.2

\* Based on forest coverage files from NS Natural Resources (blueberry land is low-bush/ wild)  
Source: Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture,  
Natural Resources Canada,  
Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources.

Looking at the land base from a slightly different perspective (the composition of lands in agriculture, Table 3) it is apparent that Antigonish County agriculture is generally taking place on good agricultural soils, and at a higher percentage than the provincial average. Approximately 15 percent of agricultural land is on class 2 soils, while 68 percent is on class 3 soils and 9 percent on class 4. Less than 8 percent of Antigonish agriculture is on poorer than class 4 soils.

**Table 3. Composition of lands in agriculture- Antigonish County**

	Agricultural land (ALIP)*		Agricultural land (DNR)**		Blueberry land (DNR)**	
	Antigonish	Nova Scotia	Antigonish	Nova Scotia	Antigonish	Nova Scotia
	Percent					
CLI 2	15.4	20.5	15.3	21.1	2.6	4.7
CLI 3	68.2	49.4	68.2	51.8	45.4	16.4
CLI 4	8.8	16.3	9.2	14.5	29.9	44.5
Other	7.6	13.8	7.4	12.7	22.2	34.4

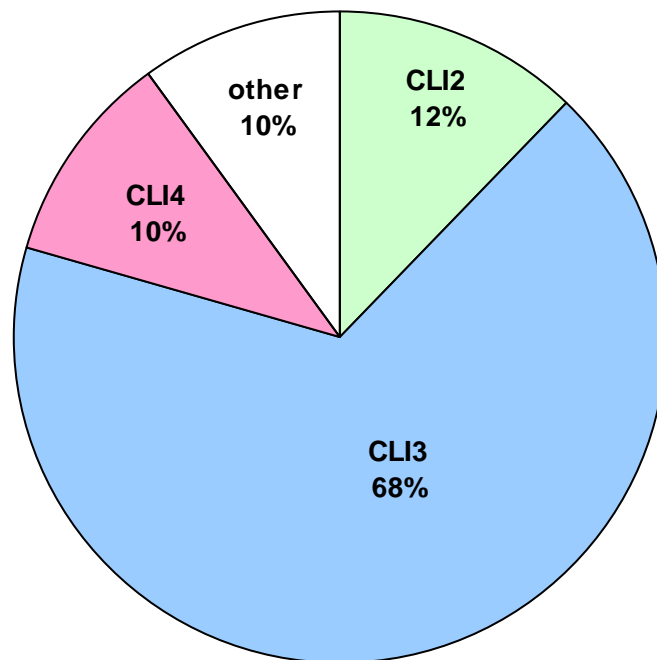
\* As indicated by the NSDA Agricultural Land Identification Project.  
\*\* Based on forest coverage files from NS Natural Resources (blueberry land is low-bush/ wild)  
Source: Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Canada,  
Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources.

## Urban use and property fragmentation of the agricultural land base

As shown in Figure 3, the majority of urban development in Antigonish is on good agricultural soils. Only 10 percent of urban land in Antigonish is on poorer than CLI4 soil; second lowest behind only Pictou County. The majority of urban development on arable land is in the Antigonish (town) area as well as near the Northumberland shore.

Over two-thirds of urban development in Antigonish has been on class 3 land, while a further 12 percent is on class 2 and 10 percent on class 4. As indicated in Table 2, the proportion of urban land encroachment on CLI soils is higher on higher quality land, consistent with the provincial average.

**Figure 3. Composition of urban land-  
Antigonish**



Some lands currently in agriculture may be relatively easily removed for other forms of development. A contributing factor is lot size. Antigonish County has 990 properties that are less than two hectares in size that are centered in ALIP lands (Table 4). These properties amount to 790 hectares, 645 of which are on ALIP.

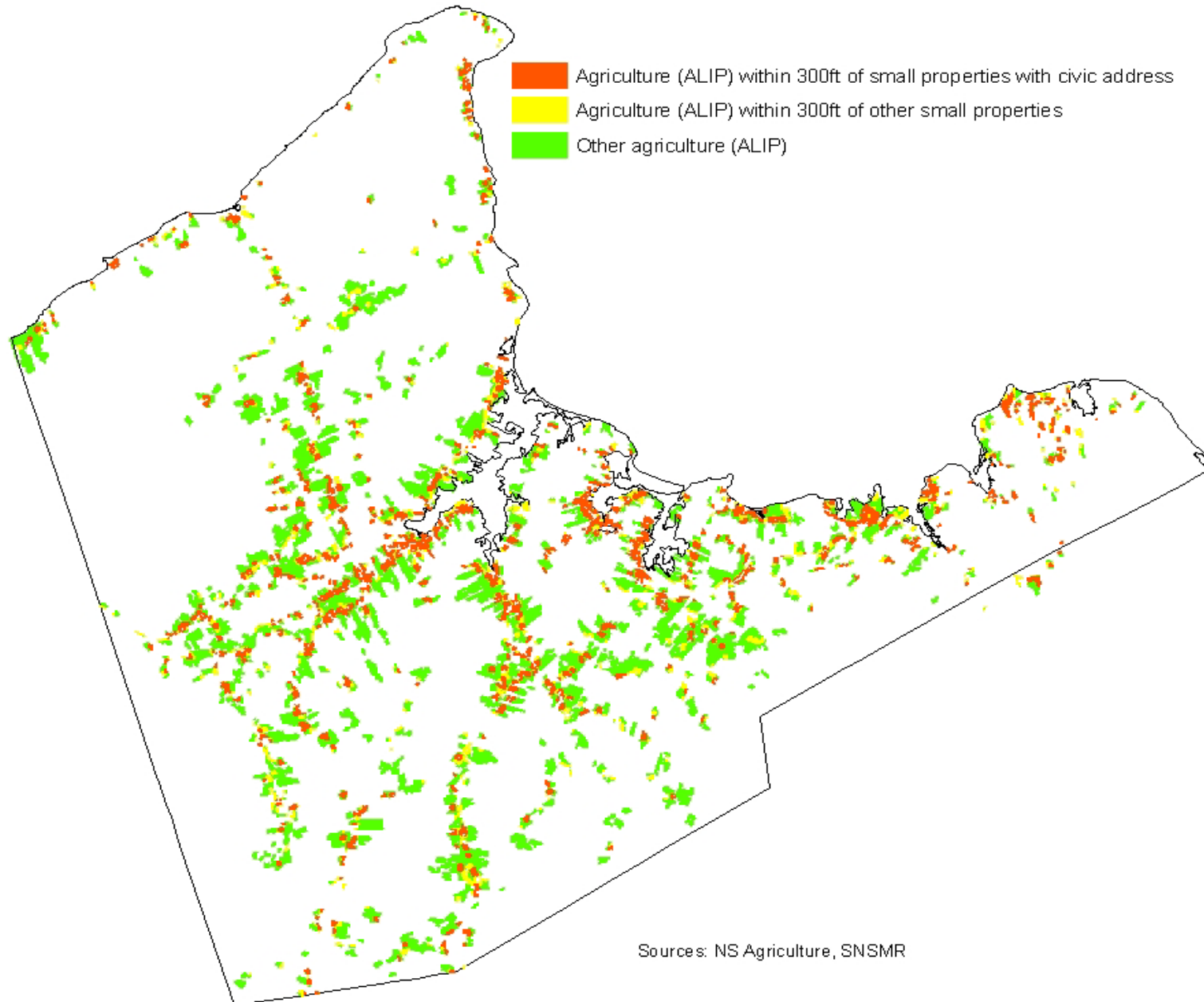
<b>Table 4. Analysis of small properties (&lt; 2ha) encroaching on farm land- Antigonish County, Nova Scotia</b>						
	<b>Vacant properties</b>		<b>Properties with civic address</b>		<b>TOTAL of small properties (&lt; 2 ha)</b>	
	# properties	Hectares	# properties	Hectares	# properties	Hectares
<b>Centered in ALIP farmland</b>	508	379	482	412	<b>990</b>	<b>790</b>
<b>Area in farmland of properties centered in ALIP</b>	508	310	482	335	<b>990</b>	<b>645</b>
<b>Within 10 meters of ALIP farmland</b>	1,111	795	1,513	1,048	<b>2,624</b>	<b>1,844</b>
Source: Provincial PID data, NSDA (ALIP data)						

A total of 2,624 properties less than two hectares in size are on or adjacent to ALIP lands, 58 percent of which have civic addresses (i.e. are not vacant). This amounts to 11 percent of the provincial total of these properties. Relative to the amount of farming in Antigonish, the county is tied with Pictou with the 6<sup>th</sup> highest rate of small developed properties that are adjacent to farmland.

Ultimately, approximately 121 hectares (0.9 percent) of ALIP lands in Antigonish have been lost to urban development since 1998. This places Antigonish 8<sup>th</sup> in terms of percentage farmland lost to development and 10<sup>th</sup> in terms of area of farmland lost.

While physical occupancy of land by non farm development or land with the potential for non-farm development can be used to estimate potential loss of land to the sector, the effect of development on adjacent agricultural lands is probably of greater significance in terms of area affected. In order to estimate the area of farm land that is at risk due to the proximity of development, a 300 ft (91.44m) buffer was drawn around each small (<2ha) property and the amount of ALIP farm land falling under this zone was calculated (Figure 4). Antigonish has approximately 28 percent of its ALIP farmland falling under this category, the 7<sup>th</sup> lowest in the province (the 7<sup>th</sup> highest in absolute terms). Approximately 19 percent of Antigonish farmland is within 300 feet of a small property with a civic address (i.e. likely developed property).

**Figure 4. Agriculture (ALIP) within 300 feet of small properties (< 2ha)**



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<sup>i</sup> Nova Scotia does not have any CLI class 1 soil. Class 2 to 4 soils have moderate to severe limitations that restrict the range of crops or require special conservation practices or both. Class 5 soils and below have very severe limitations for agriculture.

## Sources

Natural Resources Canada. Canada Land Inventory. Available from: <http://geogratis.cgdi.gc.ca/CLI/frames.html>. Accessed [25 January 2010].

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Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources. Forest Inventory - Geographic Information Systems. Available from: [www.gov.ns.ca/natr/forestry/gis/forest-inventory.asp](http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/forestry/gis/forest-inventory.asp). Accessed [25 January 2010].

SNSMR (Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations). 2009. NS Civic Address File and property polygons.