

# LUNENBURG 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 less than 10 percent of Lunenburg County (see Table 1). Lunenburg has 3 percent of the province's CLI 3 soils, but no CLI 2 or CLI 4 land.

Lunenburg has approximately 8,000 hectares in agricultural production. This amounts to over 3 percent of Nova Scotia land in agriculture. Farming in Lunenburg uses 3 percent of the county land area.

|                           | Hectares | Percent of provincial total | Percent of county land area |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| CLI 2,3,4 TOTAL           | 27,138   | 1.7                         | 9.4                         |
| CLI 2                     | 0        | 0                           | 0                           |
| CLI 3                     | 27,138   | 2.7                         | 9.4                         |
| CLI 4                     | 0        | 0                           | 0                           |
| Agricultural land (ALIP)* | 7,716    | 3.3                         | 2.7                         |
| Agricultural land (DNR)** | 8,392    | 3.7                         | 2.9                         |
| Blueberry land (DNR)**    | 33       | 0.2                         | 0.01                        |

\* 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.

Lunenburg also has a small amount (33 hectares) of wild blueberry production. This amounts to 0.2 percent of the Nova Scotia total.

Figure 1a. Agricultural lands in Lunenburg County

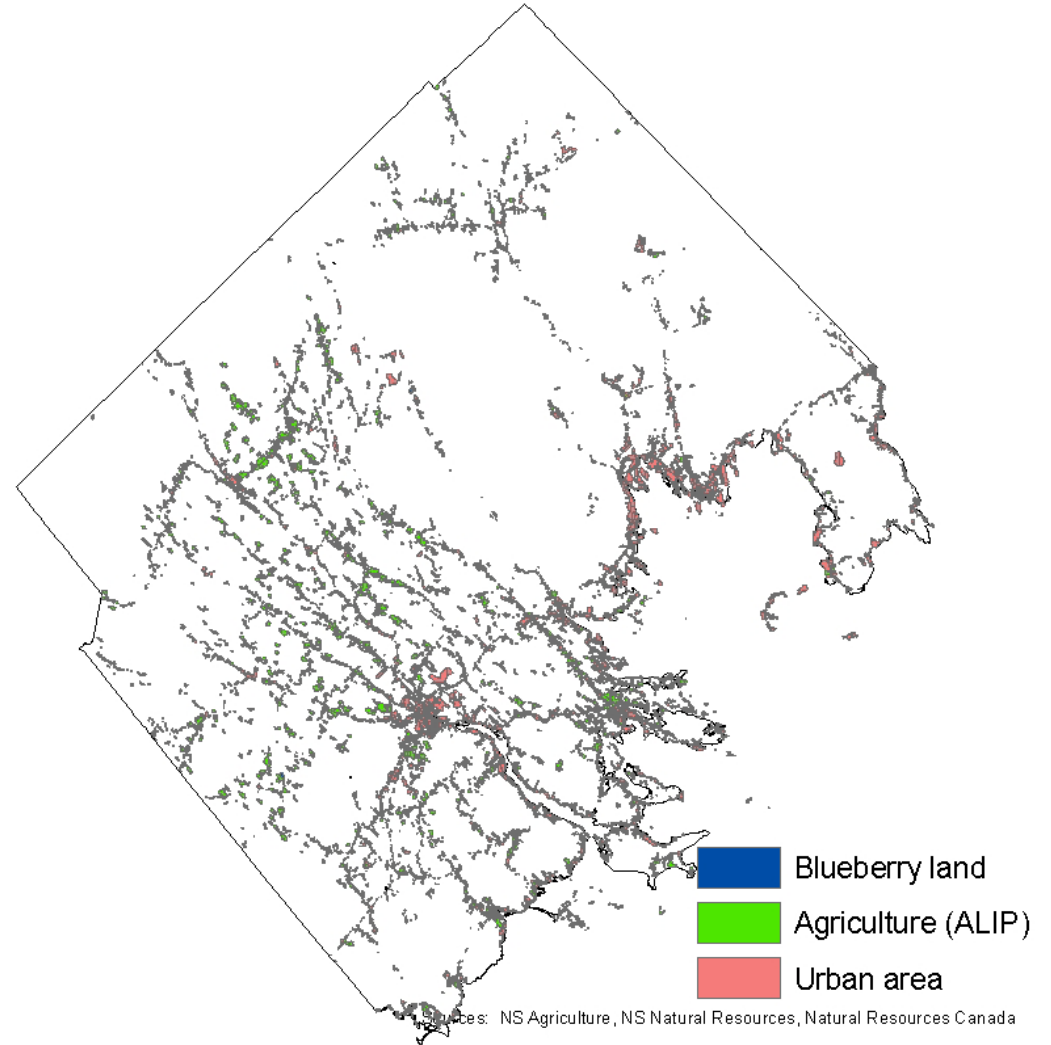
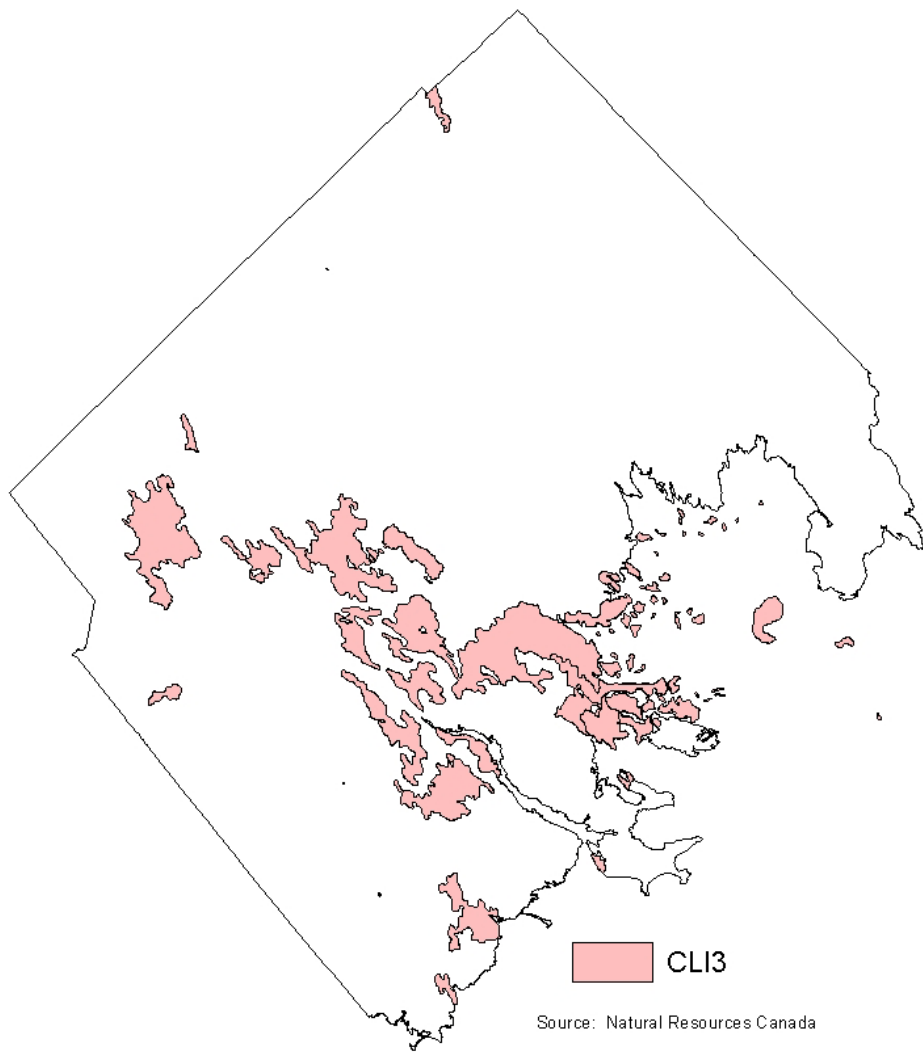
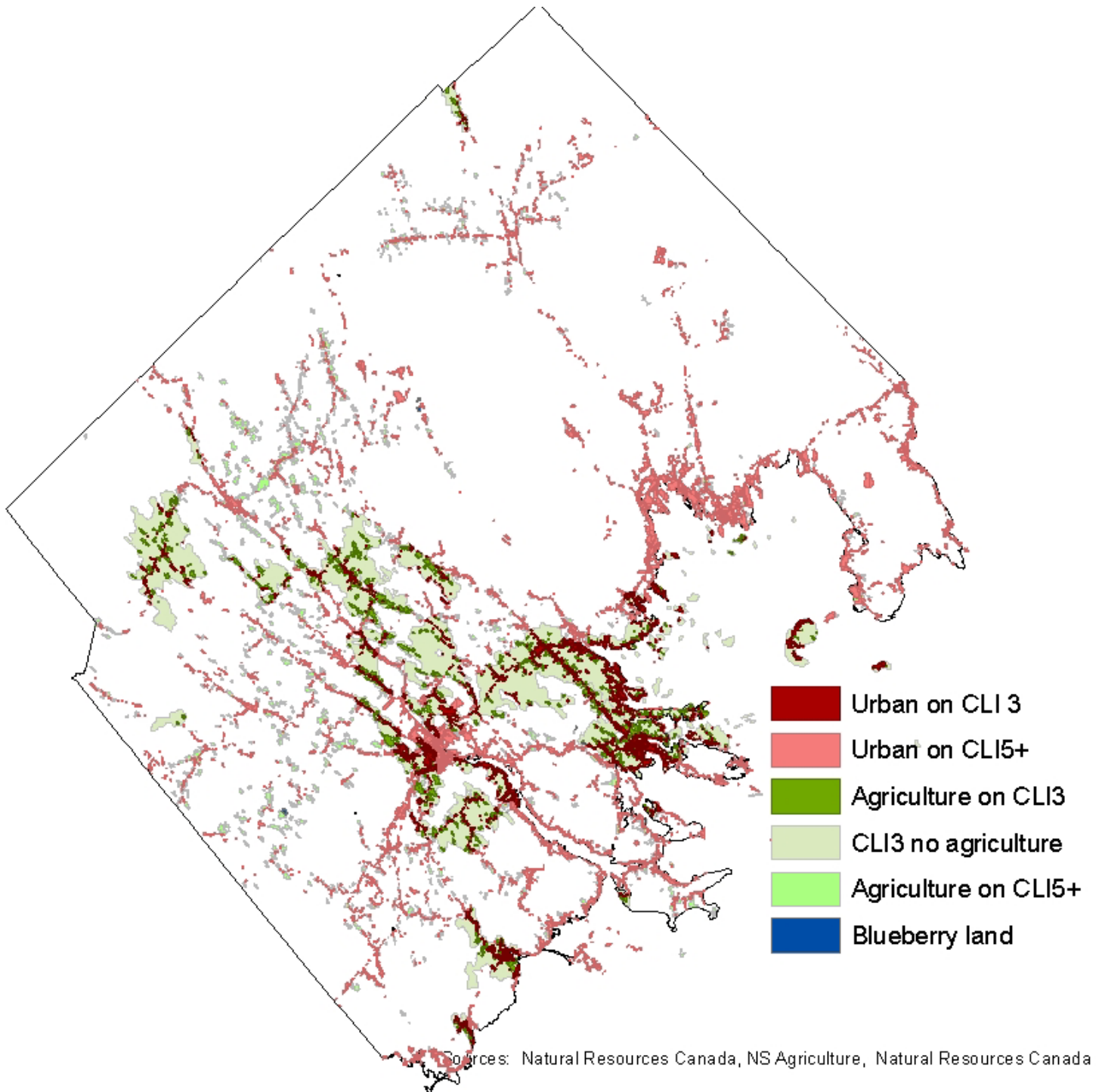


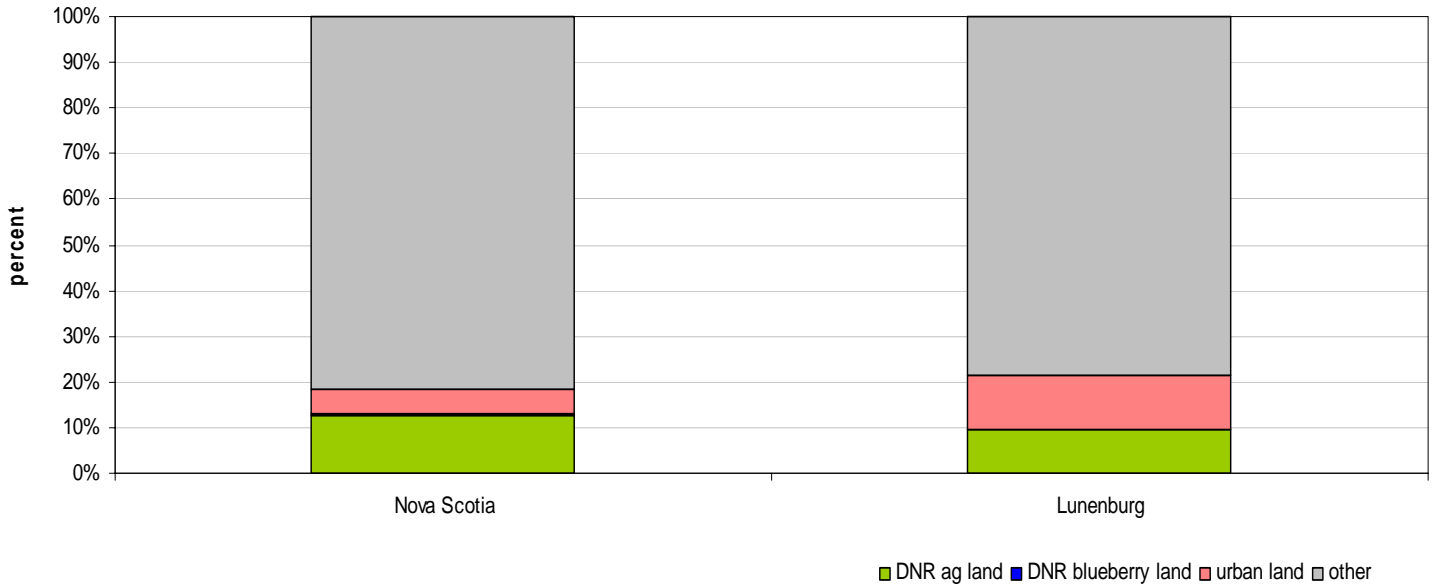
Figure 1b. Agricultural lands in Lunenburg County (overlay)



## 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 Lunenburg County at a slightly lesser rate than the provincial average (see Figure 2 and Table 2). About 10 percent of suitable agricultural land is used for agricultural production in Lunenburg compared with 13 percent provincially. This places Lunenburg 8<sup>th</sup> among the 18 counties in terms of utilization of arable land for farming.

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



Lunenburg has about 12 percent of its good agricultural soils under urban development ranking Lunenburg 3<sup>rd</sup>. This is significantly higher than the provincial average of 5.4 percent.

|                          | CLI 2     |             | CLI 3     |             | CLI 4     |             | TOTAL CLI 2,3,4 |             |
|--------------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|
|                          | Lunenburg | Nova Scotia | Lunenburg | Nova Scotia | Lunenburg | Nova Scotia | Lunenburg       | Nova Scotia |
|                          | Percent   |             |           |             |           |             |                 |             |
| Agricultural land (DNR)* | n/a       | 29.3        | 9.6       | 12.0        | n/a       | 7.9         | 9.6             | 12.7        |
| Blueberry land (DNR)*    | n/a       | 0.5         | 0.0       | 0.3         | n/a       | 1.8         | 0.0             | 0.7         |
| Urban area               | n/a       | 6.9         | 11.8      | 5.4         | n/a       | 4.6         | 11.8            | 5.4         |
| Other                    | n/a       | 63.3        | 78.6      | 82.3        | n/a       | 85.7        | 78.6            | 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 Lunenburg County agriculture is generally taking place on poorer agricultural soils, differing significantly from the provincial average. This is primarily due to a relative lack of arable land available in Lunenburg with the county having no class 2 or class 4 land. More than two-thirds of agriculture in Lunenburg takes place on poorer than class 4 soil, with the remainder on class 3 land.

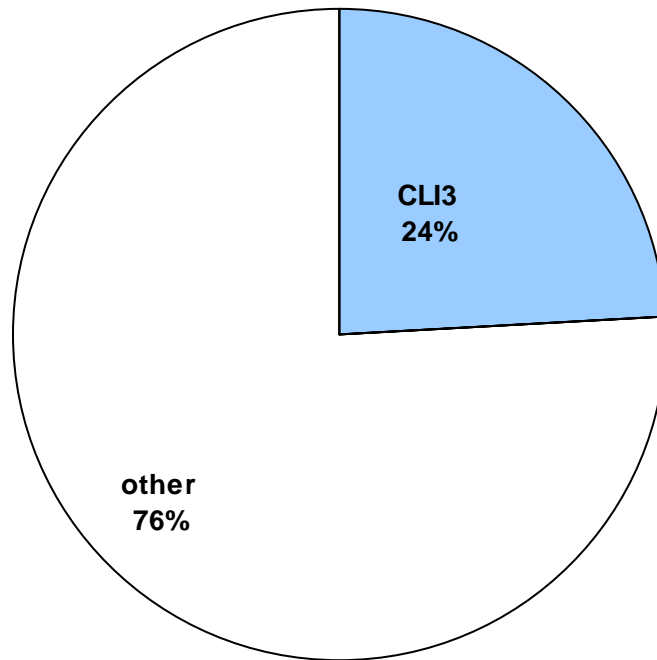
|       | Agricultural land (ALIP)* |             | Agricultural land (DNR)** |             | Blueberry land (DNR)** |             |
|-------|---------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|-------------|------------------------|-------------|
|       | Lunenburg                 | Nova Scotia | Lunenburg                 | Nova Scotia | Lunenburg              | Nova Scotia |
|       | Percent                   |             |                           |             |                        |             |
| CLI 2 | n/a                       | 20.5        | n/a                       | 21.1        | n/a                    | 4.7         |
| CLI 3 | 29.9                      | 49.4        | 30.9                      | 51.8        | 9.5                    | 16.4        |
| CLI 4 | n/a                       | 16.3        | n/a                       | 14.5        | n/a                    | 44.5        |
| Other | 70.1                      | 13.8        | 69.1                      | 12.7        | 90.5                   | 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, approximately one-quarter of urban development in Lunenburg is on good agricultural soils. The majority of urban development in the county has taken place on lands that are relatively unsuitable for agricultural production.

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



Some lands currently in agriculture may be relatively easily removed for other forms of development. A contributing factor is lot size. Lunenburg County has 1,033 properties that are less than two hectares in size that are centered in ALIP lands (Table 4). These properties amount to 698 hectares, 548 of which are on ALIP.

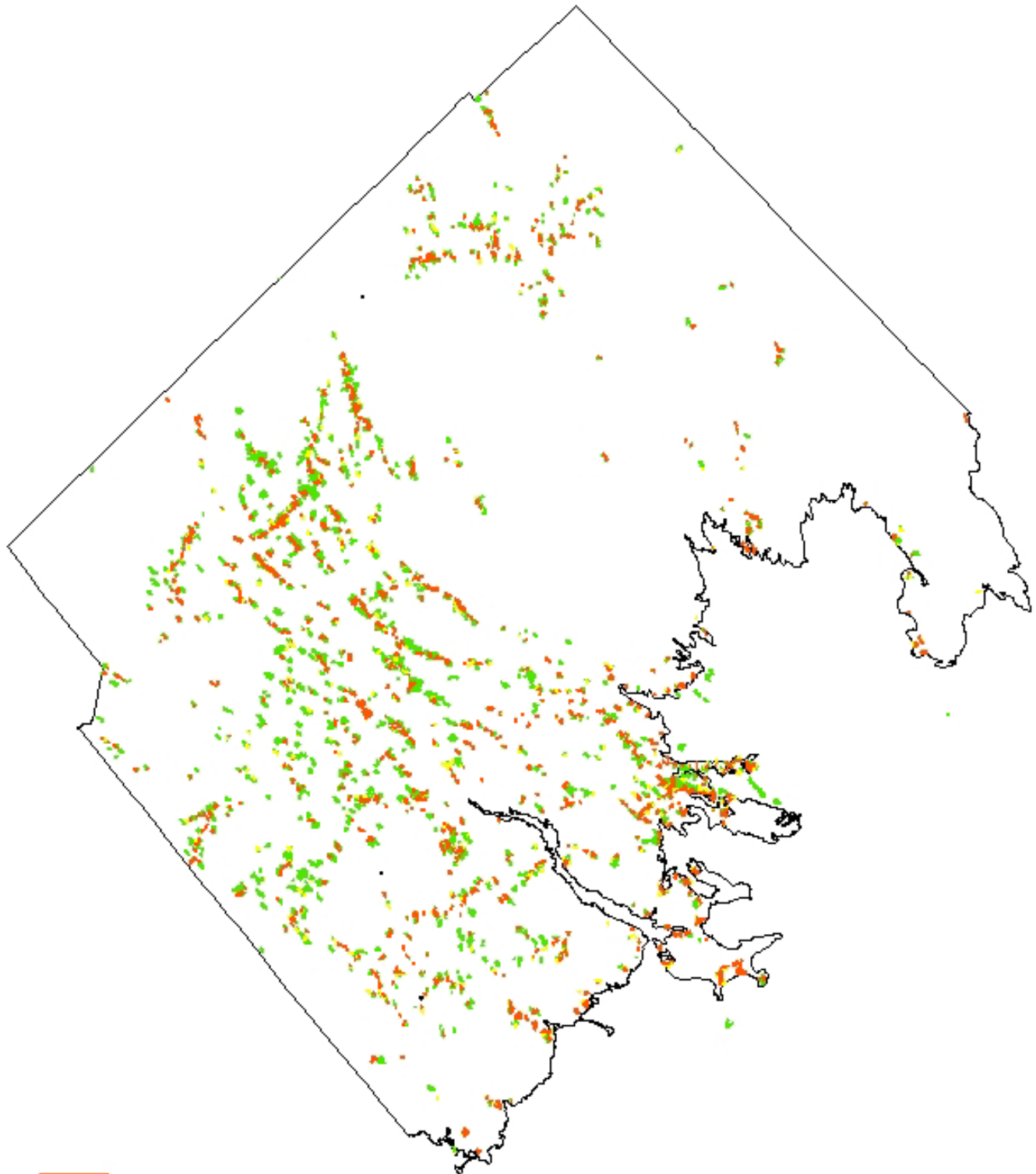
| <b>Table 4. Analysis of small properties (&lt; 2ha) encroaching on farm land- Lunenburg County, Nova Scotia</b> |                          |          |                                      |          |  |              |
|---|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|----------|--|--------------|
|   | <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>  | 493                      | 309      | 540                                  | 389      | <b>1,033</b>                                 | <b>698</b>   |
| <b>Area in farmland of properties centered in ALIP</b>  | 492                      | 242      | 540                                  | 306      | <b>1,032</b>                                 | <b>548</b>   |
| <b>Within 10 meters of ALIP farmland</b>  | 1,098                    | 733      | 1,465                                | 1,010    | <b>2,563</b>                                 | <b>1,743</b> |
| Source: Provincial PID data, NSDA (ALIP data)   |                          |          |                                      |          |  |              |

A total of 2,563 properties of less than two hectares in size are on or adjacent to ALIP lands, 57 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 Lunenburg, the county has the 4<sup>th</sup> highest rate of small developed properties that are adjacent to farmland.

Ultimately, approximately 153 hectares (2 percent) of ALIP lands in Lunenburg have been lost to urban development since 1998. This places Lunenburg tied for 6<sup>th</sup> with Guysborough in terms of percentage farmland lost to development and 8<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 farmland 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 farmland falling under this zone was calculated (Figure 4). Lunenburg has approximately 38 percent of its ALIP farmland falling under this category, the 4<sup>th</sup> highest in the province (9<sup>th</sup> highest in absolute terms). Approximately 30 percent of Lunenburg 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)**



- Agriculture (ALIP) within 300ft of small properties with civic address
- Agriculture (ALIP) within 300ft of other small properties
- Other agriculture (ALIP)

Sources: NS Agriculture, SNSMR

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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].

Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture. Agricultural Land Identification Project (ALIP).

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.