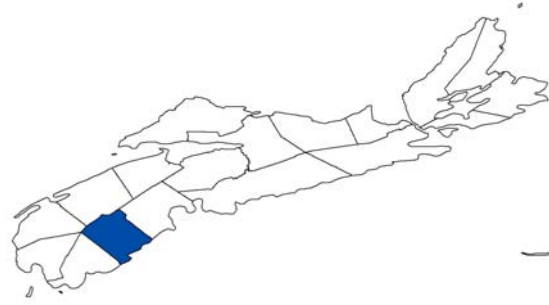


QUEENS COUNTY



PROFILE of AGRICULTURAL LAND RESOURCES

Overview of county land resources

Land most suitable for agricultural production (Canadian Land Inventory (CLI) classes 2,3 and 4ⁱ) covers less than 1 percent of Queens County (see Table 1). Queens has no CLI 2 soils, and less than 1 percent of the province's CLI 3 and CLI 4 land. Queens has the smallest amount of arable land in the province.

Queens has approximately 1,000 hectares in agricultural production. This amounts to less than 1 percent of Nova Scotia land in agriculture. Farming in Queens uses less than 1 percent of the county land area.

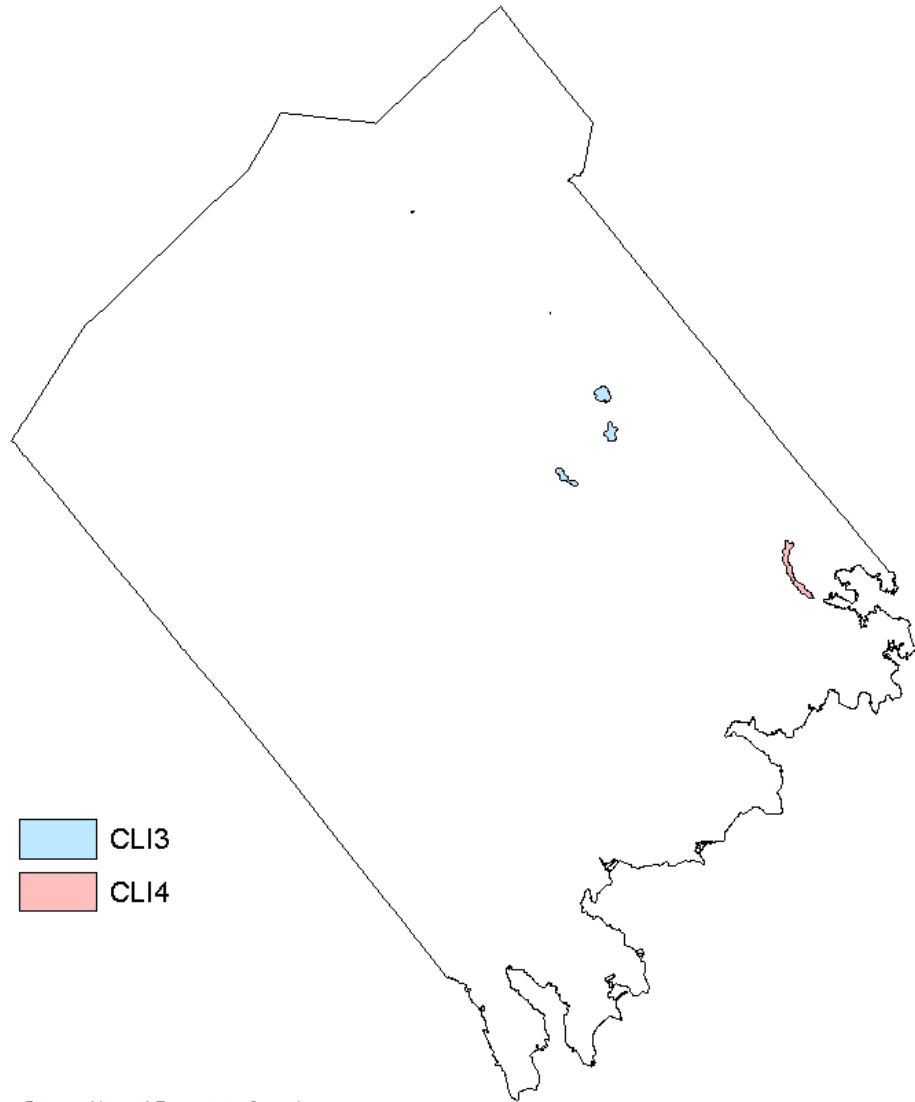
Table 1. Agricultural land statistics- Queens County

	Hectares	Percent of provincial total	Percent of county land area
CLI 2,3,4 TOTAL	470	0.03	0.2
CLI 2	0.0	0.0	0.0
CLI 3	265	0.03	0.1
CLI 4	205.4	0.1	0.1
Agricultural land (ALIP)*	989	0.4	0.4
Agricultural land (DNR)**	1,018	0.4	0.4
Blueberry land (DNR)**	33	0.2	0.01

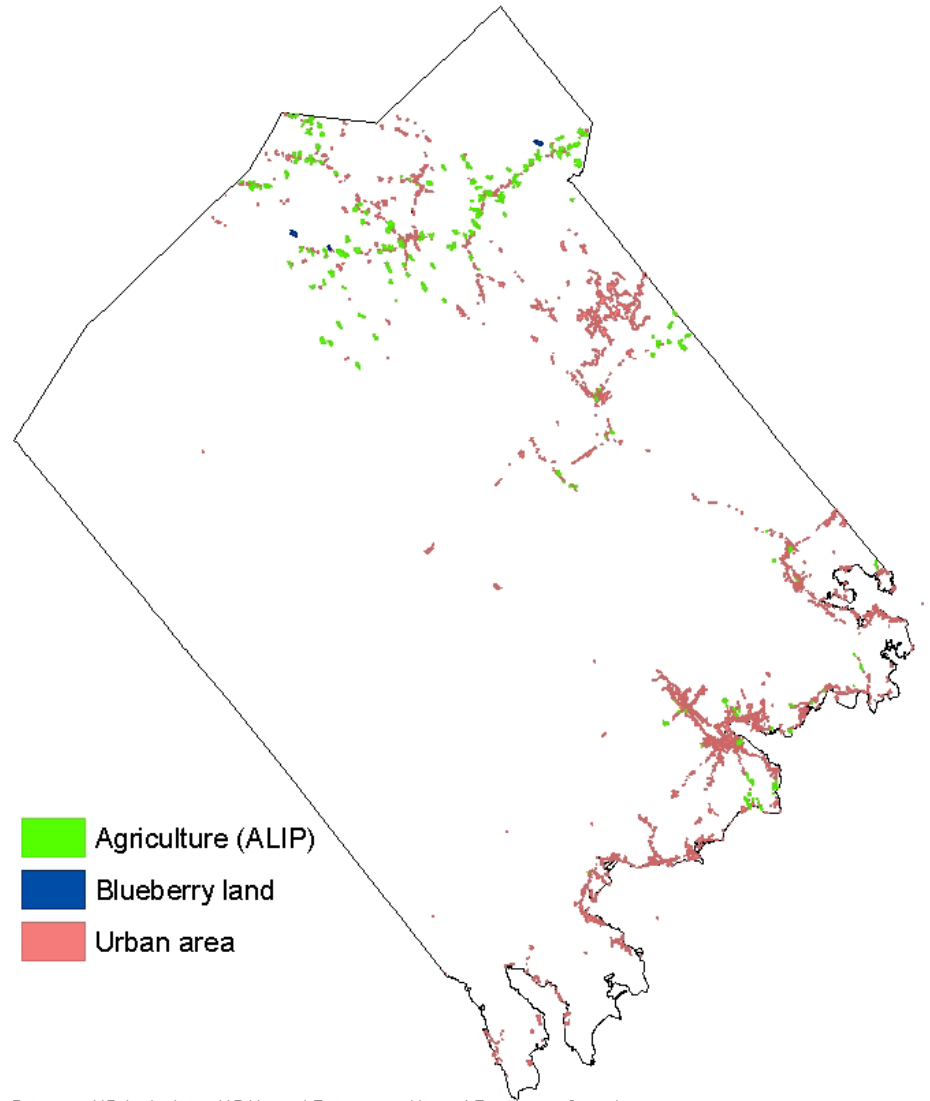
* As indicated by the NSDA Agricultural Land Identification Project.
 ** Based on forest coverage files from NS Natural Resources (blueberry land is low-bush/ wild)
 Source: Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Canada, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources.

Queens has a small amount of wild blueberry production (33 hectares). This amounts to a small fraction of the provincial total.

Figure 1a. Agricultural lands in Queens County

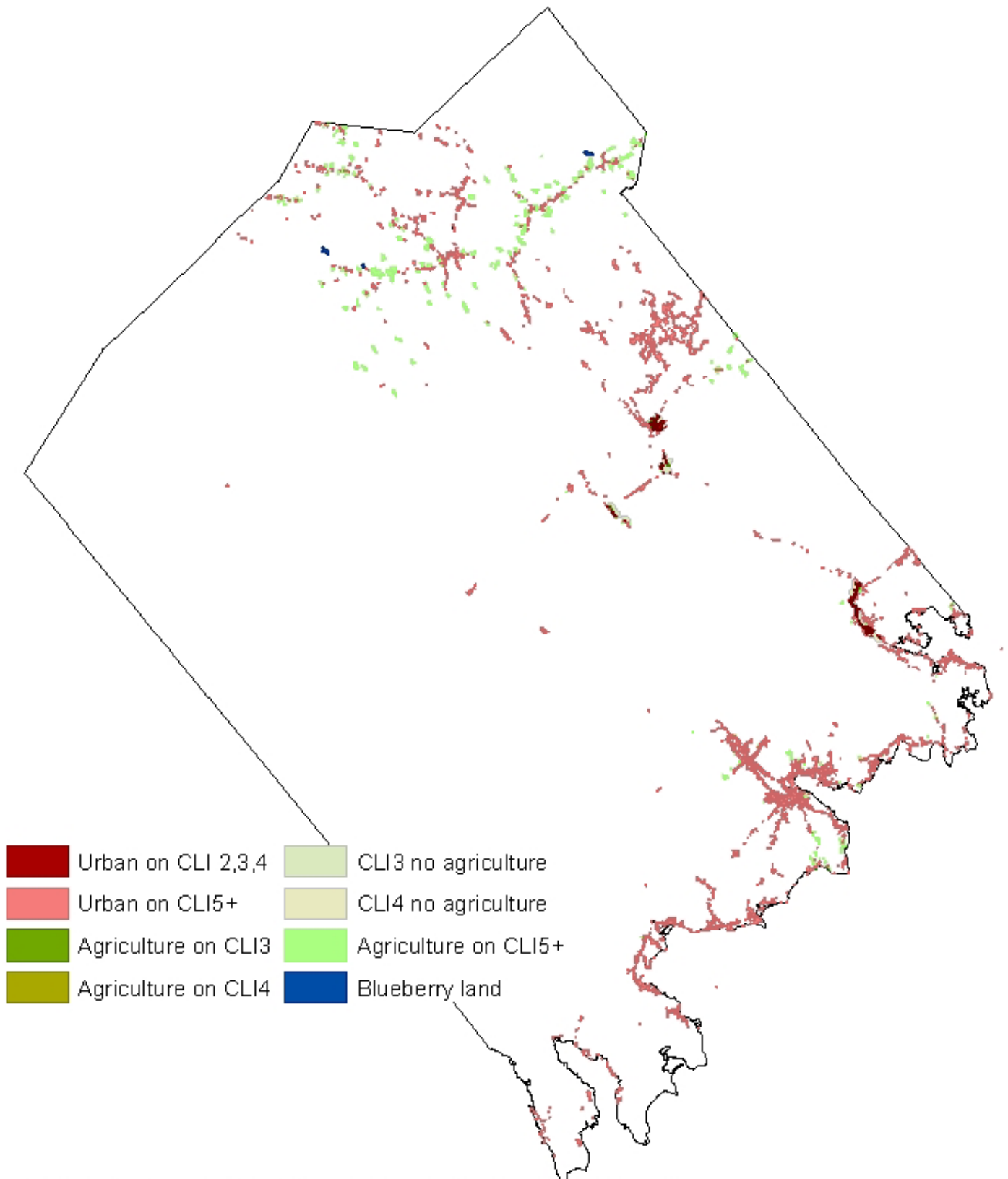


Source: Natural Resources Canada



Sources: NS Agriculture, NS Natural Resources, Natural Resources Canada

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

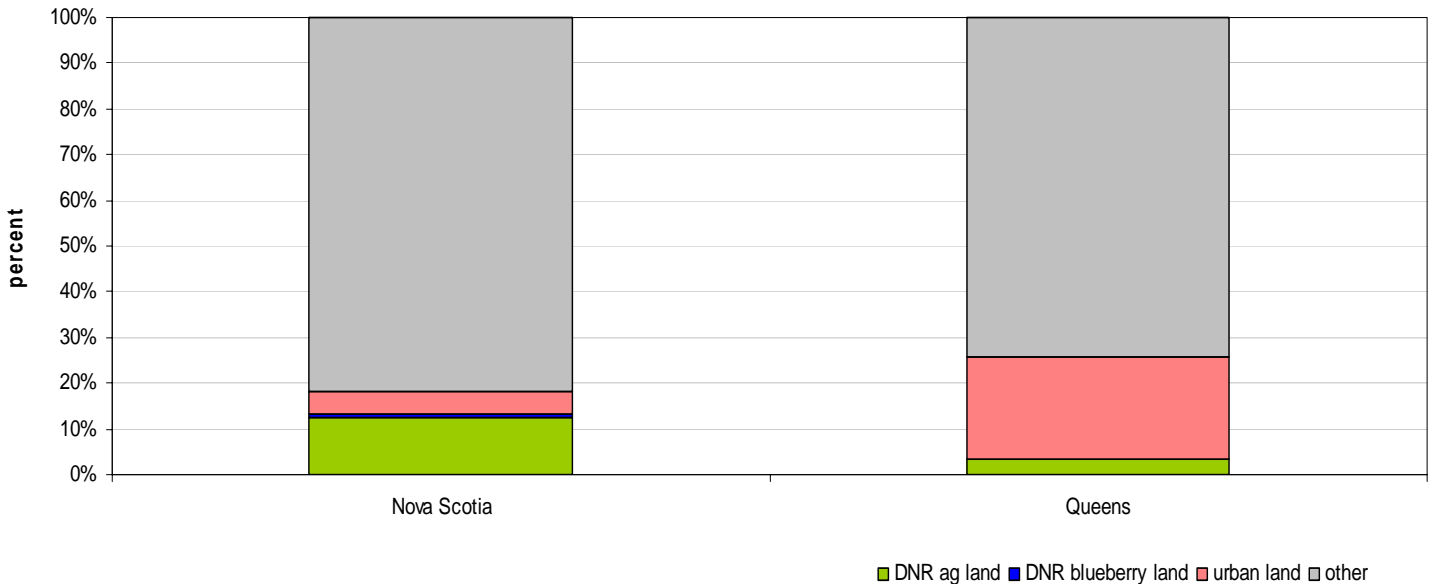


Sources: NS Agriculture, NS Natural Resources, Natural Resources Canada

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 Queens County at a significantly lower rate than the provincial average (see Figure 2 and Table2). About 4 percent of suitable agricultural land is used for agricultural production in Queens compared with 13 percent provincially. This places Queens 15th among the 18 counties in terms of utilization of arable land for farming.

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



Queens has lost the highest percentage of its potential arable land to urban development of any county at 22 percent. The high percentage is due to the very small arable land base that Queens is endowed with.

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

	CLI 2		CLI 3		CLI 4		TOTAL CLI 2,3,4	
	Queens	Nova Scotia	Queens	Nova Scotia	Queens	Nova Scotia	Queens	Nova Scotia
	Percent							
Agricultural land (DNR)*	n/a	29.3	6.2	12.0	0.0	7.9	3.5	12.7
Blueberry land (DNR)*	n/a	0.5	0.0	0.3	0.0	1.8	0.0	0.7
Urban area	n/a	6.9	18.3	5.4	27.0	4.6	22.1	5.4
Other	n/a	63.3	75.5	82.3	73.0	85.7	74.4	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 almost all agriculture in Queens takes place on poorer than class 4 land. The approximately 1.5 percent of agriculture that occurs on better than class 4 land is the lowest in Nova Scotia.

Table 3. Composition of lands in agriculture- Queens County

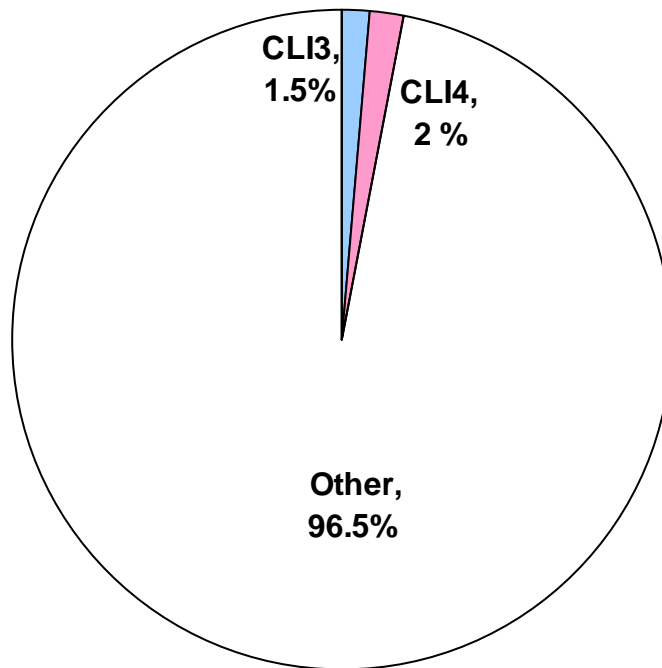
	Agricultural land (ALIP)*		Agricultural land (DNR)**		Blueberry land (DNR)**	
	Queens	Nova Scotia	Queens	Nova Scotia	Queens	Nova Scotia
	Percent					
CLI 2	n/a	20.5	n/a	21.1	n/a	4.7
CLI 3	1.2	49.4	1.6	51.8	0.0	16.4
CLI 4	0.0	16.3	0.0	14.5	0.0	44.5
Other	98.8	13.8	98.4	12.7	100	34.4

* 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, nearly all urban development in Queens is on land with poor capability for agriculture. Approximately 3.5 percent of urban development is on class 3 or 4 land combined, making Queens the least intensive user of arable land for urban development of any county in the province, due mostly to the small amount of arable land available.

Figure 3. Composition of urban land-Queens



Some lands currently in agriculture may be relatively easily removed for other forms of development. A contributing factor is lot size. Queens County is the only county in the province without any small properties (less than two hectares in area) that are centered in ALIP lands (Table 4).

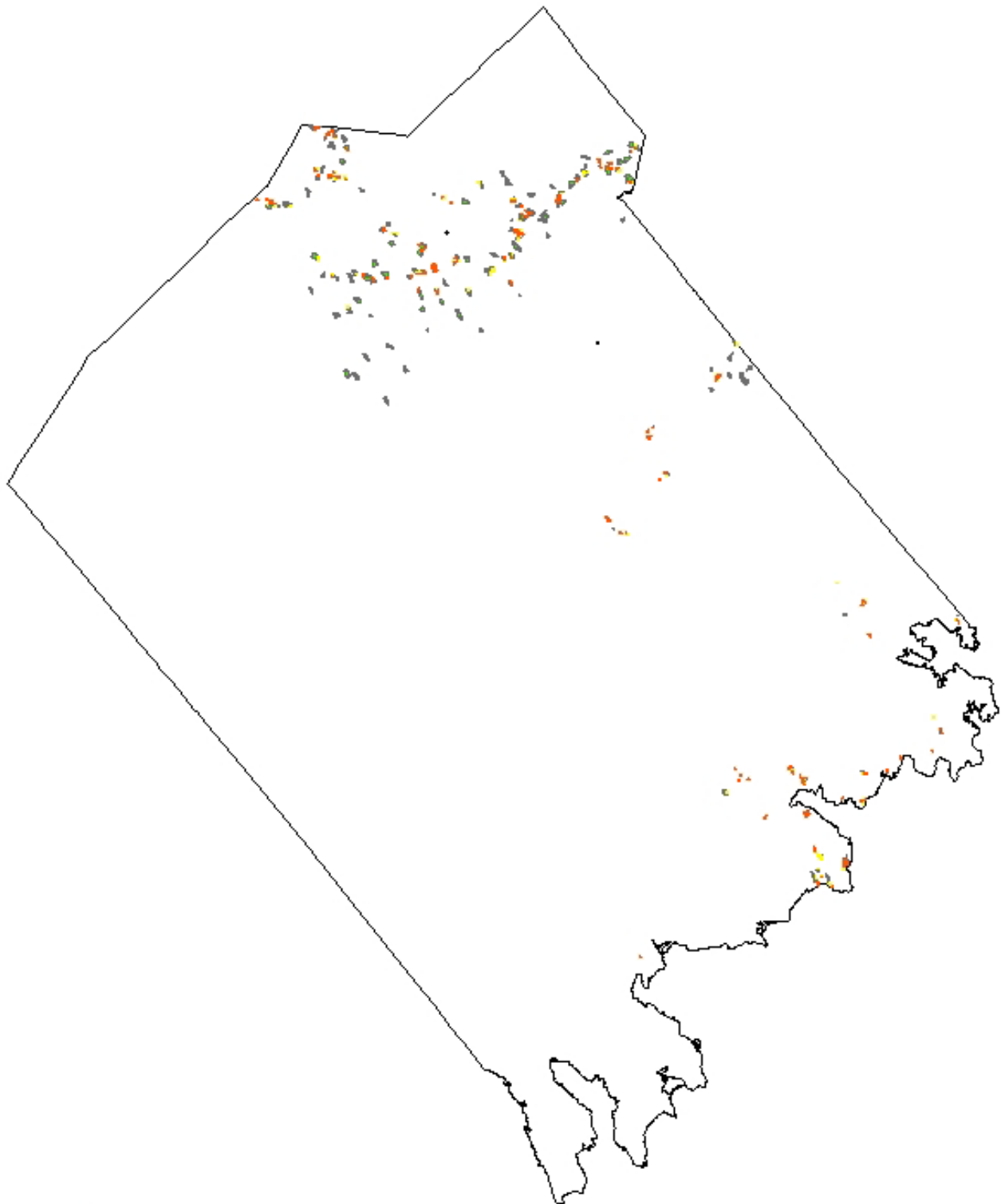
Table 4. Analysis of small properties (< 2ha) encroaching on farm land- Queens County, Nova Scotia						
	Vacant properties		Properties with civic address		TOTAL of small properties (< 2 ha)	
	# properties	Hectares	# properties	Hectares	# properties	Hectares
Centered in ALIP farmland	0	0	0	0	0	0
Area in farmland of properties centered in ALIP	0	0	0	0	0	0
Within 10 meters of ALIP farmland	70	48	122	78	192	126
Source: Provincial PID data, NSDA (ALIP data)						

A total of 192 properties less than two hectares in size are on or adjacent to ALIP lands, 64 percent of which have civic addresses (i.e. are not vacant). This amounts to 1 percent of the provincial total of these properties. Relative to the amount of farming in Queens, the county has the 8th highest rate of small developed properties that are adjacent to farmland.

Ultimately, approximately 5 hectares (0.5 percent) of ALIP lands in Queens has been lost to urban development since 1998. This places Queens 17th in terms of both percentage farmland lost to development and 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). Queens has approximately 22 percent of its ALIP farmland falling under this category, the 2nd lowest in the province in both percent and absolute terms. Approximately 16 percent of Queens farmland is within 300 feet of a small property with a civic address (i.e likely a developed property), the smallest percentage in the province.

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



- Agriculture (ALIP) within 300ft of small propety with civic address
- ALIP affected by small prop buffer
- Other agriculture (ALIP)

Sources: NS Agriculture, SNSMR

ⁱ 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. Accessed [25 January 2010].

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