

**Department of Agriculture
Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Routine Access Policy**

Approval date: February 23, 2009
Approved by: Executive Committee
Effective date: April 1, 2009
Revision date: February 10, 2009

1. POLICY STATEMENT

This Routine Access Policy for the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture (the Departments) provides an opportunity to obtain certain categories of records without having to submit a *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPOP) application. It is administered in accordance with the following principles:

- a) **Personal Privacy**
Records containing the personal information of third parties, as defined in the FOIPOP Act, will not be disclosed by the Departments outside the FOIPOP Act, unless the personal information has been severed.
- b) **Timeliness**
Departments will respond to routine access requests in a reasonable and timely manner.
- c) **Cost Recovery**
At the discretion of the Departments, fees for the reproduction and provision of records may be charged where authorized by policies, regulations or statutes.
- d) **Transparency**
This policy is available to the public through the Departments' web site or in any other acceptable format.
- e) **Reasonable**
This policy applies only to specific requests for reasonable quantities of records.

2. DEFINITIONS

- a) **access** means the provision of a copy of the record in question or providing a means and opportunity for the applicant to view the record, whichever, in the sole discretion of the Departments, is administratively most efficient;

- b) **active dissemination** is the periodic and proactive release of information or records using mechanisms such as the Internet, libraries, etc. See attached Schedule “A” for examples of actively disseminated information;
- c) **agreement** means an agreement which contains a “consent to disclose” clause;
- d) **audits** mean final audits of Departments’ programs;
- e) **confidential information** includes information
 - a) that would reveal
 - (i) trade secrets of a third party; or
 - (ii) commercial, financial, labour relations, scientific or technical information of a third party;
 - b) that is supplied, implicitly or explicitly, in confidence; and
 - c) the disclosure of which could reasonably be expected to
 - (i) significantly harm the competitive position or interfere with the negotiating position of the third party;
 - (ii) result in similar information no longer being supplied to the public body when it is in the public interest that similar information continue to be supplied;
 - (iii) result in undue financial loss or gain to any person or organization; or
 - (iv) reveal information supplied to, or the report of, an arbitrator, mediator, labour relations officer or other person or body appointed to resolve or inquire into a labour relations dispute;
- f) **designate** means a Department employee assigned responsibility for administering this policy and processing requests;
- g) **FOIPOP access** is the release of a record in response to a formal FOIPOP application made under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*;
- h) **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** means an MOU which contains a “consent to disclose” clause;
- i) **personal information** means recorded information about an identifiable individual including the individual’s name, address, telephone number; race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religious or political beliefs or associations; age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status or family status; an identifying number, symbol or other particular assigned to the individual; fingerprints, blood type or inheritable characteristics; the individual’s health care history; anyone else’s opinions about the individual and the individual’s personal views or opinions, except if they are about someone else;
- j) **policy** means an approved policy under the mandate of the Departments;

- k) **record** includes books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers, papers and any other thing on which information is recorded or stored by graphic, electronic, mechanical or other means, but does not include a computer program or any other mechanism that produces records. (Clause 3(1)(k) FOIPOP Act);
- l) **routine access** is the release, in full or part, of certain types of administrative or operational records, without the need for a formal application under the FOIPOP Act;
- m) **routine inspection** means an inspection conducted to ensure compliance with an enactment under the mandate of the Departments carried out on a recurring basis such as annually or biannually and includes reinspections carried out to ensure correction of deficiencies identified in a prior inspection.

3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

This policy reflects the spirit of openness and accountability of the FOIPOP Act. The objective is to provide an alternative for access to the records listed in Schedule "B".

4. APPLICATION

- a) This policy applies to:
 - all Department employees;
 - Resources Corporate Services Units (RCSU) - Finance, Human Resources and Information Technology; and
 - all agencies, boards, commissions reporting to the Departments and defined as public bodies under the FOIPOP Act.
- b) This policy applies to records listed in Schedule "B".
- c) This policy is effective after April 1, 2009.
- d) A request under this policy applies only to the records listed in Schedule "B" created after April 1, 2009.
- e) This policy applies only to specific requests for reasonable quantities of records. Recurring requests by a person, whether for the same or different category of records, that result in significant demands on the resources of the Departments will not be subject to the policy. It is important to ensure that the application of this policy does not unduly interfere with the day to day operations of the Departments.
- f) Personal and/or confidential information will be severed from records being accessed under this policy, using the same criteria and in the same manner as requests made under the FOIPOP Act.

- g) Nothing in this policy means that the Departments are required to create or maintain records not normally in its custody or control.
- h) This policy is consistent with the *Government Records Act* and policies under that Act.

5. POLICY DIRECTIVES

- a) The policy will be posted on the Department's web site.
- b) All employees are to be advised of the policy coming into force.
- c) Requests for information under this policy should be made to:

Routine Access Designate
Department of Agriculture or Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
PO Box 2223
Halifax, NS
B3J 3C4
Telephone: 424-4560
Fax: 424-3948
E-mail: accessaf@gov.ns.ca

- d) A tracking system will be kept by the Designate.

6. POLICY GUIDELINES

- a) Requests may be made in person, by phone, mail, fax or email.
- b) A person making a request under this policy, is required to provide at least the following: name, contact information including mailing address, phone number and specific reference to Schedule "B".
- c) Requests for records under this policy are to be made to the Designate.
- d) The Designate is responsible to determine if the requests falls under this policy.
- e) If the policy applies to the request, records will be provided to the applicant no later than 30 days from receipt of the request.
- f) If the policy does not apply to the request, the Designate will notify the requester promptly by phone, fax, email or mail and indicate other avenues that may be available to obtain the information, such as an application under the FOIPOP Act.
- g) At the discretion of the Department, a photocopying fee may be charged at a rate of \$0.20 (20¢) per page.

7. ACCOUNTABILITY/EVALUATION

- a) The Deputy Minister is accountable for the implementation of this policy.
- b) The Executive Committee is responsible for the approval of this policy and its annual review.
- c) Senior Management is responsible for ensuring that employees follow the policy directives, guidelines and procedures.
- d) Employees are responsible to follow the policy directives, guidelines and procedures.
- e) The FOIPOP Administrator is responsible for an annual evaluation of the policy.
- f) The Designate is responsible for administering requests in accordance with the policy directives, guidelines and procedures.

8. COMPLIANCE

- a) The Departments' FOIPOP Administrator is responsible for ensuring policy compliance.
- b) This policy may be subject to an audit by the Department of Finance.

9. REFERENCES/AUTHORITY

This policy is in conjunction with the:

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Government Records Act

Records Management Policy (corporate)

Department of Agriculture/Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture Records Management Policy

10. INQUIRIES

Routine Access Designate

Department of Agriculture or Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture

PO Box 2223

Halifax, NS

B3J 3C4

Telephone: 424-4560

Fax: 424-3948

E-mail: accessaf@gov.ns.ca

Department of Agriculture website:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri>

NSAC website:

<http://www.nsac.ns.ca>

Department of Fisheries & Aquaculture website:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/fish>

11. SCHEDULES

Schedule "A" - Actively Disseminated Records

Schedule "B" - Routine Access Records

Schedule “A” Actively Disseminated Records

This Schedule is not an exhaustive list and does not capture the range of information that maybe provided through other avenues.

Annual Approved Business Plans and Accountability Reports

Department Agriculture Accountability Report
Department Agriculture Business Plan
Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission Annual Report
Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission Business Plan
Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board Annual Report
Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board Business Plan
Department Fisheries and Aquaculture Accountability Report
Department Fisheries and Aquaculture Business Plan
Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board Accountability Report
Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board Business Plan

Policies

Department of Agriculture/Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture Occupational Health and Safety Policy
Department of Agriculture/Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture Records Management Policy
Department of Agriculture/Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture Routine Access Policy
Fish Buyers and Fish Processors Licence Policy
Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board Policies
Laboratory Policies
Nova Scotia Cottage Winery Policy
Nova Scotia Farm Winery Policy
Sign Language Interpreter Services Policy Guidelines for Agencies, Boards and Commissions

Program Information

4-H general program information
Agriculture Development and Business Risk Management (BRM) Program Information
Agriculture Development Program Summaries
Crop and Livestock Insurance Plan information and forms
Farm Loan Board loan program information
Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board loan program information
Fisheries Innovation Program information
Food Handlers Course information
Laboratory Information Pamphlets (schedule of fees, how to take/submit samples)
Product and Quality Development Program information
Provincially Inspected Meat Plants and Processors List
Research and Market Studies (various)

Licence, Permit and Approvals

Application forms and general information under the mandate of the Department
Anglers Handbook
Milk Distributors (licenced) List
Dairy Processors (licenced) List

Information/Newsletters/Fact Sheets/Brochures

Agricultural Services Newsletter (approx 5 issues/year)
Agricultural Weekly Market Reports
Agriculture and seafood publications and brochures (various consumer publications)
A Guide to Opening a Foodservice Establishment
Aquaculture information package
Aquaculture maps (shows license, lease location, distribution of sites)
Aquaculture Fact Sheets and Brochures
Aquaculture Species Fact Sheets
Aquaculture production information
Farm Business Management Resource Library (books, video resources available on loan)
Fish species information (marketing and biological information)
Food Safety fact sheets and brochures
Food Safety online inspection reports (restaurants/grocery stores)
Freshwater Species Fact sheets
Lake Survey and Maps
Lobster, Mussel and Oyster retailers information
Nova Scotia Food Processors Contacts Directory
Nova Scotia Seafood
Nova Scotia U-Pick and U-Fish Directory
On the Land and in the Sea: A Resource Directory
Snow Crab Working Group Minutes and Terms of Reference
Technical agricultural fact sheets and brochures

Statistical Information

Abattoir Statistics (annual)
Agriculture Development and Research Funding Statistical Report
Aquaculture Statistics (annual, provincial and by species)
Farm Analysis Project Reports (by commodity)
Farm Business Statistical Reports (various)
Food Safety Activity and Inspection Summary Report (annual)
Livestock Disease Summary Reports
Livestock Health Services Summary Annual Statistics
Livestock Herd Health Summary Annual Statistics
Nova Scotia Agriculture and Fisheries Statistics (annual, includes agriculture, fish and seafood statistics)

Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC)

NSAC Academic Calendar

NSAC Annual Tactical Action Plan
NSAC Foundation (approved financial statements, annual reports, meeting minutes, donor reports)
NSAC Presidents Report (annual)
NSAC Research Activities Summary
NSAC Research Fact sheets
NSAC Strategic Plan
NSAC Student Policies
NSAC Student Summary Statistics

Other

Agency, Board & Commission (ABC's) appointee names, and if applicable position title, on various ABC's
Agency, Board & Commission Selection Criteria
Annual Agricultural Exhibitions and Community Fairs in Nova Scotia Poster
Agricultural Exhibition Officials Contact List
Approved Boatbuilders List

Schedule "B"
Routine Access Records

| Document | Release Parameter |
|---|--|
| Agreement - Aquaculture Lease (current agreement with schedules, personal or confidential information removed, and contains a disclosure statement) | One copy of an agreement per request |
| Agreement - Aquaculture Licence (current agreement with schedules, personal or confidential information removed, and contains a disclosure statement) | One copy of an agreement per request |
| Agreement - Rockweed Lease (current agreement with schedules, personal or confidential information removed and contains a disclosure statement) | One copy of an agreement per request |
| Agreements with other governments for program(s) (approved program agreement that contains a disclosure statement which may require the severing of personal/confidential information) | One copy of an agreement per request |
| Audits of Programs (final audit) | One copy of most recent audit of a program per request |
| <p>Financial Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contract for goods or services (subject to FOIPOP restrictions including confidential business, proprietary or personal information removed) 2. Cost of overtime expenditures <p>Financial Information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Cost of renovations for specific offices | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One copy of a contract within current fiscal year per request 2. Copy of current year to date expenditures for a Department, Branch, Division or Section per request 3. One copy of expenditures for a specific renovation carried out within the previous six months per request |

| Document | Release Parameter |
|---|--|
| 4. Cost of sending a delegation out of the province or out of the country (personal or confidential information removed) | 4. Copy of expenditures for the delegation within three months of event having taken place per request |
| 5. Cost of special or specific events (eg, conferences, luncheons, workshops, training, etc) (personal or confidential information removed) | 5. Copy of expenditures for one event within three months of event having taken place per request |
| 6. Detailed expenditure reports, by main categories (eg, salaries, travel, special services etc) (personal or confidential information removed) | 6. Copy of expenditures for 3 categories within current fiscal year by Branch, Division or Section per request |
| 7. Expense Claim (individual monthly travel expense claims) (personal or confidential information removed) | 7. Copy of claim(s) for a three month period within the current fiscal year and for a maximum of three individuals per request |
| 8. Expense Summary - Ministerial Monthly Expense Summary (provided to Executive Council office) (personal or confidential information removed) | 8. Copy of claim(s) for a three month period within the current fiscal year per request |
| Fisheries Licensing and Investigation Inspection Statistics Report (on number of inspections) | One copy of most recent report |
| Human Resources Information: | |
| <i>General:</i> | |
| 1. Organizational charts with position titles | 1. Copy of one set of Department and/or a Branch, Division or Section per request |
| 2. Generic information of benefits and hours of work | 2. Information relating to one position per request |
| 3. Job descriptions, pay scale, classification of positions (unionized, non unionized) | 3. Copy of information on 3 positions per request |
| 4. Secondment agreements, both within and outside government (excluding personal information) | 4. One copy of an agreement per request |

| Document | Release Parameter |
|---|---|
| <p>5. Personal service contracts of individuals not appointed pursuant to the <i>Civil Service Act</i> (excluding personal information and service or product trade secrets)</p> <p>6. Adjudication decisions</p> <p>Human Resources Information: <i>Selection and Hiring process:</i></p> <p>7. Number of applicants for position</p> <p>8. Number of persons interviewed</p> <p>9. Identity of selection panel to only those being interviewed</p> <p>10. Name of successful candidate, once offer of employment has been accepted</p> | <p>5. One copy of an agreement per request</p> <p>6. One copy of a decision per request</p> <p>7-10 Any or all of the information on one position per request</p> |
| <p>Licence, Permits and Approvals:</p> <p>1. Apple Packer Registration</p> <p>2. Beekeeper and Apiary Registration</p> <p>3. Dairy Processor Licence</p> <p>4. Deer Farming Licence</p> <p>5. Deer Meat Processors Licence</p> <p>6. Fish Buyers Licence</p> <p>7. Fish Processors Licence</p> <p>8. Food Establishment Permit (eg. restaurants, caterers, take outs)</p> <p>9. Fur Farming Licence</p> <p>10. Game Farm Licence</p> <p>11. Meat Slaughtering and Processing Licence</p> <p>12. Milk Distributor Licence</p> <p>13. Pelting Permit</p> <p>14. Rockweed Lease</p> <p>15. Temporary Event Food Facility Permit</p> | <p>1-15 Confirmation only, that a person (includes a corporation) has a current licence, permit or approval. Maximum of 5 confirmations per request.</p> |
| <p>Licence, Permits and Approvals:</p> <p>1. Certified Bulk Tank Graders List (approval to release personal information)</p> <p>2. Fish Processing Voluntary Closure (personal information removed)</p> | <p>1. One copy of list per request</p> <p>2. Confirmation of plant in voluntary closure</p> |
| <p>Livestock Health Services - Program Claim Summaries (aggregate data) (personal or confidential information removed)</p> | <p>One copy per request</p> |

| Document | Release Parameter |
|--|--|
| Annual Inspection Summaries of Dairy Farms | One copy of most recent statistics per request |
| <p>Routine Inspection Reports:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dairy Farm Inspection Report (personal or confidential information removed) 2. Fish Buyer Licence Condition Compliance Checklist (personal or confidential information removed) 3. Rockweed Short Cutting Worksheet (personal or confidential information removed) 4. Rockweed Holdfast Removal Worksheet (personal or confidential information removed) 5. Voluntary Closure Inspection (personal or confidential information removed) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Copy of most recent inspection report for up to 5 farms per request 2. One copy per buyer within last 12 month period per request 3. One copy of one month's report on one site and within last 12 months per request 4. One copy of one month's report on one site and within last 12 months per request 5. Copy of the most recent report |
| Laboratory Services Annual Report | One copy most recent report per request |
| Laboratory Services Statistical Report | One copy most recent report per request |
| Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Department and an organization regarding agricultural program funding (contains a disclosure statement) | One copy of a specific MOU per request |
| Memorandum of Understanding/Agreements - Natural Products (contains a disclosure statement) | One copy of a MOU or agreement per request |
| Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC) Senior Management Minutes (approved minutes with personal, confidential information or advice removed) | Copy of a maximum of 2 sets of the most recent minutes per request |
| NSAC Financial and Physical Planning Meeting Minutes (approved minutes with personal, confidential information or advice removed) | Copy of a maximum of 2 sets of most recent minutes per request |

| Document | Release Parameter |
|--|---|
| NSAC Educational Memorandum of Understanding between NSAC and a university, college or institution (contains a disclosure statement) | One copy of an agreement per request |
| NSAC Advisory Board Meeting Minutes (approved minutes with personal, confidential information or advice removed) | Copy of a maximum of 2 sets of most recent minutes per request |
| NSAC Faculty Council Meeting Minutes (approved minutes with personal, confidential information or advice removed) | Copy of a maximum of 2 sets of most recent minutes per request |
| Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission Minutes (approved minutes with personal, confidential information or advice removed) | One copy of a set of approved minutes per request within the last 12 months |
| Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission Monthly Statistical Reports (confidential or personal information removed) | One copy or the set of the reports produced within the last 12 months per request |
| One Time Record Schedules (approved schedule) | Copy of one set or part of set |
| Occupational Health and Safety Annual Reports to the Deputy Minister (personal information/advice removed) | One copy of the most recent report per request |
| Public speeches by Minister or Deputy Minister (with a check against delivery statement) | One copy of a speech for a specific public event per request |
| Rockweed and Aquaculture Annual Report (summary of inspections) | One copy of the previous year report |
| Veterinary Diagnosis Statistical Summary (Annual Report) (confidential or personal information removed) | One copy per request |