

# Agriculture in the Classroom – Nova Scotia

Annual Report 2024-25



**Sustainable Canadian  
Agricultural Partnership**  
Competitive. Innovative. Resilient.

  
**NOVA SCOTIA**

**Canada** 

## Vision

An agricultural **education** program where **all Nova Scotian students are made aware** of Nova Scotia's agriculture in a **positive, meaningful way** that builds trust in Nova Scotia's **food system**.



# Contents

Steering Committee Chair Message ..... 2

Our Team..... 3

Our Reach ..... 4

Program Highlights ..... 6

    Agriculture in the Classroom Teacher Tour ..... 6

    Grow Where You’re Planted and Connect  
    with Your agriCULTURE ..... 8

    Promoting Careers in Agriculture ..... 10

    Nova Scotia Chick Hatch Program ..... 11

    AgZone 2024..... 12

Program Budget ..... 13

For More Information ..... 15

## Steering Committee Chair Message

Agriculture in the Classroom Nova Scotia (AITC-NS) is continuing to bring quality agricultural education programs and resources to students all over the province. Hands-on learning helps students make real connections, create lasting memories, and have meaningful experiences—and it makes a big difference. Last year, our programs reached more than 61,000 students.

This wouldn't be possible without the hard work and commitment of our staff, steering committee, and volunteers. They give their time, ideas, and resources because they believe it's important for the next generation to understand where their food comes from and the role of agriculture. Thanks to them, teachers keep coming back to use these programs year after year.

This year, we started using a national Agriculture in the Classroom Dashboard, creating a single, reliable place for participants to sign up and stay informed. For our team, it means less time spent on paperwork and more time focused on delivering programs. For registrants, it's fast, convenient, and always available. This system change has improved accuracy, reduced duplication, and ensured everyone has access to the same up-to-date information, strengthening both efficiency and trust.

We are proud to be the Nova Scotia voice of Agriculture in the Classroom. Across the country, member organizations of Agriculture in the Classroom are working together to provide engaging, innovative learning experiences that cultivate students' curiosities and teach them the important role agriculture plays in our everyday lives.

In the years ahead, we'll keep working to reach even more students, help them feel connected to agriculture, build trust in the industry, and support our farmers.

Michelle Miller  
*Steering Committee Chair*

# Our Team

## Steering Committee members:

### Education & Early Childhood Development

- Natalie Bakody, *Active Healthy Living Consultant*
- Kerri MacPherson, *Science Consultant*
- Tara Cormier, *Math & Science Consultant, French Second Language*
- Michelle Colley, *Transition & Community Education Coordinator*
- Kim Duncan, *Career Pathways Special Projects Lead*
- Jill Piers, *Manager, Early Childhood Development and Pre-Primary Operations*
- Nick Baskwill, *ICT Consultant*
- Rod Francis, *Director, Mi'kmaq Services Branch*
- Naomi Pierrard, *Consultant – Etuaptmumk/Two-Eyed Seeing Lead, Mi'kmaq Services Branch*

### Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

- Janette McDonald, *Director of Programs & Operations*

### Dalhousie University Faculty of Agriculture

- Jessica Fogarty, *Community Education Manager*

### Nourish Nova Scotia

- Aimee Gasparetto, *Executive Director*

### Staff

- Michelle Miller, *Manager, Regional Programming*
- Dawn Barrington-Hodgson, *Provincial Agricultural Programming Coordinator*
- Jacqueline Hoyt, *Provincial Agricultural Programming Coordinator*
- Hema Chopra, *Senior Diversity Programming Specialist*
- Moussa Sangaré-Ponce, *Diversity Programming Coordinator*
- Lisa Patton, *Career Promotions Coordinator*
- Nikki Moore, *Administrative Assistant*
- Hanna Billard, *Honoring Mi'kmaw Roots Intern*
- Annalise Robinson, *Grow Where You're Planted Intern*

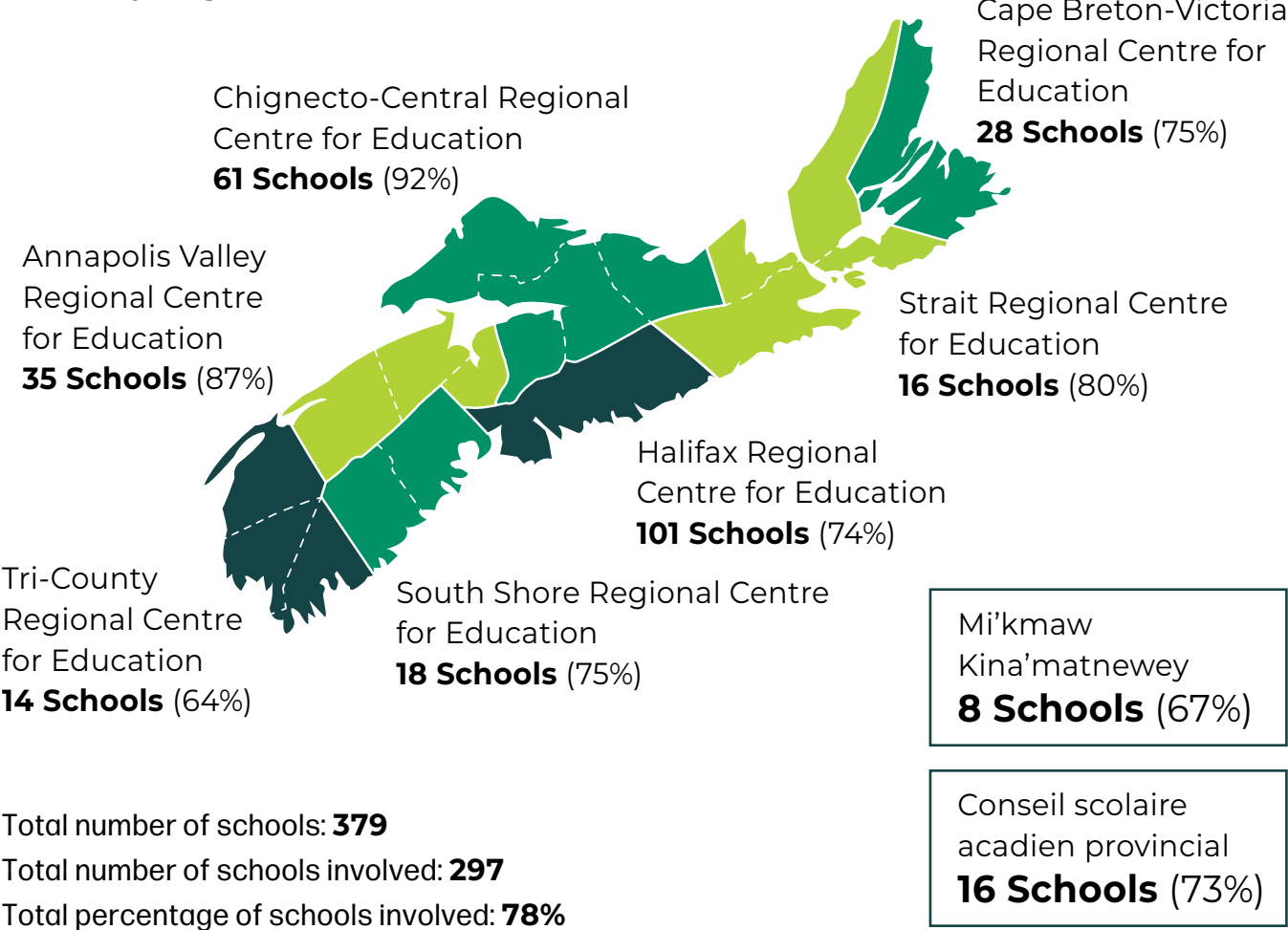
### Partners

- Agriculture in the Classroom – Canada
- Dalhousie University Faculty of Agriculture
- Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

# Our Reach

Year	Total # of Schools	# of Classrooms	# of Student Experiences
2019-20	138	393	9,261
2020-21	147	409	8,091
2021-22	269	1,581	33,807
2022-23	307	2,179	46,906
2023-24	315	2,835	62,528
2024-25	297	2,683	61,485

## Reach by Regional Centre for Education 2024-25





## Reach by Program Resource 2024-25

Resource	# of Schools	# of Classrooms**	# of Students**
Simple Machines	17	20	454
AgZone 2024	22	58	1471
Grow Where You're Planted	7	N/A	21
Pollinators	74	90	2134
All Kinds of Apples	211	637	14035
Little Green Sprouts	118	125	3545
Chick Hatch	72	94	1962
Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month	149	231	5389
Great Canadian Farm Tour (Spring)	126	182	3699
Great Canadian Farm Tour (Fall)	95	123	2216
The Quest for the Perfect Strawberry (Fall 2024)	13	37	831
The Quest for the Perfect Strawberry (Spring 2025)	17	55	1,352
Digging Deeper	22	22	584
Pkwiman Wild Blueberry	7	11	212
Weather on the Farm	3	4	102
Renewable Energy	4	5	124
Care storybook - English	21	24	435
Care storybook - French	2	2	41
Pre-Primary Activities (renamed Early years)	181	328	6,686
Explore Farming Book - English	189	337	7,101
Explore Farming Book - French	4	6	156
Explore Farming Coloring Book - English	20	21	426
Explore Farming Coloring Book - French	3	5	139
Agriculture 11 (Kentville Research and Development Centre Tour in April)	2	2	50
Look for Local	9	36	1,265
Math on the Farm	6	11	414
Career Case/Career Fairs	140	153	5,224
Cheese Resources	19	23	509
Awtiket Indigenous Youth Camp 2024			10
Mission Explorium	16	28	630
Soil your Undies	1	3	24
What's in your Lunchbox	5	7	182
Agriculture 11 (fertilizer experiment)	3	3	62
<b>Total</b>	<b>297*</b>	<b>2,683</b>	<b>61,485</b>

\*Schools may have participated in more than one program but were only counted once.

\*\*Classrooms and students may have participated in more than one program.

## Program Highlights

### Agriculture in the Classroom Teacher Tour

In August 2023, Agriculture in the Classroom Nova Scotia launched its first-ever Teacher Tour—a hands-on professional learning experience designed to showcase the breadth of career opportunities in agriculture, introduce educators to our resources, and connect them directly with trusted voices in the sector. Teachers saw firsthand how agriculture shapes our province and contributes to our communities.

Building on that success, the 2024 Teacher Tour took place August 13–14, welcoming 25 teachers from across Nova Scotia. Over two days, participants explored a diverse range of agribusinesses, including Knoydart Cheese Farm, Scott and Stewart Forestry Nursery, Steinhart Distillery, the Antigonish Farmers' Market with Lochaber Growers, and Lindenright Holsteins. Teachers also had a tour of the Cultiv8 sandbox garden at Dalhousie University Faculty of Agriculture Campus and the aquaculture department.

The tours are designed to offer teachers an authentic, positive, and lasting perspective of agriculture. By connecting directly with producers and industry professionals, teachers return to their classrooms with greater awareness of agricultural careers, deeper understanding of the sector, and fresh ideas for integrating agriculture into their teaching. The ripple effect is powerful—more positive discussions about agriculture in schools, career pathways highlighted to students, and word-of-mouth promotion that encourages other educators to get involved.

Pictured: Frazer Hunter and teachers at Knoydart Cheese Farm.





## What teachers are saying:

“

**The knowledge of local food and agri-industry is so important. It can start planting seeds of job, career, and education opportunities. Also gives great ideas and background info for projects on sustainability, climate impact, and stewardship. Plus, I love learning the passions of others.**

”

“

**This tour has helped me understand more about the ag sector and the job opportunities. I want to incorporate these ideas into my classroom.**

”

Pictured: Teachers on tour.



## Grow Where You're Planted and Connect with Your agriCULTURE Events

### Engaging African Nova Scotian and Black Youth

This year, we hosted two in-person events dedicated to engaging African Nova Scotian and Black youth in agriculture. Both events created meaningful opportunities for students to learn, connect, and see themselves in agricultural careers.

The 3rd Annual Grow Where You're Planted Event was held on May 24-25, 2024, at the Dalhousie University Faculty of Agriculture Campus in Bible Hill. Hosted in partnership with the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture, the African Canadian Services Branch (Education and Early Childhood Development), and Dalhousie University's Faculty of Agriculture, the two-day event welcomed 21 students from seven schools. Students in grades 9–11 explored agricultural careers through presentations, workshops, and hands-on activities.

Pictured are attendees of Grow Where You're Planted held at Dalhousie Agricultural Campus.





On March 21, 2025, the Department of Agriculture partnered with Imhotep's Legacy Academy to deliver the Connect with Your AgriCULTURE event at Nova Scotia Community College, Truro Campus. Youth from across the province came together for a full day of learning and community building.

Participants engaged in workshops on the agriculture supply chain, DNA replication, and seed identification, and explored the historical significance of agriculture within their communities. Students also had the chance to record podcast segments with special guests Russell Grosse, Executive Director of the Black Cultural Centre, and historian/podcaster Graham Nickerson.

The day concluded with traditional African drumming and a cooking activity. The event was filled with energy, laughter, and the building of new friendships—all while highlighting the vital role of agriculture in culture, history, and future career paths.

Remembering Dr. Cyrus Pemberton providing guidance during seed selection activity.



## Promoting Careers in Agriculture

The agriculture industry offers a wide range of opportunities—from hands-on farming and agri-business management to cutting-edge research, environmental stewardship, and technological innovation. Raising awareness of these diverse career paths is essential to attracting the next generation of skilled and passionate professionals.

Throughout the year, our Career Promotions Coordinator worked to connect students, teachers, and industry partners through career awareness initiatives, marketing materials, and strategic partnerships. This included attending career fairs, classroom visits, and collaborations with educational institutions to help youth envision themselves in meaningful careers within the sector.

We also created and shared targeted resources for teachers, youth pathway coordinators, and event organizers. These tools—distributed at conferences, professional development sessions, and directly to students—were designed to spark curiosity and support career exploration.

### Highlights of the year include:

- An agri-business tour for 22 teachers during their professional development day, featuring visits to Balamore Farm Ltd., East Coast Wild Blueberry Ltd. processing facility, and Charles Hill and Son Robotic Dairy Farm.
- Hosting and facilitating co-op placements for six students with the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture, giving them valuable work experience in areas that matched their career interests.

By inspiring and informing youth, we are not only building the future workforce but also nurturing ambassadors who will help maintain public trust in agriculture and strengthen the sector's global competitiveness. Our programs empower students to imagine themselves in agriculture—and to see the many possibilities it holds.



## Nova Scotia Chick Hatch Program

The Nova Scotia Chick Hatch Program offers elementary classrooms a unique, hands-on learning experience by bringing live chick hatching directly into schools. This initiative provides participating teachers with incubators, fertilized eggs, and all the necessary supplies and resources to guide students through the entire hatching process.

Running from March to May, the program fills up quickly, and aligns with curriculum goals in science, language arts, and math, fostering critical thinking and engagement through direct observation of chick development. Students gain a deeper understanding of life cycles, agriculture, biosecurity and animal care, creating memorable, impactful lessons that extend beyond the classroom.

By sparking curiosity and connecting students with the agricultural world at an early age, the Chick Hatch Program plays an important role in inspiring the next generation to appreciate and explore opportunities within Nova Scotia's agriculture sector.

Each school received an incubator, automatic egg turner, classroom resources, feed, shavings, and one dozen fertilized eggs. Classrooms incubated the eggs and watched them hatch after the 21-day incubation and then kept the chicks for three-to-four days to observe them in their class. The program also has eleven made for classroom videos which focus on the chicken and egg industry in Nova Scotia. As one of our most popular programs, the impact is significant for the student, teachers, and schools it reaches.

What teachers are saying:

“

**Having the experience of hatching chicks from start to finish was an amazing experience. This will be a core educational memory for them!**

”





## AgZone 2024

On June 4–6, we hosted the annual AgZone event at Dalhousie University Faculty of Agriculture Campus. Over three days, 424 Grade 7 students from nearby junior high schools participated in this hands-on learning experience.

Students rotated through six interactive sessions that highlighted different aspects of agriculture and science. Topics included sheep, poultry, and dairy production, an engineering boat-building challenge, exploring river ecosystems, and discovering how plants can contribute to curing diseases. Each session combined fun, discovery, and learning, with some activities sparking friendly competition and prizes.

The program is designed to help students make meaningful connections between agriculture, science, and career opportunities. By engaging directly with agricultural research and practice on a post-secondary campus, students gain a better understanding of the role agriculture plays in food, health, and the environment—while being inspired to see themselves as future leaders in the field.

### What teachers are saying:

“

**They enjoyed the hands-on experience and learning  
how agriculture plays a big role in Nova Scotia**

”



# Program Budget

## Revenue

Funding Source	\$ Amount
Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership	303,286.78
Agriculture in the Classroom – Canada	11,851.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$315,134.37</b>

## Expenses

Category	\$ Amount
<b>Career Promotion</b>	<b>\$97,406.56</b>
<b>Capacity Building of Teachers</b>	<b>\$14,125.95</b>
<b>School Programs</b>	<b>\$118,676.80</b>
Canadian Agricultural Literacy Month	25,498.71
Little Green Sprouts	4,574.26
All Kinds of Apples	28,333.87
The Quest for the Perfect Strawberry	3,491.09
Care Book	5,367.29
Digging Deeper Resource	426.21
Science of Cheesemaking	2,907.67
Pollinators	9,939.48
Agriculture 11 Resource Development	776.34
Program Resources	10,074.32
Pre-Primary Resources	10,978.64
Nourish - Fresh Story Sheets	2,500.00
Chick Hatch	4,115.27
Ag Zone	9,693.65

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Category	\$ Amount
<b>New Resource Development</b>	<b>\$8,027.10</b>
<b>Work with Equity-Deserving Communities</b>	<b>\$32,179.37</b>
Grow Where You're Planted	7,917.65
Learning Centres	12,604.88
Connect with your agriCULTURE	14,276.11
<b>Communications and Program Supports</b>	<b>\$32,871.00</b>
Annual Report	3,340.00
Survey	7,000.00
Promotion to Teachers and Industry	12,531.00
Operations Management System Development Contribution	10,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$303,286.78</b>

## Teachers:

Sign up for **FREE** resources



## For More Information:

***Ag.Education@novascotia.ca***



## Notes



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