

# Young Farmer Mentorship Guidelines

2024 – 2025



## PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

The objective of this program is to provide Nova Scotian young farmers with the ability to develop skills, knowledge, and connections within their focused areas of interest in the agricultural industry.

We support the development of diverse and inclusive industries. We welcome individuals from all equity-deserving communities including but not limited to women, persons with disabilities, Black and African Nova Scotians, First Nations, Indigenous peoples, 2SLGBTQI+ and racialized individuals, to apply to programming.

## ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS and PROGRAM CRITERIA

### Nova Scotia Young Farmers

- Applicants must be:
  - between the ages of 19 and 40.
  - currently involved in agriculture or can display a strong commitment to becoming involved in the industry (e.g. volunteer work, education, etc.).
  - able to commit to at least weekly communication and a minimum of one in person meeting each month over the four-month period.

### Mentors – Farms

- Applicants must be:
  - currently registered in the correct income category under the *Farm Registration Act*.
  - at least 19 years of age and actively farming in the program year.
  - at least 5 years of experience in their field of work.
  - able to commit to at least weekly communication and a minimum of one in person meeting each month over the four-month period.

### Mentors – Agri-business

- Agri-business who represents identifiable Nova Scotia agriculture and agri-food products. Identifiable agriculture and agri-food products are products supporting economic growth using Nova Scotia primary agricultural ingredients.
- Applicant must:
  - be at least 19 years of age.
  - have at least 5 years of experience in their field of work.
  - conduct value-added processing of a raw Nova Scotia agriculture product which demonstrates a direct partnership and significant economic impact to the Nova Scotia primary agricultural industry.
  - demonstrates the value or use of Nova Scotia products / ingredients.
  - be able to commit to at least weekly communication and a minimum of one in person meeting each month over the four-month period.

### ARM'S LENGTH TRANSACTIONS

Program funding will only be offered to young farmers/mentors with an arm's-length relationship and who are also not employed by their mentor. For the purposes of Programs, arm's length is defined as individuals who are NOT connected by blood relationship, marriage, common-law partnership, or adoption.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Applicants are eligible for 100% in funding assistance on total eligible activities. Young farmers and mentors can receive up to a maximum of \$2,500 each for eligible expenses related to the goals identified in the young farmer's objective plan.

This is a pilot program that will support a four-month mentorship.

- Young farmers are encouraged to seek out their own mentors and ensure that the mentor meets the criteria and applies to the program. Where this is not possible, the program will seek to match young farmers with the appropriate mentor.
- Young farmers and mentors are required to have a kick-off meeting prior to the start of their mentorship.
- Young farmers and mentors are required to create an objective plan that identifies their goals and activities throughout the mentorship in the template provided by the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture's Programs Division.
- The objective plan should be submitted for review to Programs no more than one week after the kick-off meeting.
- A two-month check-in will be completed by Department staff.
- A final evaluation form provided by Programs, will be required to be submitted at the end of the mentorship period from both the young farmers and mentor.

**Note 1:** No more than 100% of non-repayable funding can be received for any eligible project cost incurred and paid for by the applicant. This applies to all Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture (NSDA) programs.

## ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

All costs must be approved by NSDA Programs and directly related to the young farmer's objective plan.

### **Nova Scotia Young Farmer**

- Travel within the Province of Nova Scotia for mentor meetings and identified events
- Travel within the Province of Nova Scotia for young farmers training (i.e. board governance)
- Training costs for young farmer
- Conference / registration fees
- Accommodation costs
- Meal costs based on per diem amounts:
  - \$15 breakfast
  - \$20 lunch
  - \$30 dinner

## PROGRAM GUIDELINES 2024-25

### Mentor – when attending with young farmer

- Conference / registration fees
- Travel to conferences/events
- Accommodation costs associated with conferences
- Meal costs associated with event timeline based on per diem amounts:
  - \$15 breakfast
  - \$20 lunch
  - \$30 Dinner

### INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

These include but are not limited to:

- Operating expenses / existing staff salaries
- Administrative / general overhead
- In-kind labour
- Alcohol
- Wages

### APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for the Young Farmers Mentorship Program:

1. Submit a complete application by **September 20, 2024**
2. Eligible project expenses will be recognized within the Activity Period stated in the table below. Please do not make any purchases before receiving a Letter of Agreement (LOA) from the Program's Office.

Application Intake Period	Activity Period	Claim Deadline
July 22, 2024 – September 20, 2024	April 1, 2024– March 14, 2025	March 14, 2025

**Note 1:** Young farmers and mentors may only complete one mentorship per program year.

**Note 2:** Potential mentors meeting eligibility criteria shall remain on the list in subsequent years unless they notify Programs of withdrawal.

## APPROVAL PROCESS

Applications are assessed based on the information and supporting documentation. If an application requires further assessment or information, Programs staff will follow up with the applicant.

1. Applications will be reviewed and assessed by NSDA.
2. The young farmer and mentor will complete a planning form provided by Programs. Form must be submitted to Programs no more than one week after the kick-off meeting.
3. If approved, applicants (young farmer and mentor) will receive a **Letter of Agreement (LOA)** which identifies the Program funding offered and the terms and conditions under which Program funding is approved.
4. Review, sign and return the LOA to Programs within **30 days** of the date of the letter or your Program funding will be forfeited.

## CLAIMING PROCESS

1. After Programs receives your signed LOA, a **Program Claim Form** will be sent to both the young farmer and mentor.
2. Complete and sign the Program Claim Form by **March 14, 2025**
3. Attach copies of all invoices for eligible project costs incurred and paid for by the applicant.
4. Attach proof of payment for each invoice – e-transfer confirmation, debit slips, cleared cheques, or credit card/bank statements. (Invoices marked paid and signed by the supplier are not accepted)
5. Submit your claim with the required supporting documentation to the Programs office by the claim deadline.

**Note:** No payment will be made for claims under \$50.00.

## FINAL REPORT

Projects approved for program funding have mandatory reporting requirements. Applicants will receive the reporting template with their claim form if applicable. Programs that require a final and/or interim report will be subject to a **25% holdback** on their submitted claim if the final report is not submitted at the same time. Final Reports may be made available publicly on the NSDA website, and a follow up review may be conducted after project completion.

## AUTHORITY

The NSDA shall have the authority to deny an application if, in NSDA's opinion, the application does not meet the requirements described in these guidelines or there is evidence of misrepresentation of pertinent information.

## EVALUATION AND AUDIT

Review and evaluation of projects may be carried out by NSDA, Government of Canada or other parties chosen by NSDA for the purpose of audit, analysis, evaluation, program development and determining financial assistance. This review and evaluation process may be conducted prior to project commencement, during work or upon project completion. Applicants may be asked to complete an evaluation survey related to their final claim.

## PROGRAM GUIDELINES 2024-25

### CONFIDENTIALITY

Applicants consent to the release of their name and the amount of support received under the program. This specific information is deemed to be public information, to be actively disseminated by NSDA. NSDA may provide any information from an applicant to another public body or a law-enforcement agency in Canada to assist in an investigation, undertaken with a view to a law-enforcement proceeding or from which a law-enforcement proceeding is likely to result. Any other information provided, unless disclosed in the manner and for the purposes stated above, will be subject to the confidentiality and disclosure provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Please submit all documents to Programs at the address, email or fax number below. For more information, please contact Programs or your regional office.

<b>Programs</b> 74 Research Drive Bible Hill, Nova Scotia B6L 2R2 <b>Fax:</b> 902-893-7579 <b>Telephone:</b> 902-893-6377 <b>Toll Free:</b> 1-866-844-4276 <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:prm@novascotia.ca">prm@novascotia.ca</a>		
Western Region Offices	Yarmouth	902-223-8085
	Digby	902-638-2395
	Kentville	902-679-6021
	Lunenburg	902-634-7575
Eastern Region Offices	Truro	902-893-6575
	Nappan	782-370-2278
	Antigonish	902-863-7180
	Sydney	902-563-2000