

12 Farm Safety Resource Kit for Nova Scotia Farmers

Occupational Health and Safety Act

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* is designed to improve workplace health and safety. It applies to all workplaces, including farms, regardless of the number of people employed. The Internal Responsibility System is the foundation of the Act, in which everyone in the workplace shares responsibility for making the workplace safer and healthier, taking every reasonable precaution to prevent accidents.

“Your Rights, Responsibilities, and the Occupational Health and Safety Act” is a guide describing some of the main points covered in the Act, and what they mean to *employers, employees, contractors, constructors, and self-employed persons* at the workplace. The guide is currently available online in pdf format on the Nova Scotia Labour and Workforce Development website: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/healthandsafety/docs/YourRightsandResp-en.pdf>

There are a number of regulations which fall under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* which do, or may, apply to a variety of farm work environments. For more detailed information consult:

Occupational Safety General Regulations:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/ohsgensf.htm>

Occupational Health and Safety First Aid Regulations

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/ohsfirst.htm>

Guide <http://www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/healthandsafety/docs/FirstAidGuide.pdf>

Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) Regulations

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/ohs6489.htm>

Guide <http://www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/healthandsafety/docs/WHMISGuide.pdf>

Fall Protection and Scaffolding Regulations

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/ohs296f.htm>

Further information can be obtained by calling: 902-424-5301 or visiting

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

Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee

The Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee is responsible to develop and endorse farm safety policies, strategies and programs to the benefit of the farming community. The work of this committee is accomplished through consultation with farm clients in a joint cooperative, collaborative process.

The "Standards of Practice for Farms in Nova Scotia and Risk Management Tool" and "Protect Yourself from Livestock Injuries" are two publications made available as projects of the Nova Scotia Farm Health and Safety Committee. Further information can be obtained by calling 902-893-7495 or visiting <http://gov.ns.ca/agri/farmsafety/>

Society of Farm Safety Nova Scotia

In November 2009, with assistance from the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association, the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture initiated the establishment of a farm safety organization in Nova Scotia. A review of safety organizations in other industry sectors in Nova Scotia and changes to the provincial *Occupational Health and Safety Act* confirmed the need to have a central organization solely devoted to delivering health and safety support to the agriculture community.

The Society of Farm Safety Nova Scotia can assist in the development of your Farm Health and Safety Plan. The Society assists farmers to identify and act on the safety hazards present on the farm by:

- conducting a Farm Safety Assessment with the farmer;
- helping develop a farm safety action plan to address the hazards;
- providing safety information, safe work practices and safe job procedures;
- advising on and helping access required training programs;
- assisting the agricultural community navigate government regulations;
- assisting the farm community in dealing with safety issues and government departments.

The Society, through consultation, education and training will assist the industry and membership in making safety a daily routine. For more information, contact the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture at 902-893-2293 or <http://www.nsfa-fane.ca/>

Farm Family Support Center

The Farm Family Support Center offers a free and confidential consultation and referral service for Nova Scotia farm families seeking assistance in financial counseling, legal services, goal setting, interpersonal relationships, anger and stress management, psychological counseling, non-family dispute, resolutions, marriage counseling and children/teen conflicts. The goal of the Farm Family Support Center is to improve the quality of life for farm families in Nova Scotia. The center offers guidance and support designed to help the individual family resolve issues. Call toll free at **1-877-418-7555**.

Training

There are basic training requirements under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* for every workplace in Nova Scotia, which include an introduction to the Act, WHMIS and first aid. The number of employees and the distance from a health care facility may dictate the level of first aid certification required and require the preparation of remote location plans. In addition, there may be more specific training requirements based on specific job tasks and the workplace environment. Please consult the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* and the appropriate regulations.

Nova Scotia Labour and Advanced Education provides a list of training opportunities at: <http://gov.ns.ca/lwd/healthandsafety/courses.asp>

Occupational Health and Safety/WHMIS Training

Both of these courses are available online: <http://access.nsc.ca/safety/>

First Aid Training for Farmers-St. John Ambulance

First Aid on the Farm is an emergency-level first aid certification and safety course geared to individuals and families who live a farming life. The course identifies hazards unique to the farm and teaches appropriate responses through scenario-based training. For further information and course dates contact 902-463-5646 or toll free 1-800-565-5056 or visit:

<http://www.sja.ca/NSPEI/Training/AtHome/Pages/FirstAidontheFarm.aspx>

Emergency, Standard and Advanced level first aid training are offered through St. John Ambulance (see contact information above) and the Canadian Red Cross (contact by phoning 1-877-356-3226 or visiting: <https://apaccess.redcross.ca/coursemanager/coursesearch.aspx?lang=E>)

Chainsaw Safety Training/Information

The Department of Natural Resources offer opportunities around chain saw safety through the Woodlot Management Home Study Course

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/education/woodlot/modules/module6/default.asp>

and a one day chain saw safety course, one per region (east, central and West) on annual basis. Check the website for details.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/natr/woodlot/chainsaw.asp>

The Forest Professional: Guidelines for the Stewards of Tomorrow's Forests describes practices which help clients comply with legislation, promoting safe and healthy workplaces.

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/lwd/healthandsafety/docs/ForestProfessional.pdf>

Additional Agricultural Safety Organizations Links:

Canadian Agricultural Safety Association <http://www.casa-acsa.ca/>

ON Farm Safety Association <http://www.farmsafety.ca/>

Farm and Ranch Safety and Health Association <http://www.farsha.bc.ca/>

MN Farm Safety <http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/farmsafety/index.html>

Agricultural Health and Safety Network <http://www.cchsa-ccssma.usask.ca/ahsn/index.php>

Canadian Farmers with Disabilities Registry <http://www.fwdcanada.com/>

NY Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health <http://www.nycamh.com/>

[Written by Rick Hoeg, Agricultural Education Liaison, Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture; Ralph Baxter, Farm Safety Consultant, Society of Farm Safety Nova Scotia; and Larry Stewart, Occupational Health and Safety Officer, Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Workforce Development. October 2010.]