

34 Programs for Farmers

Resource Kit for Nova Scotia Farmers

Grant programs to finance agri-business start up costs are not available in Nova Scotia. However, funds are available for developing farm businesses in various aspects, such as covering costs associated with innovation, product development and complying with environmental and food safety regulations.

The details of some programs that beginning farmers may be eligible for are outlined below.

Self-Employment Benefit

If you are unemployed and want to start a farm business, you may be eligible for the self-employment benefit. This benefit allows you to receive Employment Insurance benefits for your first year in business. For more information, visit:

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/employmentnovascotia/programs/self-employment.asp>

New Entrants to Agriculture Program – Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board

Under this program, beginning farmers can receive a rebate on the interest paid on their farm loan of up to \$10,000/year for two consecutive years. Beginning farmers can apply for this rebate on interest paid to any recognized Canadian financial institution. The loan does not have to be with the Farm Loan Board to qualify. For more information, visit:

http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri/farmlb/info/ne2010_11pgm.shtml

Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture Development Programs

The NSDA has annual programs under which farmers can receive funding for all or part of the costs of initiatives to enhance their farm businesses or increase the environmental sustainability of their farms. These programs are cost-shared between the provincial and federal governments through the Growing Forward Agreement. The primary program for on-farm development is the Farm Investment Fund (FIF). Other programs for the 2010/11 financial year are the Agri-food Industry Development Fund and the Innovation Fund.

Fundable projects that may be of interest to beginning farmers include:

- 75% of the cost of hiring a consultant to do a business plan for you
- 50% for new product development and marketing
- 50% for farm safety expenses, such as tractor ROPs and seat belts, farm washrooms and first aid kits
- 75% for expenses related to meat processing food safety
- 50% of the cost of installing alternative energy technology, including wind, solar and geothermal
- 100% of the costs associated with wetland restoration
- Up to 100% of the cost of your first Nutrient Management Plan
- 25% or up to \$20,000 of the cost of establishing a riparian buffer strip at least 5m wide
- 75% or up to \$2,000 for consultative services for an on-farm energy audit/assessment

To be eligible for Farm Investment Fund funding, you must:

- Have a current registration under the Farm Investment Fund (see fact sheet #11 – Farm Registration)
- Have a fur farming license where applicable
- Be actively farming
- Have completed an Environmental Farm Plan at the time of application (or at least be on the waiting list to have an EFP completed)
- Have an annual gross farming income of at least \$10,000 (this requirement is waived for beginning farmers for the first five years that they are a registered farm)

To sign up for a free Environmental Farm Plan, contact the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture at (902) 893-2293 or info@nsfa-fane.ca.

The Agri-Food Industry Development Fund and the Innovation Fund have broader eligibility requirements and some categories require a detailed project proposal. The funds available depend on annual government approval and the number of projects funded.

For more information on NSDA Funding Programs, contact your local Agricultural Resource Coordinator or the Programs and Business Risk Management Division at (902) 893-6510 or the website:

www.gov.ns.ca/agri.prm

Energy Funding

There are a number of programs that farmers can access related to energy efficiency and renewable energy. For more information, see the [Farm Energy fact sheet](#).

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