

## Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Routine Access Policy

---

<b>Approval date:</b>	October 21, 2003
<b>Approved by:</b>	Executive Committee
<b>Effective date:</b>	October 23, 2003
<b>Revision date:</b>	December 16, 2004

---

### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

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

#### a. Personal Privacy

Records containing the personal information of third parties as defined in the FOIPOP Act shall not be disclosed by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (Department) outside the FOIPOP Act, unless the personal information has been severed.

#### b. Timeliness

The Department shall respond to any routine access requests in a reasonable and timely fashion.

#### c. Cost Recovery

At the discretion of the Department, a photocopying fee may be charged. Fees for the reproduction and provision of records may be charged where authorized by policies, regulations, or statutes.

#### d. Transparency

This policy shall be made available to the public through the Department's World Wide Web site or in any other acceptable format.

#### e. Reasonable or reasonableness

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 Department, 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 Department 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) harm significantly the competitive position or interfere significantly 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 under this policy;
- (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 or telephone number; race, national or ethnic origin, colour or 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 Department;
- (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 routine release, in full or in part, of certain types of administrative or operational records as a matter of course in response to a request, without the need for a formal application for records under the FOIPOP Act; and
- (m) **routine inspection** means an inspection conducted to ensure compliance with an enactment under the mandate of the Department that is carried out on a recurring basis such as annually or biannually and includes re-inspections 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 a reasonable alternative for access to the records listed in Schedule "B".

### 4. APPLICATION

- a. This policy applies to:
  - all Department employees;
  - Resources-Corporate Services Unit (RCSU) - Finance, Human Resources and Information Technology; and
  - all agencies, boards, commissions reporting to the Department 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 October 23, 2003.
- d. A request under this policy applies only to the records listed in Schedule "B" that were created after October 23, 2003.
- 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 Department shall not be subject to the policy. It is important to ensure that the application of this policy not unduly interfere with the day-to-day operations of the Department.

- f. Personal and/or confidential information shall be severed from the 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 shall be taken to mean that the Department is required to create or maintain records that it would not normally have in its custody or control.
- h. This policy shall be consistent with the *Government Records Act* and policies under that Act.

## **5. POLICY DIRECTIVES**

- a. The policy shall be posted on the Department's World Wide Web site or in any other acceptable format.
- b. All employees shall be advised of the policy coming into force.
- c. Requests for information under this policy shall be made to:

Routine Access Designate  
Department of Agriculture and Fisheries  
5151 George Street  
Bank of Montreal Building, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
P.O. Box 2223  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3J 3C4  
Telephone: 424-4560  
Fax: 424-3948  
E-mail:[accessaf@gov.ns.ca](mailto:accessaf@gov.ns.ca)

- d. A tracking system shall be kept by the Designate.

## **6. POLICY GUIDELINES**

- a. Requests may be made in person, by phone, mail, fax or e-mail.
- b. A person making a request under this policy, shall be required to provide at least the following: name, contact information including mailing address, phone number and the specific reference to Schedule "B".

- c. Requests for records under this policy are to be made to the Designate.
- d. The Designate is responsible for reviewing the request, and determining if this policy applies to the request.
- e. If the policy applies to the request, the records shall be provided to the applicant within a reasonable period of time, and no later than 30 days from the receipt of the request.
- f. If the policy does not apply to the request, the Designate shall notify the requester promptly by phone, fax, e-mail or by mail and shall indicate what other avenues may be available to obtain the information, such as making an application under the FOIPOP Act.
- g. At the discretion of the Department, a photocopying fee may be charged at a rate of .20 cents per page.

## **7. ACCOUNTABILITY/EVALUATION**

- a. The Deputy Minister shall be accountable for the implementation of this policy.
- b. The Executive Committee is responsible for the approval of this policy and the annual review and approval.
- 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 this policy and processing requests in a timely manner in accordance with the policy directives, guidelines and procedures.

## **8. COMPLIANCE**

- a. The Department's FOIPOP Administrator shall be responsible for ensuring the compliance with this policy.
- b. This policy may be subject to an audit by the Department of Finance.

## **9. REFERENCES/AUTHORITY**

This policy shall be read in conjunction with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*

*Government Records Act*

Records Management Policy (government)

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Records Management Policy

## **10. INQUIRIES**

Routine Access Designate

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries

5151 George Street

Bank of Montreal Building, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor

P.O. Box 2223

Halifax, Nova Scotia

B3J 3C4

Telephone: 424-4560

Fax: 424-3948

E-mail: [accessaf@gov.ns.ca](mailto:accessaf@gov.ns.ca)

The Department's World Wide Web site is: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf>

The NSAC's World Wide Web site is: <http://www.nsac.ns.ca>

## **11. SCHEDULES**

Schedule "A" - Actively Disseminated Records

Schedule "B" - Routine Access Records

## **Schedule “A” Actively Disseminated Records**

This Schedule provides an example of the records that the Department actively disseminates. This Schedule is not intended to be an exhaustive list and does not capture the range of information that may be provided through other avenues.

### **Annual Approved Business Plans and Accountability Reports**

Department Agriculture and Fisheries Accountability Report (Policy and Planning Division)  
Department Agriculture and Fisheries Business Plan (Policy and Planning Division)  
Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission Annual Report (Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission)  
Nova Scotia Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission Business Plan (Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission)  
Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board Annual Report (Farm Loan Board)  
Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board Business Plan (Farm Loan Board)  
Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board Accountability Report (Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board)  
Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board Business Plan (Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board)

### **Policies**

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Occupational Health and Safety Policy (Policy and Planning Division)  
Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Records Management Policy (Legislative Services)  
Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Routine Access Policy (Legislative Services)  
Fish Buyers and Fish Processors Licence Policy (Legislation and Compliance Branch)  
Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board Policies (Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board)  
Laboratory Policies (Laboratory Services Section)  
Nova Scotia Cottage Winery Policy (Industry Development and Business Services Branch)  
Nova Scotia Farm Winery Policy (Industry Development and Business Services Branch)  
Sign Language Interpreter Services Policy Guidelines for Agencies, Boards and Commissions (Legislative Services)

### **Program Information**

4-H general program information (4-H and Rural Organizations Section)  
Agriculture Development and Business Risk Management (BRM) Program Information (Agriculture Services Branch)  
Agriculture Development Program Summaries  
Crop and Livestock Insurance Plan information and forms (Crop and Livestock Insurance Commission)

Farm Loan Board loan program information (Farm Loan Board)  
Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board loan program information (Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board)  
Fisheries Innovation Program information (Fisheries and Aquaculture Services Branch)  
Food Handlers Course information (Food Safety Section)  
Laboratory Information Pamphlets (schedule of fees, how to take/submit samples) (Laboratory Services Section)  
Product and Quality Development Program information (Product and Quality Development Services Division)  
Provincially Inspected Meat Plants and Processors List (Food Safety Section)  
Research and Market Studies (various) (Product and Quality Development Services Division)

### **Licence, Permit and Approvals**

Application forms and general information under the mandate of the Department (Various Branches)  
Anglers Handbook (Inland Fisheries Division)  
Milk Distributors (licenced) List (Natural Products Council)  
Dairy Processors (licenced) List (Natural Products Council)

### **Information/Newsletters/Fact Sheets/Brochures**

Agricultural Services Newsletter (approx 5 issues/year) (Resource Stewardship Division)  
Agricultural Weekly Market Reports (Marketing Services Division)  
Agriculture and seafood publications and brochures (various consumer publications) (Marketing Services Division)  
A Guide to Opening a Foodservice Establishment (Food Safety Section)  
Aquaculture information package (Fisheries and Aquaculture Services Branch)  
Aquaculture maps (shows license, lease location, distribution of sites) (Fisheries and Aquaculture Services Branch)  
Aquaculture Fact Sheets and Brochures (Fisheries and Aquaculture Services Branch)  
Aquaculture Species Fact Sheets (Fisheries and Aquaculture Services Branch)  
Aquaculture production information (Fisheries and Aquaculture Services Branch)  
Farm Business Management Resource Library (books, video resources available on loan) (Business Management and Economic Development Services)  
Fish species information (marketing and biological information) (Marketing Services Division)  
Food Safety fact sheets and brochures (Food Safety Section)  
Freshwater Species Fact sheets (Inland Fisheries Division)  
Lake Survey and Maps (Inland Fisheries Division)  
Lobster, Mussel and Oyster retailers information (Marketing Services Division)  
Nova Scotia Food Processors Contacts Directory (Marketing Services Division)  
Nova Scotia Seafood (Marketing Services Division)  
Nova Scotia U-Pick and U-Fish Directory (Marketing Services Division)



On the Land and in the Sea: A Resource Directory (Marketing Services Division)  
Snow Crab Working Group Minutes and Terms of Reference (Fisheries and  
Aquaculture Services Branch)  
Technical agricultural fact sheets and brochures (Resource Stewardship Division)

### **Statistical Information**

Abattoir Statistics (annual) (Food Safety Section)  
Agriculture Development and Research Funding Statistical Report (Agriculture Services  
Branch)  
Aquaculture Statistics (annual, provincial and by species) (Fisheries and Aquaculture  
Services Branch)  
Farm Analysis Project Reports (by commodity) (Business Management and Economic  
Development Services)  
Farm Business Statistical Reports (various) (Industry Development and Business  
Services Branch)  
Food Safety Activity and Inspection Summary Report (annual) (Food Safety Section)  
Livestock Disease Summary Reports (Quality Evaluation Branch)  
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) (Industry Development and Business Services Branch)

### **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 (Legislative Services or Branch Contact)  
Agency, Board & Commission Selection Criteria (Legislative Services)  
Annual Agricultural Exhibitions and Community Fairs in Nova Scotia Poster (Legislative  
Services)  
Agricultural Exhibition Officials Contact List (Legislative Services)  
Approved Boatbuilders List (Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Board)

## Schedule "B" Routine Access Records

This Schedule provides the list of records that the Department will routinely release within the scope of this policy.

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
<b>Financial Information:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Contract for goods or services (subject to FOIPOP restrictions including confidential business, proprietary or personal information removed)</li> <li>2. Cost of overtime expenditures</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One copy of a contract within current fiscal year per request</li> <li>2. Copy of current year-to-date expenditures for a Department, Branch, Division or Section per request</li> </ol>

Document	Release Parameter
<b>Financial Information:</b>	
3. Cost of renovations for specific offices	3. One copy of expenditures for a specific renovation carried out within the previous six months per request
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
<b>Human Resources Information:</b>	
<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

Document	Release Parameter
<p>3. Job descriptions, pay scale, classification of positions (unionized, non-unionized)</p> <p>4. Secondment agreements, both within and outside government (excluding personal information)</p> <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><b>Human Resources Information:</b> <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>3. Copy of information on 3 positions per request</p> <p>4. One copy of an agreement per request</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><b>Licence, Permits and Approvals:</b></p> <p>1. Apple Packer Registration</p> <p>2. Aquaculture Lease</p> <p>3. Aquaculture Licence</p> <p>4. Beekeeper and Apiary Registration</p> <p>5. Dairy Processor Licence</p> <p>6. Deer Farming Licence</p> <p>7. Deer Meat Processors Licence</p> <p>8. Fish Buyers Licence</p> <p>9. Fish Processors Licence</p> <p>10. Food Establishment Permit (eg. restaurants, caterers, take-outs)</p> <p>11. Fur Farming Licence</p> <p>12. Game Farm Licence</p> <p>13. Meat Slaughtering and Processing Licence</p> <p>14. Milk Distributor Licence</p> <p>15. Pelting Permit</p> <p>16. Rockweed Lease</p> <p>17. Temporary Event Food Facility Permit</p>	<p>1-17 Confirmation only, that a person (includes a corporation) has a current licence, permit or approval. Maximum of 5 confirmations per request.</p>

Document	Release Parameter
<p><b>Licence, Permits and Approvals:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Certified Bulk Tank Graders List (approval to release personal information)</li> <li>2. Fish Processing Voluntary Closure (personal information removed)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. One copy of list per request</li> <li>2. Confirmation of plant in voluntary closure</li> </ol>
<p>Livestock Health Services - Program Claim Summaries (aggregate data) (personal or confidential information removed)</p>	<p>One copy per request</p>
<p>Annual Inspection Summaries of Dairy Farms</p>	<p>One copy of most recent statistics per request</p>
<p><b>Routine Inspection Reports:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dairy Farm Inspection Report (personal or confidential information removed)</li> <li>2. Food Safety Inspection Report (personal or confidential information removed)</li> <li>3. Fish Buyer Licence Condition Compliance Checklist (personal or confidential information removed)</li> <li>4. Rockweed Short Cutting Worksheet (personal or confidential information removed)</li> <li>5. Rockweed Holdfast Removal Worksheet (personal or confidential information removed)</li> <li>6. Voluntary Closure Inspection (personal or confidential information removed)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Copy of most recent inspection report for up to 5 farms per request</li> <li>2. Copy of the most recent inspection report generated from the data base and a maximum of 3 facilities per request</li> <li>3. One copy per buyer within last 12 month period per request</li> <li>4. One copy of one month's report on one site and within last 12 months per request</li> <li>5. One copy of one month's report on one site and within last 12 months per request</li> <li>6. One copy of the most recent report</li> </ol>
<p>Laboratory Services Annual Report</p>	<p>One copy most recent report per request</p>

<b>Document</b>	<b>Release Parameter</b>
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 Committee 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 Educational Memorandum of Understanding between the 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)	One copy of one set or part of set
Occupational Health and Safety Annual Reports to the Deputy Minister (personal information or advice removed)	One copy of the most recent report per request

<b>Document</b>	<b>Release Parameter</b>
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