



NOVA SCOTIA
Agriculture



BUSINESS PLAN 2006–2007

Department of Agriculture

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MESSAGE FROM MINISTER AND DEPUTY MINISTER

It is with pleasure that we present the 2006-2007 Business Plan for the Department of Agriculture.

In fiscal 2005-2006, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries restructured to form the Department of Agriculture and Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture. The two new entities maintain close operational linkages particularly in two core business areas - Industry Growth and Development, and Responsible Governance - as well as in the corporate service areas. This collaboration optimizes government expertise and maintains continuity in strategic service areas for the benefit of agricultural and fisheries clients involved in both primary and secondary food production.

Developing competitive agriculture and food industries that create economic growth and employment in rural communities continues to be a priority for the department. The Canada-Nova Scotia Implementation Agreement for the Agriculture Policy Framework (APF) has set a long-term, strategic framework for agriculture. The department will continue to work in partnership with industry to maintain strong performance and address the modern challenges facing our agricultural community including risk management, international competition and bio-security related to food products.

We are committed to providing the necessary support to meet the priorities as set out in the 2006-2007 Business Plan.

Honourable Ron Chisholm, Minister

Rosalind C. Penfound, Deputy Minister

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LINK TO THE GOVERNMENT BUSINESS PLAN

The Department of Agriculture contributes to the following strategic priorities of the government: Health Promotion and Protection; Youth, Families and Communities; Economic Development and Infrastructure; Environment.

MISSION

To foster prosperous and sustainable agriculture and food industries through the delivery of quality public services for the betterment of rural communities and all Nova Scotians.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The Department of Agriculture has a legislated mandate to promote, support and develop agriculture and food industries, recognizing that the agriculture sector is an economic engine of Nova Scotia's rural communities. The department also delivers services to Nova Scotia's fisheries and aquaculture industries on behalf of Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture (NSFA).

Agriculture Services provides regional agricultural services; land protection; environmental management including integrated pest management; 4-H and support for rural organizations; agricultural awareness; industry development programs; business risk management; crop and livestock insurance; and orderly production and supply of major farm products.

Legislation and Compliance Services licenses meat processing, retail food outlets and restaurants, fur and game farms, and oversees activities related to food and consumer safety, as well as on-farm quality evaluation. This branch is also responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance with regulations under the *Fisheries and Aquaculture Coastal Resources Act*.

Industry Development and Business Services (IDBS) integrates marketing, product and quality development, business development and economic services. This branch provides these services to both the Department of Agriculture and NSFA. IDBS also oversees the operations of the Farm Loan Board.

Policy and Planning provides corporate support for policy and planning activities, including legislative/regulatory development. It is also responsible for the administration of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, and Occupational Health and Safety programs. These services are provided to both the Department of Agriculture and NSFA.

Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC) provides education and training specific to agricultural and agri-food industries. Working in co-operation with industry and government, the NSAC is a centre of agricultural expertise throughout Atlantic Canada. The establishment of the Atlantic BioVenture Centre as part of the NSAC will enhance industry liaison and

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commercialization of the results of research at the university. The centre will work with agriculture and agri-food processing industries on bio-resource value-chain development and technology transfer and support NSAC in its role in Atlantic bio-economy training and development.

AgraPoint International Inc. is an alternative service delivery mechanism operating at arms-length from government. It was established in 2000 to provide technical advice to the agriculture industry. A team of experts provide agricultural development and consulting services to agri-businesses and associations on matters regarding livestock, horticulture and field crops and integrated pest management. AgraPoint is accountable to the department through its own business plan and annual report.

CORE BUSINESSES, GOALS & PROGRAMS

Core Business 1: Sustainable Resource Management

Goal - Environmentally and socially responsible development of the agriculture and food industries.

Programs and Services:

- Agriculture resource management and land protection

Core Business 2: Industry Growth and Development

Goal - Effective business risk management and strategic response in the client sectors.

Goal - Competitive agriculture and food businesses that create economic growth and employment in rural communities.

Programs and Services:

- Agriculture development, regional and extension services (including AgraPoint), and investment
- Business risk management (Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization and Production Insurance)
- Agriculture lending services (NS Farm Loan Board)
- Business development and economics
- Product and quality development
- Market services

Core Business 3: Responsible Governance

Goal - Orderly development of agriculture and food industries.

Programs and Services:

- Licensing and enforcement
- Laboratory services
- Food safety
- Animal health
- Natural products marketing

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Core Business 4: Education and Life Long Learning

Goal - Increased expertise and excellence in Nova Scotia's agriculture and agri-food industries through teaching, research, community services and youth development.

Programs and Services:

- Post-secondary education and research (NSAC)
- Agricultural outreach and youth (farm safety, 4-H and Agriculture Awareness)

Corporate Services

Goal - To ensure the effective delivery of a suite of corporate and administrative services for the benefit of the executive offices, operational units and the Government of Nova Scotia.

Programs and Services:

- Administrative Services
- Business Planning and Accountability
- Legislative and Policy Services
- Communications
- Employee Safety, Wellness and Health
- Executive Leadership
- Human Resources
- Information Management
- Information Technology

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Agriculture as a vital economic contributor in the province. The agriculture and agri-food sector contributed an estimated \$874 million to the provincial GDP in 2003-2004. In 2005, farm cash receipts totalled more than \$455 million. As well, in 2005 there were roughly 5,800 people working in primary agriculture in the province. Agriculture, together with fisheries, and the food manufacturing sector, make up Nova Scotia's food industry. Altogether, some 30,000 Nova Scotians are employed directly in the food industry, with another 44,000 employed in food distribution and the food service industry.

The department will continue to address matters related to the environment, industry growth, food safety, animal health, and education and training. The following captures the opportunities and challenges that will be addressed in the 2006-2007 business plan.

Environment

Climate change is a growing concern for agriculture, and the government is dedicating resources to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as per Kyoto commitments. Additional compliance requirements associated with federal environmental legislation require new ways of delivering programs agreed to under the Canada-Nova Scotia Implementation Agreement for the

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Agriculture Policy Framework (APF). Issues related to water, air, and soil quality continue to be of concern. The department works with industry to balance development with environmental and social responsibility. These efforts are long-term and require innovative solutions through applied research, new technology and adoption of best practices.

New policies and legislative initiatives contribute to a growing regulatory environment in which agriculturalists must operate. The department monitors the impacts of legislative/regulatory developments and works with stakeholders to develop strategies to address industry concerns.

Industry Growth and Development

Agriculture and agri-food industries work in a dynamic business climate affected by regulations, tax regimes, consumer trends, trade issues and international marketing considerations. Nova Scotia's agri-food businesses have to respond to new market developments, including new regulatory regimes in existing markets. As well, recent WTO negotiations could affect supply managed agricultural sectors in 2006-2007. The challenge is to remain competitive in the face of forces that tend to increase costs of production. Nova Scotia will build on its reputation for producing safe, high quality food. The department is committed to promoting environmentally responsible resource development, and to developing innovative, customer driven products. Market opportunities are now expanding for organic products and convenience foods.

Nova Scotia's agri-food sector faces both domestic and international competition, and the sector is challenged by gaps with respect to business development training and expertise. The food processing sector is also experiencing challenges, due to aging plants and technology, and labour cost competition from other areas of the world. It is necessary to increase business risk management (BRM) responses and contingency planning in the face of global economics, diseases, natural disasters and multi-national food entities. The challenge is to design effective, timely, and flexible programs within current fiscal restraints, while meeting industry and government expectations in areas of development and risk management. The department will begin to evaluate its current development programs in order to design the next generation of programming.

The concept of Ecological Goods and Services (EG&S) is gaining ground around the world, as well as here in Canada and Nova Scotia. EG&S refers to the value that human populations derive, directly or indirectly, from healthy, functioning, and evolving ecosystems. Healthy agro-ecosystems can provide numerous EG&S, including wildlife habitat, groundwater recharge, flood and erosion control, carbon sequestration, increased biodiversity, and air and water purification, and can enhance the value of agriculture production. Industry and government are conducting research in areas related to this concept.

Increased market demands for food safety and security offer product and service opportunities. Tracking and tracing throughout the market chain, through programs such as Hazard Analysis

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Critical Control Point (HACCP)/(HACCP plus) and the Quality Management Program (QMP), provide opportunities to meet food certification standards in the European Union and Homeland Security measures in the US. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) regulations affecting the beef sector represent a priority challenge for the department and will have a direct impact on primary producers and processors. The department will respond to these challenges and opportunities by working with Nova Scotia businesses to demonstrate that our products are safe and secure beyond current international standards of practice.

Agricultural industries struggle with a need to attract new entrants and investment. The department continues to address this concern by promoting the sectors, encouraging government/industry collaboration, and improved branding of the sectors. The department is committed to assisting industries identify and develop new products, services, technologies and market opportunities. This includes differentiating products by adding value through food safety and security, and promoting the development of efficient and effective distribution channels. Examples of diversification and value-adding opportunities for the industry include health products such as nutraceuticals and pharmaceuticals, and agri-tourism products.

Animal Health and Food Safety

Consumers seek assurances that the food they purchase is safe and of high quality. The department must, therefore, address issues pertaining to production and product standards, food labelling and traceability, monitoring and inspection, bio-security protocols, food handling education, and analytical testing. The new *Health Protection Act* provides a regulatory framework for the food service industry in Nova Scotia that is less intrusive and more equitable. The department will continue to deliver and implement integrated food safety programs under the Canada-NS Implementation Agreement for the APF and the new *Health Protection Act*.

Recognizing their growing and joint responsibilities around environmental health issues, the department will work with the Departments of Environment and Labour, and Health Promotion and Protection to develop a collaborative process to ensure interdepartmental input into policy development and program planning. The three departments will evaluate the environmental health issues of common concern building on the experience gained in the implementation of the provincial drinking water strategy and the food safety program, and the opportunities available with the creation of Health Promotion and Protection. Together, they will develop interdepartmental strategies for common responses and mutual aide during adverse natural and made-made disasters and expand the boundaries of current environmental health practice in NS. Through this understanding of joint understanding and action in environmental health issues, health protection for Nova Scotians will be best served.

Emergency response to animal disease outbreaks and emerging animal health and disease prevention issues are challenges. The department will continue to work with other levels of government and industry to deal with these issues and meet evolving compliance requirements,

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including the implementation of the Foreign Animal Disease Eradication System (FADES) and regulations affecting the beef sector. A regulatory, policy and procedural review of animal health legislation will improve the province's ability to respond to animal health issues.

The credibility of modern laboratories is dependent on accreditation of the procedures used to ensure the reliability of testing results through adherence to the highest standards. During 2005-2006, accreditation was obtained for a significant portion of the department's laboratory service. These accreditations will need to be maintained and expanded in 2006-2007.

Education and Training

Education and Training will continue to be a focus for 2006-07 as Nova Scotia addresses labour market needs through the *Skills Nova Scotia Framework*. The department continues to participate in this initiative, which provides ongoing opportunities for Nova Scotians to respond to changes in the labour market.

NSAC provides quality education and training to fill growing employment opportunities in the agriculture and food industries and will continue in its aim to help a changing agriculture industry remain competitive. NSAC's strategic plan, "Looking Outward – Embracing Change" points to challenges and opportunities for agriculture, including internationalisation of markets and environmental and life sciences. Development of academic programs to meet the modern challenges of an evolving labour force and globalization, and to achieve excellence in academic programming and research/innovation, requires interdisciplinary approaches, along with partnership arrangements with other universities, colleges, and industries.

Universities and colleges compete to attract students and the best faculty and researchers to their programs. At the same time, they are challenged to keep tuition and other costs attractive to students. This results in significant fiscal pressures. At present, the base of endowed funding at NSAC represents less than 10% of funding available for scholarships. There is a need to increase this base funding in order to secure the future of the scholarship programs and to compete for students. NSAC is increasing its fundraising capacity in order to secure greater capital for its endowments.

NSAC will continue to provide leading edge, practical research aimed at helping a changing agriculture industry remain competitive. There is an intensified demand on NSAC's research infrastructure. Growing research activity requires physical plant and administrative support, which requires the allocation of additional resources to this area. Researchers at NSAC have been very effective in obtaining dedicated-purpose funding for their research projects, through funding programs such as the Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) and the Atlantic Innovation Foundation (AIF). NSAC is also seeking opportunities for research contracting with industry, government and other academic institutions.

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The commercialization of research and innovation is also a priority that can be supported through business development facilities. AgriTECH Park is mandated to support innovation and business development in agriculture. As well, the Atlantic BioVenture Centre, established at AgriTECH Park in 2005, facilitates effective industry liaison and commercialization of research. This centre will work with agriculture and agri-food industries on bio-resource value chain development and technology transfer, and support NSAC in its role in Atlantic bio-economic training and development.

The department also delivers the 4-H program, which focuses on leadership and skill development among rural youth. The program seeks to enhance understanding and knowledge of Nova Scotia's agriculture industry through hands-on experience, and mentors youth in developing a range of life skills, such as public speaking, community activism, volunteerism, networking and team building. 4-H members are ambassadors for the farming community, raising awareness of the economic and social importance of the industry to Nova Scotia.

CORE BUSINESSES, GOALS, STRATEGIES AND MEASURES

The department has identified the following goals, priorities, strategies and measures. Measures established for 2005-2006 are being continued for 2006-2007.

Core Business One: Sustainable Resource Management

Goal: Environmentally and socially responsible development of the agriculture and food industries.

What it means

Long-term industry growth and sustainability arise from balancing industry development with environmental and social responsibility through applied research, technology transfer, generally accepted management principles and industry and public awareness. The department contributes to this goal by encouraging agricultural industries to become economically viable, environmentally sound and socially acceptable.

The department is responsible for addressing issues pertaining to resource protection, best management practices, water management, and other environmental impacts. The department delivers environmental initiatives identified under the Canada-Nova Scotia Implementation Agreement for the Agricultural Policy Framework (APF).

Priority - Implement strategic initiatives to address environmental issues in agricultural industries.

Strategies & Actions

- Work with industry to develop new strategies for the disposal of Specified Risk Materials (SRM) in the beef sector;

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- Continue to deliver Development and Implementation of Environmental Farm Plans initiative under the Environment Chapter of the Canada-Nova Scotia Implementation Agreement for the APF;
- Continue to develop and deliver climate change initiatives in accordance with Kyoto commitments.

Measures	Last Actual (2005)	Target 2005-2006	Target 2006-2007	Target 2007-2008
Percentage of registered farms participating in the Province's Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Initiative	27	30	40	50

Core Business Two: Industry Growth and Development

Goal: Effective business risk management and strategic response in the agriculture sector.

What it means

This goal focuses on the need for planning in the agriculture industry, which is affected by unforeseen weather disasters, disease and global market influences. Business risk management programs, designed to encourage producers to mitigate and reduce business risks and manage them more strategically, improve long-term stability and self-sufficiency in agriculture. The department contributes to this goal by providing support through programs such as the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) Program, Production Insurance (PI), and disaster recovery initiatives.

Priority - Deliver effective Business Risk Management programs under the Canada-Nova Scotia Implementation Agreement for the APF.

Strategies & Actions

- Continue to deliver the Business Risk Management Chapter of the Canada-Nova Scotia Implementation Agreement for the APF, including promoting and communicating information about the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) program to encourage greater participation;
- Strengthen and expand existing provincial insurance products to include coverage for more crops and livestock, risk splitting and catastrophic loss;
- Strengthen linkages between the CAIS and Production Insurance programs.

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Measures	Last Actual (2004)	Target 2005-2006	Target 2006-2007	Target 2007-2008
Percentage of Provincial Farm Reference Margin Protected by CAIS1	75	80	80	80
Total Production Insurance Coverage (millions)	\$51.5	\$52.8	\$84	\$86

Goal: Competitive agriculture and food businesses that create economic growth and employment in rural communities.

What it means

This goal focuses on Nova Scotia's rural communities and refers to investment in new production and market opportunities. The department encourages new and diversified product development, providing strategic investment and by facilitating sustainable growth in established sectors.

The department is responsible for promoting product development, enhancing market access and improving business services to agriculture and food industries. Services provided include financing services, business development and entrepreneurial initiatives, market research and intelligence, product development support, and technology and infrastructure enhancement.

To achieve this goal the department will produce industry development strategies, work with industry and government agencies to address trade issues such as the United States' cross border regulations aimed at bio-terrorism, develop emerging market opportunities, and promote and encourage value-added development. The department will also encourage immigration and investment in rural communities, and provide lending and marketing support for agricultural businesses and services to promote and facilitate product development and innovation.

Priority - Increase the growth and value of the province's agriculture and food sectors through strategic planning, and diversification of markets, products, and technology.

Strategies & Actions

- Support the Atlantic BioVenture Centre at AgriTECH Park, which will develop bio-resource opportunities in the agriculture sector;
- Attract more knowledge-based agri-food businesses to AgriTECH Park;

¹ The adjustment in the 2004 actual figure is due to the completion/adjustments of outstanding files and improved data allowing for more accurate target forecasting.

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- Implement development and marketing strategies for the agriculture sector, including such commodities as pork, horticulture, tree fruit and wine, and organic produce;
- Facilitate the development of new products and processes aimed at capturing value-added opportunities in the agri-food and seafood sectors;
- Implement the recommendations of the Council of Atlantic Premiers to address market access and supply chain needs of regional food producers and processors, including organizing the 2006 Atlantic Food Forum;
- Undertake business development projects targeted at sector renewal and revitalization and “Capturing New Opportunities” projects under the APF Renewal Strategy;
- Participate in the national project to assess the merits of the Ecological Goods and Services concept for Nova Scotia;
- Contribute to the development of a provincial trade strategy aimed at growing exports of Nova Scotia’s agri-food, seafood, bio-products, and technology.

***Priority** - Increase domestic and international competitiveness of the province’s agri- food industry through targeted sector marketing and development initiatives.*

Strategies & Actions

- Develop and implement the 2006-2007 priority market plan focussed on the Northeast United States, the European Union, Japan and the Caribbean;
- Facilitate and encourage the participation of the agriculture and food industries in Brand Nova Scotia and Taste of Nova Scotia initiatives;
- Implement the Culinary Tourism strategy and agri-tourism product development initiatives;
- Assist industry capture value-added market opportunities;
- Develop domestic food service and direct-to-consumer market opportunities for Nova Scotia agri-food businesses;
- Continue to provide, in cooperation with government partners, counseling and training on the new nutritional labeling and claims regulations for Canada;
- Continue to promote the adoption of tracking and tracing systems by the Nova Scotia agri-food industries to meet retail and food service specifications;
- Develop a trade plan focused on Nova Scotia’s agri-food, seafood, bio-products and related technologies, and that aligns with the provincial trade strategy.

***Priority** - Expand and develop investment initiatives and partnerships in the agriculture and agri-food industries.*

Strategies & Actions

- Continue to implement the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture Investment Plan, focused on:
 - marketing, through joint partnerships, Canada and Nova Scotia as an attractive investment destination;

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- developing a profile of the investment needs and opportunities that exist in the agriculture and agri-food industries and exploring investment options;
- developing a targeted foreign investors attraction plan, and participating in the Provincial Immigration Strategy;
- Continue to provide lending programs, including the New Entrants to Agriculture Program, to encourage investment and assist in the development of the agriculture and agri-food industries.

Measures²	Last Actual (2004)	Target 2005-2006	Target 2006-2007	Target 2007-2008
Value of sales resulting from market development projects and tactics (millions)	\$4.5	\$4	\$5	\$6
Number of new product and market opportunities pursued	1 new geographic area	1 new geographic area	1 new geographic area	1 new geographic area
	1 new product	1 new product	1 new product	1 new product
Ratio of Product and Quality Development (PQD) program funding invested to total R&D invested through PQD projects³	28%	29%	26%	25%
Number of businesses assisted to capture new business opportunities	48	50	55	60
Value of new investment in the agri-food and seafood sectors (new measure)	n/a	n/a	Benchmark	To be based on benchmark

²Sale values incorporate agriculture, fisheries, and aquaculture.

³This measures the amount of funding leveraged from other sources by PQD program funding. The goal here is to leverage more R&D investment from other sources causing the relative share of investment by PQD to decrease.

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Percentage increase in loan portfolios⁴	4.3	0.5	0.6	0.7
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Core Business Three: Responsible Governance

Goal: Orderly development of agriculture and food industries.

What it means

The orderly development of the agriculture and agri-food industries, together with a reputation for excellence in food safety, are essential in order to maintain consumer confidence and to expand both domestic and international markets.

The department encourages and promotes the implementation of food safety measures throughout the food production system. This includes the development of food safety legislation, regulations, policy, and inspection and surveillance. The department also contributes to this goal by maintaining a regulatory environment that enables business development and establishes a level playing field, while not being unnecessarily burdensome for business operators. To achieve this goal, the department provides food safety training, animal health services, laboratory services, meat and food inspections, and licenses for retail food outlets, restaurants, fur and game farms.

The department will also collaborate with the Departments of Environment and Labour and Health Promotion and Protection to address environmental health issues and ensure effective response strategies during adverse natural and made-made disasters.

Priority - Provide professional, reliable and cost-effective services in the area of food chain safety and security, including public health/food safety and animal health/disease prevention.

Strategies & Actions

- Enhance animal health and disease prevention efforts:
 - implement the Foreign Animal Disease Eradication Support (FADES) plan;
 - implement the new *Health Protection Act*;
 - continue to develop and implement livestock health legislation;
- Enhance and expand the accreditation of department laboratory services;
- Work with industry and government partners, including the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to implement the ban on Specified Risk Materials (SRMs) from the food chain;

⁴This measure refers to lending provided through the Fisheries and Aquaculture and Agriculture and Timber Loan Boards.

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- Work with the Department of Health Protection and Promotion and Department of Environment and Labour to evaluate environmental health issues of common concern and develop interdepartmental strategies for common responses and mutual aide during adverse natural and made-made disasters and expand the boundaries of current environmental health practice in NS.

Priority - Review and revise departmental statutes, regulations and policies to ensure effective, equitable, and efficient governance of the agriculture and food industries.

Strategies & Actions

- Continue the review of regulations and committees within the department, and revise outdated regulations and repeal redundant regulations or committees.

Measures	Last Actual (2005)	Target 2005-2006	Target 2006-2007	Target 2007-2008
Percentage of meat sector demand for food handler education (new initiative under APF)	0%	0%	40%	80%
Percentage of Nova Scotia-licensed food processing plants that have implemented appropriate food safety process control systems	10%	10%	20%	40%
Percentage of food establishments that developed a food safety plan (new initiative under the new <i>Health Protection Act</i>)	0%	0%	20%	40%
Statutes and regulations	9 Acts⁵ and	Examples	Examples	Examples

⁵ Acts reviewed, in whole or in part, as of December 2005 included: *Agricultural Marshland Act, Bee Industry Act, Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act, Agricultural and Marketing Act, Natural Products Act, Animal Health and Protection Act, Farm Practices Act, Health Protection Act (Food Safety), and Veterinary Medical Act.*

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reviewed by the department	16 sets of regulations⁶ reviewed	to be provided	to be provided	to be provided
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Core Business Four: Education and Life Long Learning

Goal: Increase expertise and excellence in the Nova Scotia's agricultural and agri-food industries through teaching, research, community services and youth development.

What it means

This goal recognizes that providing access to high quality agricultural education programs and the ability to generate new knowledge through research are vital for stability and sustained growth in the province's agriculture industries. The department, through the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (NSAC), contributes to this goal by offering a broad range of post-secondary educational programs, training and research for agricultural industries. Major focus areas for academic and applied research include climate change, horticulture, organic agriculture, animal husbandry, product quality enhancement, and water, soil and farm waste management.

Priority - Develop an effective and integrated institutional strategy for the recruitment, retention and timely graduation of trained and skilled leaders to the agriculture and food industries.

Strategies & Actions

- Develop new and adapt existing academic programs at NSAC to respond to industry needs and to target priority recruitment markets;
- Enhance NSAC's brand image and encourage adoption of NSAC's brand strategy;
- Implement a strategic enrollment management plan focused on marketing NSAC and recruiting and retaining students;
- Increase activities that promote awareness of the strengths of NSAC programs among stakeholders, such as alumni, local community members, and high school guidance counselors;
- Increase fundraising activities to increase NSAC's endowment funds, which are used to attract and retain students through scholarships.

Priority - Continue to improve and increase the reputation and relevance of NSAC's research capacity.

⁶ Regulations reviewed as of December 2005 included: Diseases and Pests Affecting Bees Regulations, Farm Registration, Fish Buyers' Licensing and Enforcement Regulations, Fish Inspection Regulations, Fisheries and Aquaculture Loan Regulations, Rockweed Harvesting Regulations, Food Safety Regulations, and Chicken Farmers of Nova Scotia Regulations.

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Strategies & Actions

- Develop a Ph.D program in agriculture;
- Conduct a review and evaluation of the Master of Science (M.Sc) program;
- Promote and support faculty who publish their research results in refereed journals;
- Increase research funding received from federal granting councils (i.e. Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, Canadian Institutes of Health Research);
- Implement new research programs in plant stress physiology, entomology, dairy molecular biology, vegetation management, edible horticulture, waste management and machinery systems;
- Develop the Office of the Dean of Research to support research and industrial liaison activities at NSAC;
- Continue the construction of new poultry research facilities.

Measures	Last Actual (2004)	Target 2005-2006	Target 2006-2007	Target 2007-2008
Percentage of graduates employed in their field or pursuing further education within one year of graduation	90	94	95	95
Total value of research and infrastructure grants awarded to NSAC researchers (millions)	\$5.7	\$5.0	\$6.1	\$6.5
Number of students enrolled at NSAC	758	770	790	820
Number of international students enrolled at NSAC	27	38	50	57

Corporate Services

Corporate services are composed of the offices of the Minister and Deputy Minister together with the Policy and Planning Division. Communications services are provided by Communications Nova Scotia staff located within the department. Human resources, information technology and financial services are provided through the Resources Corporate Services Unit.

Priority - Implement the Department's French Language Services Plan, in accordance with the French Language Services Act, Bill 111.

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Strategies & Actions

- Implement the French Language Services Plan for the Department of Agriculture, including encouraging employees to take French language training.

***Priority** - Implement the Employee Survey Response Plan to address areas of the department identified as needing improvement in the Government of Nova Scotia Employee Survey, "How's Work Going?".*

In February 2004, the Nova Scotia Public Service Commission conducted a survey of its employees. The purpose of the survey was to assess the effectiveness of the government's work environment and its ability to engage and motivate employees and support a client-focused culture. A plan was developed in 2005-2006 to address areas identified by employees as needing improvement. Implementation of the plan will continue in 2006-2007.

Strategies & Actions

- Organize a staff conference for 2006 that will address staff priorities as identified in the Government of Nova Scotia Employee Survey.

***Priority** - Continue to ensure equality of opportunity in departmental hiring and access to employment opportunities within the department for affirmative action candidates.*

The Public Service Commission administers the Government of Nova Scotia's Affirmative Action Program, which ensures equality of opportunity in hiring and access to employment opportunities within the civil service to affirmative action candidates. This is accomplished by applying corporate policies and providing programs to all government departments, agencies, boards and commissions. The department will strive to ensure its hiring practices reflect affirmative action goals.

Strategies & Actions

- Implement the Affirmative Action Plan for the department.

***Priority** - Develop and implement communications strategies that support the activities and initiatives of the department.*

The Communications team will continue to provide consistent, clear and timely information to internal and external clients, specific to areas relating to the Canada-NS Implementation Agreement for the APF, animal health, food safety, marketing, and environmental issues, as well as the NSAC. The communications team will continue to work with its federal and provincial colleagues to insure the consistent flow of information.

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Strategies & Actions

- Develop and implement communications strategies for the activities and initiatives of the department.

Measures	Last Actual	Target 2005-2006	Target 2006-2007	Target 2007-2008
Progress toward implementation of the French-language services plan	n/a	Examples to be provided	Examples to be provided	Examples to be provided
Progress toward addressing departmental areas of concern as identified in the employee survey	n/a	Examples to be provided	Examples to be provided	Examples to be provided
Progress toward development and implementation of a diversity policy	n/a	Examples to be provided	Examples to be provided	Examples to be provided
Communications strategies implemented for department activities and initiatives.	n/a	Examples to be provided	Examples to be provided	Examples to be provided

LONG-TERM OUTCOME MEASURES

Measures	Last Actual	Target 2005-2006	Target 2006-2007	Target 2007-2008
Value of farm cash receipts (millions)	\$455.1 (2005)	\$410	\$410	\$420
Value of food manufacturing value-added (millions)	\$711.7 (2003)⁷	\$700	\$700	\$700
Ratio of food manufacturing value-added to the value of shipments of food manufacturers	31.9% (2003)	34%	35%	35%
Dollar value of total capital	\$116.3	\$120	\$120	\$120

⁷“Value of food manufacturing value-added” and “Ratio of food manufacturing value-added to the value of shipments of food manufacturers” figures for 2004 and 2005 will be available at a later date.

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expenditures in agriculture and fisheries (millions)	(2004)			
Value of agriculture and fisheries exports (billions)	\$1.36 (2004)	\$2	\$1.5⁸	\$1.5

⁸ Due to weakened US dollar and impact on the value of Canadian exports, these targets have been adjusted from 2005-06 to reflect current market conditions.

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BUDGET CONTEXT

Agriculture (Agriculture & Fisheries 2005-2006)			
Program & Service Area	2005-2006 Estimate	2005-2006 Forecast	2006-2007 Estimate
	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)	(\$thousands)
Ordinary Revenues	\$763	\$767	\$99
TCA Purchase Requirements	\$460	\$683	\$685
Net Program Expenses			
Senior Management	\$994	\$1,013	\$1,008
Policy & Planning	\$722	\$689	\$705
Agricultural Services	\$18,831	\$23,243	\$17,844
Legislation and Compliance	\$5,601	\$5,853	\$5,821
Industry Development and Business	\$5,101	\$5,167	\$4,530
Fisheries & Aquaculture	\$4,125	\$3,948	
Nova Scotia Agriculture College	\$8,739	\$8,492	\$8,932
Total Net Program Expenses	\$44,113	\$48,405	\$38,840
Provincially Funded Staff (FTEs)	518.7	514.0	453.6