



Who IS ON THE FARM

Na-tallie Ranch Limited, in Cormack, NL, is proudly owned and operated by Barry and Sonya Samms. The Samms' purchased the existing mink ranch in 2005 and it has been a steep learning curve. The Samms' are, by no stretch of the imagination, strangers to agriculture. Barry grew up on a family farm, which included broilers and dairy, and was owner/operator of Samms Broiler Farm (1996) Limited from 1996 to 2000. Sonya discovered agriculture when she met Barry and now cannot imagine living a "normal" life. "Farming is not just a career, it's a lifestyle, one that you really have to be dedicated to" she adds. Barry feels it's in his blood and would not be content if he were not farming. They have two lovely children, Nathan (7) and Allie (4), whom the farm is named after. If they inherit their parents passion for agriculture, someday they will take over the ranch. Right now, the baby mink are the talk of the farm and the children are right there to "help" Mom and Dad.

inside Agriview

- ◆ Who is on the Farm
- ◆ President's Message 3
- ◆ Feature 4

*THIS IS TO BE COMPLETED
AT END OF EDITS*





Newfoundland and Labrador
Federation of Agriculture.

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Who IS ON THE FARM

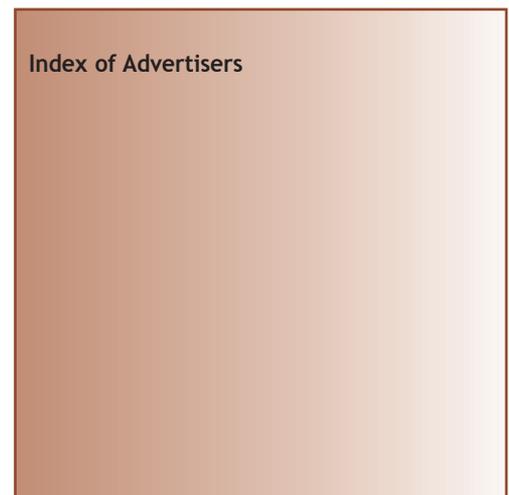
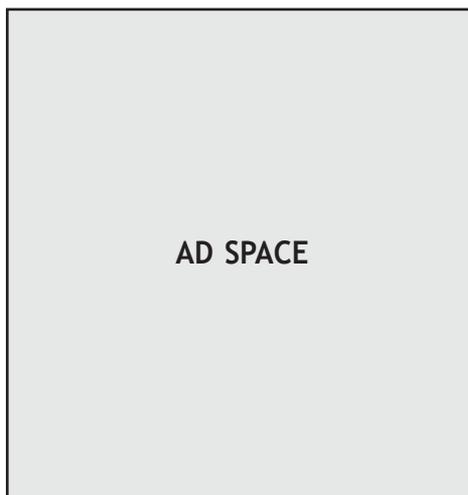
Na-tallie Ranch Limited produces high quality black and mahogany mink pelts for sale at the North American Fur Auction in Toronto. The majority of pelts are sold at the February auction, followed by a spring auction in May. There was a slight decline in mink prices this past February but industry is hopeful that the market will remain stable. Fluctuation in market prices is always a concern for the fur farmer and often leaves smaller ranchers especially vulnerable. The Samms' are continuing to expand the size of their herd and streamline the farm into a more efficient and less labor intensive venture, thus making it more financially viable. They also produce forage on the farm and for the past two years the silage has been cut and bailed by a local dairy farmer. Their hope is to put more of their 110 acres into silage production, as there is a high demand for silage in the area.

One of their key goals is to be successful and contribute to the growth of the fur industry in Newfoundland and Labrador, and also provide a future for their family in agriculture. Barry is involved in the Young Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador and recognizes the importance of promoting agriculture as a career and supporting young farmers in their ventures. "As a



young farmer, when you begin with very little, it is difficult to get started in the industry. Having our own farm didn't come easy and if it wasn't for our devotion and drive to remain in the agriculture industry, we probably would have given up" states Barry. But now as they look around and see the growth and improvements on the farm they are proud of their accomplishments. Since becoming involved in the fur industry Barry is a director with the Newfoundland and Labrador Fur Breeders Association. He also adds that being involved in a growing industry hasn't come without issues, such as food supply and "new" environmental regulations, and others that are being dealt with as an Association.

There is a big push to develop rural Newfoundland and Labrador and fur ranching is one opportunity, sparking interest and support from Government and the agriculture industry as a whole. With this kind of activity, there has to be something to fur farming and there is... a lot to learn, hard work, long hours, and a prayer that when the auction rolls around that the market will be on your side.





Mervin Wiseman
President

Those who attended our Annual General Meeting, in March, will most likely remember the debate around the resolution to lobby our provincial government to appoint a Minister of Agriculture. The debate questioned if the status quo was satisfactory. Members questioned if we are maximizing the potential of the agriculture industry under the current portfolio. Given the cli-

mate of restraint and financial limitations facing our province, is it reasonable or even realistic for us to expect our very own Minister? The alternative is to stand in a line of priorities and timelines of a minister that has to juggle far too many files that need constant attention.

Like many others, I am still looking for the formula or the measurement that constitutes justification for a stand alone Minister of Agriculture. Everyone believes they should be at the centre of attention but realistically most people understand that all things have to be rationalized within the grand scheme of things. So, is the expectation of a stand alone minister properly rationalized or can we achieve our goals and objectives within the current portfolio.

We have been told by the provincial government that on an annual basis, the Agriculture and Agri-foods industry contributes approximately \$500 million to the provincial economy. We are also told that the industry creates at least 6200 jobs. These numbers are old and I believe, way to low. We also know and it has been confirmed by regional economic development boards as well as the provincial government's Regional Diversification Strategy that the agriculture and agrifoods industry has tremendous growth potential with excellent job creation opportunity for a rural economy. In fact, it may very well be the only "renewable resource" sector with any growth potential at all - well lets not forget Aquaculture, which is farming by another name.

We know the dairy industry, with its significant allocation of industrial milk quota, is positioned to advance well beyond its current capacity. The fur industry has grown from less than \$1 million to more than \$80 million in just 3 short years. Nursery and landscaping is growing and currently contributing millions of dollars to the provincial economy. We are poised to become a significant player in a world wide \$160 billion Life Science Economy with a broad base of functional foods and nutraceuticals from such products as cranberries, blueberries, bakeapples and other products from our rich natural bio-diversity. There is tremendous room to expand our vegetable industry from its

current 10 percent share of provincial consumption. Likewise, we have significant room to expand the livestock food sector, where our farmers have only a 2 percent share of the \$120 million annual domestic consumption.

Rationalization? No problem, we have all you need, and speaking of need; we need an Agriculture Food Policy that is the cornerstone of a significant industry that can create jobs and other economic opportunities in our rural communities. We need an Agriculture Food Policy that satisfies the essential elements of food security, food safety and ultimately, food sovereignty for the people of our province. We need an Agriculture Food Policy for our people that embrace and encompass the benefits of healthy living and eating. We need a Land Use Policy and a functional Agriculture Land Use Plan that can accommodate our agriculture industry. And, we need a realistic investment strategy that is proportional to the opportunity. We need investment in research and development, infrastructure, marketing, education and awareness and human resource development.

The latest throne speech contained only a few short sentences about agriculture and agri-foods. The consolation is that one of these sentences may have been enough when it said "among our province's most successful and promising sectors is our **agricultural industry**". Government has acknowledged the potential in this sector for economic development and we are grateful for the substantial commitment that they have made but the current investment is still not proportional to the opportunity.

Since we all like to benchmark ourselves by comparisons with others it is appropriate to note the attention given to aquaculture or fish "farming" in the recent budget. Fish farming was highly embellished in all the budget documents by both language and investment. In fact the \$16 million allocation to this sector of the fishing industry, which employs 370 people represented more than the entire agriculture industry that employs 6200 people in the province of NL. Again, no language around land base farming activities with equal value and equal potential.

Does our government have it right with regard to aquaculture development? The very short answer is yes. The Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture does have a stand alone minister to deal with all sectors of the fishing industry. The Fisheries Minister is able to give the Aquaculture sector the undivided attention it deserves. This would probably explain why a farming activity or "aquaculture" would not want to be considered agriculture in this province. So, do we need a stand alone minister for the agriculture and agri-foods in Newfoundland and Labrador? I believe the answer lies in the way aquaculture development is treated.

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR
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IF YOU ENJOY AGRICULTURE INVOLVE YOURSELF IN THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY



photo by Bill Rowsell

From left to right:
Philip Thornley, Rhonda Thornley,
Bill Rowsell

Campbellton Berry Farm wins Environmental Award

Every year the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture has presented a farmer or farm family with our Environmental Award. This year the award went to Rhonda and Philip Thornley of the Campbellton Berry Farm. The farm started in 1980 as a first generation farm and now covers 25 acres with berry and forage crops. The farm is agri-tourism based, attracting tourists by offering them the opportunity to pick their own berries. The farm started off selling the berries fresh, but switched to the u-pick business model within five years.

There are several criteria which must be met to win the Environment Award. The first is to maintain beneficial management practices, which are agricultural practices which minimize negative impacts to the environment while preserving agricultural sustainability. The second is to demonstrate their endeavours to others. They must also be involved in the industry and express an eagerness for limiting impact. All of these criteria have been met, and in most cases, exceeded by the Thornleys.

Some beneficial management practices include a new fuel storage system, employing new planting and management practices, and purchasing aeration tools. The new fuel storage system holds more fuel, has a vacuum in case of leaks, and an electric pump. This fuel system requires fewer fill-ups, allows for better tracking of fuel consumption, requires less road ploughing, and allows for more monitoring in case of leaks and improved clean-up capabilities. This all leads to savings and reduced emissions. The Thornleys also bought an airway, which Philip Thornley describes as "resembling a pinwheel with spikes." The airway allows for water and fertilizer to be absorbed more effectively, meaning less water runoff, and less fertilizer usage with faster absorption. Pesticide use was also cut by 40% by using wood shavings to cover the aisles and only spraying the crops.

With commitment to improvements similar to that at Campbellton Berry Farm, environmental sustainability is in good hands in this province!



Young Farmers Influencing Next Structure of the Agricultural Policy Framework

The Federal Government is currently in the process of three rounds of consultations with the agriculture industry on the next structure of the Agriculture Policy Framework (APF). In the first round of consultations, which took place this past November and December, selected young farmers from this province participated in discussions on important pillars such as Business Risk Management and Renewal. During the second round of consultations, in the month of January, federal government officials from Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada (AAFC) visited the province to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to have input on the overall structure of APF. Young farmers in this province participated in both consultations held in Corner Brook and St. John's respectively.

On January 18, the Newfoundland and Labrador Young Farmers' Forum (NLYFF) held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Open Forum. Over 40 young farmers attended the event held in St. John's with presentations focusing on leadership, farm business management, and funding avenues for those in the industry and new entrants. During the morning session delegates had an opportunity to listen to a very exciting presentation from two young farmers involved in the Canadian Outstanding Young Farmers' Program. In the afternoon, young farmers participated in a town hall style open forum with Charlene Johnson, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Natural Resources. Topics of discussion ranged from land issues, government investment, the next structure of APF, and agriculture awareness.

In February, the Newfoundland and Labrador Young Farmers' Forum (NLYFF) participated in the 2007 Canadian Young Farmers' Forum (CYFF) National Conference and AGM in Ottawa. Ian Richardson from Cormack was again elected as the Atlantic Representative on the Board of Directors for the CYFF. He was subsequently elected as Vice-Chair for the National Board. Also during the conference the NLYFF,

had the opportunity to meet with the House of Commons Standing Committee for Agriculture and Agri-Foods. Young farmers spoke on issues of importance to moving the agriculture industry forward in Newfoundland and Labrador and how this will be accomplished through the next structure of APF.

On a go forward basis, the NLYFF with participation in the third round of consultations, are anxious to see the final structure of APF, due to be released in late summer to early fall of this year. For more information on the activities, initiatives, and projects of the NLYFF contact Chan Wiseman via email chanwiseman@nlfa.ca or phone (709) 689-6225.

Space for Ad

1/4 page

Hog Farming in Central Newfoundland

Roosevelt Thompson and his family operate a hog farm, called Leamington Farms, in central Newfoundland. They got into farming around 30 years ago by buying into a small farm with about 40 sows. They only had a handful of employees outside of family members in the early years. Their farm has since grown to an operation with about 80 employees, 130 sows, and full processing capabilities. While there have been some other farming ventures, such as hay production, the farm has been almost exclusively a pork operation throughout its lifetime.



A typical day on the farm consists of starting off by checking all the animals and verifying they have ample feed followed by routine care of the animals. Breeding of the animals also plays a large role in the farming duties. Every week there are some piglets born and some pigs slaughtered.

While the Thompson's farm has been growing and prospering, most other pork producers in the province have struggled to stay afloat, and many did not last. Roosevelt Thompson attributes most of his farm's success to marketing. Thompson believes that what sets his farm apart from other farms in Newfoundland are his marketing techniques. While most farms simply produce a basic product and sell it to grocers and suppliers to process and resell, at his farm, he takes production a step further by processing at his own facility. These fully processed products are then sold at his on-farm convenience store.

At the farm convenience store, processed products can be purchased. These include pork chops, ribs, roast, bacon, smoked bacon, ham, sausages and smoked

sausages. Another recent venture has been hors d'oeuvres for weddings. A pig on a platter is a common request for weddings and getting more popular all the time.

The farm also has a refrigerated truck, and this is the primary source of direct marketing. The truck has the farm logo on the side and is designed to draw attention. Thompson has tried many different avenues of marketing and explored what is the most successful. The truck advertising has been a huge success thus far, it is estimated that 300-400 sides of pork sold because of the truck ads. The farm also has an 'adopt-a-pig' program. A customer can pay an adoption fee on a chosen piglet and the animal will be kept at the farm and raised until it is ready for production, then the customer pays the remainder of the fees and gets ready-to-cook meats.

While the Thompson farm has been quite a success, there are always challenges as well. Considering the small number of pork producers in the province, keeping diversity in breeding has been a challenge. There are three lines of breeding stock, a breeding herd, and a production herd. Another challenge has been keeping up with the environmental and food safety regulations. Of course, a concern in animal farming is that there are often animal illness breakouts. A few years back there was an outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in the UK. Farmers here have been lucky and have not experienced anything like that, but it is always a concern.

While the farm has seen some challenges, this "birth to market" operation has proven quite successful with marketing as the main driving force. With future plans for further expansion into processing, the success already experienced is sure to continue well into the future.

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The long-term sustainability of the agriculture industry will be contingent on addressing human resource issues. Lack of awareness about career options, availability of labour, skill gaps, food security and environmental protocol, and farm safety are all challenges facing the industry today in the realm of human resources.

The agriculture industry is moving forward with initiatives to advance the sector in Newfoundland and Labrador. Significant attention will be given to the human resource issues prevalent across the industry. One particular initiative, in the vegetable sector, will address human resource impediments through the Industry Adjustment Services Committee (IASC) process. The IASC approach has brought together producers, industry representatives, and government officials with the goal of developing a strategy to move the vegetable industry forward.

The issue of farm safety is of growing importance today. In 2006, 104 farm workers were killed in Canada as a result of an on farm accident. The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture (NLFA) recognized Canadian Farm Safety Week (CASW) at its recent Annual General Meeting (AGM) this past March in Gander. Chan Wiseman, Human Resource Planner with NLFA, also attended the Atlantic Provinces Agricultural Safety and Health (APASH) Council meeting in Nova Scotia in late March. Addressing the issue of farm safety in this province will be given added impetus from industry and government.

The NLFA have been facilitating the development of an Agriculture Module to be a component of the next Environmental Science Curriculum going into grade 10 and 11 classrooms in September 2007. The Department of Education in an unprecedented approach to curriculum development has consulted with the agriculture industry to assist in the creation of this important project. The NLFA is working closely with industry representatives and representatives from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) who have been very supportive by providing technical expertise. This initiative is of great importance for the agriculture sector. Educating high schools on best practices and creating general awareness of farming will help to advance the industry in Newfoundland and Labrador.

SPACE FOR ADS

The Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) Program was developed as the successor to the Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development (CARD II) Fund, whose mandate expired March 31, 2004. The ACAAF Program continues the innovative industry-led approach employed under the CARD II program, with projects delivered at both the national and regional level.

In Newfoundland and Labrador the ACAAF program is delivered by the Agri-Adapt Council Inc. (AACI)

Investigation of Liquid Whey As A Feed Source For Dairy Cattle

As Central Dairies begins production of cheese this year, liquid whey will be produced as a by-product. While whey is used elsewhere, including the Netherlands and California, as cattle feed, it has not been used for this purpose in Canada.

The Newfoundland Dairymen's Association - Eastern Region, undertook a study to investigate the feasibility of using whey as a food source for local dairy cattle. The Agri-Adapt Council Inc., which administers the Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) program in the province for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, contributed \$16,175.73 to help cover the cost of the study.

ACAAF is a national funding program designed to help implement innovative projects that will benefit the production and processing sector, bolster the industry's capacity to address current and emerging issues and position the agriculture and agri-food industry to seize new market opportunities.

As part of the study, dairy farmers and industry representatives visited California to see the infrastructure, delivery methods, and associated costs involved in the implementation of whey as cattle feed. They concluded that there is significant potential for liquid whey to be used as feed locally.

The next step is to implement whey feed on a trial basis. Central Dairies, Ltd. will store the whey on site as it is produced. It will then be transported via milk truck to local dairy farmers. If the trial proves successful, the economic benefits for farmers would result in expansion of the program. The extra supply required for such an expansion will soon be available due to an expected increase in cheese production in coming years.

There are some concerns about the functionality of whey as a cattle feed source in this province. It is possible that liquid whey would freeze in our cold winter climate. This could be resolved through insulated tanks and agitation of the liquid, but this would increase infrastructure costs. There are also nutritional concerns, such as the volume of liquids in a whey-based diet. The production method used locally produces a smaller amount of solids, at 5%, compared to up to 30% in California. This would require some diet modification for the cattle.

While there may be some obstacles for the dairy farmers to overcome, whey appears to be a viable nutrition option for local cattle. If their concerns are adequately addressed, using whey will be a cost-saving practice which will help the dairy industry to grow. The Newfoundland Dairymen's Association, Eastern Region is working on an implementation plan to address concerns and help ensure that this venture will benefit the farming community.



Investigating Non-Chemical Methods for Chinch Bug Control



The Newfoundland and Labrador Horticulture Producers Council received funding from the Newfoundland and Labrador Agri-Adapt Council Inc. (AACI) to undertake a research project on controlling chinch bugs, insects which do serious damage to grass-covered areas. Control of chinch bugs is an emerging issue for the turf industry in the province and for homeowners. Historically, chemical pesticides have been used to control chinch bugs, however many of the chemicals that provided "good" results are no longer registered for use.

This project is investigating two non-chemical methods for reducing chinch bug damage to lawns and turf grasses. The two methods are vacuuming and endophyte-enhanced grasses. Project researcher Nancy Hudson will be comparing different vacuuming strategies with a conventional pesticide spray treatment as well as a control site where no treatment is applied. Research on endophyte-enhanced grasses will focus on determining whether the grass-fungi relationship is effective in reducing chinch bug damage and whether such effects can be sustained over time.

From our preliminary work with a backpack vacuum we confirmed that air suction through a hose was effective at picking up chinch bugs in grass and was successful at capturing all chinch bug life-history stages with efficacy equal or superior to other sampling methods. The success of the backpack vacuum has led to the testing of larger commercial lawn vacuums. Our preliminary studies indicated that chinch bug abundance was influenced more by cultural practices (amended vs. non-amended soil) than by sod type. This initial research results has led to research implementation on larger sod plot area to further explore this phenomenon. This research project will continue for two more years.



Agri-Adapt
Council Inc.

Farm Field Day Saturday, August 11, 2007 Mount Pearl

On Saturday August 11th, Farm Field Day is set to take place at the agriculture complex, located at 308 Brookfield Road in Mount Pearl. This is the 49th annual running of the event. It takes place from 10AM to 5PM. The event features free admission as well as free parking. The event is set to include tractor tours and hay rides, which are always popular with children, as well as research displays, and industry exhibitors. Also expect an appearance by the agriculture mascots, including Jacob the Farmer. A chicken barbeque and pig roast are also popular features of Farm Field Day set to return this year. Bring the whole family for an educational and fun experience this August.

For further information about Farm Field Day, please contact:

Lesley Noftall
Communications Advisor
Agriculture and Agrifoods Canada
(709) 772-0461

SPACE FOR ADS

On-Farm Food Safety Assurance Program (OFFSAP)

In 2007, the On-Farm Food Safety Assurance Program (OFFSAP); safe, safer, safest, will be implemented by all producers affiliated with the Chicken Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador. All producers have undergone an audit to get validated and all producers are expected to receive their certification by mid 2007.

Initially there is a 7 year cycle for the OFFSAP and once the producer completes the seven year cycle it reverts to a 6 year cycle thereafter. There are four types of audits that a producer undergoes in order to achieve and maintain certification. The four types are as follows:

1. Full: An on-farm evaluation of all the program requirements.
2. Partial: An on-farm evaluation of a selected portion of the program requirements.
3. Record Assessment: An off-farm evaluation of records and a telephone interview of a selected portion of the program.
4. Self Declaration: An off-farm evaluation of a producer-completed checklist and supporting documents of a selected portion of the program requirements.

Initial 7 Year Cycle

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
F	P	R	S	P	R	S

Initial 6 Year Cycle

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
F	R	S	P	R	S

By implementing the On-Farm Food Safety Assurance Program, the chicken farmers of NL are placing themselves at the forefront of food safety and will be able to prove to consumers that their chicken is produced according to internationally recognized standards.

Much of the information above was provided courtesy of Shelley Acker Manager of Chicken Farmers of Nova Scotia

SPACE FOR ADS



Environmental Stigma

Those of us who are involved in the development of agriculture in Labrador are often asked what is that “contamination issue” all about at Goose Bay. Let me try to fill you in and bring you up to date.

On the one hand, throughout the past hundred years of the governance of this Dominion/ Colony/Province Forestry badly trumped Agriculture in every encounter. When the part time farmers sought a land base in the vicinity of Happy Valley-Goose Bay they were directed to a previously burned over area with almost no forest production capacity, located between the Military Reserve of the then American Air Force Base and the Grand (Churchill) River. The approximate 1000 acres

available in this region stretches for five kilometers between the Military Reserve and the River and was identified more recently as the Churchill River Agricultural Zone.

On the other hand, at the outset of the second World War a large and vitally important Air Base was constructed on a river delta plateau known locally as “Uncle Bob Michelin’s Berry Patch”. During the height of the Cold War the American presence stood at about 7000 residents on the Base, local mythology has it that nuclear weapons were stored on the “American soil”, and twelve KC135 air-to-air flying tankers refueled the B-52 bombers which flew 24/365 in the northern vicinity of the Soviet Union. More to the present point, in their 30 years of occupation an admitted 5 million liters of fuel were spilled from Base fuel tanks and possibly more than 40,000 drums, empty and full, used to convey every conceivable commodity for the Base’s use, were discarded in the general vicinity of the Churchill River Agricultural Zone. In 1974, as changes in military technology rendered the B-52 “umbrella” redundant, the Americans allowed the former “land lease” property to revert to the Canadian Government, with the agreement that Canada would undertake any necessary clean up of the garbage.

As the current owners of the 5 Wing Goose Bay Airbase, our Department of National Defense have carried out clean up activities for the past ten years. About 2004, in rather secretive negotiations, DND requested our Provincial Government to place a freeze on any agricultural expansion within the Churchill River Zone. This was to permit a three year investigation of the existing contaminants in the area. In 2005, DND officials announced to local farmers that they would be erecting signs along the Trans Labrador Road, immediately opposite the farms, declaring the Military Reserve to be a Hazardous Area and the surface water un-potable. In May 2006 Federal Justice and DND officials met the local farmers/lease holders from the area and acknowledged that the human food production operations were being negatively impacted by the perception of contamination in the Zone. A process of evaluation of the claims of affected farmers/leaseholders was put in place with the latest commitment from the Federal Government being that initial offers of compensation for the relocation of food production activities will be made by DND in January 2008.

More recently the Lake Melville Agricultural Association has requested a meeting with the top level public servants in Provincial Crown Lands, Agrifoods, Justice, and Intergovernmental Affairs to discuss the negotiations occurring between the Federal and Provincial Governments and the future status of the existing agricultural leases in the Zone. The Association is also investigating the viability of utilizing the land base, developed at considerable investment of Government and farmers and now condemned for food production, for the production of a biofuel crop which could be refined locally to reduce local fossil fuel consumption.

The Grand River sign is located at our driveway, and the warning immediately across the highway.

Frank Pye is an ordained United Church Minister who was engaged as an Adult Education Administrator with the Labrador College for ten years prior to his “retirement into farming” in 1996. He and his wife Carole Joyce operate Grand River Farm at Happy Valley-Goose Bay. He represents the Lake Melville Agricultural Association on the Board of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture.





News Release

For immediate release

CANADA'S NEW GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE PRODUCERS WITH \$400 MILLION IN COST OF PRODUCTION PAYMENTS THIS SUMMER

OTTAWA, Ontario, May 1st, 2007 – The Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, announced today that the \$400 million in cost of production payments will begin to be paid out to farmers in June 2007.

“Our government is aware that high production costs are cutting into producer income. This \$400 million payment will help them deal with the rising costs they have faced over the past few years,” said Minister Strahl. “And for the future, we have committed up to \$100 million annually that would be paid into producer savings accounts to address increasing production costs.”

Most producers will automatically receive a payment and do not have to apply. Initial cheques will begin flowing in June and are expected to be complete by the end of October. The initial payment will be based on 2.36 percent of a producer's net sales for 2000-2004. If funds remain, final payments will be made in December. (See attached backgrounder for more detail.)

The funds are part of a \$1 billion commitment in Budget 2007 to improve national farm income programs. A kick-start payment of \$600 million will be paid out to farmer savings accounts once agreement is reached with provinces and territories. Negotiations on the new program are now underway.

The new savings account program along with the disaster relief framework, improved production insurance, and an improved margin based program represents the federal government's proposal for the replacement of the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization program.

- 30 -

For more information, media may contact:

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Press Secretary
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BACKGROUND

COST OF PRODUCTION PAYMENT WHAT PRODUCERS NEED TO KNOW

The \$400 million Cost of Production Payment is a direct payment to producers to help them deal with rising costs in recent years. Most producers will automatically receive a payment and do not have to apply. The federal government has also committed up to \$100 million annually that would be paid into producer savings accounts to address increasing production costs.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Producers of non-supply managed commodities reporting farm income for tax purposes for 2004. New producers of non-supply managed commodities reporting farm income for the first time in 2005 or 2006 are also eligible.

DO PRODUCERS NEED TO APPLY?

Producers who provided their 2004 farming income and expense information for the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) program do not need to apply.

Producers who did not provide their 2004 farming income and expense for CAIS, or producers who began farming after 2004, are eligible but must send in an application.

WHEN WILL APPLICATIONS BE AVAILABLE?

Applications will be available in late May. Producers will be notified through media and public notices when applications are available.

Applications can be requested now and will be mailed as soon as they are available. To request an application by email visit the program Web site (www.agr.gc.ca/cop) or call 1-866-367-8506.

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE TO APPLY?

The deadline to apply is September 1, 2007.

WHEN WILL PAYMENTS BE MADE?

Initial payments will begin flowing in late June and are expected to be complete by the end of October. Virtually all of the funds will be issued in the initial payments. If funds remain, final payments will be made in December.

HOW WILL PAYMENTS BE MADE?

For producers who farmed in 2004, initial payments will be based on 2.36 percent of an average of their net sales of qualifying commodities for the 2000 to 2004 period.

For producers who began farming after 2004, payments will be based on 2.36 percent of an average of 2005 and 2006 net sales.

WHERE CAN PRODUCERS GET MORE INFORMATION?

Producers can get more information by calling 1-866-367-8506 or by visiting the program Web site (www.agr.gc.ca/cop).

WHO WILL DELIVER THIS PROGRAM?

For producers in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Prince Edward Island, Yukon, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, and New Brunswick, the program will be delivered by the federal administration. Quebec has expressed an interest in delivering the program and negotiations are currently underway for them to deliver the funds provincially.



Is this an article that
is in a “Section?”

A Sweet Year for Cranberries

The province's commercial cranberry sector is coming of age with a bumper harvest in 2006 and signs of bigger things on the horizon. In 2006, 127,000 kilograms (280,000 pounds) of fruit was harvested, marking a 71 per cent increase over last year and a 367 per cent increase compared to 2004.

The harvest had a farm gate value of \$120,000 plus another \$130,000 was generated through value-added processing. Over the past four years the cranberry industry has experienced a consistent level of growth and is presently providing product to export markets.

Indian Bay Frozen Foods purchased 95 per cent of the 2006 cranberry crop. The product was packed and froze at facilities in Wareham-Centreville, Bonavista Bay and then exported to European markets. Local consumers bought the remaining five per cent as fresh fruit or U-Pick.

Expansion of the cranberry industry will offer secondary processing opportunities for producers in the province. In fact, local cranberries are already being used in the making of cranberry wine and liqueurs, purees and powders. Additional opportunities for secondary processing are being explored for such things as juices and sweet and dried cranberries.

The province's cranberry strategy falls under the Alternative Crops Initiative of the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Agricultural Policy Framework agreement. As

part of this initiative the Province and the federal government have been providing \$150,000 annually on a cost-shared basis to support various research and development initiatives.

There is plenty of room for further growth as the Province continues to work with farmers to develop a long-term cranberry strategy that will see more land identified for production. The 2006 harvest was grown on just over 11 hectares (28 acres) of land on three private partner farms at Stephenville Crossing, Stephenville, Terra Nova and at the Department of Natural Resources' demonstration and experimental site at Deadman's Bay. In addition, a 1.6 hectare (4 acre) farm at Frenchman's Cove on the Burin Peninsula is also coming into production and should add another 9,000 to 14,000 kg (20,000 to 30,000 lbs.) of fruit to the 2007 cranberry harvest. As these fields continue to mature they will yield even better results.

Research and development efforts into cranberry production will continue. In fact, several new varieties of cranberries are presently being tested for their market potential at the test site in Deadman's Bay.

The combined effort of government and the agriculture community is starting to pay dividends for local farmers. These efforts will continue with the objective of providing even more growth opportunities in support of our rural economies.



SCHOOL FUNDRAISER HAS STUDENTS LIKING THEIR VEGETABLES

A unique school fundraiser encourages students to eat their vegetables while promoting the province's vegetable industry.

Schools participating in the School Vegetable Program this past fall sold more than 550,000 pounds of locally-produced potatoes, carrots, turnips and cabbage to the public. The money raised through the sale of these mixed vegetable hampers is used to support school activities.

The vegetables are provided by local farmers and sold by school volunteers at prices comparable to, or better, than wholesale. However, those involved in the program say the greater impact is the awareness it is raising among children and parents about the local industry and the importance of eating vegetables.



Participation in the program exposes students to locally-grown, healthy foods and they begin to recognize where their vegetables come from. It also helps to reinforce and promote nutrition and better eating habits.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Horticulture Producers Council, in partnership with the Department of Natural Resources, introduced the program last year with the assistance of the federal/provincial Agriculture Policy Framework.

The public has responded positively to the initiative and to the partnership between industry and schools. Sales were 20 per cent higher this year using a new six-colour vegetable bag that promoted the program and the farm where the vegetables were grown. In addition, a new order form was used that contained the slogan, *'Farmers Helping Students + Students Helping Farmers = A Healthy Newfoundland and Labrador.'*

The School Vegetable Program includes an educational component consisting of an interactive 'Veggie Bus' exhibit, painted with cartoon characters, which teaches

students about the science behind growing vegetables. Last year, more than 4,000 children visited the exhibit. This year the 'Veggie Bus' exhibit will be taken to even more locations throughout the province.

Denise MacDonald, principal of C.C. Loughlin Elementary School in Corner Brook, believes the vegetable fundraiser also offers something else to her students - the image and understanding of the annual harvest.

"I love our annual fundraiser. It's the closest thing our children have to an annual food harvest. I love seeing children with fresh vegetables," she said.

MacDonald said the program had another positive benefit for school administrators in that it provided an opportunity for parents to work with the children to sell the vegetables. For some parents, it was the first time they volunteered to be part of such a school activity.

Organizers of the School Vegetable Program hope to sell one-million pounds of vegetables over the next three years.

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