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# Agriview

Newfoundland and Labrador Agriculture



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A Young Farmer on the Move**  
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Federation of Agriculture**

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# Agriview

Newfoundland and Labrador Agriculture



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**On The Cover: Luke Strong on his farm in Harcourt.**





**Mervin Wiseman**  
President

I want to start my message by extending my gratitude to all the members of our organization for the confidence they had in me to elect me as their president. It is indeed an honour, which I value and will reward with a full tenure of hard work on everyone's behalf. I acknowledge those who stood for election during the Annual General Meeting in January and also want to thank the outgoing president and board for their interest in, and dedication to, the agriculture industry in the province. Many of the same members will again serve in a similar capacity on the new board, and I look forward to working with them.

Most will agree, it is an exciting time to be working towards achieving our industry goals. The provincial government has set a new bar with its commitment to increase food self-sufficiency from 10 to 20 percent by 2022. It is an ambitious undertaking, and we are all looking forward to contributing to the hard work and diligence. This new vision will include new goals and objectives for the industry, including the ability to measure achievement and adjust current programs and initiatives.

The recent announcement of 64,000 hectares of new land identified and protected for agriculture sets a remarkable tone about the government's seriousness in making good on its food self-sufficiency target. It is clearly a fundamental marker for agriculture development in this province. Likewise, it indicates a willingness of government to work with the full scope of industry players, who have long advocated for this kind of a land base to effectively carry out their farming activities in a business-like manner.

Adding to the land announcement is the undertaking of a new agriculture strategy for the province. Once again, government has approached this undertaking with a full spirit of cooperation and collaboration with industry. The NLFA has been given a shared responsibility on the strategy steering committee with provincial Agrifoods with the appointment of representatives from its Board of Directors, and industry groups. Clearly, government and industry both want to pin their hopes and aspirations on establishing an agricultural development roadmap with a shared vision, goals and objectives.

As we enter a new crossroads in the development of the industry, we see additional opportunity in a new agriculture policy framework milestone. The new five-year agreement is scheduled to be finalized in St. John's this coming summer with the expectation that all provinces and territories, along with the federal government, will be signing the agreement.

Aligning and coordinating the new provincial agriculture strategy with the new framework agreement is crucial. Likewise, finding a workable and efficient process for the allocation of the newly identified land base to farmers will be the real test of value of the announcement. The NLFA and all its members are eager to work with government to achieve the best possible outcome. I look forward to the challenges and rewards that come with it all.

Looking past policy and into the fields, the new growing season is almost upon us. I would like to wish our members success in this upcoming season.

**Next Agriview**  
Newfoundland and Labrador Agriculture

Our next issue will be **Summer 2017**.  
We are accepting submissions until **June 30, 2017**. If you are interested contact:  
**info@nlfa.ca** or **709-747-4874**



# Luke Strong

## A Young Farmer on the Move

By Matthew Carlson

Readers of *AgriView* first heard about Luke Strong and his farm in late 2015 when he was profiled as part of an article about new entrants into the agriculture industry. Since that time, Luke has made great progress with making his farm dream a reality.

Luke has moved from raising beef cattle to realizing his goal of buying a dairy quota and entering the dairy industry. Fittingly, his farm is now known as Hillside Holsteins Farm.

The 215-acre farm, located in Harcourt, is getting prepared to welcome about 110 new animals, including cows, heifers and calves. At present, the cows in Luke's herd are still being milked at the farm where he bought them. The farm is currently harvesting 180 acres of forage with plans to soon grow alfalfa and corn silage.

Dairy farming runs in Luke's family. From the 1980s until the early 1990s, Luke's grandfather, Walter Young, operated a dairy farm. Luke credits the family connection, an interest in farm equipment, and the respect that comes with the profession as the main driving forces that steered him toward farming as a career.

This time of year, Luke's day starts before 4:30 am when he rises to start milking cows. This lasts from about 5:30 to 6:30, after which it takes about 45 minutes to wash down the parlour. There is usually one other person working alongside Luke. One will milk while the other cleans the barn, feeds the calves and heifers, and then gets the total mix ration (TMR) ready for the lactating cows. In the winter, snow clearing is also a part of the job, since the milk truck needs to be able to pick up milk every second day. The evening isn't much different (although the TMR is only done in the morning). Luke is usually out of the barn by 8pm.

In the summer, snow clearing is swapped for land clearing and hay



Cutting hay at Hillside Holsteins.





Luke's dog Oakley looking over the farm.

production, which usually involves two cuts, although it can be three cuts in a great season.

Luke's routine will get a shake-up soon. His newest addition to the farm, a Boumatic MRS-1 robotic milking machine, will arrive in April and will change how things are done, taking some of the labour out of the equation at milking time. Luke doubts it will mean a reduction in his overall hours spent at the barn, but it will change the schedule a bit and add some flexibility. "With the robot, I can multitask. Cows are being milked while I can work at something else and oversee everything on my phone or computer." This new addition to the farm will handle up to 60 cows.

While it may sound like Luke is already moving at a great pace with his farm, and has plenty to keep him busy, he has no intention of standing still. He has applied for more land and will keep seeking out new land leases as they become available, with a goal of

clearing 50 acres every year. Additionally, he is hoping to get more quota and another milking robot to go with it in the future. Luke is also hoping to get a greenhouse this fall. His girlfriend got him interested in greenhouse growing, and Luke says "we will produce anything and everything that grows in greenhouses. We will change with the market and demand."

In spite of all the growth and success at Hillside Holsteins, Luke has certainly faced challenges. At 20 years of age, Luke feels his youth can sometimes work against him. "Being so young, people tend to overlook you and your plans." At the same time, he says lots of others want to help him. Being new to farming can also be a challenge, having to build the relationships that others have had for generations. Cashflow can also be tight, especially when getting started. Another challenging area is land access. He has maximized his existing land and wants to access more. His long-term goal is to have 1,000 acres of workable land in 12-15 years.

While all those areas have posed challenges at Hillside Holsteins, they certainly have not held Luke back. It's been 'full steam ahead' on

the farm.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture is pleased to profile Luke Strong and wishes this 'young farmer on the move' continued success.



A sunny day overlooking the farm and the water of Smith Sound.



# NLFA Annual Meeting Draws 80 Delegates to Gander

The 42nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Workshop of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture (NLFA) was held January 25 and 26, 2017 at the Hotel Gander in Gander. The event was well attended by about 80 participants, including many farmers, industry stakeholders, government representatives, and representatives of other groups from across the province. The theme of the workshop was *"Newfoundland and Labrador's Journey to Public Trust and Social License."*

The topic of public trust and social license was chosen because it is vital to the growth of the agriculture industry of Newfoundland and Labrador. The strength of our industry is dependent on the consumers' trust that farmers provide the highest quality products, produced in a humane and environmentally sustainable way. The training and knowledge that was gained from attending this session will benefit not only the agriculture sector, but also Newfoundland and Labrador as a whole.

The first day of the two-day event was the workshop bringing together farmers and agriculture stakeholders to discuss the topic of social license. Minister Steve Crocker was on-hand to bring greetings and open the event. Kim McConnell, the founder and the former CEO of Ad-Farm, was the first to present on the topic of social license. Kelly Daynard, Communications Manager at Farm and Food Care Canada, then built on the concepts and topics introduced by Mr. McConnell.

Other speakers at the workshop included Peter Nel-



Kim McConnell presenting at the NLFA Workshop.



Minister Steve Crocker makes opening comments at the conference.

son from Farm Credit Canada, and Keith Deering from the Department of Fisheries, Forestry, and Agrifoods.





Presentation of the Environment Award to Triple E Farms. (L-R): Junior Eveleigh; Pearl Eveleigh; Barry Nolan, Department of Fisheries, Forestry, and Agrifoods; and Dwight Eveleigh.

At the evening banquet, greetings were extended from Agriculture and Agrifood Canada by Sandy Todd, Associate Director, Science and Technology Branch; Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agrifoods by Scott Reid, MHA for St. George's-Humber; and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture by Drew Black, Director of Environment Policy. Banquet entertainment was provided by comedian John Sheehan.

Awards presented that evening were: the Environmental Award to Triple E. Farms; and the Lifetime Achievement Award to Eugene Legge. Paul Lomond was also recognized for his induction into the Atlantic Agricultural Hall of Fame. It was also noted that the



Presentation of Outstanding Contribution Award. (L-R): Outgoing President Melvin Rideout; Eugene Legge, recipient; and Christa Wright, Eugene's daughter and AITC Coordinator.

Federation's Dalhousie Agriculture Scholarship was awarded to Bailey Tarrant and Allison Smith. Congratulations to all the recipients for well-deserved honours.

The AGM took place on the second day. Nominations were held for President, one Director-at-Large, and Secretary-Treasurer, with elections taking place for the President and Secretary-Treasurer positions. Mervin Wiseman was elected as President and Terrilynn Robins was re-elected as Secretary Treasurer. Chris Oram was acclaimed as Director-at-Large. Congratulations are extended to all on their elections and appointments.

## **EVENTS & HAPPENINGS**

# Lots of Interest in Young Farmers' Workshops

**T**he Newfoundland and Labrador Young Farmers' Forum (NLYFF) hosted two new workshops in January and February in central Newfoundland and on the east coast, respectively.

The first event, done in partnership with Agriculture in the Classroom NL, was called 'Speak-Up Training.' It took place on January 24 and focused on communications and media relations.

This Speak-Up Training workshop gave participants the ability to tell their stories in an easy-to-understand and compelling manner, which could be of use for media interviews, farm tours, council meetings, school groups and more.

In this day-long workshop, attendees learned who the average Canadian is, how much they know or don't know about food and farming and how to tell your





Group shot of the participants at the Speak-Up Workshop in January.

farm story to a non-farming audience. There were 15 people in attendance.

The next workshop was for new entrants. It was designed to help aspiring farmers learn what it takes to start and manage a commercial agricultural business, and decide whether this is a path they really want to take. Twelve aspiring young farmers attended the event.

The workshop provided an excellent framework to help new farmers assess their skills and interests, learn the realities of farm business ownership, and become connected to local resources. Workshop participants were supported through the *Exploring the Small Farm Dream* workbook.

One of the group activities, 'the farmer interview,' encourages participants to ask questions of an established farmer. We were fortunate to have participation from two very experienced and knowledgeable farmers for this exercise. We had the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture (NLFA) President



Speaker Kelly Daynard takes participants through an exercise at the Speak-Up Workshop in Gander.



Participants seek advice about starting farms from NLFA President Merv Wiseman at the New Entrants Workshop in St. John's.

Merv Wiseman, and Eugene Legge, a former NLFA President, provide advice and answer questions.

Funding to host these workshops was provided by *Growing Forward 2*, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.



## First Canada's Agriculture Day Marked Across Province

Newfoundland and Labrador's agriculture industry celebrated its first 'Canada's Agriculture Day' on February 16.

As part of the celebrations, Agriculture in the Classroom NL hosted culinary events at two local schools, Pasadena Elementary on the west coast and St. Teresa's Elementary on the east coast (postponed until February 23 due to adverse weather conditions). Students had the opportunity to enjoy a school-wide culinary event featuring local chicken, eggs, vegetables, milk and berries, while learning about the local agriculture industry. There were also interactive exhibits for the students to explore the different sectors of the agriculture industry and live entertainment for the kids.

Junior high and high school students throughout the province also had the chance to participate through a social media contest.

As Canadians, we can be proud that our farmers produce safe, high-quality food for our country and the world.

This project was funded in part by *Growing Forward 2*, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative intended to support innovation, competitiveness and adaptability in the agriculture and agrifoods industry. *Growing Forward 2* provides \$280,000 annually to support Agriculture in the Classroom activities in Newfoundland and Labrador.



Buddy the Puffin and Moonica the cow at the Canada's Agriculture Day celebration at St. Theresa's in St. John's.



Premier Dwight Ball attending Canada's Agriculture Day celebration at Pasadena Elementary.

## Take-Home Messages from National Young Farmers' Conference

By Kayla Arsenault, Mark's Market (Wooddale, Newfoundland)

The annual Canadian Young Farmers Forum (CYFF) conference was held in Ottawa, ON from February 24-27. Local young farmers Luke Strong, Sam Lester,

Rodney Reid, Brad Smith, Susan Lester, David Simmons, Calvin Cameron, Ian Richardson, Christopher Oram and I joined other young farmers from across



Canada at the event. There were over 150 young farmers in attendance at the conference. The annual CYFF conference sets out to educate and energize a powerful network of young farmer leaders.

'Growing Canada for 150 years' was the theme of this year's conference. We launched a Twitter campaign and used the hashtag #canag150 on everything that we posted on social media during the conference. The event started Friday evening with the launch of the new CYFF young farmer app which is going to be a great tool for all young farmers across Canada to be notified about upcoming events and to get the references and resources that are relevant to everyday farming. The days were filled with speakers covering topics of succession planning, farm management, agricultural lead-



NL attendees at CYFF 2017. (L-R): Brad Smith, Rodney Reid, Sam Lester, Ian Richardson, David Simmons, Kayla Arsenault, Calvin Cameron, Luke Strong. Not pictured: Susan Lester.

ership, stress management and financial success. One young farmer from every province was also asked to present a virtual farm tour of their farm. Susan Lester did an amazing job representing Newfoundland with her presentation about Lester's Farm Market.

By attending this year's national conference, I came home with more knowledge about succession planning and have been able to apply some of what was learned into our own farm's future plans. I feel that this conference gave me an understand-

ing of how different agriculture is in all the different provinces across Canada. Seeing how passionate and energized young agriculture professionals are, I believe that the Canadian agriculture industry is in good hands as it continues to grow.

## Agriculture in the Classroom Winter 2017 Update

### National Projects

As the last celebration for International Year of Pulses, AITC-NL partnered with Chef Andie Bulman to complete four culinary sessions with the nutrition classes at Waterford Valley High School. The students made homemade crackers and hummus, and tasted lentil cookies. They also learned what a pulse is and its nutritional value.

### Rooting For Health

As part of the 8th Annual Rooting for Health, hundreds of students were treated to a nutritious and delicious breakfast on March 10th prepared by local chefs using local ingredients, including eggs, berries and milk.

Rooting for Health is a partnership between the Kids Eat Smart Foundation Newfoundland and Labrador, the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture, the Agriculture in the Classroom Program, the



Volunteers at Forest Park Elementary for Rooting For Health.

School Milk Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Egg Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador. Dominion stores throughout the province provided funding to assist with costs associated with the breakfast.

Rooting for Health helps students in our province





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Minister Steve Crocker and MHA Derek Bennett at Mary Queen of the World for Rooting for Health.

recognize the relationship between farming, food and their health. After breakfast, students visited local farmers who were set up in the school gymnasiums. The students asked questions about where food comes from and learned about how food makes it to their table.

Participating schools in 2017: Mary Queen of the World (St. John's), Random Island Academy (Random Island), Forest Park Primary (Grand Falls-Windsor), Immaculate Heart of Mary (Corner Brook), and Peacock Primary (Happy Valley-Goose Bay).

### Little Green Thumbs Culinary Classes

Little Green Thumbs partnered with Chef Andie Bulman from Dominion to pilot a culinary class project for three Little Green Thumbs classrooms at St. Matthew's



Little Green Thumbs culinary classes. (L-R): Chef Andie Bulman and NLFA Outreach Coordinator, Chelsea Foley.



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Elementary. Little Green Thumbs teaches students how to grow healthy food, but AITC-NL wanted to take the opportunity to teach students how to use that healthy food in recipes. Chef Andie Bulman used healthy recipes that used produce from the Little Green Thumbs' gardens, and each student got to see and taste the fresh ingredients, and participate in making the food.

The first session was in the classroom on February 24, when the students learned how to make kale chick-pea pesto. For the second session, on March 3, the stu-

dents travelled to Dominion in the Pearlgate Plaza to do a grocery store tour with dietician Danielle Farrell, and made fresh salsa. The students participated in a grocery store scavenger hunt to learn about food and nutrition. The third and final session, on March 24, was a surprise final celebration in the classroom. Teachers and students had a great time learning how to use the fresh ingredients from their gardens.

*This project is funded in part by Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.*

## Canadian Agricultural Safety Week 2017

In March, the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA), the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA), and presenting sponsor Farm Credit Canada (FCC), encouraged all Canadians to be part of the AgSafe Family.

Canadian Agricultural Safety Week (CASW) is an annual public awareness campaign focusing on the importance of safe agriculture. It ran from March 12-18. This year organizers focused on information farm families need to help keep everyone safe on the farm while preserving the farming lifestyle. The campaign lasts for a week, but farm safety is important all year long.

"We are asking adults in the ag industry to demonstrate their commitment to farm safety this Ag Safety Week," said Marcel Hacault, CASA's Executive Director. "That means leading by action, whether it's creating safe play areas for children, or leading toolbox talks or creating your own farm safety plan. It's the time to make a commitment to your farm, your family and yourself."

As a part of CASW, organizers have produced a number of resources, including a template for building a general policy statement for farm safety and health. In celebration of CASW 2017, CASA is also making available, free of charge, the Canada FarmSafe Plan for farmers that fill out the template.

Farm Credit Canada is a long-time supporter of CASW and many farm safety programs. FCC shows their commitment to the AgSafe Family through not



only their support of Ag Safety Week, but also through the Safety Day Coordinator Fund. This fund provides support towards the cost of hosting youth Safety Days across the country.

New for CASW 2017, is the AgSafe Ribbon campaign. This campaign aims to raise awareness on the importance of safe agriculture and asks all Canadians what role they play in farm safety. Ribbons are available to order on [agsafetyweek.ca](http://agsafetyweek.ca).

Canadian Agricultural Safety Week takes place every year during the third week of March. For more information about CASW, media kits or resources, please visit [agsafetyweek.ca](http://agsafetyweek.ca).

CASW 2017 is presented by Farm Credit Canada and brought to you by the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture with assistance from the Government of Canada through *Growing Forward 2*, a federal, provincial and territorial initiative. In 2017, CASW sponsors include long-time corporate sponsor Farm Credit Canada, as well as CN, Dow AgroSciences and BASF.



# Agricultural History Society of Newfoundland and Labrador Winds Up 1986-2016

**Mandate: to raise the level of awareness of agriculture in the history of Newfoundland and Labrador.**

Formed in 1986 and now thirty years old, our society has decided to wind up its affairs. The inevitable aging of our membership has contributed to this decision.

However, looking back, we are proud of what our society has accomplished in bringing the province's history of agriculture into discussion, exhibits and presentations across the province and beyond.

We began with a project to restore some pieces of historic agricultural equipment (Social Services grant for employment training). Next we researched and created a 20-panel exhibit on the History of Agriculture in the province (Canada-Newfoundland Agrifood Development Subsidiary Agreement 1988-1993). This exhibit was shown across the province and in Nova Scotia.

Next we turned our attention to *Century Farms*. Newfoundland and Labrador was the only province which had not recognized families who had worked their farms for one hundred years or more. Seventeen farms were honoured with this distinction (Atlantic Policy Framework, Provincial Heritage grant, Cultural Economic Development Program). This project earned the Manning Award for Excellence in the Public Presentation of Historic Places, 2008.

More projects followed, all of which included storyboards which were widely exhibited to the public in a variety of venues. The project *Potatoes* recognized the work of Dr Ken Proudfoot, breeder of canker-free po-

tatoes. *The Practice of Gardens* project brought attention to the very origin of agriculture in the province (Culture and Economic Development Program). The Lewis family of Fahey Farm, Chapel's Cove, contributed a storyboard of the history of their farm from 1795.

We partnered with the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador (CEDP) on our *Root Cellar* project. The material collected was deposited in the Digital Archive Initiative at Memorial University. For this project we were recognized by the provincial Historic Commemorations Program for root cellars as a Distinctive Cultural Tradition and Practice (travel supported by Chicken Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador). With the legacy funding from this initiative, together with funding from CEDP, we initiated a new project: *Labrador Gardens*, which was well received.

Through our thirty years we have sponsored public lectures, participated in newspaper and radio interviews, acted as advisors to Agriculture Canada for their new national exhibits, and written many articles for publication, including a regular column — Agricultural History — in the newsletter of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture.

We sincerely thank all our supporters and financial contributors over thirty years. We feel that we have gone some way in achieving our mandate. It's been a good run — and we have enjoyed it!

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## Are you a young farmer aged 18-40?

Stay in touch with other young farmers in Newfoundland and Labrador and be a part of a powerful network by joining the Young Farmers' mailing list. Have your say in upcoming training programs and the direction of the Newfoundland and Labrador Young Farmers' Forum (NLYFF).

Contact Matthew Carlson to join:  
709-747-4830 / [mcarlson@nlfa.ca](mailto:mcarlson@nlfa.ca)  
Or visit [nlyoungfarmers.ca](http://nlyoungfarmers.ca)

