

**Atlantic Federations of Agriculture  
Board of Directors Meeting  
November 18, 2013  
Truro, Nova Scotia**

**In Attendance:**

Abe Buttimer	Eugene Legge	Dennis Boudreau	Jennifer MacDonald
Henry Vissers	Josée Albert	John Jamieson	Paul Connors
Chris van de Huevel	Cliff Thomson		

The meeting was called to order by Abe Buttimer at 1:30 pm.

**Agenda Item #1 - Agenda**

Abe Buttimer asked for a review of the agenda and the topic of wild turkeys was added. A **MOTION** to approve the agenda as amended was passed.

**Agenda Item #2 - Minutes of July 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

A **MOTION** to approve the July 17<sup>th</sup> minutes was passed.

**Agenda Item #3 - Business Arising from the Minutes**

The item concerning road weight limits was touched upon and members were asked to forward the road weight limits from their provinces to the New Brunswick members.

The issue of solid waste collection fees was discussed with members spoke about the fees and regulations concerning construction demolition waste in their provinces.

**Agenda Item #4 - Trespassing**

NFLD reps spoke about the issues in their province concerning people trespassing on agricultural land. They noted that there was a trespassing act in place, but that no one has ever been charged.

Each provincial rep spoke about the situation in their province, and the other three provinces all have Acts as well, but there is lots of diversity in some of the requirements for certain activities (hunting and fishing for example) as well as what type of signs could be used and how those signs are regarded by law.

PEI also has an Occupiers Liability Act which essentially states that, as long as a land owner is purposefully setting trespassers up for injury or damage to their belongings, that a land owner is not liable for an accident by a trespasser.

### **Agenda Item #5 - Research Priorities**

There was an extended discussion concerning research priorities as AAFC staff has met with reps in different provinces over the past couple of months. There was a consensus that the AAFC research efforts didn't seem to have a direction, and given the loss of staff (due to cuts and un-replaced retirees) and budget, that their research programs were really starting to suffer.

It was noted that, from a meeting earlier in the day with Dr. Gray at the Dalhousie Agriculture Campus, that 85% of research is now being done at Universities, not by AAFC researchers.

It was decided that the AFA should continue to build the relationship with the Dalhousie Agriculture Campus and schedule to meet with them again to get into more specific details on training and research need for the agriculture industry. The AFA should try to get an actual plan from Dr. Gray as well as time frames for some of the changes that he'd like to put in place before hand so that reps can provide comments on that the plan.

### **Agenda Item #6 – Members Benefits, Health Plan Update**

Henry Vissers gave a detailed presentation on the Health plan being presented to the NSFA, including plan details and costs. He noted that the NS plan rolls out on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014, and is being kept confidential until the AGM at the end of November.

In PEI, the same plan is being rolled out, with slightly different costs because of the “experience” used in pricing, on February 1<sup>st</sup>.

In NS, the DFNS will remain separate from the NSFA plan for now. NFLD is still in a decision making mode.

### **Agenda Item #7 – CAAP Council Update**

There was a general discussion concerning the upcoming termination of the CAAP Councils. It was noted that there had been a meeting scheduled for the next day that had been cancelled due to the ED for the NS council leaving her job. It appears that the CAAP councils themselves will still exist, and some of them are trying to transform into a different type of entity. Funding for the types of innovation projects that ADAPT councils had been funding will now have to be funneled through GFII's Innovation monies. This is expected to be a much slower process with more difficult approvals. It was noted that the CAAP Councils in the Atlantic provinces each have about \$500,000 which can be used to “benefit agriculture” until those funds are depleted.

### **Agenda Item #8 – Provincial Deadstock Removal**

This is a difficult issue currently in PEI as the provincial government is attempting to reduce the amount of funding of the program, and there was a question as to what is happening in other areas.

Henry Vissers reviewed the details and costs to farmers for the NS program, which is a partnership between NSFA, DFNS, CFIA and the 2 collectors. The program is funding by industry, a \$30,000 annual grant from the provincial department and a \$150 payment from CFIA per SRM sample. Individual beef and hog farmers who use the program are billed and dairy farmers pay through their check offs. Mink are not collected in this program.

The program is still voluntary as farmers are still allowed to do their own dead stock composting.

The NFLD industry is currently looking into a bio-digester in their region to assist in this process.

#### **Agenda Item #9 - Provincial Membership Fees**

There was a discussion on the membership rates in the various provinces including how this was administered, ie, voluntary or mandatory, and how the commodity groups fit into the process. It was noted that PEI and NB are the only provinces that requires the Federation and NFU local to agree on rates.

#### **Agenda Item # 10 - Strawberry Virus Update**

Reps from each province reviewed the situation with the strawberry virus this past year. Essentially it was prominent in PEI and NS and expected to spread. PEI had a CAAP project which completed a literature review and a "best practices" manual will be produced to assist farmers in dealing with the virus in the future. It was noted that AAFC has determined that the source of the plants was not an issue, that the virus is expected to become more prevalent and that they have identified this issue as one of their priorities for in-field monitoring and research.

#### **Agenda Item # 11 - NS EFP Update**

Paul Gore from the NSFA EFP program gave an extensive statistical presentation comparing most recent findings to 2007 to understand where areas of improvement have taken place, and where there is still a need to improve / continue to educate.

During a general discussion it was noted that the program is now subject to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party review in most areas and, although still voluntary, is a requirement for access to most funding agreements.

### **Agenda Item #12 – EI Coalition**

This discussion centered on EI changes that had been announced in the spring. There were comments that the changes haven't seemed to have had the negative impact that some sectors had predicted.

The EI Coalition was discussed and it was thought that it had pretty much petered out.

John mentioned that there was a "Premiers Coalition on EI" meeting soon, and he was asked to find out more about this to share with the group.

### **Agenda Item # 13 – Presentation to Farmers using Migrant Workers**

John noted that he had seen a speaker at the recent CASA meeting who spoke about how to deal effectively with migrant workers, works from Mexico in particular. Her talk was about how to communicate with these individuals better by understanding some of the cultural issues that are different for them, and how they may respond differently to different approaches.

John asked if other might be interested if he was able to arrange to have her come to the east coast to put on talks in a couple of locations.

There was some interest in this and John and Henry were asked to look into the possibility of this.

### **Agenda Item # 14 – Wild Turkeys**

Jennifer noted that wild turkeys have created various issues in NB. The population is growing and, as an introduced species, there is no particular channel for managing them, and the population that is there, needs to be managed. She noted that the National Wild Turkey Federation currently is putting together a proposal for a hunt, and that this will include some access to farmland.

**Next Meeting** – During CFA AGM at the end of February.

**A MOTION to adjourn the meeting was approved.**