

# PEI WATER ACT

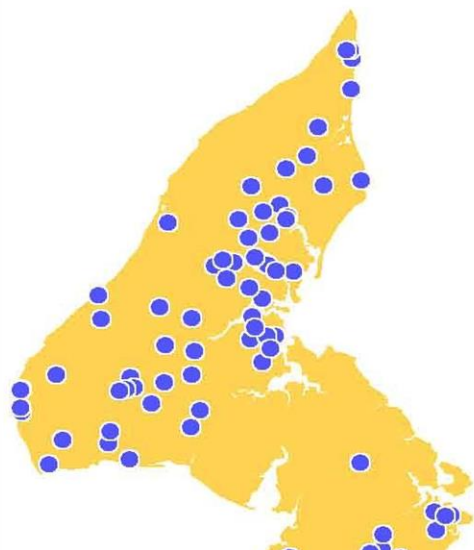
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND FEDERATION OF  
AGRICULTURE





- Chicken Farmers of PEI
- Dairy Farmers of PEI
- Egg Farmers of PEI
- Horticultural Council of PEI
- Island Grains and Protein Council
- PEI Beekeepers Association
- PEI Cattle Producers
- PEI Certified Organic Producers
- PEI Hog Commodity Marketing Board
- PEI Fur Breeders Association
- PEI Potato Board
- PEI Strawberry Growers Association
- PEI Wild Blueberry Growers Association
- PEI Woodlots Association
- Sheep Breeders Association
- Young Farmers of PEI









# ECONOMIC IMPACT



- PEIFA represents 85-90% of PEI's agricultural production
- Agriculture sector contributed almost \$450 million to Provincial GDP in 2015.
  - Multiplier Effect 6-7: Machinery, vehicles, supplies, seed, inputs, vets, wages, trucking professionals, etc.
- Island farms spent over \$435 million in operating expenses in 2015 - almost all of it in rural PEI
- In 2015, Island farmers employed approximately 4000 Islanders and spent over \$70 million in wages



# HOW WE USE WATER



- Drinking water for livestock
- Drinking water for plants
  - Main source – rainfall
  - Limited irrigation
- Wash lines – potatoes, fruits and vegetables
- Biosecurity measures – washing, sanitizing
- Crop protection (Cranberries)
- Fertigation
- Crop protectant application

# ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

- Fish Kills
- Nitrates in surface and ground water
- Erosion (wind & water)
- Organic Matter Levels
- Public Trust in our ability to manage environment

# INDUSTRY RESPONSES



- Partnering with industry and government to address our issues
  - 4R Nutrient Stewardship – Farming 4R Island
  - Environmental Farm Planning
  - Action Committee on Sustainable Land Management – Watershed projects
  - Alternate Land Use System
  - Soil Health Research

# 4 nutrient stewardship

4R NUTRIENT STEWARDSHIP CAN  
**HELP** GROW CROPS SUSTAINABLY

THE 4Rs WORK TO INCREASE PRODUCTION/PROFITABILITY FOR  
FARMERS WHILE ENSURING THE FUTURE OF THE AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY

RIGHT  
N P  
K  
SOURCE

RIGHT  
N K P K P  
RATE

RIGHT  
30  
TIME

RIGHT  
PLACE



# ENVIRONMENTAL FARM PROGRAM



- Assessment to help farmers develop plan for operating in a environmentally sustainable way
- Categories include:
  - water management, nutrient management, soil management, buffer riparian zone management
  - pesticide use, fertilizer use, well and septic condition, fuel storage, manure storage, buffer zones, wetlands among others
- **520 EFPs in place across PEI amounting to a total of 272,725 acres**
  - Since 2008 Island farmers have implemented:
    - Terrace - 1,331,369 feet (406 kilometers)
    - Waterway - 2,372,010 feet (723 Kilometers)
    - Farmable Berm - 319,647 feet (97 kilometers)
- **Another 100 up for renewal this year – they must be renewed every 5 years**

# ACTION COMMITTEE ON SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT



- 2014 saw major changes in Barclay Brook
  - Soil conservation plan,
  - Sensitive land taken out of production
  - Implementation of new sustainable practices
- 2016 Three high-priority watersheds identified
  - Carruthers Brook (Western PEI)
  - North River
  - Dunk River
    - Coordinators assigned to each
    - Water testing done
    - Working together to improve water quality in these watersheds
- Work continues – currently looking at water flow areas on field and government on strategically implementing more grassland waterways

# ALTERNATE LAND USE SYSTEM



- Voluntary program for PEI farmers and landowners with the goals to:
  - reduce soil erosion and siltation of watercourses and wetlands
  - improve water quality
  - improve and increase wildlife habitat
  - Reduce the impacts of climate change
- Farmers receive assistance from Government to remove land from production or to establish/maintain beneficial management practices that protect soil and water quality or improve fish and wildlife habitat.
- All agreements will expire on March 31, 2018 at which time the agreements will be reviewed.
- Program could be used to identify and remove land at risk – but will require additional funding to do so



# **WATER ACT VIEWS**



- **PEIFA supports the Water Act**
  - **Safe and adequate water supply for future generations is paramount**
  - **Water monitoring is important**
  - **Adequate level of controls**
- **We are prepared to work with Government going forward on a some requested revisions to this Act**
- **We are anxiously awaiting to see the draft regulations**

# SCIENCE-BASED DECISIONS



- Government has made it clear in this process that they support science based decision making
- PEIFA shares this goal. An important concept when dealing with a resource as important to all Islanders as water.
- Access and allocation should be made using the science based methodologies developed by independent experts
- PEIFA prepared to help in anyway they can to further the study of water to ensure all Islanders are given equitable access

# RECOMMENDATIONS



## 1. Section III – Protection of Water

- *This sections need to reference the Farm Practices Act*
- *We encourage the Province to not duplicate federal laws surrounding “deleterious substance.”*
  - *This is already handled by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and should remain in their hands*

## 2. Section IV – Water Management Area

- *Compensation should be considered for agriculture land inside the Management Area*
- *Language tightened to ensure the government does not subject producers to unwarranted scrutiny.*
- *The Farm Practices Act again should apply in this section of the Act*



# RECOMMENDATIONS



## Section V – Withdrawals and Discharges

- *Ensure permits for water extraction are a minimum of 5 years with little or no cost*
  - *Concern that if permit is only 5 years, this may limit financing of large facilities that may require a great deal of water*
- *Will there be restrictions on domestic supply for non-essential use in event of drought?*
- *A controlled lifting of the Moratorium be considered*

## Moratorium

- **Federation Resolution:**
  - Be it resolved that the PEI Federation of Agriculture request the Department of Environment remove the moratorium on new wells for supplemental agricultural irrigation **provided that the scientific data shows that it will not negatively impact the environment and that the PEI Water Extraction Policy provides the adequate controls for the siting and operation of any new wells.**
- The Federation is prepared to help facilitate this pilot project with Government

# THANK-YOU QUESTIONS?

