

# **PEI Federation of Agriculture 2018 Strategic Plan**

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## Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Introduction .....	4
About the PEI Federation of Agriculture.....	4
Governance .....	4
Vision, Mission & Core Values .....	4
Stakeholders .....	4
Project Background .....	5
Methodology.....	5
Internal Analysis.....	6
External Analysis .....	7
Strategic Plan .....	7
Gathering Strategic Information to Manage Risk .....	8
Enhancing Sustainability .....	11
Improving Strategic Skillsets for Producers .....	13
Advocacy .....	17
Improving Organizational Effectiveness .....	19
Timeline.....	21
Measuring Progress .....	21
Financing .....	21
Conclusion.....	22
Appendix 1. Strategic Map.....	23
Appendix 2. Strategic Checklist.....	24
Appendix 3. Timeline.....	25

# Executive Summary

The PEI Federation of Agriculture (PEIFA) pursued a project through the federal AgriRisk program in the 2017/18 fiscal year, resulting in a *Business Risk Assessment of the PEI Agriculture Industry*. This assessment was prepared by the firm MNP LLP (MNP) and led to 13 mitigations for the PEIFA to implement to manage risk present in the Island agriculture community. The PEIFA hired Dynamic Outcomes Consulting (DOC), with support from the PEI Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF), following the completion of the AgriRisk project to develop a strategic plan to assist in effectively implementing the mitigation strategies outlined in the *Business Risk Assessment of the PEI Agriculture Industry*.

The strategic plan was generated from a combination of input from the PEIFA Board of Directors and results from the *Business Risk Assessment of the PEI Agriculture Industry*. The strategic plan is a guideline for the PEIFA to follow to mitigate the risks identified in the MNP report, as well as to address internal weaknesses and issues identified by the PEIFA Board.

The strategic plan is broken down into five main strategies:

1. Gathering Strategic Information
2. Enhancing Sustainability
3. Improving Strategic Skillsets for Producers
4. Advocacy
5. Improving Organizational Effectiveness

A detailed timeline was developed to act as a measurement and monitoring tool for the PEIFA staff and board to utilize to measure progress on the strategies. The strategic plan is to be added as a standing item on the agenda for board meetings. A strategic map (see Appendix 1) and strategic checklist (see Appendix 2) were prepared as a summary of this strategic plan to use at board meetings.

To implement this strategic plan will take considerable resources from both a time and financial perspective. Potential financing options including an AgriRisk project and partnerships with organizations such as CAHRC, educational institutions, the EFP program, PEI provincial government, private partnerships and the PEIFA's existing resources.

# Introduction

## About the PEI Federation of Agriculture

The PEI Federation of Agriculture (PEIFA) is the largest general agricultural organization in PEI and has a mandate of standing for policies and programs viewed to be ‘pro’ family farm and working to improve the sustainability of Island farmers and farm families. In addition to reviewing legislative and regulatory issues impacting the agricultural sector, the PEIFA lobbies for changes to existing legislation/regulation/public policy and continually develops and delivers programs and services to meet the needs of the Island farm community.

## Governance

The organization is governed by a Board of Directors and Executive Committee. The Board is comprised of a representative from each commodity/agriculture organization, as well as two producers from each county who are non-organizational representatives. The PEIFA is operated by a trained and competent staff that is dedicated to servicing Island producers.

## Vision, Mission & Core Values

The PEIFA’s vision is *to ensure that PEI farms are financially viable, ecologically sound, support rural communities and are socially responsible.*

The PEIFA has a mission *to improve the sustainability of Island farms and farm families and to promote the sustainable production of food on Prince Edward Island.*

Core values of the organization are for Island farmers to work together for the betterment of primary producers. The PEIFA believes in developing and delivering programs and services to meet the needs of the farm community and promote a pro-family farm. The organization believes that all farmers have an equal voice regardless of the size of their holdings and exists to improve the sustainability of Island farmers and farm families.

This vision and mission, along with the core values, are central guides to developing an overarching strategic plan for the PEIFA.

## Stakeholders

The PEIFA has a large number of stakeholders, including:

- Members (primary producers);
- Member organizations (agriculture commodity groups);
- Staff;
- Board of Directors;
- Committees;
- Sponsors;
- Agriculture processors; and
- Government (Provincial + Federal).

The needs of these stakeholders are important to consider in the development of an effective strategic plan.

## Project Background

In order to keep with the organizational mandate and strategically manage risk, the PEIFA pursued a project through the federal AgriRisk program in the 2017/18 fiscal year. The AgriRisk project focused on identifying risks that PEI agriculture producers face today and in the future. Information sources included background information from industry and governments on trends and issues, and an exhaustive consultation with industry and government representatives in PEI. As well, there were a series of workshops for producers, processors and industry stakeholders held during the fall and winter of 2017-18. The result, a *Business Risk Assessment of the PEI Agriculture Industry* was prepared by the firm MNP LLP (MNP), leading to 13 clear mitigations for the PEIFA to implement to manage risk present in the Island agriculture community. These mitigations were approved by the PEIFA Board of Directors in March 2018. The assessment identified four themes that producers identified as major risk areas, including land use and access, economics of the operating environment, public trust and people, with the 13 mitigations addressing these risk areas. Dynamic Outcomes Consulting (DOC) was hired to manage the AgriRisk project and collaborate with the PEIFA and MNP to ensure the project ran efficiently and effectively. The PEIFA hired DOC, with support from the PEI DAF, following the completion of the AgriRisk project to develop a strategic plan to assist in effectively implementing the mitigation strategies outlined in the *Business Risk Assessment of the PEI Agriculture Industry*.

In addition to addressing the implementation of the mitigations and recommendations prepared by MNP, the PEIFA decided to pursue a strategic plan with the following objectives:

- Provide future direction to the organization;
- Shift from being reactive to proactive;
- Direct resources at key priorities; and
- Be more effective.

## Methodology

DOC was hired by the PEIFA to prepare a strategic plan for the organization to implement the mitigation strategies identified through the AgriRisk project. The strategic plan was generated from a combination of PEIFA Board of Directors input and results from the *Business Risk Assessment of the PEI Agriculture Industry*.

DOC met with the PEIFA Board of Directors on July 3, 2018 to generate discussion and identification of the internal strengths, weaknesses and issues of the PEIFA. The Board of Directors were asked to provide input on the PEIFA strengths, weaknesses and issues through a combination of submitting their thoughts anonymously (written on cue cards), roundtable discussions and working groups.

DOC met with the PEIFA Board of Directors for a second time on August 15, 2018 to review the external threats and weaknesses of the PEIFA and Island agriculture industry. Input was primarily generated through roundtable discussions on the mitigation strategies outlined in the AgriRisk project report. Additional time was provided for individuals to voice any concerns or opportunities they identified that were not apparent in the report.

These two board sessions, in combination with the report prepared by MNP, provided DOC with the information required to develop a strategic plan for the PEIFA that is based on considerable input from Island producers, processors and the PEIFA Board of Directors.

## Internal Analysis

### Strengths of the PEIFA

The following strengths were identified by the PEIFA Board of Directors to be the primary organizational strengths:

1. The board is a dedicated, diverse group of volunteers from all sectors of agriculture;
2. The PEI government sees the value in a strong PEIFA;
3. The PEIFA has a culture of improvement and progress and promotion of good farming practices;
4. The organization is a voice for PEI agriculture due to size of total farm representation; and
5. The PEIFA provides a leadership for the Island farm community.

These strengths played a strong role in developing actions for mitigations to the risks identified in the AgriRisk report.

### Weaknesses of the PEIFA

The following items were identified by the PEIFA Board of Directors to be the primary organizational weaknesses:

1. There is a gap between farmers and non-farmers (public trust);
2. Available resources (revenue/staff) are limited;
3. Declining membership (declining revenue);
4. Long-term vision and succession are not clear;
5. Communication (internal and external) from and within the organization; and
6. Lack of input from members of the board.

These weaknesses impacted the mitigations and are addressed in the strategic plan.

### Major Issues of the PEIFA

The Board of Directors identified several issues that are relevant to the PEIFA:

1. Public Trust in the farming community;
2. Lack of available resources (time, staff, funding, location);
3. Lack of strategic planning to focus effort; and
4. Communication at all levels.

These issues are addressed in the strategic plan.

## External Analysis

DOC used the extensive analysis completed by MNP in the *Business Risk Assessment of the PEI Agriculture Industry* report to address the risks and opportunities in the Island agriculture industry, and therefore faced by the PEIFA. These risks were summarized by MNP into four main themes:

- Land use and access
- Economics of the operating environment
- Public Trust
- People

MNP prepared a list of 13 mitigations to address the four areas of risk identified. A strategy to implement these mitigations is detailed in the following strategic plan.

## Strategic Plan

The strategic plan is a guideline for the PEIFA to follow to mitigate the risks identified in the *Business Risk Assessment of the PEI Agriculture Industry*, as well as to address internal weaknesses and issues identified by the PEIFA Board.

The overarching goal of the strategic plan is to assist Island producers mitigate and manage risk present in the industry, while simultaneously providing direction to the organization, manage and direct resources effectively.

The strategic plan is broken down into five main strategies:

1. Gathering Strategic Information
2. Enhancing Sustainability
3. Improving Strategic Skillsets for Producers
4. Advocacy
5. Improving Organizational Effectiveness

Each strategy highlights the mitigations established in the MNP report, identifying the timeline, project lead, potential partners, key actions and required resources developed by the PEIFA Board of Directors.

## 1. Gathering Strategic Information to Manage Risk

In order to effectively manage risk, the PEIFA should gather data to allow for strategic decision making at an organizational level. The accumulation of this relevant information will provide the PEIFA and Island producers with the knowledge to improve decision making. Several studies were identified to assist the PEIFA in gathering information to share with producers to help the Island agricultural industry. These studies can be commissioned to other organizations to gather the data on behalf of the PEIFA, as well as organized through PEIFA committees. These studies include an:

- Economic Viability and Environmental Sustainability Study
- Agriculture Labour Needs Assessment
- Off-Island Export Study
- Economic Viability Study on Irrigation
- Impact Analysis of Carbon Tax on the Agriculture Sector

The goal of this strategy is to establish the PEIFA as a key source of strategic information for the Island agriculture community. Each mitigation (study) is explained in detail below.

### Conduct an Economic Viability and Environmental Sustainability Study

Mitigation	Conduct an Economic Viability and Environmental Sustainability Study
<b>Timeline</b>	Short-term: commencing in 2018
<b>Project Lead</b>	PEIFA project committee
<b>Potential Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project committee: board members, PEIFA members, PEIFA staff</li><li>• Funding partners: AgriRisk, other government</li></ul>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. PEIFA staff and board to establish a project committee (drawing from board, members and staff)</li><li>2. Project committee to define scope of project to ensure resulting study is useful and relevant (this scope shall include concepts identified by MNP, such as determining how commodities can be economically viable, profitable, and environmentally sustainable in the short and long term)</li><li>3. Project committee to apply for funding through AgriRisk or other government funding programs</li><li>4. Project committee to identify and/or hire a project manager</li><li>5. Project manager and project committee to prepare and send out a request for proposals (RFP)</li><li>6. Project manager and project committee to review RFPs and hire appropriate organization to complete study</li><li>7. Project manager to oversee project to completion, submit necessary claims/reports and ensure targets are being met</li></ol>
<b>Required Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Financial: funding to finance study</li><li>• Time: commitment from project committee and project lead to define project, apply for financing, commission study; project management</li></ul>



## Conduct an Agriculture Labour Needs Assessment

Mitigation	Conduct an Agriculture Labour Needs Assessment
<b>Timeline</b>	Short-term: commencing in the next 12 months
<b>Project Lead</b>	Canadian Agriculture Human Resource Council (CAHRC), PEIFA staff
<b>Potential Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commodity groups: CAHRC/PEIFA staff to work with commodity groups to draw on their knowledge of labour needs within the individual commodities</li> </ul>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PEIFA staff to communicate with CAHRC on the interest in completing the assessment</li> <li>PEIFA staff to work with CAHRC team to identify the scope of the project, including identifying both skilled and unskilled labour, as well as recommended actions following the assessment</li> <li>PEIFA staff to assist CAHRC, if required, to connect to commodity group contacts</li> <li>PEIFA staff to review assessment and share results with members</li> </ol>
<b>Required Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time: PEIFA staff to work with CAHRC to initiate and outline scope of study</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	This has been identified as a national issue and will benefit from the available resources of CAHRC.

## Conduct an Off-Island Export Study

Mitigation	Conduct an Off-Island Export Study
<b>Timeline</b>	Short-term: commencing in the next 12 months
<b>Project Lead</b>	Educational Institution, PEIFA staff
<b>Potential Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holland College: student project with business program</li> <li>University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI): student project with business program</li> <li>Commodity groups: share available data</li> </ul>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PEIFA staff to establish contacts with professors/teachers in the business department at Holland College and UPEI</li> <li>PEIFA staff, with assistance from PEIFA project committee (see Conduct and Economic Viability...), define scope of the project</li> <li>PEIFA staff present the project and required outcomes to business students at Holland College/UPEI</li> <li>PEIFA staff request available data (e.g. that which is not available online) from commodity groups to share with students</li> <li>PEIFA staff request a sponsorship prize from relevant organization (e.g. \$ 500 prize money from an industry organization)</li> <li>PEIFA staff and board review results and provide feedback</li> <li>PEIFA staff share results with members</li> </ol>
<b>Required Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time: PEIFA staff to work with educational institutions to initiate and outline scope of study</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	In the event that establishing relationships with above-noted partners is not successful, this mitigation can be tied in to the AgriRisk submission. Therefore, connections with potential partners should be established in the short-term.

	<p>Alternatively, PEIFA can explore hiring a temporary staff (e.g. summer student) with funding from Skills PEI to complete the project.</p> <p>The PEIFA recognizes that a lot of this information is available, with the need being to consolidate and summarize this information. The scope of this project should include a summary of agricultural products being imported, exported, and methods of transportation, with the goal of highlighting potential crop opportunities for the local market and facilitating more efficient transportation.</p>
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### Conduct an Economic Viability Study on Irrigation

Mitigation	Conduct an Economic Viability Study on Irrigation
<b>Timeline</b>	Short-term: commencing in the next 12 months
<b>Project Lead</b>	PEIFA staff, PEI Potato Board, AAFC Scientists
<b>Potential Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commodity: PEI Potato Board and other commodity groups</li> <li>Provincial government: provide expertise and/or available research, funding</li> <li>Producers: provide economic results with/without different forms of irrigation</li> </ul>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PEIFA staff/partners to identify scope of study, utilizing knowledge that is already available</li> <li>2. PEIFA staff/partners apply for funding for project</li> <li>3. Project partners to develop and implement an unbiased, scientific study, with a minimum of three growing seasons to assess the economic impacts of irrigation</li> <li>4. PEIFA to share results of study with members</li> <li>5. PEIFA staff monitor provincial policies on irrigation and reassess if necessary</li> </ol>
<b>Required Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time: PEIFA staff to work with partners, identify scope and share results</li> <li>Financial: Project funding to implement study</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	<p>This study will be undertaken with the understanding that certain forms of irrigation are currently under a moratorium and that the goal of this study is to analyze only the economic impact on producers (not any environmental impacts).</p> <p>This study is a method of exploring a component of the economic impact of climate change and should consider the economics of a variety of irrigation methods (e.g. deep water wells, irrigation ponds, desalination). This study will not be limited to potatoes and consider crops such as blueberries, apples and vegetables.</p> <p>It is recommended that the PEIFA carefully review any potential partners to the study to ensure the study is not viewed as biased. It is recommended that the PEIFA capitalize on resources available in the region, including the Charlottetown Research and Development Centre (AAFC).</p>

## Conduct an Impact Analysis of Carbon Tax on the Agriculture Sector

Mitigation	Conduct an Impact Analysis of Carbon Tax on the Agriculture Sector
<b>Timeline</b>	Medium-term: commencing in one to three years
<b>Project Lead</b>	PEIFA staff
<b>Potential Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provincial government: financing, expertise</li> </ul>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PEIFA staff to monitor the status of carbon tax on Prince Edward Island, until the point that the carbon tax and related policy is announced</li> <li>PEIFA staff to commission a study to assess the impact of the carbon tax on Island producers</li> </ol>
<b>Required Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time: PEIFA staff to monitor status of carbon tax on PEI until announcement is made</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	PEIFA staff should utilize other studies (e.g. Export study and COP program) to reduce the scope of this project

## 2. Enhancing Sustainability

Island agriculture is strongly impacted by changes in the environment and market place. Recent studies have shown that the Island land base has been experiencing declining organic matter due to a combination of factors. To promote the PEIFA's mandate of sustainable agriculture and ensure producers are up to date on best practices in the industry, the PEIFA should develop a code of practice and sustainable agriculture education program.

### Establish a Code of Practice and Sustainable Agriculture Education Program

Mitigation	Establish a Code of Practice and Sustainable Agriculture Education Program
<b>Timeline</b>	Short-term: commencing in 2018
<b>Project Lead</b>	PEIFA staff
<b>Potential Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provincial/Federal government staff: utilize PEIFA connections to capitalize on available expertise to establish code of practice</li> <li>Commodity groups: PEIFA staff to work with commodity groups to draw on their knowledge of specific sectors in establishing a code of practice</li> </ul>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<p>The PEIFA is currently in the process of renegotiating its Enhanced Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) program, which has the goal of helping farmers develop a practical plan for operating their farm in a way that is environmentally sustainable, socially acceptable and economically viable. Currently there are two PEIFA staff members dedicating 50% of their time to the EFP program. The PEIFA Board has identified the EFP program as an ideal method of implementing this mitigation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PEIFA staff negotiate the EFP program renewal to incorporate this mitigation with the goals of hiring an additional staff person, implementing measures (each producer to receive a score that can be compared year over year to track progress) and adding control mechanisms (e.g. audited by PEIFA staff or peer reviewed)</li> <li>PEIFA to hire additional staff through the EFP program (if this is unsuccessful, explore the ability to hire a staff member through the AgriRisk project, other government funding)</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. PEIFA staff to develop partnerships and to work with commodity groups, government specialists (e.g. Les Halliday on animal welfare) to draft a code of best practices, building on existing assurance programs and codes</li> <li>4. PEIFA staff to organize producer workshops to review code of best practices and edit where required</li> <li>5. PEIFA staff to share the code and best practices with producers through a variety of media, which could include information sessions/webinars, on the PEIFA website, at the PEIFA AGM and through the PEIFA newsletter</li> <li>6. PEIFA staff to encourage uptake of the code of practice by working with industry organizations and commodity groups to encourage producers to incorporate best practices and improve their score over time (for example, negotiate with FCC to offer producers meeting the code of best practices a financial incentive, such as 0.25% rebate of interest on loans; have buyers provide a premium for product meeting the standards); this is believed to be beneficial to industry organizations as they will be viewed by the public as supporting sustainable and ethical agriculture</li> <li>7. PEIFA staff to send a survey to members to identify areas that producers would like training on, as well as review the data from the EFPs to identify where PEI producers are lacking; provide training or information sessions to producers on these areas by drawing on local expertise (e.g. government staff, producers scoring high on the EFPs)</li> <li>8. PEIFA staff to review the code annually or as needed to ensure it is up to date with best practices for each commodity group</li> </ol>
<b>Required Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial: funding to finance an additional staff person</li> <li>• Time: PEIFA staff to renegotiate EFP, develop code, share information with producers, review EFP data, audit EFP, negotiate benefits with industry organizations</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	<p>This mitigation was identified as the highest priority by the PEIFA Board of Directors.</p> <p>At this time, it is believed that the code of best practice should be voluntary, with the provision of financial incentives (e.g. interest rebate, better crop insurance rates) to meet the standard and improve EFP scores over time. A certificate could be provided to producers meeting or exceeding code who attended a specified amount of training sessions, which when presented could provide them with the financial incentives.</p> <p>Other methods to assist in the establishment of the code of best practices that could be utilized by the PEIFA include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote public awareness of the code and improving practices;</li> <li>• Focus effort on improving the incentives (public and private sectors);</li> <li>• Analyze the EFP result data and track improvement;</li> <li>• Build producer training opportunities where gaps exist;</li> <li>• Utilize a farmer to farmer learning approach; and</li> <li>• Develop new training forums (e.g. webinars), while also using traditional methods (e.g. print).</li> </ul>

### 3. Improving Strategic Skillsets for Producers

In an ever-changing industry and market conditions, producers are faced with constant change. In order to help reduce the risk to Island producers in their operations, it is recommended that the PEIFA host a winter workshop series aimed at improving strategic skillsets. This series can be presented as informational sessions, with the sessions taped for a webinar (that could be viewed live or subsequently). There are a number of methods to provide these sessions to producers. One option could be to offer all workshops in both Charlottetown and Summerside. For example, the first Tuesday in February could be dedicated to Cost of Production and Succession in Charlottetown, with the same presentation provided the following week in Summerside. Factsheets should be provided to producers at these sessions and information and relevant links posted on the PEIFA website. In addition to the workshop series, the PEIFA could offer a follow up panel discussion on these topics at events such as the PEIFA AGM.

This workshop series should include sessions on:

- Cost of Production
  - The importance of analyzing costs on farms
  - The provision of a template for producers, with instruction on best use
  - Benchmarks for producers to compare and target
  - Information for current producers looking to enter a new area or for new producers who are interested to start farming
- Succession
  - The importance of succession planning on a farm
  - Information from professionals on options available
  - Input from producers who have already gone through succession planning and their experience with the process
- Joint-Ventures
  - Explanations of the available models of joint-ventures that may help producers mitigate risks
  - Information from professionals on the process of starting a joint-venture
  - Input from producers who have established joint-ventures
- Human Resources
  - Information for producers on different elements of human resources on their farms

It is anticipated that accounting firms, law firms and Farm Credit Canada (FCC) would be interested in volunteering time to provide these presentations to producers, and in some cases, help develop tools to present. In the event that the PEIFA has difficulty identifying potential partners in firms, provincial organizations, such as CPAPEI and the PEI Law Society could be approached to identify individuals in the profession who might be interested in volunteering their time.

## Establish a Cost of Production Program

Mitigation	Establish a Cost of Production Program
<b>Timeline</b>	Short-term: commencing in the next 12 months
<b>Project Lead</b>	PEIFA staff
<b>Potential Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provincial government: financial support</li> <li>Private sector/industry organizations: expertise (e.g. private accounting firm might prepare a template in exchange for sponsorship benefits, such as their logo being featured at workshops and on the PEIFA website); FCC may have similar templates available</li> <li>Commodity groups: provide information for benchmarks</li> </ul>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PEIFA staff to work with the provincial government to identify potential funding available for this project to develop a tool and share the tool, as well as resources currently available (e.g. benchmarks)</li> <li>PEIFA staff to contact FCC and private accounting firm(s) to identify tools already available that are specific to the PEI market; once resources are known, the PEIFA should invite an accounting firm to modify or create a template specific to PEI producers in exchange for sponsorship benefits or at a discounted rate</li> <li>PEIFA staff to incorporate tool and benchmark into EFP program to reach a large number of producers</li> <li>PEIFA staff to put on a workshop, with assistance from local expertise (e.g. accounting firm) to teach producers the most effective way to use COP templates and benchmarks</li> <li>PEIFA staff to share the resources through different media, such as the website and newsletter</li> </ol>
<b>Required Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time: PEIFA staff to source resources and funding, organize and share tools and templates</li> <li>Financial: cost of hiring someone to create template and benchmark</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	To teach producers the best way to use this tool, the PEIFA could use a combination of one-on-one training (EFP) and more general group training sessions (e.g. a workshop series featuring this topic as well as succession planning, joint-venture opportunities and HR).

## Establish a Succession Plan Program

Mitigation	Establish a Succession Plan Program
<b>Timeline</b>	Short-term: commencing in the next 12 months
<b>Project Lead</b>	PEIFA staff, PEI Young Farmers
<b>Potential Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provincial government: financial support</li> <li>Private sector/industry organizations: expertise, e.g. FCC has provided expert speakers on succession in the past; accounting firms who might be interested in sponsoring event and/or providing expertise</li> </ul>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PEIFA staff to contact PEI Young Farmers to determine if they would be interested in taking the lead on this and organizing an information session for producers</li> <li>PEIFA staff to create and share a survey with producers to identify interest and who currently has a succession plan; a follow up survey should occur following the program to measure the level of success with the program</li> <li>PEIFA staff to encourage producers to attend any related events by sharing the details through different media sources (e.g. website, social media, newsletter)</li> <li>PEIFA staff to share tools with producers</li> </ol>
<b>Required Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time: PEIFA staff work with PEI Young Farmers to establish event</li> <li>Financial: cost of hosting event and developing tools</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	<p>Information session should include expert advice (e.g. accounting firm), as well as a story from an Island producer who has undertaken a succession plan and their experience with it.</p> <p>Factsheet should be prepared and shared with members.</p> <p>If the PEIFA determines that many producers don't have someone to take over their farm, the PEIFA could provide the following service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect details on producers who are interested in retiring and when they want to retire</li> <li>Collect details on individuals interested in farming that may not have access to land/farm</li> <li>Connect potential buyers/sellers to retain agricultural land and reduce the land that is developed</li> </ul>

## Establish a Joint-Venture Farming Program

Mitigation	Establish a Joint-Venture Farming Program
<b>Timeline</b>	Short-term: commencing in the next 12 months
<b>Project Lead</b>	PEIFA staff
<b>Potential Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provincial government: financial support</li> <li>Private sector/industry organizations: expertise, sponsorship (e.g. accounting firms, lawyers, FCC)</li> <li>PEI Young Farmers: may be interested in helping organize event series to go along with succession planning</li> </ul>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PEIFA staff to work with provincial government to identify potential for financial support</li> <li>PEIFA staff to contact relevant private organizations to identify their interest in providing expertise (presenting, preparing factsheet) or sponsoring an event</li> <li>PEIFA staff to create and share a survey with producers to identify interest and who currently has a joint-venture; a follow up survey should occur following the program to measure the level of success with the program</li> <li>PEIFA staff to contact producers who currently have a joint-venture to see if they would be interested in sharing their experiences</li> <li>PEIFA staff to develop an informational session with both expertise (e.g. accountants/lawyers) and local producers to share their stories; producers should be provided with an informational factsheet</li> <li>PEIFA staff to encourage producers to attend any related events by sharing the details through different media sources (e.g. website, social media, newsletter)</li> <li>PEIFA staff to share tools with producers through online resources</li> </ol>
<b>Required Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time: PEIFA staff to organize event</li> <li>Financial: cost of hosting event and developing tools</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	<p>Factsheet should be prepared and shared with members.</p> <p>Informational event should not be limited to traditional stories of joint-ventures; for example, could identify a producer who shares tractors with a snow removal company; crop-sharing could be a venture created between non-farming landowners who have idle land but want to be more involved in what is farmed on their land.</p> <p>PEIFA could explore the potential of tracking people interested in joint-ventures and working with PEI Young Farmers to host networking event.</p>



## Establish a Human Resources Training Program

Mitigation	Establish a Human Resources Training Program
<b>Timeline</b>	Short-term: commencing in the next 12 months
<b>Project Lead</b>	CAHRC, PEIFA staff
<b>Potential Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>CAHRC: currently CAHRC has a Human Resources Toolkit available on their website; therefore, PEIFA has identified that it would be useful to work with CAHRC rather than recreating resources that already exist</li></ul>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>PEIFA staff to contact CAHRC to discuss the Human Resources Kit and determine CAHRC's interest in sharing this resource with Island producers</li><li>PEIFA staff work with CAHRC staff to organize an informational session for producers</li><li>PEIFA staff to share resources with members through a variety of media (e.g. website, newsletter, social media)</li></ol>
<b>Required Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Time: PEIFA staff work with CAHRC to establish program and share resources with producers</li><li>Financial: cost of hosting event and developing/sharing tools</li></ul>

## 4. Advocacy

Advocacy is a key role for the PEIFA and reflects the direction established by the PEIFA Board and Membership on a range of issues through resolutions and other policy forums.

The PEIFA will continue with current advocacy surrounding the resolutions established each year at the organization's Annual General Meeting (AGM) by members. This advocacy fluctuates from year to year depending on the resolutions established. It is recommended that the PEIFA develop key themes to help tie individual issues into groups and strengthen the advocacy role of the organization. This includes:

- Key advocacy themes be developed and prioritized;
- Key targets established for each theme;
- Link to key result areas that would be impacted by advocacy;
- Link to key elements of MNP report; and
- Identification of advocacy partners for each theme.

In addition to this advocacy, the PEIFA will advocate for farmers on an ongoing basis relating to land issues, as discussed in the mitigations below.

## Enhance Land Use and Zoning Regulations Provincially

Mitigation	Enhance Land Use and Zoning Regulations Provincially
<b>Timeline</b>	Ongoing
<b>Project Lead</b>	PEIFA staff
<b>Potential Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provincial government: PEIFA staff to work with provincial government to establish regulations that benefit agriculture on PEI</li> </ul>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PEIFA staff to monitor status and regulations relating to land on an ongoing basis, providing input to the government on an ongoing basis to enhance land use and zoning regulations from an agricultural perspective</li> </ol>
<b>Required Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time: PEIFA staff monitoring status of land on PEI</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	<p>The PEIFA Board identified that there are varying perspectives within the PEIFA membership. PEIFA staff will use resolutions from the AGM to guide their approach on this subject.</p> <p>The PEIFA Board explored the option of becoming more 'aggressive' in order to promote appropriate use of agricultural land. If continuous monitoring is proving not to be effective, PEIFA staff should create a project committee to get momentum (e.g. social media, news articles) and garner support from the public.</p>

## Ease Land Ownership Restrictions

Mitigation	Ease Land Ownership Restrictions
<b>Timeline</b>	Long-term: commencing in three years or later
<b>Project Lead</b>	PEIFA staff
<b>Potential Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provincial government: PEIFA staff to work with provincial government to establish regulations that benefit agriculture on PEI</li> </ul>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<p>The PEIFA Board identified that no actions will be taken in the short-medium term, due to the recent easements that satisfied many producers. Further, major land concerns are addressed in the mitigation above. The Board noted that while there are issues with the current system, easing restrictions will also create many challenges. The current system will push producers to focus more on soil health and pushing higher yields from current acreages. Further, this is a very contentious issue with the public.</p> <p>This mitigation should be reviewed annually to identify any necessary change in actions required.</p>
<b>Required Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A at this time</li> </ul>

## 5. Improving Organizational Effectiveness

Three key areas were identified where improved results would improve the effectiveness of the PEIFA:

### 5.1 Membership

Membership has been slowly declining, due primarily to the decline in Island producers and consolidation of farmland. It is recommended that the existing membership model be reviewed within the development of the communication strategy to explore opportunities to increase revenue generated, especially from larger consolidated farms, while retaining current members.

### 5.2 Resources

As with many not-for-profit organizations who derive large portions of funding from government organizations, the resources of the PEIFA are limited from both a staff and dollar perspective. While the goal of these mitigations is to hire two additional staff people (one for EFP, one for communication), this strategic plan has outlined several ways to stretch resources.

These methods include:

- Developing partnerships (e.g. PEI Young Farmers, CAHRC, UPEI/Holland College);
- Utilizing volunteers from the PEIFA board and membership (e.g. project committees, producers); and
- Capitalizing on sponsorship opportunities (e.g. accounting firms and law firms to assist in delivering workshops).

In addition to implementing the mitigations proposed by MNP, it is essential for the PEIFA to manage internal resources. In order to improve financial sustainability, it is recommended that:

1. The PEIFA set a financial target for its membership
  - a. Explore changing the current membership fee structure to add more categories for larger farming operations (as in NB); this would require cooperation from the NFU and requires a majority of members to agree at an AGM.
  - b. Discuss with the provincial government the possibility of tying membership with a farm organization to funding and fuel permits to ensure all farms are members of an organization.
  - c. Identify whether non-farm organizations and individuals could be invited to be a new class of members.
  - d. Enhance member benefits.
  - e. Involve farming alumni as a method of stretching internal human resources further.
2. Develop a new sponsorship model
  - a. Tier 1: Exclusive partnership per category. Categories include banking, law firms, accounting firms, fertilizer suppliers, crop protectants, insurance, car dealerships and implement dealers. Benefits would include the best program, such as advertising at all PEIFA events, including the AGM and golf tournament, as well as points of access. Goal is to increase from the current two sponsors to seven. Assign each PEIFA staff to secure one new sponsor.
  - b. Tier 2: Open to other companies in the same categories with a less robust set of benefits.
  - c. Non-competitive with other tiers.

The first focus of the new sponsorship model is expanding on Tier 1, with growth in Tiers 2 and 3 over time. It is anticipated that as the PEIFA implements its strategic plan, sponsorship opportunities will grow.

### 5.3 Communications

Currently the PEIFA does not have a communication plan or a crisis communication plan, often having to develop communication plans for issues as they arise. Further, several staff members are responsible for communicating to members and the public, which could impact the portrayal of one strong clear voice from the PEIFA. It is recommended that the PEIFA develop a communication strategy and plan to more effectively communicate with members and the public on a regular basis, as well as manage the communication around arising issues in the Island agriculture community.

Mitigation	Develop a PEIFA Communication Strategy and Plan
<b>Timeline</b>	Short-term: commencing in the next 12 months
<b>Project Lead</b>	PEIFA staff
<b>Potential Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provincial government: potential source of funding to hire staff person</li> </ul>
<b>Key Actions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PEIFA staff to survey members to determine level of satisfaction with current PEIFA communication (e.g. currently a minimum of 5 hours per week is spent on the daily newsletter – are members happy with this, would they prefer once per week, are they happy with the content); it is recommended that the PEIFA create an ongoing (e.g. biannual) member satisfaction survey to gauge the engagement of members, generate ideas, and generate volunteers for events and committees)</li> <li>PEIFA staff to identify opportunities of funding, with the goal of hiring a staff person to handle all communications, freeing up other staff members time that is currently spent on communication; this role would focus on communications and membership liaison</li> <li>PEIFA staff to develop communication and crisis communication plan, drawing on resources and plans available from other organizations; this plan should include a review of the current membership model and sponsorship model discussed above</li> </ol>
<b>Required Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time: PEIFA staff to develop communication and crisis communication plan</li> <li>Financial: hire a communication staff person</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Information</b>	<p>The goal of this mitigation is to effectively communicate with members as well as have a plan to follow in the event of a crisis. In addition, the PEIFA would like to be able to provide communication support to members in the event of a 'crisis'. For example, provide support and communication strategies to members being charged with fish kills.</p> <p>In the event that a new staff member cannot be hired, the PEIFA should explore other options for the development of the plan. This includes partnerships with business programs at UPEI and/or Holland College and the development of a communications committee (made up of members and board).</p>

# Timeline

A detailed timeline was developed and is included as an appendix (see Appendix 3) to outline the plan for each mitigation. This timeline can be edited and updated as mitigation steps progress.

This timeline should act as a measurement and monitoring tool for the PEIFA staff and board to utilize to measure progress on the mitigations. It could be added as a standing item on the agenda for board meetings. In order to facilitate efficient discussion on the strategic plan at meetings, a strategic map (see Appendix 1) and strategic checklist (see Appendix 2) were also prepared.

# Measuring Progress

To ensure the PEIFA is implementing and monitoring the success of proposed mitigations, the following actions should be taken:

- Survey membership regularly;
- Standing item at PEIFA Board meetings for strategic plan;
- Utilizing strategic map, strategic checklist and timeline as a measure to assess progress; and
- Periodic review of key result areas, including:
  - Membership satisfaction
  - Membership number
  - Implementation of key actions for Risk Mitigation Strategies and Strategic Plan
  - Advocacy targets and decisions influenced

# Financing

To implement this strategic plan will take considerable resources from both a time and financial perspective. Potential financing options for each mitigation are outlined below.

- AgriRisk Project – it is recommended that the PEIFA submit an AgriRisk Proposal to finance several mitigations outlined above. This would allow the PEIFA to accomplish several strategies with limited financial input. Projects that could be financed through AgriRisk include:
  - Conduct and Economic Viability and Environmental Sustainability Study
  - Develop a PEIFA Communication and Crisis Communication Strategy and Plan
  - Establish a Code of Practice and Sustainable Agriculture Education Program (in combination with EFP program/if EFP program does not result in the hiring of an additional staff person)
  - Conduct and Off-Island Export Study (if business programs are not interested in the project)
  - In the longer term, the AgriRisk project could be used to ‘Conduct an Impact Analysis of the Carbon Tax on the Agriculture Sector’
- CAHRC was identified as a potential leader for two of the mitigation strategies:
  - Conduct and Agriculture Labour Needs Assessment
  - Establish a Human Resource Training Program
- Business Programs of UPEI/Holland College

- Conduct an Off-Island Export Study
- In addition to the above noted study, the PEIFA should explore other projects to ease the stress on the organization's resources. This could include the development of an updated logo or the creation of a communication plan if a new staff member cannot be hired.
- EFP Program
  - Establish a Code of Practice and Sustainable Agriculture Education Program
- Provincial Government Support and Commodity Groups
  - Conduct an Economic Viability Study on Irrigation
- Private Partnership/Sponsorship Support (e.g. from PEI Young Farmers and a local accounting and law firm):
  - Establish a Cost of Production Program
  - Establish a Succession Planning Program
  - Establish a Joint-Ventures Program
- Low Carbon Economy Fund
- PEIFA Resources (only)
  - Enhance Land Use and Zoning Regulations
  - Ease Land Ownership Restrictions

Ideally, two staff people will be hired to assist the PEIFA implement its strategic plan, an individual to help establish and implement a code of practice and sustainable agriculture program (supported by EFP program) and a communications staff person (supported by AgriRisk in short-term with the goal to be supported in the long-term by government funding, sponsorship, change in membership model).

## Conclusion

This strategic plan will assist the PEIFA establish a sustainable organization by:

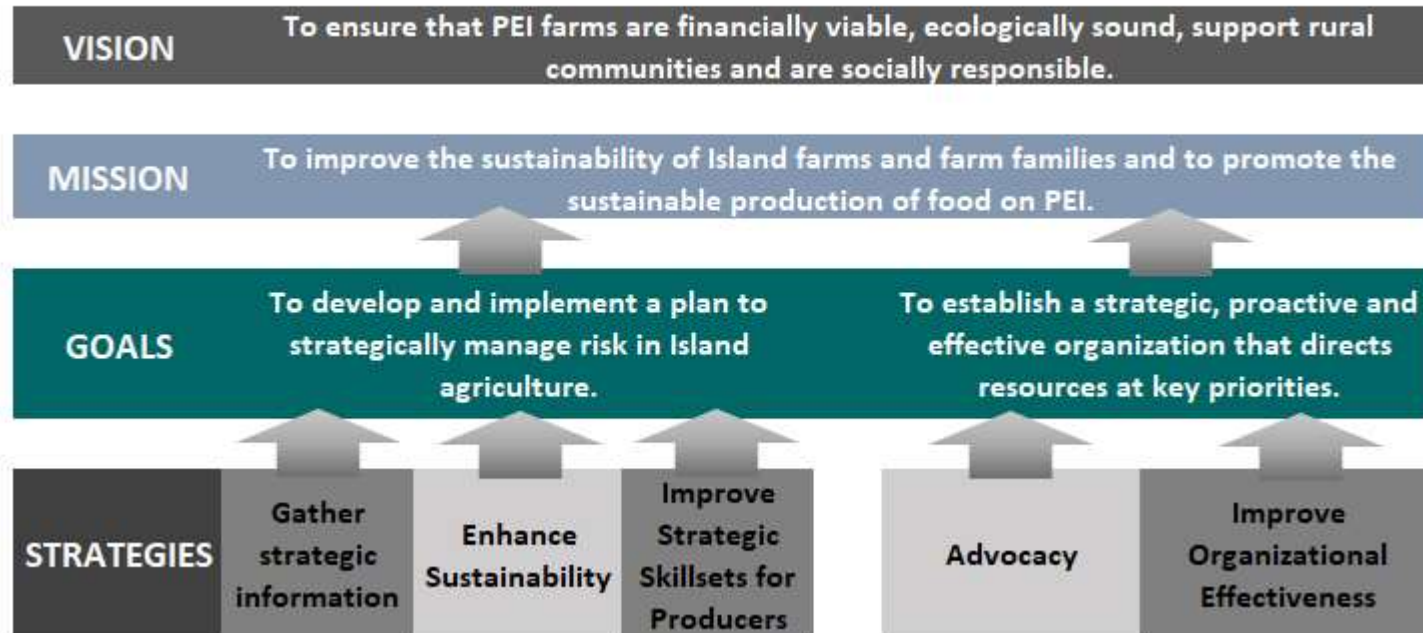
- Combining MNP developed mitigations and additional desired results into five strategies to better coordinate PEIFA efforts;
- Strengthen the PEIFA's case for consolidated project funding (e.g. AgriRisk Program, provincial government funding);
- Board and staff can share in the responsibility of achieving results;
- Board and PEIFA members can become involved in action committees to break the plan into achievable steps; and
- Building on the strengths of the organization while addressing the weaknesses and critical issues.

The successful implementation of this plan would result in many benefits for the organization, including:

- Showing leadership in strategic information for sector decision making;
- Driving positive change in farm practices and being a leader in sustainable practices;
- Improving strategic skillsets of PEI producers;
- Being an attractive industry partner;
- Presenting the organization as a 'can do' organization for funding organizations;
- Being an attractive organization to belong to; and
- Having a positive impact on the agriculture and food sectors.

# Appendix 1. Strategic Map

## PEI Federation of Agriculture



## Appendix 2. Strategic Checklist

VISION		To ensure that PEI farms are financially viable, ecologically sound, support rural communities and are socially responsible.						
MISSION		To improve the sustainability of Island farms and farm families and to promote the sustainable production of food on PEI.						
Goals		Strategies		Sub-Strategy	Result	Key Action(s)	Project Lead(s)	Timeline
Goal A	To develop and implement a plan to strategically manage risk in Island agriculture.	1. Gather Strategic Information	Gather data to allow for strategic decision making	Economic Viability & Environmental Sustainability Study	Study	Establish committee, define scope, find funding, request RFP	PEIFA Project Committee	Short-term (commencing in 2018)
				Agriculture Labour Needs Assessment	Study	Communicate with CAHRC to initiate project	CAHRC	Short-term (commencing within 12 months)
				Off-Island Export Study	Study	Communicate with Holland College and/or UPEI to initiate project	Educational Institution, PEIFA Staff	Short-term (commencing within 12 months)
				Economic Viability Study on Irrigation	Study	Communicate with partners, find funding, initiate study	PEIFA staff, PEI Potato Board, AAFC Scientists	Short-term (commencing within 12 months)
				Impact Analysis of Carbon Tax on Agriculture Sector	Study	Monitor status of carbon taxation	PEIFA Staff	Medium-term (commencing in one to three years)
		2. Enhance Sustainability	Promote sustainable agriculture	Code of Practice & Sustainable Agriculture Education Program	Code of Practice	Negotiate EFP program, develop and share code	PEIFA Staff	Short-term (commencing in 2018)
		3. Improve Strategic Skillsets for Producers	Help producers remain competitive	Establish a training program that incorporates cost of production, succession planning, joint-ventures and human resources	Workshop Series and/or Training Program	Identify funding, establish partnerships, develop and deliver training program	PEIFA Staff with partners (Private sector, Government and CAHRC)	Short-term (commencing within 12 months)
Goal B	To establish a strategic, proactive and effective organization that directs resources at key priorities.	4. Advocacy	Support membership on established resolutions	Advocate for members on resolutions, including land use and zoning regulations	Advocacy	Monitor regulations and provide input to government on ongoing basis	PEIFA Staff	Ongoing
		5. Improve Organizational Effectiveness	Enhance resources to support a proactive, effective organization	Membership focus	Membership model	Review existing model, update model	PEIFA Staff	Short-term (commencing within 12 months)
				Increase resources	Financial security	Develop partnerships, utilize volunteers, explore sponsorship opportunities	PEIFA Staff	Short-term (commencing within 12 months)
				Develop communication strategy & plan	Communication plan	Survey members, identify funding to hire staff, develop plan	PEIFA Staff	Short-term (commencing within 12 months)



## Appendix 3. Timeline