



ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Looking back over the last year, I am pleased with the continued growth of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture. We made strides in our industry and commodity support activities, including mental health and farm safety initiatives and advancing women in agriculture in Newfoundland and Labrador. We are now shifting some of our focus to the sustainability of the organization in the longer term.



Wayne Simmons
NLFA PRESIDENT

This winter, NLFA staff and executive board members took part in a strategic retreat where we had the opportunity to connect as a team. We had some great discussions which resulted in identifying some goals and focus areas to continue helping the sector, our members and commodity groups.

It was an early spring, and the lack of snow was an opportunity for some farmers to have an early start to the season. Meanwhile, NLFA hosted virtual training events focused on mental health awareness, began distributing first aid kits to farmers, and we hosted a mid-season membership meeting in April which included an update on activities and budgeting. We also partnered with some of our members on a project to explore establishing a new organization supporting local women in agriculture, and we're proud to have been part of that journey.

It was a full summer for our program staff. Agriculture in the Classroom Canada held their national summer meeting in St. John's, which was hosted by our AITC-NL staff who did a great job planning this well-attended event. The NL Young Farmers program saw a significant increase in its membership and continues to provide vital resources and promote young farmers across the province. NL Living Lab completed their second year of research, and we look forward to start seeing the results and learn best practices for farmers to adapt and mitigate climate change in our province. We also launched AgriCare, a free, confidential platform where you can access agriculturally-informed counseling and resources to support mental, physical, social, and financial wellbeing.

Fall is busy for anyone in the agriculture sector and NLFA is no exception! Open Farm Day was a success with hundreds of people coming out to 16 farm events across the province. Then, we hosted two Agriculture Expos in Corner Brook and Grand Falls and over 10,500 people came out to learn about and support local agriculture between both events. We added some new live sheep shearing, honey extraction and meat cutting demonstrations this year, which was exciting. Also, NL Young Farmers hosted their annual Leadership Summit in Deer Lake in October. Approximately 55 people attended this engaging two-day event of industry speaker sessions and networking opportunities followed by a farm field trip in collaboration with NL Living Lab.

We also made some positional changes this year:

- Kylie Stokes joined the team in late 2023 as the Mental Health and Farm Safety Coordinator, and she hit the ground running in January 2024, providing essential, quality resources for farmers.
- Erica Taylor stepped into the role of Financial Administrator, a new position created to streamline all financial data and oversight. In addition, we established a Finance Committee, which meets regularly.
- We welcomed Heather Legge to the Corner Brook team, as she took over the Administrative Assistant position.
- We're glad to have Mark Hoffe join the NL Young Farmers team in Mount Pearl as the Outreach Coordinator.
- We're happy to welcome our newest staff member, Shelly Bailey as Programs Clerk in the Mount Pearl office.
- Finally, at the Executive level, we welcomed Krista Chatman of Three Mile Ridge as a Director at large, while Howard Morry moved into the Secretary-Treasurer position after the NLFA Annual General Meeting in January.

Looking ahead, we will be developing a new 3-year Strategy Plan for the Federation to begin implementing in the spring. The last several years have been focused on setting up our new office in Corner Brook and laying a strong foundation to support the organization. Our new strategic

plan will be our guide to sustaining the Federation so we can continue to grow and support the agriculture sector in the province. We are proud of how far we've come, and we will continue to improve and increase our resources and supports for our members and commodity groups.

We always strive to be professional, transparent and up-to-date with current issues. We will work to maintain our strong positive relationship with government, and we appreciate the work of all our stakeholders, partners and collaborators. We'd like to sincerely thank our sponsors for helping us make our events such great ones, and lastly, thank you to our members for supporting the NL Federation of Agriculture so we can continue serving you and the agriculture sector in Newfoundland and Labrador!

Thank you.



NLFA PRESIDENT WAYNE SIMMONS, VICE PRESIDENT ANDY WRIGHT AND GENERAL MANAGER COLIN CARROLL AT THE CFA AGM IN FEBRUARY 2024

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Executive

PRESIDENT

WAYNE SIMMONS

VICE PRESIDENT

ANDY WRIGHT

SECRETARY-TREASURER

HOWARD MORRY

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

KENT FUDGE

KRISTA CHATMAN

Board Members

NL BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

TROY COOMBS

DAIRY FARMERS OF NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

MATTHEW ROSE

SHEEP PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION OF NL

BRENDA AYLWARD

NL CATTLEMENS ASSOCIATION

GORDON PEDDLE

NL CRANBERRY ASSOCIATION

COREY REID

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROWERS OF NL

MELVIN J. RIDEOUT

LABRADOR AGRICULTURE ASSOCIATION

DARREN DINSMORE

NL YOUNG FARMERS

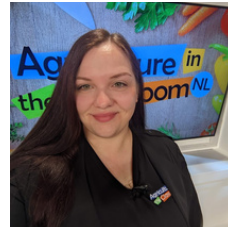
LAURALEE LEDREW

NLFA STAFF



**Colin
Carroll**

**GENERAL
MANAGER**



Chelsea Foley

**AGRICULTURE IN THE
CLASSROOM NL
COORDINATOR**



**Erica
Taylor**

**FINANCIAL
ADMINISTRATOR**



**Maureen
Foley**

**LITTLE GREEN THUMBS
COORDINATOR**



**Heather
Legge**

**ADMINISTRATIVE
ASSISTANT**



**Lisa
Davis**

**NL YOUNG FARMERS
COORDINATOR**



**Sara
Power**

**PUBLIC TRUST &
MARKETING MANAGER**



**Mark
Hoffe**

OUTREACH COORDINATOR



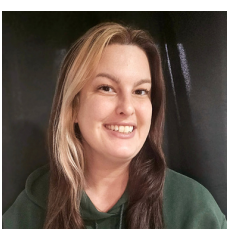
**Rodney
Reid**

**CLIMATE CHANGE
MANAGER**



**Shelly
Bailey**

PROGRAMS CLERK



**Kylie
Stokes**

**MENTAL HEALTH &
SAFETY COORDINATOR**

NLFA HIGHLIGHTS

Membership

During the 2023-24 membership year (November 1 – October 31), NLFA had 62 Industry Members and 5 Associate Members.

In 2023, to ensure we have a record of all necessary membership information and permissions, we created a new form for new applicants and renewals on the NLFA website. To become a new member (or if you were a member prior to 2023-24), we ask that you please fill out and submit the form at nlfa.ca/membership.

NLFA Members Receive:

- Preferred rates at all NLFA functions (including reduced ticket prices for the Agriculture Industry Symposium and first chance to reserve your booth at the 2025 Ag Expos)
- NLFA mail-outs and email newsletters
- Subscription to Agriview magazine
- AgriVantage discounts at select businesses
- NLFA Member Card
- **Industry Members also have the privilege to vote and hold office on the NLFA Board of Directors*

NLFA strives to continue to advocate for our members' interests, foster a collaborative agriculture community in the province, promote industry growth and innovation, and celebrate our farmers and local products.

Agrivantage



Outreach

NLFA utilizes a number of communications platforms and tools to increase outreach to our audiences, internally and externally:

- The Agriview magazine is published three times a year and mailed to our membership list, as well as made available online.
- NLFA members receive regular email newsletters with information about the Federation, upcoming events and news.
- Our website NLFA.CA is a hub for all updates and info about NLFA. We saw a 70% increase in page views in 2024 over the previous year.
- Social media is an important communication tool, and NLFA primarily uses Facebook and Instagram. At the end of December 2024, we gained over 400 new Facebook followers to a total of 3594. We also gained 147 followers on Instagram to a total of 682. NLFA also has a presence on X and LinkedIn.
- We received over 40 media mentions in 2024 (including NLFA initiatives, NL Young Farmers, Agriculture in the Classroom NL and NL Living Lab), appearing primarily on NTV, CBC, VOCM and Bay FM.

Agriculture Industry Symposium

Over 75 farmers and agriculture stakeholders came together for the annual Agriculture Industry Symposium at the Mount Peyton Resort and Conference Centre in Grand Falls-Windsor on January 23-25, 2024. The event included information sessions, networking opportunities, a facility tour, an awards banquet and NLFA's Annual General Meeting.

"Events like these are beneficial to our farmers and to the growth of the sector. Through collaboration with individuals involved in all aspects of the industry, we can work together to create a stronger and more sustainable agriculture industry in Newfoundland and Labrador," says NLFA President Wayne Simmons.

On the first day of the event, the group took a field trip. The first stop was the Wooddale Center for Agriculture to see their Nuclear Lab for research on nuclear seed potatoes and a new state-of-the-art climate control system in the greenhouse. Then, the group visited Central Vegetable Products' storefront and packing and cold storage facilities before bussing back to the hotel. That evening hosted a welcoming reception with greetings from the Honourable Gerry Byrne, Minister for Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

The theme of the second day was "Risk Management," headlined by Farm Management Canada through sessions on building resiliency on the farm using proactive risk management. Sessions included updates from Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada, the Government of Newfoundland & Labrador Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture, NL Living Lab and Agriculture in the Classroom Canada.

One of the highlights of the day was a panel of local producers who spoke about their seasonal challenges and experiences. Andy Wright (Wright's Family Farm, Pasadena), Darren Dinsmore (Aldercroft Farm, Happy Valley-Goose Bay), Brenda Aylward (Aylward's Farm, Port Kirwan) and Richard Oram (Mark's Market,



CAROLE SPICER OF SPICER FACILITATION MODERATES THE PRODUCER PANEL

Wooddale) discussed several topics including mental health, climate change and access to funding.

During the banquet that evening, award recipients for 2023 were recognized:

- Environmental Award: Nemori Farms Ltd.
- NLFA Scholarship to Dalhousie University: Abigail Higdon and Payton Hannon
- Atlantic Hall of Fame: Peter Noer, Viking Fur Inc.
- Outstanding Contribution to Agriculture Award: The Honourable Derrick Bragg

On the third day of the Symposium, NLFA held their AGM. Vice President Andy Wright was re-elected for a two-year term, Howard Morry stepped into the role of Secretary-Treasurer, and Krista Chatman joined the NLFA Board Executive as a Director at Large.



THE NEW NLFA BOARD EXECUTIVE MEMBERS. WAYNE SIMMONS, PRESIDENT; KRISTA CHATMAN, DIRECTOR AT LARGE; ANDY WRIGHT, VICE PRESIDENT; KENT FUDGE, DIRECTOR AT LARGE; HOWARD MORRY, SECRETARY-TREASURER

Women in Agriculture

NLFA is proud to be part of the journey of forming a new organization supporting women in agriculture in Newfoundland and Labrador.

It started in the spring of 2024, with four engagement sessions held in St. John's, Gander, Corner Brook and online. Over 100 people from all agriculture sectors, including men and those who provide wraparound supports, joined the conversation to share experiences, celebrate successes and identify priorities. Successes, challenges and barriers facing women in agriculture were discussed, and priorities identified.

The second phase of engagement sessions delved deeper into what participants would like to see in a new organization. Three sessions were held in St. John's, Corner Brook and virtually. Overall, feedback was positive and in favour of establishing a not-for-profit supporting women in the agriculture industry.

Lastly, a strategic planning session was held to review all the information gathered in the engagement sessions, and to identify a mission, vision, values and strategic objectives of a new organization.

The initiative was championed by two women in agriculture: Brenda Aylward of Aylward's Farm in Port Kirwan and Terri Lynn Robbins of Robbins Family Farm in Deer Lake, and each phase was facilitated by Carole Spicer of Spicer Facilitation.



VANESSA MANUEL, NLFA INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT MANAGER; BRENDA AYLWARD, AYLWARD'S FARM; SARA POWER, NLFA PUBLIC TRUST & MARKETING MANAGER; TERRI LYNN ROBBINS, ROBBINS FAMILY FARM; CAROLE SPICER, SPICER FACILITATION

"Quite often at our farm, I am considered the farmer's wife," said Terri Lynn at the Corner Brook Phase 1 meeting. "When we go places, Bill is introduced as Farmer Bill and I'm introduced as Ms. Terri Lynn... I just picked up on that and I just ran with it because it sort of just flowed off the tongue, but then I started to think about it and that bothers me because I'm very much the farmer on the farm as well."

Terri Lynn has been a farmer for about 12 years, and she sat on the board of the NLFA for several of them. "In spite of the wonderful support that I got from them [NLFA] and different people in the industry, I never really truly felt like I was supported specifically as a woman in agriculture."

NLFA wanted to help change that. "This has been a long time coming, I think," said Vanessa Manuel, NLFA Industry Development Manager. "These discussions are happening in other parts of the country, and we thought it was the right time to bring the dialogue to this province. Brenda and Terri Lynn had been expressing their interest in this initiative for some time, so when we reached out to offer our support, they ran with the idea."

NLFA looks forward to seeing what happens next with this new organization and working with them to support advancing women in the agriculture industry in Newfoundland & Labrador.



DISCUSSION DURING THE CORNER BROOK PHASE 1 MEETING



FEEDING A CALF AT RIDEOUT'S DAIRY FARM

NL Open Farm Day

People all across Newfoundland and Labrador visited farms to learn about and celebrate local agriculture on Sunday, September 15. Some toured barns, bought fresh food, took pictures on tractors or enjoyed hayrides. Others bottled-fed dairy calves, got their face painted, played pin-the-tail-on-the-cow, or fed eager chickens and sheep.

"Open Farm Day helps people see the connection between food and the farms where it's grown," says Wayne Simmons, President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture. "It's a chance to meet farmers in their communities, see the hard work that goes into farming, and celebrate agriculture."

Atlantic Open Farm Day is an annual initiative to raise awareness of the agriculture industry. It's a fun day for people of all ages to meet farmers, observe working farms and learn about locally produced food.

This year, 16 in-person farms opened their doors to the public across the province:

- Upper Humber Settlement, Cormack
- Rideout's Farm, Cormack
- Hammond Farm & Headline Holsteins, Little Rapids
- Wright's Family Farm, Pasadena
- Robbins Family Farm, Deer Lake
- Norris Arm Farmers Market, Norris Arm
- Exploits Meadow Farm, Bishop's Falls
- Campbellton Berry Farm, Campbellton
- Living Water Hydroponic Farms, Stag Harbour, Fogo

- Crooked Branch Orchard, Jamestown
- Windy Heights Farm, Portugal Cove
- Aylward's Farm, Port Kirwan
- Lester's Farm Chalet, St. John's
- O'Brien Farm Foundation, St. John's
- Aldercroft Farm, Goose Bay
- Spruce Meadow Farms, Goose Bay

Each farm planned and executed their own event, ranging from farm markets to tours to family activities to educational experiences and more! Wright's Family Farm hosted a scarecrow festival, at Living Water Hydroponic Farms, visitors learned about hydroponic farming, and at Upper Humber Settlement, they learned about permaculture. Some events included a corn boil, BBQ or at Rideout's Farm, even a full Jiggs Dinner!

Most of the province lucked out with beautiful weather this year. At Robbins Family Farm, who partnered with the Tree House Family Resource Centre, vehicles lined the dirt road outside Deer Lake almost as far as the eye could see.

Terri Lynn Robbins says they had over 450 people walk through their gates that afternoon. "We had people from Port aux Basques, Stephenville, Baie Verte, Flowers Cove and lots of places in between. What an amazing day!"

NL Open Farm Day 2024 was organized by the Newfoundland & Labrador Federation of Agriculture with support from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.



EXPLOITS MEADOW FARM PARTNERED WITH BRETT'S STAND FOR DIABETES

Agriculture Expos

Every fall in Newfoundland and Labrador brings colder temperatures, changing leaves, and the return of the Agriculture Expo, hosted by the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture (NLFA). Over the years, the name and location of the event may have changed, but at its heart, the Agriculture Expo is all about showcasing local products and teaching the public about the provincial agriculture industry.

This year, Agriculture Expo 2024 brought together farmers, industry experts and agriculture enthusiasts at the Corner Brook Civic Centre on September 20-22 and at the Joe Byrne Arena in Grand Falls-Windsor on October 4-6.

“The 2024 Ag Expo at both locations was a tremendous success, showcasing a perfect blend of innovation and tradition. This year’s new layout and cutting-edge demonstrations brought fresh energy to the event while honoring its rich history,” says Christa Wright, Agriculture Expo Coordinator. “We’re proud to have reached a milestone in attendance, which reflects the growing excitement around the agriculture industry and the Expo’s role as a hub for learning, networking, and celebrating our farming community.”

The annual event highlights the importance of the province’s agriculture and agri-food industry through a farmers’ market, informational booths, educational experiences and fun family activities. This year, over 10,500 people came out to learn about and support local agriculture between the two events, approximately 6,700 people in Corner Brook and 4,000 in Grand Falls-Windsor.



AG EXPO VENDOR CORMACK BEE COMPANY



CORNER BROOK DEPUTY MAYOR LINDA CHAISSON; THE HONOURABLE GERRY BYRNE, MINISTER OF FISHERIES, FORESTRY AND AGRICULTURE; NLFA PRESIDENT WAYNE SIMMONS; AGRICULTURE EXPO COORDINATOR CHRISTA WRIGHT

The Expos featured exhibits from various sectors, including a farmers’ market with products; culinary demonstrations using local food in partnership with College of the North Atlantic in Corner Brook and Chef Roary MacPherson in Grand Falls-Windsor; sheep shearing demonstrations with professional sheep shearer Amber Peterson; honey extraction demos with the NL Beekeeping Association, and more!

The Expo also included many attractions for kids, including an animal farm, a brand-new chick hatchery, an interactive milking cow, and other fun, educational activities, thanks to Agriculture in the Classroom NL.

Thanks to donations at the door combined with the sales from NL Eggs, NLFA reported they were able to make generous donations to two local organizations as well. 4-H Newfoundland and Labrador received the Corner Brook donations, which totalled approximately \$18,000. Meanwhile, Brett’s Stand for Diabetes, a charity started by a local farming family that helps families of children with diabetes access resources, supplies and costly technologies, received approximately \$9,400 from the Grand Falls-Windsor event.

Agriculture Expo 2024 was hosted by the NL Federation of Agriculture and supported by the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP).



NLFA STAFF AND EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS PARTICIPATED IN A RETREAT IN FEBRUARY 2024 TO PRIORITIZE TEAM BUILDING AND STRATEGIZE ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS.



The Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture (NLFA) is an organization representing farmers and farm groups in the province. Our motto is “farmers helping farmers” and we believe that through sharing information and speaking with a united voice, farmers can work more effectively for the betterment of the agriculture industry. NLFA is partially funded by the Government of Newfoundland & Labrador through the Labour Market Partnerships agreement.

MENTAL HEALTH & FARM SAFETY

The NLFA Mental Health & Farm Safety Program has successfully completed its first year of activities, reaching significant milestones in the development of our support services for farmers, farm-workers, and the agricultural community in Newfoundland and Labrador. Below is a comprehensive year-end report outlining our activities and achievements for 2024, categorized under key program objectives.

Communication and Marketing

The NLFA MHS Program has worked consistently throughout the year to enhance communication efforts and promote mental health and farm safety initiatives:

- Launched communication materials for the NLFA Mental Health and Farm Safety Program, including resources for farmers to access provincial help lines and readily available community support information.
- Developed and launched marketing materials to promote AgriCare, a mental health and wellness platform for farmers in NL, across multiple communication channels, including print, online, and social media.
- Developed and distributed regular content to keep farmers informed of program updates and upcoming events on the NLFA website and social media channels, in emailed newsletters, in Agriview magazine, and via the AgriCare Platform Newsfeed.






AgriCare is a free, confidential platform powered by TELUS Health for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to access agriculturally-informed counselling and resources to support mental, physical, social, and financial wellbeing.

- Search for resources and tools on topics ranging from financial planning to dealing with mental and physical health to improving communication skills.
- Stay connected with other agricultural businesses and organizations through the News Feed.
- Receive support on your own schedule with CareNow – from participating in exercises and taking assessments, to listening to podcasts and videos.
- Access the Total Wellbeing Assessment to help identify your wellbeing strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- Speak to an advisor anytime, 24-7, for guidance, resources or a referral to an agriculturally-informed counsellor for face-to-face, telephone or video sessions.



Organization name: AgriCare (Newfoundland and Labrador Farmer Wellness Program)



agricare.lifeworks.com
 Username: NLfarms
 Password: NLFA1

1 (866) FARMS-01
 1 (866) 327-6701



AgriCare
 1-866-FARMS-01 (1-866-327-6701) 24/7
 Wellness Solutions for Farmers in Newfoundland and Labrador



AGRICARE FLYER

Engagement

The program made substantial progress in engaging directly with farmers, agricultural organizations, and stakeholders to collect baseline data, get informed on the kinds of services farmers want to see for mental health and wellness, and thus improve mental health and safety outcomes.

- Conducted a preliminary producer survey to assess mental health needs and priorities within the NL farming community with a sample size of about 40 producers.
- Engaged with affiliated organizations such as the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA), the DoMore Ag Foundation, the Canadian Centre for Agricultural Wellbeing (CCAW), WorkplaceNL, Workplace Safety & Prevention Services (WSPS), St. John Ambulance and others to discuss partnerships and improvements in farm safety and mental health services in Newfoundland & Labrador.
- Partnered with the Canadian Centre for Agricultural Wellbeing (CCAW) to secure funding for the launch of AgriCare, the mental health and wellness platform for NL farmers.
- Delivered mental health literacy presentations at the Sheep Producers Association of NL AGM and Beekeepers AGM, engaging members of these sectors in mental health literacy discussions and providing ongoing resources.
- Delivered two virtual mental health workshops in collaboration with the DoMore Ag Foundation, reaching ~25 participants, and receiving positive feedback.

Steering Committee

Our Steering Committee meetings provided regular updates and kept program goals on track:

- Initiative planning, key project decision making, development and implementation of communication assets and promotional items, and actionable items to prioritize throughout the first year.



STRESS “BARNs” - AGRICARE PROMOTIONAL GIVEAWAY ITEMS

Educational Templates

Educational materials were created and distributed throughout the year, further supporting the agricultural community in farm safety and mental health:

- Continued development of farm safety templates and wellness resources, including distributing them through the NLFA Resource Drive, AgriCare platform and NLFA social media platforms.

In 2024, we made strides in developing orientation guides for new and existing farmers to ensure easy access to the program's resources, sourcing and sharing nationally recognized templates, guides and checklists for ease of access:

- Sourced and shared templates, guides and self-assessments for Mental Health & Wellness.
- Sourced and shared templates, guides and assessments for Farm Business Management (Stress Management).
- Sourced and shared templates, guides and checklists for Farm Safety.
- Planned, developed and provided access to the following in-house made guides and templates (NL Provincial Mental Health Resources; Resource Package: Managing Stress and Burnout)

All guides, templates and checklists can be found on the NLFA Resource Drive, available on the NLFA website under Mental Health & Farm Safety.

Events and Initiatives

Throughout 2024, we organized and participated in numerous events and initiatives to raise awareness of mental health and farm safety:

- **Winter/Spring 2024:** Attended and introduced at NLFA Symposium & AGM, presented a mental health literacy presentation at the Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association of NL AGM, and the Sheep Producers of NL AGM.
- **Spring/Summer 2024:** Attended and presented a mental health and wellness for beekeeper's presentation at the NL Beekeeper's Association AGM; Launched the First Aid Kit Initiative, distributing over 200 free first aid kits to farmers and agricultural community members across Newfoundland and Labrador, launched AgriCare: Wellness Solutions for NL farmers (24/7 helpline, free counselling and online resources platform).
- **Fall 2024:** Participated in the Ag Expo Corner Brook and Grand Falls, where we provided information on mental health and safety resources available through the program; Attended the NL Young Farmers Summit.
- **Winter 2024:** Finalizing preparations for the Agriculture Industry Symposium 2025, which will include an AgriCare promotional booth and 3 presentations covering topics related to mental health and farm safety.



NLFA DISTRIBUTED FIRST AID KITS TO FARMERS AND AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS ACROSS NL

Training programs remained a priority throughout the year, helping farmers build resilience and better mental health:

- Delivered an online mental health workshop on stress management, titled "Managing Stress and Burnout on the Farm," attended by ~25 participants, including NLFA staff.
- Completed facilitator training for the "In the Know" mental health literacy program to enable in-person delivery across Newfoundland and Labrador.

The expansion of farm safety and mental health programming continued to be a primary focus:

- Participated in a national survey regarding farm safety in Canada with the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA), contributing to the development of farm health and safety resources specific to NL's unique farming landscape.
- **Ongoing:** Collaboration with CCAW and TELUS Health to enhance the AgriCare platform, making improvements based on feedback to ensure better accessibility and usability for Newfoundland and Labrador farmers.

Facilitate and Deliver Services

The mental health services provided to farmers remained a cornerstone of the program's offerings:

- **July 2024:** Launched AgriCare, offering 24/7 support through a toll-free help line and online wellness platform.

Administration

In 2024, the NLFA Mental Health & Farm Safety Program was actively administered, ensuring smooth operation, budgeting, and reporting.

- **Throughout the year:** Ongoing program administration, including budgeting, reporting on activities, tracking participation in workshops, training, and events. Regular updates were shared with stakeholders to ensure transparency and accountability.



KYLIE STOKES, NLFA MENTAL HEALTH AND FARM SAFETY COORDINATOR AT THE CORNER BROOK AGRICULTURE EXPO

The NLFA Mental Health & Farm Safety Program has made significant strides in 2024, expanding our reach and resources to farmers and the broader agricultural community. With continued engagement, partnership-building, and a focus on accessible resources, we are well-positioned to meet the evolving needs of the farming community in the year ahead. We look forward to building upon these achievements in 2025.

NLFA Mental Health & Safety is funded by the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) to support youth in the agriculture and agri-food industry. Sustainable CAP is a five-year, \$3.5-billion investment between the federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen the competitiveness, innovation, and resiliency of Canada’s agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector. This includes \$1 billion in federal programs and activities and a \$2.5 billion commitment that is cost-shared 60 per cent federally and 40 per cent provincially/territorially for programs that are designed and delivered by provinces and territories.



AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM NL

AITC-NL continues to deliver agriculture education in an interactive, hands-on, virtual, and inquiry-based learning manner and strives to connect youth to agriculture through education.

The AITC-NL program continues to expand to reach our goal of connecting students from kindergarten to grade 12 to agriculture. Our program is only as strong as the dedication and passion of the members of the AITC Steering Committee, farmers, and volunteers. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to everyone that believes in our organization and donates their time and efforts to us.

AITC-NL would like to thank our partners, including the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture, and the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership. We would like to thank the community partners and business/commodities that support our program and the teachers and administrators from all the schools across the province that open their classrooms to us.

Here are some of the initiatives worked on throughout this year:

Canada's Ag Day

Canada's Agriculture Day is a time to showcase all the amazing things happening in our industry and create a closer connection with consumers about where their food comes from and the people who produce it.

As part of the celebrations on February 13, 2024, AITC-NL hosted an agriculture exhibit at All Hallows Elementary in North River. Volunteers from various commodity groups and agriculture professionals shared their knowledge and



CANADA AG DAY AT ALL HALLOWS ELEMENTARY IN NORTH RIVER.

offered students an interactive and hands-on learning experience, with exciting giveaways provided by Farm Credit Canada, Egg Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador, School Milk Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, and AITC-NL.

All kindergarten to grade 12 teachers throughout the province had the opportunity to participate in a social media contest showing us how their classes celebrate Canada's Agriculture Day by adding the hashtag #CdnAgDay and tagging @AITCNL in their social media posts. We encouraged all teachers to show us how they celebrate the food we grow here in Newfoundland and Labrador.

"Canada's Agriculture Day is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate our hardworking farmers, farm families, and communities that produce the world-class products that are enjoyed here in Canada and around the world. We appreciate the work that Agriculture in the Classroom – Newfoundland and Labrador is doing to help inspire the next generation of farmers and agricultural workers," said the Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month

Canadian Agriculture Literacy Month (CALM) is a national initiative hosted by AITC-C. The event was held in Newfoundland and Labrador March 1-31, 2024.

CALM is a hands-on program that encourages children to learn about and celebrate agriculture in various ways, including reading books about agriculture and watching virtual farm tours and agriculture videos. The theme for CALM is “Our Food, Our Story.” An important element of this event is the connection between students, local farmers, and agriculture industry representatives and how AITC-NL strives to continue to make that connection.

AITC-NL delivered this program in kindergarten to grade 12 classrooms across Newfoundland and Labrador in a month-long event. AITC-NL shared the stories of farmers and agriculture professionals with online presentations, virtual farm tours and other resources. Over 5000 students were engaged in learning about agriculture in Newfoundland and Labrador. Teachers and students were excited to have visitors back in the classroom for CALM.

AITC-NL introduced a new activity in grade 5 and 6 classrooms where students paired everyday items with the commodity it originated from (cattle, corn, canola, sheep, pig, bees or wheat). AITC-NL also provided classrooms with a new storybook from WS Marketing called All The Farmers You Will Know, about different farmers all across Canada.

On March 1, 2024, AITC-NL hosted an in-person CALM launch at Upper Gullies Elementary in Conception Bay South with the Little Green Sprouts classes and launched “I’m a Little Green Sprout” music video from The Swinging Belles. AITC-NL planted lettuce with the students and provided all classes with resources. As previously mentioned, visits were also made to junior high and high schools and other events took place throughout CALM.

Bee Creative Literacy Contest March 2024

In March of 2024, AITC-NL partnered with the Newfoundland and Labrador Beekeeping Association (NLBKA) and Egg Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador (EFNL) again to host the Bee Creative Literacy Contest for NL kindergarten to grade 6 classes. Winning classes received an empty beehive to decorate, and the hive was returned to the beekeeper to become home to a new colony of honeybees. Congrats to the Bee Creative Literacy Contest winners for 2024: Ms. Simms, Cloud River Academy; Ms. Penney, Bishop White School; Ms. Fagan, MacDonald Drive Elementary; and Ms. Martin, Belanger Memorial School.



Great Canadian Farm Tour

The Great Canadian Farm Tour (GCFT) virtually connects students with real farmers across the country to inspire interest in learning about the important role agriculture plays in their lives.

AITC-C and its 10 provincial members hosted season three (April to May 2024) and four (October to December 2024) of the GCFT. Tours included virtual visits to 22 farms focusing on the diversity of commodities across the country.

Students in grades 1-6 had the opportunity to learn about Canada's agriculture and food story, connect and interact virtually with farmers on their own farms and experience real farm environments. Some farm tours included grain farming, greenhouse production, chickens, sheep and more. Newfoundland and Labrador's two stops were dairy farming and pumpkin farming.

For season three, AITC-NL visited Nancy Lester at Lester's Dairy Farm on Brookfield Road in St. John's. Nancy is a sixth-generation farmer, a mother to two boys and a proud member of NL's new Dairy Co-op with Central Dairies. Nancy farms alongside her parents, her brother, and her husband. Lester's Dairy Farm has four Delaval Robots that milk roughly 250 cows 24/7. Students were able to participate live by asking questions in the chat and getting to interact with a real dairy farmer!

For season four, AITC-NL's provincial farm tour visited Wright's Family Farm in Pasadena. Wright's grows over 30 different varieties of fruits, berries, and vegetables and has an on-site Farmers Market. Sharon Wright hosted the tour and showed students all around the Wright's Family Farm pumpkin patch. Sharon shared with students her educational background and how she and her partner, Andy, moved to Pasadena and started the farm.

More than 748 teachers registered from across Canada to watch the Newfoundland and Labrador farm tour and over 200 classes tuned in live during the farm tour. Sharon got to interact and answer questions with students from Newfoundland and Labrador, in addition to Saskatchewan, Ontario and more! The Great Canadian Farm Tours give students the opportunity to learn about agriculture from all over Canada.

Career Initiatives and National Projects

AITC-NL hosted a thinkAG Career Expo on February 21, 2024, at Corner Brook Regional High School with over 500 students.

The goals of the Career Expo are to strengthen understanding of innovative concepts in the agriculture sector, stimulate creative thinking, generate new ideas, and develop collaborative problem-solving methods. Through this work we are increasing awareness of agriculture, agri-foods, and agri-science careers; encourage and attract new entrants to the agriculture industry; provide direction on where to find agriculture career information; and equip students with additional information to better identify, evaluate and choose a career path.

AITC-NL hosted a Career Case learning experience with students from across the province at the Provincial Student Leadership Conference (PSLC) held in Gander from October 17-19, 2024. With a history that dates back more than 30 years, PSLC is an annual event that celebrates and builds leadership capacity in our students and schools. Supported by Student Leadership NL, PSLC is the province's premiere leadership training event for youth. Putting a spin on Career Case, the session was called "PSLC had a Farm" and students were challenged to figure out all the jobs on the "PLSC Farm" by winning the Career Case Extravaganza. The concept of this session was for AITC-NL to teach these students how to play Career Case and to teach them how to facilitate it at the same time.



Amazing Agriculture Adventure

In-person Amazing Agriculture Adventures (AAA) were held at the Agriculture Expos in Corner Brook and Grand Falls-Windsor (Sept 30 & Oct 4, 2024). Over 500 students and teachers participated in the AAA where students go from booth to booth and visit farmers and agriculture representatives to learn about the province's agriculture industry. Students were excited for the opportunity to participate in hands-on activities, including making nutrient bracelets, living necklaces, commodity match, animal farm, beekeeping displays, and much more!

AITC-NL hosted an exciting Virtual Amazing Agriculture Adventure for grades 4, 5, and 6 classes from November 23 to December 13, 2024. Teachers received a package that included video links to several farm tours and agriculture related videos and the classes answered a series of questions based on whichever four videos they chose. Topics included in the farm tours videos are Food Safety, Chicken Farming, Berry Farming, Lester's Farm Market tour, Mark's Market tour, Honeybee Farm, Dairy Farm, Egg Processing, Soil and Plants, Plant Adaptations, Cranberry Farming, and more!

Each class that participated was entered to win a class prize. Five winners were chosen and each participating class received a set of resources and activities from AITC-NL. Winners received Seed Detective kit where students investigate mystery seeds to guess what plants they are growing.

Little Green Thumbs Program

The Little Green Thumbs (LGT) program is an indoor gardening program, currently in its 13th year, focusing on grades 3 to 6. It gives the students and teachers the opportunity to become food producers right in their own classroom.

Little Green Sprouts (LGS) is a junior Little Green Thumbs gardening program for grades



THINKAG CAREER EXPO AT CORNER BROOK REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL.

That way, the students could bring the game back to their schools and facilitate it in their classrooms, teaching the teachers and students how to play it.

Other high school initiatives include classroom visits from farmers, agriculture professionals and researchers. AITC-NL continues to work with AITC-C on national initiatives including Mission Explorium, thinkAG website and events, Kareero app and Career Case game.

Women in AG Videos

AITC-NL partnered with the Newfoundland and Labrador Young Farmers program to develop the Women in Agriculture Video series. These videos showcase the amazing women working in agriculture and are meant to engage students in the variety of careers available in the industry.

In 2024, two more videos were added to the series. They feature Mary Lester and Susan Lester Ryan of Lester's Farm Market in St. John's and Pauline Duivenvoorden of Barn Fine Eggs and Headline Holsteins in Deer Lake. These videos are featured in the virtual Amazing Agriculture Adventure where students use virtual farm tours to answer a series of questions and enter to win a prize for their class. The videos can be found on AITC-NL's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@aitcnl>

kindergarten to 2 that includes a smaller system for micro-greens (lettuce, herbs, etc.) It enables our younger students to care for their own garden. LGT/LGS gardens are in 120 elementary/primary schools across Newfoundland and Labrador.

Overview LGTs and LGSs Gardens

January 2024 – June 2024 (School Year 2023-2024)

- 202 LGT gardens (4160 students)
- 174 LGS gardens (3086 students)

September 2024 – December 2024 (School Year 2024-2025)

- 180 LGT gardens (3800 students) 14 new and refurbished
- Upgraded 33 old lighting system to LED
- 150 LGS gardens (2900 students)

The gardens have inspired conversations about nutrition, healthy eating, cooking, and planting. Children who grow their own food are much more willing to try new foods. The Little Green Thumbs and Sprouts gardens have become the focal point of the classroom. Many outdoor school community gardens have grown from the LGT classroom gardens. Students have their families participating in growing at home and have developed home and community gardens with the skills they have acquired through the LGT program.

Ongoing support has been provided for all teachers throughout the entire school by the Little Green Thumbs coordinator, volunteer mentors, LGT National office, and other teachers. There is a national website www.littlegreenthumbs.org.



HARVEST CELEBRATION AT ST. FRANCIS SCHOOL

LGT Virtual Teachers' Training Session

The LGT Virtual Teachers' Training session was held on October 9, 2024. In attendance were 26 new and current teachers. Some received new gardens and were new to the program, some were new teachers with existing gardens, and some were teachers that could not participate in the past.

National LGT Director Brit MacDonald, and NLFA General Manager Colin Carroll also attended. Teachers were presented with an overview of the AITC-NL Program, the LGT Mentorship program, AITC-C national resources library, national LGT resources, and more!

Teachers were provided with details on how it all starts, journals, seeds, germination, transplanting, vermicomposting, and of course, recipes, and eating. Benefits of the program to teachers and students were discussed, such as: curriculum links; gardens' contributions to improving social and emotional well-being; creating meaningful connections between gardens and agriculture; building environmental stewardship; sharing knowledge of local food and farmers; building responsibility and classroom inclusiveness; planting the seeds of healthy eating; transforming wonder into knowledge; and creating pride in knowing they can grow something themselves.

A pre-recorded session on Growing a Great Garden was presented with Jane White, Crop Development Specialist, NL Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture. This video demonstrated how to start your seeds, care of the seeds, germination, watering, lighting, and transplanting the seedlings. Videos were also shown on how to set up the new LED lighting system, how to set up the earth boxes, and info about promix, fertilizer, transplanting, light requirements, and watering.

The final session was a Teachers' Perspective session with long time LGT teachers Ms. Nancy Ryan of St. Matthews School and Ms. Judith Crocker of Helen Tulk Elementary. Ms. Ryan and Ms. Crocker discussed their experiences with their gardens. Some teachers have had their gardens for 13 years since the beginning of the program.

Agriculture in the Classroom Canada

Agriculture in the Classroom Canada (AITC-C) is a national organization that creates programs and resources to support our member organizations in each of the 10 provinces. Provincial partners, like Agriculture in the Classroom NL (AITC-NL), are the boots on the ground, delivering programs and resources to help teachers get agriculture education into classrooms across Canada. AITC-C's mission is to cultivate a meaningful connection to agriculture and food for students and educators.

Each year, the AITC-C collective across Canada creates more than two million student experiences through programs and resources, making valuable connections to agriculture and agri-food. In addition to developing hands-on programs, our Canadian resource library offers educators hundreds of resources in French and English that are linked to provincial curriculum outcomes.

Members of the AITC-C collective from across Canada gathered in St. John's, NL, for AITC's annual national Summer Sharing Sessions from July 9- 12, 2024. The week was full of exciting sessions to bring the collective together and included provincial sharing, working on a thinkAG national strategy, learning how thinkAG initiatives work in each province, a national volunteer strategy, and some team bonding events.

Together, the AITC-C collective has the power to make a difference by helping to change behaviours and practices through education and awareness beginning in the classroom. AITC-NL Coordinator, Chelsea Foley, sits on the national AITC-C board of directors. To learn more about AITC across Canada, visit www.aitc-canada.ca



DELEGATES GOT SCREECHED IN AT THE AITC-CANADA NATIONAL SUMMER SHARING SESSION IN ST JOHN'S

Agriculture in the Classroom NL is funded by the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP). The Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership is a five-year (2023-2028), \$3.5 billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen the competitiveness, innovation and resiliency of Canada's agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector. The agreement includes \$1 billion in federal programs and activities and \$2.5 billion in cost-shared programs and activities funded by federal, provincial and territorial governments. The Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership provides \$330,000 annually to support Agriculture in the Classroom activities to connect youth to agriculture and increase awareness of how food is grown in Newfoundland and Labrador.



NL YOUNG FARMERS

Working in collaboration with the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture (NLFA), NL Young Farmers continues to assist farmers aged 18-40 who are interested in getting into agriculture or are already farming by offering resources, training, workshops and networking sessions with other farmers and connecting them to the right people in the industry. The following are key initiatives that took place in 2024.

NL Young Farmers Rebranding

Early in 2024, NL Young Farmers rebranded to refresh its identity with a contemporary look to help attract more young farmers to the organization. Key rebranding initiatives include:

- A new logo with crisp, clean lines and a colour palette that reflects the NLFA's brand. The design symbolizes a successful young farmer with hands raised in a jubilant fashion and the light green colour represents healthy growth.
- Logo release across the NL Young Farmers website and social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube). All social media profile pictures and banners now feature the new logo and a consistent mission statement.
- A new membership video with a cutting-edge, contemporary look. The video was released on our new YouTube channel and website in June 2024.
- A new website with updated resource links, a new media page featuring stories about our members and activities, and a new page for our Fieldnotes newsletter.

Fieldnotes Newsletter

The inaugural Fall 2024 issue of *Fieldnotes*, a new NL Young Farmers newsletter, was released in early December. Highlights include:

- A story about Heather Zurel and her husband David Porter that covers their sustainable agriculture work at Vinland Acres Forest Farm and Data Farms.
- A story about the new NL Young Farmers Farm Walk Series.
- A review of Food First NL's All Around the Table documentary series.
- A quick farm fact, a recipe and a list of upcoming agriculture-related events.



**THE INAUGURAL ISSUE OF THE NEW
FIELDNOTES NEWSLETTER WAS RELEASED IN
DECEMBER 2024.**

Farm Walk Series

The Farm Walk Series is a new video series that profiles NL Young Farmers members to inspire other young people with an interest in agriculture. The first two videos are scheduled for an early 2025 release on our website and social media. Highlights include:

- August 2024 shoot with fourth-generation sheep farmer Matt Morry (Heritage Farm). Matt discussed why he loves farming and his goals for the future.
- September 2024 shoot with Krista Chatman (Three Mile Ridge) and Jonathan Holloway (Mosquito Cove Farm). They discussed their farming history and goals and the benefits of the NL Young Farmers Mentorship Program.



FEATURED IN OUR NEW FARM WALK SERIES, JONATHAN HOLLOWAY SELLS HIS PRODUCTS AT CLARENVILLE FARM & MARKET.

New Farmer Guide 3.0

The New Farmer Guide 3.0 was published in July 2024 to help current and future farmers know which steps to take and what resources are available. It is available as a PDF document on our website. Printed copies were available at the Leadership Summit, the NLFA's Agriculture Expos, and other events. The guide was also promoted on social media.

Leadership Summit

The 11th annual NL Young Farmers Leadership Summit took place October 18-19, 2024, in Deer Lake. The theme for this year's Summit was "The Cost of Farming." Approximately 55 people attended the event, including 15 NL Young Farmers members, farmers from across Atlantic Canada, government representatives, and industry stakeholders.

Day One highlights include:

- Afton Madore (Farm Management Specialist) spoke about farm business planning and led a business plan workshop.
- Daniel Hillier (Land Management Specialist) spoke about land acquisition.
- Annette Bennett (Partner, Poole Althouse) discussed the benefits of incorporating a business versus registering a sole proprietorship.
- Jennifer Eustace (Industry Development Officer) provided a presentation about Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership programs.
- Jason Codner (Relationship Manager, Farm Credit Canada) spoke about various financial resources, including loans for young farmers.
- Crystal Anderson (Market Development Officer) explored the effective ways farmers can market their farm business.
- Keynote speaker Dan Rubin (Food Producers Forum) talked about the importance of community collaboration.
- A Young Farmers Panel featured farmers from all four Atlantic Provinces: Lauralee Ledrew (Upper Humber Settlement, NL), Soleil Hutchinson (Soleil's Farm, PEI), Adrienne Helder (Creek Home Farm, NB), and Patricia Bishop (TapRoot Farms, NS).
- A networking banquet featured ingredients and products from local farms. In his opening remarks, the Honourable Gerry Byrne, Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture, praised the work being done by farmers across Newfoundland and Labrador.

Day Two of the Leadership Summit was a field trip collaboration with NL Living Lab. Highlights include:

- A tour of Wright's Family Farm for a farmer's perspective on the practical economics of improving soil health with cover crops.
- A tour of Birchbark Farm with Richard Butt to discuss how he developed his farm with a solid business and marketing plan and his plans for growth. NL Living Lab representatives held a panel discussion about social research and implementing beneficial management practices.
- A tour of Larch Grove Farm with core NL Living Lab farmer Ian Richardson to discuss the benefits and costs in the forage field and how technology improves efficiency on the farm.
- A tour of Rideout's Farm with core NL Living Lab farmer Melvin Rideout to discuss how technology helps reduce input and processing costs. NL Living Lab representatives also discussed various technologies and how farmers use them as practical management tools.
- A tour of Cormack Bee Company with Lee Harvey to discuss beekeeping and how to run a successful business.

Reaction to the Summit was quite positive.

Feedback received included:

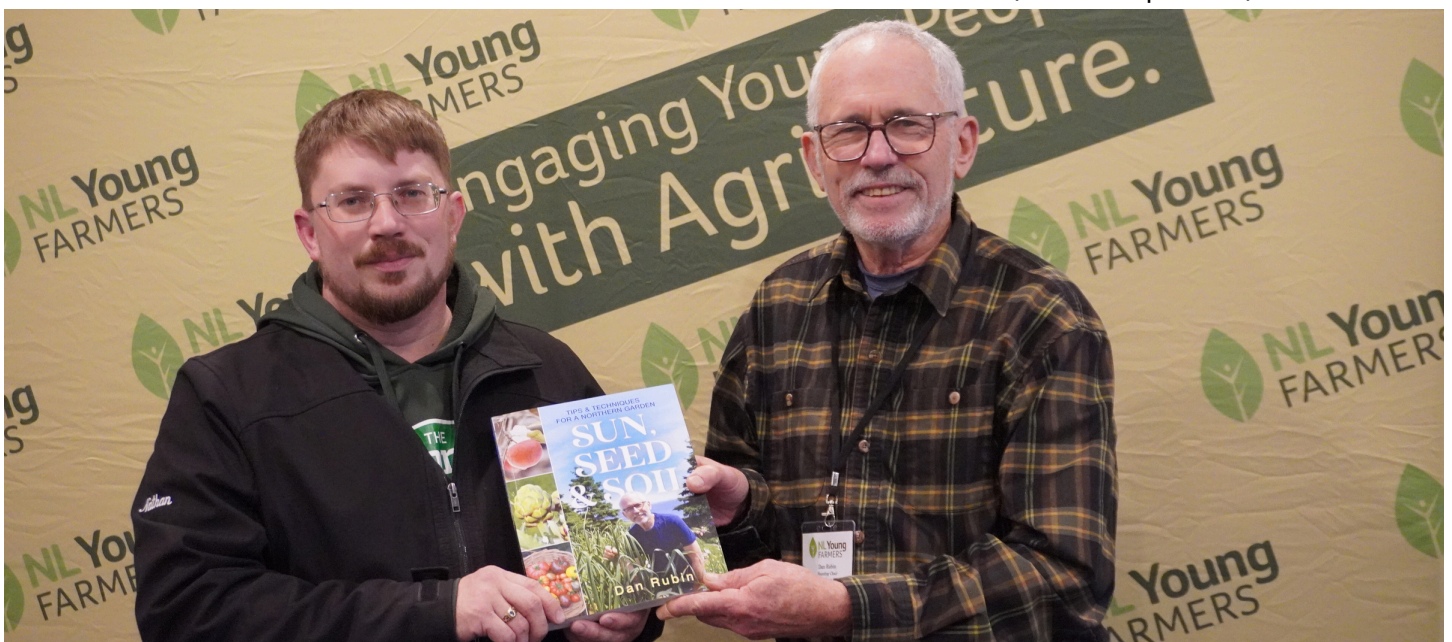
- "I have learned so much today attending my first summit."
- "I learned that there are lots of possibilities of achieving your goals and dreams."
- "Great education and networking!"
- "Everyone's presentations were wonderful and very informative."

Media coverage included:

- The Spark Podcast promoted the Summit and conducted interviews with NL Young Farmers members Lukas Doman (Deep Roots Farm & Market) and Ashely Hann (Riverside Farms/Humber River Off-Grid Tours)
- Interview with Tonya Organ from BayFM – Bay of Islands Radio 100.1
- Interview with Martin Jones from CBC Newfoundland Morning

Information booths included: NL Young Farmers, Harvey & Company, Western NL Food Hub, Farm Credit Canada, Food Producers Forum, NL Living Lab, and the NLFA, which featured information on the organization and its resources available to farmers, including the NLFA Mental Health & Safety Program.

Four event sponsors: Harvey & Company (Banquet Sponsor), Farm Credit Canada (Platinum Sponsor), NL Kubota (Bronze Sponsor), Town of Deer Lake (Bronze Sponsor).



AT THE 2024 LEADERSHIP SUMMIT, KEYNOTE SPEAKER DAN RUBIN FROM FOOD PRODUCERS FORUM PRESENTS NATHAN DENNIS WITH A SIGNED COPY OF HIS BOOK SUN, SEED AND SOIL.

Workshops and Training

NL Young Farmers provided training sessions based on a membership training needs survey conducted in June 2024. We collaborated with the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture to offer a three-hour “Building Healthy Soil in Newfoundland and Labrador” webinar in early December 2024. This is the first webinar in a two-part series; the second webinar is scheduled for February 2025.

Conferences

In partnership with the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, NL Young Farmers covered 75% of the costs for members to attend the following conferences:

- Amanda Cull (Amuk Farm) attended the Atlantic Farm Women Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia, from November 15-16, 2024.
- Jade Lawrence (Wright’s Family Farm) attended the Advancing Women in Agriculture Conference in Niagara Falls, Ontario, from November 17-19, 2024.
- Jeremy McNiven (McNiven’s Fresh Produce) attended the Agriculture Excellence Conference in Abbotsford, British Columbia, from November 19-21, 2024.



IN JULY 2024, NL YOUNG FARMERS WAS INVITED TO HOST THE COMMUNITY TABLE AT THE ST. JOHN’S FARMERS’ MARKET.

Collaborative Initiatives and Events

NL Young Farmers continues to collaborate with other agriculture-related organizations across Newfoundland and Labrador and Canada. NL Young Farmers had information booths and distributed promotional materials at the following events:

- Academy Canada Career Fair (St. John’s)
- St. John’s Farmers’ Market
- NLFA Agriculture Expo (Corner Brook)
- NLFA Agriculture Expo (Grand Falls). Member Danielle Borland (Jiggs’ Farm) joined our booth to help answer any questions.
- Amazing Agriculture Adventure at both NLFA Agriculture Expos in collaboration with Agriculture in the Classroom NL.

Other collaborations included:

- Attendance at O’Brien Farm Foundation for Open Farm Day.
- Attendance at the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Minister’s visit to O’Brien Farm Foundation for a young farmer roundtable discussion. NL Young Farmers members Heather Zurel (Vinland Acres Forest Farm/Data Farms), Jeremy McNiven (McNiven’s Fresh Produce) and Emily Bland (SucSeed) attended the event.
- Attendance at the Food Producers Forum panel discussion How Do We Grow Our Food? at the Autism Society Greenhouse in St. John’s. NL Young Farmers member Heather Zurel was featured on the panel.

Other collaborations in the early stages of discussion and planning include: a film screening and panel discussion with First Light; a presentation about NL Young Farmers and panel discussion with Growing Up Labrador; and an inter-provincial agriculture-related trivia night with NS Young Farmers and NB Young Farmers.



THIS YEAR'S YOUNG FARMER OF THE WEEK SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN INCLUDED A SPECIAL FEATURE OF AGRICULTURE TECHNICIAN STUDENTS AT COLLEGE OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC IN CORNER BROOK.

Social Media

NL Young Farmers continues to utilize social media to promote our organization and members, offer resources and information, and connect with farmers and other agriculture-related organizations.

Our Young Farmer of the Week social media campaign took place in spring and fall 2024. The campaign increased engagement with our organization and featured the following members for one week each:

- Jonathan Holloway (Mosquito Cove Farm) and Krista Chatman (Three Mile Ridge)
- Jeremy McNiven (McNiven's Fresh Produce)
- Jasmine Gale (College of the North Atlantic Agriculture Technician Program)
- Matt Morry (Heritage Farm)
- Danielle Borland (Jiggs' Farm)
- Amanda Cull (Amuk Farm)
- Jade Lawrence (Wright's Family Farm)
- Genevieve and Mackenzie Warford (Papa's Farm)

Promotional Materials

NL Young Farmers continues to distribute existing promotional materials, including brochures, postcards, and the New Farmer Guide 3.0. Our banner and logo wall are displayed at various events. New promotional materials include a table-top banner and an 18x24" poster with a QR code link to our website. The poster was mailed to farmers' markets and public libraries across Newfoundland and Labrador. We also created branded toques, sweaters, and Post-It notes. In addition, we placed a full-page ad in the Fall 2024 issue of Agriview along with an article called "The Benefits of Buying Direct From Farmers."

Steering Committee

In October 2024, Rodney Reid resigned as Interim Chair of the NL Young Farmers Steering Committee. Lukas Doman (Deep Roots Farm & Market) was approved as the new Chair in November. Lauralee Ledrew (Upper Humber Settlement) and Matt Morry (Heritage Farm) also joined the Steering Committee as new members in 2024.



NL YOUNG FARMERS OUTREACH COORDINATOR MARK HOFFE AND PROGRAM COORDINATOR LISA DAVIS AT AGRICULTURE EXPO 2024 IN CORNER BROOK, NL.

NL Young Farmers is funded by the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) to support youth in the agriculture and agri-food industry. Sustainable CAP is a five-year, \$3.5-billion investment between the federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen the competitiveness, innovation, and resiliency of Canada's agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector. This includes \$1 billion in federal programs and activities and a \$2.5 billion commitment that is cost-shared 60 per cent federally and 40 per cent provincially/territorially for programs that are designed and delivered by provinces and territories. Sustainable CAP in Newfoundland and Labrador provides \$229,000 annually to NL Young Farmers' activities in the province.



NL LIVING LAB

A Productive Year in Agricultural Innovation

The Newfoundland and Labrador Living Lab (NL Living Lab) is a collaborative project that is making strides in agricultural innovation and research. The project is one of the 14 agroecosystem living labs across Canada under the Agricultural Climate Solutions - Living Labs (ACS-LL) program funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC). It is focused on developing beneficial management practices (BMPs) that are aimed at sequestering carbon; reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; improving farmers' economic wellbeing; as well as other environmental benefits such as improving biodiversity; soil health, and water quality.

2024 has been a tremendous and fulfilling year for the NL Living Lab filled with so many activities and success stories, such as:

- Strategic Planning Workshop (February 2024);
- Students and Researchers Retreat (September 2024);
- Collaborative Field Day (October 2024);
- Filming of NL Living Lab Video;
- Partnerships and Collaborations;
- Core Producers;
- Internship; and
- Others

Strategic Planning Workshop

Over the course of two days in February 2024, the NL Living Lab team and Participants held a strategic planning workshop at the Centre for Research and Innovation in Corner Brook. The workshop brought together about 30 participants from the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture (NLFA), researchers and students from Grenfell Campus of Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN), researchers from AAFC, and researchers from the Provincial Department of Fishery, Forestry and Agriculture (DFFA).

The two-day workshop was facilitated by Dr. Brook McWherter from Dalhousie University. The workshop centered on identifying and strengthening partnerships that exist in the project and facilitating collaboration and participation among project partners. The highlight of the workshop was the development of partnership mapping and logic model that outlines the relationship among stakeholders, the inputs, and outcomes of the project.



NLiving Lab
AGRICULTURAL CLIMATE SOLUTIONS



NL LIVING LAB STUDENTS WORKING IN THE LAB (LEFT TO RIGHT): ABDULLAH SAMI, MUHAMMAD UMAR AND THARINDU KULASINGHE

Researchers and Students Retreat

September 12, 2024 saw the gathering of researchers and students in the NL Living Lab project for a one day retreat. The retreat was an opportunity for them to provide an update and findings on their ongoing research in the project. Researchers and students from the Grenfell Campus of Memorial University and researchers from the provincial Department of Fishery, Forestry and Agriculture were provided the opportunity to make presentations on their research activities.

Internship

To keep up with the collaborative approach of the NL Living Lab and its project partners, the NLFA hired a master's student as an intern to serve as a communication link between NLFA and Grenfell Campus researchers and students. Bethel Chukwukere is a master's student in the Environmental Policy program of Memorial university of Newfoundland, Grenfell Campus. His duties as an intern in the NL Living Lab include scheduling and attending meetings between the NLFA and Grenfell researchers and other duties delegated by the NLFA such as compiling a database of agricultural organizations across Canada and attending NLFA weekly staff meetings. The internship provided the opportunity to see first-hand how collaborative relationships have grown through the living lab process.

Partnerships and Collaboration

The AAFC's ACS-LL program aims to foster international, national, and regional collaboration in agricultural innovation and practices through knowledge sharing and technology transfer. The NL Living Lab has engaged in this collaboration and partnerships with other living labs across the nation and working on creating international relationships.

NL and NS living lab project leads had the opportunity to present at the Tri Society in San Antonio Texas in November on the process of the living lab network and have contacts with two organizations looking to further the discussion. Such collaboration includes monthly meetings and interactions with NL Living Labs and other living labs in Atlantic Canada and Manitoba and the National living lab conference in Ottawa in September of 2024, the first time that all project leads were able to share and connect under one roof.



LIVING LAB ATLANTIC CANADA LEADS (LEFT TO RIGHT): RODNEY REID (NL), CAROLYN MARSHALL (NS), ANDREA MCKENNA (PE) AND CEDRIC MACLEOD (NB).

The day began with a farmer's perspective on co-developing cover cropping strategies, including field observations and the benefits of being part of the innovation process. Discussions included plans to increase the use of legumes in rotation, a panel discussed the socio-economic activities of the living lab and how farmer interactions would be captured by the research team.

Thank you to the farmers that hosted and shared their knowledge with the young farmers. They included Andy Wright (Wrights Family Farm), Richard Butt (Birchbark Farm), Ian Richardson (Larch Grove Farm), Melvin Rideout (Rideout's Family Farm) and Lee Harvey (Cormack Bee Company).

Core Farmers

The NL living lab as a farmer-led project will not be successful without the cooperation and participation of our core farmers. Thank you to the farmers for participating in the on-farm trials, contributing their skills, experiences and time to the project.

NL LIVING LAB CORE FARMER JIM LESTER



NL LIVING LAB CORE FARMER IAN RICHARDSON



NL LIVING LAB CORE FARMER MELVIN RIDEOUT

AWARDS

Environmental Award

Congratulations to Green Farms Innovations Inc., the 2024 recipient of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture Environment Award!

Green Farm is adopting modern and environmentally safe techniques for watering, nutrient supply and for insect/pest and disease management. They are new, innovative and environmentally sustainable.

The most prestigious environmental and conservation award in the province, the Environmental Award is presented each year to an individual producer or farm group that makes great contributions to sustainable resource management and/or to the prevention of environmental damage on the agricultural landscape in Newfoundland and Labrador.



College of the North Atlantic Agriculture Technician Scholarship

To encourage local students to pursue careers in the agri-products industry, NLFA is supporting two scholarships for students in the first and second year of the Agriculture Technician Co-op program at College of the North Atlantic.

Congratulations Jade Lawrence and Cordell Lush!

Dalhousie University Faculty of Agriculture Scholarship

Katelynn Blundon is the 2024 recipient of the Newfoundland & Labrador Federation of Agriculture Scholarships to Dalhousie University.

Katelynn is from Mount Pearl, NL and enrolled in the BSc (agr), Animal Science program.

We wish you the best in your academic journey and future career!



NLFA GENERAL MANAGER COLIN CARROLL PRESENTS THE CNA AGRICULTURE TECHNICIAN SCHOLARSHIP TO JADE LAWRENCE.

Stewart King inducted into Atlantic Agricultural Hall of Fame

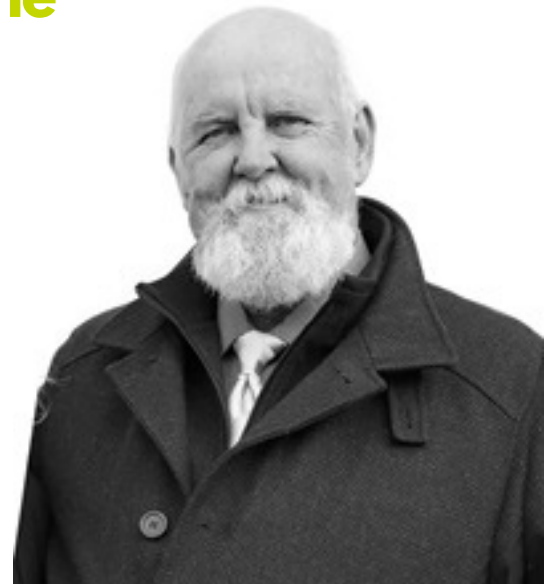
For Stewart King, farming was a family affair. Born in 1964, Stewart spent his childhood tearing around the farm after his father. There was no doubt that he would be the 7th generation to work the land.

The King family began farming in the 1880's in Goat Cove, near Portugal Cove-St. Phillips. Stewart joined his father on the farm part time through high school, transitioning to full-time work after graduation. After his father's death in 1990, Stewart and his wife Daphne operated Stoney Ridge Farms, and in the family tradition, their own daughter, son, and daughter-in-law would eventually join them in operating the farm.

In the 1970s, the Kings expanded their acreage and added a hog operation when a swine station was established nearby. By the early 1990s, Stewart had built a provincially inspected slaughterhouse for hogs, processing bacon, ham, and sausage. On the farm, they produced pork, eggs, broilers, and forage, and also ran a turf farm operation. When the swine industry experienced a downturn in 2006, Stewart switched to turkey production, which continues today.

Stewart was known for adapting to the industry and economic environment, always finding a way to make a living from the farm. He viewed adjustments as opportunities and was not averse to change. In 2002, the family opened a farmers' market. In 2022, Stewart returned to swine production and built a new barn for his herd of pure Berkshires acquired from Quebec. He believed that consumers care about knowing where their food comes from, making this an opportunity to renew awareness in the swine industry.

Stewart's passion for agriculture extended to industry organizations, and his experience made him a leader in a variety of sectors. He played an active role in the Hog Producer's Association and served as a Director for the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture.



SOURCE: [DAL.CA/DIFF/AAHF/INDUCTEES/STEWART-KING.HTML](https://dal.ca/diff/AAHF/INDUCTEES/STEWART-KING.HTML)

He was a Director with the NL Livestock Council, representing pork. He also served as a Director for the Canadian Agriculture Adaptation Council, whose mandate was to administer federal grant money to producers.

Success in agriculture can often be a balance between tradition and innovation. Stewart maintained the long history of farming on his ancestral land, while also expanding the operation and developing specialized enterprises. Stoney Ridge Farm was honoured with the Century Farm Award, recognizing a farm family that has continuously worked the same land for one hundred years or more. Stewart said he never worked a day in his life because he loved farming that much. It was everything he knew and his greatest passion. Stewart passed in early 2024.

Nominated by the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture for his commitment to agriculture both on and off the farm, Stewart King is a deserving inductee into the Atlantic Agricultural Hall of Fame.

Outstanding Contribution to Agriculture Award: The Honourable Derrick Bragg

The Honourable Derrick Bragg was posthumously awarded the Outstanding Contribution to Agriculture Award at the Agriculture Industry Symposium in Grand Falls-Windsor on January 24, 2024.

Minister Bragg was involved in Newfoundland and Labrador's agriculture sector from 2018 to 2023, first as Parliamentary Secretary to the department and later, as Minister of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture.

He was nominated to be the 2023 recipient of this award by the Dairy Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador. In the nomination form, Keith Deering wrote, "A backyard farmer himself, he always reminded everyone about the hard work and resiliency that farming required and he never missed an opportunity to meet with farmers on their farms to learn what he could about their cropping systems and livestock rearing operations and to proudly 'Bragg' about their products, as only he could."

"From the lessons he learned from farmers, he was able to advocate very strongly for Newfoundland and Labrador's unique circumstances at the Federal, Provincial Territorial Ministers Policy Table. He was also very successful in increasing resources for departmental staff so that they could support the agriculture industry more effectively. The agriculture industry of Newfoundland and Labrador is much stronger today because of his influence," said Deering.

Beyond recognizing Minister Bragg for his contributions to the agriculture sector, the award ceremony was also an opportunity for his friends and colleagues in the agriculture sector to remember him and honour his recent passing on January 22, 2024.



"Local farmers who knew Minister Bragg liked him because he listened to them. He spent time visiting farms and learning about their issues and challenges in order to be a strong advocate for Newfoundland and Labrador farmers. He was a vocal supporter of the agriculture sector and worked hard to provide opportunities to advance the industry. We are proud to recognize Minister Bragg for this award because he was a great agriculture minister and a great person, and he will be missed," said Wayne Simmons, NLFA President.

Lee Noel, Chair of the Dairy Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador, said in a news release, "Minister Bragg was a fine gentleman and very good at putting people at ease in conversations. As a backyard farmer himself, he took every opportunity to highlight the hard work and resiliency farming requires, and never missed an opportunity to meet with farmers to learn what he could about their operations. The agriculture industry of Newfoundland and Labrador is much stronger today because of his influence."

ATLANTIC HALL OF FAME

INDUCTEES:

2023 Peter Noer
2022 Wallace Skinner
2021 Gerard Comier
2020 Raymond Eveleigh
2019 Hector Williams
2018 Ron Taylor
2017 Richard Oram
2016 Paul Lomond
2015 Mervin Wiseman
2014 Ross Traverse
2013 Leonard Ruby
2012 Mary Lester
2011 Melvin Rideout
2010 Michael Bland
2009 Rhonda Thornley
2008 Eugene Legge
2007 Rick Woodford
2006 Walter Fiander
2005 Howard Morry
2004 Martin Howlett
2003 Cecil Howse
2002 Aubrey Ellsworth
2001 Eric Williams
2000 Thomas Brown
1999 Wilson Chaffey
1998 Leo Cormier
1997 Scott Simmons
1996 Robert Peddle
1995 Kenneth Proudfoot
1994 Juanita Lesta
1993 Hollis Duffett
1992 Francis McDonald
1991 Fred Wells
1990 Michael Ryan
1989 Thomas Lester
1988 Colin Bull
1987 Joseph Moore
1986 Alton Smith
1985 Raymond Morris
1984 Robert Chancey
1983 Clarence Badcock
1982 Dan Gillis
1980 Rupert Wood

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

RECIPIENTS:

2023 Nemori Farms Ltd.
2022 Warren's Farm
2021 Jeff and Connie Peddle
2020 Countryside Abattoir
2019 Riverbend Dairy
2018 Sunrise Dairy Ltd.
2017 The Natural Gardener
2016 Triple E Farms
2015 Art Gill
2014 Beautyview Farms
2013 Smallwood Group
2012 Headline Holsteins
2011 Munn Poultry
2010 Burnt Hill Farm
2009 Service Master Lawn Care
2008 Service Master Lawn Care
2007 Campbellton Berry Farm
2006 Rowsells Farm
2005 Rabinowitz Organic Farm
2004 River Brook Farms


OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION AWARD

RECIPIENTS:

2022 Pauline Duivenvoorden
2021 Melvin Rideout Sr.
2020 Rhonda Thornley
2019 Joseph R. Smallwood
2018 Roosevelt Thompson
2017 Bob Aylward
2016 Eugene Legge
2015 Mary Lester
2014 Hector Williams
2013 Howard Morry Sr.



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