

# FARM INDUSTRY REVIEW BOARD

## **ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2024-25**



## Chairperson's Message

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The Honourable Lisa Dempster  
Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture  
Petten Building  
30 Strawberry Marsh Road  
P. O. Box 8700  
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Dear Minister Dempster:

On behalf of the Farm Industry Review Board (the Board), I am pleased to present this annual performance report for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

The Board is classified as a category three government entity under the **Transparency and Accountability Act**. As such, the Board is required to submit annual performance reports outlining its success in achieving the objectives and indicators in its multi-year performance-based activity plan. This report outlines the accomplishments of the Board from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025, with regards to its responsibilities under both the provincial **Natural Products Marketing Act** (NPMA) and the **Farm Practices Protection Act** (FPPA).

In 2024-25, the Board experienced challenges in recruiting for the minimum required members, which constrained our ability to fully complete all work that had been intended. Nevertheless, the Board remained committed to its mandate and takes pride in the progress achieved during the past year. We look forward to working with the Minister to ensure the Board has the full membership required to support the agriculture industry and the province's food self-sufficiency goals.

As Chairperson, and on behalf of the Board, I accept accountability for the achievement of its objectives. My signature on behalf of the entire Board signifies the Board's accountability for the preparation of this report and the actual results reported.

Respectfully submitted,



Tammy Pike Farrell  
Chairperson

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## Overview

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The Board was established in 2005 when the **Natural Products Marketing Act** (NPMA) was proclaimed by the House of Assembly. In addition to the creation of the Board, the Act allowed for the creation of three commodity boards in the province: the Dairy Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador (“DFNL”), the Chicken Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador (“CFNL”) and the Egg Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador (“EFNL”). The Board is also responsible for carrying out the duties of two former boards; the Agriculture Products Marketing Board under the NMPA and the Farm Practices Review Board under the FPPA.

The NPMA requires that the Board shall consist of not less than five and not more than seven members appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, one of whom shall be a person nominated by the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture (NLFA). Appointments are made using a merit-based process; however, gender balance is considered during the appointment process and efforts are made to ensure the Board is representative of the population it serves.

In 2024-25, the Board could not operate from April to November as it did not have the minimum of five members required by the NPMA. The Board member positions were advertised by the Public Service Commission (PSC); however, it took longer than anticipated to find suitable candidates for appointment. This situation, which was beyond the Board’s control, constrained our ability to fully achieve our objectives and fulfill our responsibilities. During this period, the Board was unable to hear appeals, render decisions on complaints, or finalize certain draft documents and policies.

Despite these limitations, the Board remained steadfast in its commitment to the agriculture community and the public interest. We continued to engage actively with stakeholders and to support them to the extent possible, even as our formal authorities were constrained. The Board takes pride in the progress that was made despite these challenges.

The Board reports directly to the Minister of the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture (the Minister). Members of the Board shall be appointed for a three-year term and are eligible for reappointment. The Board is supported by the Manager of the Farm Industry Review Board and an Economist, both of whom are employees of the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture (FFA). All other members are volunteers and are reimbursed for expenses related to meetings or their duties of the Board.

As of March 31, 2025, the Board was comprised of the following:

Name	Title	Appointment Date	Expiry Date	Area
Pike Farrell, Tammy	Chairperson	2022/06/21	2025/06/20	East
Kennedy, Sarah	Vice-Chairperson	2022/06/21	2025/06/20	West
Bell, Sharon	Member	2024/07/26	2027/07/26	West
Wicks, Gerry	Member	2024/11/12	2027/11/12	East
Reid, Rodney	NLFA Member	2022/06/21	2025/06/20	Central
Vacant <sup>1</sup>	Member			
Vacant <sup>1</sup>	Member			

<sup>1</sup> Position being advertised by the Public Service Commission.

The Board's meetings of 2024-25 started in October 2024 and continued into December, January, February and March 2025. The meeting in October noted the procedural deficiency, as the meeting did not meet the quorum requirements specified in subsection 3(3) of the NPMA and no formal votes or decisions were conducted. Audited financial statements are not required as the Board is budgeted through FFA. Remuneration to Board members for the 2024-25 fiscal year was approximately \$7,715. Travel expenditures for the Manager totaled \$11,921 and \$509 for the Board members.

### Key Statistics:

Revenue Type	Description	2023-24 (million)	2024-25 (million)	Change Since 2023-24 (%)
Total Farm Cash Receipts	Receipts paid to farmers for products produced on the farm (excluding cannabis)	\$163.9	\$172.6	5.3%
Total Supply Managed Farm Cash Receipts	The portion of cash receipts made to producers for dairy, eggs and chicken production.	\$132.6	\$133.4	0.6%
	Dairy	\$53.6	\$53.9	0.6%
	Eggs	\$25.3	\$25.9	2.4%
	Chicken (estimated)	\$53.7	\$54.1	0.7%

Source: Statistics Canada. Table 32-10-0046-01, Farm cash receipts, quarterly (x 1,000).

\* Due to source data timing, availability and revisions, figures may differ comparatively.

### Farm Cash Receipts

Farm Cash Receipts (FCR), excluding cannabis, increased 5.3 per cent in 2024-25 to \$172.6 million. The majority of commodities reported growth in receipts in 2024-25 with significant growth

occurring in fruits and berries at \$2.0 million (6.7 per cent increase) and eggs at \$25.9 million (2.4 per cent increase).

### **Dairy and Poultry Production Receipts**

Receipts from milk production increased 0.6 per cent in 2024-25 to \$53.9 million. The increase was due to higher milk prices as Statistics Canada reports the volume of production was unchanged from 2023-24 at 48.7 million litres. Production of butterfat was unchanged at 2.0 million kilograms, of which 64.4 per cent was used in the fluid market and 35.6 per cent in the industrial market.

Statistics Canada does not provide an estimate of FCR for chicken production for any of the Atlantic provinces. The CFNL reports production increased 0.3 per cent in 2024 to reach a record high of 18.0 million kilograms (eviscerated weight). Based on this increase in production from the CFNL and the average Atlantic chicken pricing, the 2024-25 production value was estimated at \$54.1 million.

Farm cash receipts from egg production rose 2.4 per cent in 2024-25 to \$25.9 million. The increase was due to higher prices as production increased 1.3 per cent from the record high 10.4 million dozen reported in 2023-24.

The three supply-managed commodities (i.e., dairy, chicken, and eggs) are the top three FCR generators of all the agricultural commodities, covering approximately 77.7 per cent of total cash receipts for 2024-25. This highlights the tremendous importance of supply management to this province's agriculture industry.

### **Lines of Business:**

Based on legislative requirements, the Board has four lines of business as follows:

1. Supervisory Role
2. Appellate Role
3. Conflict Management Role (Farm Practices)
4. Signatory Role

### **Vision:**

The vision of the Board is of a regulated but fluid marketing system which supports the growth and operations of a harmonious, sustainable farming environment through good governance, transparency and stakeholder engagement.

### **Mandate:**

The Board is a regulatory and adjudicative body, responsible for general supervision of provincial agricultural commodity boards, and for hearing complaints from those aggrieved by board

decisions, or by farm practices.

The mandate of the Board is set out in two statutes:

**1. Natural Products Marketing Act (NPMA)**

<https://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/n02.htm>

The Board is responsible for general supervision of the operations of commodity boards created under this Act; hearing appeals filed by any person who is aggrieved by or dissatisfied with orders, decisions or determination of the commodity boards; and acting as a signatory to Federal-Provincial agreements for supply-managed commodities.

**2. Farm Practices Protection Act (FPPA)**

<https://www.assembly.nl.ca/legislation/sr/statutes/f04-1.htm>

The Board is responsible for hearing complaints from persons aggrieved by odor, noise, dust or other disturbances arising from agriculture operations, and may also study and report generally on farm practices.

### **Contact Information:**

For information about the Board, commodity boards, farm practices dispute resolution or the regulated marketing system in Newfoundland and Labrador, please contact us at:

Farm Industry Review Board

P.O. Box 2006

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 192 Wheeler's Road

Corner Brook, NL A2H 6J8

Tel: 709-637-2596 Fax: 709-637-2589

E-mail: [nlfirb@gov.nl.ca](mailto:nlfirb@gov.nl.ca)

Web: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/flr/agencies-boards-and-commissions/agriculture-and-lands/firb/>

This report is available in alternate formats. Please contact us at the above to request an alternate format.

### **Highlights and Partnerships**

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The Board worked throughout 2024-25 in partnership with DFNL, CFNL, EFNL, industry, governments and national agencies to build on opportunities, address challenges and manage a system that provides fairness and balance to all stakeholders.

The NLFA represents all commodities in the agriculture industry in the province by coordinating the efforts of producers for the purpose of promoting their common interest through collective action. As a result, one member of the Board is appointed as a representative of the NLFA.

The Board deals directly with the Minister and senior FFA officials on various issues (e.g., commodity board updates, mandate and legislation). Additionally, the Board advises the Minister on all matters related to the operation of the three commodity boards (CFNL, DFNL and EFNL) established under the NPMA with a view to ensure that all activities are carried out in accordance with existing legislation.

On a regular basis, the Board communicates openly with the CFNL, DFNL and EFNL providing direction on policy and procedure detailed in the NPMA legislation under which they are constituted. The Board also provides advice and decisions, as needed, for the development and establishment of internal policy and procedures, including changes to their related legislation.

The Board is a member of the National Association of Agricultural Supervisory Agencies (NAASA). This association was formed in 1997 with membership comprising of the Farm Products Council of Canada, all provincial/territorial supervisory agencies and the Canadian Dairy Commission. NAASA members have adopted a set of supervisory principles that guide its members in the supervision of commodity boards and other agencies within their national and provincial jurisdictions. It provides provincial and federal governments with a forum to discuss issues pertaining to regional or national matters and to build consensus on moving the industry forward in a regulatory framework that supports the needs of the industry.

## Report on Performance

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The following objectives and indicators, as outlined in the 2023-26 Activity Plan, have guided the Board in achieving its mandate in 2024-25, which is the second year of the 2023-26 planning period. As the focus of the Board will be the same for the planning period, the Board will report on the same objectives and indicators in all three years. For more information, please view the Activity Plan here: <https://www.assembly.nl.ca/business/electronicdocuments/FIRBActivityPlan2023-2026.pdf>.

### Issue 1: Effective and Transparent Self-Governance

Good governance ensures consistency, transparency and visibility. By creating clear, fair processes and guidelines, decisions will be administratively fair, comply with legislation/regulations and accordingly with sound marketing policy.

**Objective:** By March 31, 2025, the Board will have enhanced its self-governance practices.

INDICATOR	Results
Developed key governance tools (e.g., code of conduct, appeal policies and procedures, terms of reference, etc.) to support the efficient and transparent operation of the Board.	Final drafts of the revised and terms of reference were approved by the Board in 2024-25. These revised terms of reference will help support the efficient and transparent operation of the Board. The amended governance tools are anticipated to be implemented in 2025-26.

Developed, implemented, and reviewed the Board’s policies and procedures to clearly articulate to stakeholders how to engage with the Board.	In 2024-25, the Board continued its review of policies and procedures related to the FPPA. It is anticipated that the process and related documents will be finalized and ready for implementation in 2025-26. Additionally, the Board implemented an e-mail address, <a href="mailto:NLFIRB@gov.nl.ca">NLFIRB@gov.nl.ca</a> , thereby providing stakeholders and/or the public the ability to engage more easily with the Board.
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## Issue 2: Effective, Fair and Independent Resolution of Inquiries and Disputes

The Board provides support for both producers and the public of the province in instances where they are aggrieved by commodity board decisions or general farm practices. Another service provided by the Board involves keeping a registration of agricultural producers and associated maintenance of the farm registration system. Ensuring these services continue to serve all interested parties appropriately and effectively will be a key focus for the Board.

**Objective:** By March 31, 2025, the Board will have ensured that issues and disputes arising within its jurisdiction are resolved in a fair and timely manner, with clearly articulated processes and guidelines to follow.

INDICATOR	Results
Developed, implemented and reviewed the Board’s appeal procedures and guidelines to facilitate stakeholder engagement and use of the Board’s appeals process.	The Board continued work in 2024-25 to develop a clear and transparent appeal procedure and guidelines with reasonable timelines. The development and implementation of the final appeal policies and processes are anticipated to be completed in 2025-26. Additionally, to ensure board members are properly prepared for their role in the appeal process, the Board took action to ensure that all current and future board members would receive adjudication training through the Council of Canadian Administrative Tribunals. This training will help ensure that disputes are resolved more fairly.
Developed, implemented, and reviewed criteria and guidelines for the registration process for agriculture producers.	In 2024-25, the Board continued its review of the registration process, including a scan of similar processes in other comparable jurisdictions. The development of the final policies and registration process is anticipated to be finalized and implemented in 2025-26.

## Issue 3: Monitoring and Support of the Provincial Supply Management System

Under the NPMA, the schemes for the supply-managed commodity boards form the basis for how the commodity groups will market their respective commodities. The Board continues to provide support and direction to the commodity groups implementing their respective schemes; this monitoring provides support and structure for supply management in Newfoundland and Labrador.

**Objective:** By March 31, 2025, the Board will have monitored and provided supports for the supply managed commodities system where appropriate.

INDICATOR	Results
<p>Attended meetings of the National Association of Agricultural Supervisory Agencies and exchanged information with Federal and provincial supervisory boards regarding their respective marketing boards.</p>	<p>In 2024-25, the Board Manager monitored national and provincial supply management activities through three NAASA meetings and through regular correspondence with national and provincial bodies, which are part of the supply management system. This included annual reports from other jurisdictions and industry-related information and updates. Relevant information about industry happenings was disseminated to the Provincial Government and Board members. The Board attended the annual meetings of the provincial supervisory boards of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick and its national supervisory board, Farm Products Council Canada (FPCC), to discuss regional concerns of the provinces and update provinces on the activities of the national commodity groups under FPCC.</p>
<p>Actively monitored issues and trends on provincial, national and international levels that affect the province’s supply management environment; and facilitated information transfer among commodity boards, the Provincial Government, national supply management partners and other stakeholders, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Throughout 2024-25, the Board Manager monitored issues and trends on provincial, national and international supply management activities. This was accomplished by attending federal commodity board meetings, through participation in NAASA meetings and through regular correspondence from national and provincial bodies, which are part of the supply management system. Through these activities, the Board helped facilitate information transfer among commodity boards, the Provincial Government, national supply management partners and other stakeholders.</p>
<p>Provided supports to commodity boards in addressing the ever-evolving environment of the supply management system and its requirements.</p>	<p>The Board provided supports to commodity boards in 2024-25 to help address the ever-evolving environment of the supply management system. These supports included: assistance in arranging legislative changes as needed; clarification of NPMA and related commodity board legislation; and reviewing commodity board policies in relation to applicable legislation and policies that guide supply management.</p>

## Opportunities and Challenges

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The Board recognizes the challenges and opportunities within the industry and acknowledges the roles and responsibilities of all interested parties. The Board’s commitment is to continue to work within its mandate and with interested parties to build a sustainable farming environment that is cognizant of the interests of the public and the industry.

## **Opportunities:**

The Board recognizes the continued necessity of an opportunity to improve its communication and collaboration with commodity boards through regular correspondence, participation in board and industry meetings, open exchange of valued information and ongoing consultation in efforts to properly carry out its mandate. The Board provides a valuable communication link between the provincial commodity boards and the provincial government.

The Board further recognizes the opportunity to establish clear guidelines for stakeholders on how to engage the board when seeking to have the Board exercise its authority under its enabling legislation. This will ensure fair application of the process, clarity on thresholds to be met and advanced understanding of possible outcomes.

The Board continues to support the development of marketing and secondary processing activities in the province with the understanding that secondary processing will provide stability to the supply managed commodities and the entire agricultural industry.

## **Challenges:**

The Board continues to be challenged by attracting and retaining qualified board members. Without a minimum of five members as required by the NPMA, the Board cannot function and this affects its ability to fulfill its mandate.

The Board, like its counterparts across Canada, continues to experience a heightened level of challenges from industry on policy matters and from the public regarding farm practices. Balancing the needs of existing producers with potential new entrants requires diplomacy and financial acumen. Most importantly, it relies on a collaborative relationship and open dialogue with the different commodity boards. Operating remotely compounds the challenges as we work through best ways to ensure transparency.

The emergence of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) which is generally spread through wild birds in North America is a continuous threat to the agriculture industry. This peril, which is now considered an airborne disease, has increased in 2024-25 as the disease continues to spread and mutate. HPAI is threatening the entire agriculture industry causing farms to take significant measures to improve their on-farm biosecurity measures to protect their flocks and the commercial flocks of the province. Developing practical education and outbreak procedures is especially difficult in an island setting, where limited people, facilities and logistical options make preparedness for HPAI more complex. FIRB recognizes this gap and sees an opportunity to use its oversight role to encourage boards to treat HPAI preparedness as a governance priority. Working with FFA, FIRB could help foster greater coordination across sectors and strengthen the call for technical and resource support to build a workable outbreak response framework.