

St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Appeal Board

Annual Performance Report 2022-23



Chairperson's Message

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

Dear Minister Loveless:

In accordance with the provisions of the **Transparency and Accountability Act** for category three public bodies, we are pleased to submit the Annual Performance Report for the St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Appeal Board (the Board) for the period of April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023.

The Board has a mandate to hear appeals of the decisions of the St. John's Land Development Advisory Authority (the Authority). Through the appeals process, the Appeal Board ensures that plans for development within the St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Development Area (ADA) conform to the provisions of the **St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Development Area Regulations** (the Regulations) under the **Lands Act** (the Act). The strategic directions of the Provincial Government related to the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture (FFA) have been considered in the preparation of this report. More specifically, the work undertaken will support Government in increasing Newfoundland and Labrador's food self-sufficiency.

On behalf of the entire Board, we accept accountability for the preparation of this report and the achievement of its objective. The signature below is indicative of the entire Board's accountability for the results reported for fiscal 2022-23.

Respectfully submitted,



Board Member
St. John's Urban Region Agriculture Appeal Board

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Overview

Agriculture development areas are areas identified as having important agricultural significance based on site and soil suitability. The ADA encompasses approximately 12,152 hectares (30,028 acres). To see a map of the ADA, see Appendix A.

Section 7 of the Regulations under the Act provides for the appointment of an Appeal Board to review appeals of decisions of the Authority. The Board is appointed by the Minister of FFA (the Minister).

During the 2022-23 reporting period, the Board received operational support from FFA. Employees of FFA performed many day-to-day administrative functions with budgetary support for operations provided through the Department.

The members of the Board as of March 31, 2023, were as follows:

Name	Region	Appointment Term Expiry
Eugene Legge	Avalon	8/12/2022 ¹
Ed Woodrow	Avalon	8/12/2022 ¹
Vacant ¹		

¹ FFA is working to reappoint or replace members with terms of appointment that have expired.

A Land Management Specialist and Land Management Officer from FFA's Land Management Division provided support to the Authority and acted as the Board secretariat during the 2022-23 fiscal year by accepting appeals and maintaining records of decisions. All expenses regarding the administration of the Board are funded through FFA.

This report is available in alternate formats. For further information, please contact Megan Nichols, Land Management Officer, at: (709) 729-6647 or email: megannichols@gov.nl.ca.

Mandate

The Board has a mandate to:

- (a) Hear appeals of the decisions of the Authority concerning applications to carry out development on land in the ADA;
- (b) Recommend that the Minister of FFA uphold, reverse or vary a decision of the Authority; and
- (c) Maintain records of minutes, including the attendance and proceedings of the Appeal Board at all appeal hearings.

Highlights and Partnerships

The Board is committed to hearing appeals of the decisions of the Authority and maintaining records of minutes at all meetings. Due to the nature of this work, there were no particular highlights.

The Board does not have partnerships as it is an independent board that evaluates the decisions made by the Authority from an impartial viewpoint.

Report on Performance

The Board reviews appeals of decisions made by the Authority. All appeals are given due consideration in accordance with the Regulations. The Board makes recommendations to the Minister of FFA. The appellants are notified by the Minister of the final decision in consideration of the recommendations of the Board.

The activities of the Board support Government's commitment to the agricultural mandate of the Department. The Board contributes to the mandate and objectives of FFA by helping protect agriculture and agricultural land in the ADA. This is done through the review of appeals of decisions by the Authority to ensure the long-term sustainable development of agricultural land resources for the benefit of all residents.

This is the third and final year of the 2020-23 planning period. For more details, please refer to our plan here: <https://www.gov.nl.ca/ffa/files/SJURAABActivityPlan2020-23.pdf>.

Objective 2022-23

By March 31, 2023, the Board will have reviewed all appeals of decisions by the Authority and made recommendations regarding the appeal to the Minister.

Indicators

- Reviewed all appeals as per the Regulations

Due to a vacancy on the appeal board, the committee did not have a full membership of three members as is needed to review applications. As such, all applications submitted during the 2022-23 fiscal year have been deferred and will be reviewed as soon as the vacancy is filled.

- Made recommendations to the Minister

Due to a vacancy on the appeal board, the committee did not have a full membership of three members as is needed to review applications. As such, all applications submitted during the 2022-23 fiscal year have been deferred and will be reviewed as soon as the vacancy is filled.

- Recorded minutes of proceedings

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Opportunities and Challenges

The agriculture industry has witnessed substantial growth, which is a great opportunity for the Authority, in large part due to the Province's commitment to increase food self-sufficiency and new entrants looking to be a part of the agriculture industry.

The St. John's region continues to experience a vast amount of growth in population and industrial services. This increasing non-agricultural development often puts strain on agriculturally-zoned areas in several communities, which in turn may present challenges for the Board.

Financial Information

The Board does not have a stand-alone budget; and as a result, audited financial statements are not required. Remuneration expenses associated with Committee members are funded through FFA. The total expenses for the 2022-23 fiscal year was \$0.

Annex A: Map of ADA

