



Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee

Activity Plan

Fiscal Years 2020-23



Chairperson's Message

Honourable Elvis Loveless
Minister 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 3 public bodies, I am pleased to submit the Performance-Based Activity Plan for the Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee. This activity plan meets the requirements of the **Transparency and Accountability Act** for a Category 3 entity and covers the period April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2023.

The strategic directions of Government related to the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture (formerly the Department of Fisheries and Land Resources) have been considered in the creation of this activity plan. More specifically, the work undertaken in this plan will assist in reaching the target to increase Newfoundland and Labrador's food self-sufficiency. The Committee has also considered potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on its operations and has determined that, because all members (with the exception of legal representation) are government employees, impacts will be minimal or non-existent.

My signature below is on behalf of the Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee and is indicative of the committee's accountability for the preparation of this Plan and the achievement of its objective.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard Carey
Chairperson (Acting)

Table of Contents

- 1. Overview 1
- 2. Mandate..... 2
- 3. Lines of Business 2
- 4. Primary Clients 2
- 5. Vision 2
- 6. Objective 3
- Indicators:..... 3

1. Overview

The Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee (the Committee) was established as part of a set of guidelines for the Agricultural Land Consolidation Program (the Program) for the St. John's Agricultural Development Area that was initially approved by Cabinet in 1985. This program was established due to significant growth opportunities in the agriculture sector in Newfoundland and Labrador. It is critical that our province makes significant progress towards food security and self-sufficiency.

With respect to supply managed industries, it is equally important to increase opportunities for self-sufficiency in forages and continue to take advantage of opportunities to grow grains, which requires an expanded agricultural land-base.

The availability of suitable farm land is one of the more critical challenges facing the agriculture and agrifoods industry. In order to position this industry to take advantage of the tremendous growth opportunities, farmland has to be made available. The expansion and development of the land-base will provide the root crop sector with the means to increase local production and create opportunities to increase the consumption of locally-grown goods. For the supply-managed sector, it will mean having access to more land for forage and grain production.

The Committee administers the Program, which is designed to provide the opportunity for non-farmer landowners and retiring farmers to sell their granted land to the Provincial Government. In turn, Government makes this land available to existing commercial farmers, part-time farmers and new entrants who are in need of additional lands as Crown land agricultural leases.

The Committee is comprised of members of the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture (FFA), and guidance is provided by private legal representation that is responsible for the legal processes with respect to the negotiation. The current committee structure is as follows:

Position	Name	Organization	Region
Chair (Acting)	Richard Carey	FFA	Provincial
Member	Jeremy Short	FFA	Provincial / Western
Member	Coolene Brake	FFA	Western
Technical Support	Deanne McCarthy	FFA	Eastern
Legal Representation	John Hogan	Wadden Peddigrew Hogan Law	N/A

The Committee receives operational support from FFA. Employees of the department perform many day to day administrative functions as part of their normal work activities. The Program is currently funded by FFA through the Land Development Capital Budget which includes a budget of \$1.1 million for the purchase of land, in addition to funds to accommodate the expenses of legal and environmental costs associated with the delivery of the Program. The Program does not generate revenue, and expenditures are dependent on annual applications presented for consideration for purchase and vary from year to year. It is important to note that evaluations and negotiations may not happen in the same fiscal year as purchases.

2. Mandate

The Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee has a mandate to:

- a) Ensure public awareness of Government's Agricultural Land Consolidation Program;
- b) Evaluate applications for land acquisition under the Agricultural Land Consolidation Program based on established guidelines; and
- c) Facilitate and conclude negotiations for a land purchase and sale agreement for applications that meet criteria.

3. Lines of Business

The Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee has not identified separate Lines of Business, as they would be repetitive of its Mandate.

4. Primary Clients

The clients of the Committee are members of the public and organizations who wish to sell or relinquish arable land to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for allocation for agricultural purposes.

5. Vision

Through its evaluation of applications for land acquisition the Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee contributes to the Department of Fisheries,

Forestry and Agriculture's vision of sustainable renewable resources that are responsibly developed for the social, cultural, ecological, and economic well-being of the province.

6. Objective

The Committee facilitates purchases of land by the province for lease to farmers based on established guidelines. Applications are reviewed by the Committee using established guidelines. Applicants wishing to sell suitable land are invited to commence negotiations for a purchase and sale agreement. A number of third parties may be involved in the process, such as land appraisers, land surveyors and lawyers. An environmental assessment may be required. Applications to buy land from private landowners are solicited by departmental staff and industry.

As the focus of the Committee will remain the same for the entire plan, the Committee will report on the same objective and indicators in all three years.

Objective: By March 31, 2021, the Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee will have administered the Agricultural Land Consolidation Program in an effort to preserve and/or increase the province's agricultural land-base.

Indicators:

- Evaluated applications for land acquisition by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador under the Agricultural Land Consolidation Program based on established guidelines and policies;
- Recommended potential purchases to the Minister;
- Facilitated and concluded negotiations for a land purchase and sale agreement for applications that meet program criteria;
- Publicly communicated the opportunity to private landowners to sell private, agriculturally suited land through the Agricultural Land Consolidation Program.