

**NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
CROP INSURANCE AGENCY**

ACTIVITY PLAN

APRIL 1, 2014 - MARCH 31, 2017



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Chairperson's Message

Honourable Derrick Dalley
Minister of Natural Resources
Forestry and Agrifoods Agency
Natural Resources Building
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6

Dear Minister:

I am pleased to submit a Performance-Based Activity Plan for the Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency, as a category 3 public body under the *Transparency and Accountability Act*. This Plan covers the period from April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2017.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency recognizes the vision and mission of the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency and is committed to a supporting role by administering a crop insurance program to support vegetable farmers of the province.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency has reviewed the strategic direction of the Provincial Government in the area of forestry, agriculture and agrifoods, as communicated by the Minister of Natural Resources. As such, this plan has been prepared in support of a direction toward enhanced utilization, sustainability and public awareness of the forestry, agriculture and agrifoods sectors.

My signature below is on behalf of the Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency and indicative of the Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency's accountability for the preparation of this plan and achievement of its annual objective.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia MacDonald, P. Ag.
Chairperson

Overview

Section 3 (2) of the *Crop Insurance Act*, R.S.N. 1990, c.C-39 provides for the membership of the Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency. The membership of the Agency shall consist of not less than 3 and not more than 7 members to be appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council to hold office at his/her pleasure.

The Agency presently consists of the following Board members:

Cynthia MacDonald - Chairperson, Director of Agriculture Business Development Division, Forestry and Agrifoods Agency, Department of Natural Resources

Gerald Wicks – Provincial Representative, Agriculture Development Officer, Forestry and Agrifoods Agency, Department of Natural Resources

Dr. Peggy Dixon – Federal Representative, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Junior Eveleigh - Producer Representative

Elaine Wells - Producer Representative

The headquarters of the Crop Insurance Agency is in Corner Brook. A branch office for Eastern region field work is located at the Provincial Agriculture Building in St. John's, and this office services all locations east of the Bay D'Espoir highway. There is one other Western region office located in Pynn's Brook, and this office services areas west of the Bay D'Espoir highway and Labrador. An Agriculture Development Officer with the Department of Natural Resources also assists producers in the Happy Valley-Goose Bay area.

The Agency operates under the umbrella of the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency with an independent annual budget of approximately \$432,000.00. Since the Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency is part of a National AgriInsurance Program, the administration costs of the program are cost-shared on a 60:40 federal-provincial basis. The annual financial statements of the Crop Insurance Agency are audited by the Office of the Auditor General of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Three Agricultural Inspectors employed with the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency assist the Crop Insurance Agency with field inspections. Also, the Program Coordinator of the Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency is an employee of the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency.

AgriInsurance premiums are paid on a cost-shared basis with producers paying 40 percent, the federal government paying 36 percent and the provincial government paying 24 percent. These premiums are deposited into a fund from which indemnities are drawn.

In 2013-14 there were 23 producers with 288 acres of produce enrolled in the

AgriInsurance program administered by the Crop Insurance Agency. Through this program, \$95,935.60 was paid out by the Agency for crop losses. Also, indemnity payments of \$197,968.82 from the 2012-13 crop season were approved and paid in fiscal year 2013-14 as there was no board quorum in place to decide claims during the 2012-13 year. Indemnity payments for 2013-14 were slightly above the ten year average because of reduced crop yields obtained by some of the producers. The weather conditions were unfavorable for growing successful crops which resulted in decreased crop yields during the 2013 crop season.

Mandate

The mandate of the Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency is to establish and carry out a crop insurance plan under the direction, supervision and control of the Minister of Natural Resources. The Agency shall;

- administer plans of crop insurance established under the *Crop Insurance Act* or the regulations,
- fix by order and publish in the Gazette a final date in each year for the receipt of applications for insurance under a plan,
- conduct surveys and research programs relating to insurance and obtain statistics for the purposes of the agency,
- evaluate and determine crop losses and pay claims under a plan,
- enter into agreements with or retain persons for the soliciting and receiving of applications for instance, the collecting of premiums and the adjusting of claims under plans for and on behalf of the agency, and doing of other things on its behalf that the agency considers necessary,
- reinsure with another insurer the risk or a portion of it under a contract,
- require an applicant for crop insurance or an insured person to provide the information, statements and reports that the agency may require.
- exercise powers and perform the duties that are conferred or imposed upon it under the *Crop Insurance Act* or another Act,
- perform the other functions and discharge the other duties that are assigned to it by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council and,
- make the orders and directions that are necessary to enforce the observance of the *Crop Insurance Act*, the regulations or a plan.

Refer to Appendix A for the Agency's full mandate.

Core Values and Guiding Principles

The Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency performs its duties within the core values and guiding principles established by the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency:

Integrity - Each individual will be honest, dependable, fair, credible and trustworthy. They will openly acknowledge mistakes, seek to correct them and learn from them.

Respect and Professionalism - Each individual will apply legislation and policies equitably and will serve the Department's client groups to the fullest extent possible in a timely manner.

Collaboration - Each individual will seek the opinions and ideas of others in the application of legislation and policies.

Innovation - Each individual will demonstrate initiative and flexibility in responding to challenges and change.

Safety – Each employee views the personal safety of themselves and co-workers on the highest regard and will promote workplace safety at all times.

Productive – Each employee will maximize their productivity and efficiency in carrying out their duties.

Continuous Improvement - Each employee will develop their strengths, improve their knowledge, increase their potential and achieve personal growth through continuous education.

Timely – Each employee will conduct their duties in a timely manner and meet all established deadlines.

Primary Clients

The primary clients of the Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency are horticulture producers with eligible crops in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Lines of Business

The sole line of business of the Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency is the delivery of AgriInsurance to horticulture producers in the province.

The AgriInsurance program is voluntary and producers who decide to enroll each year do so by applying before the April 30 deadline. Currently, there are insurance plans in place for potato, turnip, cabbage, carrot (separate plans are available for carrot grown on mineral

soil and peat land), parsnip and beet. In addition, in 2013, the agency introduced an insurance plan for blueberry producers on a three-year pilot basis (2013-16).

Vision

Through the AgriInsurance program, the Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency protects investments in crop production. By easing the financial burden in times of crop loss, the AgriInsurance program helps ensure resources are available for future generations and helps ensure prospects for future development. It contributes to the vision of the Department of Natural resources, stated as follows:

“The vision of the Department of Natural Resources is a province that realizes the full benefit from the sustainable development of its natural resources.”

Mission

Planning guidelines associated with the *Transparency and Accountability Act* encourage all public bodies to consider the development of mission statements. The guidelines provide the flexibility, however, for small public bodies like the Crop Insurance Agency to determine for themselves whether the development of a mission statement will add value to planning efforts. A mission statement, if developed, should represent the priority focus area of a public body and should be accompanied by measures and indicators that will help evaluate success at the end of the planning period.

During the development of its 2014-17 Activity Plan, the Crop Insurance Agency determined that its mandate, as stated above, accurately represents its priority focus and, therefore, a mission statement would be unduly repetitive. As a result, the Agency opted to forgo the development of its own mission statement and, instead, to illustrate its role in supporting the mission of the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency, part of the Department of Natural Resources.

The Forestry and Agrifoods Agency’s mission statement is as follows:

“By March 31, 2017, the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency will have supported programs and services to strengthen and sustain forestry, agriculture and agrifoods industry development in an innovative and economically beneficial manner.”

The Crop Insurance Agency contributes to agricultural and agrifoods resource development by administering the AgriInsurance program, thereby helping protect horticulture farmers from financial losses. In this manner it provides general support to the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency’s mission. The Crop Insurance Agency determined that it has no material impact on achievement of specific measures and indicators associated with

the mission and, as such, no specific mission-related results have been targeted in this plan.

To view the complete mission of the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency, refer to its 2014-17 Strategic Plan which can be found on the Department of Natural Resources' website at www.gov.nl.ca/nr.

Objective

This section of the plan outlines the key priority of the Crop Insurance Agency for the period April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2017. The objective and associated indicators identified for the priority, or "issue", area apply to each year covered by the plan and will be reported on in relevant annual reports.

Issue 1: Management and Administration of the AgriInsurance Program

The primary issue of the Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency is to deliver the AgriInsurance plan to horticultural producers in Newfoundland and Labrador who choose to participate and to assess the feasibility of offering new insurance plans (i.e., for additional crop products), upon request by industry. The Agency is committed to supporting sustainability and best management practices within the provincial industry. In doing so, the Agency contributes to the strategic direction of the Provincial Government toward enhanced utilization, sustainability and public awareness of the forestry, agriculture and agrifoods sectors

Objective: The Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Agency will have continued to deliver insurance plans to producers and helped support sustainability/best management practices on farms.

Measure: Delivered insurance plans and helped support sustainability/best management practices

Indicators:

- Provided advisory services to producers, as required, regarding sustainability/best management practices on farms
- Requested and reviewed crop rotation and/or green manure plans from participating producers
- Registered applications for crop insurance
- Reviewed applications to ensure they meet requirements
- Issued contracts to approved applicants
- Measured and inspected insured fields
- Completed test digs and yield calculations
- Reviewed all claims
- Decisions communicated to applicants and indemnities paid, where applicable
- Commenced appeal process when requested by producers

- Assessed feasibility of covering new crop products, upon request, and carried out development work on insurance plans for new crops approved
- Conduct information sessions and workshops
- Publish fact sheets

Appendix A: Legislated Mandate

Source: *Crop Insurance Act*

Creation of agency

3. (1) The corporation known as the Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance agency established to carry out a crop insurance plan under the direction, supervision and control of the minister is continued.

(2) The membership of the agency shall consist of not less than 3 and not more than 7 members to be appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

(3) The Lieutenant-Governor in Council shall designate 1 of the members of the agency to be chairperson and another to be vice-chairperson of the agency.

(4) Members of the agency shall hold office at the pleasure of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

(5) Three members of the agency, 1 of whom shall be the chairperson or the vice-chairperson, shall constitute a quorum.

(6) Where at a meeting of the agency, there is an equality of votes, the chairperson or vice-chairperson presiding at the meeting shall have a 2nd or a casting vote.

(7) Where a vacancy occurs in the membership of the agency because of death, resignation or illness of a member, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may appoint a person to replace him or her.

(8) Notwithstanding the *Legislative Disabilities Act*, where a member of the House of Assembly is or becomes a member of the agency, his or her seat does not become vacant by reason only of the appointment and acceptance of remuneration as a member of the agency.

(9) A member of the agency shall be paid the salary, travelling expenses or other remuneration that the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may determine.

(10) The agency, subject to the approval of the minister, may employ officers, inspectors, clerks, agency representatives or other persons who are considered to be necessary and may pay those employees the salaries, travelling expenses and other remuneration that the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may determine.

Appointment of managing director

4. (1) The Lieutenant-Governor in Council shall appoint a managing director of the agency and shall establish the terms and conditions of the employment, the salary, travelling expenses, and other remuneration of the managing director.

(2) The managing director shall be the chief executive and administrative officer of the agency, and subject to control by the agency, shall be responsible for the management and

direction of the agency, the day to day administration of its affairs and shall have general supervision and authority over its employees.

Use of seal

5. (1) The agency shall have a common seal and the application of it shall be certified by the chairperson or vice-chairperson of the agency.

(2) A contract or instrument which, if entered into or executed by a person not being a corporation, would not be required to be under seal, may be entered into or executed on behalf of the agency by a person generally or specially authorized by it for that purpose.

(3) A document purporting to be a document executed or issued under the seal of the agency or on behalf of the agency shall, until the contrary is proved, be considered to be a document so executed or issued.

Status of agency

6. (1) The agency is, for the purposes of this Act, an agent of the Crown under the control and direction of the minister and may exercise its powers under this Act only as an agent of the Crown.

(2) The agency may, on behalf of the Crown, enter into contracts or other agreements and acquire and dispose of and otherwise deal with property in the name of the agency.

(3) Notwithstanding that the agency is an agent of the Crown, it may enter into contracts with the Crown and appoint agents to act on its behalf for any purpose and on the conditions that it considers necessary.

(4) Property of the agency is the property of the Crown and title to it shall be vested in the name of the agency.

(5) A member of the agency or a person employed by the agency does not become, because of the employment only, an officer or servant of the Crown.

Actions

7. Actions, suits or other legal proceedings in respect of a right or obligation acquired or incurred by the agency may be brought by or against the agency in the name of the agency in a court as if the agency were not an agent of the Crown.

Powers, functions and duties of agency

8. (1) Included in the agency's powers, functions and duties, shall be power to

(a) administer plans of crop insurance established under this Act or the regulations;

(b) fix by order and publish in the *Gazette* a final date in each year for the receipt of applications for insurance under a plan;

- (c) conduct surveys and research programs relating to insurance and obtain statistics for the purposes of the agency;
- (d) evaluate and determine crop losses and pay claims under a plan;
- (e) enter into agreements with or retain persons for the soliciting and receiving of applications for insurance, the collecting of premiums and the adjusting of claims under plans for and on behalf of the agency, and the doing of other things on its behalf that the agency considers necessary;
- (f) reinsure with another insurer the risk or a portion of it under a contract;
- (g) require an applicant for crop insurance or an insured person to provide the information, statements and reports that the agency may require;
- (h) exercise the powers and perform the duties that are conferred or imposed upon it under this or another Act;
- (i) perform the other functions and discharge the other duties that are assigned to it by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council; and
- (j) make the orders and directions that are necessary to enforce the observance of the Act, the regulations or a plan.

(2) An order and direction of the agency made under this section may be made with retroactive effect.

Regulations of agency

9. (1) Subject to the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, the agency may make regulations

- (a) establishing, amending and revoking voluntary plans for the insurance within the province of insurable crops;
- (b) governing the terms and conditions of insurance under a plan;
- (c) designating perils for the purposes of a plan;
- (d) determining coverage and establishing values with respect to insurable crops for the purposes of a plan;
- (e) fixing premium rates and providing for the payment and collection of premiums in respect of a plan;
- (f) prescribing forms and terms of contracts and applications for a contract and providing for their use, and requiring information given in a form to be verified by statutory declaration;
- (g) requiring applicants for insurance and insured persons to provide the information, statements and reports that are prescribed;

- (h) designating insurable persons for the purposes of a plan;
 - (i) establishing the level of coverage in relation to average crop yield; and
 - (j) prescribing the method of notification and the form in which proof of crop loss shall be given and the information and details to be provided.
- (2) Regulations establishing or amending a plan may provide for 1 or more insurable crops and may apply to all of the province or to an area or location within the province.

Appeal board

10. (1) The minister may appoint an appeal board consisting of 3 persons, one of whom shall be designated as chairperson.

(2) At least one of the persons appointed under subsection (1) shall be a person who is or who has been engaged in the production of an insurable crop.

(3) Persons appointed under subsection (1) shall hold office at the pleasure of the minister.

(4) Each member of the appeal board has, in relation to the hearing and determination of a matter, all the powers that are or may be conferred upon a commissioner under the *Public Inquiries Act*.

(5) Subject to the approval of the minister, the members of the appeal board shall make rules of procedure to govern hearings of the appeal board.

Appeals

10.1 (1) An insured person may file an appeal in respect of

- (a) an act of the agency, its officers or agents, within 14 days of the disputed act; and
- (b) a finding, order or decision of the agency, its officers or agents, within 14 days of receiving notice of the finding, order or decision.

(2) An appeal is filed under subsection (1) by serving the chairperson of the appeal board and the chairperson of the agency with a statement setting out in writing the grounds for the appeal.

(3) The chairperson of the agency shall respond to an appeal filed under subsection (1) by serving a written response on the chairperson of the appeal board and on the appellant within 14 days of receiving the appeal.

(4) A decision of a majority of the members of the appeal board is final and binding.

Voluntary arbitration

10.2 (1) An insured person who files an appeal under section 10.1 and the chairperson of the agency may agree to resolve the dispute by voluntary arbitration on those terms as are agreed by the parties.

(2) Where an agreement under subsection (1) provides that no appeal from the arbitration may be made to the appeal board, that provision is valid and the decision of the arbitration is final and binding.

Payment of money

11. All money required by this Act to be paid in respect of premiums under plans shall be paid to the agency.

Establishment of fund

12. (1) The Newfoundland and Labrador Crop Insurance Fund, which is in the custody and control of the agency on behalf of the Crown, is continued.

(2) The Minister of Finance, with the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council and on the written requisition of the minister, may advance to the agency for use as working capital those sums that may be stated in the requisition, but the total advances made in each financial year under this subsection shall not exceed \$100,000.

(3) From and out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, with money appropriated for the purpose, the Minister of Finance, on the written requisition of the minister, shall pay to the agency in each year an amount equal to

(a) the amount determined to be the cost to the agency of administering this Act during that year, and for the purpose of the determination, the agency shall not later than December 31 in a financial year, prepare, adopt and submit to the minister a budget containing estimates of all sums required by it during the next financial year for the administration; and

(b) a sum not less than 1/2 of the premiums payable under a contract.

(4) The agency may receive and accept other sums of money that may be paid to it by way of grant, contribution or reimbursement from a source, if it receives the funds to help it in the attainment of its objects or in the proper exercise of its functions or to reimburse it for disbursements made by it or on its behalf.

(5) The agency shall credit to the fund

(a) all money advanced or paid under subsections (2), (3) and (4);

(b) the total of all premiums received from contracts; and

(c) all other amounts received by the agency.

(6) The agency shall deposit and keep all amounts credited to the fund in a Canadian chartered bank.

Minute books and accounts

13. The agency shall keep regular minutes of all its meetings and shall ensure that complete books of financial and other accounts and records are established and maintained.

Administration of fund

14. (1) The agency shall administer the fund and pay from it all amounts required to be paid under this Act and the regulations, including expenses of administration, the salaries of the managing director and all other persons employed by the agency or otherwise engaged for the administration of this Act.

(2) Notwithstanding another Act, the money in the fund does not form part of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, and the fund is not a division or part of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, but the money is the property of the Crown.

(3) The agency may, and shall where so directed by the minister, pay to the Minister of Finance for investment on behalf of the agency money in the fund not immediately required for expenditure, and the Minister of Finance may invest the money or part of it by any or all of the methods by which the Consolidated Revenue Fund may be invested.

(4) Money paid to the Minister of Finance for investment under subsection (3) shall form a trust or special fund and interest and earnings on it shall be credited to the account of the agency, and the earnings, or a part of them, shall be paid over to the agency by the Minister of Finance on the request of the agency.

(5) The minister may authorize the Minister of Finance to realize sums invested under subsection (4) and sums so realized shall be paid to the agency for the purposes of the administration of this Act.

Financial year

15. (1) The financial year of the agency shall correspond to the financial year of the province.

(2) The agency shall, not later than September 30 in each year, prepare and submit to the minister a financial statement setting out the assets and liabilities of the agency and the receipts and expenditures of the agency for the previous financial year, together with a report concerning the work of the agency during the previous financial year, and the statement and report shall be laid before the Legislature within 15 days after they are submitted to the minister if the Legislature is then sitting, and, if not, then within 15 days after the beginning of the next session.

(3) The financial statement referred to in subsection (2) shall be signed by the managing director and 1 other member of the agency and certified by the auditor general and shall have attached to it a report which the auditor general may have made to the agency.

(4) The auditor general shall audit the accounts of the agency and has authority to call for and shall be supplied by the agency with all books and vouchers which he or she considers necessary for this audit.

(5) The Lieutenant-Governor in Council may require the agency to provide those reports or the information respecting the business and operations of the agency, that he or she may direct.

Agreements with Canada

16. The minister may, with the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, enter into an agreement with the Government of Canada respecting any or all of the matters provided for in the *Crop Insurance Act* (Canada).

Non-application

17. Without prejudice to all rights, privileges, benefits or exemptions which may be vested by law in the agency because of its being an agent under the control of the Crown, nothing contained in

- (a) the *Insurance Adjusters Act*;
- (b) the *Insurance Companies Act*; and
- (c) the *Insurance Contracts Act*

shall apply to the agency or a matter or thing done under this Act or the regulations.

Appendix B: Strategic Directions

Strategic directions are the articulation of desired physical, social or economic outcomes and normally require action by more than one government entity. These directions are generally communicated by government through platform documents, Throne and Budget Speeches, policy documents and other communiqués. The *Transparency and Accountability Act* requires departments and public bodies to take into account these strategic directions in the preparation of their performance-based plans. This action will facilitate the integration of planning practices across government and will ensure that all entities are moving forward on key commitments.

The Crop Insurance Agency needs to consider Strategic Directions as communicated to the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency by the Minister of Natural Resources. For the 2014-17 planning period, these directions are outlined in the table below.

Title	Natural Resource Development (Forestry, Agriculture and Agrifoods)
Outcome Statement	Enhanced utilization, sustainability and public awareness of the forestry, agriculture and agrifoods sectors.
Focus Areas	Industry Development Research and Development Awareness and Education Resource Sustainability

The priority and initiatives outlined in the Agency’s 2014-17 Activity Plan are supportive of these Strategic Directions. The table below clearly identifies which of the strategic direction focus areas are addressed in the activity plan and which ones, if any, do not apply to the Agency.

Strategic Direction Component (Focus Area)	This direction is ...	
	addressed in the entity’s Activity Plan	not applicable
Industry Development		X
Research and Development	X	
Awareness and Education	X	
Resource Sustainability	X	