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Prince Edward Island Agriculture Has Direct Voice at Cabinet Table

The appointment of Malpeque Member of Parliament Wayne Easter as Parliamentary Secretary to the federal Minister of Agriculture gives the industry in Prince Edward Island a direct voice into the formulation of future directions for agriculture. New powers given to parliamentary secretaries by the Martin government means they now have much more input into cabinet decisions.

In the past, Easter has been a vocal critic of some of the actions of his own government. His appointment as parliamentary secretary means that he will have to adhere to the rules of cabinet solidarity, but his knowledge and experience is expected to give him extra clout in cabinet discussions.

The expectations facing the new government are high. During the early summer election campaign, representatives of farm organizations expressed concern that agricultural issues were virtually ignored. While all political parties released platforms on agriculture, it failed to emerge as an important issue during the campaign.

Bob Friesen, president of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, said that more than two million people are employed in the agriculture and food industry, but heard little about what each party would do to help restore profitability to farming. His views were echoed by the National Farmers Union. Following the election, Stewart Wells, national president of the NFU, said that government now has a fresh

opportunity to address the major issues facing farm families across Canada.

Friesen said that with a minority government, it is more important than ever before that all political parties work together with the industry to build policies that create a climate of success. During the campaign, the Federation of Agriculture released a policy booklet that highlighted key issues, including restoring profitability, creating new trade rules, encourage competitiveness and support for farmer-led food safety and environmental initiatives.

Easter himself was critical of the lack of attention given to agriculture throughout the campaign.

Strong background

Easter brings a long record of involvement in the industry to his new job. He was a long-time national president of the NFU, and has been a strong advocate of the family farm and rural communities. First elected to the House of Commons in 1993, he served as Solicitor General of Canada in the Chretien government and also served as parliamentary secretary to the ministers of fisheries and



Wayne Easter (shown here in this 1980 photograph) has been a strong advocate for Canadian agriculture over the years. The former president of the NFU brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to his new responsibilities.

agriculture. He was also former chair of the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans.

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A call for applications for the 2004-2006 Class of the Atlantic Agricultural Leadership

Consider joining the upcoming class of the Atlantic Agricultural Leadership Program (formerly the New Brunswick Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program):

The Program

Now in its tenth year, this not-for-profit program works! It targets Atlantic Canadian men and women working in the agricultural and associated sectors who want to help shape the future of our agri-food industry. The Program starts in November and ends in March of each year.

The Learning

Seminars and study tours over a two-year period help participants:

- develop solid leadership skills;
- learn how political, cultural, social, economic and physical forces impact the agri-food industry; and
- establish networks amongst themselves and with leaders from Atlantic Canada and beyond.

The Impact

"My experience with NBAALP was a fantastic experience and a real gift from everyone involved in the program. Positive interaction with progressive people in agriculture have allowed me to see what is possible in our food production system...and there is great potential there. I believe that, through time, leadership training like this will be standard in the industry...and the farming sector will prosper because of it." Chris Dunbar (Class V), Montrose, Prince Edward Island.

More information and application forms are available from our website or by contacting the office at: Atlantic Agricultural Leadership Program Inc, P.O. Box 20075, Fredericton, NB, E3B 6Y8, Phone (506)459-0965, Fax (506) 455-6527, or www.agleaders.ca

Deadline for applications is September 1, 2004

Direct Voice at Cabinet Table

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The issues facing the industry are critical. Agriculture has recently experienced one of its worst years on record, and producers remain unconvinced about the effectiveness of new safety net programs. Trade issues such as those caused by the BSE crisis have led many to demand a more pro active response by the federal government.

Prince Edward Island's representation in the federal cabinet is at an all-time high. Joe MacGuire has been re-appointed as minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and Shawn Murphy goes back as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans. That means Island MPs will be ex-

pected to deliver, although the demands facing a minority government will put added pressure on all members.

Wayne Easter has been one of the most articulate and energetic fighters for agriculture that Canada has seen in recent years. His penchant for shaking things up is a breath of fresh air in Ottawa.

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Looking Forward to the Future

In an era when family farms are disappearing, George and Melaney Matheson could be considered trend setters. Eight years ago the couple bought back the Albion Cross farm where George grew up, and named it Springwater Farms. It was much more than a desire to re-connect with his roots that fueled the decision – the couple have a self-professed “passion” for the rural way of life that they wanted to pass on to their two pre-school age children. This love of rural life has also motivated them to become involved with the Dundas Plowing Match (this year, the pair take over the chairmanship of the organizing committee), which is one of the province’s longest running agricultural events. This industrious couple are also in the process of establishing a farm vacation home.

While the Matheson homestead still remained in the family, the land was sold when his father retired. When George and Melaney got married, they moved into the homestead and became more determined than ever before to regain the farm.

“We got the family farm but we had to buy it.” Melaney jokes. “We were starting from scratch.”

Springwater Farm’s main commodity is hay. Melaney said that they produce approximately 17,000 bales annually, adding “It’s a bit of a niche market— not that many people are doing small, square bales anymore — but for people who have horses in the backyard, the smaller bales are easier to handle.”

The Mathesons also have a handful of sheep. Both George and Melaney are convinced staying small and carving out niche markets is the key to survival in the 21st century. Melaney further stated “my sense is there is a chance for the small family farm if it stays small.” George feels that keeping a close eye on the bottom line is crucial, like it is for any small business.

“We get to work together,” Melaney adds. “If you are really big and have a lot of employees, you end up only being the farm manager instead of the farmer.”

During haying season, work on the Matheson farm is basically a sun-up to sundown affair. A lot of credit goes to their summer staff for getting the work done. The first thing on the agenda is to unload the previous day’s harvest — usually four or five wagon loads. While one partner is handling that job, the other heads to the

fields to start cutting and raking the hay that would be baled that afternoon. After the noon meal, it is back to the field to begin filling the wagons again.

On an average day, Melaney said that they can harvest from 1,000 to 1,200 bales. This usually takes them well past the supper hour. After that, they have to put the wagons under cover for the night. George explained that virtually all of the production is stored in the farm’s main barn until it is shipped for delivery. He usually delivers the product personally to regular customers, often leaving the farm in the morning with 118-120 bales. There are also chores to do with the care and feeding of the sheep. During lambing season, the couple has a baby monitor in their bedroom to alert them to any problems with the newborn lambs in the barn.

In the Spring, the couple plants Christmas trees — they just began that venture three years ago. Since it takes at least ten years before the first trees are ready for harvest, that is a long term commitment.

George has off-farm employment as an insurance director, adding that the flexibility of working from home and setting his own hours is a good fit with his farming lifestyle. Melaney has recently left her part-time position as a United Church minister to turn her attention to readying the farm to receive its first agri-tourism visitors.

Since many people, both islanders and visitors, have lost the direct connection to farming, Melaney views the venture as an opportunity to show them what agricultural life is all about. George hopes to add hay rides and farm tours to the farm vacation experience and provide guests with an opportunity to help out with the chores if they so desire.



“People come to P.E.I. for the attractions, but they also come for the rural lifestyle,” Melaney said. “They like to see the lush, green fields.”

The Mathesons’ love of rural life has also encouraged them to become involved with the Dundas Plowing Match. Melaney sees that as another way to help educate the non-farming community about the industry and to pass on her love of the best of rural life.

While that is a long time in the future, the pair said they would like to eventually see their two children Ila (five) and Rae (who is two and a half) eventually become involved in the operation. Melaney added, “Certainly our hope would be this would be a working farm after we are retired — we want the farm to be here so they have the option.”

(This article is one of a series prepared for the Prince Edward Island Agricultural Awareness Committee to profile life on 21st century Island farms. Funding for this project is received from Agriculture and Agric.-food Canada)

Prince Edward Islands Changing Forests - where do we go from here?

Prince Edward Island's most recent State of the Forest Report revealed that for the first time in a century the area of forest in this province has decreased. Between 1990 and 2000, about 6% of our forest (nearly 17,000 hectares) was converted to agriculture or development. While changes in forest area are easy to report and understand, changes in forest composition are worth considering.

It is estimated that Prince Edward Island's forest covered about 95% of the province in the early 1800s. Early writers described an island covered with forests dominated by shade-tolerant species: American Beech, Sugar Maple, Yellow Birch, Eastern Hemlock, and pine among others. Some wrote of Red Pine masts more than 22 metres tall and 60 centimeters in diameter being harvested from Prince Edward Island. Others described Eastern Hemlock of more than a meter in diameter and 27 meters tall, and Yellow Birch nearly two meters across and towering above the forest floor. The average age of these trees would have been in the hundreds of years.

By 1901, Prince Edward Island's population had grown from a few thousand people to more than 100,000, and land clearing had reduced forest cover to just over 30% of the Island. Beginning about the 1920s, a pattern of land abandonment began to emerge: previously-farmed areas began to revert to forest. These abandoned lands did not produce the shade-tolerant, long-lived species that had been cleared a century earlier, but early-successional species, primarily White Spruce. In 2000, approximately 45% of the Island was classed as forest, but the most common species were Balsam Fir, Red Maple, White Spruce and Trembling Aspen; the average age was 44 years.

Within the Island's present-day forest are different types of communities. Some, such as upland hardwoods, rich wet hardwoods and black spruce forests grow on land that has never been cleared and farmed. Although these lands have experienced past cycles of cutting and human-caused fires, they do persist as descendants of the forests of centuries ago. Others such as old field white spruce and commercial plantations exist on land that was once in agriculture. These communities are a result of human uses of the land, both planned (plantations) and unplanned (abandoned farmland).

Between 1990 and 2000, each of the forest communities associated with unploughed land decreased while two of the three associated with human use increased. Both groups have their strengths: forests on unploughed land tend to have greater diversity of tree species of various ages and the potential to offer a greater range of timber and non-timber values. Forests on previously-farmed land tend to have the even-aged conifer species favored by

industry and the potential to provide greater economic returns.

Does it matter that some types of forest are increasing while others are decreasing or is total area all that's important? Is there a balance between community values (such as water quality, green space, ecosystem conservation and wildlife habitat) and commodity values (such as timber and non-timber products and dollars contributed to our economy)? Collectively, what is Islanders' vision for the forest of PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND?

As Prince Edward Island explores a new forest policy, all Islanders are encouraged to share their vision. A new Forest Policy web site at www.gov.pe.ca/go/forestpolicy contains the current policy and what Islanders have been saying about public and private forests over the last decade. It also provides a discussion forum where landowners, farmers, fishers, forest workers, wood processors, conservation groups, tourism operators, students, the public and others can share their ideas for our public and private forests.



**Buy a ticket to
Farmers Helping Farmers
Fund Raising Beef Barbecue**

**and help Kenyan
and Tanzanian farmers
Saturday, August 14
from 4 to 6:30 p.m.**

**Research Station, Charlottetown
Steak, new potatoes, salads,
strawberry shortcake**

**\$20 per ticket; \$5 per child
For tickets call Teresa Mellish
at 838-4032**

Farm Workplaces Have Two-Year Phase In Period

On May 20, 2004 the Occupational Health and Safety Act was given assent and the old act repealed. Farm workplaces are no longer exempt from the Act by regulation. Farmers will be given a two-year phase-in period and will be issued a Code of Practice (COP) for the purpose of providing practical guidance for carrying out of the requirements of the Act. The Farm Health and Safety Program's 2004 project will be to provide the COP booklet and provide assistance to farmers with implementation on their farm.

What this means is farmers have a legal obligation that "every reasonable precaution" is taken to ensure the health and safety of their employees.

Employer's Duties:

- provide and maintain machinery, equipment and materials in a safe condition
- provide adequate information, instruction and training to enable employees to work safely
- ensure employees are adequately supervised
- ensure employees are familiar with the farm task at hand
- ensure employees are familiar with the proper use of all devices, equipment and clothing required for their protection, and
- consult with employees on health and safety matters

For many of you the difficulty will be shifting from verbal training to documenting the verbal information you have given your employees. The Canadian Quality Milk Risk Prevention Program use a training tool called Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) to identify potential problems or hazards and develop steps that can be taken to minimize or eliminate hazards. The process includes prevention and documentation (records, standard operating procedures and corrective action plans).

- say what you do

- do what you say
- prove it
- change it whenever necessary

A written OH&S program to include provisions for training, written procedures, hazard identification system, etc will be required where 20 or more workers are regularly employed. Where 5 or more workers are regularly employed a written policy is required which expresses the commitment of the employer to cooperate with the workers in pursuing OH&S. Workers will have the right to refuse work if he/she has reasonable grounds for believing that the act is likely to endanger their OH&S.

The COP is not itself a law, however in cases where a prosecution has resulted from a breach of the Act or regulations, the code will be used as evidence of correct procedure.

OH&S is a division of the Workers Compensation Board (WCB). Staff work out of the WCB building. Staff presently include five enforcement officers.

If you have comments or suggestions or require any further information on farm health and safety issues please contact Marilyn Affleck, Farm Health and Safety Program, 420 University Avenue, Charlottetown, PEI, C1A 7Z5 or telephone (902) 368 7289 or e-mail marilyna@peifa.ca.

Nova Scotia Agricultural College

September – December
(web based study)

- Transition to Organic Agriculture
- Basic Composting Skills
- Principles of Organic Horticulture

For further information on this web-based study, contact: 902 893 6666 or cde@nsac.ns.ca

The Prince Edward Island Federation of Agriculture's Farm Health and Safety Program will deliver FARM HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING to:

- students employed or a student seeking employment on Prince Edward Island farms
- farm employees (full time or seasonal)
- farm owner/operators and family members

Workshop Leader: Marilyn Affleck
Register at (902) 368 7289 or marilyna@peifa.ca

TRAINING CAN BE
8:00 am - 12:00 noon
or EVENING 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm

The course deals with situations involving:

- tractors and machinery\ the potato harvest
- pesticides, electrical safety, livestock handling
- grain bins, silos and manure shortages

Lunch provided: No Cost to attend

A one on one training session specific to your farm can be arranged for your employee(s) and/or family members on your farm or at a facility in your area..

Contact Marilyn Affleck at
420 University Avenue
Charlottetown, P.E.I., C1A 7Z5



Agriculture, Fisheries,
Aquaculture and Forestry

Eastern Forest District Happenings

The crews have finally come home to roost in the Eastern Forest District and the activity around the Southampton Depot has risen dramatically. However, the Eastern Forest District has continued to be busy with a number of projects that were taken on throughout the year.

Picking up from where we left off from last year, some of the main project activities that took place in the Eastern Forest District were:

- The Canadian Breast Cancer Network "Giving Trees Giving Hope" Program
- Arbor Day Celebrations
- Boy Scout Planting
- Chainsaw Sharpening and the Weekend Wood Cutter Courses
- Forest Fire Training Course & Fire Responses

The Canadian Breast Cancer Network in conjunction with the Provincial Forest Section sponsored a Memorial / Family day Celebration on Saturday May 15, 2004. The event was held on a Provincial Forest property on the St. Patrick's Road. The premise behind the event was that it would be a celebration of life for those who have survived having breast cancer as well as a memorial for those who have been taken by the disease. The day was also intended to be a time for families to come closer together.

To achieve these goals it was decided that the public was welcome to stop by the property and dig up some native Island trees and shrubs which they could take home and plant as a memorial to friends and family members. Besides the naturally occurring species on the property, the area was also "seeded" in 2003 using trees from the J. Frank Gaudet Nursery in preparation for this event. Also in 2003 a trail was created through the woodlot to encourage family outings and to allow some time for quiet reflection in a peaceful surrounding. The event also featured presentations given by Kate MacQuarrie, Dan McAskill and David Carmichael which were hosted by the management and staff of Peakes Tee. Minister Kevin MacAdam was on hand to welcome the visitors and participants and to thank the volunteers who helped to organize the event.

While the project began as a Provincial Forest partnership with the Canadian Breast Cancer Network it very quickly grew in scope. Extra support was given by the Private Land Staff of both the Eastern District and Upton Road, management and staff from both Upton Road and the Nursery, the Breast Cancer Network volunteers, and members of the Silvicultural Crew from the Eastern District. All gave of their time to make this event a success.

And a success it was! All of the staff involved were impressed by not only the numbers of people who were able to make it out, but also the distances that some of these people traveled to be there.

Sherry & Coady Fitzpatrick planting at Glenmartin.



Boy Scout Planting

Boy Scout Planting, a perennial favorite of the Forestry Division came off without a hitch again this year. The Beavers, Cubs and Scouts in the Eastern District were accommodated at two Provincial Forest sites. Scouts in the eastern end of the district planted at the Sparrow Road site which is just east of St. Peter's Bay. Scouts in the southern portion of the district planted their trees in Glenmartin. Approximately 600 seedlings were planted over a 2 hour period.

Arbor Day

Arbor Day was first celebrated on Prince Edward Island in 1884. This year Arbor Day was held in conjunction with the 200th anniversary of education of Prince Edward Island. To mark the event each school was given a red oak supplied from the J. Frank Gaudet Tree Nursery. Now these were not just the regular run of the mill seedlings that most people associate with reforestation practices. The root ball of each of these trees approached some 130 kilograms in weight and required some coordination to have them planted. In the Eastern District the work of making sure that each school received their tree and that they were planted correctly was in the hands of Doug MacMaster, Head Crew Chief for the District and Robert Savoie, Site Crew Boss.



Doug MacMaster and some of the participants of the sharpening course.

Chainsaw Training & Sharpening Courses

All three Provincial Forest Districts were involved in with teaching chainsaw safety through a course called “Cutting Firewood Safely”. These courses were sponsored by the Island Sustainable Forest partnership Co-operative Limited which provided \$2000 in funding, and the Provincial Forest Section, which provided the trainers and the equipment . The courses were offered in Montague, Southampton, Charlottetown, Wellington, O’Leary and Kensington with a total of 62 learners completing both course components while 13 others completed the first component of the course. In addition to the Firewood cutting course, Doug MacMaster offered a chainsaw sharpening course at the Southampton Office. The course was a three hour affair in which both theory and practice were put to the test. It was with some trepidation on the part of the learners that they let Doug smash into the teeth of their chains with a ball-peen hammer and then have him tell them to “fix it”. Billy MacLeod filled in as a second instructor during the hands on period. In all, eight learners participated in the course and the amount of individual attention given by both instructors was one of the strong points of the course.

Forest Fire Training Course and Fire Responses

This season the silviculture crews completed a Basic Fire Suppression Course and were given a hands on demonstration of some of the equipment they could possibly be using if required to fight a forest fire. The Georgetown Forestry Fire Truck (one of two in the District) was brought in and the staff had a chance to run a portable pump and set up the portable water tank. Approximately 70 volunteer firemen from Morell, St. Peter’s, Souris, Central Kings, and Cardigan were given the Basic Forest Fire Suppression Course over the winter months. The course was taught by Reg Conohan and Kevin Brothers. While it is always hoped

that no one will have a need for this equipment and information, at the time of this writing the Eastern District had responded to 10 minor fires so far in 2004.

Coming Events

- The Provincial Forest Section of the Eastern District will once again be involved with the open house at the Dover Tree Orchard at the end of July. The Open House is held yearly to coincide with the Northumberland Fisheries Festival Parade. Fire equipment supplied by the Central District will also take part in the parade and will be on display at the orchard.
- The Provincial Forest Fall Frolic will go once again in the Demonstration woodlot in New Harmony in October. Two courses (4.6 km & 12.3 km) are available to test all levels of participants. The run is sponsored in conjunction with the P.E.I. Roadrunners Club.
- Fuelwood tenders will once again be offered in the Eastern District. The tendering process will be advertised in the local newspapers later in the year.



Reg Conohan talks to the students of Morell Consolidated.



Avondale fire

Institute of Agrologists Award

Each year, the Prince Edward Island Institute of Agrologist presents an award in recognition of an individual, partnership or entity who has made a significant contribution to Island agriculture. This year, based on a nomination submitted by the Prince Edward Island Cattlemen's Association, Shane Murphy, P.Ag. was presented the Institute of Agrologist Recognition Award at the annual meeting on April 15, 2004. The following information is taken from the nomination submitted by the Prince Edward Island Cattlemen's Association.

Shane Murphy has earned the respect of the Board of the Prince Edward Island Cattlemen's Association for his vision, experience, knowledge of the beef industry and genuine desire to see the beef industry of Prince Edward Island prosper. He has been employed by the Department of Agriculture for over 23 years and, although his role with the Department consumes a large quantity of his time, Shane never refuses an invitation to attend a meeting with the Prince Edward Island Cattleman's Association Board, where his expertise is valued. When issues are discussed which include the Department, Shane is always very receptive to ideas presented by the Association's Board members. He has assisted both individuals and organizations in the industry by attending meetings, making phone calls or writing letters of support. In August of 1999, Shane was recognized by the Prince Edward Island Hereford Breeders Club for 20 years of support and service to their organization.

The Island beef industry has progressed from one producing commodity beef to one that is now adding value by developing one of the first branded beef programs in Canada. Shane has been a driver of the Atlantic Tender Beef Classic branded beef program ever since it was identified as a strategy of the Prince Edward Island Cattlemen's Association in the late



Congratulations to Shane Murphy, P.Ag. on receiving the Prince Edward Island Institute of Agrologist (PEIIA) Recognition Award. Here he is presented his award by outgoing President Paul Jenkins, P.Ag.

90's. He helped establish the Maritime working group that developed the brand, was a founding member of the more formally organized Maritime Beef Development and Marketing Group, assisted in the establishment of the Prince Edward Island Feeder Loan Cooperative, is a founding member of Atlantic Branded Beef Management Inc., helped in the lobby of Co-op Atlantic and the provincial government for assistance with freight costs to ship branded beef cattle to Better Beef when the Hub Meat plant closed to beef slaughter, and, most recently, has been instrumental in the proposal, development and ongoing construction of the beef processing plant in Borden.

All of Shane's work on the branded beef program and the beef plant has involved gathering the support of the Maritime beef organizations, provincial governments and other government and private organizations. It required developing solutions to chal-

lenges that had no models to follow. Shane has been generous with his knowledge and proven invaluable to the Cattleman's Association Board over the recent past. Most recently, he has been called to task during the BE crisis and has met that challenge with expertise, professionalism, patience and understanding. At a time when beef producers and members of the board were facing some very difficult decisions, Shane remained the voice of calm and reason. He guided them through the months following the discovery of BE in a single cow in Alberta in May of 2003, helping develop the best possible compensation program to benefit Island beef producers, not once, but three times. The board is certain that as long as Shane is at the table, these talks will continue until the BE crisis is resolved.

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Farm Health & Safety Program News

Since April, Farm Health and Safety Program Coordinator, Marilyn Affleck delivered Farm Stress Management training in four regions of Prince Edward Island and Farm Health and Safety training to students employed or seeking employment on Prince Edward Island farms. The good weather the last week of June resulted in a few cancellations as some students were helping with the silage harvest. To this end, please telephone the office (902) 368-7289 to arrange a rain day session in your area.

Tractor training for highschool students was delivered to Kensington/Kinkora Agriculture Certificate Program students. Charles Easter, Highway Safety Division, David Younker, 4-H Leader, Ms. Affleck and a host of volunteers delivered the training to our future farmers. Tractors were involved in 45 per cent of the work-related agricultural fatalities in Canada between 1990 and 2000. Incidents resulting in these fatalities

were primarily rollovers and runovers. Tractor incidents also accounted for 28.4 per cent of hospitalized injuries. Because of this data, we have to emphasize the importance of ONE SEAT ONE RIDER!

Kensington Agricultural Services generously donated the use of New Holland tractors for the Driver Training session. Students, with help from volunteer coaches, had to negotiate their way through an obstacle course. The event was immensely successful, already Brian Gard, the Agricultural Program Instructor is planning a workshop for next years' class. The evaluation forms, completed by participants, indicated an overwhelming level of satisfaction with the course. When asked what was liked most about the training day, 95 % included "driving the tractors" in their response.

This year the Farm Health and Safety Program hope to form a chapter of Canadian Farmers with Disabilities on Prince Edward Island. Other

initiatives is to promote a National Project "On Guard", a handbook for home built guarding on farm equipment; and continue with on going activities such as farm health and safety training; farm stress management training; safe tractor operation and safe livestock training.

If you have comments or suggestions or require any further information on farm health and safety issues please contact Marilyn Affleck, Farm Health and Safety Program, 420 University Avenue, Charlottetown, PEI, C1A 7Z5 or telephone (902) 368 7289 or e-mail marilyna@peifa.ca.

Institute of Agrologist's Award

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The Cattleman's Association would have been less effective in the past several years without the assistance of Shane Murphy. It cannot be emphasized enough the importance of Shane's role in the survival and evolution of the beef industry of Prince Edward Island.

Outside of work, Shane is a very committed family person. He and his wife Debbie (Mais) reside in Cornwall with their three children - Katrina (17), Mitchell (15) and Steven (11). Shane and his family are members of the St Francis of Assisi Parish in Cornwall where Shane and Debbie have acted as facilitators in the Parish's Marriage Preparation Program. He is very proud of his three children and makes every effort to support them. One of his goals as a parent is to provide a happy childhood and lifelong memories for his children, and this has re-

sulted in many fun-filled hikes and vacations as a family. In his spare time, Shane enjoys astronomy, golfing, fitness and reading about extreme sports such as mountain climbing. At one time, Shane even held a pilot's licence.

Congratulations to Shane Murphy on receiving the Agrologist Recognition award.

The Prince Edward Island Institute of Agrologists is an organization whose mandate is to "safeguard the public by ensuring its members are qualified and competent to provide knowledge and advice on agriculture and related areas". Professional Agrologists are designated with a "PAG." after their name. For more information on the PEIIA, visit their website at www.peiia.ca or contact their office at (902) 892-1943.

TEEN DRIVERS: why crash rates are so high

Understand and manage risks

Learning to drive and getting a driver's license are rites of passage that most adolescents anticipate. Unfortunately, this increased autonomy also has a down side - the risk of injuries.

Compared to older drivers, teen drivers are more likely to speed, tailgate, violate traffic signs and signals, and overtake other vehicles in a risky manner. Teens are less likely to wear a seatbelt while driving or as a passenger. Consider:

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for Canadian youths. More than 250 teens aged 15 - 19 were killed in traffic crashes in 2001.
- Road crashes are also the leading cause of hospitalization among 15 - 19 year olds. In 1999/2000, more than 3000 teens aged 15 - 19 were hospitalized as a result of a motor vehicle traffic crash.
- Although drivers aged 15 - 19 made up only 5 per cent of all licensed drivers in Canada in 2000, they were involved in 10 per cent of all collisions involving injuries and 10 per cent of all fatal collisions.

Risk Factors

- Driving inexperience. Novice drivers are less able than more experienced drivers to assess driving hazards, they have different visual fixation and scanning patterns, are more likely to focus away from the road to distractions in the car, and their psychomotor, steering, braking, and speed adjustment skills are less well-developed. Age and maturity also play a role, independent of experience.
- Sensation seeking. Teens, more than any other age group, tend to be "sensation seekers" who will engage in risky behavior to experience novel, varied and intense experiences. This greater need for stimulation is closely linked with reckless driving

behavior such as drinking and driving, speeding and drag-racing. High sensation seekers are more likely to be involved in collisions and receive traffic violations.

- Peer influence. Teen drivers may take risks to impress their friends, and teenaged passengers can also be very distracting to the driver. Canadian research suggests the risk of a fatal crash is 45 per cent higher for drivers with one passenger, 100 per cent higher for those with two passengers, and increases by 200 per cent for teen drivers with three or more passengers.
- Fatigue. Teens often do not get enough sleep. This sleep deficit could easily lead to crashes, either through inattention or falling asleep at the wheel.
- Biological factors. Testosterone levels surge during adolescence and have been linked to high risk driving behavior. Also, recent neurological research suggests some of the brain structures related to decision making and judgement are not fully developed until later in adolescence, so teens are more likely than adults to act on impulse.

Reduce Risks: Get Trained

- It is important for teens to learn appropriate driving skills from a professional instructor. Motor vehicle designs have changed over the years, and novice drivers should learn the most up-to-date information.

- Graduated licensing is effective. But it only works if young drivers follow the licensing rules and avoid higher-risk driving scenarios (such as night driving or driving with other young passengers) until they have gained more experience.

Buckle Up

- Teenagers have the lowest seatbelt wearing rates. Teens should understand buckling up may save their lives.

Drive Sober

- The number of alcohol-related deaths among young drivers has dropped in the last couple of decades. However, those who do drink and drive are at very high risk of collision - 40 per cent of teen drivers killed in crashes have been drinking.
- Teens may also be impaired if driving while tired, while taking some medications, or when distracted by such things as a cell phone, passengers and loud music. Drivers must be alert and focused on the road at all times.

Reprinted from HEADS UP, Spring 2004 issue. The Official Newsletter of SMARTRISK

Come Celebrate Agriculture on Our Island!



Mark your calendars for Sunday, September 26, 2004. This is the third year that the Prince Edward Island agriculture communities have come together to help celebrate their industries with the third annual Open Farm Day. The Prince Edward Island Agriculture Awareness Committee in conjunction with the Prince Edward Island Agricultural Human Resources Development Council have taken this initiative to showcase some of the finest of Island agriculture in the attempt to create more appreciation and awareness for the agriculture industry within the general public.

Visitors attending the host operations will appreciate the time and effort the hosts put into their presentations and displays. This year's theme, "Farming Together," helps exhibit the impressive amount of knowledge, technology and science involved in the agriculture and forestry sectors. Remarkable points of interest will be displayed throughout this day in an effort to demonstrate to the public what the agriculture and forestry industries have been doing to be more sustainable and efficient.

For further information on this noteworthy event contact the Prince Edward Island Agricultural Human Resources Council at 892-1091 or Dawn Simmons, 2004's Open Farm Day Coordinator, at 836-4208.

Coming Events

To list upcoming dates, contact Suzanne MacNeill (Agriculture Information Officer) at 888-8040 or e-mail slmacneil@gov.pe.ca A complete list of events can be found on-line at the Agriculture, Fisheries, Aquaculture and Forestry Information Center website http://www.gov.pe.ca/af/agweb/events_calendar/index.php3

DAIRY/BEEF

- **August 20**
Kensington Agricultural Services 2004 Simmental Heifer Classic. Charlottetown Civic Center Contact: Shelley Ployer 583-3329
- **September 3**
P.E.I. Farm Equipment Simmental Futurity. Egmont Bay. Contact: Shelley Ployer 583-3329
- **October 30**
P.E.I. Simmental Association Fall Sale. Contact: Shelley Ployer 583-3329

FAIRS & EXHIBITIONS 2003

Contact: 368-4848

- **August 5 - 7**
Prince County Exhibition
- **August 5 - 8**
Tyne Valley Oyster Festival
- **August 6 - 7**
P.E.I. Tractor Pull Championships
- **August 13 - 21**
P.E.I. Provincial Exhibition Old Home Week
- **August 21 - 25**
Kensington Community Harvest Festival
- **August 27 - 29**
Provincial Plowing Match and Agriculture Fair
- **September 2 - 5**
L'Exposition agricole et le Festival acadien de la région Évangéline
- **September 18 - 19**
Eastern Kings Exhibition

SWINE

- **November 4 - 6**
2004 Maritime Pork Conference. Delta Hotel, Saint John, NB. Contact: Agriculture Information Desk. 368-4145

EDUCATION/TRAINING

PEI Agricultural Human Resource Development Council

Contact 892-1091 or toll free
1-866-892-1091 or email
agrihrdc@auracom.com

- **August 2 - 20**
3A Truck Driving Course. JVI Commercial Driving School - Summerside Contact: Angela Campbell (902) 892-1091
- **August 17 - 20**
Growing, Protecting and Marketing our Forest Products. Fredericton, NB. Contact: Ann LeBrun Ruff, (506) 450-8787

4-H UPDATE

Contact: 368-4833

- **August 6**
Alberton (Prince County) Exhibition - 4-H Day
- **August 16 - 18**
4-H Judging Competition. Civic Centre, Charlottetown
- **August 18**
4-H Clipping Competition. Trade Centre, Charlottetown
- **August 18**
4-H Day at Provincial Exhibition. Civic Centre, Charlottetown
- **August 28**
4-H Day at Dundas Exhibition
- **September 3**
4-H Day at L'Exposition Agricole et le Festival Acadien de la region Evange. Abram Village - Egmont Bay
- **September 10 - 11**
4-H Rural Youth Fair, Egmont Bay

FARM ORGANIZATIONS

- **August 14**
The Farmers Helping Farmers Barbecue. Charlottetown Research Station Cost: \$20/adult \$5/child. 4:00 - 6:30p.m. Rain or Shine. For tickets call: (902) 368-5605
- **September 4**
Antique Power Show. 1286 New Argyle Rd., Bonshaw, PE Contact: Boyd MacQuarrie 902-675-2443
- **September 26**
Open Farm Day - 2004. Throughout Prince Edward Island. Contact: Dawn Simmons, coordinator (902) 836-4208

FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE

- **September 17 - 19**
P.E.I. International Shellfish Festival Date(s): Contact: Richard Gallant Contact Phone: 902-368-5524 www.peishellfish.com

FORESTRY

- **August 17 - August 20**
Growing, Protecting and Marketing our Forest Products. Fredericton, NB; Contact: Ann LeBrun Ruff. (506) 450-8787

AGRI-CONFERENCES

- **August 5-8**
Agri-fest. Canning, N.S. www.agrifest.com/
- **September 14-18**
National Agriculture Awareness Conference 2004, Winnipeg, Manitoba. www.naac-cnsa.ca/
- **September 29 - October 1**
Global Grain 2004. Genva Switzerland; www.globalgrain2004.com/
- **November 18-20**
Atlantic Farm Challenge 2004, Corner Brook, NF; www.gov.nl.ca/agric/afc2004/

