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Summer 2016

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Agriview

Newfoundland and Labrador Agriculture



**United Way Helps Grow Agriculture
in the Classroom**

Page 2



**Newfoundland and Labrador
Federation of Agriculture**

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Agriview

Newfoundland and Labrador Agriculture



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On The Cover: Chelsea Foley, Outreach Coordinator and Nicole Parrell, Financial Officer of the NLFA receiving the grant cheque from United Way.



Melvin J. Rideout
President

With the growing season well underway, our members have had to adapt once again to the many challenges involved in farming in this province. Much of it, of course, is due to our unpredictable weather. Frost in July is never a welcome part of the forecast, but we've dealt with it before and we will get fresh farm products to NL consumers as they've come to expect.

At the Federation, there has been a lot happening. Agriculture in the Classroom has been successfully seeking donations to grow its Little Green Thumbs program. Most notably, the United Way has provided \$30,000 to get more gardens into classrooms in the upcoming school year.

The Young Farmers held another workshop recently, this time on soil management, and are having a big impact on social media. They are now planning their next Leadership Summit for November in St. John's. We are continuing to get great support from the Growing Forward 2 program and would like to once again extend a 'thank-you' for all the assistance we as an organization and as an industry have received.

We also would like to thank the provincial government for supporting us in the form of the new position of Project Coordinator, Funding Programs. This position is envisioned as identifying, researching, securing, promoting and delivering various agriculture funding programs / initiatives in Newfoundland and Labrador. The Funding Programs coordinator will work closely with agriculture producers, agricultural commodity groups, government departments, and other industry stakeholders. We advertised the position recently and hope to have someone hired in the near future.

As we look ahead to the fall season, we plan to build on last year's success with the Agrifoods and Garden Show when we returned to Corner Brook after spending two years in St. John's. This year we're back in Corner Brook and we anticipate another fantastic show. There is something at the show for everyone, whether it be kids' activities, cooking demonstrations, the petting farm, or the farmers market. The show will be at the Corner Brook Civic Centre, September 23-25.

We're also gearing up to do another Open Farm Day, after having great success with it the past couple of years. We had 20 farms participate last year with over 4,000 visitors, and we anticipate further growth when the event takes place on Sunday, September 18.

In addition to putting on events, we will be attending others. The tradeshow season kicks off with Farm Field Day this month, and continues through October. Look for us at events across the province.

I would like to wish all of our members a successful and safe growing and harvest season.

Next Agriview
Newfoundland and Labrador Agriculture

Our next issue will be **Fall 2016**. We are accepting submissions until **October 7**. If you are interested contact:
info@nlfa.ca or **709-747-4874**

Agriculture in the Classroom Receives Contribution from United Way



Chelsea Foley, Outreach Coordinator and Nicole Parrell, Financial Officer of the NLFA receiving the grant cheque from United Way.

An example of a Little Green Thumbs garden. Many more of these will be in schools across the province thanks to the United Way donation.

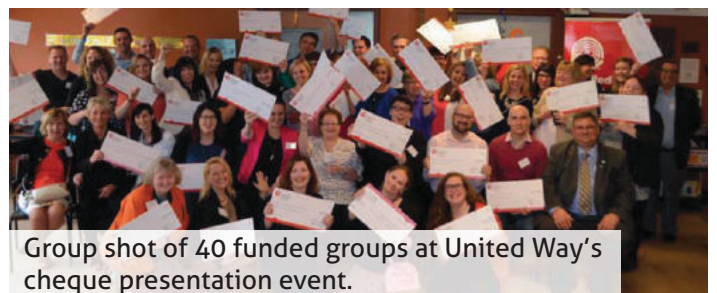


lished as United Way of Avalon in 2004, it quickly evolved into a provincial organization by 2009. With a steady increase of funds — raising nearly \$1.2 million during its 2014 Workplace Campaign — United Way of Newfoundland and Labrador is not only the youngest branch of United Way Centraide Canada, but also the fastest growing. The group's mission statement is "To improve lives and build community by engaging individuals and mobilizing collective action."

On June 16, United Way of Newfoundland and Labrador invited Agriculture in the Classroom (AIRC) to its cheque presentation event. At the event, held at the Choices for Youth Outreach Centre in St. John's, the United Way distributed \$500,000 in cheques to charities across the province. A total of 52 funded groups were grateful to receive grants made possible by donations made to United Way's Community Fund in 2016.

Agriculture in the Classroom was thrilled to receive \$30,000 to expand its Little Green Thumbs program in the upcoming 2016-17 school year.

Since its inception, United Way of Newfoundland and Labrador has grown from an idea to a reality. Estab-



Group shot of 40 funded groups at United Way's cheque presentation event.

United Way's Funding for AIRC was provided through the All that Kids Can Be funding category which sets out to 'Providing youth with access to early literacy and development programs, recreational activities, mentors and other opportunities to discover and develop their talents and interests as they progress through school and into adulthood.'

NL Young Farmers Host Soil Management Workshop



Susan Lester tells workshop participants about how they manage soils and crop rotation at Lester's Farm Market.

The Newfoundland and Labrador Young Farmers' Forum hosted a soil management workshop on May 25 and 26 in St. John's. The event covered all aspects of soil management. Participants spent time indoors in a classroom format, and also did work outside in the field.



Manager of Soils and Mapping Services You Jiao shows attendees around the provincial soils lab.

The event began with a presentation on the nature and properties of soils. This included an introduction to soil; soil processes; and soil properties. Attendees then covered soil fertility, which included soil nutrients and soil improvement.

The first day was rounded out looking specifically at Newfoundland soils and soil profiles. Day one ended with a field exercise where participants examined samples

Soil Specialist Shawn Howlett demonstrating how to take a soil sample.



around the federal Cool Climate Research facility.

Day two began back indoors. The first presentation was on soil surveys, specifically looking at how soil information is gathered, compiled, and interpreted. Then participants heard about soil suitability and capability. Next was a look at soil maps of Newfoundland and Labrador, followed by a presentation on crop rotation, just before a tour of the provincial soils lab.

The workshop started to wrap up with a presentation on soil sampling, analysis and report. This was followed by a visit to Lester's Farm Market, where the plan was to do more field work outside, but the weather did not cooperate. Instead participants met in one of their greenhouses and heard about how they manage their soils and rotate crops on their farm.

Funding to host the workshop was provided by Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

Little Green Thumbs Celebrate Harvest Across the Province



The Little Green Thumbs program aims to help young people value the health of themselves, the environment and their community through active participation in a classroom garden. The grow kits, soil and seeds form an indoor garden that complement learning concepts such as where food comes from, how to grow healthy plants, sustainable food systems, community interdependence and nutrition in fun, interesting and relevant ways.

Agriculture in the Classroom NL would like to give thumbs up to our Little Green Thumbs on their successful gardens this year. This school year our 102 Little

Green Thumbs classes in 54 schools participated in their Harvest Celebrations.

Students visited farms, hosted concerts, had a harvest with their crops, attended grocery store tours, visited greenhouses, and shared the gift of their gardens.

We would like to thank our partners that made Harvest Celebrations special for Little Green Thumbs. This program would not have blossomed without partnerships, volunteers, teachers and students and school administrators. Way to grow!

This project is funded in part by Growing Forward 2.



2016 Newfoundland and Labrador Agricultural Events

The following are the planned agricultural events and festivals taking place in the province this year

August

Bakeapple Folk Festival
August 8-10, 2016
Forteau, Labrador

Garnish Bakeapple Festival
August 8-14, 2016
Community Centre, Garnish

Brigus Blueberry Festival
August 12-14, 2016
Water Street, Brigus

Annual Farm Field Day
August 13, 2016
308 Brookfield Road, St. John's

The Gathering
August 25-27, 2016
13 Old Church Rd, Burlington

September

Humber Valley Agriculture Home/Handicraft Exhibition
September 16-17, 2016
Hodder Memorial Stadium, Deer Lake

Roots, Rants and Roars Festival
September 16-17, 2016
Elliston, Bonavista Peninsula

Open Farm Day
September 18, 2016
Various farms across the province

Agrifoods and Garden Show
September 23-25, 2016
Corner Brook Civic Centre

Port au Port Agricultural Fall Fair
September 24-25, 2016
Our Lady of Mercy Church, Port au Port West

Trinity-Conception Bay Agriculture Fall Fair
September 24-26, 2016
Harbour Grace, Conception Bay North

October

Eastport Agricultural Exhibition
October 7-10, 2016
Beaches Heritage Centre, Eastport

Fogo Island Partridgeberry Festival
October 8-9, 2016
Iceberg Arena, Fogo Island Central

From This Rock Culinary Tour
Mid October – Early November
Province Wide

AgriVantage Membership Program Welcomes Scotiabank



The AgriVantage membership program has added Scotiabank to its suite of special offers available to members. This member offer is available in addition to all the other services offered by the Federation of Agriculture.

Members can now avail of discounts off standard rates for approved credit products, select fee waivers and more at Scotiabank.

This new offer is in addition to the great offers on vehicles, travel, farm equipment, heating oil, equipment leasing and much more that have been a continuing part of the program.

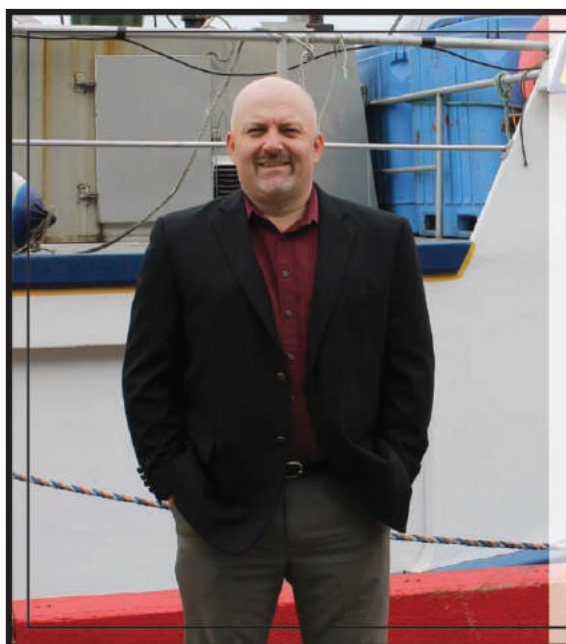
We also take on issues for our members in areas like municipal taxes, trespassing, access to crown lands, and

more. If a member needs us to help, we'll 'go to bat' on their behalf.

With all the great benefits highlighted above, it is easy to see why our members consistently rate our program highly, year after year.

Maximize your savings with the AgriVantage program by becoming a member today. Join the satisfied members already enjoying the benefits of the program and in the process build a strong united voice for the agriculture industry in this province.

If you require further program details, please visit our website, www.nlfa.ca and click on the 'Membership' link. If you have any questions, please contact our office at (709) 747-4874 or info@nlfa.ca.



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Canola

Fields of Yellow on the Horizon

Beautiful fields of yellow will soon be a part of the Agricultural landscape in Newfoundland and Labrador. Canola (*Brassica napus* L.) has been planted on the island portion of the province for the first time and is showing tremendous potential.

Canola is a high value oilseed crop that is grown in all provinces except Newfoundland and Labrador (Statistics Canada, 2009). It is a member of the mustard family, specifically rapeseed, and is closely related to turnip, cauliflower, cabbage and broccoli. Canola is worth over \$19 billion to the Canadian economy, making it the most profitable commodity for Canadian farmers. Closer to home in the Atlantic Provinces, in 2013, canola was grown on 56,000 ha of land and was worth \$45 million with growth increases of 300 percent in the past few years. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is exploring the possibility of growing canola here on a large scale, hoping to capitalize on an opportunity not yet realized.

Research being conducted this year aims to determine the potential for growing canola in Newfoundland and Labrador. Specifically, research objectives are to determine if canola can reach maturity in the western region, assess and develop harvest and pressing procedures, establish growing practices and determine oil and meal yield quality potential.

Canola meal is commonly used as a component of livestock feed because of its high protein content and has been shown to significantly increase milk production when incorporated into feed rations. Growing canola locally, in addition to grain and soybean, has the potential to vastly improve the livestock sector in this province.

Decreasing our dependence on imported feed and lowering the cost of production for local livestock producers is the goal of the research being conducted by provincial scientist Dr. Vanessa Kavanagh. In addition to the direct benefits to the livestock sector, there are environmental benefits as well. Incorporating canola into a rotational cropping system together with high valued vegetable crops, grain and/or soybean could decrease weed pressure and improve soil quality thus reducing



the need for additional herbicides, fertilizers and extensive cultivation.

It is expected that the first canola crop will be harvested this September with expected yields just under one tonne/acre, which could potentially result in 0.30 tonnes of oil and 0.70 tonnes of canola meal (22.5 tonnes of canola can feed approximately 86 cows for one year). Local restaurants have expressed interest in using the oil and have reserved all that will be processed this year. If this research is successful, it will be a significant advancement in the livestock industry as well as another unique local product for the restaurant industry.

For more information about the canola and other livestock feed research being conducted throughout the province, please contact Sabrina Ellsworth, Manager, Agricultural Research (Forestry and Agrifoods Agency) at sabrinaellsworth@gov.nl.ca.

Provincial Agriculture Research and Development Program, Forestry and Agrifoods Agency Sabrina Ellsworth, M.Sc. P.Ag

Making Older Tractors Safer



Everyone likes sharing good news. Older tractors were built to last, so many from the 1960s and 1970s are still in operation in Canada. Despite their strengths, these older tractors are not up to current safety standards. An important gap between new and old tractors is the absence of Roll-Over Protection Structures (ROPS) on tractors built before 1985. The ROPS are roll bars or enclosures designed to create a protective zone around the operator when a rollover occurs. When used with a seatbelt, the ROPS will prevent the operator from being thrown from the protective zone and crushed by an overturning tractor or by equipment mounted or hooked to the tractor. It is important to have both: ROPS and a seatbelt.

Memorial University's SafetyNet Centre for Occupational Health and Safety Research (www.mun.ca/safety-net) is participating in a national study funded by Canadian AgriSafety Applied Research Program. In one part of that study, engineers at the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute (PAMI) are developing and testing a set of ROPS designs for older tractors that are relatively inexpensive and can be built and installed by operators. This project is called the Low-Cost Pilot Program (www.agrivita.ca/program/lowcost.php).

According to the NL Occupational Health and Safety Regulations [OHS Regs., Sec. 112 (1)], which came into

force in 2012, tractors used in NL must be fitted with ROPSs. These ROPS must be certified by the manufacturer of the ROPS or by a professional engineer [Sec. 112(7)] because, a homemade bar attached to the tractor axle cannot protect the operator if the tractor overturns. The ROPS frame must also pass a series of static and dynamic crush tests to demonstrate its ability to withstand various loads and to ensure the operator's station zone remains safe in an overturn. Moreover, the ROPS must meet standards set forth by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA).

A farmer from central Newfoundland recently joined the PAMI Low-Cost ROPS Pilot Program. He requested a copy of the engineered fabrication drawings designed for his older Massey Ferguson tractor from James Wasserman, vice-president of the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute (PAMI) and Mr. Justin Gerspacher, Lead Project Engineer. He used these to build a ROPS structure to retrofit his older Massey Ferguson tractor. As part of the study he was required to send it back to PAMI so they could test the quality of his work. Testing showed that this farmer's ROPS was very well-built and up to standard. His ROPS passed the test for structural integrity and was comparable in strength to the PAMI-built prototype. Two farmers from Saskatoon also built ROPS that met the PAMI requirements. This is good news for operators with older tractors without ROPS because it shows there is a possible low-cost way to retrofit these older tractors.

The average cost of materials for the ROPS built by these farmers was only \$144. ROPS for older tractors purchased from commercial dealers typically cost in the range of \$750 to \$2,000. This cost may discourage farmers from installing ROPS on their older tractors putting them at serious risk of injury or death when operating these tractors and in violation of the provincial Health and Safety regulations.

The Low Cost Pilot Program for ROPS is ongoing. While the initial results are promising, more tests and participating agricultural operators are needed to complete the work. To date, project engineers have only developed



ROPS designs for older Massey Ferguson tractors. However, it appears that the concept of having farmers build their own effective, low-cost ROPS could be feasible for a wide range of older tractor makes and models.

Tragically, 46 percent of all agricultural fatalities in Canada that occurred between 1990 and 2012 were due to three machine-related causes: machine rollovers, machine runovers and machine entanglements (Canadian Agricultural Safety Association, 2014). The Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture (CCHSA) has found that 99% of machinery-related rollover fatalities are preventable on tractors equipped with ROPS when the operator is wearing a seatbelt. Making older

tractors safer is not an expense — it is an essential investment in health and future prosperity.

We don't know how many tractors in NL are not equipped with ROPS. However, in a SafetyNet Agrisafety study carried out in 2015-2016, 37 NL agricultural operators reported on 90 tractors in use on their operations. Of these tractors, 87.8% of tractors had ROPS with most installed by the manufacturer; 12.2% did not have ROPS. Significantly, more than half of tractor operators (58.6%) did not wear seatbelts on their tractors even though most had them. In addition, only 60% of participants in our interviews were aware of provincial legislation requiring ROPS to be installed on their tractors.

A key objective of the Low-Cost Pilot Program for ROPS is to help Canada's operators get to 100% coverage by raising awareness of the importance of ROPS and finding ways to reduce the cost of safe retrofitting of older tractors. This tells us that more needs to be done to promote tractor safety in Newfoundland and Labrador. We wish you a safe and prosperous farming year.

Please contact Dr. E. Dabrowska at: edabrowska@mun.ca if you require more information about the ROPS Low-Cost Pilot.

Article by Ewa Dabrowska and Barbara Neis, SafetyNet Centre for Occupational Health and Safety Research, Memorial University, St. John's, NL





Update from the Big Land

The Finleys' Farm Hydroponic Greenhouse can't keep up with the turnip green market demand in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.



By Edward Mesher

The 2016 Lake Melville Agriculture Association (LMAA) Annual General Meeting (AGM) had a great turnout with 27 people in attendance. It was held at the Birdhouse Garden Market meeting room in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, central Labrador, on April 27. The meeting included a special guest from Memorial University's Grenfell Campus in Corner Brook, Dr. Ewa Dabrowska. She is a fellow at the Safety Net Centre for Occupational Health and Safety Research.

During the LMAA AGM there was plenty of interest for the five elected positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and for the vacated Labrador Representative position who sits on the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Agriculture Board of Directors at the provincial level. Several new members showed up, and paid their membership fee, keen to join the LMAA. One-by-one the elected positions were announced, people were nominated, speeches given and votes cast. Dr. Dabrowska was on hand as a scrutineer.

James (Jim) Purdy of Birch Lane Farm was elected President; Desmond Sellars of Nature's Best Farm was elected Vice-President, Frank Pye was acclaimed as Secretary and Joyce Pye was acclaimed as Treasurer. I can say with confidence that most, if not all, members of the LMAA were happy to see both Joyce and Frank continue on in those positions for the continuity and good of the association. They were both instrumental in starting up LMAA to help the local agriculture industry de-

velop and grow here in central Labrador. I was elected to the position of NLFA Labrador Rep., to represent the LMAA at the Federation — the first born and bred Labradorian in this position.

The next morning after our AGM I had the privilege to show Dr. Dabrowska some of the local farm sites including Frank and Joyce Pye's Grand River Farm, Jim Purdy and Marge Goudie's Birch Lane Farm, Greg and Jamie Lee Finley's Hydroponic Greenhouse and their farmland. There was just too much snow to get to all the farms at that time. All of these farms are located on the Mud Lake Road area near the estuary of the Mista Shipu, Grand, Hamilton and/or Churchill River.

Row cover over greens at Desmond Sellers' Real Nature Farm. This is done to ensure that bugs and/or weather conditions won't stunt the growth.



Dr. Dabrowska was thankful for the tour which also included a stop at *Them Days* magazine, a publication documenting the stories of early Labrador. There she found information on the recorded history of farming and gardening in Labrador. The stories include Captain George Cartwright gardening at Cartwright Labrador in 1786, fishermen growing food at Bateau in 1893, Moravian Missionaries gardening at Hebron in 1909 and many other examples up to fairly recent times.

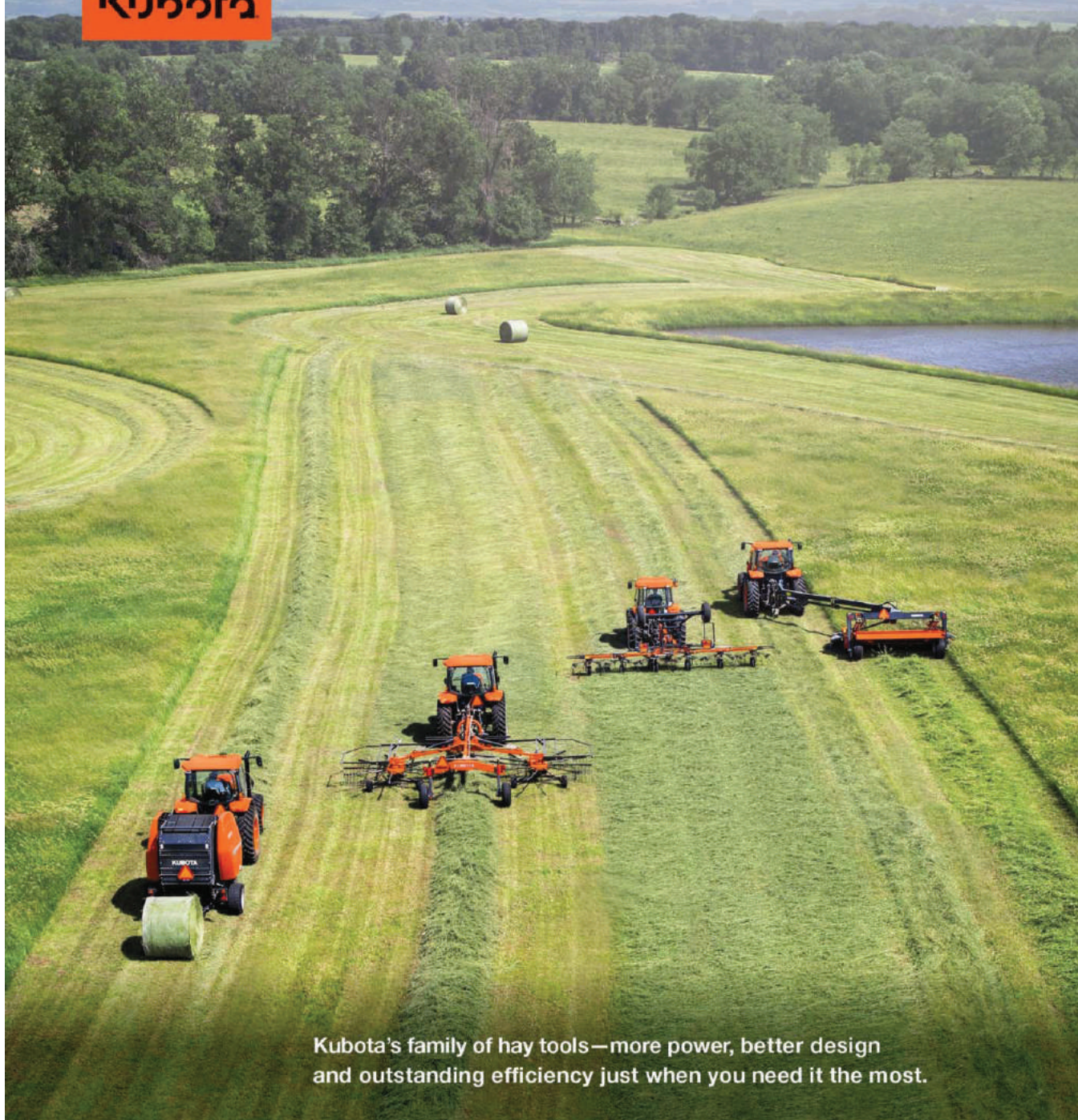
Unfortunately we also recently lost one of LMAA's new members, Tracy Best, who passed away at a young age. She will be remembered and missed.

I wish every farmer and gardener the right amount of rain and sunshine this summer for a bountiful harvest season.



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Potatoes Potatoes Potatoes

“Pauperism existed to a very alarming extent in the District of St John’s last winter; from the 1st April to the 9th, 750 families, averaging 5 each, received relief. There were considerably more last year than the year before. Attributes pauperism to the high cost of provisions, the short catch of fish, the failure of the potato crop, and the sickness last year; great numbers of Outport Poor have been added to the usual number.”

“... if the potato crop escapes the disease this season, it would sensibly decrease pauperism. There is an unusually large space of land under potatoes this year...”

(Report to the Relief of the Poor, Journal of the House of Assembly 1855; Appendix 264-265)

Potatoes and fish. Together, historically, they sustained the Newfoundland diet. But if the fish were scarce or the potatoes fell to disease, disaster ensued. The Government grew potatoes. And the Government bought potatoes from local producers to feed soldiers of the garrison, the sick, and the poor.

How did potatoes come to Newfoundland? People who came to settle in Newfoundland brought with them potatoes from their part of the world: England, Ireland, eastern North America, St Pierre and Miquelon. There were many different varieties. It is said that the Irish Cobbler was first grown by Irish shoemakers in the northeastern United States in the 1870s. The Forty-Fold is said to have been originally from Lancashire in the north west of England. The town of Hebron in New York State gives the Beauty of Hebron potato a prominent mention on its website because the potato was developed there in the 1870s. The Green Mountain potato originated in the Green Mountains of Vermont and was first released in 1855.

The 1916 Annual Report of the Newfoundland Department of Agriculture mentioned many varieties of potato which were grown in Newfoundland. How many of these names are familiar to you, one hundred years later? Dakota Red, McPhail’s, Irish Cobblers, Beauties of Hebron, Early Rose, Calicos, Terra Novas, Blues, Green Mountain, and Forty-Fold.

Historically, potatoes which were surplus to the household were sold through the coastal trade. In 1916 King’s Cove sold 150 barrels of their Dakota Reds and McPhails to the north side of Bonavista Bay from Greenspond to Newtown. Bonavista Bay sold their Whites to the north of Bonavista Bay and into Notre Dame Bay. “Heart’s Content has supplied the steamers which are engaged in bringing pulp, lumber and paper from Botwood, with potatoes and other vegetables.” Port Rexton grew the Green Mountain variety. They argued that it was less susceptible to disease and was a better keeper than other White varieties. They reported: “A small quantity was sold to St. John’s where the best prices are obtained. The Labrador fishing fleet takes a supply for the consumption of their crews during the fishing voyage. So there is always a good demand for potatoes in

the spring.” Grand Bank reported that “Many people sell their potatoes to schooners, etc. and buy PEI potatoes for their own use.”

By the early twentieth century, the railway had been built across the island and it had opened access to the development of mines and forests. New towns grew, not by the sea, but inland. Farmers were quick to take advantage of the railway. Port Blandford sold their Whites to Millertown, Grand Falls, and St. John’s. Spaniard’s Bay sent 500 barrels of Reds to Grand Falls. The Codroy District grew Calicos and Terra Novas and sold 1,000 barrels. Robinsons liked Early Rose which they sold to the Bay of Islands, Grand Falls, Channel, and Sandy Point. St. John’s was supplied by Port Blandford (Whites), Northern Bay (Reds), Kelligrews (Irish Cobblers and Beauties), Riverhead St Mary’s (Reds), Hants Harbour (Whites) and others. The St. John’s District itself grew Irish Cobblers, Dakota Reds, and Beauty of Hebron.

Some districts grew very few potatoes, or, perhaps, just enough for themselves and none to sell. Burgeo reported: “We are large buyers [of potatoes] every year.” Lark Harbour reported: “People being fishermen do not take an interest in agriculture, they only grow enough to satisfy themselves, from 10-20 barrels per family.” Epworth reported: “The general result of agricultural operations the past year [was] not very satisfactory, owing to the land not being properly looked after in the spring when our people spend the greater part of their time fitting out for the fishery.”

Of the 51 responses to the 1916 government questionnaire, 21 opined that in their experience the Reds were the most resistant to disease; 23 districts reported that the Whites were the best; and 7 believed that the Blues suffered least from disease.

Sources: Reports of the Newfoundland Agricultural Board for the Year Ended December 31st 1916

- www.mainpotatolady.com
- www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hebron,suttonelms.org.uk/forty-fold
- www.potatoassociation.org/industry/varieties

Written by Jo Shawyer for the Agricultural History Society of Newfoundland and Labrador, the mandate of which is to raise awareness of the long history of agriculture across this province.



NEWFOUNDLAND
AND LABRADOR'S LARGEST

AgriFoods & Garden Show

2016

SEPTEMBER

23-25

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Growing Forward 2 



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