

Atlantic Agrology Network Newsletter

This newsletter is a joint effort from all four Atlantic Provinces Institute of Agrologists organizations. This quarterly distributed newsletter will keep all Agrologists updated on Council reports, upcoming events and job postings within the Atlantic Region. A trending topic will be highlighted in each edition, with provinces rotating in writing this segment.

Council Updates



NBIA:

nbia@nbagrologists.nb.ca

The COVID-19 pandemic has caught everyone off guard, including all associations, agriculture industries and governments. The Agriculture Minister, Ross Wetmore, indicated that both the Agriculture Industries and Agriculture Departments have been classified as essential and that most NBIA Agrologists are doing their best at the front line working from home or social distancing to deal with the most pressing issues to help the agriculture industry to move forward and provide food security to the province.

Due to all this, the 2020 AGM was postponed that was going to be held on April 24 in the Moncton area and probably pushed to a later date with most other activities curtailed. The NBIA Council is hoping to continue making progress in some upgrades to the association and that things will get back on track later in 2020.

The Act/Bylaws Committee have been conducting a complete review of the NBIA Acts/Bylaws and are recommending amendments as required. The revision of the NBIA manual and the exam process has also been revised by this committee.

The Communication and Marketing Committee continues to work on updating our new website and electronic mandatory PD reporting

Most members have sent their Mandatory PD reporting and we have two new members that have recently achieved P.Ag. status, 7 Articling Agrologists and 6 pending applications waiting to be reviewed by council for new Articling Agrologists with NBIA.

Nicole Williams, P.Ag.
President



NLIA:

NLAgrologists@gmail.com

Our AGM is scheduled for Wednesday, April 29th, 2020. We are closely watching the Covid-19 situation to determine if the meeting will be done face-to-face, via conference call or postponed.

We currently have two membership applications (Professional Agrologist) in progress.

Charles Kelsey, P.Ag.
President

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Council Updates



With the current COVID-19 pandemic, NSIA Council unfortunately had no choice but to postpone the upcoming Annual Meeting and Honours and Awards Banquet, both slated for April 29, 2020. Similarly, there will be no annual Spring Tour planned for this year, but we are hopeful there will be a Fall Tour! We are excited to announce our Semi-Annual Meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2020 in Truro, NS. Additional information to follow!

Membership holds steady with 174 Professional Agrologists, 43 Retired Members and 10 Articling Agrologists, as well as an Associate Member. We are still in the process of wrapping up this year's membership renewals, so expect these numbers to change slightly.

NSIA Council wish everyone to stay safe and use all recommended health precautions during this time.

Jonathan Wort, P.Ag.
President



First off, the PEIIA council and membership hopes that our fellow Agrologists across the region and nationally are safe and healthy with their families and loved ones. It is truly a time we will never forget, and we thank all of our producers across the country who continue to provide us with healthy and nutritious food.

The PEIIA was scheduled to host it's 60th Annual General Meeting on April 8th, 2020 but it obviously had to be postponed due to the current crisis. Our AGM would have seen presentations from Justin Rogers with Picturesque Farms, Barry Balsom with Arlington Orchards and Alan Miller with the Atlantic Grains Council. All are amazing people who are actively involved in shaping the future of agriculture in our province. We look forward to being able to hear and engage these presenters when conditions finally allow.

In terms of the PEIIA Council business proceedings, some changes will take place when we get the opportunity to meet with general membership. As part of natural council turnover, 2020 will welcome a new president, Steve Howatt. Steve sat as president of the PEIIA many years back and has continued to play a very active role in Atlantic Canadian agriculture throughout his career. The PEIIA will be very proud to welcome Steve into the president position at our next AGM. Furthermore, the council will be saying goodbye to some very strong council members who have sat on important council positions over the past number of years. Maryella Maynard will be moving on from her position as Secretary/Treasurer, a position that was previously held by her mother Liz. The PEIIA was very lucky to have Maryella on council and would like to thank her very much for the work she put into the Institute.

Council will also be saying goodbye to Mette Ching who has been our Registrar for about the last 6 years. Mette had brought with her a vast amount of experience gained from her potato farming background as well as through past positions, such as Past President of the PEI Federation of Agriculture. Mette was very dedicated to her role as Registrar and will be greatly missed from council.

It is also important to note that Earl Pickard will be moving on from his position as Past-President. Earl's knowledge and experience with finances is almost unequaled and he continues to work daily with farmers from across Atlantic Canada. Although the PEIIA said goodbye to Earl as President a few years ago, it is now Council's turn, and his service was greatly appreciated.

As hard as it is to lose people from council that I now consider friends, it is part of the natural turnover that is necessary to keep an organization fresh and rejuvenated. As much as our friends will be missed, it will be exciting to meet and work with the new council members who will take their places. Although small, PEI has always punched above its weight and continues to provide an ample selection of agricultural professionals to keep our organization moving forward. So here is to the next 60 years of the PEIIA helping to lead and support a healthy and productive Ag industry in Atlantic Canada.

Dan MacEachern, P.Ag.

Upcoming Events

NLIA:

- ◆ **Eastern Region Science and Technology Fair 2020** April 24-25, 2020 **POSTPONED**

Due to the Covid-19 situation, the event has been postponed. NLIA established The Ken Proudfoot Memorial Award for Science (named after a distinguished AAFC scientist) in 2012 and sponsors an award for the best Agricultural project in the Junior Division. Winners receive a plaque and a \$50 award plus \$50 for the school's Science Department. The winners names are also engraved each year on the Ken Proudfoot Award.

- ◆ **NLIA Annual General Meeting** April 29, 2020

We are closely watching the Covid-19 situation to determine if the meeting will be done face-to-face, via conference call or postponed.

- ◆ **Model Forest of Newfoundland and Labrador Envirothon 2020** May 8-9, 2020

NLIA has sponsored this event since 2014. Student teams from High Schools across the province prepare for the event by studying the natural environment of Newfoundland and Labrador, including topics such as aquatic ecology, soils and land use, wildlife, forestry and current environmental themes. Winners qualify to compete at the North American Envirothon in Lincoln, Nebraska in the summer of 2020.

NSIA:

- ◆ **Annual General Meeting** April 29, 2020 **POSTPONED**

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, NSIA have decided to postpone the Annual Meeting. When a new date has been decided, members will be notified via email.

The Honours & Awards Banquet has also been postponed from this date to the below date.

- ◆ **Semi-Annual Meeting and Honours & Awards Banquet** November 18, 2020

Job Postings

NLIA:

Veterinary Pathologist: www.hiring.gov.nl.ca/Jobs.aspx/Public

Please also keep checking: <https://www.hiring.gov.nl.ca/Jobs.aspx/Public>.



NSIA:

No current job postings are available, however, please keep checking: <http://nsagrologists.ca/job-postings/>

PEIIA:

Area Manager/Sales Agronomist: <https://www.agcareers.com/nutriag-ltd/area-manager-sales-agronomist--pei--ns-job-767363.cfm>

Please also keep checking: <https://peiia.ca/careers/>

Trending Topic

The “Trending Topic” is a current, hot topic within the agriculture industry. This will alternate between the provinces each edition.

It is hard to believe the changes that we have seen over the last month and the impact that these changes have had on all sectors of our industry. As I thought about writing something for this newsletter it seemed like anything that I could write will seem trivial considering the current impact of COVID-19.

Things that we took for granted; like face to face meetings with clients and workshops seem like a thing of the distant past. It seems like ZOOM has become the new reality of doing business.

For many people that we work with, their day to day realities are also different and very challenging. We are days away from spring planting in many areas of the region, other areas are still waiting for the snow to melt. Regardless of where your region is in terms of the weather, there is uncertainty regarding many aspects of the production season that we have ahead of us. No matter what commodity produced, whether livestock, crop or finished product, the common denominator that everyone can be sure of is that nothing can be taken for granted. Supply of inputs, availability of labour and market prices are going to be uncertain in the coming weeks and months. Being flexible, nimble and willing to adapt to change quickly are going to be important to ensure that our industry comes through COVID-19 and the challenges we know are going to follow.

In the cattle industry, we saw two successful bull sales conducted online in the last month. The traditional gathering for these sales was not possible and the option of canceling the sales seemed unthinkable. The organizers reacted quickly and worked hard, and the sales were held using technology that was available, making much needed breeding bulls available to producers in the region. Everyone involved from Balamore Farm Ltd. and the Maritime Beef Test Society: consignors, the organizers, and the producers who purchased bulls should be congratulated for making the most of what could have been a bad situation and turning it into a success.

The General Farm Organizations, Commodity Groups, Service Providers and Government are all working together to ensure that our industry can respond to the impacts of COVID-19 as effectively as the Bull Sales have been able to. Not all the solutions will be as simple or as obvious as switching to an online sale, recognising that market trends are changing. There is a dramatic shift in many markets with restaurant demand dramatically declining.

It is more important than ever to ensure that producers, commodity organizations and their advisors stay current and follow market signals and communicate this information as quickly and responsibly to our clients and industry partners. As Agrologists, we all have a network of people who we interact with both in the industry and outside. Stay connected with these people and use the information that you gather to the advantage of our industry.

Market uncertainty makes good decision making and careful management more critical in these challenging times. The information that we have available to us and the way that we analyze this information and then communicate it to our clients and partners is critical to supporting our industry. Using all the communication tools that we have available to us is vital. We need to bring all the technology available to us into use to ensure that we can respond to the best advantage.

It is also critical that we ensure that we protect everyone in the industry and keep them healthy. The way that we run our agricultural operations, processing and services will require adjustments to ensure worker health and safety. It is important we ensure that we protect ourselves and our coworkers to ensure continuity of operation in the agriculture industry. We are all linked in our industry and are required to make sure that the supply chain functions properly.

As Professional Agrologists, we are a critical link in the food industry who can and should be leaders. We need to hold ourselves to the highest possible standards and demonstrate leadership by setting a good example. Follow the guidelines set out by Public Health, limit face to face contact with clients, but work hard to communicate with them and continue to provide the best advice possible in the most innovative way possible. Reach out to clients, coworkers and people around you to ensure everyone is doing as well as possible.

Look after yourself. In stressful times it is often easy to overlook your own health and those around you.

Jonathan Wort. President NSIA