Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries

Annual Report **2014–2015**



Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries Annual Report 2014–2015

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www.gnb.ca

ISBN 978-1-4605-0926-5 (Bilingual print edition) ISBN 978-1-4605-0927-2 (PDF: English edition)

ISSN 1929-8242 (Bilingual print edition) ISSN 1929-8250 (PDF: English edition)

10430 | 2015.11 | Printed in New Brunswick

Transmittal letters

From the Minister to the Lieutenant-Governor

The Honourable Jocelyne Roy Vienneau Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

May it please your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries, Province of New Brunswick, for the fiscal year April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Honourable Rick Doucet

Minister

From the Deputy Minister to the Minister

Honourable Rick Doucet
Minister of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries

Sir:

I am pleased to be able to present the Annual Report describing operations of the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries for the fiscal year 2014–2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Levesque

Deputy Minister

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Minister's message

New Brunswick's agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors continue to drive economic prosperity and create thousands of jobs here at home.

Our province's farms and processors generate more than \$570 million in farm cash receipts and more than \$1 billion in processed agri-food products.

New Brunswick's aquaculture sector is the second-largest in Canada and is home to some of the world's best seafood products. We can be proud of our leadership in sustainable management practices.

The value of our fish and seafood exports continues to rise and accounts for a significant part of New Brunswick's overall exports. The value of New Brunswick's fish and seafood exports rose once again to more than \$1 billion in 2014.

Our commercial fisheries are a vital thread in the social and economic fabric of the province, particularly in our rural coastal communities.

Our export development and market promotion initiatives are just some of the ways in which we are providing support to New Brunswick businesses so that we can create the conditions for job growth, improve our fiscal situation and support our families.

While we are assisting producers in setting their sights globally, we are also thinking locally. We take pride in our *Buy Local* initiative and its goals: to educate consumers on New Brunswick food and beverage products and to promote a growing culture of respect and support for our local farmers and producers.

The potential for continued growth in these sectors is unquestionable, and will play a vital role in helping to move New Brunswick forward. We remain committed to working with our sector partners and stakeholders to ensure a sustainable, healthy future.

Honourable Rick Doucet

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Minister of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries

Deputy Minister's message

The Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries is focused on its mission: to foster economic growth through leadership, focused programs and services to the sectors.

We are committed to increasing export and domestic sales of New Brunswick's agri-food, fish and seafood products; achieving a sustainable budget; and promoting access to local food and beverage products. Our continued focus on these priorities assists the department in ensuring the best value for taxpayers.

The department was under budget by more than \$3.1 million for the fiscal year 2014–2015 as a result of less-than-anticipated expenditures and a close monitoring of departmental spending.

We continue to evolve as a performance-based organization energized by a commitment to growth and prosperity for our agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors.

Bill Levesque Deputy Minister

Strategic priorities

Strategy management

The Government of New Brunswick (GNB) uses a formal management system built on leading business practices to develop, communicate and review strategy. This process provides the public service with a proven methodology to execute strategy and continuously drive improvement.

The development of the strategy, using the formal management system, starts with a strategic vision of *Moving New Brunswick Forward*. This vision is anchored in four strategic themes which include:

- More jobs Creating the best environment for jobs to be generated by New Brunswickers, by businesses, by their ideas, by their entrepreneurial spirit, and by their hard work. This includes providing seamless support to businesses, leveraging new technologies and innovation by supporting research and development, and developing a skilled workforce by improving literacy and education.
- **2.** *Fiscal responsibility* Getting New Brunswick's fiscal house in order through a balanced approach to decrease costs and increase revenues.
- 3. Best place to raise a family Designing social programs to make life more affordable and make New Brunswick the best place to raise a family.
- **4. Smarter government** Providing taxpayers with better value for their money by transforming the culture of government by eliminating waste and duplication, adopting new innovations in technology to improve services and savings, and improving accountability measures.

Highlights

During the 2014–2015 fiscal year, the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries focused on these strategic priorities through:

The department led the implementation of the *New Brunswick Wild Blueberry Sector Strategy*, which was developed to support producers in keeping pace with the growing worldwide demand for wild blueberries. An implementation steering committee was appointed; five working groups were established; and a new Crown land lease allocation process for wild blueberries was released in August 2014.



The department developed the Farming in New Brunswick... A Road Map for New Entrants document to provide guidelines for new entrants about what is required to farm in New Brunswick, including regulatory requirements, available resources and contact information for key department staff and farm organizations.



The department implemented the Canada–New Brunswick Wildlife Damage Compensation Program, which provided agricultural producers with compensation for damage to crops and livestock caused by wildlife. In 2014–2015, 39 claims received compensation. The program cost was \$250,000.



The Livestock Development Centre officially opened in Sussex in July 2014 to serve as the work location for the Provincial Livestock Specialists and Livestock Feed Specialist.



The department supported industry participation in fish and seafood commercial trade initiatives for the promotion of New Brunswick products both at the national and international levels to increase exports in traditional and emerging markets (North America, Europe and Asia). The value of New Brunswick fish and seafood exports rose by \$77.37 million (7.7 per cent) to reach \$1.09 billion in 2014.



The department provided assistance to agri-food businesses to increase the sale and consumption of New Brunswick-produced agri-food products within the province. Fifty projects were completed, which included road signage, promotional material, agri-tourism, and new product and market development.



The department completed 55 marshland infrastructure maintenance projects, as well as 12 emergency repair projects from a storm in December 2014.



The department was under-budget by 8.6 per cent or \$3,149,000 as a result of less-than-anticipated expenditures and a close monitoring of spending.



The department provided \$9,877,520 in support to the agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors through various programs, including the Total Development Fund, Miramichi Regional Economic Development and Innovation Fund, the Northern NB Economic Development and Innovation Fund and Federal/Provincial Non-BRM Programs under Growing Forward 2.

Performance measures

The following table summarizes some of the performance measures for the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries for 2014–2015.

More jobs	Measures
Increase export and domestic sales associated with the sectors	Dollars invested in seafood promotion and market development
Fiscal responsibility	Measures
Achieve sustainable budget	Ratio of actual to budgeted expenditures
Best place to raise a family	Measures
Promote access to local food products	Number of activities coordinated through the "Buy Local" initiative
Smarter government	Measures
Align department performance to GNB strategy	Percentage of employee performance reviews completed

More jobs

Objective of the measure

Increase export and domestic sales associated with the sectors.

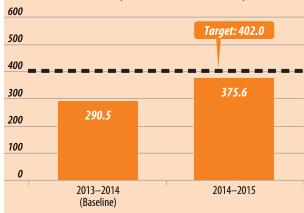
Measure

Dollars invested in seafood promotion and market development.

Description of measure

This measure captures the total amount of money invested for Seafood Processing and Market Development and was based on promotional targets set for 2014–2015.

Investment in seafood promotion and market development (\$000)



Overall performance

The department did not meet the target dollar amount in 2014–2015. The actual dollars invested in seafood promotion and market development increased from \$290,542 in 2013–2014 to \$375,645 in 2014–2015.

Why do we measure this?

Seafood exports into strategic markets are seen as a priority for the department during the coming years. Measuring the amount of promotion and effort placed on key markets is viewed as a beneficial way to measure impact in future years.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

Focus was given to attendance at priority tradeshows within key markets (Hong Kong, Brussels, China, Barcelona and Boston).

Fiscal responsibility

Objective of the measure

Achieve sustainable budget.

Measure

Ratio of actual to budgeted expenditures.

Description of measure

The ratio measures whether the department is over-budget or under-budget. The ratio will exceed 100 per cent when spending is over-budget and will be less than 100 per cent when spending is under-budget.

Ratio of actual to budget expenditures (%)



Overall performance

The department's 2014–2015 budget was set at \$36,674,085. As a result of less-than-anticipated expenditures and a close monitoring of spending, the department closed out the fiscal year at 8.6 per cent or \$3,149,000, under-budget.

Why do we measure this?

This indicator measures the ability of GNB to manage its overall expenses as compared to its budget. GNB must ensure that expenses are managed in accordance with the budget and be prepared to take corrective action if expenses are projected to be over-budget during the year.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

To achieve this target, the department managed staffing in 2014–2015 by delaying the filling of vacant positions. The Department also realized savings in the Growing Forward 2 AgriStability Program due to less-than-anticipated demand from producers.

Best place to raise a family

Objective of the measure

Promote access to local food products.

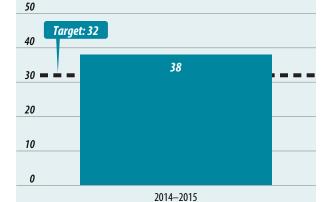
Measure

Number of activities coordinated through the "Buy Local" initiative.

Description of measure

The department has become very active in promoting local food production/consumption. A "Buy Local" initiative started in 2013–2014 that proactively shared the message to New Brunswickers. A van and promotional material were used at functions throughout the summer to promote local products. Fewer, more targeted, events with larger audiences were attended in 2014–2015. The goal was to attend events providing the greatest exposure through media and number of individuals.

Number of activities coordinated through "Buy Local"



Overall performance

The department exceeded the target set for 2014–2015 and attended 38 events chosen based on best total exposure.

Why do we measure this?

To help quantify the exposure of the "Buy Local" initiative to New Brunswickers.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

Attendance at larger events and festivals, as well as new events such as Flavours New Brunswick, was seen as strategic in promoting local food purchases. A strong social media presence was tracked as well to help further quantify customer penetration. The BuyLocal Facebook page was established in May 2014 and received a total of 2,809 likes by March 31, 2015.

Smarter government

Objective of the measure

Align departmental and individual employee performance to the GNB strategy.

Measure

Percentage of employee performance reviews completed.

Description of measure

The completion of performance reviews provides an opportunity to align and cascade goals throughout the department. Performance reviews also drive business results by linking individual performance to the overall departmental strategy.

Employee performance reviews completed (%)



Overall performance

The department exceeded the target set for 2014–2015 and reported a 98 per cent completion rate for all performance reviews, an increase of 3 percentage points from the 2013–2014 fiscal year.

Why do we measure this?

It is important for staff to be provided with an annual review of their performance. Comprehensive performance reviews provide employees with feedback on aspects of their jobs that were done well and areas that require improvement.

What initiatives or projects were undertaken in the reporting year to achieve the outcome?

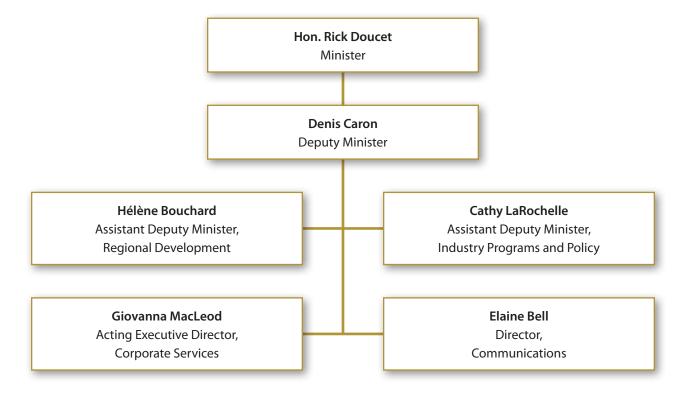
Early communications regarding target setting and timelines for completion of performance reviews ensured that a high percentage of performance reviews were completed in a timely manner

Overview of departmental operations

The mandate of the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries is to foster economic growth through leadership, focused programs and services to the sectors.

In 2014–2015, the department employed up to 240 individuals on a full-time, casual or contract basis. This was down from 262 in 2013–2014.

High-level organizational chart



Division overview and highlights

Industry Programs and Policy Division

Overview (mission, objective, staffing)

The Industry Programs and Policy Division has two primary objectives: 1) To coordinate industry financial programs and regulatory functions; and 2) To develop and implement policies and strategies to support competitive agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors.

The **Industry Financial Programs Branch** provides financial assistance to the agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries industries under various funding programs.

The **Leasing and Licensing Branch** fosters responsible leasing and/or licensing related activities under various departmental Acts. It also provides GIS services to the department.

The Innovation and Market Development Branch provides strategic direction, services and programs in support of value-added food, local food, biosciences and market development.

The **Sector Specialist Services Branch** provides specialist advice and services to industry.

The Strategic Planning and Program Development Branch provides expertise in the areas of interjurisdictional coordination, strategic planning, legislation, and policy and program development.

The **Farm Products Commission** provides management and administrative support in the monitoring of commodity boards under the provisions of the *Natural Products Act*.

Highlights

- Provided \$9,877,520 in support to the agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors through various programs, including the Total Development Fund, Miramichi Regional Economic Development and Innovation Fund, the Northern NB Economic Development and Innovation Fund and Federal/ Provincial Non-Business Risk Management Programs under Growing Forward 2.
- Implemented the Canada–New Brunswick Wildlife Damage Compensation Program, which provided agricultural producers with compensation for

- damage to crops and livestock caused by wildlife. In 2014–2015, 39 claims received compensation. The program cost was \$250,000.
- Repealed three obsolete pieces of legislation and their associated regulations. These were the Farm Machinery Loans Act, the Farm Improvement Assistance Loans Act and the Farm Credit Corporation Assistance Act.
- Worked with the Department of Public Safety to amend the Motor Vehicle Act to enable registered farm vehicles to be used for a wider scope of farming activities, including transporting goods to and from market.
- Developed the Farming in New Brunswick... A Road Map for New Entrants document to provide guidelines for new entrants about what is required to farm in New Brunswick, including regulatory requirements, available resources and contact information for key department staff and farm organizations.
- Led the implementation of the New Brunswick Wild Blueberry Sector Strategy, which was developed to support producers in keeping pace with the growing worldwide demand for wild blueberries. An implementation steering committee was appointed; five working groups were established; and a new Crown land lease allocation process was released in August 2014.
- Amended the Potato Plan Administration Regulation under the Natural Products Act to change the composition of the New Brunswick Potato Board.
- Restructured the Farm Products Commission Potato Negotiation Order, which is now the New Brunswick Negotiation, Conciliation, and Arbitration Order for Potatoes, to facilitate contract negotiations between the potato producers and processors.
- Provided assistance to agri-food businesses to increase the sale and consumption of New Brunswick-produced agri-food products within the province. Fifty projects were completed, which included road signage, promotional material, agritourism, and new product and market development.
- Supported BioNB and their programs, which during the last three years resulted in the number of core bioscience companies operating in the province increasing by 30 per cent. There was also a 50 per

cent increase in companies that are non-bioscience based, but employ or use biotechnology to propel R&D. These programming efforts also resulted in a steady (15 per cent per annum) growth in full-time employment by bioscience-based companies.

Regional Development Division

Overview (mission, objective, staffing)

The **Regional Development Division** provides strategic direction, targeted programs and services in support of economic development opportunities related to the agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors.

The delivery of programs and services is done through offices in the following regions:

- Northwest region through offices in Grand Falls and Wicklow.
- Northeast region through offices in Bathurst, Tracadie and Shippagan, including the New Brunswick Aquarium and Marine Centre.
- Southwest region through offices in St. George. This
 office also has responsibility for seafood processing
 and market export functions for the province.
- Southeast region through the office in Bouctouche.
- Central region through offices in Fredericton, Sussex and Moncton. This region also has responsibility for the maintenance of marshland infrastructure.

The Regional Development Division also includes the **Fisheries Resource Management Branch**, through the office in Caraquet, providing management of programs and service delivery to the fishery and seafood processing sectors as well as strategic direction with respect to fisheries management approach throughout the province.

The Animal Health Services Branch provides services and programs focused on maintaining livestock and aquatic animal health, as well as food safety and quality awareness and implementation. The branch includes veterinary field services complemented by specialized in-clinic and laboratory diagnostic services.

Highlights

 Completed 55 marshlands infrastructure maintenance projects, which included the Dixon Island, Calkins and Taylor Village dikes, as well as 12 emergency repair projects from a storm in December 2014.

- Officially opened the Livestock Development Centre in Sussex in July 2014 to serve as the work location for the Provincial Livestock Specialists and Livestock Feed Specialist.
- Provided staff support to the New Brunswick Grain Commission in the role of Chief Grain Grader, implemented several national and regional initiatives, and provided training and technical support to 44 authorized grain graders in the province.
- Initiated the pre-identification of Crown lands for wild blueberry development, which will be allocated at a later date through a public tendering process.
- Sampled oysters in the spring and the fall from private and public sites along the eastern shore to check for the presence of MSX. The analyses showed no sign of the parasite along our shores.
- Facilitated increased competitiveness and sales
 of New Brunswick seafood products through
 participation in well-attended industry trade events
 and promotional activities in Asia (Hong Kong,
 Qingdao, China) and Europe (Barcelona, Brussels).
- Supported the New Brunswick Maple Syrup sector through 77 economic development projects completed by maple syrup producers in the Northwest Region.
- Performed 55,862 tests at the Provincial Dairy Laboratory for a variety of parameters, including milk composition (fat, protein and lactose), somatic cell counts, bacterial counts of raw milk, freezing temperature of raw milk, antibiotic residues in milk, and analysis of dairy solids (cheese, butter, etc).
- Successfully completed the ISO/IEC 17025:2005
 re-accreditation process at the Provincial Dairy
 Laboratory with the Standards Council of Canada
 for the testing and services they provide to the
 dairy sector.
- Played a crucial role through the Provincial Veterinary Laboratory relative to the province's enhanced surveillance activities for the detection and diagnosis of rabies in wild raccoons and skunks associated with a re-emergence of this disease in southwestern New Brunswick. Department veterinarians assisted the Department of Health by assessing exposure risks of potential rabies incidents involving domestic animals.
- Provided 8,370 on-farm visits by departmental veterinarians, which were supported by the Provincial Veterinary Laboratory for diagnostic work.

- Provided surveillance and testing for Infectious Salmon Anemia (ISA) for Atlantic salmon, MSX for oysters and for other aquatic animals and diseases.
 The analyses showed no signs of disease.
- Created a multi-stakeholder working group to help plan and oversee work on marine debris clean-up in the Bay of Fundy.

Corporate Services Division

Overview (mission, objective, staffing)

The Corporate Services Division is responsible for the provision of direction and administrative support in matters of human resources, accounting, budgeting, financial control and information technology and communication services to support the continued development of the agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture sectors.

The **Human Resources Branch** assists and supports senior management, directors and managers in the effective management of their human resources within the scope of departmental guidelines and policies.

The **Financial Services Branch** facilitates the efficient use of the financial resources available to deliver departmental programs.

The **Information and Technology Branch** facilitates the efficient use of information and technology and implements strategic information handling, systems support and systems development initiatives related to enhancing the business activities of the department.

The **Continuous Improvement Unit** helps review processes within the department and provides staff with a tool to increase efficiencies and remove roadblocks in their respective work areas.

The **Enforcement Branch** ensures compliance with acts administered by the department through the provision of enforcement services.

Highlights

- Conducted 286 enforcement activities and was involved in nine court cases relating to charges or lawsuits.
- Developed and successfully implemented a new New Brunswick Agricultural Insurance (Crop Insurance) database system on April 1, 2015.
- Achieved the modernization and standardization of Information Technology systems with completion of the departmental Internet site migration to the new GNB Internet platform and the departmental server migration to the new GNB Data Centre.

Financial information

Departmental expenditureStatus report by primary,
fiscal year ending March 31, 2015 (\$000)

	Budget	Actual
Personal services	18,692.5	17,389.3
Other services	3,828.8	3,770.9
Materials and supplies	493.8	644.8
Property and equipment	20.0	227.1
Contributions, grants and subsidies	13,604.0	9,643.6
Debt and other charges	35.0	1,849.4
Total	36,674.1	33,525.1

Summary of staffing activity

Pursuant to section 4 of the *Civil Service Act*, the Deputy Minister of the Department of Human Resources (DHR) delegates staffing to each deputy head for his or her respective departments. Please find below a summary of the staffing activity for 2014–2015 for the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries.

Number of permanent and temporary employees, as of December 31 of each year			
Employee type	2014	2013	
Permanent	221	234	
Temporary	19	28	
Total	240	262	

The department advertised 14 competitions, including 10 open (public) competitions and 4 closed (internal) competitions.

Pursuant to Section 15 and Section 16 of the *Civil Service Act*, the department made the following appointments using other processes to establish merit, than the competitive process:

Appointment type	Appointment description	Section of the Civil Service Act	Number
Specialized Professional, Scientific or Technical	An appointment may be made without competition when a position requires: — A high degree of expertise and training — A high degree of technical skill — Recognized experts in their field	15(1)	0
Equal Employment Opportunity Program	Provides Aboriginals, persons with disabilities and members of a visible minority group with equal access to employment, training and advancement opportunities.	16(1)(a)	0
Department Talent Management Program	Permanent employees identified in corporate and departmental talent pools, who meet the four-point criteria for assessing talent, namely performance, readiness, willingness and criticalness.	16(1)(b)	1
Lateral transfer	The GNB transfer process facilitates the transfer of employees from within Part 1, Part 2 (School Boards) and Part 3 (Hospital Corporations) of the Public Service.	16(1) or 16(1)(c)	1
Regular appointment of casual/temporary	An individual hired on a casual or temporary basis under Section 17 may be appointed without competition to a regular properly classified position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(i)	3
Regular appointment of students/apprentices	Summer students, university or community college co-op students or apprentices may be appointed without competition to an entry level position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(ii)	0

Pursuant to Section 33 of the *Civil Service Act*, no complaints alleging favouritism were made to the Deputy Head of the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries and no complaints were submitted to the Ombudsman.

Summary of legislation and legislative activity

Bill#	Name of Legislation	Date of Royal Assent	Summary of changes
Bill 66 Chapter 42	An Act to Amend the Seafood Processing Act http://www.gnb.ca/0062/acts/BBA-2014/Chap-42.pdf	May 21, 2014	Amendments related to the definition and the category of licences and Schedule A.
Bill 79 Chapter 55	An Act to Amend the Agricultural Development Act http://www.gnb.ca/0062/acts/BBA-2014/Chap-55.pdf	May 21, 2014	Amendments related to the right to collect personal information with respect to financial assistance and agreements for debt collection.

Name of Regulation	Effective date	Summary of changes
Regulation 2014-49 under the Natural Products Act	April 16, 2014	Amendments to Regulation 2006-10 related to the composition of the board (Potatoes New Brunswick).
Regulation 2014-50 under the Natural Products Act	April 16, 2014	Amendments related to Organic Grade, including definition, grade, marketing, labelling and advertising requirements.
Regulation 2014-56 under the Natural Products Act	May 12, 2014	Amendments to Regulation 84-88, including Schedule "A" and definitions for Act, grade name, produce, decay and federal regulation.

Summary of Official Languages activities

Introduction	The Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries developed its 2011–2014 Action Plan including strategic means for all sectors of activity in the Government <i>Plan on Official Languages</i> . The vast majority of objectives had been achieved in previous fiscal years and the following items were primarily ongoing of reinforcement efforts.
Focus 1	Ensure access to service of equal quality in English and French throughout the province: — The linguistic profiles were kept updated and maintained on a regular basis to ensure the linguistic requirements set forth in each work unit were appropriate to meet the needs of clients as per the Language of Service Policy.
Focus 2	An environment and climate that encourages, for all employees, the use of the official language of their choice in their workplace: — The department continues to offer the option to all employees to have performance reviews, day-to-day activities and small meetings in the language of choice. — Human Resources services and other administrative services provided to employees are offered and provided in the employees' official language of choice.
Focus 3	What strategic means did your department implement to ensure that new and revised government programs and policies took into account the realities of the province's official language communities (promotion of official languages)? For example, did you hold public consultations? Some of the department's ongoing efforts related to the promotion official languages included: — Ensuring that Official Languages is a key consideration in the development of any internal and external polices. — Ensuring that written and oral communications to employees were offered in both languages and delivered at the same time. — Conducting performance review meetings in the employee's language of choice. — The ongoing promotion of Official Languages in various training or all staff events.
Focus 4	Ensure public service employees have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Official Languages Act, relevant policies, regulations, and the province's obligations with respect to official languages: — The department mandated that all new and current employees complete the Knowledge Centre iLearn modules on official languages.
Conclusion	The department ensured the ongoing promotion of Official Languages polices and continued to offer quality services to clients in their language of choice. During this last fiscal year, the department did not receive any official languages complaints.

Summary of recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General

Name and year of audit area with link to online document	Total	Adopted
Veterinary Services — Accounts in Arrears (2013) — Recommend a matching process be undertaken to identify provincial employees with past due accounts for veterinary services or with any other amounts in arrears. http://www.gnb.ca/oag-bvg/2013v2/agrepe.pdf (page 189)	1	0

Report on the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*

Under Section 18(1) of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*, the chief executive shall prepare a report of any disclosures of wrongdoing that have been made to a supervisor or designated officer of the portion of the Public Service for which the chief executive officer is responsible. The Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries received no disclosure(s) of wrongdoings in the 2014–2015 fiscal year.