



PEOPLE  
INNOVATION  
CAPITAL  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
AGILITY

# New Brunswick Growth Opportunity

Boosting local food and  
beverage consumption



**New Brunswick Growth Opportunity:  
Boosting local food and beverage consumption**

Province of New Brunswick  
PO 6000, Fredericton NB E3B 5H1 Canada

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# Message from the Minister

We live in a world that is constantly changing. For New Brunswick to be able to compete on a global scale, we must adapt and grow, while showcasing all the impressive things happening here. We have sound economic strategies in place to do this and have been making significant strides forward, but if we wish to continue on this path, it is crucial that we work together as a province.

The New Brunswick Economic Growth Plan was created in consultations with many New Brunswickers from around the province. Your recommendations have helped us to identify the economic opportunities that will help us grow. The plan coordinates cross-sector efforts, bringing together government, stakeholders and the public to focus on programs with high growth potential and industry longevity. This will help to ensure New Brunswick retains the high standard of living that makes it such a wonderful place to work, live and raise a family.

Our province has many assets and attributes that set it apart from the competition, and we need to leverage these strengths in order to develop new growth opportunities and strengthen existing opportunities. Growing the local food and beverage sector is at the forefront of this strategy.

New Brunswick's access to farm land, our history in agriculture and our entrepreneurial spirit are all key factors in our ability to capitalize on this opportunity for growing our economy. By investing in a local food and beverage strategy, not only will New Brunswickers have better access to healthier and more sustainable foods, but the increased exposure to local products for future generations will help to develop lifelong health benefits while supporting environmental best-practices.

We have created a strategy framework to support the increased consumption of local food and beverages. Our new Local Food and Beverages Strategy will be the main catalyst to achieve this objective. At the same time our new Agricultural Land Policy will encourage more investment in the agriculture sector across the province.

The local food and beverage strategy is being led by the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries with support from numerous private and public sector partners. We welcome the opportunity to work together to expand the local food and beverage industry, generating economic opportunities for farmers and agri-food producers across the province.

Hon. Rick Doucet  
Minister of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries  
Minister of Energy and Resource Development



# The New Brunswick Economic Growth Plan

## Focusing our economic development efforts

The New Brunswick Economic Growth Plan establishes the framework and role for the provincial government to help bring the economy back to a solid rate of growth. A growing economy is needed to provide the fiscal foundation that will ensure the province remains a great place to live and work.

The Economic Growth Plan is a directional plan outlining how government – across all of its departments, agencies and related organizations - will mobilize to ensure there is a co-ordinated, complementary effort to improve New Brunswick's economy and establish a strong foundation for the future. The plan is the outcome of valuable consultation with hundreds of community and business leaders across the province.

The New Brunswick Economic Growth Plan is based on five key focus areas:

- **PEOPLE** – We will grow our workforce by providing more targeted training and skills alignment efforts; and by significantly expanding the number of new and returning New Brunswickers building their careers in the province.
- **INNOVATION** – We will foster an innovative economy by investing more in research and development, supporting high growth potential entrepreneurs and by transforming government through new and innovative technologies.
- **CAPITAL** – We will boost private-sector investment by strengthening our business climate and addressing key challenges that are holding back growth.
- **INFRASTRUCTURE** – We will expand investment into economic infrastructure that ensures industries continue to invest here and talent from around the world will come to call our province home.
- **AGILITY** – We will increase the speed at which government interacts with the business community and we will strive to build a stronger partnership with industries to move the province ahead within a sustainable fiscal framework.

## Pursuing Growth Opportunities

Farming, food production and wholesaling employment in New Brunswick (2011)\*  
Includes agriculture, food production and wholesale trade. Source: Statistics  
Canada National Household Survey



The New Brunswick Economic Growth Plan is focused on leveraging key industries, assets and attributes to create a strong value proposition for business investment. The global competition for business investment and talent has never been more pronounced and New Brunswick needs to focus its efforts to be able to compete and win.

Government will start by using the subject-matter experts in departments and working with the private sector and community-based partners to uncover potential opportunities. A growth opportunity is one that will lead to incremental business investment and jobs, leading to a sustained boost in economic activity (GDP) and tax revenue. Opportunities will be assessed based on:

1. the scope and scale of the opportunity (we need to boost the economy);
2. the time to impact (we need growth in the short term to stimulate the economy);
3. a clearly defined and relevant role for government and the resources required (not all opportunities for business investment require government involvement– some may require just a nudge); and
4. a defined return on taxpayer investment (we need to show that public investment in opportunities will increase tax revenues).

## Growth Opportunity: Boosting local food and beverage consumption

One of the earliest forms of globalization was experienced through the export and import of commodities, particularly foods and beverages. New Brunswick has always played a vital role in contributing to the world food supply, with an abundance of natural resources and food production capabilities.

In recent years, the world has seen revitalization in celebrating niche and regional foods, and local farmers' markets. Although large corporations continue to be at the forefront of food management and production, entry points for smaller markets in local food production have emerged for jurisdictions around the world.

With a history of success and a tradition for providing food and beverages to world markets, creating a local food presence in New Brunswick will see numerous benefits actualized for the economy as a whole, and our shared standard of living. Currently, vegetable production in the province accounts for only eight percent of provincial demand, while beef and pork production addresses only 5 percent of provincial demand. By promoting consumption of locally produced food and beverages, we will add to the province's GDP growth through import substitution, enable more employment opportunities and invest in our region's unique landscape and culture.

New Brunswick's access to farm land, history in agriculture and ingenuity are all contributing factors in building a successful self-sustaining food model. By investing in a local food and beverage strategy, not only will New Brunswickers have better access to healthier and more sustainable foods, but the increased exposure to local products for younger generations will help to develop lifelong health benefits while supporting environmental best-practices.

All regions of the province, rural and urban, will benefit from supporting New Brunswick's local food and beverage industry. New Brunswick produces some of the world's best foods and beverages and supporting this growing market will allow opportunity for ingenuity in these industries to thrive, while adding to our communities' health and vitality.

These are among the many reasons we launched our new Local Food and Beverages Strategy in the Fall of 2016. Enabling New Brunswickers to make informed decisions regarding purchases of local foods, beverages and products contributes to growing our provincial economy, creating jobs and supporting and fostering growth in our diverse food and beverage industry. We are committed to working together to reach these goals and unite our strengths to capitalize on growing market opportunities locally and internationally.

The local food and beverage strategy is being led by the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries, through the strategy action plan, which will focus on consumer awareness, product availability and support of the industry's new and expanding businesses. Implementation of New Brunswick's local food and beverage strategy is made possible with the support of numerous private and public sector partners, and the New Brunswick community's drive for a healthier and connected province. We have identified actions under the five pillars of the Economic Growth Plan that will help us boost the consumption of local food and beverage in the years ahead.

### **People – strengthen the workforce**

- Improve support for new or expanding food and beverage enterprises by expanding the local market development program.
- Develop a mentorship program.
- Implement measures to support community food programs.
- Boost local food procurement in public schools, and support healthy and local food fundraising in schools.

### **Innovation**

- Improve consumer awareness of local foods and beverages by developing a stronger brand.
- Develop and implement a culinary tourism strategy.
- Expand the directory of local products, taking steps to connect New Brunswickers directly to the province's agriculture sector through farm visits, information in schools, etc.

### **Capital – more private investment**

- Review agriculture loan programs to address the gaps in support for new farmers, and support the craft wine and microbrewery sector.

### **Investing in strategic infrastructure**

- Expand the amount of local wine sold in the province.
- Look for ways to expand local food use among lower income consumers.
- New Brunswick has a considerable amount of agricultural land that is not being used for farming. Making this land productive again is an important new source of economic growth. In addition, there are a number of older New Brunswick farmers looking to retire over the next few years.
- Investigate red tape barriers to businesses and seek out improvement in distribution chains.

## **Foster agility and nimbleness in the public sector and across the economy**

- Improve availability of local foods and beverages by implementing policy to encourage local food purchasing by government organizations.
- Leverage our new Agricultural Land Policy to encourage more investment in the agriculture sector across the province.