

# Agriculture Opportunities Summit

## Summary Report



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# BACKGROUND

## Context

The Jobs Board Secretariat was established to support the Jobs Board and its mandate to foster an economic growth agenda for New Brunswick. Their new opportunities-based economic development model is based on the idea that the competition for business investment and for highly ambitious entrepreneurs and talent has never been as high as it is today. We need to identify and align our resources to develop tangible, highly valuable and profitable opportunities that will attract investment from local businesses, communities, ambitious new entrepreneurs and multinational firms.

In order to ensure that we are considering the largest range of potential opportunities for NB’s growth, the JBS has organized a series of Opportunities Summits around the province, between late September of 2015 into March of 2016, in partnership with Opportunities NB (ONB) and lead departments.

## Summit Objectives

- Identify list of viable economic opportunities to explore
- Identify conditions for success in identified opportunities
- Participants feel the time was well spent, process was strong, and their contribution mattered

## Summit Agenda and Participants

On October 21, 2015 at the Golden Age Club in Grand Falls, NB, a diverse group of 46 individuals involved in the agriculture sector, 10 government officials and 14 staff gathered to discuss economic opportunities within the agricultural industry. For a full list of attendees see Appendix A.

10:30am	Welcome and Mingle
10:50am	Premier Brian Gallant
11:10am	NB Agricultural Economy overview Cathy Larochelle, Asst. Deputy Minister (DAAF) <i>(See Appendix B)</i>
11:15am	Brainstorming
2:10pm	Presentation of ideas and conditions
2:45pm	Premier and Minister closing words
2:55pm	Next steps and closing

## WHAT WE HEARD

### Challenges

While these Opportunities Summits are meant to focus on opportunities, it was discovered early in the process that it is difficult for participants to focus on opportunities when they are always thinking of the challenges facing their sector or industry. Therefore, the brainstorming phase of the meeting is kicked off with short (10 minutes) table discussions about challenges and recorded for this report. This is meant to get all the challenges out on the table, off the chests of participants and to understand that the main focus of the discussion is not on the challenges but on the opportunities.

#### **Access to Appropriate Skills (Every table reported challenges in this category)**

- Access to skilled labour
- Labour – technical expertise, industry experts
- Lacking new entrant farmers, skilled labour and integration in school system
- Lack of business management skills
- Mentorship / training
- Education (apprenticeship / community college)
- A farm is not a career it is a business

#### **Market Access (10+ tables reported challenges in this category)**

- New markets
- Accessing markets (\$ and Economy of scale) - regional, not just large volume, greater % of final sale going to farms
- Transportation (cost and infrastructure)
- Market (ex: transportation, federally certified abattoirs)
- Interprovincial competition
- Inability to fill market demand
- Growth in exports

#### **Succession (7 tables reported challenges in this category)**

- Succession planning
- Youth don't have faith/confidence in farming as a viable option
- Aging population
- Lack of motivation for growth

#### **Land Access (4 tables reported challenges in this category)**

- Lack of sufficient margin to invest in marginal land
- Land abandonment
- Access to crown land outside of forestry
- Land availability

### **Access to capital (5 tables reported challenges in this category)**

- Access to capital to start business
- Access to capital for existing business
- Lack of government contribution and contribution from governments that compete directly

### **Productivity**

- Soil health
- Energy costs
- Costs of production (ex: electricity)
- Low potato yields
- Seed quality
- Growing season, Climate
- Yields
- Barriers with adaptation of new technology
- Agronomic performance

### **Product**

- Viable alternative crops
- Diversification of products
- Limited options for by-products and downgrade
- New products

### **Other (each of these challenges was only mentioned by once among the tables or via post feedback survey)**

- Perception about potatoes and potato products (health and wellness)
- Visibility
- Taxation strategy vs. Economic development strategy
- Value added or growth capital when trying to diversify at a small scale
- Sustainable agriculture
- Lack of inventory (DAAF does not have an accurate inventory of number of farms)
- Fractured industry

## Opportunities

Participants were divided in tables of 4 or 5 and asked the following questions:

- What are the growth opportunities in agriculture for NB? (15 years scope)
- What are the growth opportunities in agriculture for NB? (3 years scope)

They were given 20 minutes to discuss at tables each of these questions and after 40 minutes each table was asked to present their top 3 opportunities. These opportunities are outlined below:

### **Market Development (10 tables reported this opportunity)**

- Value added
- New Brunswick brand (labelling and marketing)
- Maximize our niche market opportunities (blueberries, maple, hops, etc.)
- NB products in NB schools (investment in education)
- Understanding what the customer wants so that we can produce it
- Local food
- Buy/sell infrastructure for primary and secondary grade (ex. schools - make locally grown available)
- More exports
- Export more grains and potatoes

### **Human Resources (5 tables reported this opportunity)**

- Encouraging new entrants (not just production: distribution, retail process, Food & Beverage)
- Succession planning to ensure continuation of the industry (training, access to land)
- New farmer recruitment (including support for mentorship and apprenticeship, land opportunities, succession planning)
- Skilled labour recruitment and retention (link to social dev. training programs. ex: SPADE)

### **Infrastructure (4 tables reported this opportunity)**

- Infrastructure and railway access
- Freight distance to market (infrastructure)
- Processing capacity scaled appropriately to local size (local investments)
- Centralized marketing and distribution (maritime) for local products

### **Alternative Crops (3 tables reported this opportunity)**

- Alternative rotational crops
- biofuels
- industrial hemp production and ancillary services
- Leaders in healthy bee production

### Training and Development (3 tables reported this opportunity)

- Sandbox (ex: Truro) - innovation startup lab and link to academia
- Business and marketing training
- Providing technical advice and guidance

### Other (each of these opportunities was only mentioned by once among the tables or via post feedback survey)

- More access to crown and abandoned land for agriculture
- One stop shop for bio resources (cross-sectors: health, agri, etc.)
- Focus on yield
- Automation tax incentives (improve equipment)

## Conditions for Success

Then tables were asked to choose an opportunity from the ones identified in the previous activity and to identify conditions for success within each of the 5 pillars of the Jobs Board economic policy framework.

<i>Opportunity - N.B. « Centre of Excellence for Agriculture »</i>	
<b>People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Cooperation (Academia, researchers)</li><li>▪ Industry innovators</li><li>▪ Growers</li></ul>
<b>Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Innovation</li><li>▪ Best practices</li><li>▪ New technologies</li><li>▪ Yield/quality/sustainability (soil health, bee health, technology for agriculture)</li></ul>
<b>Money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Federal and provincial alignment</li><li>▪ Research</li><li>▪ Curriculum development (agriculture school)</li></ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Open up access to Federal and Provincial R&amp;D infrastructure</li><li>▪ Regional policy development</li></ul>
<b>Nimble Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Federal and provincial governments need to be the champions of the vision, not the constraint</li></ul>

**Opportunity - Processing for niche markets**

<b>People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training/expertise</li> <li>▪ Skilled labour resources</li> <li>▪ Retain the skilled labour</li> <li>▪ Agricultural awareness in the school system</li> </ul>
<b>Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Technical assistance</li> <li>▪ Understanding best in class</li> <li>▪ Innovation</li> <li>▪ Benchmarking</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seed money (for product/market launch)</li> <li>▪ Capital assistance</li> <li>▪ Bridge financing</li> <li>▪ Cashflow</li> <li>▪ Money to individual producer not consultants of producer organizations</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Equipment</li> <li>▪ Storage</li> <li>▪ Transportation</li> <li>▪ Research</li> <li>▪ Lab testing (quality assurance)</li> </ul>
<b>Nimble Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assistance with business plans, market planning</li> <li>▪ Flexible tax system</li> <li>▪ Innovation investment grants</li> <li>▪ Level playing field for subsidies against other growing areas</li> <li>▪ Streamline process / regulations for all levels of government</li> </ul>

**Opportunity – Biofuels (Hemp and Anaerobic digester)**

<b>People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sustainable employment</li> <li>▪ Local people at work</li> </ul>
<b>Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clean energy</li> <li>▪ Renewable energy</li> <li>▪ Organic fertilizers</li> <li>▪ Land rotation</li> <li>▪ Lower greenhouse gas emissions</li> <li>▪ Lower carbon footprint</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to innovative programs, in micro business so to reinvest into this business</li> <li>▪ Equity investments</li> </ul>

<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Digester plants generators</li> <li>▪ Processing plants</li> <li>▪ Reliable supply of raw material</li> </ul>
<b>Nimble Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to land</li> <li>▪ Private investments</li> <li>▪ Less bureaucracy in government</li> <li>▪ Openness in DAAF, open to ideas</li> <li>▪ Idea desk within DAAF</li> </ul>

<b>Opportunity – Increasing sustainable employment in agriculture (owners and labourers)</b>	
<b>People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Business owners – current with succession plans</li> <li>▪ Starts with expansion plans</li> <li>▪ New farmers (immigrants, students, unemployed)</li> <li>▪ Mentors</li> <li>▪ Rural New Brunswickers</li> </ul>
<b>Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Value chain recognition – Starting from where we are, knowing what we have and what opportunities exist</li> <li>▪ Collaboration</li> <li>▪ HR training – employee retention</li> <li>▪ Research</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Private equity</li> <li>▪ Public equity</li> <li>▪ Existing government programs</li> <li>▪ CEDIFs</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training programs – Formal and on farm</li> <li>▪ Program facilitators</li> <li>▪ Public school education – where food comes from and valuing farming as a career option</li> <li>▪ Social enterprise as training opportunity</li> <li>▪ HR programs – on farm</li> <li>▪ Shared storage, transportation, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Nimble Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Procurement program to favor local business in institutions</li> <li>▪ Scalable regulations</li> </ul>

**Opportunity – Centralized logistics / Distribution (Maritimes) for local and export**

<b>People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CEO</li> <li>▪ Marketing/Logistics expertise</li> <li>▪ Board and advisors</li> </ul>
<b>Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local wine</li> <li>▪ Fruit and vegetables</li> <li>▪ Potatoes</li> <li>▪ Cider</li> <li>▪ Big mobile farmers market</li> <li>▪ Copy what exists</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Investment group (10-15 complementary producers)</li> <li>▪ Debt (mortgage) - Working cap</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Warehouse distribution (cold storage)</li> <li>▪ Freight partner</li> </ul>
<b>Nimble Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Resolve interprovincial trade barriers</li> <li>▪ Export support</li> <li>▪ Canadian sales support</li> </ul>

**Opportunity – Maximize value of bio resources**

<b>People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Education opportunities for bio resource sectors</li> <li>▪ Quality of life</li> <li>▪ Community</li> </ul>
<b>Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Department of Bio resources (broad and inclusive)</li> <li>▪ Values policy suggestion – Development in bio resource sector benefits all of N.B.</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to stable, long term funding (not changing every few years)</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One stop shop</li> </ul>
<b>Nimble Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ R&amp;D expertise – Technical advice and guidance</li> <li>▪ Access to market information</li> <li>▪ NB Brand</li> <li>▪ Certification barriers (CSA, GAP, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Financing – open climate for new opportunities</li> </ul>

<b>Opportunity – New entrants</b>	
<b>People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mentors</li> <li>▪ Peer support</li> <li>▪ Collaboration</li> <li>▪ Skilled labour (programming, funding, finding, hiring)</li> <li>▪ Young leaders</li> <li>▪ Growth oriented</li> </ul>
<b>Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cross sector networking (start up)</li> <li>▪ Collaboration (peers, supply chain)</li> <li>▪ Workshops, seminars</li> <li>▪ Communication</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Education (not advice)</li> <li>▪ Support</li> <li>▪ Access - Non debt</li> <li>▪ Program/service guidance</li> <li>▪ Succession</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Incubation for sector (facilities and programming)</li> <li>▪ Support as well as regulations</li> <li>▪ Market development</li> <li>▪ Bring digital skills and infrastructure (internet, software, modern business tools)</li> </ul>
<b>Nimble Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Federal abattoir/provincial licensing</li> <li>▪ Cross Atlantic regulations/trade</li> <li>▪ Sector educated officials/consultants</li> </ul>

<b>Opportunity – New people/new ideas/new commodities</b>	
<b>People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Specialized people to introduce new crops</li> <li>▪ Family farm growers</li> <li>▪ New ethnic groups</li> </ul>
<b>Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Jolly farmer</li> <li>▪ Colonies</li> <li>▪ New crops</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recruiters</li> <li>▪ Start new colonies</li> <li>▪ Greenhouses and technology investments</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To promote new crops (alternative crops)</li> </ul>

<b>Nimble Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to land</li> <li>▪ Access to government expertise</li> </ul>
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<b>Opportunity – Increase market for second grade / processing grade products</b>	
<b>People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Producers from mixed industries</li> <li>▪ Buyers (institutions, retailers, food distributors)</li> </ul>
<b>Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Different scale implementation – sustainable (Canada’s smartest kitchen, food tech, small scale California cottage, food act bill, etc.)</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase food budget in kitchens</li> <li>▪ Money for transformation upgrades – value added (farmworks)</li> <li>▪ Market study (investment)</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Equipment/facilities for value added food transformation</li> <li>▪ Transportation and storage</li> </ul>
<b>Nimble Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Procurement policy - be open to less perfect produce (schools, hospitals)</li> <li>▪ Remove interprovincial (Atlantic) trade barriers (streamline regulations between provinces)</li> </ul>

<b>Opportunity – Succession</b>	
<b>People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Young people</li> <li>▪ Immigrants</li> <li>▪ Training</li> </ul>
<b>Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exchange programs to get good ideas</li> <li>▪ Apprenticeship</li> <li>▪ Encourage new technology</li> </ul>
<b>Money</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to capital</li> <li>▪ New entry program</li> <li>▪ Adjust financing amounts</li> </ul>
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Education infrastructure (satellite campus?)</li> <li>▪ Data collection</li> <li>▪ Promotion</li> </ul>
<b>Nimble Government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to land</li> <li>▪ Private investments</li> <li>▪ Less bureaucracy in government</li> <li>▪ Openness in DAAF, open to ideas</li> <li>▪ Idea desk within DAAF</li> </ul>

## LESSONS LEARNED

This summit was the third in a series of sector specific Opportunities Summits throughout the Province. For every Summit lessons learned were noted to inform future Summits.

### What went well

- Objectives for the session were met
  - List of opportunities
  - Conditions for success for those opportunities were identified
- Good feedback from participants
- Good attendance
- Audio and simultaneous translation worked well

### What could be improved

- Clarity of purpose of summit, instructions for the day
- Logistics (name tags, registration)
- More/better advance information provided for future summits
- Food (special orders)

## **NEXT STEPS**

### **Summit Survey**

Following the summit a survey was sent to the participants to collect additional input on the ideas discussed and the event itself. This feedback helps us to assess which discussions resonate beyond the summit, as well as to continue to improve future summits.

### **Summit-Specific Report**

Following each summit a report of the ideas generated (this document) and participant feedback (Appendix C) is shared with all participants following the summit.

### **All-Summits Report**

After the full series of summits have been completed a final report will be prepared and shared with all summit participants. This is meant to provide visibility of the ideas generated from other summits and to highlight common themes related to the opportunities.

### **Early Opportunities**

The Jobs Board Secretariat plans to identify and advance initial opportunities coming from the summits in partnership with Opportunities NB and lead departments, and to test the opportunities-model of economic development using the 5-policy pillar structure on these early opportunities. We will also identify opportunities that would benefit from further study and those that government is not well-positioned to lead, and share this assessment with the community of participants and interested New Brunswickers.

### **Implementing Policy Conditions for Growth**

Finally, with your help, we will identify the best growth opportunities for New Brunswick. The Jobs Board Secretariat will lead the formation of cross-departmental teams, the development opportunity plans and measures, and assist in the implementation of the necessary policies to create the conditions growth. GNB will then track the progress and outcomes of these efforts and report those findings.

### **Future Summits**

Consideration is being given to hosting follow-up summits in 2016 and early 2017 to explore whether this approach is demonstrating early results, discuss how it could be improved, and what has changed with the opportunities for NB's economic growth.

## APPENDIX A: ATTENDEES

### Agricultural Opportunities Summit Attendees

Participants	
<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>
Ron Smith	UNB
Cedric Macleod	Macleod Agronomics, Young farmers forum
Robert Bourgeois	Verger Belliveau Orchards Ltée
Mark Simon	Esgenoôpetitj First Nation
Clark Dedam	Esgenoôpetitj First Nation blueberry operation
Matt Hemphill	Potatoes NB
Joe Brennan	Brookdale Farms Ltd.
Andre Daigle	Ferme André Daigle Inc.
Mathieu Daigle	Ferme AndréDaigle Inc.
Guy Paillard	COFNO Coopérative Forestière du Nord-Quest
Tim Livingston	Strawberry Hill Farm
Roy Culberson	Crop Exchange Inc
Nick Southan	Southan Farms
Kathryn Southan	Southan Farms
Calvin Hicks	Golden Acres Honey Farm
Rishin Biehl	Resson Aerospace
Tanya Daley	Resson Aerospace
Wayne Reid	Old Dutch Foods
Byron McGrath	Mountain View Packers
Sebastien Roy	Distillerie Fils du Roy Inc.
Calla Fern	McCains
Bruce Andrews	Cavendish
Ken Reid	Cavendish
Kim Lawrence	Real Food Connections
Levi Lawrence	Real Food Connections
Kevin Shiel	Bioenergy
Meaghan Seagrave	BioNB
Danny Blanchette	AgroMart
Faith Matchett	Farm Credit Canada
Marc Surette	UdeM
Joanna Brown	Westmoreland Albert CIN Coop
Theresa Richards	ACORN
Susan Rickards	Sunrise Farm
Barb Sommerville	NFU Board member
Fons Dejong	Dairy Farmers of NB
Bernard Savoie	Nominee from Agricultural Alliance
Fern Rioux	Syngenta

Chantal LaRouche	Nominee from Agricultural Alliance
Eric Theriault	Eastern Grains
Shaun Pelkey	Cavendish
Tanna Pirie Wilson	Tobique First Nations
Jeannette Bear	Tobique First Nations
Gerald Bear	Tobique First Nations
Josee Leblanc	Agricultural Alliance
Melanie Laforge	Laforge Bio/Dairy
Louise Laforge	Laforge Bio/Dairy
<b>GNB</b>	
<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>
Bill Levesque	Dept of Agriculture, Aquaculture & Fisheries
Roger Robichaud	Dept of Agriculture, Aquaculture & Fisheries
Alison Thomas	Dept of Agriculture, Aquaculture & Fisheries
Cathy Larochelle	Dept of Agriculture, Aquaculture & Fisheries
Greg Toner	Dept of Agriculture, Aquaculture & Fisheries
Gerry Chevrier	Dept of Agriculture, Aquaculture & Fisheries
Kevin McCully	Dept of Agriculture, Aquaculture & Fisheries
Elaine Bell	Dept of Agriculture, Aquaculture & Fisheries
Susan Holt	Jobs Board Secretariat
David Campbell	Jobs Board Secretariat
Melanie Clarke	Opportunities NB
Vikki Durepos Landry	Opportunities NB
Jonathan Barteau	Opportunities NB
René Boudreau	Jobs Board Secretariat
Lisa Harris	MLA, Miramichi Bay-Neguac
Cathy Rogers	Minister, Social Development
Denis Landry	Minister, Natural Resources
Serge Rouselle	Minister, Education & Early Childhood Development
TJ Harvey	MP, Tobique-Mactaquac
Hédart Albert	House Leader
Premier Brian Gallant	Premier
Rick Doucet	Minister, Agriculture, Aquaculture & Fisheries
Brian Kenny	Minister, Environment & Local Government
Andrew Harvey	MLA, Carleton-Victoria

## APPENDIX B: AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY OVERVIEW

Presented by Cathy Larochelle, Asst. Deputy Minister, Dept. of agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries

# Agriculture and Agri-food Overview

Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries

October 21, 2015



## NB Agriculture & Agri-Food Industry (2013)

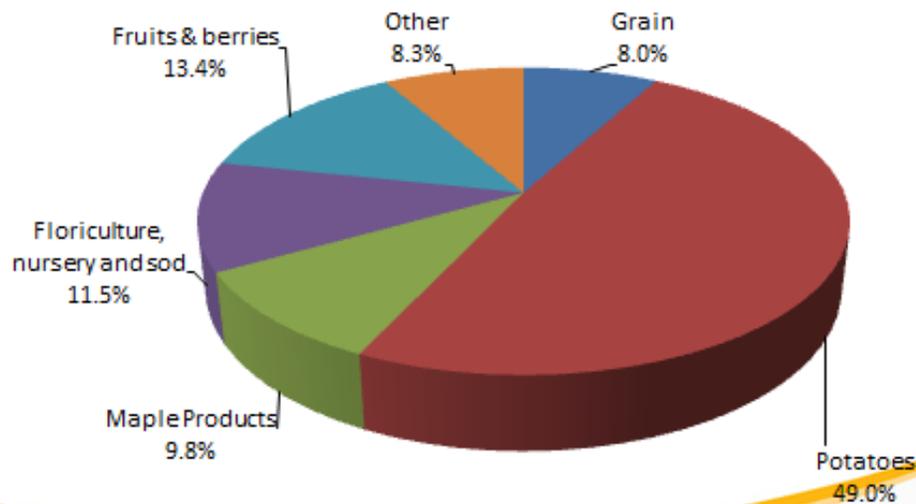
Number of farms (2011 Census of Agric.)	2,611
Farmland, hectares (2011 Census of Agric.)	379,526
Land in crops, hectares (2011 Census of Agric.)	142,138
Total Farm Assets	\$2.7 billion
Farm cash receipts	\$573 million
Number of processing plants	140
Shipments of processed food products*	Over \$1 billion
Agri-food exports	\$380.8 million
Employment, farm	4,500
Employment, processing	6,200

\*estimated due to confidentiality



## Crops: Total Value \$293 million

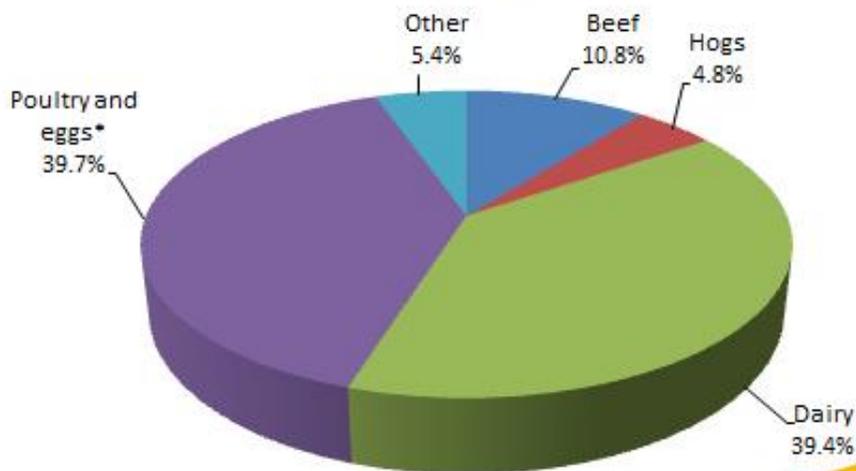
(2013)



New Brunswick  
Nouveau Brunswick

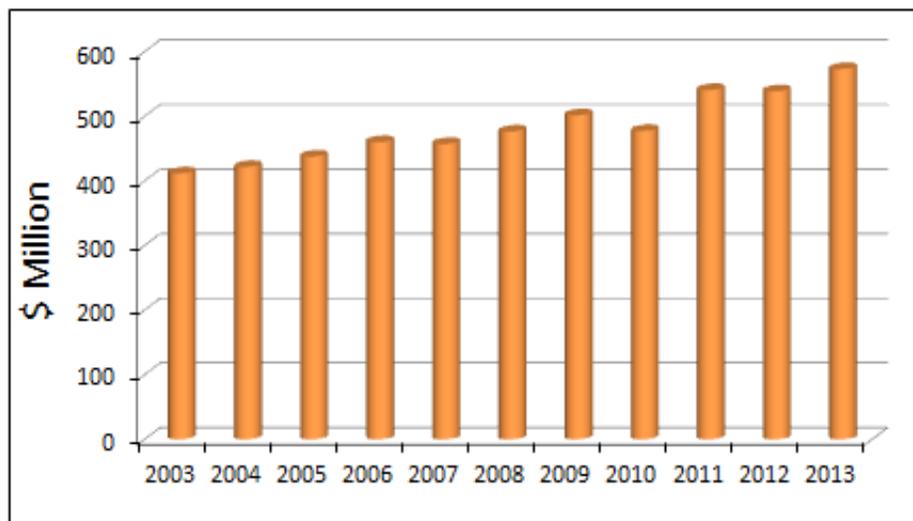
## Livestock: Total Value \$259 million

(2013)



New Brunswick  
Nouveau Brunswick

## Total Farm Cash Receipts



## Industry and Exports

- 2,611 farms and 140 processing plants
- >\$1 billion in processed agri-food products.
- ~ 80% of primary product is processed in-province before reaching the market.
- Extensive network of export markets comprising over 70 countries.
- Total exports estimated at \$380.8 million in 2013.



## APPENDIX C: POST-SUMMIT SURVEY RESULTS

Surveys sent – 39

Responses received – 13 (33%)

Survey Preamble:

Our objectives for the Agricultural Opportunities Summit were:

### Information Gathering

- Identify a list of viable economic opportunities to explore
- Identify conditions for success in identified opportunities

### Participant Experience

- Participants had a positive experience and their contribution mattered
- Participants felt heard

Given these objectives, we would greatly appreciate if you could answer a few questions on your Summit experience.

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### **Q1. Which idea discussed most interested you?**

#### Theme – People solutions

“connecting new farmers to available land”

“new entrants and farm succession”

“nouveau entrant”

“succession”

“Agricultural Recruitment Program (incl. mentorship/apprenticeships, , enriching the opportunities and resources available for people choosing agriculture as a career/lifestyle)”

#### Theme - Education

“incorporating agricultural awareness into school curriculum/activities”

“farm school/education programs”

“Out of many excellent suggestions, perhaps the most interesting to me was the idea of establishing an agriculture centre of excellence. It could be a place where training and education could be organized and take place, as well as taking information and resources on the road to farmers. It could serve farmers in so many ways -- from technology training to crisis support, advice on succession to ideas for raising capital, doing research and managing mentorship programs, and on and on. We need a central non-partisan (and fairly permanent) office to organize and implement the services NB farmers need to thrive and profit.”

#### Theme - Bioenergy

“Biofuels”

“opportunity for bioenergy on the farm”

### Other

“Centralized food storage and distribution system that could link different grades of foods to big and niche markets (including social enterprises and social programs)”

“Need for alternative cash crops”

“Supporting local food”

“exploring economic opportunities”

“Le tout était des bonne idées”

“it was an open discussion many topics were interesting it was the first time I got an overview on the industry”

### **Q2. How much did you feel your contributions were heard?**

Not at all – 0%

A bit – 23%

A lot – 61.5%

Completely – 15.5%

### **Q3. My biggest take-away from the Summit was:**

“There are 2 distinct subsectors emerging in the agricultural sector 1) Agribusiness (Potatoes, Grain, Dairy, Beef) and 2) Local food production (organic, small scale). Only the first group actually creates wealth as it is an exported product. The other sector is focused on providing local healthy food to NB'rs (retail market) which is very admirable but from an economic development perspective it creates no wealth (just redistributes it) however it could be argued it moves purchases from loblaws and sobeys who import food so it does keep \$ in the province. These 2 sectors cannot be served with the same policies and programs - they are extremely different. Also if economic development is the focus then you need to give priority to agribusiness and not the local food production.”

“There are at least three internal agriculture sectors: the global-scale producer, the small commercial farmers with niche products or who serve regional markets, and the beginning farmers (young people and immigrants) who need various supports.”

“The diversity of potential in the agricultural industry (from small investment to big individual/local impacts to larger strategic investments that have significant distribution diffusion potential) but there were so many ideas...but I questioned who will help get them going? It not a just government, just community or just business role it is a mix responsibility and support approach.”

“The agricultural world is rather small in NB, but can have a large impact, the more we create a vision for sustainable agriculture in the province, the more supports available to encourage a sustainable farming economy in the province, the more sustainable farm businesses and spin-offs we'll see in our Province—rich with land, resources and so much traditional and innovative farming knowledge.”

“Our government is listening to industry and wants ideas. I would like to have seen more farmers in the room, but I realize space was limited.”

“We need to get away from the traditional crops and diversify.”

“People were willing to look at other products and realize it’s not just potatoes.”

“Every commodity has its problems.”

“L’opinion divers de tous.”

“The ideas provided by everyone and great cross-section of people.”

“We are a very diverse group with hugely different objectives and challenges making policies or goals difficult to define.”

“Connections with others.”

#### Q4. Please rate the following elements of the summit:

	unsatisfactory	neutral	good	great
Venue (Golden Age Club, Grand Falls)	0.0%	15.4%	38.5%	46.1%
Timing (10:30-3pm)	0.0%	7.7%	38.5%	53.8%
Refreshments (beverages, lunch)	15.4%	7.7%	23%	53.8%
Facilitators (Amanda & Jason)	0.0%	15.4%	30.8%	53.8%
Agenda / Structure	0.0%	46.1%	23%	30.8%

#### Comments

- Difficult to capture this very complex sector which has many players in the value chain in just a few hours and using the brain storming technique. With the large and complex a economic sector usually a draft plan that is criticized and modified works better.
- A lot of information to digest in a short time
- Ce fut très intéressant d’entendre la version des autres gens qui participaient.
- Given the time constraints to cover such a large topic, the session would have benefited if the facilitators had provided to the participants an overview of what the goal(s) for the session was as well as an overview of how the day was going to proceed. The participants were very diverse in background and hence the lack of clarity in direction at the onset resulted in quite a bit of mission drift in regards to the objectives as stated above. It would also have been of benefit if we had been sent at least some material ahead of time.
- I found that some of the roundtable sessions were not as productive as they could have been (more on this later in the survey)
- Wonderful idea to hold this summit, very informative and productive.
- I did not actually receive an agenda prior to the session, which I think would have been helpful, even receiving the questions in advance (or some of the questions) would have been helpful

preparation, to allow me to consult with board members in the province and be ready to speak to our current priorities.

- As a representative of the National Farmers Union - NB and as a farmer, I was pleased to see our suggestions welcomed and to see so many in the room who agreed with many of our policies. Hope we can move forward to action on some of the excellent feedback received
- The groups were so broad that it was hard to dig into any one idea together. Wonder when digging into an idea if at that time a bit more strategic table compilation would have helped.
- I was very disappointed with the level of organization leading to the summit. Never received the invitation and was reminded by a colleague the day before the meeting.
- Need more think tanks that work on more products for the marketplace.

#### **Q5. The best part of the summit was:**

##### Theme – The People

###### Networking (x2)

“Chance to interact with a broad range of individuals from many points of the ag sector and value chain”

“to connect with a lot of people”

“recontrer et partager les idées avec différentes personnes”

“Bringing people together who otherwise would never get together”

“meeting a new segment of business and learning of their ideas and hopes”

##### Theme – The Conversation

“les discussions avec divers métiers dans l’agriculture”

“one on one discussions and those at the tables”

“Round table discussions and presentations. A good format.”

“having many leaders focusing on opportunities to advance the industry”

##### Theme – The Government

“the presence of government staff”

“exposure to government officials”

“Direct conversation with others and meeting Premier and Ag minister again. Glad to see the Premier's engagement and appreciate the opportunity to be there.”

#### **Q6. The least valuable part of the summit was:**

##### Theme - timing

“Only a short interaction with stakeholders - not a lot to base a long-term sustainable economic strategy on!”

“in the short time we had to handle a lot of issues”

##### Theme – format

“the two exercises before lunch - they were not used as part of the afternoon round tables and it is not clear to me how they will be used in the summary report.”

“2 icebreaker activities (how to brainstorm and link ideas and getting out all our challenges) it didn't seem to have much impact but stole time for conversations we were wanting to have....”

### Theme – Premier’s comments

“No offence, but the Premier's comments were not that helpful. Nice to see you all here and thank you for coming would have sufficed.”

“Sad to see that the Premier put so much emphasis on export which in my view will only help the large middle men players and will neutral or negative on the majority of farmers and local businesses, especially new farmers not in the current supply chain.”

### Theme - Nothing

It was all valuable (x2)

“Pour moi le tous à été correcte”

“?”

## **Q7. Where would you like to see government focus their efforts to grow the agricultural economy?**

“Needs to be a two-pronged balanced focus on the 2 large sectors 1) agribusiness and 2) local sustainable food production - this is an opportunity to restructure the department of ag, its mandate and its role. Currently they are all mostly program administrators.”

“low cost solutions to keep our farms competitive.”

“The two greatest needs are, in my opinion, a) N.B. needs to have a bio-resource inventory (people and the resources) and b) a strategy to optimize the use of ALL land-based bioresources in a way that maximizes the benefits to NBers. An integrated strategy that crosses sector boundaries is lacking (agriculture, health, forestry).”

“1) attract new farmers, especially young Canadians and Europeans who are comfortable in this climate, by making an inventory of available farmland and designing a pathway for young entrants through all the steps in the process 2) bring education and awareness about food, farming, and agriculture careers into the school system with experiential learning on farms.”

“Biofuels, Hemp, Anaerobic Digesters, Alternative Crops”

“Organic, sustainable, diverse and local agriculture opportunities. By focusing on sustainable and organic agriculture, the province is responding to international trends for a long-term healthy food system, driven by consumer demand (who would choose chemical pesticides over non if the choice was fair?), as well as appealing to the next generation of farmers, who are all about organic agriculture options! By focusing on local, NB is building the infrastructure and models to support NB needs, and the spin-off benefit is that the province will have the systems to supply export markets where needed. Pair this idea with crop and livestock diversity, and the potential is endless: we are growing so few crops commercially here, and there is so much more potential! Where the region's small-scale diverse farms are growing over 140 different crops on a single farm—a veritable showcase of the crop potential in our region! The province is poised to showcase a sustainable agriculture sector powered by a traditional model (e.g. smaller-scale sustainable and organic family farms) using the best of the current innovation landscape (e.g. farm technologies, production advances for sustainable options, research in organic agriculture).”

“NB can become stronger and more resilient through supporting small businesses, including family farms, throughout our rural areas. To do so, we must support farmers with appropriate policies (financial support, educational resources, technical training, sound infrastructure, recognition of the vital women in the industry, publicity around our locally grown products and the important work farmers do stewarding our land and communities, etc. The NFU policies are sound and sensible and doable, so please have a look at them and use those ideas to cultivate a vital agricultural economy, to the benefit of all New Brunswickers.”

“Like to see government focus some investment on changes that would help small scale/individual/local projects (cottage food business policy like California; sandbox system) Medium sized (distribution support, R&D etc) and Large scale (link to new international niche markets). However, if I were to pick one item it would be a **Maritime Wide Storage and Distribution Center** that would allow all farmers access to broader markets if they wanted them. Also I would see this center having another component of more localized niche marketing and social enterprise spinoffs using various grades of food.”

“reducing red-tape, streamlining regulations to reduce interprovincial trade barriers and addressing factors preventing agriculture producers to be on the same competitive level playing fields compared to neighboring provinces.”

“Encourager et appuyer les nouveaux entrants dans l’industrie.”

“Local food - will send a separate paper I've written titled A Case for Local Food”

“providing access for micro- farmers Ideas Desk”

#### **Q8. Please share any other feedback you have on the Summit.**

##### Theme - Format

“Focus on less issues for the time span”

“The concept of the summit was good but I did not feel it was delivered in a way that was very effective. My apologies for being so critical but I have attended many other similar summits/workshops etc that resulted in more concrete deliverables and which enabled more open discussions on important topics than occurred at this one.”

“It was wonderful but the structure of the day made it less productive than it might have been. If you had stuck with the two goals of the day as listed here and focused on one in the morning and one in the afternoon, less time would have been wasted (everyone there knows the challenges and has ideas for opportunities). The information you got would have been richer if you had started where the participants are, which is well ahead of the first two roundtable topics. In the morning, we could have suggested opportunities. Over lunch, the facilitators could have sorted these into themes, and in the afternoon we could have gotten specific about actions. We might even have signed on to advisory committees around topics where we have interest and expertise.”

##### Theme - Positive

“Wonderful experience.”

“Beau travail et très bien organiser.”

“Good job! Do more summits to engage people.”

“Thank you sincerely for the invitation!”

“Overall good but more focus on organization would be appreciated.”

“Great opportunity to share ideas and get them into the hands of those who create policy. Can it be done annually, giving feedback on what is taking place and what is missing?”

“Un gros merci pour l’organisation, ce genre de sommet devrait y avoir lieu plus souvent pour que vous puissiez entendre l’opinion des gens ainsi que les demandes.”

#### Other

“Overall intrigued and enjoyed the day but not sure how useful or impactful this conversation was in influencing change...time will tell. From logistic side I would recommend having water and glasses on all the tables as well I ordered special meal and was told it was possible but no meal was there and limited food options...it is more an inconvenience because I would have happily brought food if I knew.”

“See my email (coming later today) with paper titled "A Case for Local Food"