

**NEW BRUNSWICK SOIL AND CROP
IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION INC.**



ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Enhancing soil and crop sustainability

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President's Report – John Best

New Brunswick Soil & Crop Improvement Association experienced a significant transformation to a new structure and higher performance level during 2016.

The structural changes undertaken by the provincial Board now enables the Local organizations greater operating flexibility and the ability to respond more effectively to their respective member agronomy priorities.

The new membership funding structure will provide more financial resources to Local organizations in support of enhanced project development in their areas.

With the changes made throughout the organization during the year, the NBSCIA is in a strong position to mount a concerted effort to deliver a full complement of agronomy services to our members.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation for all the work undertaken by the Board and staff to strengthen the current and future service performance of NBSCIA.

Executive Director – Gerry Gartner

NBSCIA started the year with its Annual General Meeting and technical workshop, held at Moncton and hosted by the Chignecto Local Association. In addition to a full complement of workshop presentations, the meeting was presented with an outline of the new structure developed for the organization.

The six candidates competed for the 2015 Farm of the Year.

The NBSCIA Farm of the Year for 2015 was awarded to Riverview Farms Corporation. Congratulations to Riverview Farms Corporation and all the participants. The award was sponsored by Pioneer.

Staffing of four vacant agrologists positions commenced early in the year. The positions were filled by:

William McCallum – Northshore

Monic Thibault – Moncton

Sidney Raithby – Chignecto

Leigha Sandwith – Central

Company Description

New Brunswick Soil and Crop Improvement Association Inc. (NBSCIA) is comprised of a diverse group of producers from across the province who are committed to pioneering advanced soil and crop practices in New Brunswick. New innovative approaches are developed through research for economic and environmental sustainability.

The Association is an organization dedicated to providing leadership in the development, management, and sustainability of soils and crops in New Brunswick. Our objectives can be summarized by the following five goals:

1. To develop, demonstrate and promote environmentally and economically sound agricultural practices as they relate to soils and crops in New Brunswick.
2. To provide New Brunswick farmers with services and resources necessary for the sound development and management of soils and crops in New Brunswick.
3. To encourage greater public awareness of the importance of a viable agricultural industry, and the vital role which effective soil and crop management play in achieving that objective.
4. To be a respected and positive influence on the government with respect to matters relevant to the NBSCIA and its members.
5. To develop and manage operating funds necessary to meet the goals of NBSCIA.

Historical Background

NBSCIA was founded 37 years ago in the Sussex area under the guidance of the department of agriculture staff in the late 1970's. The first local was established in the Sussex area and the provincial organization was constituted in 1978. The NBSCIA initially focused on education and the demonstration of new technology – this continues to be an important part of what the organization undertakes. It stressed soil and crop management practices, conducted tours to various locations in Canada and New England, and brought in experts to speak on new technologies, etc. These activities were primarily undertaken at the local level.

The NBSCIA has two objectives identified in its constitution:

1. To encourage the development and expansion of the activities of local associations in New Brunswick in the field of soil and crop improvement; and
2. To encourage the improvement of soil and crop management in the Province of New Brunswick.

Association Strengths

- A network of agronomists throughout the province to provide professional agronomy service to individual farm members and local organizations.
- NBSCIA has a long history of involvement in soil and crop research, information, education and policy support.
- Its membership represents farmers in almost all commodity sectors and regions in the province.
- NBSCIA is regarded as an objective, independent collaborator for research, testing and reporting results.
- The Association is uniquely qualified to represent the interests of farmers and other rural residents when contending with non-farm soil and water management issues.
- NBSCIA has demonstrated ability to be a credible partner with like-minded private sector firms.

Board, Committees and Employees

Board Executive

President – John Best

Vice President – David Goodine

Secretary/Treasurer – David Waddy

Directors

John Riordon

Ellen Gammon

Shawn Paget

Dean Acton

Nathan Murray

Ryan Van de Brandt

Brian Walker

Sheldon Moore

Garnet Donnelly

John Schenkels

Brian Earle

Research Committee – Shawn Paget, Dean Acton and David Goodine

Employees

Gerry Gartner – Executive Director

Coordinators – Ray Carmichael – Carleton County

- Nadine Simpson – Kings County
- Sidney Raithby – Chignecto
- William McCallum – Northshore
- Monic Thibault – Moncton
- Leigha Sandwith – Central

Research Coordinator – Walter Brown

Local Reports

Kings County Soil & Crop – Nadine Simpson, Agro-environmental Agrologist

For 2016, Kings County Soil and Crop Local had 37 members, with 19 of them being club members.

The Kings County Soil & Crop Improvement Association started the year with an AGM held in February at the All Seasons Inn. An annual forage showcase was held with donations from Sussex Co-op and Pioneer.

Planning for workshops and field days for the year began in May. In June, Kings County Soil and Crop members attended a field session with Pat Lynch sponsored by Pickseed.

Our local Farm of the Year nominee was Clearland Holsteins. A dinner banquet was held for the MacDonald family in November at the Up to Par Restaurant in Norton with over 50 people in attendance. Cavendish Agri-Services donated a farm sign to the MacDonald's.

On farm project activity with local producers consisted of the Group Forage Project on 6 local farms, and the Cabbage Maggot Project on 2 farms.

Kings County Soil and Crop held a corn field day in August at the Dave Hayes farm, where the provincial corn trials were planted. The Kings County no till corn planter was demonstrated with

their new precision monitor. The day was sponsored by Co-op Federee, Sussex Co-op and the Atlantic Grains Council. A tallest corn plant contest resulted in a display of some impressive corn plants grown in the area. Prizes were donated by Cavendish Agri-Services.

Agrologist work included developing protocols and procedures for existing and new agronomy services. Along with the field day, workshop and dinner, individual on-farm work was undertaken, including crop yield assessments, bale weights, GPS and mapping, fertilizer recommendations, Environmental Farm Plans, emergency response plans, and equipment calibrations. Assistance with training new staff and planning for the provincial annual meeting was also part of the agrologist work plan for the year.

Chignecto Soil and Crop – Sidney Raithby – Agro-Environmental Agrologist

It has been a growing year and an intense learning experience here in Chignecto, with my start as the Agrologist in mid-April, 2016. Relationships were built with local farmers, as well as a time to apply my theoretical and working knowledge to each farm/farmer to suit their individual needs and situation. Overall, services have been well received by the local farming community especially with interest in my soil and soil health background.

Major projects were carried out in the region in 2016. The forage quality project successfully completed the second year of a three year undertaking. The Tantramar community pasture was another large undertaking with approximately 2,000 acres of soil testing completed. More projects will be mounted in the coming year due to the positive feedback and highly involved group of producers in the area.

Our 2016 Farm of the Year was Richard Strang of Strang Farm at Malden, NB. The Strang farm is one of Chignecto's two major potato producers. The farm was nominated on the basis of its superior management capacity, use of BMP's, marketing, and innovative use of "waste products". The Strang family has created and built an on-farm distillery to make a value added product from their cull potatoes. In 2016 they received all the necessary permits to create their own commercial vodka distillery.

Chignecto is the smallest local serviced by the New Brunswick Soil and Crop improvement Association. But what it lacks in size, it makes up in diversity and community spirit. The Chignecto conducts monthly twilight meetings where farmers get together and discuss agronomy issues and opportunities. Speakers on technical issues are invited to give presentations and discuss development concerns of local producers. A yearly AGM was held in December at the Sackville Legion with over 130 attendees. The Strang's also hosted an on-farm gathering as a thank you for their nomination, and highlighted by a tour of the new distillery.

The Chignecto Local is characterized by a highly motivated and involved group of farm members, which augurs well for a high level of project and service activity for members in the future.

Central Soil and Crop – Leigha Sandwith – Agro-Environmental Agrologist

A Newsletter was written and sent out to all members that included a “year in review” article of what NBSCIA has accomplished for their members in 2016.

Assisted other agrologists in staking out and measuring the available space at Richmond Corner site for potential variety trials in 2017.

Soil sampled over 600 acres for members in the Central are between September and early December.

Planning began for the Provincial Soil and Crop AGM and Workshop. Tasks included identifying speakers, writing and sending out sponsorship letters and making follow-up calls to companies that may be interested in supporting the event.

Training sessions attended during the year included:

- Digging Into Soil – learned a very informative way to promote and establish soil health;
- Sprayer Workshop – learned a practical and useful way to undertaken member sprayer calibrations; and
- Atlantic Agrology Workshop – a day of networking and seeing what agrology services were being made available in other regions as well as information was obtained on how we can support and promote agriculture.

A Central board of Directors meeting was held in mid-December to develop plans for the local AGM, and to review Central activities of the year.

Carleton County Soil and Crop – Ray Carmichael – Agro-Environmental Agrologist

The Board of Directors of the Carleton County Soil and Crop improvement Association met on January 13, 2016 at the NB Seed Grower’s Coop to finalize plan for the information workshop and the annual general meeting.

Approximately 45 attended the Carleton County Soil and Crop Improvement Association Information workshop held January 26, 2016 at the West Western in Woodstock, NB. The information session included: Srop the Robbery! – Weed eradication in corn and non-GMO soybeans – Gavin Graham, Weed Management Specialist, NBDAAF; Growing Quality Oats – Things your grandfather never told you! – Dr. Art McElroy, Phytogene; NBSCIA Geomatics Service, Ray Carmichael, P. Ag., Carleton Agro-environmental Club; Understanding your Maps – soil application and yield – questions you should ask, Bill Jones, Geomatics Analyst, exp services Inc.; Picking the Winners – 2015 Cereal and Oilseed trial results - Peter Scott, Crop

Development Specialist, Cereals and Oilseeds, NBDAAF; Designer Oats for targeted markets, and a word on industrial hemp – Dr. Art McElroy, Phytogene resources, Inc.

At the Annual General Meeting the following individuals were elected to the Local Executive: John Best, President; Wietze Dykstra, Treasurer; Charlie McIntosh, Secretary; Shawn Paget, Director; and Greg Carpenter, Director.

Carleton County Soil and Crop Improvement Association had twenty-three members in 2016, representing dairy, potato/grain/oilseed, beef/potato, beef, berries and fruit.

The Local Association hosted a twilight meeting at the Richmond Corner forage site and Greg Carpenter's adjacent corn field with Dr. Pat Lynch, Pickseeds leading the discussion on alfalfa management and maximizing corn yield. Approximately 12 farmers and industry partners attended.

North Shore Soil and Crop – William McCallum – Agro-environmental Agrologist

During 2016, emphasis was placed on training and providing up to date service to producer members. PSNTs for corn were in strong demand as well as soil sampling in the fall period. Fertility recommendations were made as requested, and response was made to an increasing demand for NMPs.

The Forage Project operated its second year with timed harvest of plot on 7 farms in the area as part of a province wide three year variety trial.

The 4R project in the Northeast continued on from the previous year with a new trial added in 2016.

A strawberry trial was undertaken in collaboration with NBDAAF to evaluate the effect of mustard as a bio-fumigant.

A corn and forage field day was held in August to provide producers with the opportunity to discuss and learn about production management with David Dykstra from NBDAAF.

The Northeast AGM was well attended and participants were pleased to hear Jason Wells of NBDAAF presentation on forage mixture recommendations.

A workshop on Forage Quality and Feeding in Robotic Milking Systems was held in mid-March with presentation and discuss led by Nutritionist, Jeff Walker. The information received by participants was well received and relevant to their operations.

Throughout the year, sessions and workshops were attended along with specific training activities in order to better serve member needs.

Moncton Soil and Crop – Monic Thibault – Agro-environmental Agrologist

In 2016, the Moncton Soil and Crop Improvement Association had 20 members. These members included dairy, hogs, grains, potatoes, vegetables/strawberries and blueberry operations.

The Moncton Soil and Crop AGM was held at the St. James Gate in Dieppe in January where the Farm of the Year candidate Creek Home Farm made a presentation on their dairy operation. The 2016 Board of Directors consisted of: David Waddy (President); Ryan Van de Brand (Vice President); Winston Jones (Secretary/Treasurer); Francois Lavigne; Henry Helder; John Wesselius and Bruce MacNichol.

On farm projects included the second year of the improved Forage Quality and Quantity Project through the use of New Mixtures forage, located on 3 different local farms. The 4R corn trial continued in 2016 for the purpose of assessing the impacts of three different rates of sidedress nitrogen.

A forage field day was planned in August, but for unforeseen circumstances was cancelled.

The main services provided to our producer members consisted of: 425 acres of soil sampling; tissue sampling; fertilizer recommendations and mapping.

Throughout the year I attended many workshops and conferences to increase my knowledge base to better serve our members.

NBSCIA Project Research Report – Walter Brown-Agrologist

In 2016, the NBSCIA either managed or sponsored 6 projects under the **Enabling Agriculture Research and Innovation (EARI) Program**, 2 projects under the **Developing Management Skills (DMSP) Program**, and 1 under the **Environmental Management Planning (EMP) Program of Growing Forward 2**. The total funding approved for these 9 projects was approximately \$243,000.

The NB Field Crop Germplasm project, managed by Peter Scott of NBDAAF, involved the Regional Cereal Variety Evaluation trials, soybean and other oilseed work, and the Regional Corn Hybrid Evaluation trials. These trials generated the evaluation data that was incorporated into the publishing of the 2017 Corn Guide for the Maritimes, 2017 Maritime Soybean Trials report and the 2017 Maritime Cereal Cultivar Performance Trials. These publications are designed to assist producers in the Maritime Provinces select their seed for the coming production year.

The NB Forage Cultivar Development trials at Richmond Corner are now under the management of NBSCIA. 2016 was the second year for NBSCIA assuming this responsibility. The forage cultivars were planted in 2014 and due to winter injury were reseeded in 2015. The data generated by these trial will be published in 2017 Forage Guide to Cultivar Selection of the Maritimes. A third year of data when harvested in 2017, will give a three year persistence rating for the forage cultivars.

The harvesting of forage mixtures grown in the **On-Farm Project** were all undertaken in a two and three cut management approach. The second year of data when analyzed compared the yield and quality performance of the trials under the two management systems.

A province wide project managed by NBSCIA in 2016 was the **Improved Forage Quality and Quantity Project** through the use of New Mixtures on 29 farms in New Brunswick. The 25 farms that participated with complete data in 2016 generated a massive amount of data and a team of six agrologist and one summer student did an excellent job managing all aspects of the project.

The main purpose of the **Agro-Environmental Program** with funding for the NBSCIA agrologists is to give NBSCIA the capacity to accomplish its service activities that relate to Environmental Sustainability within the NB farm Community.

The introduction of Geomatics, Google Earth and the NBSCIA Agricultural Geomatics Support Services projects round out related activities under NBSCIA management. NBSCIA acts as sponsor for several projects where private sector interests undertake the investigations on their own.