



New Brunswick Soil and Crop Improvement Association



January 2026 Newsletter

Volume 12 Issue 1
Revised by Andrea Versloot & Gabrielle Schenkels

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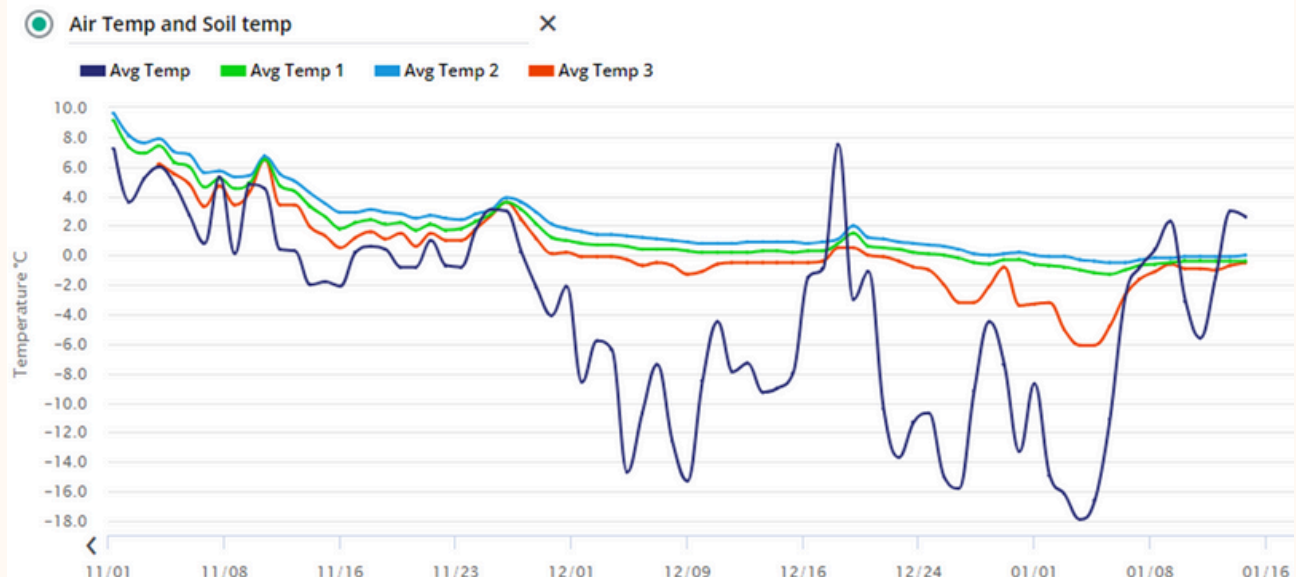
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Soil Temperature Through the Winter

Wintertime doesn't mean we have to forget about what's going on in our soil! Last fall, the New Brunswick Soil & Crop Improvement Association (NBSCIA) began installing soil temperature sensors at a 2" soil depth to complement our existing 6" and 12" soil temperature sensors. This gives nearly a full snapshot of temperature data throughout the rooting zone for management considerations throughout the year.


The graph below illustrates the trends between air temperature and soil temperature in the Woodstock area from November 1st, 2025 to January 15th, 2026.

"Avg Temp" = average air temperature over 24 hours, in dark blue
 "Avg Temp 1" = average 6" soil temperature over 24 hours, in green
 "Avg Temp 2" = average 12" soil temperature over 24 hours, in light blue
 "Avg Temp 3" = average 2" soil temperature over 24 hours, in orange



Soil temperature follows similar trends as air temperature until ample snow cover persists, which in this case came around the end of November. Things like frost depth, winter injury, root heaving risk, volunteer potato survival and crop dormancy can be measured and predicted throughout the winter months. For example, we can be optimistic that winter injury to crops like alfalfa and winter wheat should be minimal so far based on the 2" soil temperature not going below -15 °C. Below that temperature, damage could be caused to the crowns and roots during the periods of extreme cold. We can also say that root heaving should be minimal since soil temperature stayed at or below freezing during mild spells where air temperature was above freezing.

Real-time soil temperature data can be seen on the Davis Weatherlink app. Check out NBSCIA's Guide to Davis Weatherlink found on the NBSCIA website "Resources" tab if you're not already on it <https://nbscia.ca/fact-sheets-reports/> . Reach out to your local NBSCIA agrologist to get access to the soil temperature data on Davis Weatherlink or for historical soil temperature data like the graph above.

	<div data-bbox="397 930 928 1052"><h2>NBSCIA's Guide to Davis WeatherLink</h2></div> <div data-bbox="1130 898 1299 1066"></div>
	<div data-bbox="394 1182 638 1228"><h3>About the App</h3></div> <ul data-bbox="375 1247 1339 1591" style="list-style-type: none">• Allows you to look up locations and names of Davis weather stations• Data from Davis stations across the globe can be bookmarked and accessed• Real time weather updates, with wind speeds updating every 2.5 seconds• Data available includes: temperature, humidity, barometric pressure, wind direction, wind speed, wind gusts, precipitation accumulation over 24hr period, precipitation chance (%), and monthly cumulative precipitation• Provides 7 day and hourly forecasts for the region where the station resides• Provides visual graphs and diagrams depicting temperature, wind and rainfall for the day• Provides historical high and low temperatures recorded by the station for that day and for selected years that the station has been operational

A snapshot from NBSCIA's Guide to Davis Weatherlink



General Manager Report - Ray Carmichael

NBSCIA General Manager

Over the past year the New Brunswick Soil & Crop Improvement Association (NBSCIA) staff have continued to organize a number of workshops and field days on various subjects to improve your understanding of best management practices to improve soil health and crop yields. The most recent of these was the last week of January on the topic of cover cropping with Woody Van Arkel, a farmer from outside Dresden, Ontario. Woody has been experimenting with no-till and cover crops for several years and is a farmer representative on the Midwest Cover Crops Council. Jason Wells, New Brunswick Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries (NBDAAF) will also be presenting on the Establishing Alfalfa with a Corn Companion Crop project.

All of these sessions end with our 47th Annual General Meeting and Technical Workshop, taking place March 12th -13th at the Crowne Plaza in Moncton, “Envisioning New Brunswick’s Agri-food Sector in 2050”. Speakers will address the issue of climate change, digital innovation, succession planning, biomass mapping, rotational grazing, nitrogen management, cover cropping and project reports from NBSCIA and NBDAAF staff. Of course, the highlight is NBSCIA’s Farm of the Year Banquet held the evening of March 12th at 7pm to celebrate the accomplishments and efforts of New Brunswick farmers.

Check the events tab on the NBSCIA website, watch for Facebook posts and remember to watch your email for specific times and program agendas.

NBSCIA ACS-OFCAF Manager

NBSCIA has been approved for the expansion phase of the On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF) for the period April 1, 2025 ending in March, 2028. The objective of the expansion phase of On-Farm Climate Action Fund is to support farmers in adopting beneficial management practices (BMPs) that store carbon and reduce greenhouse gases, specifically in the areas of:

1. nitrogen management
2. cover cropping
3. rotational grazing practices

NBSCIA is accepting applications beginning January 1, 2026 closing when funding is fully allocated, for projects funded in the fiscal year ending March 31, 2027. Remember that each of the BMP areas, nitrogen management, cover cropping and rotational grazing require a management plan, signed by a PAG or CCA. So don’t wait give your NBSCIA Coordinator, PAG or CCA a heads up if you require assistance.

Detailed program guidelines and the application process are available on the NBSCIA website:
<https://www.nbscia.ca/ofcaf-program-registration/>

For assistance with the application process, contact a member of the NBSCIA OFCAF Program Administration team: Stephen London (506) 392-0408 ofcaf.facf@nbscia.ca; David Walker (506) 461-6046 research@nbscia.ca; David Good (506) 391-9424 drgood449@gmail.com; Ray Carmichael (506) 276-3311 ofcafadmin@nbscia.ca

“Support for these activities has been provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Agricultural Climate Solutions – On-Farm Climate Action Fund”

NBSCIA 47th Annual General Meeting and Technical Workshop

NBSCIA will be hosting its 47th Annual General Meeting and Technical Workshop on March 12th and 13th at the Moncton Crowne Plaza. We are excited to welcome many experts and speakers to share their knowledge with producers and industry here in NB. You can see the event agenda on our website for more information about the presentation topics. A hotel block is also reserved until February 11th, which can be booked online or by calling (506) 854-6340. We look forward to welcoming producers from across the province as well as our 5 Farm of the Year nominees for the presentation banquet on March 12th.



[Hotel Block](#)

[Agenda](#)

[Register Today!](#)

Message from the NBSCIA President - John Bos

As we begin a new year, I'd like to extend best wishes to all our members and their families. With the days slowly getting longer, many of us are already looking ahead to the upcoming cropping season—reviewing plans, ordering crop inputs and preparing for the work that lies ahead in the fields.

This year also marks a new season for the On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF) with some welcome additions and improvements. New inclusions such as provisions for electronic fencing and drones, along with positive changes to land-use restrictions related to legumes, will provide more flexibility and opportunities for producers across the province.

Several regional associations have already held their Annual General Meetings, while others are coming up soon. If your region hasn't yet met, I encourage you to take part. These meetings are an important opportunity to stay engaged, share ideas and celebrate local achievements, including local Farm of the Year presentations.

Looking ahead, the Provincial AGM and Technical Workshop will take place March 12–13 in Moncton. Additional details can be found elsewhere in this newsletter. I strongly encourage members to attend—these events offer excellent presentations and a chance to connect with our many agricultural industry partners by visiting their booths.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Moncton and wish you all a successful and productive year ahead.

John Bos
President
NB Soil and Crop Improvement Association



The Canadian Forage and Grassland Association (CFGGA) hosted its 16th annual conference in Fredericton, New Brunswick, in November. With the theme Greener Horizons: Technological Innovations in Forage and Grassland Management, this year's event was held in partnership with the CFGGA's provincial partner, the New Brunswick Soil and Crop Improvement Association (NBSCIA), and highlighted the cutting-edge advancements shaping the future of sustainable agriculture.



Photo source: CFGGA

The event included:

- two concurrent pre-conference workshops – the Grasslands Stakeholder Summit and the Advanced Grazing Mentorship Workshop
- two full days of expert-led sessions exploring smart tech, pasture strategies and innovations in forage management systems
- an industry trade show
- presentation of the CFGGA's 2025 Leadership Award
- farm tours at three innovative family farms that showcase integrated crop and livestock systems, sustainable forage management and regionally adapted practices
- numerous networking opportunities including a Building Bridges Social bring that brought together those who have an impact on forage, pasture and grasslands to network and build stronger connections.

Check out the CFGGA blog (<https://www.canadianfga.ca/en/news/cfga-blog/recent/>) for conference summaries. Online access to recordings of all the conference sessions are available free to those who registered for the conference as well as for purchase. Email info@canadianfga.ca for more information.

IYRP

It's International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, a United Nations-designated global initiative for 2026 that highlights the importance of rangelands and the pastoralist communities who depend on them. The CFGGA is hosting bi-weekly Zoom meetings to bring together people and organizations interested in doing activities to celebrate the IYRP. If you would like to join the meetings, please email info@canadianfga.ca.

Female graziers, ranchers and farmers across Canada, join the CFGGA as it hosts a National Zoom Watch Party to participate in a special IYRP event, the North American Regional Women Pastoralist Gathering, on Feb. 7 from 9 am to 5 pm PST. Bring your coffee and your slippers and pull up a chair as we listen in and then have Canadian-wide sharing and discussions around key topics mentioned in the presentations. Build networks, share ideas and discuss the common challenges facing women in ag and connect with fellow female graziers, ranchers and farmers across Canada.

Register here: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/G6X-RNUrREuraM2wA3kGDA>. Translation will be provided for Francophone listeners.



LIVING LAB
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LLNB upcoming events and recent news

Living Lab New Brunswick (LLNB) is busy planning its 2026 agronomy training which will take place in Moncton on March 11. Speakers will explore a full spectrum of climate-smart and data-driven farm management tools, from sustainability reporting and advanced software integrations to nutrient stewardship, profitability impacts and precision agronomy. The sessions will highlight practical strategies for whole farm planning, soil and manure management and cropping system design, culminating in a panel discussion on executing advanced, resilient production systems. Register here <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/2026-llnb-agronomy-training-tickets-1981856021711?aff=oddtcreator>.



Photo source: NBLL

Stewardship event

LLNB was also pleased to participate in Cultivating Connections: Stories of Farmers Protecting Nature at Hampton High School on Jan. 23. Organized by Nature New Brunswick, this event brought together farmers, community members and groups, including LLNB partner the Kennebecasis Watershed Restoration Committee, to hear firsthand how local farmers are restoring habitat, protecting soil and water and supporting biodiversity. The evening included screenings of the films *Homes on the Range* and *Guardians of the Grasslands* and offered an opportunity for farmers to access support to kick-start sustainable, nature-friendly practices on their farms.

Recent news

LLNB was in Fredericton Jan. 13 to 16 for several important events, including a day of strategic planning, the LLNB annual update and workshop and the Agricultural Alliance of New Brunswick's (AANB) 20th annual general meeting.

Dr. Heather Bruce opened the first day with an overview of Dalhousie University's 2025–2030 Faculty of Agriculture strategic plan, highlighting priorities such as community engagement, experiential learning, stronger programs and enhanced research and partnerships. As well, LLNB project manager Cedric MacLeod led a conversation on building a digital strategy for Atlantic Canada. Participants explored key pillars including tech adoption, data governance, workforce development and financial incentives, while also examining governance, collaboration and the data-management challenges.

The agenda for Jan. 14 covered a full review of LLNB's progress, including updates on knowledge transfer, science team reporting, cost-of-production analysis and GHG data collection, along with an introduction to digital agriculture and the use of HOLOS for farm-level planning. The afternoon shifted to understanding global and local barriers to BMP adoption, followed by a workshop focused on overcoming those barriers in the Atlantic region.

On Jan. 15 and 16, LLNB was pleased to join AANB's annual meeting. Discussions focused on sector challenges, policy updates and opportunities to strengthen the province's agricultural competitiveness.

Learn more: <https://lvnbll.ca/>



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Regional Updates

Northshore Update

by Gabrielle Schenkels

Late fall and winter in Northern New Brunswick was variable at best. Many water tables and reservoirs, like ponds and marshlands, remain quite low compared to normal years. The winter seems to be making up for the lack of last summer's precipitation with winter rains, making for another worry for farmers: winterkill. Especially in crops like alfalfa, which is at risk of both heaving of the crown and ice sheets smothering the plant. It is a good idea to take stock of the ice and snow deposits on your fields to check for damage come spring. In more remote fields, like blueberries, you can use the [Google Earth Aerial Maps from NBDAAF Crop Department](#). These maps track satellite images every couple weeks, so you can keep an eye on your field snow coverage from afar.

Overall, I saw most fall seeded crops germinate without much trouble or delay from the dry soils. Come the spring growing season, we will be able to see if there will be long term effects from this year's drought. I hope to see all our members at the upcoming AGM in Moncton on March 12-13th, and for the Farm of the Year banquet on March 12th as well!



No-till winter wheat planted into barley stubble, in early November

Carleton January Update

by Andrew Sytsma

NBSCIA began a three-year starter nitrogen in soybean trial in Williamstown last year. In this project, the effect of starter nitrogen by planting date is looked at. In theory, starter nitrogen should have less of an impact when planting date gets later, since soil temperature increases and more nitrogen is available from organic matter in the soil before nodulation occurs. There were three planting dates: May 14th, May 28th and June 13th to line up with relatively early, medium and late planting dates, respectively. Each planting date had a plot with 27 pounds per acre of starter nitrogen applied and another plot with zero-nitrogen. The table below summarizes the results:

Treatment	Yield @ 13% moisture (tonnes/ac)	Yield increase from N compared to corresponding zero-N (%)	Crude Protein % (dry matter basis)	Test Weight (kg/hL)	Revenue minus N cost @ \$500/tonne soybean price in January 2026
Early – N	0.87	2.3	35.4	71	385
Early – Zero N	0.85	-	34.7	70	424
Middle – N	0.72	9.1	36.1	73	309
Middle – Zero N	0.66	-	35.0	75	330
Late – N	0.59	0	35.1	73	244
Late – Zero N	0.59	-	35.5	73	294

The dry summer may have been a major factor in the low yields observed. In this low yield situation, the starter nitrogen may have given some yield bumps in the early and middle planting dates but not enough to pay for the fertilizer. Higher yield and commodity prices would have resulted in profit from starter nitrogen only in the middle planting date trial so, overall, there are no clear conclusions yet if starter nitrogen is always beneficial in soybean production or not. This highlights the importance of multiple years of testing.

The full project report will be available on the New Brunswick Soil and Crop Improvement Association (NBSCIA) website <https://nbscia.ca/fact-sheets-reports/>. Previous reports of NBSCIA research projects can also be found on the website.

Moncton January Update

by Beverly Booth

Hello everyone! I hope calving season is going well.

This past year has been one for the records. Even though we experienced a severe drought, the field work continued. I was very busy with nutrient management planning and was consistent with that throughout the fall months. I formulated nutrient recommendations to match soil test results which have accounted for a large portion of my day-to-day tasks. I created many field maps for producers with acreages which are necessary for various funding programs. I installed soil temperature sensors at the two-inch depth for the New Brunswick Soil & Crop Improvement Association (NBSCIA) weather stations in the Moncton and Chignecto regions. I also had the opportunity to attend the Horticultural Congress in early December along with two of my colleagues. We manned the NBSCIA trade show booth and answered questions from the public. We successfully gained five new members from promoting our organization at this event.

I planned for upcoming workshops as well as the provincial Annual General Meeting (AGM) happening March 12th – 13th at the Crowne Plaza in Moncton. I have also been able to help a few of my producers with updating Environmental Farm Plans (EFPs) and lastly, I want to say that I have been fortunate to meet with many of the producers in my area from one end of the region to the other.

The past few months have been very busy with planning workshops and meetings all over New Brunswick. A few that I feel need to be shared more in depth are the Moncton local Annual General Meeting (AGM) and the Chignecto Soil and Crop banquet. The Moncton AGM was held on Jan 15th at the Salisbury Legion where Intervale Dairy Farm Ltd – Ryan, Albert and Arlene Wesselius were recognized as Farm of the Year in the Moncton region. The Wesselius family presented on the day-to-day activities that make their farm so successful. The meal at this event was sponsored by South Eastern Farmers Co-op, Cavendish Agri-Services and the Moncton Soil & Crop Club.

The Chignecto Soil and Crop banquet was held on January 31st at the Sackville Legion and I am proud to say this is always a sold-out event with 150 attendees. Many people enjoy this event as there is a door prize for each individual, the meal is fantastic and the Chignecto Farm of the Year recipient provides a presentation about the family operation. This year's award was presented to Jakob's Energy Fruit Farm and sponsored by Cavendish Agri-Services.

A cover crop workshop was held on January 29th at the 4-Points hotel in Moncton. We had guest speakers Woody Van Arkel, a cover crop expert from Ontario as well as Jason Wells, Forage Specialist, New Brunswick Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries (NBDAAF) to discuss his alfalfa with a corn companion project.

The registration link for the provincial AGM and the hotel booking link have been emailed out and can also be found on our website at <https://nbscia.ca/event/47th-annual-nbscia-agm-and-technical-workshop/>. Please keep in mind that the group rate for the hotel booking ends February 11th so please book as soon as possible to ensure the best price.

I look forward to working with you this year to improve the soil and crop sustainability in New Brunswick and we will be back to doing field work before you know it. I can't wait!

Don't hesitate to contact me at 506-364-2853 or moncton@nbscia.ca for any of your soil or crop needs!

Winter Update from the Central Region

by Andrea Versloot

Happy New Year! I hope you had an enjoyable and safe holiday and are comfortably back into your normal routines. So far, we have experienced a mild winter with fluctuating temperatures that have made everything very icy. I am hoping that the fall planted cover crops and cereals are able to withstand the lack of snow cover we have when the temperatures drop.

The past few months have been busy with projects and assisting producers with their management plans for funding applications. The fall soil and grain corn samples were collected in November for the Biological Nitrogen Mineralization project I am working on with the New Brunswick Soil & Crop Improvement Association (NBSCIA) in collaboration with Living Labs New Brunswick.

This project has now had 2 years of data collected and my colleagues Joseph Graham, Dave Walker and I are working on compiling a report to summarize the results. This data is to be presented at the NBSCIA Provincial Annual Meeting in March.

The Central Soil & Crop Annual Meeting took place at the Fredericton Inn on January 26th. This meeting featured a cover crop workshop by Laurent (Woody) Van Arkel and a presentation by Jason Wells, New Brunswick Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries (NBDAAF) on the Establishing Alfalfa with a Corn Companion Crop project. In addition to these presentations, Leigha Beckwith, NBDAAF gave an update on projects that have been completed on farms through the various provincial programs and Waygood Farm provided a presentation about their farm as the recipient of the local Soil & Crop Farm of the Year award for 2025. I would like to congratulate the Waygoods once again for their efforts in improving soil and crop sustainability on their farm.

As most of you know, I am off on maternity leave starting February 9th, or sooner if plans change. I wish all the best for you this coming year and hope that you experience a successful growing season. In my absence, Andrew Sytsma and Lauren Boonstoppel will be covering the Central Region and the rest of the Soil & Crop team is always available to help, so don't hesitate to reach out.

Kings County Winter Update

by Joseph Graham

Going into the holiday season Kings County has been busy planning events and preparing for local and provincial Annual General Meetings (AGMs). Our focus is to always try and bring speakers or demos of interest to our membership. This coming growing season we will host our Tillage Day, where last season we hosted a seed and soil focused event. The local will once again work towards an event of interest to our local membership.

Locally, this past fall, the Kings County Soil & Crop Improvement Association (KCSCIA) hosted a drone demo day at Lonsview farm. Drone Spray Canada demoed the new DJI T100 drone. It was impressive, and the water it sprayed was probably the most moisture the crops had seen in months. Going forward, I expect drones to become a very important part of the agriculture industry. The challenge for everyone will be keeping up with how quickly it is advancing and evolving.

Speaking further on this drone topic, I was happy to be invited as a guest speaker at the Canadian Forage and Grassland Association (CFGA) Annual Conference. The conference was held in Fredericton on Nov 18th-Nov 21st. It was an amazing event, with some incredible presentations. I will hopefully have a few mins to present at the NBSCIA AGM to share some of the mapping done with drone photography.

Going forward, locally we will be hosting our AGM and cover cropping event on January 29th, details are emailed to all members. We also were happy to host Bryce Geisel on Jan 14th. Bryce is a lead agronomist with Koch Fertilizer Canada. He spoke in great detail about nitrogen inhibitors and keeping nitrogen where you want it. This presentation and the upcoming cover crop event are possible because of the OFCAF funding NBSCIA receives to train producers.

Lastly, I wish everyone a happy new year. I hope to see many of you at the provincial AGM which our staff are busy planning for.



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Preliminary winter assessment in northwestern NB

by Jean-Mars Jean-François

The beginning of 2026 is marked by a stable winter in northwestern New Brunswick. Since the end of November 2025, cold and relatively consistent temperatures, combined with steady snow accumulation, have allowed for the formation of a continuous snow cover on agricultural land. Despite some operational constraints, these conditions are generally considered agronomically favorable and reassuring for the upcoming growing season. Indeed, the snowpack plays a vital role in protecting agricultural soils. Acting as thermal insulation, it limits the effects of freeze-thaw cycles, preserves soil structure, and reduces the survival of certain pathogens. Cover crops and winter wheat benefit greatly from this protection. Producers hope that these conditions will continue until the spring thaw, as a durable cover promotes soil moisture retention, reduces the risk of erosion and allows for a good start to crops in spring 2026. No winter damage has been reported so far.

In the livestock sector, the first part of winter is progressing satisfactorily. Stable weather conditions are limiting animal stress and facilitating herd management. Thanks to rigorous forage stock planning in the fall, hay and silage reserves are considered sufficient to meet livestock needs until the end of spring 2026, although producers remain attentive to evolving weather conditions. The potato sector is also showing stability, based on current tuber prices. Storage conditions are adequate, and no major quality issues have been observed. However, continuous monitoring of temperature, humidity, and ventilation remains essential to preserve the market value of the tubers until they reach the market. Economically, the outlook remains uncertain. Current grain prices continue to be influenced by international competition and imports from major exporting countries, which is putting pressure on the margins of regional farms. Uncertainties related to US trade policies also add a risk factor, making financial prudence and rigorous planning essential. Winter is also a strategic period for farm management. Producers use this time to prepare for the 2026 season, analyze the previous season, plan crop rotations, order seeds, and maintain machinery. Participation in training and technical meetings also contributes to the continuous improvement of practices.

Overall, the outlook for the 2026 agricultural season remains cautious yet encouraging. If spring conditions prove favorable and the economic environment stabilizes, producers in northwestern New Brunswick will be well positioned to begin the upcoming season under good conditions. This situation will rely in particular on careful planning, attentive management of human and material resources, and the ability of farms to continually adapt to changing climatic realities and the economic constraints of the agricultural sector.



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The Southwest Miramichi River in mid-January



Kings County Christmas



Cover Crop Workshop in Fredericton, NB



Andrew and Dave collecting corn samples



Blueberries in the Northeast in late fall



Gabrielle, Beverly and Andrea at the New Brunswick Hort Congress

Service Description

Geomatic Package

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Custom mapping packages include soil status maps, target balance maps, variable rate application maps, GPS work, perimeter mapping, area determination, and crop yield determination.

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