

Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee

ACTIVITY PLAN

April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2011



June 16, 2008

Honourable Kathy Dunderdale
Minister of Natural Resources
Natural Resources Building
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NL
A1B 4J6

Dear Minister:

In accordance with the provisions of the *Transparency and Accountability Act* for category 3 public bodies I am pleased to submit the Performance-Based Activity Plan for the Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee. This Activity Plan covers the period April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2011.

The Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee has a mandate to:

- (a) Ensure public awareness of government's agricultural land consolidation program;
- (b) Evaluate applications for land acquisition by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador under the agricultural land consolidation program based on established guidelines and policies; and
- (c) Facilitate and conclude negotiations for a land purchase and sale agreement for applications that meet program criteria.

The Committee has reviewed all Strategic Directions from the Minister of Natural Resources and has prepared this Plan to support improved sustainable resource development and usage for the long term benefit of residents of the province and to support increased agriculture and agrifoods development and diversification.

My signature below is on behalf of the Land Consolidation Review Committee and is indicative of the Committee's accountability for the preparation of this Plan and the achievement of its objectives.

Respectfully submitted,



Brian Murphy
Chairperson

Table of Contents

Overview..... 1

Mandate..... 2

Values 3

Primary Clients 4

Vision and Mission 4

Objectives 5

Appendix A..... 6

Overview

There are significant growth opportunities in the agriculture sector in Newfoundland and Labrador. Only 3% of beef and 15% of root crops consumed by Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are produced here. Furthermore, as a result of an additional 31 million litres in industrial milk quota negotiated in 2001 and to be developed over the next 8 years, specifically for the production of such dairy products as cheeses and yogurts, there is an opportunity to double the Province's total milk production.

The availability of suitable farm land is one of the more critical challenges facing the agriculture and agrifoods industry. In order to position this industry to take advantage of the tremendous growth opportunities, farmland has to be made available. The expansion and development of the land base will provide the root crop sector with the means to increase local production and create opportunities to increase the consumption of locally-grown goods. For the dairy sector, it will mean having access to more land for forage production.

The Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee administers the land consolidation program designed to provide the opportunity for non-farmer landowners and retiring farmers to sell their granted land to the provincial government. In turn, government makes this land available to existing commercial farmers, part-time farmers and new entrants who are in need of additional lands.

The Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee has one member from the Department of Natural Resources, one member from the Department of Transportation and Works, a representative from industry and a chairperson from the public at large. The current members are: Randy Ricketts (Department of Natural Resources); Martin Balodis (Department of Transportation and Works); Robert Walsh (industry); and Brian Murphy (Chairperson). Raymond Tucker (Department of Natural Resources) is the Committee's secretary, researcher/assessor who maintains the files.

The Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee receives operational support from the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency. Employees of the Agency perform many day to day administrative functions. The agricultural land consolidation program is currently funded by the Agency based on a \$17.5 million, five year budget covering the period April 1, 2005 until March 31, 2010.



Mandate

The Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee has a mandate to:

- (a) Ensure public awareness of government's land consolidation program;
- (b) Evaluate applications for land acquisition by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador under the land consolidation program based on established guidelines and policies; and
- (c) Facilitate and conclude negotiations for a land purchase and sale agreement for applications that meet criteria.



Values

The Land Consolidation Review Committee performs its duties within the following core values:

Integrity - Each individual will be honest, dependable, fair, credible and trustworthy. They will openly acknowledge mistakes, seek to correct them and learn from them.

Respect and Professionalism - Each individual will apply program guidelines and policies equitably to stakeholders. They will serve our client groups to the fullest extent possible.

Timeliness - Each individual will meet specified deadlines in accordance with priorities and follow through on their commitments.

Collaboration - Each individual will seek the opinions and ideas of others in the application of supporting legislation and policies.

Innovation - Each individual will demonstrate initiative and flexibility in responding to challenges and change.

Primary Clients

The clients of the Land Consolidation Review Committee are members of the public who wish to sell or relinquish land to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for agricultural purposes.

Vision and Mission

The Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee has established a vision and mission to guide its activities during the April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2011 planning period and into successive planning cycles.

Vision

The vision of the Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee is of a Province that realizes the full benefit from its agrifood resources in a sustainable manner.

Mission

To prepare the mission of the Agricultural Land Consolidation Review Committee, the Committee considered that the province has many opportunities for expansion of agricultural and agrifoods production. The consolidation of agricultural land will help achieve adequate economies of scale in operation needed to sustain current operations and make agricultural production more feasible for new entrants. Thereby, the Committee contributes to the Strategic Directions of the Minister responsible for the Department of Natural Resources to: work toward the sustainable development of its natural resources for the long term benefit of residents of the province; and to work toward increased agriculture and agrifoods development and diversification.

By March 31, 2011, the Land Consolidation Review Committee will have identified and facilitated land consolidation opportunities in support of sustainable agriculture and agrifoods resource development.

Measure: Identified and facilitated land consolidation

Indicators:

- Maintained statistics of applications received
- Properties purchased and made available for allocation as Crown Land Leases

Objectives

The Land Consolidation Review Committee facilitates purchases of land by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador for resale to farmers based on guidelines for the land consolidation program. The process involves a periodic public notice to submit an application for agriculture land purchase. Applications are reviewed by the Committee to determine whether the land is suitable for agricultural purposes and is free of zoning issues. Applicants wishing to sell suitable land are invited to commence negotiations for a purchase and sale agreement. A number of third parties are involved in the process, such as land appraisers, land surveyors and lawyers. An environmental assessment may be required.

The Land Consolidation Review Committee considered the Strategic Directions of the Minister of Natural Resources to work toward improved sustainable resource development and usage for the long term benefit of residents of the province and to work toward increased agriculture and agrifoods development and diversification. See Appendix A for further details. The following area has been identified as the key priority of the Committee for the three year period April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2011. The objective below applies to each year covered by this Plan and will be reported on in relevant annual reports.

Issue 1: Land Consolidation

Objective: The Land Consolidation Review Committee will have processed applications under the Land Consolidation Program.

Measure: Processed applications

Indicators:

- Posted public notices and informed stakeholders of the Program
- Reviewed applications for eligibility based on guidelines
- Initiated negotiations with eligible applicants

Appendix A

Strategic Directions

Strategic directions are the articulation of desired physical, social or economic outcomes and normally require action by more than one government entity. These directions are generally communicated by government through platform documents, Throne and Budget Speeches, policy documents and other communiqués. The *Transparency and Accountability Act* requires departments and public bodies to take into account these strategic directions in the preparation of their performance-based plans. This action will facilitate the integration of planning practices across government and will ensure that all entities are moving forward on key commitments.

The Land Consolidation Review Committee considered the Strategic Directions of the Minister responsible for the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency in preparation of its April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2011 Activity Plan.

The following excerpt from the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency's Strategic Plan 2008-11 is relevant to the Land Consolidation Review Committee in the development of its Activity Plan. For a full list of the Strategic Directions of the Minister Responsible for the Forestry and Agrifoods Agency, please contact the Agency.

1. Title: Sustainable Forestry, Agriculture and Agrifoods Resource Development

Outcome: Improved sustainable resource development and usage for the long term benefit of residents of the province.

This outcome supports the policy direction of Government and requires systemic intervention by the Land Consolidation Review Committee in the following areas:

Strategic Direction Component (Focus Area)	This direction is ...	
	addressed in the entity's Activity Plan	not applicable
Forest sector management		√
Agrifoods sector management	√	
Legislative and regulatory framework		√
Forest sector research and development		√
Agrifoods sector research and development		√

2. Title: Forestry, Agriculture and Agrifoods Development and Diversification

Outcome: Increased Forestry, Agrifoods and Agriculture development and diversification.

This outcome supports the policy direction of Government and requires systemic intervention by the Land Consolidation Review Committee in the following areas:

Strategic Direction Component (Focus Area)	This direction is ...	
	addressed in the entity's Activity Plan	not applicable
Access to farm capital	√	
Primary agriculture production	√	
Value added and secondary production	√	
Agriculture development and promotion		√
Research and development		√
Agricultural land development	√	
Forest sector competitiveness		√