



National Farmers Union
Union Nationale des Fermiers



March 22, 2018

To: The Membership of NFU District 1, Region 1

District Convention - Our annual District Convention will be held on **Tuesday, April 3** at the Milton Community Hall in North Milton (7 New Glasgow Rd., corner of Rte. 7 and 224). Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. and the meeting will be called to order at 10:00 a.m. The registration fee is \$20 per person and this includes a meal at noon. Adjournment is planned for 4:00 p.m. (The storm date is Thursday, April 5). Assistance is available to those members who require child care in order to attend the Convention. If this is needed, please call Edith Ling at 902-368-1262.

The Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Robert Henderson will attend and will address the delegates following the noon meal. Hon. Richard Brown, Minister of Communities, Land and Environment will speak to the delegates on the Lands Protection Act. I am sure our members will have lots of questions for Mr. Brown following his presentation. He is also Minister responsible for the Water Act, holding ponds, high capacity wells, etc.

We will also have a presentation on the trends in the level of organic matter in Island soils. This will be delivered by Judith Nyiraneza who is a Research Scientist with Agriculture Canada in Charlottetown.

We will be considering resolutions at the District Convention and members are encouraged to submit resolutions to the Resolutions Committee prior to Convention. The members of this Committee are: J.P. Hendricken, Gordon Carter and Randal MacFarlane.

Resolutions are a very important part of any District Convention. One of the excellent things about the NFU is the fact that members at the grass roots level are able to submit resolutions which can become national policy of the NFU (if the resolutions are national in scope and are passed at the District, Regional and National levels). I would expect that the Locals will hold meetings prior to the District Convention and resolutions to go forward to the District Convention can be dealt with at that time. Of course, members can also submit resolutions to the Resolutions Committee on the day of the Convention as well.

Elections for the positions of District Director, Women's District Director and Youth District Director will take place at the Convention. Please make time to attend this Convention and take part in developing policy and direction for our organization in the days ahead.

Farm and Food Care - The NFU has serious concerns about this program which was instituted with \$100,000 of provincial funds (for the first year). The Board of this organization includes representatives of Sobeys, Cavendish Farms, two Deputy Ministers, along with a minority of farmers, ADL, Agricultural Awareness Committee, Canadian Centre for Food Integrity, Potato Board, and a Dairy Farmers of PEI representative. Another Government study previously found that a very high percentage of Islanders already have a moderate to high level of trust in

Island farmers. The group will also help in the distribution of the magazine "The Real Dirt on Farming". The NFU sees this whole endeavour as a way to gloss over the real issues of farming from the survival of family farms, the load of debt farmers are carrying, to land and water issues, etc., etc. Those at the table who have the loudest voices, i.e. government and agri-business will be the ones whose voices and actions will prevail. It would seem that there are much better ways to spend \$100,000 i.e. dealing with production issues, regulations, land and water issues.

Fuel Agreement - On March 7, 2018 the NFU Collective Bargaining Committee was successful in negotiating a fuel agreement for NFU members with Island Petroleum Ltd. The same program will apply for 2018 as in the year previous and the discount will be applied at the time of delivery of the fuel. The company has plans to be in the propane distribution business within a year so it is possible we can negotiate a deal for propane users as well at that time. The important part to remember is that **in order to receive the discount, please make sure that Island Petroleum knows you are a NFU Member.**

Fertilizer Agreement - The Collective Bargaining Committee will soon be negotiating an agreement on fertilizer for NFU members for 2018. Details will follow.

Meeting with Minister of Agriculture & Fisheries - The NFU had a meeting in February with the new Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Hon. Robert Henderson. This introductory meeting included a lesson on the history and philosophy of the National Farmers Union. Other topics discussed were the Farm and Food Care program, the issue of multi-faceted corporations buying up large tracts of land, the water act - holding ponds and wells. We are pleased to see in his Mandate that the Minister is responsible to promote environmental stewardship - this surely includes the land and water.

Congratulations to NFU members Allan, Coleen and Jeff MacQuarrie of MacTalla Farms in Bonshaw on winning the Holstein Canada Master Breeders Award recently. This award was started in 1929 and since that time there have only been nineteen farms in PEI to receive it. It is great to see a deserving Island farm family receive this highly-regarded award.

Select Standing Committee on Communities, Land and Environment - On November 2, 2017 Reg Phelan and myself met with this Committee to bring them up to date on the ways large amounts of Island farmland are being gobbled up. The Committee passed a motion to ask Cavendish Farms, Vanco Farms and the Asian Investors group to appear before a future Committee meeting to discuss their land holdings.

It is quite interesting to know that officials of the Dept. of Environment have no idea how many agricultural irrigation ponds have been put in and no idea where they are located. They also have no idea on the number of new low capacity wells which have been dug to fill the ponds. This is not surprising as there were no regulations governing the construction of the ponds - just simply suggestions or "recommendations".

I hope to see you all at the District Convention on April 3, 2108.

Douglas Campbell, District Director, telephone 902-436-2518

