



National Farmers Union Union Nationale des Fermiers



NFU District 1, Region 1 Newsletter January 31, 2019

Hello to all members of the National Farmers Union in District 1, Region 1 (PEI) and a special welcome to new members who have joined this organization over the past number of months. The past months have been very busy for the NFU District Board as we try to keep abreast of the occurrences with regard to land purchases by large corporations.

District Convention - Will be held at Milton Hall on **Tuesday, March 19** (March 21 is storm date).

National Convention - Nine members from PEI attended the 49th annual NFU Convention which was held in Saskatoon in late November. The theme was Food Sovereignty and many speakers and panels dealt with this subject. Newly-elected National officers include Katie Ward as President; Toby Malloy, Women's President; Stuart Oke, Youth President; Cam Goff, 1st Vice President (Policy); Stewart Wells, 2nd Vice President (Operations), Coral Sproule, Women's Vice President and Jessie MacInnis is the Youth Vice President. Our member on the National Board is Reg Phelan. Women's Advisory Committee member is Carinna Phillips.

(Note from Edith Ling, Women's District Director. I am very happy to tell you that the recipient of the Grass Roots Award at our National Convention in Saskatoon was our District Director, Doug Campbell. As you know, Doug is a very hard working District Director and this recognition is richly deserved by him. It also reflects the support he receives from his wife, Kathy and family). The award is given for exemplary leadership and work within the NFU.

50th Anniversary Convention - will be held in Winnipeg in late November 2019, the place where the NFU began in 1969. Plans are in progress to have a fitting convention and celebration in Winnipeg, and I hope you will be able to attend.

Land - As mentioned earlier, a lot of our time and effort in past months has centered on the Lands Protection Act and the ways in which large corporations in particular have been allowed to use loopholes in the legislation to amass large acreages of land. We held several meetings with the Minister responsible, Hon. Richard Brown to emphasize to him the seriousness of the situation. We have also asked that the IRAC website be made much more user-friendly so that the general public can see the various land transfers taking place. We have also asked that the IRAC website display what IRAC's recommendation to Executive Council (Cabinet) was on each transaction. At present, the only information given is the Executive Council decision so it is impossible to find out what IRAC recommended on each transaction. Mr. Brown told us last spring that he was ordering IRAC to conduct a land review which would show the amount of land owned by non-residents and corporations. We tried all summer to get a copy of the terms of reference for this study but this document was not available until November. To say the least, it is a very vague and shallow terms of reference. We have since found out that Mr.

Brown's Department has come up with some figures on land holdings which they have sent to IRAC for verification. (IRAC was too busy with the amalgamation issue to do the study, we are told). These figures are expected sometime this month. At the time of writing this newsletter, we are investigating a purported sale of a large tract of land in Prince County.

Land Forum - It would appear the best way to have necessary changes made to the Lands Protection Act would be for the general public to become much more knowledgeable and vocal about what is going on. To this end, the Coalition for the Protection of PEI Land (of which the NFU is a member) is planning a public forum on land for Saturday afternoon, February 23, 2019 at the Farm Center, Charlottetown at 1:30 p.m. (Storm date is March 16, 2019). Senator Diane Griffin has been booked to speak on land grabbing on the national scope. Other panelists are Ian Petrie and myself (Doug Campbell). The title of the forum is "Land Grabbing on PEI: How the Lands Protection Act is Being Violated and Why Islanders Should Be Concerned". Plan now to attend.

Trade Negotiations - The NFU is very concerned about the outcome of the USMCA (US, Mexico, Canada Agreement), particularly as it affects supply-managed commodities. Class 6 and 7 milk pricing in this deal will be ended and Americans will again be able to flood the market with discounted diafiltered milk. Canadian dairy farmers will be unable to compete with this. During the TPP negotiations, Canada gave away 3.25% of our domestic market in dairy, poultry and eggs. Now the USMCA deal has resulted in giving another 3.25% of our market to the United States. Compensation for dairy farmers amounts to giving money to farmers who expand their operations, use more modern technology, etc. Dairy farmers never wanted taxpayers' money in the form of subsidies - all they wanted was the supply management program they had initially. Any forthcoming compensation should be available to all dairy farmers.

Study on Environmental Protection and Species At Risk - Dr. Carolyn Peach Brown, UPEI Professor is conducting this study and is interested in gaining the perspective of young farmers. If you are interested, call Dr. Peach Brown at 902-620-5066 or email hcbrown@upei.ca .

Rural Coalition - This coalition to fight amalgamation of rural communities is attempting to raise funds to go forward with a constitutional challenge on this issue. Lawyers have worked for free to put together the challenge. Obviously the cost of Court Action will have to be paid and the Coalition has been given a figure of \$15,000 for this - a greatly reduced figure. If the challenge is successful, it would make the Municipal Governance Act illegal. The goal now is to raise the money for the Court Action. Memberships are available for \$10 and can be sent to Rural Coalition of PEI, P. O. Box 152, Georgetown, P. E. I. COA 1L0. Be sure to include your name and address

Newsletters by Email - As a cost saving measure, members with email addresses will now receive newsletters that way. If you wish to still receive a mailed copy, please call District Secretary, Dan Murphy at 902-954-0803 or email dmurphypei@gmail.com .

Watch for the next newsletter with details of our annual District Convention on March 19.

Douglas Campbell, NFU District Director

