



The Honourable Iain Rankin was first elected to the Nova Scotia House of Assembly as MLA for Timberlea-Prospect in 2013 and was re-elected in 2017. He has served as the Minister of Environment and Minister of Lands and Forestry. (Photo courtesy NS Legislature)

Rankin Releases Agriculture Sector Plan

Iain Rankin, MLA Timberlea-Prospect and a candidate for the leadership of the Nova Scotia Liberal Party, has released a plan for the agricultural sector that focuses on helping farmers manage the risks of extreme events, enhancing food security, increasing consumption of local food, improving innovation and expanding markets for Nova Scotia's agri-food products.

"The Nova Scotia agricultural sector is important to both rural and urban Nova Scotia, providing significant employment in our rural communities and feeding residents in all parts of the province," Mr. Rankin said. "In a time of increased severe weather events it is clear that governments have to work with farmers, producers, and processors to help them manage risks beyond their control. The COVID-19 crisis itself increased awareness of the importance of food security as producers faced labour uncertainty and consumers sought more locally produced food," he added.

As Premier of Nova Scotia Iain will: Help Farmers Manage

the Risks of Extreme Events; Enhance Food Security by working with producers and the agriculture industry to develop a provincial strategy for season-extension, with the goal of increasing year-round food production and offsetting imports. He plans to make the Nourishing Communities pilot program under the Department of Communities, Culture, and Heritage permanent with a provincial contribution each year. The program helps support some of Nova Scotia's most vulnerable residents by both providing access to healthy foods via farmers markets and supporting local producers. He will also support increased participation among African Nova Scotians in the province's thriving farming sector through education, mentorships and support for social enterprises as was outlined in the "Count Us In" report.

Increased Consumption of Local Food will be accomplished by working with an established partner like Nourish Nova Scotia to expand access to healthy food choices in Nova Scotia's schools and

mandate an increased focus on locally produced food for school meal programs and work to get more local food into other public institutions like hospitals and universities.

Science, research and innovation are all important to improve productivity, adapt to climate change and increase value-added agricultural production. There is tremendous work being done in research labs at Perennia, Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture, NSCC, CBU and Acadia University that are creating new opportunities for food production and processing. The next step is to expand technology to reduce GHG emissions, like that at Den Haan Greenhouses in Annapolis County where LED lighting increased yields by 25-30% while reducing their carbon footprint. Make the existing Green Fund from Cap and Trade legislation eligible for clean agriculture technology investment that reduces emissions in the agriculture sector, helps to extend the growing seasons and strengthens food security.

Rankin's plan will focus on expanding world markets.

Nova Scotia is the world's largest supplier of frozen wild blueberries and Nova Scotia agri-food products are exported to 83 countries around the world, representing the province's third largest export category. Those markets are not going away, and after COVID-19 he will work to double-down on trade missions to continue to expand opportunities for producers in these export markets. He feels it is important to identify market prospects within Canada by supporting the renewal of the Atlantic Trade and Growth Strategy agreement with the federal government to increase outbound and inbound trade missions to help N.S. farmers and processors explore new domestic, U.S., and international markets. He plans to work collaboratively with other provinces and territories, particularly the Atlantic provinces, to advance direct-to-consumer (DTC) agreements allowing Nova Scotia wine producers to send their world-class product across Canada and remove unnecessary interprovincial trade barriers.

Winter Hikes Fend Off Cabin Fever

Pandemic or not, fighting boredom and inactivity has always been a challenge in winter. Hike Nova Scotia says that one way to fend off cabin fever is to hike or snowshoe.

"We can glue ourselves to screens this winter or we can get off the couch and do something good for our bodies, minds and souls," says Janet Barlow, Hike NS Executive Director. "Getting out for a hike or a snowshoe is something most folks can do close to home on a local trail."

Hike NS and 15 host organizations partnered to offer the Winter Guided Hike Series in January, February and March. There are over 35 hikes scheduled province-wide. Hikes are led by local folks and participants qualify to win trail prizes. All of these free or low-cost hike or snowshoe events require pre-registration and will follow public health protocols, including social distancing.

The full schedule with registration details and directions is found at www.hikenovascotia.ca.



Hikes are listed by date and region and include various lengths and difficulty levels. For some of the guided hikes, snowshoes are provided. If there's no snow, events will go ahead as hikes.

Hike NS thanks its local partners for organizing the hikes on the ground as well as The Trail Shop, Goose Lane Editions and the NS Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage for their support. Hike NS encourages and promotes a growing hiking culture throughout the province,

striving to be the voice for those who hike, walk and snowshoe.

For those new to snowshoeing, there's an Intro to Snowshoeing webinar coming up on January 26. If you need snowshoes, easily find some to borrow, rent or buy using Hike NS's online guide, with over 65 listings. There are over 40 venues where you can borrow them for free. Learn more about the webinar and guide at www.hikenovascotia.ca.

Update Business Listings on NovaScotia.com

Tourism Nova Scotia offers eligible tourism businesses a free listing on Nova Scotia's official trip planning website, NovaScotia.com and in the Doers & Dreamers Travel Guide. To ensure your listings are accurate, updates or confirmation every year must be submitted every year. The deadline to update your listing(s) was Friday, January 22, 2021.

Listing confirmation update forms should be arriving in the mail shortly. While there may be some delays in the mail due to seasonal volumes, if you haven't received your form by early January, or have any questions, please contact the Doers and Dreamers production team at doersndreamers@novascotia.ca.

Please note, new eligibility and listing requirements were introduced in 2020. Listings must include:

- A link to your ratings on a peer review site i.e.: TripAdvisor, Expedia,



- Google Business, Yelp, etc.
 - Contact information including an address, phone number, and email
 - A written description of the experiences available at the business
 - Hours of operations and open/close dates Please note these can be adjusted/updated as needed throughout the year.
 - A minimum of one (1) to a maximum of 10, horizontal images sized 1920 pixels wide by 1080 pixels high
 - Photos for your NovaScotia.com listing can be emailed to novascotia@gmail.com
 - Accommodation listings must include rates, number of rooms, and available amenities
 - Fixed-roof accommodations must provide their Tourist Accommodation Registry number.
- More information about the Tourist Accommodations Registry can be found at <https://novascotia.ca/touristaccommodation/>
- If you do not provide the required information, your listing will be considered incomplete and will be removed from NovaScotia.com until all information is received.
- Please visit <http://www.tourismns.ca/marketeligibilitycriteria> for detailed information about category-specific listing requirements.

Deadline for the March issue of The Shoreline Journal is February 16.

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