



Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries

ANNUAL REPORT
2023-2024

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ANNUAL REPORT 2023–2024

Province of New Brunswick
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Transmittal Letters

FROM THE MINISTER TO THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

Her Honour The Honourable Brenda Murphy
Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick

May it please your Honour:

It is my privilege to submit the annual report of the
Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries,
Province of New Brunswick, for the fiscal year
April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable Pat Finnigan
Minister

FROM THE DEPUTY MINISTER TO THE MINISTER

Honourable Pat Finnigan
Minister of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries

Sir:

I am pleased to be able to present the annual report
describing operations of the Department of Agriculture,
Aquaculture and Fisheries for the fiscal year April 1, 2023,
to March 31, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,



Cathy LaRoche
Deputy Minister

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Minister's Message

The agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors are essential contributors to our province, and they are the heart of rural, coastal, and Indigenous communities in New Brunswick. They play a crucial role in the lives of New Brunswickers, creating good jobs, boosting our exports, and providing safe, high-quality food for our tables.

New Brunswickers working in these sectors have demonstrated their unwavering commitment to adapt and transform in the face of global challenges. We are committed to working alongside New Brunswickers in these sectors, ensuring they have access to a variety of programs and services to support them.

New Brunswick proudly produces and exports our delicious Canadian products worldwide. Our dedicated farmers and fishers work tirelessly to deliver high-quality food and beverages, all while preserving our land and waterways through sustainable practices.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone in these sectors and to the dedicated staff at the department. I look forward to collaborating to advance these vital sectors, both at home and around the world.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat Finnigan', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Honourable Pat Finnigan

Minister of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries

Deputy Minister's Message

New Brunswickers working in agriculture, aquaculture, and fisheries take immense pride in delivering top-quality products to customers locally and worldwide. These sectors are crucial to New Brunswick's economy, especially in coastal, rural, and Indigenous communities. In the past year, our agriculture sector achieved record-breaking farm cash receipts and agri-food exports for the second consecutive year, while maintaining our status as one of Canada's largest seafood exporters.

Growing these sectors remains a top priority, and we are committed to working with industries and stakeholders to help them reach their full potential. Their hard work produces the high quality food and beverages we have the privilege of enjoying everyday.

During the 2023–2024 reporting period, the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture, and Fisheries continued to deliver outstanding results, and provided the necessary resources and support for these sectors. In collaboration with the federal government, we invested more than \$50 million to modernize and grow New Brunswick's fish and seafood processing, harvesting, and aquaculture sectors, and \$7 million to strengthen and expand the agriculture sector. This included launching several new programs to support these sectors.

The department actively promoted New Brunswick products and the New Brunswick Deliciously Canadian brand in 23 export markets, including Canada. The department expanded its digital presence to promote the New Brunswick Food Basket and increased diversification efforts in international markets.

Additionally, in collaboration with the Departments of Justice and Public Safety, and Natural Resources and Energy Development, amendments were made to the *Trespass Act* and the *Fish and Wildlife Act* to deter trespassing on agricultural lands, thereby minimizing damage to lands and crops and improving biosecurity.

These examples highlight the department's diverse accomplishments in 2023–2024. I extend my sincere gratitude to departmental staff for their professionalism, dedication, and passion. This report clearly demonstrates that we have numerous reasons to be proud of our efforts and achievements.



Cathy LaRochelle
Deputy Minister

Government Priorities

Delivering for New Brunswickers

STRATEGY AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

The Government of New Brunswick (GNB) uses leading business practices to develop, communicate and review strategy. This provides the Public Service with a proven methodology to execute strategy, increase accountability and continuously drive improvement.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Our vision for 2023–2024 is a vibrant and sustainable New Brunswick. To make progress towards this vision, we must focus on our government’s priorities:

- Energize private sector
- Vibrant and sustainable communities
- Affordable, responsive and high-performing government
- Dependable public health care
- World-class education, and
- Environment

Highlights

During the 2023–2024 fiscal year, the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries focused on these government priorities through:

- Implementing the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a new five-year federal-provincial-territorial cost shared suite of targeted programs to strengthen the competitiveness, sustainability, innovation, and resiliency of the agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector, that is in effect from April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2028.
- Supporting market development activities in key markets to achieve a record-high \$779.0 million in agri-food exports, a 12 per cent increase from 2022. New Brunswick's agri-food and seafood export sales totaled \$2.46 billion in 2023.
- Approving 52 projects under the Atlantic Fisheries Fund to support New Brunswick's commercial fisheries, aquaculture and seafood processing sectors. Total project funding was \$48.8 million, of which \$30.6 million was leveraged from the federal government. An additional four pan-Atlantic projects received \$9.9 million in funding with just under \$1.0 million provided by New Brunswick.
- Supporting amendments to the *Trespass Act* and the *Fish and Wildlife Act* to better protect agricultural lands from hunters, motor vehicles, and individuals traveling on foot, who may pose a risk to biosecurity and damage to agricultural lands.
- Assisting in the development of the Statements of Public Interest for Agriculture which are now incorporated into regulation under the *Community Planning Act* to help protect agricultural land.
- Collaborating with the New Brunswick Beekeepers Association and Bleuets NB Blueberries to develop a five-year *2024–2029 New Brunswick Wild Blueberry Pollination Strategy* to increase pollination resources while supporting a sustainable and growing beekeeping industry in New Brunswick.
- Supporting Agriculture NB (a partnership between the Agricultural Alliance of NB, National Farmers Union of NB and Really Local Harvest) in launching the New Brunswick Farmer Mental Health and Farm Safety Initiative to provide farmers with essential support and resources to help address the stress of operating a farm.
- Hosting the Annual Conference of Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Agriculture.

Performance Outcomes

Outcome #1

OVERALL AGRI-FOOD AND SEAFOOD EXPORTS

Enable sector growth in the agri-food and seafood sectors by increasing export sales outside of Canada by three per cent in 2023.

Why is it important?

Agri food and seafood exports contribute significantly to the New Brunswick economy. Investments in promoting New Brunswick products and assisting New Brunswick companies to penetrate strategic markets should increase the overall value of exports in future years.

Overall Performance

The target for total agri-food and seafood export sales was not met in 2023. Export value decreased by four per cent to \$2.46 billion in 2023, due to lower sales of seafood products, as global markets encountered inflationary and consumer demand challenges. It is important to note, however, that total agri-food and seafood exports in 2023 were still above pre-COVID levels (\$2.27 billion in 2019). Compared to 2022, agri-food exports rose by 12 per cent to a record-high \$779.0 million in 2023; while the exports of some value-added seafood products grew in a number of European and Asian countries.

Initiatives or projects undertaken to achieve the outcome

The New Brunswick agri-food and seafood sector was very active in 2023, participating in 11 trade shows and seven other market development activities generating over 490 leads for exporters. The department also organized 20 promotional activities, reaching more than 27 million people via social media influencers and the New Brunswick Deliciously Canadian platforms. Finally, New Brunswick shared market intelligence with the industry by organizing four workshops/seminars addressing market demand and market access requirements.

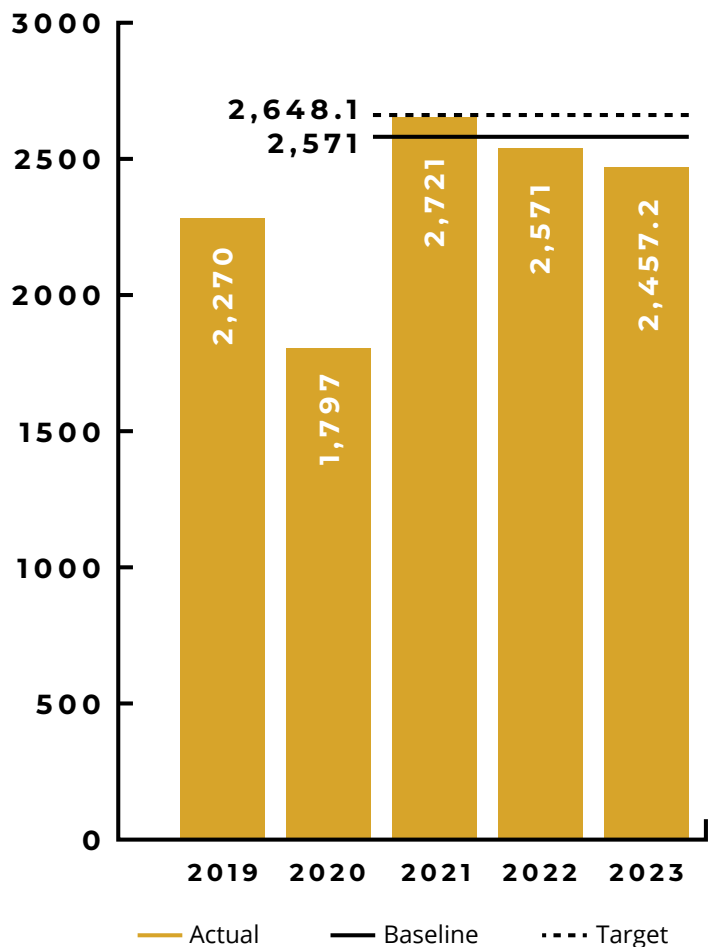
Agri-Food and Seafood Exports (\$ millions)

Baseline: \$2,571.0 million (2022)*

Target: \$2,648.1 million (3% growth from 2022)

Actual: \$2,457.2 million (4% decrease from 2022)

*2021 and 2022 numbers revised by Statistics Canada



Outcome # 2

CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENTAL AGRICULTURE (CEA) IN NB

Enable growth in the vegetable sector by increasing the square metres of CEA facilities producing vegetables, which will in turn increase farm cash receipts and local food availability. Production is targeted at 30,000 square metres by 2024.

Why is it important?

The NB Food Self-Sufficiency Model that was developed as part of the Action Plan: Improving Food Self-Sufficiency in New Brunswick, has identified that vegetables (excluding potatoes) represent one of the largest gaps between what the province produces and consumes. There is an opportunity for growth in CEA for new entrants, existing producers and Indigenous participants. By increasing production space in CEA, food self-sufficiency will be increased.

Overall Performance

Square meter growth in the CEA sector between 2022 and 2023 increased from 28,224 square metres to 29,425 square metres, representing an increase of 4.3 per cent. Farm cash receipts of greenhouse grown vegetables increased by 11 per cent during the same period (from \$1.76 million in 2022 to \$1.95 million in 2023).

Initiatives or projects undertaken to achieve the outcome

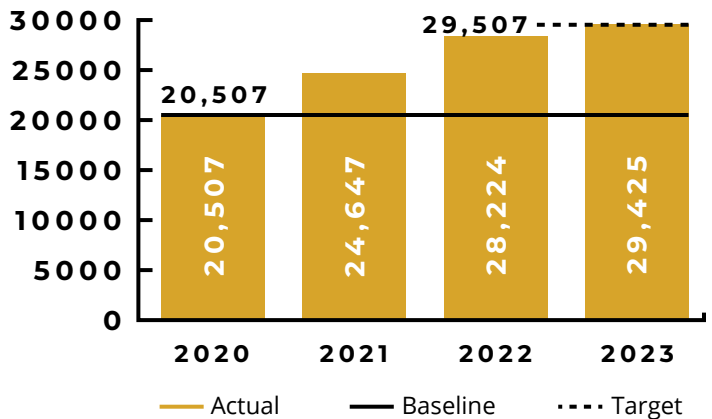
As the market for locally produced New Brunswick fruit and mixed vegetable crops has expanded significantly during the past few years, the department continues to provide funding support for the Fruit and Vegetable Industry Development program. In 2023, \$284,000 was dispersed, which netted an increase in growing space. The funding contributions were provided under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

Square Metres of Controlled Environmental Agriculture

Baseline: 20,507 square metres (2020)

Target: 30,000 square metres by 2024 or an additional 3,000 square metres annually (29,507 square meters in 2023)

Actual: 29,425 square metres achieved in 2023



Outcome # 3

FARM CASH RECEIPTS

Farm cash receipts measure the gross revenue of farm businesses in current dollars. They include export and domestic sales of crops and livestock products (except sales between farms in the same province) and program payments.

Why is it important?

Farm cash receipts are seen as a strong indicator of the health and growth of the agricultural sector. Increases in annual farm cash receipts indicate that the province is investing in the proper areas related to innovation, research and other programs deemed essential to the industry.

Overall Performance

The target for farm cash receipts was not met in 2023. New Brunswick's farm cash receipts (excluding cannabis) totaled \$884.8 million in 2023, up \$26.1 million (3 per cent) from 2022. Livestock receipts and program payments rose, while crop receipts (excluding cannabis) fell. Compared to 2022, crop receipts (excluding cannabis) fell by \$9.8 million (2 per cent) to \$459.1 million in 2023. The largest decreases were noted in receipts for blueberries and maple products. On the other hand, potato receipts rose 13 per cent. Livestock receipts increased by \$33.6 million (9 per cent) to \$408.2 million in 2023, with cattle and calf, poultry and egg, and dairy receipts rising.

Initiatives or projects undertaken to achieve the outcome

The department undertook several initiatives to increase farm cash receipts, including the following:

- Launch and delivery of the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a 5-year federal-provincial-territorial agreement designed to provide cost-shared funding to industry in areas contributing to agriculture sector sustainability and growth;
- Completed 90 per cent of the actions to date under the Action Plan: Improving Food Self Sufficiency in New Brunswick; and
- Completed 75 per cent of the actions to date under the *Local Food and Beverages Strategy 2021–2025*.

Farm Cash Receipts (\$ Millions)

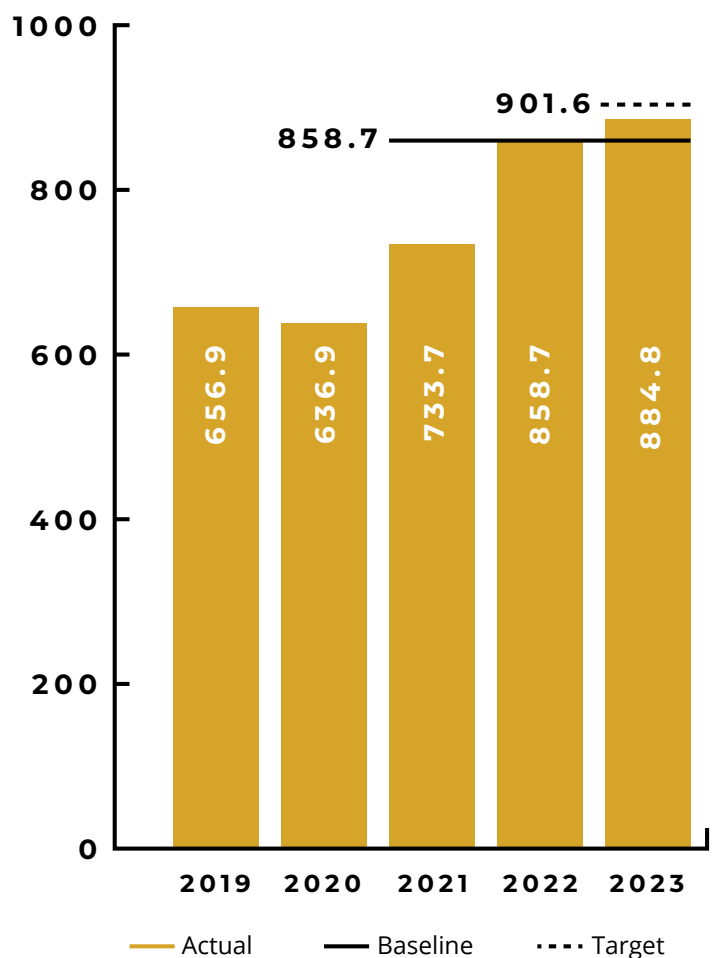
Baseline: \$858.7 million (2022)*

Target: \$901.6 million (5 per cent growth from 2022)

Actual: \$884.8 million (3 per cent growth from 2022)

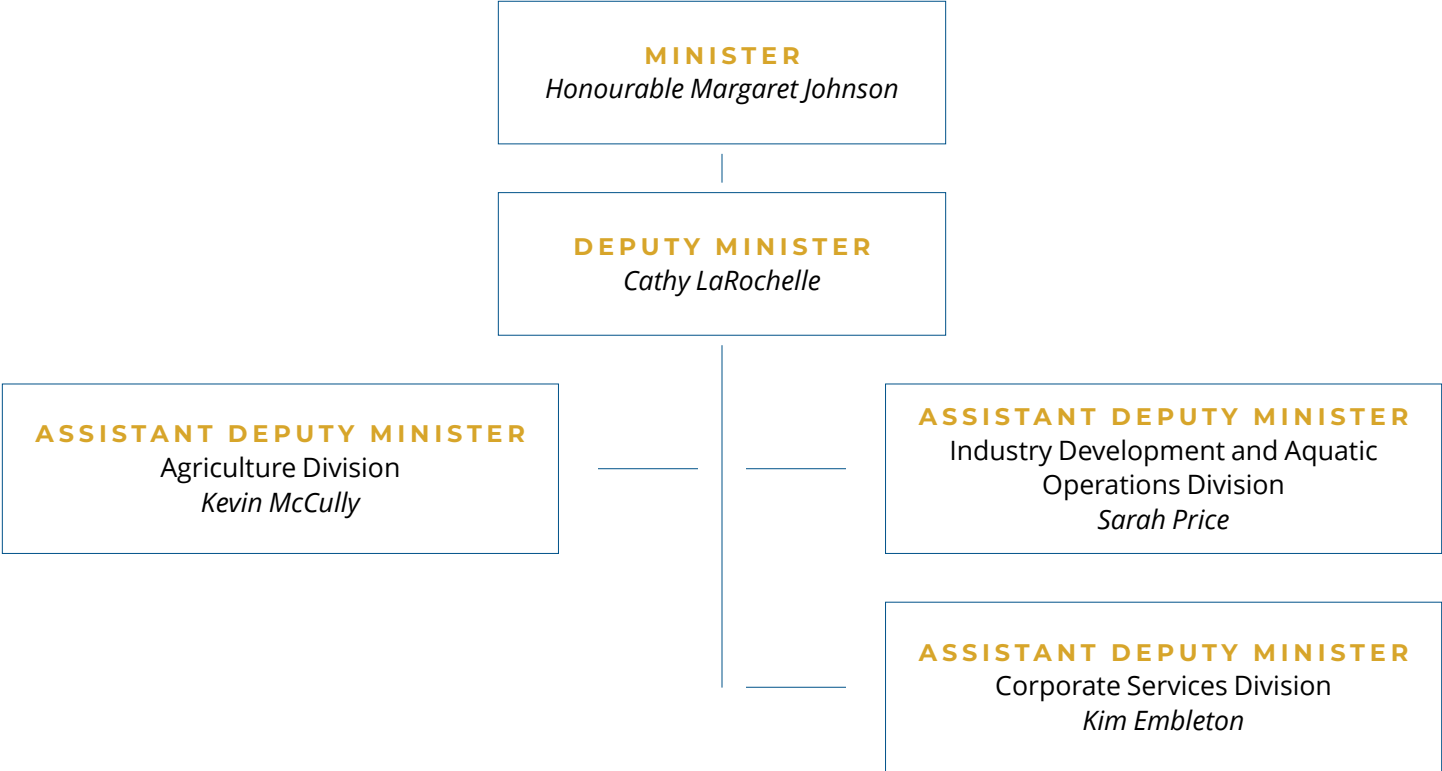
*2022 number revised by Statistics Canada

Note: farm cash receipts exclude cannabis



Overview of Departmental Operations

HIGH-LEVEL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Division Overview and Highlights

The department delivers targeted programs and services and provides strategic direction in support of economic development opportunities related to the sustainable primary and value-added agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors.

Please note that the budget and expenses for the common administration of the Departments of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries and Natural Resources and Energy Development are recorded in the 2023–2024 annual report for the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development. The common administration applies to the Corporate Services Division.

AGRICULTURE DIVISION

The Agriculture Division is composed of four branches: Animal Health Services; Livestock Sector Development; Crop Sector Development; and Potato Sector Development.

The **Animal Health Services Branch** provides veterinary field services and laboratory diagnostic services to the livestock sector and supports important related programs for the greater public good (e.g., rabies, New Brunswick Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals). Veterinary field services provide on farm animal health care, technical services and disease surveillance to agriculture and equine stakeholders throughout the province on a 365 day/year (24 hour basis).

Highlights

- Departmental veterinarians completed 8,660 on-farm visits and travelled over 759,800 kilometers to all regions of the province to support the health and development of the livestock industry. The Provincial Veterinary Laboratory supported the departmental veterinarians and other clients with diagnostic work in response to over 3,171 submissions resulting in 7,625 diagnostic samples.
- Hired ten students through the Future GNB initiative, fostering the growth and development of future large animal veterinarians in the province.
- Introduced a new tuition reimbursement program, as part of a highly active recruitment strategy to target future veterinarian graduates, that will reimburse recent graduates a portion of their tuition for three years of service. The strategy has demonstrated success with the recruitment of four new staff in 2023.

- Completed over 51,000 tests at the Provincial Veterinary Laboratory and Foreign Animal Disease Laboratory, including 348 tests for rabies and 108 tests for Avian Influenza. These tests support the laboratory's role in promoting and protecting animal health, public health, regulatory responsibilities, animal welfare and disease surveillance and management in New Brunswick.
- The annual hand and aerial oral vaccine bait program in July and August dispersed 382,830 oral rabies vaccine baits, in collaboration with the Departments of Health and Natural Resources and Energy Development. Six positive rabies cases in raccoons were confirmed early in 2023–2024, with no further positive cases confirmed following the summer vaccine bait program.

The **Livestock Sector Development Branch** provides technical advisory services; strategic and innovative research and monitoring; and develops and implements strategic sector initiatives and programs. The branch is also responsible for the New Brunswick Grain Commission.

Highlights

- Supported the livestock and livestock feed sectors through technical advisory services, forage variety research, promoting grain and oilseed quality through the New Brunswick Grain Commission, animal disease emergency preparedness and promoting livestock traceability initiatives.

- Signed the Provincial-Territorial Animal Traceability Multilateral Information Sharing Agreement as part of the National Agriculture and Food Traceability System to improve collaboration on animal health, traceability, disease surveillance and response efforts.
- Implemented enhancements to the New Brunswick Livestock Premises Identification database, ensuring livestock premises information is accessible to support provincial and federal animal regulatory requirements.
- Provided strategic funding to grow the beef and sheep sectors. Over \$662,000 was provided to help retain and increase herd sizes, enhance animal genetics, and improve handling infrastructure.
- Supported 101 projects under the Beef Genetic Enhancement program, six projects under the Beef Rotational Grazing program, and 20 projects for humane handling systems for beef and sheep producers.

The **Crop Sector Development Branch** provides crop technical advisory services; integrated pest management and diagnostic services; environmental programming and advice; strategic and innovative research and monitoring; and develops and implements strategic sector initiatives and programs. The branch is also responsible for the Farm Land Identification Program, leads the climate change file for the Agriculture Division, and represents the department and agricultural sector interests on various intergovernmental, regional, and national committees.

Highlights

- Launched the Lime Transportation Assistance Program to support farms in offsetting the transportation cost of lime, which is vital in improving production efficiencies by neutralizing the acidity of the soil on farmland. The first year of this program saw \$247,183 disbursed to 77 producers.
- Delivered the Fruit and Vegetable Industry Development Program, including 26 projects and an investment of \$284,020 impacting 21 producers.
- Advanced the final phase of the Improving New Brunswick Farmland Soil Productivity project to support industry accessing alternative affordable soil amendments to improve farmland productivity and sustainability. Five workshops were held around the province with industry, resulting in a list of approved alternative amendments that can be used by industry to improve soil on agricultural land.

The **Potato Sector Development Branch** provides technical advisory services; strategic and innovative research and monitoring; and develops and implements strategic sector initiatives and programs. The branch also includes the Plant Propagation Centre (PPC), which is responsible for the production of tissue cultured nuclear stock according to the requirements of the Canadian Seed Potato Certification System. The PPC houses the Canadian Potato Variety Repository, a collection of nearly 500 varieties that supplies nuclear stock material to the seed potato industry of New Brunswick, other Canadian provinces, the United States, and countries around the world.

Highlights

- Potatoes were the highest value food crop grown in New Brunswick with 2023 farm cash receipts at \$262.9 million, an increase of 12.6 per cent over the previous year. Contributing factors include: near record yields in 2022, of which a large portion was marketed in 2023, producers receiving higher prices for processed potatoes, exceptional demand for fresh potatoes, and supports provided by the branch and department.
- The PPC produced 118,700 disease-free units (plantlets/micro-tubers) in 2023, which are used by the seed potato industry to further multiply.

INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT AND AQUATIC OPERATIONS DIVISION

The Industry Development and Aquatic Operations Division consists of four branches: Aquaculture and Extension Services; Commercial Fisheries, Aquarium NB and Marine Facilities; Marketing and Trade – Food; and Business Growth.

The **Aquaculture and Extension Services Branch** provides specialist advice and extension services to promote and foster the growth and competitiveness of the aquaculture sector and administers the regulatory framework for aquaculture in New Brunswick. The branch provides services and programs focused on maintaining responsible practices that produce safe, high quality seafood products. The branch also provides regulatory oversight of the *Aquaculture Act* and the *Seafood Processing Act*. The Aquaculture and Extension Services Branch includes four separate units: Aquaculture Sector Development, Science and Environment, Fish Health, and Leasing, Licensing and Compliance.

Highlights

- Continued work on the themes within the *New Brunswick Finfish Aquaculture Growth Strategy 2022–2030*. Early successes include increased technical support for land-based aquaculture, enhanced international marketing efforts for New Brunswick produced Atlantic salmon and oysters and work on potential future sea lice therapeutants.
- Established an online Aquaculture Registry, which centralizes information pertaining to the department's regulatory oversight of aquaculture, including information related to sites and information concerning reportable conditions found within an aquaculture management area, to promote greater accountability and accessibility for stakeholders and the public.

The **Commercial Fisheries, Aquarium NB and Marine Facilities Branch** provides specialized advice and services to support and advocate for New Brunswick's interests in the commercial fisheries sector. The branch provides technical advice to support funding programs aimed at maintaining responsible practices and developing innovative practices that provide safe, high-quality seafood products. The branch operates the New Brunswick Aquarium and Marine Centre and is responsible for three Marine Service

Centres. The Commercial Fisheries, Aquarium NB and Marine Facilities Branch includes three separate units: Commercial Fisheries, New Brunswick Aquarium and Marine Centre, and Marine Facilities.

Highlights

- Co-chaired a task force with the shrimp industry, resulting in the identification of opportunities and recommendations to address shrimp industry concerns.
- Continued to raise awareness, identify opportunities and support stakeholders in the transition to greener, more fuel-efficient engine technologies for fishing and aquaculture boats, including participation in a series of tours, conferences and webinars.

The **Marketing and Trade – Food Branch** provides strategic delivery and coordination of market development and trade initiatives. This includes the facilitation of increased local, domestic, and international New Brunswick seafood and agri-food sales and increased market diversification. Key initiatives include the continued implementation of the *Local Food and Beverages Strategy 2021–2025*, the expansion of New Brunswick's digital presence through multiple social media platforms, the promotion of the New Brunswick Food Basket, the promotion and expansion of seafood and agri-food export markets, and the compilation of market intelligence and other market access related activities.

Highlights

- Completed year three of the *Local Food and Beverages Strategy 2021–2025* in 2023. Accomplishments included:
 - educated over 31,000 students about New Brunswick's agriculture, aquaculture and/or fisheries sectors, representing a 400 per cent increase over 2022;
 - supported eight Indigenous food and beverages projects through the New Brunswick Indigenous Agriculture Development Program;
 - supported the Kredl's Local Food Supply Chain initiative, which expanded partnerships with approximately 90 New Brunswick suppliers, resulting in over \$1 million worth of local food sales in 2023;

- facilitated grocery retail matchmaking efforts for more than 45 local food and beverages companies; and
- promoted local food and beverages in more than 15 buy local campaigns and digital marketing activities that reached over 185,000 people and accumulated 17,000 followers across our several social media platforms.
- Increased market diversification efforts for the New Brunswick food industry in international markets, including:
 - led 18 international market development activities generating over 490 leads;
 - launched 20 promotional activities reaching more than 27 million people including 314,000 people across our New Brunswick Deliciously Canadian social media channels, 6 million video plays through our brand ambassadorship with Chef Dennis Prescott, and 21 million views across several social media channels in Asia; and
 - created five professional videos highlighting key New Brunswick products which were used in awareness campaigns for key events such as the Seafood Expo North America and influencer events in Asia and Europe.

The **Business Growth Branch** provides strategic delivery and coordination of development initiatives to support clients, including new entrants. The branch is responsible for fostering growth of existing businesses through expansion, modernization or diversification within agriculture, aquaculture, and fisheries sectors. Business growth officers are the liaison to programs, including extension services, offered by the department and various other partners.

Highlights

- Supported 35 new entrants to the farming sector with business navigator support services and financial programming in support of growth in primary and value-added food production, resulting in 20 new farming operations.
- In partnership with the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development, launched a maple sugary development initiative where current and future maple producers and First Nations will have access to up to 5,000 additional hectares of Crown land. The request for proposals for new development closed on March 31, 2024.

CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION

The Corporate Services Division provides direction and support in matters of human resources, financial services, policy, strategy, information and technology, facilities management and coordination of financial assistance to the agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors under various funding programs. The division consists of the Financial Services Branch, the Industry Financial Programs Branch, the Human Resource Services Branch, the Information Systems and Departmental Services Branch, the Strategic Planning and Intergovernmental Relations Branch, and the Regulatory Affairs Branch.

The **Financial Services Branch** is responsible for the department's financial resources, including expenditure and revenue management, budgeting, accounting and financial reporting services, and supports the departmental procurement process.

Highlights

- Supported the GNB Enterprise Resource Planning team and the department with the implementation of quarterly reporting within the Enterprise Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service.
- Supported the transition of the Ordinary Budget process to allow for electronic submission within the Enterprise Planning and Budgeting Cloud Service.

The **Industry Financial Programs Branch** provides financial assistance to the agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors under various funding programs.

Highlights

- Provided \$7.2 million to producers during year one of the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership to fund 821 projects.
- Administered the AgrilInsurance Program that paid over \$7.5 million in indemnities to producers who suffered losses due to challenging growing conditions in 2023.

The **Human Resource Services Branch** is responsible for providing all human resource management services, including recruitment and retention, classification, labour relations, human resource policies, employee engagement, organizational development, succession planning and administration of programs such as health and safety.

Highlights

- Coordinated health and safety and employee experience initiatives.
- Championed the employee experience survey, achieving a 79 per cent participation rate.

The **Information Systems and Departmental Services Branch** provides province-wide services to the department, including information technology, records management, information security, intranet management, facilities management, remotely piloted aircraft (drone) services and geographic information system services.

Highlights

- Expanded the Remotely Piloted Aircraft program in the department.

The **Strategic Planning and Intergovernmental Relations Branch** provides strategy development, strategic planning, and support for federal-provincial-territorial activities. The branch is also responsible for trade policy analysis, economic forecasting, monitoring, research, statistical analysis and reporting. The branch supports departmental programs to align towards common goals and conducts improvement projects to close gaps. This work is done using process improvement, project management, change management, and other innovative techniques. Additionally, the branch is responsible for the management of ministerial correspondence.

Highlights

- Published (on-line) Sectors in Review Reports for Agriculture and Fisheries for 2021 and Aquaculture for 2022, the New Brunswick Agri-Food and Seafood Export Highlights for 2021 and 2022, as well as the New Brunswick Census of Agriculture Report for 2021.
- Supported the department with three legislative changes, two regulatory changes, and other proposals.

The **Regulatory Affairs Branch** provides leadership, coordination and support regarding the Minister's legislative business. The branch also manages requests under the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and provides support on privacy matters. The branch, in conjunction with the Strategic Planning and Intergovernmental Relations Branch, provides policy administrative support to the department's Policy Management Committee.

Highlights

- Coordinated responses to eight requests under the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

Financial Information

EXPENDITURES IN DETAIL 2023 – 2024 (\$)

ORDINARY PROGRAM	MAIN ESTIMATES	APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS	FINAL BUDGET	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries	48,876,000	543,000	49,419,000	48,906,000	(513,000)
Total 2023 – 2024	48,876,000	543,000	49,419,000	48,906,000	(513,000)

CAPITAL ACCOUNT	MAIN ESTIMATES	APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS	FINAL BUDGET	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
Capital Equipment	65,000	-	65,000	65,100	100
Strategic Infrastructure	400,000	-	400,000	396,500	(3,500)
Total 2023 – 2024	465,000	-	465,000	461,600	(3,400)

LOANS AND ADVANCES	MAIN ESTIMATES	APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS	FINAL BUDGET	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
New Brunswick Agricultural Insurance Commission	1,600,000	-	1,600,000	-	(1,600,000)
Loan Programs	7,000,000	-	7,000,000	3,628,000	3,372,000
Total 2023 – 2024	8,600,000	-	8,600,000	3,628,000	(4,972,000)

REVENUE IN DETAIL 2023 – 2024 (\$)

REVENUE	MAIN ESTIMATES	APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS	FINAL BUDGET	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
Return on Investment	400,000	-	400,000	597,800	197,800
Taxes on Consumption	-	-	-	-	-
Licences and Permits	243,000	-	243,000	240,800	(2,200)
Sales of Goods and Services	5,838,000	-	5,838,000	5,438,000	(400,000)
Miscellaneous	71,000	-	71,000	457,300	386,300
Conditional Grants – Canada	5,628,000	-	5,628,000	4,838,300	(789,700)
Total 2023 – 2024	12,180,000	-	12,180,000	11,572,200	607,800

LOANS AND ADVANCES	MAIN ESTIMATES	APPROPRIATION TRANSFERS	FINAL BUDGET	ACTUAL	DIFFERENCE
Recoveries	700,000	-	700,000	1,326,700	626,700
Total 2023 – 2024	700,000	-	700,000	1,326,700	626,700

Summary of Staffing Activity

Pursuant to section 4 of the *Civil Service Act*, the Secretary to Treasury Board delegates staffing to each Deputy Head for his or her respective department(s). Please find below a summary of the staffing activity for 2022–2023 for the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries.

NUMBER OF PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES AS OF DEC. 31 OF EACH YEAR		
EMPLOYEE TYPE	2023	2022
Permanent	170	167
Temporary	46	41
TOTAL	216	208

The department advertised 15 competitions, including 12 open (public) competitions and three closed (internal) competitions.

Pursuant to sections 15 and 16 of the *Civil Service Act*, the department made the following appointments using processes to establish merit other than the competitive process:

APPOINTMENT TYPE	APPOINTMENT DESCRIPTION	SECTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ACT	NUMBER
Specialized Professional, Scientific or Technical	An appointment may be made without competition when a position requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a high degree of expertise and training • a high degree of technical skill • recognized experts in their field 	15(1)	6
Equal Employment Opportunity Program	Provides Aboriginals, persons with disabilities and members of a visible minority group with equal access to employment, training and advancement opportunities.	16(1)(a)	0

APPOINTMENT TYPE	APPOINTMENT DESCRIPTION	SECTION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ACT	NUMBER
Department Talent Management Program	Permanent employees identified in corporate and departmental talent pools, who meet the four-point criteria for assessing talent, namely performance, readiness, willingness and criticalness.	16(1)(b)	2
Lateral transfer	The GNB transfer process facilitates the transfer of employees from within Part 1, 2 (school districts) and 3 (hospital authorities) of the Public Service.	16(1) or 16(1)(c)	1
Regular appointment of casual/temporary	An individual hired on a casual or temporary basis under section 17 may be appointed without competition to a regular properly classified position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(i)	4
Regular appointment of students/apprentices	Summer students, university or community college co-op students or apprentices may be appointed without competition to an entry level position within the Civil Service.	16(1)(d)(ii)	0

Pursuant to section 33 of the *Civil Service Act*, no complaints alleging favouritism were made to the Deputy Head of the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries and no complaints were submitted to the Ombud.

Summary of Legislation and Legislative Activity

BILL #	NAME OF LEGISLATION	DATE OF ROYAL ASSENT	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
47	<i>Livestock Health Act</i> Chap-19.pdf (gnb.ca)	June 16, 2023	Repealed the <i>Diseases of Animals Act</i> and the <i>Poultry Health Protection Act</i> and replaced with a new <i>Livestock Health Act</i> to modernize the protection of livestock health, including poultry, in New Brunswick.
12	<i>An Act Respecting Trespass on Agricultural Lands</i> Chap-39.pdf (gnb.ca)	December 13, 2023	<p>Amended the <i>Trespass Act</i> and <i>Fish and Wildlife Act</i> to deter trespassing on agriculture lands to reduce damage to lands and crops.</p> <p>Amended the <i>Trespass Act</i> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibit all forms of trespass on the classes of agricultural lands referred to under the <i>Act</i>, not just by motor vehicle; • Permit persons to enter in or on agriculture lands provided written consent is first obtained from the landowner or occupant; and • Remove the requirement for agriculture landowners or occupants to inform the public (by posting signs, blue discs or painted bands, or by advising verbally or in writing) that trespass is prohibited on their land. <p>Amended the <i>Fish and Wildlife Act</i> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the requirement to post signs, yellow and red discs or painted bands to deter trespass on the classes of agricultural lands referred to under the <i>Trespass Act</i>; • Permit persons to enter in or on these lands provided written consent is first obtained from the landowner or occupant; and • Create an exception for hunters who need to enter private property to pursue and take wounded wildlife. Instead of written consent, hunters will need to first inform the landowner or occupant.

NAME OF REGULATION	EFFECTIVE DATE	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
Amendments to the General Regulation (91-50) under the <i>Provincial Offences Procedure Act</i>	December 13, 2023	Amended to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an offence for persons trespassing on agriculture lands; and • Make trespass on agriculture lands a ticketable offence.
Repealed the Prohibition of Motor Vehicles Regulation (90-55) under the <i>Trespass Act</i>	December 13, 2023	Repealed, as the requirement to obtain a written authorization is now covered under the <i>Trespass Act</i> .

The acts for which the department was responsible in 2023–2024 may be found at:

[Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries \(gnb.ca\)](https://www.gnb.ca)

Summary of Official Languages Activities

INTRODUCTION

The Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries has continued to respect its Official Languages obligations by focussing on four sectors of activity. The following outlines the actions taken during 2023–2024 in each of the four areas of focus.

FOCUS 1

Ensure access to service of equal quality in English and French throughout the province:

- Employees were provided with the tools enabling them to be successful in respecting their legal obligation to offer service of equal quality in English and French in all locations.
- Linguistic profiles were respected through the recruitment process to make certain that the department is able to provide services in both English and French throughout the province.

FOCUS 2

An environment and climate that encourages, for all employees, the use of the Official Language of their choice in their workplace:

- Communication, correspondence, and interactions with employees such as performance appraisals, were delivered in the employee's Official Language of choice.
- The department continued to encourage the use of both Official Languages for small meetings. For all large meetings, the department promoted bilingual presentations, or separate English and French sessions.

FOCUS 3

New and revised government programs and policies will take the realities of the province's official linguistic communities into account:

- Correspondence and information were provided to the public in the Official Language of their choice.

FOCUS 4

Ensure Public Service employees have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the *Official Languages Act*, relevant policies, regulations, and the province's obligations with respect to Official Languages:

- The Deputy Minister, and other management team members, reminded employees of their legal obligation to offer services in the Official Language of choice of the client. Employees were also reminded of the Language of Service Policy and Guidelines and the Official Languages Toolkit.
- As part of the ongoing process for employee orientation and performance management, employees were required to read the policies related to Official Languages.

CONCLUSION

The department understands, promotes, and honours its obligations under the *Official Languages Act* and related policies. It strives to provide quality services to clients in both Official Languages. The department encourages and supports the use of both Official Languages in the workplace and invests in employee development through second language training.

Summary of Recommendations from the Office of the Auditor General

Section 1 - Includes the current reporting year and the previous year.

The department did not receive any recommendations from the Auditor General's reports in 2022 or 2023.

Section 2 - Includes the reporting periods for years three, four and five.

NAME AND YEAR OF AUDIT AREA WITH LINK TO ONLINE DOCUMENT	RECOMMENDATIONS	
	TOTAL	IMPLEMENTED
N/A	N/A	N/A

Report on the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*

As provided under section 18(1) of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act*, the chief executive shall prepare a report of any disclosures of wrongdoing that have been made to a supervisor or designated officer of the portion of the public service for which the chief executive officer is responsible. The Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries received no disclosure(s) of wrongdoing in the 2023–2024 fiscal year.