
Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries

**ANNUAL REPORT
2020-2021**



**Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries
Annual Report 2020-2021**

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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, 2020, to March 31, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,



Honourable Margaret Johnson
Minister

**From the Deputy Minister to the Minister
Honourable Margaret Johnson
Minister of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries**

Madam:

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, 2020, to March 31, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,



Cathy LaRochelle
Deputy Minister

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Minister's message

In New Brunswick, our agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries industries play enormous roles in our everyday lives.

It is extremely important that we take the time to recognize and commend the hard-working people who are part of these sectors and the work they do every single day to make our lives better.

This year, we also need to acknowledge the ways in which the past year has impacted the sector, and the ways we have had to adapt so we can continue to thrive.

I am pleased that the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries was able to provide support to all sectors through programming and advice to protect the health and safety of workers by mitigating and limiting the spread of COVID-19.

I am also proud to be able to say that while the pandemic has posed many challenges, it has not stopped the very important work being done to continue to grow the industries.

This past year, we created an Indigenous Agricultural Development Program to support First Nations interests in the agriculture and agri-food industry, and established a collaborative, inter-agency team with federal and provincial representation to streamline the review of Indigenous projects within the agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors.

We were also the first jurisdiction to return to promotional activities in China following the first wave of pandemic shutdowns, recognizing that China's online and retail markets provided a strong alternative to the lack of sales opportunities in the United States and Europe.

These accomplishments, and many others, would not have been achieved without the hard work of New Brunswickers, both in the industries and in our department. I thank them all for their various contributions, which help us as we continue to grow our agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries industries both at home and all over the world.



Honourable Margaret Johnson
Minister of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries

Deputy Minister's message

During the 2020-2021 reporting period, the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries was faced with unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With many of our usual avenues of operation and promotion unavailable, we underwent a dramatic shift to change our approaches so we could continue to support businesses and organizations and energize the private sector.

As a result of this shift, we were able to ensure that New Brunswick's food industry was represented in key markets in Europe, Asia and North America, even as global trade shows were cancelled or saw significant restrictions. During this time, we were also able to retain and establish market diversification in key global markets in Europe and Asia.

Closer to home, we have delivered on several priority items over the past year. We were proud to develop an action plan to improve our province's food self-sufficiency ratios and the stability and strength of our own local food supply. We also released the *Local Food and Beverages Strategy 2021-2025*. This will enable us to reach our three key goals: Grow NB, Buy NB and Feed NB.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen a growing interest in locally produced food and beverages. For us, that means that by strengthening the food system, we are also working to grow, develop and sustain our local food and beverage sectors.

We are committed to working with industries and stakeholders to continue the growth of our agriculture, aquaculture, and fisheries sectors, which are incredibly important to New Brunswick's economy and employment, especially in our coastal and rural communities.

None of these accomplishments would be possible without our employees. Their input is highly respected and valued by industry stakeholders and I thank them for their passion and dedication to the work they do every day. We should all be proud of our 2020-2021 accomplishments.



Cathy LaRochelle
Deputy Minister

Government Priorities

DELIVERING FOR NEW BRUNSWICKERS - ONE TEAM ONE GNB

One Team One GNB is a new, collaborative approach to how we operate. It represents a civil service that works together as a single unit for New Brunswickers. We have discovered new and innovative ways of doing business, ways that have allowed us to achieve the outcomes needed for New Brunswickers and we are working more efficiently and effectively than ever before. Our new path forward includes a mindset of focus, urgency and results.

We are working every day to improve the way government departments:

- Communicate with one another
- Work side-by-side on important projects, and
- Drive focus and accountability.

STRATEGY AND OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT

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

The development of the strategy, using the Formal Management system, starts with our government's roadmap for the future of New Brunswick that focuses on key priorities and the importance of public accountability.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Our vision for 2020-2021 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

COVID RESPONSE

As part of GNB's priorities this past year, responding to the COVID-19 pandemic was at the forefront. Our department supported GNB in responding to the pandemic by deploying staffing to assist with COVID-19 efforts and changed standard operating procedures to adhere to public health guidelines. Critical services were maintained throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Offices across the province were prepared with enhanced safety measures to ensure a safe return to work.

Highlights

During the 2020-2021 fiscal year, the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries focused on these government priorities through:

- Launching the *Local Food and Beverages Strategy 2021-2025*.
- Developing a ten-pillar action plan to facilitate improvements to New Brunswick's food self-sufficiency ratio and the stability and robustness of our local food supply, while supporting producers and food manufacturers.
- Working with BioNB, Opportunities New Brunswick, Natural Resources and Energy Development, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, to investigate controlled environment agriculture opportunities for NB, which resulted in a 33 per cent increase in square meter growth in these facilities during 2020.
- Creating an Indigenous Agricultural Development Program under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership to support First Nations interests in the agriculture and agri-food industry.
- Establishing a collaborative, inter-agency team, with representation from both the federal and provincial governments to streamline the review of Indigenous Projects in the agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors.
- Working to secure in-market consulting agencies to retain and establish market diversification in the province's food sector key global markets, including Europe, Asia and Korea during the COVID-19 global pandemic.
- Being the first jurisdiction to initiate promotional activities in China following the COVID-19 pandemic shutdowns. The department reacted quickly to the reopening of markets following the first wave of COVID-19, recognizing that China's retail and online markets would provide a strong alternative to the closed food service industry in the United States and Europe.
- Providing targeted support to all sectors through programming and advice to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 to protect the health and safety of workers.

Performance Outcomes

OVERALL AGRI-FOOD AND SEAFOOD EXPORTS

DESCRIPTION OF PRIORITY

Enable sector growth in the agri-food and seafood sectors by increasing exports sales outside of Canada by three per cent in 2020.

IMPORTANCE OF PRIORITY

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.

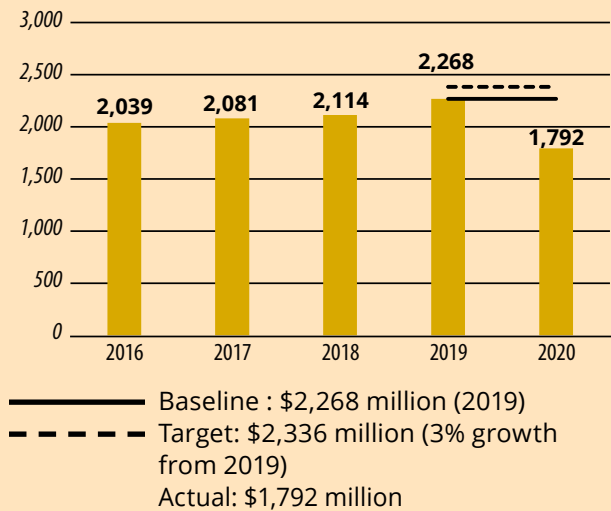
OVERALL PERFORMANCE

The target for agri-food and seafood export sales was not met in 2020. Export value declined by 21 per cent, largely due to global market disruptions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

This measure captures the value of all agri-food and seafood delivered to customers outside of Canada.

Agri-food and seafood exports (\$ millions)



WHAT INITIATIVES OR PROJECTS WERE UNDERTAKEN IN THE REPORTING YEAR TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME?

A dramatic shift was required to address the market collapse and access issues during the early stages of the global pandemic. In-market consultants were secured in Asia and Europe to provide accurate and timely reports on global marketing conditions, and trade show alternatives were developed using virtual platforms and innovative virtual matchmaking events. Outreach and promotional events were hosted in Asia and Europe to maintain and expand NB's network of potential buyers and influencers. Digital content became increasingly critical for NB's success and investments were made to support key food products. A sharp focus on retail sales, specifically domestic sales was established and championed resulting in increased local food and beverage sales. As the global pandemic evolved, New Brunswick was first in global markets attending Virtual Trade Shows (May 2020 China) and promotional events customized for our industry.

GROWTH IN OYSTER PRODUCTION

DESCRIPTION OF PRIORITY

Enable sector growth in the oyster aquaculture industry by ten per cent each calendar year from 2017-2021.

IMPORTANCE OF PRIORITY

The oyster aquaculture industry is an important generator of employment and economic activity in rural coastal communities along the eastern shores of the province. While the shellfish aquaculture sector has experienced unprecedented growth in New Brunswick in the past decade, there remain opportunities to further expand the sector, which would create jobs and grow the economy. The number of bags on a site directly correlates to the site's inventory.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE

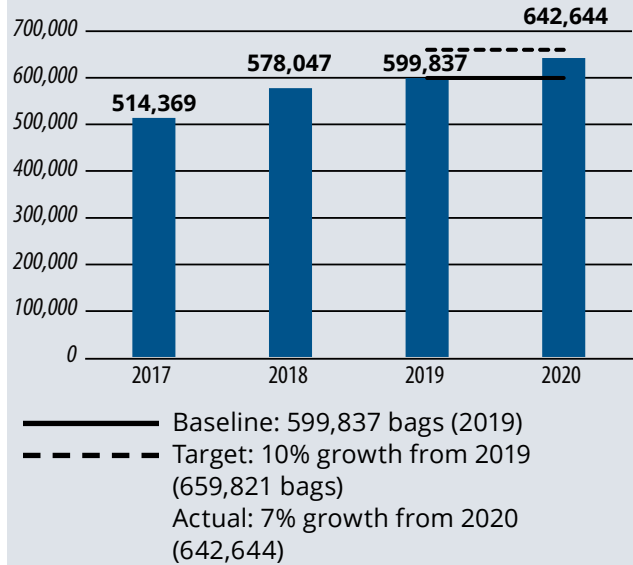
The number of oyster production bags in the water grew by seven per cent compared to 2019. This was below the targeted increase of ten per cent annual growth, due to unexpected events related to COVID-19. This represents overall growth of 25 per cent since 2017.

Year four of the *2017-2021 Shellfish Aquaculture Development Strategy* was completed and although there were challenges in meeting bag count targets several other targets were exceeded. An additional strategy target was to record sales of 30M market size oysters by 2021, which was exceeded in 2018 (34.3M), 2019 (35M) and 2020 (33.1M). The target associated with this was to have a farm gate value of \$12M. The sales numbers for market size oysters in 2018 (\$14.8M), 2019 (\$15.3M) and 2020 (\$12.9M) all exceeded this target. It would be important to note that the drop in value in 2020 was partly due to a reduction in average price to \$0.39 per individual oyster.

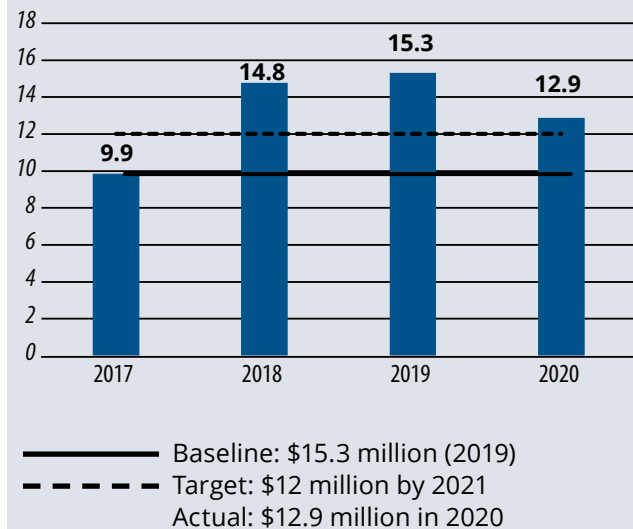
DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

This measure uses the total number of oyster production bags in the water, by calendar year, to capture the annual growth rate for New Brunswick's oyster production. In addition, farm gate value captures the annual growth in market size oyster sales.

Oyster production (number of bags)



Farm gate value of market size oysters (\$ millions)



WHAT INITIATIVES OR PROJECTS WERE UNDERTAKEN IN THE REPORTING YEAR TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME?

This outcome was achieved as part of the department's *2017-2021 Shellfish Aquaculture Development Strategy*. The goal of this strategy is to promote the orderly growth of New Brunswick's shellfish aquaculture industry, while recognizing the importance of protecting the environment and co-existing with other users of the marine space. Five broad objectives have been set to guide efforts aimed at increasing shellfish production. Strategic actions have been identified to address priorities, the implementation of which is coordinated by the New Brunswick Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries through a multi-party committee (the Shellfish Aquaculture Development Strategy Steering Committee) that includes industry and First Nations representatives.

CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENTAL AGRICULTURE (CEA) IN NB

DESCRIPTION OF PRIORITY

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

IMPORTANCE OF PRIORITY

The NB Food Self-Sufficiency Model has identified that vegetables (excluding potatoes) represent one of the largest gaps between what the province produces and consumes. NB is only 9.4 per cent (2019) self-sufficient in vegetable production. Tomatoes, one of the principle crops grown in year-round CEA facilities is only at 1.2 per cent self-sufficiency. This represents 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.

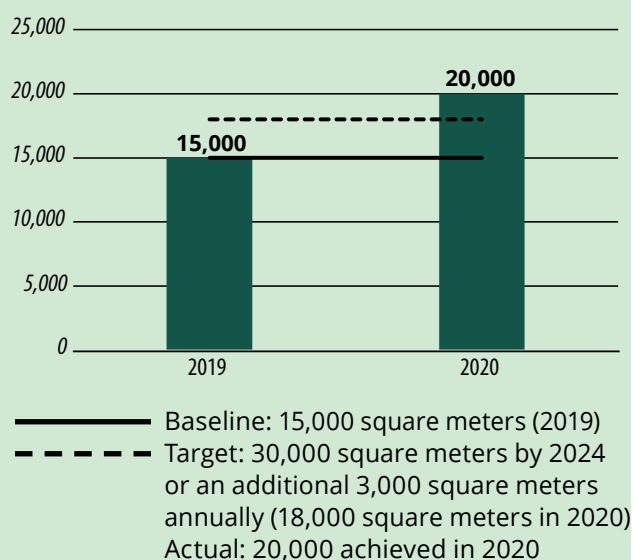
OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Square meter growth in the CEA sector between 2019 and 2020 increased from 15,000 square meters to 20,000 square meters, a growth of 33 per cent. Farm cash receipts of greenhouse grown vegetables grew by 23 per cent during the same period (from \$1,120,000 in 2019 to \$1,381,000). The new square meters of CEA facilities did not have a full year of farm cash receipts as many were constructed during the 2020 growing season.

DESCRIPTION OF MEASURE

Growth of additional square meters of CEA space is measured from applications for funding under the Fruit and Vegetable Industry Development program (FVID) which identifies the square meters of CEA facilities being added each year. Increased farm cash receipts of greenhouse grown vegetables comes from data provided by Statistics Canada.

Square metres of controlled environmental agriculture



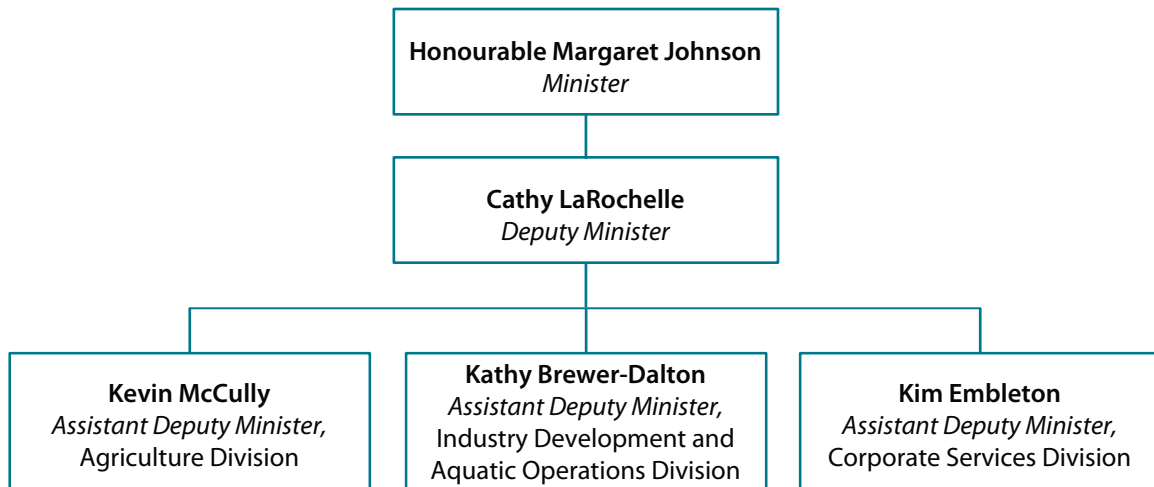
WHAT INITIATIVES OR PROJECTS WERE UNDERTAKEN IN THE REPORTING YEAR TO ACHIEVE THE OUTCOME?

In 2020, funding for the FVID program was increased from \$100,000 to approximately \$500,000, which netted a substantial increase in growing space.

Overview of departmental operations

The mandate of the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries is to develop and implement a total development approach for the agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and value-added sectors. This approach aims at improving the economic competitiveness and sustainable development of these sectors and related industries.

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 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 2020-2021 annual report for the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development. The common administration applies to the Corporate Services Division.

AGRICULTURE

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

- ◆ Department veterinarians (18), travelled over 760,000 km to all regions of the province and completed 8,172 on-farm visits to support the health and development of the livestock industry. The Provincial Veterinary Laboratory supported the departmental vets and other clients with diagnostic work in response to over 3,600 submissions.
- ◆ Completed approximately 70,000 tests at the Provincial Veterinary Laboratory and Foreign Animal Disease Laboratory, including 175 tests for rabies. These tests support the lab's role in promoting and protecting animal health, public health, regulatory responsibilities, animal welfare and other functions related to disease surveillance and control in New Brunswick.
- ◆ Led and coordinated the dispersal of 365,875 oral rabies vaccine baits through aerial and hand distribution over 5,700 km² of southwestern and western New Brunswick. This was done with the cooperation and support from the Department of Health and the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development. One case of racoon variant rabies was reported during the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

The **Crop Sector Development Branch** provides technical advisory services; strategic and innovative research and monitoring; environmental programming and advice; and develops and implements strategic sector initiatives and programs.

Highlights

- ◆ Developed and delivered a Fruit and Vegetable Industry Development Program to support growth. New Brunswick is only 9.4 per cent self-sufficient in the production of vegetables (excluding potatoes) and 36 per cent for fruits. The program supports producers to increase production capacity through the adoption of season extension technologies, enhancing on-farm storage capacity and investing in on-farm equipment that permits automation and efficiency improvements. The department supported 53 projects with a value of approximately \$920,000. Forty-five new and established vegetable growers were approved for funding for 33 greenhouse projects, two hydroponics projects, eight on-farm storage projects, and 10 scaling-up projects.
- ◆ Surveyed fruit and vegetable growers to identify barriers that limit their ability to grow. This information was used to improve programming and target barriers limiting growth.
- ◆ Continued to support clients via technology advisory extension services and program delivery through virtual technologies during the pandemic.

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

- ◆ Helped support the livestock sectors to navigate the impacts of the pandemic, including the transfer of critical information related to safety guidelines, supply chain disruptions, border restrictions and enhanced programming to help producers adapt to pandemic impacts.
- ◆ Surveyed the abattoir sector to gather information on issues and opportunities. Information was used to develop strategic sector support which promoted the expansion of abattoirs to capitalize on an increase in demand for local meat products.
- ◆ Supported 32 local meat processing projects with a value of \$574,000. A total of 16 abattoir/butcher/direct farm market operations were approved for funding for a variety of upgrades including new cooler/freezer capacity, processing and packaging equipment and food safety upgrades.
- ◆ Led the establishment of a Maritime Working Group on Food Self-Sufficiency to collaborate on opportunities to improve the production and processing of food within the Maritimes.
- ◆ Completed a survey of livestock stakeholders to identify growth opportunities in the non-supply managed livestock sector and developed action plans for beef, sheep and hogs.

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

- ◆ Provided support to industry through technical advisory services, disease diagnostics, processing potato testing, potato variety research trials, crop monitoring services for pests and disease (e.g. aphid alert, late blight), daily in season crop updates, post-harvest testing for Potato Virus "Y" and regulatory services to ensure enforcement of the *Potato Disease Eradication Act*. Support provided by the branch has contributed to potatoes being the highest value crop grown in New Brunswick with 2020 farm cash receipts at \$152.9M.
- ◆ The PPC produced 105,000 disease-free units (plantlets/microtubers) in 2020 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 and Strategic Initiatives**; **Marketing and Trade**; 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 three separate units: Aquaculture Sector Development, Aquaculture Science and Fish Health, and Leasing, Licensing and Compliance.

Highlights

- ◆ Integration of the Leasing, Licensing and Compliance Unit into the branch. As a result, the branch now offers a full complement of services to the industry as it relates to aquaculture production and seafood processing.
- ◆ Staff conducted the following compliance checks under the *Aquaculture Act* and *Seafood Processing Act*: 99 shellfish site inspections, 35 finfish site inspections, and 32 fish buyer visits. In addition, 577 surveillance visits took place with 5,195 fish submitted for testing under the Infectious Salmon Anemia (ISA) surveillance program, while under the Certificate of Health for Transfer program, there were 23 visits and 835 samples (eggs, fry, smolt) tested.

The **Commercial Fisheries and Strategic Initiatives Branch** provides specialized advice and extension services to support and advocate for New Brunswick interests in the fisheries sector. The branch provides technical advice to support programming that focuses on maintaining responsible practices and production of safe, high quality seafood products. It has management responsibilities over two Marine Service Centers in New Brunswick and the New Brunswick Aquarium and Marine Center. The Commercial Fisheries and Strategic Initiatives Branch includes three separate units: Commercial Fisheries, Strategic Initiatives and the New Brunswick Aquarium and Marine Centre.

Highlights

- ◆ Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, spring lobster season was delayed. To facilitate communication, the branch coordinated weekly meetings with lobster processors, harvesters, and provincial departments.
- ◆ Completed work with the fish and seafood industry to coordinate and implement the priority objectives of the final year of the *2018-2020 Fisheries Renewal Framework Action Plan* and re-established regular meetings of the Minister's Round Table on Fisheries.
- ◆ Continued to work with the federal government and the New Brunswick fish and seafood harvesters to retain and protect New Brunswick's access to the resource and to support the development of new emerging fisheries, particularly Red Fish in the Gulf of St. Lawrence.
- ◆ Adapted activities at the New Brunswick Aquarium and Marine Center for the 2020 season, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This delayed the opening and targeted marketing activities to 11,119 visitors from the Atlantic region.

The **Marketing and Trade Branch** provides strategic delivery and coordination of marketing and trade initiatives. This includes facilitation of increased local, domestic and international New Brunswick seafood and agri-food sales. Key initiatives include the implementation and execution of the *Local Food and Beverage Strategy 2021-2025*, promotion of the New Brunswick Food Basket, the promotion and expansion of the seafood/agri-food export markets, the compilation of market intelligence and other related activities.

Highlights

- ◆ Established a First Nations Working Group with representatives from multiple First Nation communities, the Joint Economic Development Initiative, the North Shore MicMac District Council, Indigenous Services Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. This group was responsible for developing Indigenous-specific goals for the *Local Food and Beverage Strategy 2021-2025*.
- ◆ Supported the development of an Indigenous Branding project, in partnership with other provincial agencies and Eel Ground First Nation, for striped bass that are commercially harvested from the Miramichi River.
- ◆ Ensured that the New Brunswick food industry was well represented within our key markets (Europe, Asia and North America) throughout 2020-2021, despite global trade show cancellations and restrictions. A total of 15 international and virtual trade show events took place in 2020-2021 with an average participation rate of six New Brunswick companies per event.
- ◆ Launched multiple local and national campaigns with Canadian retailers. Enhanced programming contributed to the recruitment of New Brunswick food producers to invest in a multitude of digital and in-store promotions.
- ◆ Added New Brunswick beverages to New Brunswick food basket promotions, resulting in increased market diversification and export sales for these products and increased local food sales.
- ◆ Enhanced programming was introduced to facilitate online sales for local food producers and farmer's markets across the Province.

The **Business Growth Branch** provides strategic delivery and coordination of development initiatives to support clients, including new entrants. The branch is also responsible for fostering the growth of existing businesses looking at 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

- ◆ Approved 49 projects under the Atlantic Fisheries Fund. This fund supports New Brunswick's commercial fisheries, aquaculture and seafood processing sectors. Total project funding was \$11.2M, of which \$7.84M was leveraged from the federal government.

- ◆ Supported 142 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. This resulted in over 60 confirmed new farming operations.
- ◆ Continued implementation of the Client Relationship Management System and a document sharing system that enables data driven support to over 3,000 clients in the agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries sectors

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**, the **Regulatory Affairs Branch**, and the **Performance Excellence Branch**.

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

Highlights

- ◆ Supported the Government of New Brunswick Enterprise Resource Planning team by participating in the chart of accounts mapping, the user acceptance testing for the General Ledger module and the requirements gathering for the Fixed Asset Module.
- ◆ Supported the department through the transition to the new Telus Mobility contract.

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

Highlights

- ◆ Administered the third year of the five-year Canadian Agricultural Partnership, an investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen and grow the agriculture sector.

- ◆ Revised AgrilInsurance for potatoes by splitting the plan into separate field and storage plans to help address industry concerns.

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 ongoing training for managers/supervisors on various human resources related topics such as mental health, workplace health and safety, substance use, and respectful workplaces.
- ◆ Coordinated COVID-19 operational plans to ensure a safe return to the workplace

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, and geographic information system services.

Highlights

- ◆ As part of the Mobile workforce project desktop units were replaced with laptops and VPN to enable staff to work remotely if necessary.
- ◆ The GIS section completed a project to identify farmland within the province and provided a web application to allow the public to view it.

The **Strategic Planning and Intergovernmental Relations Branch** provides strategy development, strategic planning, and support for federal/provincial/territorial (FPT) activities. The branch is also responsible for trade policy analysis, economic forecasting, monitoring, research, statistical analysis, reporting and providing support to the agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries, forestry, mining and energy sectors. Additionally, the branch is responsible for the management of ministerial correspondence and provides updates, input and analysis on various trade issues, including trade agreements.

Highlights

- ♦ Provided support for the department's climate change actions and reporting contributions to the *Transitioning to a Low-Carbon Economy New Brunswick's Climate Change Action Plan Progress Report 2020*.
- ♦ Published (on-line) Sectors in Review Reports for Agriculture and Agri-Food, Aquaculture and Commercial Fisheries, as well as the New Brunswick Agri-Food and Seafood Export Highlights, all for 2019.

The **Regulatory Affairs Branch** provides leadership, coordination and support regarding the development of legislation, policy initiatives and proposals, and 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, continued to provide policy administrative support to the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries and the Department of Natural Resources and Energy Development's Policy Management Committee.

Highlight

- ♦ Coordinated responses to 16 requests under the *Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

The **Performance Excellence Branch** supports the implementation of GNB's formal management system, leads process improvement projects and provides project management services throughout the department.

Highlight

- ♦ Worked with program areas to implement Lean Six Sigma Black Belt and Green Belt process improvement projects.

Financial information

EXPENDITURES IN DETAIL 2020-2021 (\$)

Ordinary Program	Main Estimates	Appropriation Transfers	Final Budget	Actual	Difference
Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries	40,178,000	135,300	40,313,300	37,746,400	(2,566,900)
Total 2020-2021	40,178,000	135,300	40,313,300	37,746,400	(2,566,900)

Capital Account	Main Estimates	Appropriation Transfers	Final Budget	Actual	Difference
Capital Equipment	100,000	-	100,000	99,800	(200)
Strategic Infrastructure	200,000	-	200,000	200,000	-
Total 2020-2021	300,000	-	300,000	299,800	(200)

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	9,500,000	-	9,500,000	2,761,200	(6,738,800)
Total 2020-2021	11,100,000	-	11,100,000	2,761,200	(8,338,800)

REVENUE IN DETAIL 2020-2021 (\$)

Revenue	Main Estimates	Appropriation Transfers	Final Budget	Actual	Difference
Return on Investment	400,000	-	400,000	381,000	(19,000)
Licences and Permits	268,000	-	268,000	243,700	(24,300)
Sales of Goods and Services	5,134,000	-	5,134,000	5,116,100	(17,900)
Miscellaneous	71,000	-	71,000	269,800	198,800
Conditional Grants - Canada	4,630,000	-	4,630,000	4,600,300	(29,700)
Total 2020-2021	10,503,000	-	10,503,000	10,610,900	107,900

Loans and Advances	Main Estimates	Appropriation Transfers	Final Budget	Actual	Difference
Recoveries	2,500,000	-	2,500,000	1,363,800	1,136,200
Total 2020-2021	2,500,000	-	2,500,000	1,363,800	1,136,200

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 2020-2021 for the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries.

Number of permanent and temporary employees as of Dec. 31 of each year		
Employee type	2020	2019
Permanent	194	192
Temporary	17	23
TOTAL	211	215

The department advertised 11 competitions, including six open (public) competitions and five 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 <i>Civil Service Act</i>	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)	0
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
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)	0
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)	9
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)	0
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
	N/A		

Name of regulation	Effective date	Summary of changes
N/A		

The acts for which the department was responsible in 2020-2021 may be found at:
<http://laws.gnb.ca/en/deplinks?subjectnumber=1>

Summary of Official Languages activities

INTRODUCTION

FOCUS 1

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

- Employees were reminded of their legal obligation to offer service of equal quality in English and French in all locations.
- Linguistic profiles were maintained throughout the year and utilized during the hiring process to ensure the department's ability to provide services in both Official Languages 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 their 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.
- The department's annual report provided a summary of activities associated with Official Languages.

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 its obligations under the *Official Languages Act* and related policies and 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.

Name and year of audit area with link to online document	Recommendations	
	Total	Implemented
2019 Volume 3 Chapter 7 Contaminated Sites https://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2019V3/Chap7e.pdf	1	

Implemented Recommendations	Actions Taken
7.31 We recommend the Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries obtain and maintain proof of insurance or financial security as collateral for all property it leases to third parties.	Implemented. The Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries obtains and maintains proof of insurance or financial security as collateral for all property it leases to third parties.

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
Agricultural Fair Associations (2016) – Determine whether there is adequate government oversight of New Brunswick Agricultural Associations. http://www.agnb-vgnb.ca/content/dam/agnb-vgnb/pdf/Reports-Rapports/2016V1/Chap4e.pdf	4	4

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 2020-2021 fiscal year.