



Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

Law Amendments Committee

Animal Protection Act

September 17, 2018

The Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture (NSFA) represents the interests of over 2400 farm families in Nova Scotia. Founded in 1895 to provide Nova Scotia's farm community with a single voice, the NSFA is the province's only general farm organization.

The Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture appreciates the opportunity to present to the Law Amendments Committee.

Upon review of Bill 27, there were elements identified that have the potential to negatively impact farms. While the Act is written in such a way that industry practices can more easily continue to evolve through Code of Practice being referenced as a standard or guide, other elements like inspectors' access to farm land and property without taking bio-sanitary measures and the blurred definition between companion animal and farm animal create cause for concern.

The vague definition of Companion Animal vs Farm Animal

Often time farms will have animals traditionally kept as companion animals work on their farm. The line between companion animal and livestock animal is blurred and jurisdiction will cross between SPCA and Department of Environment Inspection Division. This undefined jurisdiction causes more red tape in an era where governments are working towards reducing red tape.

- Recommendation: All animals owned by registered farm or owner of registered farm be assumed under farm animal sections rather than companion animal. This does not exclude farm animals raised by non-registered farms or homesteaders from being included under the farm animal definition, it just merely streamlines another layer of inspection for registered farms.



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Non-specialized inspectors and inspection process

Since 2016 when the change of inspection moved from Department of Agriculture to Department of Environment's Inspection Division, farmers have been faced with numerous inspection difficulties including but not limited to inspectors not understanding industry norms for animal welfare practices.

Section 21 gives an inspector the authority to cross lands while carrying out duties under the act. While one can appreciate helping an animal in distress, in the instance of farms, biosecurity has the potential to be a concern when inspectors cross one property to access another or entering buildings, in particular mink ranches and poultry operations. Respect and consideration for biosecurity protocols required on farms to ensure the health of animals are necessary.

- Recommendation: To have specific inspectors dedicated to the livestock animal welfare file which will ensure an understanding of the livestock industry in Nova Scotia. This understanding extends to animal welfare practices as well as property access and proper biosecurity practices.
- Recommendation: An Agriculture Resource Coordinator under NSDA to accompany an Inspector designated under the Animal Protection Act when going on farm.

Other recommendations:

- Ensure that all organizations directly impacted by these regulatory changes be consulted.
- We recognize that Code of Practice exist of many of the farm animals impacted by this Act, however, not all are. Industry consultations will need to take place to ensure that those commodities not covered by Codes of Practice have standards identified.

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