



# Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture

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## Law Amendments Committee

### *Traffic Safety Act*

October 9, 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.*

Farmers require the use of roads for many different aspects of farming. Not only are goods for sale transported on roadways, farm trucks, tractors and machinery move from field to farm via roadways.

Current legislation under the Motor Vehicle Act is not up to date with the changing industry trends. For example, self-propelled implements of husbandry are not written in legislation. Other challenges with current legislation are around officers' unfamiliarity of farmer exemptions under the Motor Vehicle Act and associated regulations. Much like other elements of regulatory burden and red tape, service delivery of provincial programs, such as farm plating, is inconsistent across the province.

In Spring 2018, Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal opened a consultation for the development of a new Traffic Safety Act. Areas to be addressed under this Act include vehicles and farm equipment, use of the road, licensing and permitting processes and administration. New regulations will be developed as part of the Act creation. NSFA see these regulations as an opportunity to improve the red tape as it relates to farm transportation.

Upon review of Bill 80, NSFA is pleased to see that farm equipment operators are listed as vulnerable road users. We look forward to participating in consultations around farm equipment operators and the associating regulations. Some highlights that we would like to see in transportation regulations include:

- Updated transportation legislation must have a strong agriculture component which does not limit farm equipment access on public highways. Farmers use different types of vehicles to do work on farm. For example, farmers will often use ATVs and UTVs when checking fields. UTVs are lighter than tractors and trucks, therefore soil compaction is reduced. In order to travel from one field to the next, the UTV needs to be insured and thus plated in order to cross roadways. Most UTVs farmers use are able to be equipped with a road kit. There are is also a non-expiry plate system for farm tractors and farm equipment that could be adopted for UTV registration.

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- Other components that we look forward to having in regulations are a definition for self-propelled implement of husbandry and an expanded definition of farm tractor.
- NSFA also suggests that further legislation through regulations facilitate a practical approach to transporting farm equipment and products on Nova Scotia's roadways. This would include the following:
  - Nova Scotia incorporate in TSA or ensuing regulation permission and regulation around Speed Indicator Symbols (SIS).
  - We would also recommend that agriculture has a clear exemption to Commercial Vehicle Drivers regulation and exemption to reporting hours of service.
  - Farm tractors are permitted to haul no more than two implements of husbandry. With a farm implement of husbandry being is exempt from the trailer definition in the Traffic Safety Act, this recommendation can now easily be applied.
  - NSFA also recommends that if a Slow Moving Vehicle Sign is in use, there is no need for endorsements 23 or the class 8 endorsement on licenses related to hauling farm implements.
- As mentioned earlier, there is a farm plate registry in place. NSFA recommends that "farmer" be better defined as the authorized person representing a farm business duly registered under the Farm Registration regulations.
- NSFA would also recommend that FM plate regulations be broadened to be inclusive of all farmers and be linked to the Farm Registration System for verification.
- Considering the unique nature of agricultural use of roadways, NSFA recommends the development of specific regulations that encompasses all agricultural related traffic regulations and exemptions be developed.

Thank-you for the opportunity to speak today. NSFA looks forward to being a part of regulation development.

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