

Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture Report to the CWSS/SMC
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Legislation

Agricultural Weed Control Act and Regulations

The process of modifying our *Agricultural Weed Control Act and Regulations* is entering final stages. Development of a risk assessment process as a decision-making tool for noxious weeds is nearing completion. The process will be tested and reviewed by the Weed Control Advisory Committee and external colleagues.

<http://nslegislature.ca/legc/statutes/agrcweed.htm>

<https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/WControl.htm>

Minor Use

No Emergency Use Registrations or User Requested Minor Use Label Expansions were submitted by Nova Scotia for 2019. No submissions have been requested by industry. In the coming weeks, growers and commodity associations will be asked to identify priority pests and preferred solutions in preparation for the National Priority Setting Meeting, in March of 2020.

Provincial Weed Survey

Animal and Crop Services staff have initiated a rotating, annual weed survey by crop. It started in 2017. This information will give us a snapshot of current weed flora and can determine changes in species composition and densities over time by comparing to surveys from subsequent years. This will help identify development of herbicide resistance and research needs. It will also help in assessing management practices when developing weed management recommendations for extension personnel. Julia Leeson, Weed Monitoring Biologist, AAFC Saskatoon, is collaborating on this initiative. Crops surveyed to date are : corn, soybean, carrot, onion and strawberry.

Wild Parsnip

Due to an increasing number of calls concerning Wild parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa* (L.) and recommendation from the Weed Control Advisory Committee, a public education campaign was developed and displayed on Access NS screens during the spring and summer months. The message included wild parsnip images, warnings, and information about where to learn more:

https://novascotia.ca/agri/documents/NoxiousWeeds-Wild_Parsnip.pdf

Invasive Species

The Invasive Species Alliance of Nova Scotia Council has been revived; an initial spring meeting was held April 2019. Presentations during the session included: emerald ash borer and Hemlock wooly adelgid, freshwater aquatic invasive species, Chinese mystery snail project, and the history of the Invasive Species Alliance of NS. The future of the council and ideas as to what it shall look like were discussed. The council's email address was reactivated, and identification requests have been coming in.

<https://www.invasivespeciesns.ca/>

On March 14, 2019, the Minister of Lands and Forestry introduced an act to provide for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity entitled: Bill 116 Biodiversity Act. The Biodiversity Council helped craft this new legislation for the province that will enable Nova Scotia to improve the conservation and sustainable use of wild species and ecosystems in flexible and adaptive ways, address legislation gaps and manage emerging risks. Proposed Bill 116:
https://nslegislature.ca/legc/bills/63rd_2nd/1st_read/b116.htm

Wild Chervil Control Initiatives

Wild Chervil (*Anthriscus sylvestris* (L.) Hoffm.) is a noxious weed under the *Agricultural Weed Control Act*. It is an aggressive competitor in grass forage which, if left unchecked, will readily spread, forming dense patches, void of desirable grass species, which increases susceptibility to erosion of dyke structures on our agricultural marshlands. A summer assistant was hired in the summers of 2017 - 2019 to work under the direction of the Plant Protection Coordinator and along with Regional Land Protection staff. The student assisted in administering a wild chervil management plan to reduce wild chervil populations on Nova Scotia Marshlands. Results to date have been promising with significant decreases in plant populations in areas treated each year.

Weed Management Guides

Perennia's weed management guides for fruit and vegetable crops can be found at the following link:
<https://www.perennia.ca/agriculture/commodity-information/> Guides are updated yearly.

Horticulture Weed Issues

Common Toad Rush (*Juncus bufonius*) emerged as a problem weed in onions this year. While it's not an uncommon species in Nova Scotia, prolonged wet spring conditions allowed it to thrive. Available herbicides provided little control and onions intolerance to weed competition made toad rush quite problematic.

Wild Blueberry

Weeds are becoming more problematic because of ongoing tight margins and the limited financial ability of some producers to address challenging weeds. Hair fescue is widespread and can have a devastating impact on yields. This is the most critical weed facing the industry.

Dr. Scott White at Dalhousie Agricultural Campus has completed his third year of the wild blueberry weed survey and has the most comprehensive weed population study ever done in wild blueberry in Nova Scotia.

Fruit Trees

There has been an increase in on-farm apple tree nurseries and where there are no selective or residual products available for grasses, weed control is challenging.