

Shelburne County Community Pastures

Supporting local beef production

Presented by

Yarmouth/Shelburne County Federation of Agriculture

Who we are

- Yarmouth/Shelburne County Federation of Agriculture
- Farms in Yarmouth and Shelburne counties.
- A county branch of the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture
- We are the families that raise and grow local foods.
- We are the backbone of local food security.
- We are businesses that keep local dollars in the community

Why are we presenting to you today

- Shelburne County is ideal for beef production
- The county is losing farms/agricultural land
- Potential to increase the viability of county farms
- The Province is promoting a “Beef Initiative”
- The Province just launched a “Land Initiative”
- Asking for your cooperation and endorsement

Why Shelburne County

- ▶ Moderated climate
- ▶ Long pasture growing season
- ▶ 27% of the county's registered farms' main commodity is beef
- ▶ Mild winter and summer temps give the county an advantage
- ▶ Abattoir located in Yarmouth County
- ▶ Province has a beef initiative to support beef growers
- ▶ Province has a land initiative to support community pastures
- ▶ End of supply chain! Need to increase food security

What is a community pasture?

Cooperatively owned/managed grazing land where multiple member farms send their livestock to graze during the summer. These lands are often managed by local associations promoting sustainable land use, which provides cost-effective grazing while preventing soil erosion by managing stocking rates.

- Land managed by a group of farmers
- Preserves agricultural land
- Allows new farmers to access pasture
- Increases county beef numbers
- Demonstrates pasture management best practices
- Increases food security for the area

Nova Scotia Community Pastures



Vision of the project

- Strengthen cattle production
- Provide opportunity for farms to grow
- Improve the image of agriculture
- Protect agricultural lands from development
- Multiple parcels of land in both counties
- Increase local food security

What will be developed

Southwest Pastures Cooperative Ltd.

- ▶ Co-operative not-for-profit legal structure
- ▶ Run by members
- ▶ Governed by an elected board of directors from membership
- ▶ By-laws for governance
- ▶ Employment opportunity to maintain fencing and herd oversight
- ▶ Yarmouth County Community Pastures
- ▶ Shelburne County Community Pastures

Management Practices

- ▶ April to November Grazing Season
- ▶ Soil testing to determine pH and fertility requirements
- ▶ Pre-season fence check and repair to permanent perimeter fencing
- ▶ Rotational Grazing
- ▶ Interior paddocks with temporary Solar electric fencing
- ▶ Weekly check and repair of permanent perimeter fencing
- ▶ Seasonal job creation

Rotational grazing will improve soil quality year after year

Requirements for use

- ▶ Member of Cooperative
- ▶ Provincially registered farm
- ▶ Release of liability signed
- ▶ Cattle owners have insurance
- ▶ Cattle have Vaccinations
- ▶ De-wormed
- ▶ Identification tags
- ▶ Entry and exit weights

Time frame

2026

- ▶ Form the cooperative
- ▶ Secure funding
- ▶ Identify properties
- ▶ Establish perimeter fencing
- ▶ pH testing and adjustments
- ▶ Fertility testing and seeding
- ▶ Obtain guarantees of use

2027

- ▶ First livestock on pasture
- ▶ Expand pasture properties
- ▶ Expand fencing of properties
- ▶ Improve fertility
- ▶ Hire seasonal pasture manager
- ▶ Acquire portable chute and scale

Moving forward

- ▶ MODS identifies properties of 5 acres or larger (End of March)
- ▶ MODS gives permission to walk properties (End of March)
- ▶ Yarmouth/Shelburne Federation of Agriculture evaluates properties
- ▶ Potential properties are identified (End of April)
- ▶ Enter into lease agreement (End of June)
- ▶ Cooperative assumes responsibility to maintain/improve properties

Suggested Motion:

To recommend that staff be directed to explore opportunities regarding community pastures with the Yarmouth/Shelburne Federation of Agriculture.