



PEIIA Presentation to Land Matters Advisory Committee

February 9th, 2021



PEI Institute of Agrologists

- The Prince Edward Island Institute of Agrologists is the organization of professional agriculturalists in PEI.
- The term, “Agrologist” or the designation “P.Ag.” after a person’s name indicates that this person is a member of PEIIA and is a professional, legally qualified as an agrologist.



PEI Institute of Agrologists

- “Agrology is the practice of bio-resource and economic sciences to provide advice to the agriculture, agri-food and natural resources sectors and contribute to the health of the society, environment and the economy.”
- The mandate of the PEIIA is to safeguard the public by ensuring its members are qualified and competent to provide knowledge and advice on agricultural and related areas.



PEI Institute of Agrologists

- Professional Agrologists are employed by educational and extension institutions, research centres, producer associations, government agencies, and agricultural businesses.
- As varied as their careers may be, Professional Agrologists on PEI have one common element: they are members of the PEIIA with a strong commitment to work within their area of expertise and collectively throughout every sector of the agriculture and food industry.



PEI Institute of Agrologists

- As of December 2020: 89 members, including:
 - 58 – P. Ag. practicing
 - 9 – P. Ag. retired and honorary
 - 11 – PPA (Permit To Practice Agrology)
 - 11 – AIT (Agrologist in Training)



Land Policy and Agriculture

- PEIA members work to support the success of the agriculture industry in Prince Edward Island.
- Fundamental to a prosperous agriculture industry is effective land ownership and land use policy.
- Policies must protect agricultural land, provide fair and equitable access to land for agriculture, and keep farmland in the hands of farmers to produce food.



Three Key Points of Focus

- Protecting Agricultural Land
- Fair & Equal Application of Regulations
- Reviewing Land Limit Regulations



Protecting Agricultural Land

- The PEIA supports policy that protects agricultural land and keeps it in the production of crops and livestock.
- PEI has often lacked cohesive, forward-thinking land use policy to ensure that prime agricultural land is not turned into subdivisions or a series of residential lots along rural roads.



Protecting Agricultural Land

- Jurisdictions with high population density and significant agricultural policy have rigorous land use policies to protect agricultural land and keep it in food production:
 - United Kingdom
 - Netherlands
 - Belgium



Protecting Agricultural Land

- If agricultural fields are increasingly surrounded by residential/commercial buildings, this can create conflict between residents and farmers.
- Prince Edward Island is a small province where agriculture is our #1 industry. The province needs to ensure that there is enough quality agricultural land to continue fostering the province's top economic generator.



Fair & Equal Application of Regulations

- Historically, there has been inconsistent application of existing regulations relating to land ownership/land sales.
- In recent years, there have been significant land sales to individuals or corporations that either directly circumvent regulations or go against the spirit of these regulations.



Fair & Equal Application of Regulations

- Sales of land to out-of-province owners may need to be considered differently if the prospective buyers are buying a farm enterprise.
- There may be a need to examine whether there are loopholes that need to be closed to ensure that the spirit of land ownership laws are upheld.



Reviewing Land Limit Regulations

- At the moment, there a number of family farms that at their land ownership limits and are unable to purchase land to accommodate a next generation, diversify production, and take advantage of production efficiencies/new technology.
- Many farms that wish to sell to new owners find that they have **limited prospective buyers due to the restrictions** of land ownership regulations.



Reviewing Land Limit Regulations

- Current land ownership regulations are meant to prevent the consolidation of large acreages in the hands of relatively few landowners. Nonetheless, **current regulations appear to be doing the opposite.**
- Consideration should be given to amend regulations to **allow a landowner to exceed land limits for a defined period of time** in order to parcel out newly purchased land to additional buyers or divest of other land-holdings? This would allow for more flexibility in the succession of farm enterprises within the agricultural community.



Reviewing Land Limit Regulations

- **Re-evaluation of land limits should be performed on a regular basis**, possibly by a third-party or external committee to ensure that regulations reflect the needs of the industry and the province.
- Family farms come in all different sizes and business structures. **Farms with large land holdings and corporate structures are not “factory farms”** and should be valued as much as small and medium sized farm enterprises.



Reviewing Land Limit Regulations

- In order for certain farms to be efficient in the use of equipment, capital, and human resources, they must be able to access the necessary land.
- Increasingly, crop rotation and diversity of production is increasing. Land limits **must not restrict the ability of farms to optimize crop rotation and sustainability of production** while still serving their markets and filling their contracts/quota.



Summary / key points

- PEI needs modern land use legislation/regulations that protect agricultural land.
- Land ownership/use regulations need to be applied fairly and equitably to all land owners.
- Land limits must not be so restrictive that they impact the competitiveness, profitability and sustainability of Prince Edward Island farms.



Thank You

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