



**NOVA SCOTIA  
FARM LOAN BOARD**

# Guidelines

## **Program for Accessing Agricultural Land**

**2025-2026  
Guidelines**



## Objective

The Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board (FLB) designed this program to help new primary producers, expanding operations, or commercial farm successors to gain access to farmland within Nova Scotia. With farmland leasing and flexible financing options, we aim to support new farm establishment and/or growth. With our \$5 million, three-year pilot investment in streams one and two, the program focuses on accessing land through two lease options from the Board. Streams three and four are lending options with increased flexibility and custom terms. These leasing and purchasing pathways allow producers to choose the option that best matches their goals and financial readiness for their farming operation.

## Program Criteria

Applicants must be involved in, or entering, primary agricultural production and demonstrate capacity and intent to establish a viable business through existing farming plans or business plan. Three key eligibility categories will apply:

- **New Entrants:** Registered farm businesses that have been operating for five years or less. Applicants must demonstrate start-up potential, training, or experience. New ownership of long-standing farming businesses may also be considered.
- **Growth Mode Farms:** Existing operations projecting a significant increase in revenue or sustainability in the next five years. Applicants must provide credible financial projections and demonstrate that the project supports significant business expansion with market capacity and applicant experience.
- **Farm Succession:** Acquisition of farmland with documented succession plan whereby the individual/company acquiring the land will be responsible for the operation of the property.

## Applicant Eligibility

Applicants must:

- be in production or entering primary agricultural production
- must be registered, or registering once eligible, as a farm in Nova Scotia\*
- have an Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) at time of application or when eligible\*
- be at least 19 years of age
- meet the eligibility criteria of a borrower under the [Agriculture and Rural Credit Act](#)
- if purchasing a family farm, have a documented succession plan and be purchasing a minimum of 25% interest of the commercial farm.

\*Proponents not registered as a farm and/or hold a valid EFP at the time of application will be given the opportunity to enter the program pending eligibility criteria is fulfilled within one year of the approval date.

## Program Parameters

- **Program Budget:** \$5 million over three years in a pilot phase for Stream One and Stream Two. Streams Three and Four are part of general FLB lending within existing capital funds of the FLB.
- **Eligible Sectors:** Primary production required (examples: crop, livestock, or mixed farming). Value-added processing activities may occur on property in addition to primary production.
- **Intake:** Open intake for 3-year pilot program or until program budget is fully used, whichever is sooner.

- **Maximum Land Purchase:** No maximum purchase, however, the program intends to support multiple applicants for property purchases annually.
- **Eligible Properties:** Cultivated agricultural land, or land that demonstrates clear potential for development and agricultural use, is eligible under this program. Any upgrades or improvements made to the land by applicants under Streams One and Two will become the property of the Board. Properties must be migrated or be migrated as part of the purchase and sale, at the seller's expense.
- **Easements:** Properties with pre-existing easements will be considered as eligible properties. The presence of any such easement will factor into land valuation.
- **Loan Security:** The Board will use standardized land values and established benchmarks to value the property. Purchases above these thresholds will require a formal appraisal and added to the cost. Environmental assessments, if required, can be added to the project cost.
- **Farm Registration** Applicants must remain a registered farm for the duration of any lease-period.
- **Environmental:** Applicants must commit to implementing a valid EFP within a prescribed timeframe for duration of any lease-period and carry out any. Issues identified in your EFP as high risk or immediate action required, is to be carried out within one year of the EFP. Applicants are encouraged to seek consent from selling party to share an EFP (if one exists).
- **Insurance Requirements:** Specific to land and any infrastructure being purchased; however, liability to be the responsibility of the lessee.

## Program Streams

### Stream 1 – Land Freeze

- FLB will purchase the requested property and lease to the client for 10 years.
- The tenant pays a minimal lease rate as calculated by the Board.
- Payments do not build equity; however, land value is effectively frozen at the purchase price.
- At the end of 10 years, the tenant may:
  - Purchase the property through a conventional loan, or
  - Surrender the property to the Board.
- Purchase price will be calculated from original price plus associated fees.
- Tenant may opt at anytime to convert to either the Asset Building or Deferred Purchase stream (if still being offered).

### Stream 2 – Asset Building

- FLB will purchase the requested property and lease it to the client for 10 years.
- Market-rate lease payment that will build equity towards future purchase.
- At the end of 10 years, the tenant may:
  - Purchase the property through a conventional loan, or
  - Surrender the property to the Board forfeiting equity.
- Purchase price will be calculated from original price plus associated fees less accumulated equity.
- Tenant may opt at anytime to convert to Deferred Purchase stream (if still being offered).

### Stream 3 – Deferred Purchase

- Up to 90% financing for land purchase.
- Up to 25-year loan amortization.
- The client purchases the property directly with support from a loan deferral structure.
- Up to a 7-year deferral period is available on a maximum 25-year loan (e.g., 7 years deferred + 18 years repayment).
- Flexible repayment schedule dependant on farm type (monthly, annual, etc.).

### Stream 4 – Small Farm Start-up

- Up to 100% financing on loans for land, in addition to equipment or livestock.
- Maximum loan amounts up to \$500,000 (inclusive of equipment, livestock, etc.).
- Amortization up to 25 years for land purchases.
- Standard loan parameters apply.
- Deferrals may be available dependent on request.

### Eligible Costs for Streams 3 and 4

- Land
- Land improvements/development/clearing
- Surveys, appraisals, environment assessment
- Farming Equipment
- Building upgrades
- Infrastructure such as drainage, fencing, access roads, water access, etc.
- Livestock purchases
- Legal fees

### Ineligible costs for Streams 3 and 4

- Insurance
- Non-agricultural properties
- Purchases deemed not necessary for operation
- Multi-purpose equipment (Trucks, ATVs)
- Operating costs
- Property taxes/fines

## Lease and Financing Agreements

Successful applicants will enter into a lease or financing agreement with the FLB that aligns with the applicable program Stream. This acknowledges the applicant will comply with all terms and conditions set out in the agreement as well as the Program guidelines and application form.

This agreement will outline all relevant terms, including payment schedules, interest rates, lease duration, and any other conditions, and the applicant agrees to adhere to these terms throughout the program. The applicant further acknowledges that any improvements or upgrades made to the land under the program become the property of the Board, unless otherwise specified in writing.

## How to Apply

Application forms for leasing and financing options inclusive of all Streams can be found on our website at [nsfarmloan.ca](http://nsfarmloan.ca). Stream One and Stream Two can be applied for on the PAAL Application Form, while Stream Three and Stream Four would use the general Loan Application Form.

Applications can also be found at a Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board office or at your regional Department of Agriculture office and sent to:

TRURO – HEAD OFFICE  
74 Research Drive  
Bible Hill, NS B6L 2R2  
T: 902-893-6506  
F: 902-895-7693

KENTVILLE – FIELD OFFICE  
Kentville Agricultural Centre  
32 Main Street  
Kentville, NS B4N 1J5  
T: 902-679-6009  
F: 902-679-4997

or

**[FLBNS@novascotia.ca](mailto:FLBNS@novascotia.ca)**