



STRATEGIC PLAN

2018-2021

Growing Forward 2 


Newfoundland
Labrador

Canada 



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Newfoundland and Labrador Young Farmers' Forum (NLYFF) has embarked on a strategic planning process to determine where we are, where we want to be and how we will get there.

A strategic planning session was held with the Board of Directors on November 2, 2017 where potential goals, mission and vision statements were proposed. At the end of November, delegates at the NLYFF Leadership Summit were presented with four potential mission and vision statements, and were asked to rank them in their order of preference. They were also asked to endorse the goals from that board session.

This resulted in this **new mission statement**:

To attract, create, and empower a network of aspiring, new, and existing young farm leaders.

Delegates also selected the following **new vision statement**:

Young farm leaders preserving the future of a sustainable agriculture industry and working towards food self-sufficiency.

The delegates were also asked to look at our proposed goals and determine if each should be kept or discarded. The **five new goals are as follows**:

- Double the number of signed up members in 2018 and increase by 20% annually
- To increase non-government revenue streams of the organization by at least 5% annually.
- Create awareness of NL agricultural opportunities provincially, nationally and internationally available to young farmers looking to pursue farming as a career option.
- Identify and deliver ongoing training/education resources to aspiring, new and existing young farmers. Offering one new program/workshop annually.
- Prepare aspiring, new and existing young farmers for a more active role in provincial and national agricultural organizations.



PLAN OVERVIEW



Strategic Planning – An Overview

Strategic planning is the process used by community groups, government departments, organizations, businesses and others develop a blueprint for action and change within their community, department, organization or business.

At the organizational / Industry level (such as NLYFF) strategic planning provides the board's partners and stakeholders an opportunity to identify actions to address issues affecting their industry.

It answers the following questions:

- Where are you?
- Where are you going?
- Where should you be going?
- How do you get there?

Strategic plan must be based on a realistic assessment of resources, include all stakeholders, include ways to evaluate the plan's success, and lead to long-term commitment.

Overview of Why NLYFF is doing a strategic plan

When asked "why the NLYFF wanted to engage in Strategic planning?" Responses at our session included:

- Because we need a plan
- To know what to include in funding proposals.
- To know what is going on with the organization
- To ensure that the NLYFF is doing what stakeholders want.
- To ensure that everyone is on the same page.

This is the first time the NLYFF has done any strategic planning since it was founded in 2003.



MISSION STATEMENT

The Newfoundland and Labrador Young Farmers' Forum (NLYFF) had a mission statement which needed to be reviewed and updated. Leading into this process the mission statement was:

To energize and educate a powerful network of young farm leaders within the province.

The mission statement is the core purpose of your organization, presented in a clear, short statement that focuses attention in one clear direction by stating purpose of the group's uniqueness.

A mission statement should be a one or two sentence, clear, concise statement that says who the agency is, what it does, for whom, and where. It needs to communicate the essence of the organization to its stakeholders and to the public.

After our first session on November 2, we had four potential new proposed mission statements which were voted on at our Leadership Summit on November 27.

Conference attendees worked on the wording of the top-rated statement and we came out of the exercise with the new statement:

To attract, create, and empower a network of aspiring, new, and existing young farm leaders.



VISION STATEMENT

The Newfoundland and Labrador Young Farmers' Forum (NLYFF) had a vision statement which needed to be reviewed and updated. Leading into this process the mission statement was:

We have a vision of empowered young Newfoundlanders and Labradorians leading an attractive and profitable agriculture industry.

A vision statement describes an ideal future, while reflecting the essence of an organization's mission and values. It seeks to answer the question 'what impact do we want to have on society?' It should unite an organization in a common, coherent strategic direction and convey a larger sense of organizational purpose.

After our first session on November 2, we had four potential new proposed mission statements, which were further refined at our Leadership Summit on November 27 and 28. There we asked participants to rank the potential statements, and then we improved the language on the chosen statement.

We came out of the exercise with the new statement:

Young farm leaders preserving the future of a sustainable agriculture industry and working towards food self-sufficiency.



SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT analysis is a basic tool for auditing an organization and its environment, and provides direction and a basis for development of a plan. It is an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. It is an important step in planning and its value is often underestimated despite the simplicity in creation.

A SWOT analysis was also conducted at the session on November 2. This guided the development of goals.

SWOT Analysis – conducted during session

<p><i>Strengths</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The level of activity that the organization is undertaking relative to the size of the org., industry and Province.</i> • <i>Paid staffing</i> • <i>Good communicators</i> • <i>Size and commitment of membership</i> • <i>Social media use</i> • <i>Strong board of directors and interest (most director positions required elections)</i> • <i>Government Support</i> • <i>Vocal membership (leadership)</i> • <i>Good at engaging their target audience</i> • <i>Age / Young Farmers classified as under 40.</i> • <i>Market opportunity</i> • <i>Consumer demand</i> • <i>Available resources (information and expertise)</i> • <i>Confidence and initiative</i>
<p><i>Weaknesses</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The organization has been newly reformed resulting in a learning curve.</i> • <i>Membership is dispersed</i> • <i>Time constraints – members / directors are involved in a variety of other things.</i> • <i>Lack of Youth interest in farming</i> • <i>Lack of long term sustainability plan. What if current government support dries up.</i> • <i>Lack of knowledge of those not involved in the industry / consumer</i> • <i>We are on an island</i> • <i>Population retention.</i>
<p><i>Opportunities</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hugh market with respect to opportunities for import replacement (lots of room to grow</i> • <i>Land availability</i> • <i>Support from the general population regarding availability of fresh food.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Having a coordinator</i> • <i>Government is focusing on the industry / funding availability</i> • <i>Local food movement (globally)</i> • <i>Self-sufficiency</i>
<p><i>Threats</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Activist groups and our reaction to them</i> • <i>Social media</i> • <i>Potential cut to government funding</i> • <i>Uninformed / misinformed consumer</i> • <i>Natural Environment / Soil Conditions</i> • <i>Public Trust – people believing what is said on social media</i> • <i>Imported goods and services often cheaper</i> • <i>Conglomerate Corporations (that can process more efficiently and import at lower costs)</i> • <i>Disruptive Technologies that could replace local market. (new tech also an opportunity)</i> • <i>Stigma of certain past ideas impacting how new opportunities are judged (i.e. Sprung??)</i> • <i>Pseudo science (GMO)</i> • <i>Government regulations (or lack thereof – With respect to quality of food being imported)</i> • <i>Prov and Fed support has been good. Municipal Support is not typically good. Tax system is not considered fair (taxing land) Need improved Taxation system.</i> • <i>Mismatch between wanting local food but the NIMBY attitude when it comes to providing it.</i> • <i>The population is resistant to change.</i>



GOALS

Goals are identified from having taken a wide look around the outside of the organization (an external analysis) and careful look inside the organization (an internal analysis), and then identifying what are the most important issues to address.

The strategic plan will include goals which are long-term outcomes to provide focus for the planning process. Goals may refer to the entire organization, such as those concerning operating the organization, such as staffing and office space. An organization may also have goals that arise from providing products or services to clients.

During this process, we used the SMARTER goals system to develop goals. A goal should fit all the criteria below.

- **SMARTER GOALS**

- **Specific:** For example, it's difficult to know what someone should be doing if they are to pursue the goal to "work harder". It's easier to recognize "Write a paper".
- **Measurable:** It's difficult to know what the scope of "Writing a paper" really is. It's easier to appreciate that effort if the goal is "Write a 30-page paper".
- **Acceptable:** If I'm to take responsibility for pursuit of a goal, the goal should be acceptable to me. For example, I'm not likely to follow the directions of someone telling me to write a 30-page paper when I also have to five other papers to write. However, if you involve me in setting the goal so I can change my other commitments or modify the goal, I'm much more likely to accept pursuit of the goal as well.
- **Realistic:** Even if I do accept responsibility to pursue a goal that is specific and measurable, the goal won't be useful to me or others if, for example, the goal is to "Write a 30- page paper in the next 10 seconds".
- **Time frame:** It may mean more to others if I commit to a realistic goal to "Write a 30-page paper in one week". However, it'll mean more to others (particularly if they are planning to help me or guide me to reach the goal) if I specify that I will write one page a day for 30 days, rather than including the possibility that I will write all 30 pages in last day of the 30-day period.
- **Extending:** The goal should stretch the performer's capabilities. For example, I might be more interested in writing a 30-page paper if the topic of the paper or the way that I write it will extend my capabilities.
- **Rewarding:** I'm more inclined to write the paper if the paper will contribute to an effort in such a way that I might be rewarded for my effort.

Existing NLYFF Goals

- To raise awareness of the NLYFF.
- To provide educational and developmental resources to beginning and young farmers in the province.
- To provide networking opportunities provincially, nationally, and globally.
- To identify challenges encountered by young people attempting to enter the industry and encourage solutions related to those issues.
- To encourage agricultural interest among youth and young adults through raising awareness of the agriculture industry.
- To promote the exchange of ideas and identify training needs
- To encourage capacity building through information sessions, mentoring programs, and workshops.
- To consolidate the opinions of young and beginning farmers.

We started discussing new goals from the perspective of SMARTER. As the discussion unfolded it became clear that the goals really didn't meet the SMARTER criteria. New goals were discussed and an initial attempt made to write them. As agreed these goals should be further reviewed and re-drafted as necessary.

Some work was done on the goals prior to the Leadership Summit and a tweaked list of goals was presented at the conference. The delegates at the Leadership Summit were also asked to look at our proposed goals and determine if each should be kept or discarded. They endorsed all five goals as follows:

- To increase organization membership
- To increase financial stability of the organization
- Tell our Story (To create awareness of NL agricultural opportunities provincially, nationally and internationally available to young farmers looking to pursue farming as a career option).
- To identify and deliver ongoing training/education resources to aspiring, new and existing young farmers.
- Prepare aspiring, new and existing young farmers for a more active role in provincial and national agricultural organizations.

Strategies

- Outlines how you will achieve your goals.
- They are usually what change the most as the organization eventually conducts more comprehensive strategic planning, particularly by more closely examining the external and internal environments of the organization.

Objectives

- Identify specific, measurable results produced while implementing strategies.
- They are the specific activities that the organization must undertake to ensure that it's effectively implementing each strategy.
- Objectives should be clearly worded to the extent that people can assess if the objectives have been met or not.
- Objectives are specific, measurable results produced while implementing strategies. Use SMARTER criteria.

New Goals with Strategies

- Double the number of signed up members in 2018 and increase by 20% annually
 - **Strategy:** *To increase organization membership through promotion at events and online.*
- To increase non-government revenue streams of the organization by at least 5% annually.
 - **Strategy:** *Identify potential corporate sponsors.*
 - **Strategy:** *Develop a sponsorship package that can be used to attract potential corporate sponsors.*
- Create awareness of NL agricultural opportunities provincially, nationally and internationally available to young farmers looking to pursue farming as a career option.
 - **Strategy:** *Continue to build social media programs.*
 - **Strategy:** *Identify success stories to share.*
 - **Strategy:** *Utilize all available media (print, video, social, etc.) to promote success stories.*
- Identify and deliver ongoing training/education resources to aspiring, new and existing young farmers. Offering one new program/workshop annually.
 - **Strategy:** *Identify new training opportunities and methods.*
 - **Strategy:** *Consult with young farmers to determine training requirements and provide educational and developmental resources to beginning and young farmers in the province.*
 - **Strategy:** *Encourage capacity building through information sessions, mentoring programs, and workshops.*
- Prepare aspiring, new and existing young farmers for a more active role in provincial and national agricultural organizations.
 - **Strategy:** *Identify challenges encountered by young people attempting to enter the industry and encourage solutions related to those issues.*
 - **Strategy:** *Consolidate the opinions of young and beginning farmers.*



A B.H.A.G. is a Big Hairy Audacious Goal. It is a strategic business statement similar to a vision statement and is designed to focus an organization on a single medium-long term organization-wide goal which is audacious, and while it may be questioned by those outside the organization, it should be seen as possible internally.

Several such goals have been suggested throughout the strategic planning process.

The audacious goal selected is as follows:

To make young farmers the driving force behind the NL Government's goal of increasing food self-sufficiency to at least 20% by 2022.

Potential Strategies:

- Ensure existing young farmers have the tools necessary to successfully expand and grow their operations.
- Do our part to dramatically increase the number of new entrants and ensure they have the tools necessary for success.