

French-language Services Plan

2023–2024

Agriculture



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French-language Services Plan
Department of Agriculture
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Ce document est également disponible en français sous le titre : « Plan de services en français 2023-2024 »

Message from Deputy Minister Loretta Robichaud

The Acadian and Francophone communities are integral to the culture and history of Nova Scotia, and the Department of Agriculture is committed to effectively implement the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations by increasing the prevalence and awareness of French-language services through our commitment to the *Hello/Bonjour!* program and by engaging with the Acadian and Francophone communities.

We will continue to take a coordinated approach to the delivery of French-language services and look forward to advancing our work with the Acadian and Francophone community, the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie, and other government departments and agencies working to improve French-language services in the Province.

It is my pleasure to share the 2023-24 French Language Services Plan for the Department of Agriculture. I encourage Nova Scotians and industry stakeholders to share the feedback, ideas, and suggestions on our current French offerings and how the Department can work together with the Acadian and Francophone communities of Nova Scotia.

Loretta Robichaud
Deputy Minister

What we're doing to contribute to the growth of the Acadian and Francophone community

The Department of Agriculture's French-language Service Plan outlines the steps that were taken during 2022-2023, as well as those that will be taken in 2023-2024 to further the provision of French-language services. Through this on-going work, the Department makes every effort to identify how it can contribute to the preservation and support of the Acadian and Francophone community in Nova Scotia.

We believe Nova Scotians should have access to quality government services in French and this plan demonstrates our commitment to ensuring our programs, policies and services address the priorities expressed by the Acadian and Francophone community. We support Nova Scotians in requesting services from government in either English or French. We also encourage Acadians and Francophones to have their voices heard by participating on agencies, boards, and commissions, which are regularly advertised by the Executive Council Office. We endeavour to fulfil our responsibilities under the *French-language Services Act* and Regulations.

To achieve this aim, we collaborate regularly with other designated public institutions across government, including the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie, through the French-language Services Coordinating Committee. As we continue to maintain and build upon our French-language services, we welcome feedback on our progress, and invite you to share your comments or questions by contacting our French-language Services Coordinator. Should you wish to make a formal complaint regarding French-language services, please contact the Office of the Ombudsman.

French-language services coordinator:

Dawn Miller email: Dawn.Miller2@novascotia.ca Tel: 902-890-8530

Senior Policy Analyst / French Language Services Coordinator / Agriculture

Services we offer in French

- Offer of services in French through the *Hello/Bonjour!* program throughout various regions of the province.
- A variety of class projects and classroom learning activities that promote agriculture are available in French. These materials, activities, and projects are available for a variety of grades and in subjects including math, science, and social studies.
- Some funding program materials for new entrants to agriculture have been translated.
- Programs and materials originating from the federal government are made available to clients in both official languages.
- Yearly French-language services plan.

How we communicate with the public in French

The Department of Agriculture responds to verbal and written communication, including invoicing and project administration documents, from Acadian and Francophone communities, institutions, and businesses in their language of choice.

Departmental French-speaking staff members are available at the Cornwallis, Halifax, Antigonish, and Truro offices to offer initial services in French through the *Hello/Bonjour!* program and to also help francophone clients with their requests. As required, the Department engages Communications Nova Scotia translation services.

New employees are advised of the process to follow when offering services to French-speaking clients through regular orientation sessions. The Department also supports staff enrolment in French-language courses sponsored by the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie with the goal of increasing French-language capacity.

What we did to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2022-23

- Calls, inquiries, and requests for assistance received in French were responded to in French.
- Information is available to new staff on French-language services via the French Language Services Coordinator.
- Staff were provided updates about French-language services across government, including *Acadie at a Glance* training, the *Hello/Bonjour!* program and French-language courses supported by the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie.
- Increased employee and senior management awareness and obligations of the *French- Language Services Act* and Regulations.
- The departmental French-language Services Coordinator represented the Department during regular monthly meetings of the French-language Services Coordinating Committee.
- The 2022-23 French-language Services Plan was posted to the Department website.

How we plan to maintain or improve our French-language services in 2023-24

Objective 1: Strengthen internal operational structures including policy, legislative and administrative frameworks

- Integrate French-language services into the corporate planning process as appropriate.
- Support French-language training for staff.
- The Deputy Minister will continue to champion French-language services and to raise awareness among staff about government initiatives that improve service delivery to the Acadian and Francophone community.
- Build awareness into the orientation session for new staff.

Objective 2: Develop and deliver quality French-language services and programs to the public

- Promote agriculture in the classroom with materials in both official languages.
- With work underway to bring in a new Federal-Provincial funding program, decisions are being made to identify which program materials may be made available in French.
- Increase employee awareness of and obligation to the *French- Language Services Act* and Regulations.
- Increase active offers of French-language services to clients by encouraging staff training and increasing the visibility and promotion of the *Hello/Bonjour!* program.

- Continue to translate pertinent documents and increase French content on departmental websites.
- Continue to give consideration to the translation of new promotional and industry outreach programming materials.

Objective 3: Maintain ongoing dialogue and consultation with the Acadian and francophone community

- Strive to meet the service needs of the Acadian and Francophone community.
- Display the “Bonjour!” sign which lets the public know our organization will make an effort to offer French-language services.
- For regulatory changes requiring consultations, consider consultations with Francophone industry members as appropriate and provide materials in French and interpretation where necessary.
- Work closely with the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie regarding the implementation of the *French- Language Services Act* and Regulations, including seeking advice and guidance on public consultations and translation of documents.

The Department of Agriculture continues to acknowledge and recognize the importance of the Acadian and francophone community and are committed to working together to advance the agriculture industry within these communities. The Department will continue to consult and seek input from the Office of Acadian Affairs and Francophonie to develop ways to further our efforts to improve our support through French-language capacity and to making our resources and services available in French.