## Operations

Atlantic Poultry Research Institute (APRI) is the only poultry research organization in Atlantic Canada, and it is celebrating its 25th year. APRI is a non-profit society that unites all industry stakeholders under one umbrella, to address industry needs and enhance industry performance.

### Priorities

- **Research Needs:** Prioritizes research needs, solicits for funding for research projects, and transfers research knowledge to the industry.
- **Funding:** The research activity created by APRI is primarily undertaken by scientists of Dalhousie University, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada and provincial governments.
- **Facilities:** APRI does not have any research facilities, resources or scientists of its own. APRI has one staff person, Janice MacIsaac, a Research Associate who is responsible for all APRI activities including industry and educational institutions has contributed to incredible changes and expanded knowledge within the poultry industry.

### Funding

Research conducted and supported by industry, government and educational institutions has contributed to incredible changes and expanded knowledge within the poultry industry.

### Benefits

- **Research Projects:** A small sampling of research projects that have been completed under APRI and the benefits they offer for industry are included on the APRI website.
- **Agricultural and Agri-Food Canada (AC) websites:**
- **Atlantic Veterinary College (AC) websites:**
- **Dalhousie University, Agricultural Campus (AC) website:**

### Research Activities

Research conducted at the APRC, a $13 million facility, includes the following activities:

- **Commercial Testing:** The APRC facility is also built to federally inspected standards for slaughter and processing, a feature expanding its research capacity.
- **Chute Animal Nutrition Centre (feed mill):** In association with the APRC, is the new Chute Animal Nutrition Centre (feed mill) that enables precise mixing of rations for poultry research trials.
- **Isolated Hatchery Unit:** The new isolated hatchery unit located nearby at the Perennia Innovation Park.

### Students

- **Dalhousie University, Agricultural Campus (AC):** Students attending Dalhousie AC gain exposure to the poultry industry and provided valuable contacts that led to their current positions.
- **Atlantic Poultry Inc. (APR):** Many of them are now working in the poultry sector.
- **Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada (AC):** Students were able to offer testimonials on their experiences and education, and how it helped them secure employment in the poultry sector.

### Industry Support

- **NSAC (New Brunswick Egg Producers):** People were always available and willing to provide guidance and assistance. They believed in the value of research and provided concrete support.
- **Atlantic Poultry Inc. (APR):** When they provided funding for research projects, they were very happy to have someone at APRI working on their needs.
- **Atlantic Veterinary College (AC):** People definitely believed in the value of research and were willing to provide guidance and assistance.
- **Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada (AC):** People definitely believed in the value of research and were willing to provide guidance and assistance.
- **Dalhousie University, Agricultural Campus (AC):** People definitely believed in the value of research and were willing to provide guidance and assistance.

### Research and Development

- **Foster innovation and productivity:** Research and development foster innovation and productivity within the poultry industry in meeting future demands.
- **Quality Control/Research & Development, Northeast Nutrition Inc.:** An additional benefit of research conducted in a University setting is that graduate students are exposed to the cutting-edge techniques and technologies used in the industry.

### Why Invest in Research?

- **Future:** In the next 50 years, agriculture will be called upon to produce much more food with little or no increase in arable land, water or resources available.
- **Consumer:** Funding today’s research projects is essential to building sustainable and productive agriculture.
- **Consumer Attitudes:** Consumer attitudes and preferences are continually changing, influenced greatly by consumer attitudes and preferences. Funding today’s research projects is essential to building sustainable and productive agriculture.
- **Innovation:** Research and development foster innovation and productivity within the poultry industry in meeting future demands.

### Added Benefit – the Next Generation

- **Michelle Langille:** My graduate work prepared me for a career in the animal nutrition industry and provided valuable contacts that led to my current position. The knowledge and hands-on experience I received during my time at NSAC has served me well in my career.
- **Ashley Gillis:** The research projects addressed current industry needs as well as being proactive in dealing with changes yet to come. The research facilities enabled experiments to be conducted in controlled environments, providing optimum conditions for quality research. Personnel were always available and willing to provide guidance and assistance. I have no doubt that my education and hands-on research experience through APRC/APRI helped me attain my position.
- **Jennifer Saunders-Blades:** My graduate work prepared me for a career in the animal nutrition industry through the APRC and APRI, and many of them are now working in the poultry industry.
- **Dr. Derek Anderson:** When I enrolled in NSAC my ambition was to make a difference in the life of animals. My exposure to poultry research was an underdog and again as a MHS student opened my eyes to a whole new career path in animal research, one that is exciting and never the same day-to-day. My experiences at NSAC provided me with the knowledge and confidence to continue my education, completing a PhD and pursue a career in poultry research. The wonderful, knowledgeable researchers and personnel at NSAC were great mentors, instilling in me the value and need of top quality poultry research.
- **Dr. Michael Cockram:** Atlantic Poultry Research Institute, Head and CEO, Atlantic Veterinary College, University of Prince Edward Island.

### Table 1: APRI Board of Directors (July, 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Sector</th>
<th>Representative</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Processor</td>
<td>Ian Blethen, Chair</td>
<td>Atlantic Poultry Inc., Watfordale Farms Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Dr. Derek Anderson, CEO</td>
<td>Dalhousie University, Agricultural Campus (AC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>Dr. Sam Aideau</td>
<td>Dalhousie University, AC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatchery</td>
<td>Gerry Kennie</td>
<td>Atlantic Poultry Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg</td>
<td>David Young</td>
<td>Turkey Farmers of NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg Producers</td>
<td>David Coburn</td>
<td>Atlantic Poultry Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Government</td>
<td>Carol Anne Walsh</td>
<td>NL Dept. of Natural Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extension Services</td>
<td>Heather McLean</td>
<td>Perennia (NS)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Conclusion

APRI is a non-profit society that unites all industry stakeholders under one umbrella, to address industry needs and enhance industry performance. APRI operates through a volunteer board that includes industry stakeholders, extension workers, government and universities. The current board make-up is indicated in Table 1.

To learn more about APRI, visit their website: [www.dal.ca/sites/apri.html](http://www.dal.ca/sites/apri.html).
Moving Forward – Changes Needed

Workshop participants agreed that change is inevitable to ensure APRIs functions as mandated, contributing valuable research to the poultry industry of Atlantic Canada. The first priority is restructuring the organization such that the human resources are in place to enable APRIs stated objectives.

As previously indicated, APRI lost much of its research capacity when Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada withdrew its financial support in 2013 by eliminating three staff positions devoted to poultry research at Dalhousie Agricultural Campus. The proposed structure of APRI as presented in Slide 1 would enable APRI to fulfill its mandate of sourcing, conducting, and reporting on research to the poultry industry. The board commissioned the development of a Business Plan in 2013. The business plan concluded with numerous recommendations to position the organization for the future. The key recommendations addressed staffing of APRI such that it could effectively carry out its roles and responsibilities being performed by the retiring member that has consistently contributed funds to APRI each year. To make the proposed restructuring work, fair and equal participation is needed from all sectors of the poultry industry.

This position is currently funded from research projects with 1/3 coming from industry seed funds, and the intent is that such will continue. A Research Technician position is also required but would be funded from research projects secured, again with 1/3 coming from industry seed funds. This position would be placed in the APRIC to assist Dalhousie researchers with work required in the production facilities and in the analytical labs for on-going research projects.

Under the present situation, Dalhousie AC has one staff member who is dedicated 0.25 FTE to performing poultry research. One route to getting researchers on the ground is to secure a Research Chair position in collaboration with the University and the provincial government programs. The APRIC restructuring model includes seeking a Meat Poultry Research Chair position that would focus on chicken and turkey research. Dalhousie University has been in the initial stages of discussion with Egg Farmers of Canada to develop an Egg Research Chair position. Such chair positions are typically supported for a term of 5-years and if successful, the position is offered on an open competition. The research chair will secure research projects which will include funds for technical support, post-doctorate students, graduate students and farm labor. The funding for research chair positions is typically 1/3 industry funds, 1/3 Research Acceleration Program (Nova Scotia government), and 1/3 Dalhousie University. There are several researchers at Dalhousie AC who started their position as an industry research chair. The blueberry, carrot and apple industry all have supported a research chair position for five years to eventually secure the position as a university researcher.

The Atlantic Region has recognized the need for a Meat Poultry Research Chair. A number of changes have occurred in recent years requiring adjustments are needed for APRI to continue its important role in conducting and providing regional research for the poultry industry. As previously indicated, the only position currently in place with APRI, will continue with the website, handling finances, preparing reports, presentations, providing industry directed research and economic development.

Where to Now?

In light of all the changes, the APRIC Board of Directors recognizes that adjustments are needed for APRI to continue its important role in conducting and providing regional research for the poultry industry. As previously indicated, the only position currently in place with APRI, will continue with the website, handling finances, preparing reports, presentations, including handling outreach material preparation, managing the website, handling finances, preparing reports, presentations, fact-sheets, research reports for industry, handling staff and human resources, securing funding, conducting and evaluating research. The Research Associate (Janice Mastluss), the only position currently in place with APRI will continue with responsibilities in preparing applications for research funding, conducting research, and reporting on research results.

Requested Industry Contributions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funds for:</th>
<th>Annual Contribution Request</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-year</td>
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<tr>
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Table 1: Necessary Funds for Restructured APRIC Model


Requesting Financial Support from Industry

Recommendations from the June workshop were to pursue financial assistance from all sectors of the poultry industry to support the proposed restructuring of APRI for a 5-year period. APRI cannot function without adequate staff or funds. The past the egg producers have been the only commodity that has consistently contributed funds to APRI each year. To make the proposed restructuring work, fair and equal participation is needed from all sectors of the poultry industry.

Figure 1 presents the costs associated with reorganizing of APRI and its operations. The Board of Directors of APRI is requesting an additional commitment from industry of $200,000 for each of the next five years to implement the restructuring of APRI. It is proposed the financial commitment be divided amongst industry stakeholders as follows:

• 50% from industry suppliers (hatchery, processing and feed sectors), and
• 50% from producers of all feather commodities

The goal is to have full participation from every sector of the poultry industry. Everyone will benefit, therefore everyone should contribute.

Discussions at the June workshop revolved around how best to request this amount from industry. It was agreed that the request per sector be based on gross sales, calculated as a percentage of the total generated per commodity regionally. Table 2 indicates the annual contribution that is being requested per commodity group.

Commodity Commitment

Now we are asking producers (through their provincial commodity board) as well as industry partners to commit to providing $200,000 annually for 5 years at which time the board asks that everyone support this initiative as the benefits will be Atlantic wide as well as national.

Additional questions can be directed to Ian Blenkinsap, APRIC Chair, or to Derek Anderson, CEO. We ask that you kindly consider this request and respond by January 31, 2015 to enable timely decision making.

Moving Forward – Changes Needed

Workshop participants agreed that change is inevitable to ensure APRIs functions as mandated, contributing valuable research to the poultry industry of Atlantic Canada. The first priority is restructuring the organization such that the human resources are in place to enable APRIs to do its job.

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