

# REAP - Canada in Nova Scotia

By Dr. David Patriquin

On Feb 18th, eight farmers from the Amherst area and two from Maitland/Bramber met at the Hubbard farm near Oxford, N.S. to discuss cooperating in some REAP style research and to form a REAP-Nova Scotia chapter. Roger Samson (President of REAP) and Dave Patriquin (a Professor at Dalhousie University and scientific advisor to REAP) gave short presentations dealing with the Ontario projects and "participatory Research Approaches" respectively, following which there was a round table discussion of local concerns and of possible REAP projects. Six of the farmers had livestock based operations, one operated a greenhouse, and two were vegetable producers. Two other farmers joined the group subsequently.

Discussions carried on into the evening between Roger, Dave and Charles Hubbard and the next day Roger, Dave and Rupert Jannasch compiled the results in and wrote up a proposal for on farm research which was immediately sent out to the farmers. The projects are as follows:

I. Composting: Tests of 3 systems using either strips of raw manure, composted manure or no manure. Farmers will choose the one that suits them, and conduct field evaluations. A question to be answered is whether or not turning is necessary.

II. Extended Grazing System: Extend the grazing period on both ends, provide a mid-season use for manure, and under-seed kale to avoid weed problems. Some of the farmers are already using brassicas to extend grazing into November or even December. The group will be experimenting with variants of the following schemes:

Year 1 - Break sod/ incorporate manure/ plant forage rye in August;

Year 2 - Graze rye in early May/ incorporate manure/ plant kale under-sown with rye or red clover in June/ graze kale to late fall;

Year 3 - Graze rye again or seed down cereal with forage mix under-sown.

III .Hay/Pasture Improvement achieved by seeding in various legumes, and by Voisin Grazing Management. Six farmers are experimenting with Sonja clover, a newly released swedish type with high promise for rotational grazing systems.

IV. Grains - Experiments will include oats and peas with clove, under-sown, and fababeans with Ellette perennial ryegrass under-sown.

V. Vegetables - One farmer will interseed crimson clover and hairy vetch in asparagus after harvest and also do some experiments with the rye mow-kill system.

Already the farmers are planning other experiments including trials of oat and vetch forage, composting with worms and the use of a finger weeder.

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