

In the News

Atlantic Region

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INFORMATION

A monthly summary of labour market news for the Atlantic Region

JULY 2025

Highlights

(News published July 1st – 31st 2025)

- Kruger has announced plans to invest \$700M in stabilizing the Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Mill amid today's challenging newsprint industry by shifting priorities to lumber production.
- Woodstock's Ironwood Manufactured Homes is expanding and building a new modular construction plant. The new facility will be 10 times larger than the current factory.
- The N.S. Community College is laying off 27 food service workers effective August 22 as the college decides to outsource its food service operations to Aramark Canada due to it sustaining significant losses.
- Halifax-based renewable energy company Natural Forces, in partnership with Lennox Island First Nation, plans to build a new wind farm in Three Rivers that would see 4-5 turbines installed that could power about 11,500 P.E.I. homes.
- Statistics Canada reports that while net income went down for most Canadian farmers in 2024, it increased in P.E.I. and N.S.

Industry Updates

Newfoundland and Labrador

The N.L. Government has reached a final \$700M project agreement with New Avalon Corrections Partners to construct the new 395-bed prison facility in East White Hills (St. John's) to replace Her Majesty's Penitentiary (HMP).

Kruger has announced plans to invest \$700M in stabilizing the Corner Brook Pulp and Paper Mill amid today's challenging newsprint industry by shifting priorities to lumber production. N.L.'s only pulp and paper mill employs about 400 people but developments could open the door to more jobs and training in existing positions.

Hydro Quebec is about to begin the preliminary work at Gull Island valued at between \$10-15M as part of the Churchill Falls Memorandum of Understanding. The work includes collecting environmental data, surveying, and the installation of construction trailers.

The N.L. Government has awarded the \$38.4M contract for the construction of the new K-12 school in Cartwright, Labrador to JMJ Holdings Limited.

Prince Edward Island

The Early Childhood Development Association of P.E.I. says that its initiatives to help recruit and retain staff is making a difference, but the need for workers has grown. Rural and francophone communities have had a greater shortage of staff than urban areas.

Halifax-based renewable energy company Natural Forces, in partnership with Lennox Island First Nation, plans to build a new wind farm in Three Rivers that would see 4-5 turbines installed that could power about 11,500 P.E.I. homes. Land agreements have been secured and environmental assessment work has started.

P.E.I.'s oyster industry is concerned that dermo disease has been identified in oysters in Egmont Bay. Dermo is a highly damaging mollusc disease. The province recently created a \$3M contingency fund to help the oyster industry with the MSX parasite.

Nova Scotia

Northern Pulp has announced it will move ahead with plans to auction off its NS-based assets as part of an ongoing creditor protection process. A review of its multi-billion-dollar proposal for a new softwood pulp mill and bioproducts hub operation near Liverpool deemed it not to be viable. This decision is expected to have



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negative impacts on N.S.'s forestry sector.

The Canada-N.S. Offshore Energy Regulator has announced a call for bids due by the end of April 2026 for offshore oil and gas exploration on 13 parcels totalling over 3.3M hectares as it looks to revive the offshore gas industry. Another call for bids for wind projects are also expected later this year with an 80% renewable energy consumption goal by 2030.

The Government of Canada has announced \$2.5M to support artificial intelligence-related (AI) projects at three Halifax businesses. These include Liveable Cities (\$2M), Oberland Agriscience Inc. (\$250k) and Kindred AI Inc. (\$256k).

Cape Breton University has announced plans to build a new, larger daycare facility on the campus that will triple available child-care spaces from 35 to 104. Construction is scheduled to start soon and the facility is expected to open within a year.

New Brunswick

Over \$29M in federal funding will go toward training more francophone health-care professionals in N.B. Three post-secondary institutions, including l'Université de Moncton, will get money to increase the number of students enrolled in health programs.

Earth to Belly Homestead in Stanley is looking to keep adding garden beds and growing its direct client base over the next five or six years. The small-scale farm currently employs seven

employees and has 120 customers but wants to grow to 3-4,000 customers.

NB Power has announced a new generation facility will be built in southeastern New Brunswick near Sackville (the first in over 2 decades). PROENERGY has been selected to build and operate the facility. New Brunswick has seen an increase in electricity demand amid unprecedented population growth within the province.

NB Power is proposing a \$180M project aimed at modernizing the electricity grid across southern New Brunswick. The Saint John Corridor Project involves the addition of 37 km of new transmission lines and a third power transformer at the Coleson Cove Generating Station.

Job Creation

North Sun Energy, which operates North Atlantic Stores in N.L. has partnered with Little Caesars. The franchise agreement will see Little Caesar's express outlets opened in 18 stores in Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia.

Newfoundland and Labrador

The Corner Brook Community Health Centre will be home to a new family care team to provide primary care to residents in the region, with renovations underway to create 30 long-term care beds and a 15-bed transitional care unit. Recruitment is ongoing for nurse practitioners, RN's, LPN's, personal care attendants, allied health professionals, recreation staff and support staff.

Western Memorial Regional Hospital (Corner Brook) has recruited 2 new radiation oncologists to start this summer and fall as part of the expansion of the NL Health Services Cancer Care Program. Additional social workers will also be hired to support oncology patients.

Nova Scotia

Halifax Regional Municipality is getting 3 new health homes: Hobsons Lake Health Home (Beechville) - 6 physicians, 3 family practice nurses, 2 nurse practitioners (NP) and 2 LPN's; The Citadel Health Home (Halifax) - 4 physicians, 1 NP, 3 family practice nurses and 1 LPN; Needham Health Home (Halifax) - 6 physicians, 1 NP, 3 family practice nurses and 1 LPN. Sites will also have clerical support and allied health professionals.

New Brunswick

Woodstock's Ironwood Manufactured Homes is expanding and building a new modular construction plant. The new facility will be 10 times larger than the current factory. Ironwood currently employs 54 people but will grow to 85 when it opens in the fall.

Federal funding will allow a mobile outreach service to now offer 24/7 service to those in need in the Fredericton area. Six new staff members will be hired and trained in mental-health first aid, trauma care, overdose prevention and suicide intervention.





Layoffs

Newfoundland and Labrador

Memorial University of Newfoundland has announced a major \$20.85M reduction in its 2025-26 budget that will result in 20 layoffs of permanent and contracted staff. The budget cuts also led them to eliminate vacant permanent positions and could lead to reduced contract teaching positions in the coming years.

Nova Scotia

The N.S. Community College is laying off 27 food service workers effective August 22 as the college decides to outsource its food service operations to Aramark Canada due to it sustaining significant losses. Employees are being offered interviews with Aramark. Wages for front line workers will range from \$16-23/hour.

New Brunswick

Arbec Forest Products states that it will shut down its Miramichi plant for six weeks starting in September, due to market conditions. The plant makes wood panels used in housing. During the shutdown 113 employees will be affected and 29 positions cut.

The Woodstock Duty Free Shop in Belleville has announced it will be closing within the next 6 weeks after 31 years in business due to a significant drop in cross-border shopping. According to Statistics Canada, return trips from the U.S. by car were down 33% in June 2025 compared to June 2024.

Economic Reports

Statistics Canada

Statistics Canada reports that while net income went down for most Canadian farmers in 2024, it increased in P.E.I. and N.S. Farmers still faced rising cost of fertilizer, fuel and other supplies.

An analysis of Statistics Canada data by Hill Strategies reports that there has been a sharp decrease in cultural funding in P.E.I. over the past 15 years. When adjusted for inflation, cultural spending on P.E.I. dropped by 62% between 2008-09 and 2023-24.

Government of New Brunswick

The 2024 Economy in Review report has identified a number of growth areas in N.B. The economy grew by 1.4% in 2024, the population increased by 2.7%, employment rose by 2.9%, total capital investment went up 4.4%, and merchandise exports rose 2.7%.

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