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Message from the President of Nature Fresh Farms

On behalf of Nature Fresh Farms, I am pleased to share with you Nature Fresh Farms Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2021-2025).

Nature Fresh Farms is a growing leader in Canadian agriculture. We continue to grow and expand our business each and every day. We recognize that planning for accessibility is part of the responsibility of a growing corporation in order for us to reach out to our diverse community. That is why it is so important for us to continue to move forward on creating an accessible company and to ensure that we meet our goals.

We have made significant progress to become more accessible, but there is more work to be done. As an agricultural leader in a very diverse country, we need to work hard to remove barriers that limit the full participation of all those who live, work, play and visit our community and Nature Fresh Farms.

The 2021-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan emphasizes that people with disabilities are a valued part of our community. It demonstrates how Nature Fresh will comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), and it showcases our plan for how Nature Fresh will exceed minimum standards to achieve maximum accessibility for everyone.

I appreciate the commitments made by Nature Fresh, staff, HR and H&S department to ensure Nature Fresh Farms is a leader when it comes to accessibility in agriculture. I look forward to implementing this important plan and as President, I am committed to ensuring accessibility is a priority for our company.

John Ketler, President of Nature Fresh.

Signature

John Ketler, President

Introduction



Commitment to an Accessible Farm

The 2021-2025 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) outlines goals and initiatives that reaffirm Nature Fresh’s commitment to creating an accessible Farm and advancing efforts in building an equitable and inclusive working environment that values the contributions of people with disabilities.

Nature Fresh Farms is committed to the identification, removal, and prevention of accessibility barriers. By doing so, Nature Fresh will provide an accessible environment in which employees, contractors and visitors with disabilities can access Nature Fresh’s goods, services, and facilities, including buildings, information, and communications, in a way that meets their individual needs.

Nature Fresh is equally committed to supporting their employees through advice, policies, tools, resources, and governance structures that promote an inclusive workplace and support employees in delivering accessible goods, services and facilities.

Background

Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) companies are required to develop a multi-year accessibility plan. Nature Fresh Farms MYAP outlines how the Farm/DC/Sales will advance accessibility in the following areas:

- General Accessibility
- Training
- Procurement
- Information and Communication
- Customer Service
- Employment
- Transportation

While Nature Fresh is compliant with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) under the AODA, Nature Fresh's MYAP focuses on maintaining and monitoring compliance, as well as promoting accessibility by design beyond legislative requirements. This plan covers the period from 2021 through 2025 and includes both new and continuing priorities that supports Nature Fresh in the ongoing identification, removal, and prevention of accessibility barriers.

The 2021-2025 MYAP was informed by HR and the H&S department. It is a document which will be reviewed and updated every 5 years.

Guiding Principles

The following MYAP principles serve to guide Nature Fresh Farms in actions, decision-making and service approaches pertaining to the delivery of Nature Fresh goods, services, and facilities.

MYAP Guiding Principles

1. Leadership and Accountability
2. Dignity and Independence
3. Integration and Equity
4. Accessibility by Design
5. Innovation and Adaptability
6. Collaboration and Engagement



Leadership and Accountability

Nature Fresh Farms will lead by example in accessibility excellence by striving for maximum accessibility over minimum compliance. Leadership in all areas and at all levels of the organization are accountable for advancing accessibility in their areas of responsibility.

Nature Fresh will:

- Foster a culture of equity and inclusion both within the Nature Fresh Farms organization by challenging assumptions and biases when planning and delivering Nature Fresh goods, services and facilities.
- Identify and address discriminatory systems, processes, and behaviours.
- Establish an accountability and compliance framework to ensure accessibility goals are achieved.

Dignity and Independence

Nature Fresh Farms goods, services and facilities will be provided to people of all abilities in a manner that respects the inherent dignity, diversity and abilities of all individuals.

Nature Fresh will:

- Create and maintain an atmosphere of dignity and respect for all Nature Fresh employees, contractors, and visitors.
- Provide services in a caring, compassionate, non-judgmental manner, free from discrimination and harassment.

Integration and Equity

Nature Fresh Farms goods, services and facilities will be provided to people of all abilities in a similar way, unless an alternative measure is necessary to enable people with disabilities to obtain, use or benefit from the goods, services or facilities.

Nature Fresh will:

- Ensure people with disabilities can access and benefit from the same goods, services and facilities in an equitable way as others.
- Seek permanent accessibility solutions for employees, contractors and visitors with disabilities to access and benefit from Nature Fresh goods, services and facilities.

- Take into account individual needs and proactively provide accessible formats, communication supports or other accommodations to ensure equitable outcomes.

Accessibility by Design

A barrier-free environment is achieved when accessibility is intentionally incorporated into the design of all Nature Fresh planning, procurement and implementation of goods, services and facilities to address the diverse needs of all employees, contractors and visitors.

Nature Fresh will:

- Incorporate accessibility in the earliest planning stages and throughout the design, development, implementation and procurement of Nature Fresh goods, services and facilities.
- Create permanent inclusive solutions ensuring accessibility for persons with disabilities is not an afterthought.
- Ensure accommodation processes incorporate an approach that recognizes and addresses accessibility barriers (e.g., attitudinal, systemic, information, communications and technology, built / physical environment).



Innovation and Adaptability

Nature Fresh Farms seeks new approaches and solutions to accessibility and adapts to new technologies that facilitate increased participation of Nature Fresh employees, contractors, and visitors with disabilities.

Nature Fresh will:

- Take a holistic approach that recognizes that accessibility solutions may need to address multiple barriers and that a single solution might not meet the accessibility needs of everyone.
- Seek to embed an accessibility lens towards continuous improvement of processes and procedures.
- Investigate technologies, products and services that will improve accessibility for Nature Fresh employees, contractors, and visitors with disabilities.

Collaboration and Engagement

Addressing accessibility barriers requires a collaborative approach and is a shared responsibility of Nature Fresh Divisions and staff. Accessible employee engagement will help Nature Fresh make more informed decisions and build strong relationships with the communities that Nature Fresh serves.

Nature Fresh will:

- Commit to ongoing, meaningful engagement with diverse connections including employees, contractors and visitors with disabilities when designing and implementing Nature Fresh goods, services, and facilities.
- Consult with Nature Fresh Farms HR and H&S department on decisions related to accessibility planning, as outlined in AODA.
- Consult with International Association of Accessibility Professionals.
- Ensure that employee engagement activities are accessible.
- Ensure Nature Fresh departments work together to align and advance accessibility priorities.



General Accessibility



The general requirements of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (IASR) under the AODA require Nature Fresh Farms to have accessibility policies, a statement of commitment, and a multi-year accessibility plan. The development, implementation and maintenance of corporate policies governing how Nature Fresh will achieve accessibility have been established, including:

- [Nature Fresh Farms Statement of Commitment](#) to Creating an Accessible workplace was adopted Nature Fresh in April of 2022
- Nature Fresh Farms Corporate [Accessibility Policy](#) was adopted by Nature Fresh H&S department in April of 2022.

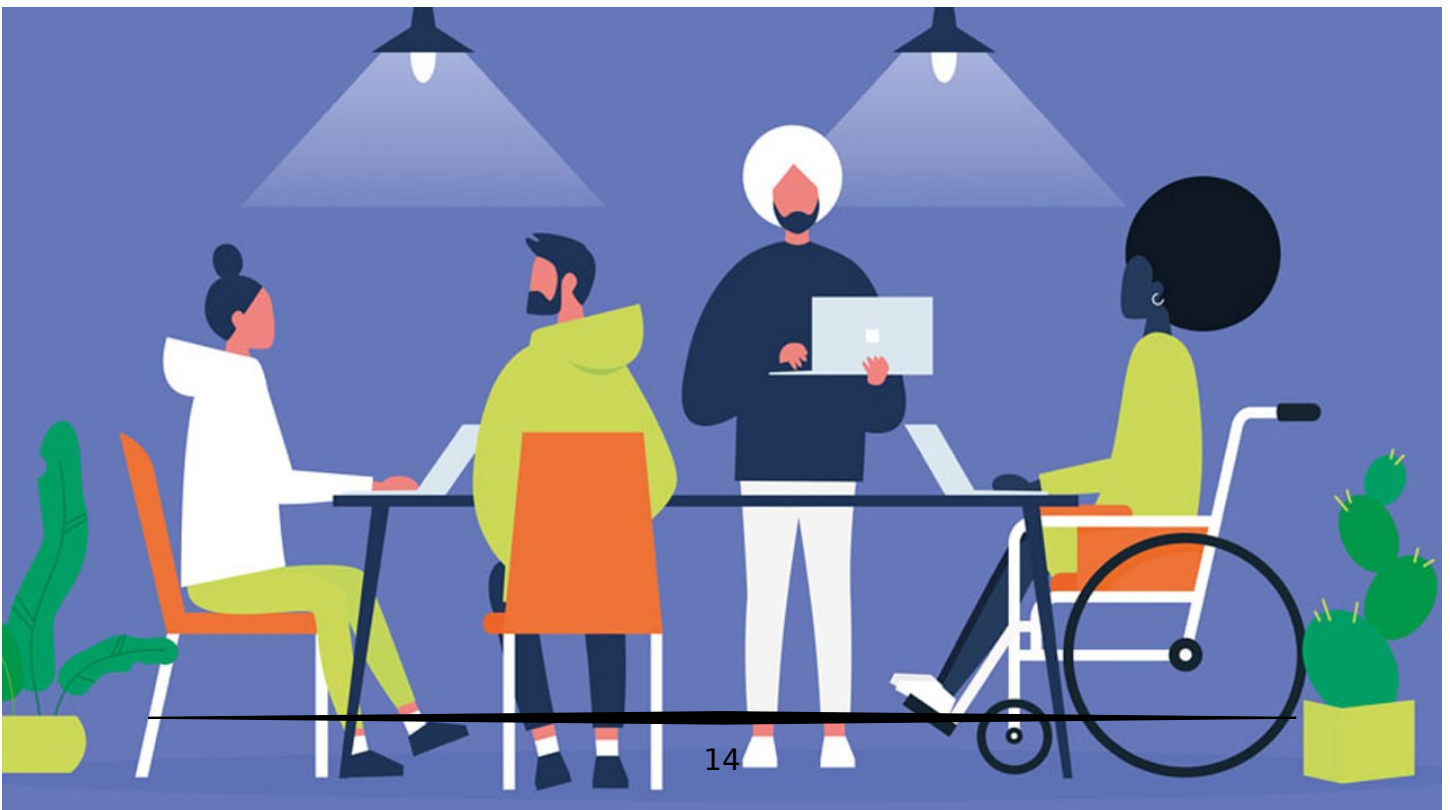
Initiatives:

1. Establish a corporate Accessibility Governance Structure and Accountability Framework to oversee the implementation of MYAP (HR and H&S).
2. Develop relevant divisional implementation plans which will include detailed deliverables and timelines (All Divisions).
3. Develop, maintain and monitor accessibility guidelines and tools to support implementation and AODA compliance assurance (HR & H&S).

4. Promote accessibility awareness within the organization through education and awareness.
5. Continue to engage and seek advice from the International Association of Accessibility Professionals on advancing accessibility and inclusion. Current advisory groups include a. Nature Fresh Farms HR department b. Nature Fresh Farms Health and Safety department
6. Continue to embed and train employees on accessibility awareness to consider equity impacts of all new planning, projects, policies, and initiatives (All Divisions).

Outcomes:

- An organization which fosters a culture of equity and inclusion, that values and includes employees, contractors, and visitors with disabilities.
- Nature Fresh Farms employees, contractors and visitors are aware of resources and can easily utilize accommodation and accessibility services when accessing Nature Fresh goods, services, and facilities.
- Nature Fresh employees have the support and tools needed to actively identify, prevent, and remove accessibility barriers.
- Clear roles and accountabilities for advancing accessibility across the organization.



Training

An education program for the Nature Fresh Farms that enables staff to build and maintain an equitable and inclusive workplace to better serve our visitors, contractors, current and future employees.



Nature Fresh Farms is required, under the AODA, to provide training on the requirements of the IASR and on the Ontario Human Rights Code to all employees in developing Nature Fresh policies or provide services or goods on behalf of Nature Fresh Farms.

Initiatives:

1. Ensure all employees continue to complete mandatory AODA and accessibility training appropriate to the person's role as soon as possible and in a variety of formats (All Divisions).
2. Enhance leadership knowledge and skills to ensure compliance with Nature Fresh Policies, Human Rights legislation, AODA and other related legislation.
3. Continue to record and track employee learning and development activities specifically related to AODA and accessibility requirements.
4. Ensure that all training, activities, course materials and learning approaches are developed and delivered in accessible formats (All Divisions).
5. Continue the development of Nature Fresh inclusive education to help employees understand human rights obligations, unconscious bias, and power and privilege to promote equitable outcomes for people with disabilities.

Outcomes:

1. Nature Fresh Farms employees understand their responsibilities to provide accessible goods, services and facilities that consider the needs of employees, contractors, and visitors with disabilities.
2. Employees with disabilities have equitable access to learning, development, and career growth opportunities.

Procurement

Nature Fresh Farms is required, under the IASR, to incorporate accessibility design, criteria when procuring or acquiring goods, services, or facilities, except where it is not practicable to do so. Nature Fresh's Purchasing department must have established accessibility requirements to support Nature Fresh departments in procurement activities.



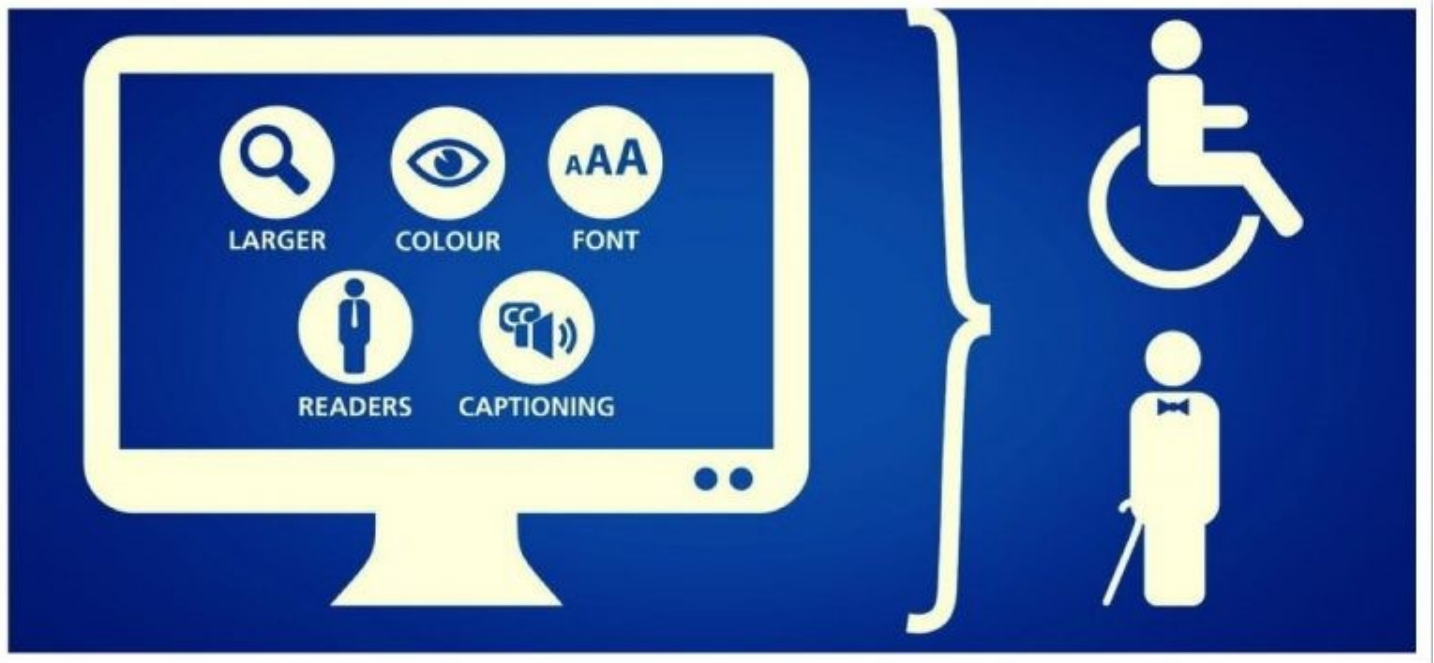
Initiatives:

1. Continue to ensure accessibility criteria are key requirements of the procurement process when acquiring or purchasing goods, services and/or facilities (All Divisions and Purchasing & Materials Management).
2. Provide tools and resources to assist Nature Fresh employees in meeting accessibility obligations in procurement, such as training, templates, sample language and guidelines that embed accessibility considerations at all stages of procurement (Purchasing & Materials Management, HR, H&S and Technology Services)
3. Review and update resources and tools for accessible procurement to ensure that current best practices and technologies are considered (Purchasing & Materials Management, HR and H&S).
4. Ensure an accessibility analysis of all projects and purchases before funding is requested (All Divisions).
5. Continue to include provisions for vendor accessible customer service training requirements and a declaration of compliance with Anti-Harassment / Discrimination Legislation and Nature Fresh policy for all Nature Fresh procurement contracts (All Divisions).
6. Continue to work with vendors and community partners to meet or exceed accessibility requirements (All Divisions).
7. Continue to apply Nature Fresh's Social Procurement Policy and practices (All Divisions).

Outcomes:

1. Accessibility is embedded into Nature Fresh procurement processes to ensure funds are not inadvertently used to create or maintain accessibility barriers.
2. The needs of employees, contractors and visitors with disabilities are considered at all stages of the procurement process to ensure that Nature Fresh goods, services and facilities are accessible.
3. People with disabilities have equitable access to goods services and facilities procured by Nature Fresh Farms.
4. Leveraging Nature Fresh's procurement processes to promote accessibility and help build a more inclusive workplace.

Information and Communicati on



The Information and Communications Standard under the IASR requires Nature Fresh Farms to communicate and provide information in ways that are accessible to people with disabilities. Nature Fresh IT department will establish an AODA Compliance project to ensure AODA compliance and accessibility by design leadership in all Nature Fresh Farms digital communications and web content. Nature Fresh Farms Digital Accessibility Standard will be established to ensure digital accessibility in all services and information Nature Fresh Farms provides to employees, contractors, the public and visitors.

Initiatives:

1. Continue to notify the public (applicants) and employees about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports (All Divisions).
2. Continue to ensure that any process for receiving and responding to feedback is accessible by providing or arranging for accessible formats and communication supports (All Divisions).
3. Continue to ensure that Nature Fresh employees understand the accommodation request process, including the requirement to arrange for accessible formats and communication supports, and the requirement to consult with the person making the request in order to determine suitable accessible formats or communication supports (All Divisions).
4. Research and develop a streamlined process for Nature Fresh employees to access American Sign Language (ASL), Communication Access Real-Time Translation (CART) and other accessibility services and supports to provide equitable access to Nature Fresh employees, contractors and visitors with disabilities.

5. Develop and implement accessible information, communication and technology guidelines and standards to ensure Nature Fresh is providing clear, accessible, appropriate and timely information and communication (IT Services).
6. Continue to ensure that Nature Fresh's website and web applications incorporate the foundations of Nature Fresh's Digital Accessibility Standard (IT Services).
7. Regularly review compliance and usability best practices in order to identify ways to improve accessibility in information, communications and technology based on broader accessibility sector advancements and legislated requirements (IT Services).
8. Develop and implement a process to review and assess requests for exceptions based on practicability and risk management as part of Nature fresh Farms Digital Accessibility Standard (IT Services).

Outcomes:

1. Nature Fresh Farms employees have the tools and resources to develop and provide information in accessible formats.
2. Nature Fresh Farms employees, contractors and visitors with disabilities will have equal access to Nature Fresh information through communication supports, alternate formats, accessible website, and digital content.

Customer Service

Nature Fresh Farms is committed to customer service excellence. This includes service provision that is both accessible to and inclusive of employees, contractors, and visitors with disabilities. The Accessible Customer Service Standard under the IASR requires Nature Fresh Farms to provide accessible services for people with disabilities and to have policies and procedures in place to support accessible customer service.

Initiatives:

1. Continue to embed and strengthen the focus on accessibility within all Nature Fresh Customer Service.
2. Review AODA customer service guidelines and update to reflect required standards in accessible customer service.
3. Continue to evaluate Nature Fresh services to ensure inclusion and equitable participation of employees, contractors and visitors with disabilities.

Outcomes:

1. People with disabilities receive Nature Fresh Farms services of the same quality and within the same timeline as others and benefit equally from customer service initiatives.
2. Nature Fresh employees have access to tools, resources, policies, and procedures to support accessible customer service.

Employment

The Employment Standards under the IASR requires that Nature Fresh Farms support the recruitment and accommodation of employees with disabilities. Nature Fresh is committed to advancing accessibility, diversity and inclusion of employees with disabilities.

Initiatives:

1. Continue to embed an equity analysis into all recruitment processes to remove any unintended accessibility barrier.
2. Review people services policies and procedures to identify, prevent and remove barriers to employment and development opportunities. This review will also serve to ensure ongoing compliance with AODA legislation
3. Continue the practice of preparing individualized accommodation and emergency response plans for Nature Fresh employees with disabilities (All Divisions).
4. Foster a culture of employee engagement and inclusion.
5. Continue to conduct an employment equity survey to inform workforce planning priorities through data-informed decision making.
6. Support development opportunities for employees with disabilities.

Outcomes:

1. Increased employment, engagement, and advancement of employees with disabilities within the Nature Fresh organization.
2. Equitable, clear and consistent employment and accommodation policies and procedures that seek to remove systemic barriers and ensure people with disabilities are able to participate fully as job applicants and employees of Nature fresh Farms.

Conclusion



Nature Fresh Farms is committed to the prevention, identification, and removal of accessibility barriers. The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (MYAP) will be monitored by Nature Fresh HR and H&S departments on an annual basis and status updates will be posted on the Nature Fresh Farms website. The MYAP will be updated in 2025 in consultation with employees, contractors and visitors with disabilities and the Nature Fresh Farms HR and H&S departments.

Accessibility is everyone's responsibility and will be incorporated by design into the work of all Nature Fresh Farms departments. Nature Fresh Farms MYAP will coordinate across all service areas to create a shift in the workplace culture with respect to attitudes about accessibility and disability. Nature Fresh Farms will demonstrate and maintain accessibility excellence as an inclusive employer, service provider and member of the community.