ONTARIO AGRICULTURAL SERVICES CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE (OASCC)

ANNUAL REPORT

presented to the

Canadian Agri-Food Research Council

2000 – 2001

Section A - **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Ontario Agricultural Services Coordinating Committee (OASCC) operates under the following **mandate**:

> *To review regularly the broad aspects of agri-food research, extension, and education in Ontario with the objective of:*
>
> < *Facilitating communication and coordination among different groups at the management level;*
> < *Assessing immediate and future needs, and developing proposals for ways to take care of them;*
> < *Advising on joint uses of facilities and people;*
> < *Contributing information and ideas about regional and national policies affecting agriculture and food.*

The **membership** of OASCC includes Assistant Deputy Ministers and Directors from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), the Director General - Eastern Region, of the Research Branch, and Research Centre Directors from Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, Department Chairs and Research Program Directors from the University of Guelph, and the Chairs of the nine main research and services committees.

OASCC held its **annual meeting** on February 28, 2001 in Guelph, at which time highlights of the annual reports of the nine main committees were presented, along with recommendations and updates on research and service activities for the purpose of planning and for general information. A visioning exercise was conducted as part of the meeting.

The Ontario Animal Research and Services Committee developed, over the past year, a four year strategic plan outlining the industry's research needs as preparation for the review of the OMAFRA/University of Guelph Animal Research program. This committee was the first to develop a strategic report as outlined in the OASCC restructuring.

OMAFRA supported two competitive research program. The Special Research Program supported research in 6 areas: new value-added food and non-food products from Ontario agricultural raw materials, alternative livestock species in Ontario, antimicrobial resistance, food safety risk assessment and risk control, a healthy environment, and pesticide reduction and safe usage (*formerly Food Systems 2002 Pest Management Program*). A four year, four million dollar Food Safety Research Program has been established. Starting in 2001, the Food Safety Research Program will fund research to assist in the implementation of a science-based food safety system. The purpose of the program is to analyze emerging hazards and contaminants, and improve efficiencies by developing more effective and faster tests, including quick field tests.

Section B - **STATE OF THE AGRI-FOOD RURAL SECTORS IN ONTARIO**

Economic Outlook: Ontario Agriculture, Food and Rural

Ontario's agri-food sector is the largest and the most diversified in Canada, marketing more than 200 agricultural commodities with an estimated on-farm production value of nearly $7.6 billion in 2000. The agriculture and food sector is the second largest manufacturing sector in the Ontario economy, with the value of food shipments reaching $23.4 billion in 1997. There are approximately 67,500 census farms in the province, 84,000 employees in the food processing sector, 250,000 jobs in the foodservice industry and 135,000 jobs in food retailing.

Although the provincial economy is experiencing a period of growth and expansion, the economic outlook for Ontario's agri-food industry and for the province's rural communities remains mixed. While some stakeholders are taking advantage of the expanding economy to make new investments in staff and infrastructure, many others are faced with serious challenges to their quality of life.

Agriculture: Ontario's 2000 net cash income is projected to reach $1.5 billion, up from $1.3 in 1999. This higher income masks serious difficulties facing many cash crop and horticultural producers. Excessive rain and cool weather provided ideal conditions for disease, and damaged many Ontario crops, resulting in lower yields and quality. Depressed global commodity prices hurt grain and oilseed growers (e.g. corn, soybeans and wheat), as well as some horticultural producers (e.g. apples and potatoes).

Internationally, excellent growing conditions in much of the United States (U.S.) and the continuation of excessive subsidies to producers in the European Union and the U.S. also contributed to low grain and oilseed prices. In 1999, American producers received $20.6 billion in direct government payments – much of this to grain and oilseed producers. Direct payments to producers in the U.S. are expected to reach a record $22.7 billion in the year 2000. In the 1995-96 crop year the average price of Ontario grown corn was $4.64 per bushel. In recent months the price has been in the $2.50 per bushel range representing a decline of nearly 50 per cent.

Returns for dairy and poultry producers are expected to remain stable since they benefit from a regulated marketing system where production and price are controlled. However, the dairy industry is currently dealing with the results of an unfavourable World Trade Organization (WTO) decision on Canadian dairy exports. The industry has reworked its export systems to bring them into compliance with the WTO ruling, but early indications show that the United States may challenge Canada's new system.

The outlook for 2001 is for a modest reduction in farm income, as grain and oilseed prices are projected to remain low and hog prices are expected to show weakness. Although, a slowdown in the North American economy and an appreciation in the value of the Canadian dollar could have a negative impact on agricultural commodity prices, these factors are beyond producer control and can only be addressed through an effective system of safety net programs.

Food Processing: Overall, the Ontario food processing industry has experienced slow but steady growth over the past few years and is expected to continue along this path for the coming year. Many companies in the food industry have made significant investments in new and expanded facilities throughout the province, and the recent mergers and acquisitions in the industry reflect the global trend in this sector. Strong export growth, especially to the U.S. market, has been a major contributor to the continued success of the industry. As long as the U.S. economy remains strong and the Canadian dollar remains stable, the Ontario food industry will continue to benefit from export growth.

Increasingly, the use of genetically modified organisms (GMO) in food production has been the focus of consumer attention and concern. While the majority of Canadians appear to be more willing than their European counterparts to accept the new technology, consumers remain wary and are demanding more information. The food industry is responding to this concern with enhanced efforts to communicate with consumers to provide them with the information they need to make informed decisions.

The industry is also preparing for significant federal regulatory changes in a number of areas, including health claims, fortification, additive harmonization and nutritional labeling. These new regulations should provide consumers with more information on their food product purchases and enhance consumer confidence in the food safety system. Finally, food companies are becoming more aware of how e-commerce and e-business could change the food retailing and distribution system in the future. Ontario companies need to apply this new technology to become more competitive domestically and to penetrate new markets abroad.

Rural Economy: On average, between 1995 and 1998, small, rural Ontario towns (fewer than 10,000 people) experienced a greater percentage of economic growth than the province's urban centres. Recent investments in the telecommunication's network in rural Ontario have created opportunities to grow new businesses and to create new jobs. Rural Ontario has a very diversified economy with sectors like agriculture (and related services), manufacturing, tourism and services all being key contributors.

The rural economy is poised to continue to grow, but faces a number of challenges. To maintain the quality of rural life in Ontario, efforts must be made to ensure that the water supply is safe and that municipal infrastructure is adequate to meet the demands of rural residents.

Economic Outlook: Ontario – General Economy

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) noted in its latest Economic Outlook that "[world] economic prospects are the brightest they have been in some time". OECD-wide economic output growth in 2000 is predicted to be the strongest growth in a decade. East Asia, with the exception of Japan, has rebounded strongly from the effects of the 1997-98 financial crisis, and Europe is also showing solid growth after several years of weakness.

The American economy continues to exhibit strong growth. There have recently been some indicators that growth in the United States is slowing due to the interest rate increases of the past

year. Policy makers would welcome slowing growth, since there is concern that the U.S. economy has been growing at an unsustainable pace, which could lead to inflationary pressures.

Ontario's growth is expected to be considerably stronger than the international average. Real GDP growth in 1999 was a very robust 5.9 percent, and forecasters expect only a modest slowing in 2000, with growth forecasts averaging close to 5 percent. Some further modest slowing is expected in 2001, due to the influence of higher oil prices and interest rates, as well as the slowing American economy.

Issues

Over the past several months, there has been a significant increase in the amount of public attention and concern directed towards issues that affect the economic well being of the agri-food sector and the public health of Ontario's rural communities.

Farm Income: In the summer of 2000 producer groups, held a series of regional meetings across the province to discuss the low income situation and the need for adequately funded safety net programs. The producers who attended these meetings clearly indicated that they expect governments to provide adequate funding for safety net programs.

Water Quality: Public concerns over recent drinking water safety problems in rural Ontario have highlighted the trend towards an intensification of livestock operations in the province. Urban and rural media have focused on this issue with articles using inflammatory terms like "factory farming" and "water crisis". In some cases, the material in the media does not accurately depict the situation or is highly speculative with little foundation in fact. If not addressed, it is likely that this negative public perception could have a detrimental impact both on the level of investment in the agri-food sector and on the viability of rural communities.

Food Safety: There is heightened public and media awareness of food safety issues. An Environics survey conducted in July 1999 found that 87% of Ontarians were concerned about food safety; 94% were concerned about pesticides in food production; 92% were concerned about pollution affecting food; and 80% were concerned about the use of antibiotics in livestock. More virulent pathogens and other hazards are emerging with greater frequency in the global food system. Pathogens such as E. coli 0157:H7, for example, have been the source of serious outbreaks in the United States, leading to thousands of illnesses, dozens of deaths and billions of dollars in corporate losses.

Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO): Well-publicized campaigns against genetically modified organisms have been launched by a number of environmental and social groups, such as Greenpeace, the Sierra Club and the Council of Canadians. Last year, McCain Foods and Seagrams announced that they would not be using genetically modified commodities in their products. However, other food processors remain supportive of GM ingredients.

Marketing Issues: Producer marketing arrangements will continue to come under pressure to change over the coming years. This pressure will be applied both at home and abroad.

Other Public Interest Issues: Public pressure on the agri-food sector to respond in the public interest will escalate from already high levels in areas such as nutrient management, livestock medicine use/anti-microbial resistance and pesticide use/environmental carcinogens. While farmers have traditionally followed sound land stewardship practices, the public is increasingly concerned that producers farm in a fashion that is environmentally responsible and that safeguards the public health.

Challenges for Stakeholders

In order to maintain their market share and income levels, agri-food and rural stakeholders need to work together. For example, producers, processors and retailers need to work together to improve their products and marketing systems to better meet the needs of consumers and overcome competition from other jurisdictions. Greater cross-sector collaboration (i.e. in the area of regulated marketing) will help ensure a co-ordinated and co-operative approach to market growth in the agri-food sector.

Changing Rural Communities: A serious challenge faced by stakeholders is the increasingly confrontational relationship between some producers/processors and their communities with regard to the impact of their operations on the environment and public health. For example, as more farmers begin to make significant new investments in larger farming enterprises (e.g. large hog operations and modern greenhouse production), some rural residents are concerned with how these new practices will affect air quality, access to water resources and the health of their communities.

Rural Development: Each community faces different economic realities that shape its growth and development. With increased economic interdependence, many of these realities are beyond the control of the community. However, the increased interconnectedness of today's world creates opportunities as well as challenges. For example, it is possible for some rural communities to compete with urban areas for call-centres, research and development, and information technology.

Role of OMAFRA

Programs and initiatives like Healthy Futures, OSTAR, nutrient management initiatives, the Food Safety Strategy and the safety net package are key elements of OMAFRA's future strategy. They will help producers to manage their risks and maintain their quality of life. These programs will help the province's businesses and communities take full advantage of the new life sciences economy and help build strong, healthy communities in rural Ontario.

Life Science Opportunity for Agriculture, Food and Rural Ontario

While Ontario's agri-food sector and rural communities must deal with many risks and uncertainties, they are also faced with many opportunities that could put them at the centre of the next wave of economic growth. What the computer and the Internet did for the economy in the

latter part of the twentieth century, advanced agri-food technologies, or the life sciences revolution, could do in the first part of the twenty-first century. Life science is the process of using our growing knowledge of living things to produce new products that will benefit society and create new jobs and economic activity. These new products would come from renewable sources such as agriculture and forestry. Such products would provide benefits to the environment, human health and the quality of life. Some products of these new, advanced technologies might include foods that have a higher nutritive value or are designed to produce a desired medical benefit. Other examples include using crops produced in Ontario to manufacture non-food products like pharmaceuticals, plastics and gasoline substitutes.

Certain sectors of Ontario agriculture could benefit by having stronger demand for their products, resulting in new sources of income, from an expansion of the life sciences. Some Ontario food processors may benefit from capturing new domestic and export markets. Many other Ontario processing sectors could also benefit from these new products, and they may choose to locate new facilities in rural areas to be near their suppliers. The net result would be new investment in manufacturing facilities in the province, promoting the growth and development of rural Ontario. While the life sciences revolution will not provide benefits to all, it has the potential to offer unique rewards and opportunities to those who are in a position to take advantage of them.

Section C - **COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES**

Complete reports with the detailed recommendations and priorities from of the nine major committees are available from the OMAFRA website

http://www.gov.on.ca/OMAFRA/english/research/OASCC_00/index.html

Ontario Animal Research & Services Committee (OARSC)

OARSC's 12 sub-committees (aquaculture, broilers, dairy, deer and elk, egg layers, equine, fur-bearing, goats, pork, sheep and turkeys) met in 2000 to identify strategic research requirements for the future.

In general, the market for products of animal origin is strong. Identified trends included:

- The established major commodity groups (beef, dairy, poultry and pork) continue towards greater consolidation. The loss of genetic diversity is of concern.
- Increased producer numbers in the smaller production sectors reflect niche market development opportunities (e.g. goat milk, velvet antler and sheep cheese)

The sub-committees identified seven common research themes for the future: public health and safety, food safety, environmental quality, product quality/development of new products, animal health, profitable production for the smaller production sectors, and animal welfare.

Ontario Soil, Water, and Air Research and Services Committee (OSWARSC)

The research issues identified by the committee are unchanged from previous reports. These are manure management, nutrient use efficiency, water management, soil and crop management, identification/validation of Best Management Practices, biosolid/waste application and treatment and greenhouse gas emissions.

Specific research needs and priorities have been identified within each issue. All of the previous research priorities remain with the addition of. New research priorities have been added and existing ones modified to increase emphasis on nutrient management, transport of bacteria, nutrient and chemical contaminants within the soil, the farm water cycle and development of models for integrated pest management, crop growth and irrigation management.

Infrastructure issues dealing with data management and scaling have been identified in past reports remain unchanged. The issues have been identified as areas which must be addressed so the research recommendations can be dealt with.

Ontario Agriculture and Food Engineering Research and Services Committee (OAFERSC)

The OAFRERSC is composed of four committees covering the areas of crop, livestock, rural environment and food engineering.

The crops engineering committee identified development of non compacting field equipment, manure and biosolids application, grain and forage drying and rural roads and equipment transport safety as priorities for research and service.

Livestock engineering priorities were identified as development of standards for manure storages and structures, air quality in livestock buildings and corrosion and deterioration of agricultural building components.

The focus of the Rural Environment sub-committee continues to be manure handling and the impact of livestock operations on the environment. The need to investigate and adapt treatment processes used in urban environments for handling livestock manure was added to the list of research priorities from previous years.

The food engineering committee identified one new research and one new service priorities in addition to the list of priorities from last year's report. Byproduct utilization and waste management research added to the list.. The committee also indicated that there was a continuing need for research at public institutes on process and product development suited to small scale processors who have limited capital to invest in short term R&D and long term high risk research. Lack of research support may make the long term survival of these processors questionable.

Ontario Field Crops Research and Services Committee (OFCRSC)

The mandate of the OFCRSC is to review and direct research and services leading to improvements in crop production efficiencies and competitiveness of Ontario agriculture in world markets. OFCRSC has six subcommittees which focus on corn, cereals, forages, oil and protein seed crops, pulses and tobacco. The 2000 report identified 4 core strategic directions. These are listed in priority order as follows:

- Field Crop Breeding and Biotechnology
- Agronomic Technologies
- Plant and Crop Physiology
- Variety / Pesticide Testing

There is also one Service recommendation related to continued support for extension of research results to industry.

Ontario Horticultural Crops Research and Services Committee (OHCRSC)

The OHCRSC considers a wide range of horticultural crops with 16 subcommittees covering fruits, vegetables, greenhouse crops, nursery, landscape and turf. Agroforestry and apiculture are also considered under the OHCRSC umbrella. Research priorities are identified separately by each subcommittee and are presented in the 2000 OHCRSC report. While these priorities vary greatly from group to group the following major issues crossed over many of the crops:

- Integrated Pest Management
- Nutrient Management Planning
- Water quality and management
- Minor use pesticide registrations through PMRA
- Pesticide Harmonization with United States/Food Quality Protection Act
- Requirement for research stations to be GLP (Good Lab Practices) certified for Minor Use Residue Testing studies and the cost for this certification.

Ontario Agricultural Economics Research and Services Committee (OAERSC)

Ontario Agricultural Economics & Business Research and Services Committee (OAE&BRSC)

The OAE&BRSC's mandate is to identify and prioritize future agricultural economics and business research and service needs of Ontario's agri-food industry stakeholders. The committee added the word "business" to its name to better reflect this mandate.

AE&BRSC met twice last year to further develop the issues listed under the research priorities and to revise its terms of reference. The six main research areas, in priority order are:

- Risk Management (three issues)

- Environment (four issues)
- Competitiveness of the Agri-Food Industry (four issues)
- Economic Data and Benchmarking (one issue)
- Marketing (four issues)
- Trade (four issues)

Ontario Pest Management Research and Services Committee (OPMRSC)

The OPMRSC's mandate is to review and consider pest management and crop protection issues that may affect several different commodities within Ontario plant agriculture.

The committee also reviews reports from the Ontario's Weed Committee and the Technical Working Groups who review and update OMAFRA's crop production publications.

OPMRSC identified the following issues for 2000:
- Increasing cost of Minor Use registration process and decreased funding from AAFC for Minor Use trials
- Availability of non-biased, crop information and pest management programs throughout the province, including field diagnosis of crop problems
- Consolidation of the crop protection industry
- Maintenance of research teams and succession planning for research programs
- The up-coming Supreme Court judgement to ban pesticide use by municipalities may impact the agricultural community if the ban is imposed
- The on-going need for improved accessibility of Ontario growers to crop protection materials, including IPM friendly materials and biologicals and biorational products

Ontario Rural Research and Services Committee (ORRSC)

The ORRSC's mandate is to identify and prioritize future research and service needs that affect the sustainability of the economic, social and environmental conditions of rural Ontario as determined by Ontario rural stakeholders.

In 1998, ORRSC established its four-year, strategic priorities. As 2001 is an interim year in this cycle, the Committee reviewed and confirmed the four priority areas. The issues under the four main areas were prioritized and updated to reflect current issues.

The four main priority areas are:
- Economic Development – Strengthen economic growth, entrepreneurship and business development in rural Ontario
- Response to Change and Restructuring – Understand, facilitate and assist rural communities as they plan for and act in response to change and restructuring
- Capacity Building – Understand community capacity building and enhance rural leadership, organization and community management
- Information Technology – Understand the roles of and promote the availability and use of information technology in rural Ontario

Ontario Food Processing Research and Services Committee (OFPRSC)

The Ontario Food Processing Research and Services Committee (OFPRSC) met in 2000 and reviewed the recommendations made in its *1999 Strategic Report for 2000-2004*. These recommendations, which continue to be priority, include:

- Food Quality and Safety
  - Methods for the early detection, and reduction/elimination of food safety hazards/contaminants.
  - "Farm to fork" processes for ensuring food safety.
  - Methods to improve the quality and consumer acceptance of Ontario products.
  - On-line methods for monitoring and predicting quality during processing.

- Value-added Products and Innovative Technologies
  - Methods to enhance the value of Ontario products.
  - Development and evaluation of processing technologies that will limit the impact of the processing industry on the environment without unduly affecting cost and competitiveness.

A new research recommendation was added to the *value-added products and innovative technologies* category in 2000:

- Development of innovative technologies to improve the manufacturing effectiveness of existing food products or to facilitate the production of new food products.

As in 2000, the issue of consumer acceptance of new technologies, especially genetically modified foods, was regarded as an important non-research and development priority.

OASCC Strategic Visioning Exercise

Introduction and Objective

A strategic visioning exercise was held as part of the annual OASCC meeting. The objective was to generate discussion among key stakeholders and to gather input on strategic issues that will have a major impact on future public research expenditures, including those of the OMAFRA funded research system.

The participants were divided into four working groups and asked to address one of four questions. The questions and the summarized conclusions are listed below.

Question 1
Background:
The OMAFRA/University of Guelph research program is committed to doing the research that needs to be done. This includes supporting research related to the public good and emerging issues. Traditional agriculture production-related research also needs to be supported. However, the resources available to support research are limited.

a) What balance should be maintained between supporting "public good" and emerging issues" research and the traditional agricultural production related research?
b) How can traditional areas of research be supported given the limited resources available to the OMAFRA/University of Guelph research program?
c) OMAFRA's research funding to the University of Guelph currently is split 70%/30% infrastructure/project funding. Is this the right split?

Group Summary:
- Need to maintain a minimum of 70% of funding for a strong infrastructure for the long term including a critical mass of research expertise.
- Debate over the definition of "public good" and the need for research to be market driven and to generate wealth for Ontario. The debate over the definition of "public good" and "public" was a common theme through several of the groups.
- Increasing need for flexibility to allow resources to be directed strategically.

Question 2
Background:
The OMAFRA/University of Guelph Research Program consists of 5 program areas: Plants, Animals, Sustainable Rural Communities, Resources Management and Food. These programs are reviewed on a 4-year planning cycle. Some issues or areas of interest are addressed by more than one committee, such as life sciences, food safety and environmental topics.

How can the OMAFRA/University of Guelph Research Program be responsive to pressures and issues that cut across several programs?

Group Summary:
- Role that communication plays in clearly identifying these pressures, bringing the various parties together and providing effective mechanisms for input.
- The OASCC system needs to consider methods for more regular and timely (not just once a year) two way communication and co-ordination between the various program areas.
- OASCC and ARIO needs to continually review their membership to ensure that all segments of the industry are represented and able to provide input.
- The research system needs to be less inward looking and needs more integration.
- The value of research needs to be quantified and the benefits communicated more clearly (marketed) in order to reduce some of the pressures on funding for research. The scientific community can contribute by communicating outward more effectively.

Question 3
Background:
The future of agriculture will extend beyond traditional food and feed production. New plant and animal-based fibre products, fuels and biopharmaceuticals will become increasingly cost efficient to produce as our knowledge of living systems, out ability to manipulate them and our quest for renewable, raw materials all expands.

Given this "life sciences" revolution that many forecast will equal or surpass the impact of the information technology revolution, what do you think will be the critical research question in

agriculture five to ten years from now?

Group Summary:

A list of issues were identified including:

- Ethics
  - Human Health
  - Environment
  - Consumer demand
- Identify active ingredients in novel products – ED gene function
- Nutrient Management & erosion Control – maximum production
- Water Quality and energy alternatives
- Credibility, assurance of research / food – open trade barriers
- Rural Issues – land use, social conflicts
- Genetic Diversity – mono-culture, fewer seed companies
- Biological Controls – other than pesticides, antibiotics.
- Modelling risks – demonstrate, identify point in production to cause least risk
- What will farms look like?
- Logistics – IP-assessment of products
- Economics also an issue & plays a significant role.

Question 4

Background:

Protection of intellectual property for commercialization purposes can be in conflict with the goal of rapid technology transfer, including publication/dissemination of research results.

How can this conflict be managed or minimized?

Group Summary:

- Complex area and that freedom to operate issues can hinder both commercialization and technology transfer.
- Public/private partnerships have to deal with tensions over ownership, distribution and commercialization.
- To manage the conflict it was suggested that
  - Good contracts make good partners.
  - The public sector should be developing 'bargaining chips' or 'pools' of knowledge/technologies to exchange for access to private sector technologies.
- Questions about the role of public vs. private research and competition between the two were raised.
- Commercialization helps with technology transfer.
- Funds generated from publicly owned intellectual property could be used to speed up commercialization and tech transfer.

Conclusions/Actions

The discussion generated by these questions will provide useful guidance for the OASCC

committee chairs, OMAFRA staff and members of the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario in the months ahead as they continue to grapple with these important issues.

Competitive Research

OMAFRA recognizes that research and technology development are essential to the competitiveness and sustainability of Ontario's agri-food and rural sectors. Competitive research programs has been being funded to support areas of research which will enhance Ontario's position as a leader in agriculture and food and build upon existing research programs funded by OMAFRA through the Enhanced Partnership with the University of Guelph.

During the 2000-2001 fiscal OMAFRA has supported two competitive research programs, the Special Research Program and the Food Safety Research Program.

The **Special Research Fund** was open to researchers from academia, government and industry. Proposals must address defined priority areas and demonstrate a benefit to Ontario.

This year's program supported research in 6 areas: new value-added food and non-food products from Ontario agricultural raw materials, alternative livestock species in Ontario, antimicrobial resistance, food safety risk assessment and risk control, a healthy environment, and pesticide reduction and safe usage (*formerly Food Systems 2002 Pest Management Program*).

The Food Systems 2002 Pest Management Program, which, although funded through the Special Research program, had previously been operated as a separate call for proposals was fully integrated into the Special Research Program.

Collaboration with the associated industry and support from non-government sources are important components of the program.

The Ontario food safety system review, being led by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), is helping plan and implement food safety enhancements. The review is designed to improve Ontario's food safety system by increasing the government's capacity to maintain high standards of food safety, protect public health and increase the marketability of Ontario food products.

As part of this initiative, a four year, four million dollar **Food Safety Research Program** has been established. Starting in 2001, the Food Safety Research Program will fund research to assist in the implementation of a science-based food safety system. The purpose of the program is to analyze emerging hazards and contaminants, and improve efficiencies by developing more effective and faster tests, including quick field tests.

The program is open to private and public sector organizations with the capacity to perform high quality research. A Research Requirements Document will be issued on an annual basis, or more often as needed, outlining the priorities for research funding.

Section D - **NATIONAL ISSUES**

National issues and specific recommendations identified by the major committees will be forwarded to the respective Canada Committees.

APPENDIX

COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION AND MEMBERSHIP

The OASCC operates under the following terms of reference:

To review regularly the broad aspects of agri-food research, extension, and education in Ontario with the object of:

Facilitating communication and coordination among different groups at the management level;
Assessing immediate and future needs, and developing proposals for ways to take care of them;
Advising on joint uses of facilities and people;
Contributing information and ideas about regional and national policies affecting agriculture and food;

To carry out special assignments on behalf of the Canadian Agri-food Research Council (CARC) which are appropriate to the above objectives; and

To meet at least once a year and report through a delegated representative to the annual meeting of CARC. Summary reports are sent to the Chairman of CARC with copies to the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs for Ontario.

MEMBERSHIP OF OASCC 2000-2001

Chair	Dr. Deb Stark, Assistant Deputy Minister, Research and Corporate Services Division (RCSD), Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)
Recording Secretary	Ms. Rhonda Habart, RCSD, OMAFRA

Chairs and Vice-chairs/Secretaries of Major Subcommittees

Agricultural Economics Research and Services Committee
- Mr. Rod Stork , Director Economic Development, OMAFRA
Agriculture and Food Engineering Research and Services Committee
- Mr. Ron Fleming, Ridgetown College of Agriculture and Food Technology, University of Guelph
Animal Research and Services Committee
- Dr. Gwen McBride, Director, Livestock Technology Branch, OMAFRA
Field Crops Research and Services Committee
- Dr. G. Ablett, Ridgetown College of Agricultural Technology, University of Guelph
Food Processing Research and Services Committee
- Mr. Doug Chapman, Director, Food Industry Competitiveness Branch, OMAFRA
Horticultural Crops Research and Services Committee

- Ms. Annette Anderson Crop Technology, OMAFRA
-Pest Management Research and Services Committee
- Dr. M.R. McDonald, Muck Research Station, University of Guelph
Soil, Water, and Air Research and Services Committee
- Mr. Keith Reid Crop Technology, OMAFRA
- Dr. Ivan O'Halloran, Ridgetown College of Agricultural Technology, University of Guelph
Ontario Rural Research and Services Committee
- Ms. Lera Ryan, Rural Development, OMAFRA

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Dr. F. Ingratta	Deputy Minister
Mr. J. Wheeler	Assistant Deputy Minister, Agriculture and Rural Division
Dr. B. Archibald	Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy & Farm Finance Division
Mr. Don Taylor	Assistant Deputy Minister, Food Industry Division
Mr. Rod Stork	Chair, Farm Products Marketing Commission
Mr. Bill Ingratta	Director, Crop Technology, ARD
Mr. D. Hope	Director, Policy Analysis Branch, PFFD
Mr. R. Jackiw	Director, Resources Management, ARD
Mr. D. Chapman	Director, Food Industry Competitiveness Branch, FID
Mr. K. Smith	Director, Communications Branch
Dr. Jim Ashman	Director, Economic Development, ARD
Dr. G. Zellen	Director, Food Safety Systems Development Branch, PFFD

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Dr. Y. Martel	Director General, Eastern Region, Research Branch
Dr. J-M Deschenes	Director, Eastern Cereal and Oilseed Research Centre
Dr. P. Ide	Director, Animal Diseases Research Centre
Dr. C.F. Marks	Director, London Research Centre
Mr. G. Poushinsky	Director, Food Research Program
Dr. G. Whitfield	Director, Harrow Research Station

University of Guelph

Dr. L.P. Milligan	Vice President, Research
Dr. Tom Michaels	Acting Dean, Ontario Agricultural College (OAC)
Dr. A. Meek	Dean, Ontario Veterinary College (OVC)
Dr. K. Parton	Chair, Dept. of Agricultural Econ. & Business, OAC
Dr. S. Kruth	Chair, Dept. of Clinical Studies, OVC
Dr. K. Armstrong	Director, Equine Research Centre
Dr. A. Gibbins	Chair, Dept. of Animal & Poultry Science, OAC
Dr. M. Goss	Director, Agrifood System Resources and Environment Research Program
Dr. P. Shewen	Chair, Dept. of Pathobiology, OVC
Dr. R. Hacker	Director, Animal Research Program, Dept. of Animal Science,
Dr. C. Swanton	Chair, Dept. of Plant Agriculture, OAC
Dr. T. Gillespie	Chair, Department of Land Resource Science, OAC

Dr. J. Fitzgibbon	Executive Director, Faculty of Environmental Design and Rural Development
Dr. D. Hume	Executive Director, Research Programs, OMAFRA/ University of Guelph Partnership
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