



Ontario

Ontario Farm Products
Marketing Commission

Newsletter

June/July 2004 - Issue #111

Commission Chair to Retire in September

Rod Stork will officially retire as Chair of the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission on September 3, 2004.

In a letter to boards, associations and stakeholders issued June 4th, Stork summed it up in the following italicized quotes.

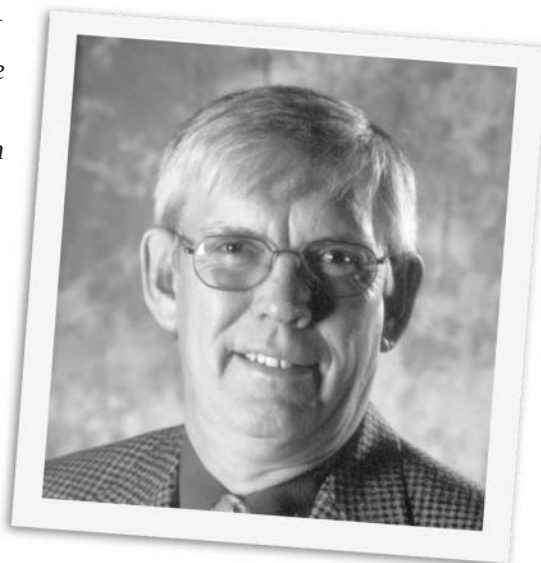
I want to take this opportunity to say a personal thanks to you, your directors and staff for support and assistance during my tenure as Chairman of the Commission. This has been a great experience for me during the past five years and it is the people that I have had the opportunity to work with that have made it special.

In fact, during my 34-year career with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, it has been the

people that I have had the opportunity to work with that have made my career so rewarding.

We have a dynamic and diversified agri-food sector in Ontario and while it faces

challenges today and will face challenges in the future, I am confident that the sector will continue to grow and flourish. You and the organizations that you represent will continue to provide the strong leadership necessary to keep our agri-food sector in the forefront and I am confident that everyone is up to that challenge.



“It has been the people that I have had the opportunity to work with that have made my career so rewarding.”

After 34 years working with OMAF, the challenge to Rod Stork choosing a time to retire is akin to finding the

right time to move off the family farm. It's never quite right, it's often inevitable.

OMAF is a special part of the Ontario Public Service. We are a small ministry with very close ties to all our constituents. It's uncommon to not be on a first name basis with our stakeholders.

I have always felt like we are a team that is trying to build a stronger and better agri-food sector.

That is a positive goal and it creates a great atmosphere. It's no wonder I'm not alone in spending over 30 years with one organization.

continued on page 2

In This Issue

Commission Chair to Retire in September	1
Sharing Regulated Marketing News with Producers	2
OFPMC Business File	3
Upcoming Annual Meetings and Conventions	4

Sharing Regulated Marketing News with Producers

Understanding the structure and workings of regulated marketing can be especially challenging for producers who haven't spent time on the board of directors of their marketing board.

At the same time, a recent survey of marketing boards revealed that 85 percent of boards think it is important that members understand how the system works.

To supplement each board's own information services to members, the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission will gladly add members to the electronic mailing list for this newsletter. Boards can choose to forward it themselves to interested members or members can get it directly from the Commission.



“85% of boards say it's important for producers to understand the relationship between their marketing board and the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission.”

Source: 2003/04 Marketing Board Survey

As long as the producer has an e-mail address, we can get it to them in a cost efficient manner. That address is treated as confidential and will never be released for any other purpose.

The file size of the Commission's monthly newsletter has been pared down to around 163K. That means it will download readily while supplying graphics and photographs in colour.

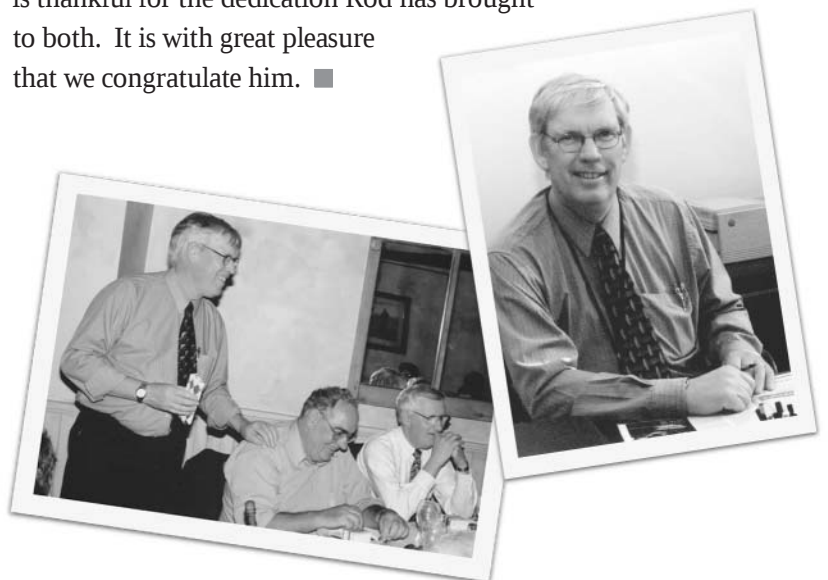
For more information, contact newsletter editor, Graham Howe at <graham.howe@omaf.gov.on.ca> ■

Commission Chair to Retire in September *continued from page 1*

Rod will always tell you that OMAF and the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission were more than a place to work. For Rod, working with the Commission was as much about conviction as it was vocation. It boils down to an opportunity to help an industry that is vitally important to the economy, and the foundation of the social well-being of Ontario's rural fabric.

Rod grew up on a ranch in southwestern Saskatchewan with his mom, dad and five brothers. The ranch is still in the family. Those who know Rod's passion for agriculture will tell you the soil is still under his fingernails and always will be.

Everyone at the Commission and the Ministry is thankful for the dedication Rod has brought to both. It is with great pleasure that we congratulate him. ■



OFPMC Business File

Goat Milk Vote

Ontario's goat milk producers have voted to maintain the status quo rather than establish a marketing board for their commodity.

At the request of producers, the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission conducted an expression of opinion vote by mail-in ballot between May 13 and May 21, 2004. The province's 169 goat milk producers were asked the following question.

"Are you in favour of the creation of a marketing board for goat milk with the powers to:

- set the price and determine terms and conditions for sale for different classes of goat milk;
- have authority over agreements between producers and persons engaged in marketing or processing goat milk;
- collect information from producers, marketers and processors; and
- collect a mandatory license fee of 2 cents/litre from the sale of all goat milk to fund the board's activities?"

Fifty-five per cent of the producers who received a ballot participated in the vote. Of those who voted, 48.39 per cent supported the establishment of a marketing board for goat milk. These producers represented 37.44 per cent of the production of all producers casting a ballot.

The OFPMC policy on expression of opinion votes requires that 66.6 per cent of producers casting a ballot vote in favour of the question, and that those voting in favour represent 50 per cent of the total production of all producers voting, in order for a vote to be considered successful.

The Commission believes the province's producers are in the best position to judge the suitability of regulated marketing for their industry. Through a democratic process, goat milk producers have shown they do not collectively think a marketing board is the way to proceed at this time.

Omega-3 Milk Beverages

The Commission has amended Regulation 753 under the Milk Act to permit sources of omega-3 fatty acid to be added to milk beverages in order to allow the relevant federal nutrient content claim to be made. After considering input from interested stakeholders, the regulatory amendment will allow 0.5% by weight of such fats or oils to be added.

This regulatory amendment is very narrow. It will only allow the addition of oil or fat to "milk beverages." Under the Milk Act, milk beverages are distinct from milk and must be labelled as such. Further, the regulatory amendment is limited to oils and fats that contain omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids.

The inclusion of these fats in the milk beverage will allow the federal nutrient content claim that the milk beverage is a source of omega-3.

The Commission views this amendment as a market growth issue.

Ontario Food Processors Association

The Commission met with the executive of the Ontario Food Processors Association (OFPA) to discuss current issues facing vegetable processors in the province ranging from labour to retail consolidation and financing. The Association's member companies account for ten percent of Ontario's total food processing sector and account for purchases of vegetables in excess of \$100 million. Several Ontario companies rely on the export market for about 40 percent of sales.

Consolidation since free trade has decreased the number of processors while the province's production capacity has expanded overall. Private label sales account for up to 30 percent of production among members of OFPA.

Grape Growers' Governance

The Commission is assisting the Grape Growers of Ontario as they work through a review of the board's governance structure. The marketing

continued on page 4

board is in the process of assessing its current representation structure against other possible models to ensure that it has the best process and design in place to represent the province's 517 processing-grape growers.

Greenhouse Governance

The Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers (OGVG) has surveyed directors to determine opinions on the existing governance structure and solicit new ideas. The Commission has been assisting as an information resource at this stage.

In spring, 2003, the OGVG became the second Ontario marketing board to have an appointed, independent Chair working with the elected directors. OGVG's use of an independent chair is an interim measure at the present time.

Northeastern Apple Marketing

The Commission will be participating with the Ontario Apple Growers and the Minister of Agriculture and Food when they meet with apple marketing groups from Nova Scotia and New York State to discuss strategies for the long-term viability of apple producers in

eastern Canada and the northeastern United States. The two-day meeting will be held in July in Halifax.

Tomato Seedling Agreements

Negotiated agreements were brought into force by the Commission which specify the prices, terms and conditions of sale for tomato seedlings. All ten tomato processing companies reached agreement with the Ontario Tomato Seedling Growers' Marketing Board. ■

Upcoming Annual Meetings and Conventions 2004

Date	Organization	Location	Telephone
July 8	Ontario Flue-Cured Tobacco Growers' Marketing Board - Annual Meeting	Delhi	(519) 842-3661
August 31	Ontario Wheat Producers' Marketing Board - Annual Meeting	Stratford	(519) 767-6537
September 13	Ontario Agri-Business Association – Feed Conference	Guelph	(519) 822-3004
October 17-19	Canadian Restaurant and Foodservice Association – HOSTEX Show	Toronto	(416) 923-8416
October 30	Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency – Annual Meeting	Guelph	(519) 836-0043
November 27	Ontario Asparagus Growers' Marketing Board – Annual Meeting	Ingersoll	(519) 246-1640

This information is provided strictly for our readers' convenience. Please note that organizations may restrict attendance to some or all of their agenda items. Please contact each organization for more information on programs, agenda items open to non-members, and location. While the Commission endeavours to ensure this information is correct, readers are responsible for confirming its accuracy with individual organizations before making any plans to attend. ■

Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission

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This newsletter is available on our website <www.gov.on.ca/OMAFRA/english/farmproducts/index.html>

