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This update is designed to provide you with concise, up to date agricultural business information with links to where you can find the details.

Introducing: Guide to Tracking 2003-2005 Program Payments to Ontario Farmers

This guide summarizes 37 federal and provincial programs that issued payments to Ontario farmers from 2003 to 2005 and projects payments in 2006. The purpose of this guide is to assist farmers and their advisors in tracking the payments, and in cashflow and business planning.

The guide lists CAIS and APF Companion programs, NISA and programs based on NISA participation, BSE support programs and other programs.

The guide provides program details regarding:

- eligibility,
- payment calculations,
- application deadlines,
- timeframes in which payments were issued,
- program contact phone numbers and website addresses, and
- a **Payment Chart** organized by calendar years 2003 through 2006 that gives a quick summary showing which programs issued payments in that year.

The Guide to Tracking 2003-2005 Program Payments to Ontario Farmers can be found on the OMAF website at: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/payments.htm>

Changes to the Specialized Business Planning Services – New Guide is Available

There have been some changes to the Specialized Business Planning Services program, which is part of the Canadian Farm Business Advisory Service. Some of the key changes include :

- There is no longer a 25% cap on “other professional fees”.
- A Conflict of Interest must be signed by the SBPS consultant(s)
- More than one consultant may be involved in developing business or succession plans; however a lead consultant must be identified to coordinate the overall plan.
- Each consultant must meet the following criteria:
 - be a member in good standing of a recognized professional organization or have related post-secondary education and have completed a course on ethics and professionalism (*An interactive, online Professional and Ethics Course is now available through the Agricultural Institute of Canada (AIC) and can be accessed at <http://www.aic.ca/learning/index.cfm>) ;*

- have experience in preparing business plans or succession plans; and
- provide a minimum of two references from previous clients (names and telephone numbers) who can endorse past work of a similar nature.

Revised SBPS guide now available online at http://www.agr.gc.ca/ren/cfbas/how-comment_e.cfm

Occupational Health and Safety On Farms

To help enhance health and safety on farms, the Ontario government has made a regulation to bring farming operations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA). The regulation will come into effect on June 30, 2006.

Paid farm workers, both domestic and foreign, will now have the same basic health and safety rights that are already given to other Ontario workers employed in provincially-regulated workplaces.

Farms operated by self-employed individuals without paid workers will continue to be exempt from the OHSA.

Rights and responsibilities

As a result of the regulation extending coverage of the OHSA to farming operations, certain rights and responsibilities will apply to both employers and farm workers.

For example, employers will have the duty to:

- Take every reasonable precaution to protect workers
- Provide information, instruction and supervision to workers
- Notify workers and supervisors about hazards in the workplace
- Notify the Ministry of Labour of workplace fatalities and critical injuries
- Co-operate with the workplace joint health and safety committee or the worker health and safety representative and respond to recommendations.

Paid farm workers would have the duty to work safely, in accordance with the act and regulations. They would also have basic rights, including the right to:

- Participate in decisions about workplace health and safety, through either a joint health and safety committee or a worker representative
- Know about workplace hazards to which they are exposed
- Refuse unsafe work.

In addition, where required, specially trained and certified members of a joint health and safety committee will have the right to stop work in dangerous circumstances.

For more information visit the Ontario Farm Safety Association web site at <http://www.farmsafety.ca/ohsa.shtml>

Canadian Farm Business Management Council Excellence Awards for Agricultural Students

The CFBMC Excellence Awards challenge students enrolled in an agriculture program at a

recognized post-secondary educational institution to write an essay on a subject related to farm management. The five winning essays will each receive a \$1,000 cash prize and the winners will be invited to present their essays at the next Farm Management Innovation Workshop. Visit http://farmcentre.com/english/courses/excellence_award.htm for all the information

Thanks for reading the OMAFRA Business Update. If you have any questions or comments about this email update contact the editor, Rob Gamble at rob.gamble@omaf.gov.on.ca.

Looking for more information? Visit the OMAFRA website at <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca> or the Business Development site at <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/agbusdev.html>

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