



ISSUE # 18 – December 9, 2005

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

Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)

Ontario's *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) came into force in October 1979. The main principle of the OHSA is that workers and employers must share the responsibility for health and safety in the workplace. The Act sets out the rights and duties of both employers and workers, and it provides for enforcement where compliance has not been achieved voluntarily. The Act allows Ministry of Labour inspectors to investigate accidents resulting in critical injuries or death, and to inspect the workplace to ensure compliance with the Act.

Until now, farming operations have been exempt from the OHSA. Since late 2003, the Ministry of Labour (MOL) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) have been working with the agricultural industry, through the Labour Issues Co-ordinating Committee, a coalition of about 20 agricultural commodity and farm organizations, to develop occupational health and safety standards appropriate for farming operations.

In June 2005, the government announced a new regulation that will extend the OHSA to farming operations with paid workers. **It will come into effect on June 30, 2006.** This means that the rights and duties for workers and employers outlined in the Act will apply; inspection and enforcement will apply; and both workers and employers will participate in workplace health and safety matters. **Farming operations without paid workers will continue to be exempt.**

OHSA information is now posted on the OMAFRA web site in the Farm Labour section:

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/farmlabour.html>

There are two items:

1. Info Sheet: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/ohsa.htm>
2. Q&As : <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/q&aohsa.htm>

Your Guide to Food Processing in Ontario

Ontario is home to 3,700 food processors that contribute more than \$30 billion to the economy and employ almost 110,000 people. Small business represents 78.3% of establishments in Ontario's food and beverage industry which employs more than 17,601 across Ontario.

"Your Guide to Food Processing in Ontario" is an internet-based tool for entrepreneurs starting food-processing businesses. The guide is intended to help the food business entrepreneur start, manage and grow their business.

The Guide takes a look at some of the important areas specific to the food processing business, including information on researching, manufacturing and marketing commercial-scale food products, as well as comprehensive guidelines for food safety, quality assurance and government regulations. Numerous contacts and on-line links throughout the Guide direct the reader to resources, such as business planning, financing and taxation.

The information is available in English and French on the ministry's website. You can download the guide for free in PDF or plain text format at <http://www.omafr.gov.on.ca/english/food/industry/newbusiness.htm>

Making Sense of Your Farm Property Tax Bill

This info bulletin explains the basics of how your property tax is calculated. It covers:

- (1) Property Assessment Valuation
- (2) Property Class and
- (3) Municipal tax rates.

Understanding these three components can help you understand your bill. Visit <http://www.omafr.gov.on.ca/english/policy/ftaxfaq.html> for this and other information on farm property tax.

How to Build Farmers' Markets and How Farmers' Markets Build Community! "SHARING THE HARVEST"

The first Canadian How-To Book for Farmers' Market leaders, managers, vendors and communities on how to build Farmers' Markets and how Farmers' Markets build community! This book is a celebration of Ontario's Farmers' Markets and their communities, products and people. It tells their stories and shares their successes. The book has two major themes:

- 1) How Farmer's Markets' build communities – economically, socially, culturally;
- 2) An operational manual to guide market leaders to build a successful market in their community.

Topics include:

Characteristics of a Community Driven, Producer-Based Farmers' Market
How Farmers' Markets Impact Downtown Revitalization
Six Successful Strategies for Vendor Recruitment
Stall Layout and Design
Signs – Highway, Permanent (on-site) and Market Day
Market Rules and Regulations
Food Practices and Safety – A Must for Your Market
Advertisements that Work

For more info visit the Farmers' Markets Ontario website at <http://www.farmersmarketsontario.ca>

To order a copy of the book send a cheque for \$23.85 per copy (includes shipping and GST) to:

**Farmers' Markets Ontario,
54 Bayshore Road,
Brighton, Ontario
K0K 1H0**

Agriculture Management Courses via the Web Classroom

The non-profit OATI Learning Group, with support from Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, has created a unique **Web Classroom** environment!

Producers and farm business managers all across Ontario now have access to four new agricultural business management courses – delivered right to their home or office computer in a new Web Classroom environment. Participants will have live audio and video, and direct communication with the instructor and classmates. The unique new web technology works over dial-up connections, as well as high speed connections. Each course is delivered one evening per week, over 5 to 6 weeks.

The new courses and the dates being offered are:

Managing for High Performance (human resources management)

Thursdays, 7:00pm - 9:30pm: January 12, 19, 26, February 2, 9, 16

Introduction to Commodity Marketing

Tuesdays, 7:00pm - 9:30pm: January 10, 17, 24, 31, February 7, 14

Intermediate Commodity Marketing

Tuesdays, 7:00pm - 9:30pm: February 28, March 7, 14, 21, 28, April 4

Introduction to Farm Succession Planning (for advisors but producers welcome)

Wednesdays 7:00pm - 9:00pm: February 22; March 1, 8, 15

For more details on the course content visit the OATI website at:

http://www.oati.com/buy_course/online_course.asp

The cost for each course is \$199 + GST. All courses have a minimum of 12 participants and a maximum of 22 participants... so book early.

Introduction to Farm Succession Planning will also be offered as a 1 day classroom course on January 18 (pilot) and additional dates in February-March TBA.

Furthermore, **Advanced Succession Planning for Farm Advisors** will be offered as a 1 ½ day classroom course in late February-early March.

For further information about any of these courses or to register contact Lee Davis at davis@oati.com or (519) 763-3160 or 1-800-668-6284, extension 222.

This Web Classroom project is funded under the Renewal Chapter of the Canada – Ontario Agricultural Policy Framework.

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@omafra.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>