

OMAFRA Ag Business Update

ISSUE # 77 – February 2012

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

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Announcements

Optimism about Canadian agriculture at all-time high

Optimism among Canadian agriculture producers and agribusiness owners is at an all-time high, according to the fifth annual Farm Credit Canada (FCC) national Vision panel survey. A full 80% say that their farm or business will be better off in five years – a shift from 76% in 2010. Further evidence of this optimistic attitude is demonstrated in additional survey findings which show:

- that more Canadian producers report being better off today than they were five years ago – 77% compared to 67% in 2010;
- that 58% of producers plan to expand or diversify their operations within the next five years; and
- that seven in ten producers would encourage a friend or relative to pursue a career in primary production.

Full survey results are available at www.fccvision.ca/research.

Agricorp News

Commodity code changes for 2011

To avoid unnecessary delays in processing AgriStability and AgriInvest 2011 forms, participants and agents should refer to the [revised 2011 commodity code list](#). Commodity codes are used to identify sales and purchases of specific commodities on program forms. Changes to these codes have been made in an effort to simplify reporting requirements for producers and to remove duplicate or redundant codes.

Premium rates set for RMP livestock plans

For livestock producers who are thinking about their risk management options for 2012, premium rates are now set for the new Risk Management Program (RMP). Three coverage levels are available for the cattle, hog, sheep and veal plans. Premium rates and the  [2012 Handbook - RMP for livestock](#) are now posted on www.agricorp.com. More information about the 2012 program, including application and renewal forms, will be available in February.

Industry proposed changes to the Grain Financial Protection Program

The changes were requested by the Grain Farmers of Ontario (GFO) and the Ontario Agri Business Association (OABA) and are supported by the other stakeholders groups that will be affected by the amendments.

Three of the proposed changes apply to Regulation 260/97 (General) and would allow deferred payment of any duration; change the payment timelines for sales from storage and change the basis contract.

Specifically, the proposed changes to O. Reg. 260/97 would:

- allow deferred payments of any duration under the Grains Act. This makes permanent the conditions put in place December 2010 which are scheduled to expire on July 1, 2012.
- extend the payment requirement for dealers on sales from storage from 2 p.m. the next day to 5 days to better reflect current industry payment practice; and
- reduce the initial payment amount from dealers to producers on basis contracts from 75% to 60% to better manage the risks and volatility in the current marketplace.

The additional requests apply to the regulations under the Farm Products Payment Act and refer to payment from the compensation funds. The amendments would:

- allow producers entering into deferred payment arrangements to be paid on a sliding scale, based on the length of deferral. As an example, producers that do not defer would receive 100% of eligible coverage in the event of a successful claim. Those that deferred for up to 45 days would receive 50% coverage. There would be no compensation for deferrals over 180 days; and
- increase the coverage level for canola and soybean producers from 90% to 95 % to be consistent with grain corn and wheat.

[More>>](#)

The CFFO Launches Business Management Pilot Project

Farm business management groups have been used across Canada over the past few decades but there appears to be a renewed push to broaden their appeal. Although these groups can vary widely from sector-to-sector, most feature a small group of farmers working with a facilitator to compare individual production and financial records against those of peers. In the process, the aim is to grow and develop the management skills of all participants in the group.

Through funding received from the Agricultural Management Institute, CFFO is conducting a pilot project to assess membership support for farm business management discussion groups. Our goal is to organize three clubs and host four to six meetings for each over the course of the next year. The groups are intended to be a source of information on business management trends and analysis. However, the sharing of ideas may be the most important aspect in assisting producers to develop a new approach to, or concept of, farm business management.

[More>>](#)

Canadian Farm Business Management Council – Excellence Award for Ag Students – applications open until February 28th, 2012

About the Award

Each year, the CFBMC collects submissions from agricultural students across Canada and awards three winners with \$1,000 towards furthering their education in agriculture.

The award is designed to help students develop their communication skills by having the opportunity to voice their opinion on a on a subject related to farm management.

This year, we asked you to respond to the following:

What is the importance of lifelong learning to meet the business management requirements of an increasingly complex agricultural industry, and how can farm managers integrate learning opportunities into their hectic schedules?

[Click here](#) to learn more or apply [here](#).

Measuring Social Media and Smartphone Use in Ontario Agriculture

Janice LeBoeuf, OMAFRA, Ridgetown

A team of OMAFRA field staff are leading an OMAFRA/University of Guelph initiative to determine the level of usage of various smartphone and mobile device platforms and communication tools, including social media, in the Ontario agriculture industry. An online survey has just been launched, aimed at those working in agriculture across the province. The questions will focus on whether you are using social media, smartphones, or other internet, media, and print resources in your agricultural business. Agricultural students are also included in the survey.

The online survey is being conducted by Ipsos Reid. The project team hopes to get participation from a wide range of people across the industry – and from those who get their information from a wide variety of sources, not just those with smartphones and social media accounts. The existing ways of sharing information aren't being thrown out just because we have some new tools, but with so many options out there, it's a good time to ask people how they want to get their information.

The online survey is found at: <http://www.ipsosresearch.com/OMAFRA>. It should take less than ten minutes to complete.

Results will be available early in April. The data will help agricultural organizations and businesses make decisions on where to focus their efforts in the fast-changing landscape of mobile tools and online communication.

This project is funded by Agri-Food and Rural Link, the [Knowledge Translation and Transfer program](#) under the OMAFRA-U of G Partnership.

Publications and Online Resources

New/Updated OMAFRA Publications

[2012 Field Crop Budgets PDF](#)

[Programs and Services for Ontario Farmers PDF](#)

[Harmonized Sales Tax \(HST\) on the Sale or Transfer of Farmland PDF](#)

The Cost of Raising Replacement Dairy Heifers, Order No. 11-055

All Ontario publications can be ordered through ServiceOntario

Online at www.publications.serviceontario.ca

Telephone the ServiceOntario Contact Centre

Monday to Friday, 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM

416-326-5300

416-325-3408 (TTY)

1-800-668-9938 Toll-free across Canada

1-800-268-7095 TTY Toll-free across Ontario

In person at ServiceOntario Centres throughout the province.

Ontariofresh.ca

Ontariofresh.ca is now live! Join more than 1,000 registered users to grow your business and build your networks using this free, dynamic, online, business-to-business marketplace for Ontario food. **Ontariofresh.ca** is a new way to sell more Ontario food to corporate and institutional buyers across the province or in your own backyard. From single chefs or caterers to hospitals, universities, and major distributors, reach out and build connections with new business partners.

For more information visit www.Ontariofresh.ca, email info@ontariofresh.ca, or give them a call at (416) 960-0001 x.310 or x.315. You can also call their toll-free help line at 1-888-249-9399.

New Online Tool for Pork Producers

Ontario Pork has launched a new online tool for producers, which will provide them with easy access to hog data, at the click of a button.

This tool provides producers a location on the Ontario Pork website to view their weekly hog shipment summary that has the data necessary for filling in the Risk Management Program (RMP) application form. If producers do not have an ID/password for this secure site, they can phone 1-877-ONT-PORK (1-877-668-7675) and ask for Member Services or email to memberservices@ontariopork.on.ca. Once on the site, producers can select the 'Weekly Hog Shipment Summary' to get a specified report.

"Ontario Pork hopes that this tool will make it more convenient and easy for producers to get their RMP sales data, which will help them fill out the RMP application form," said Ontario Pork's General Manager, Ken Ovington.

This tool can be used to complete their livestock sales information for the Risk Management Program and is accessible now by visiting the Ontario Pork website at <http://www.ontariopork.on.ca/MemberLogin.aspx>

AgPal – Program and Service Finder

AgPal links you directly to all of Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, Farm Credit Canada, and Nova Scotia's programs and services, as well as those of Ontario's Growing Forward program. Plans are to add information from other provinces in the coming months.

If your organization provides services to agricultural clients in Canada, we would like to talk to you about including your information in AgPal. We offer a variety of participation options for governments, associations, educational institutions, non-profit and community-based organizations. [More >>](#)

Contact us at AgPal-AgriGuichet@agr.gc.ca

Value Chains in Agriculture, Food and Agri-Products Sectors

Collaborate to Compete

Welcome to the Value Chain Business Information Bundle - your resource centre for information on establishing and growing your value chain.

[More>>](#)

FCC Edge

Hosted by Kevin Stewart, FCC Edge is a bimonthly agriculture podcast from Farm Credit Canada. From discussions on business and technology, to inspiration and farm safety, FCC Edge has features and interviews that are relevant to Canadian agriculture. Get the most out of your farming operation.

[Get the FCC Edge>>](#)

Conferences, Workshops and Seminars

Farm Biosecurity Program Workshop

Producers must attend a half-day Poultry Farm Biosecurity workshop before applying for cost-share funding under the Farm Biosecurity Program. At the workshop, you will:

- Learn about biosecurity risks to Ontario poultry operations and how those risks can be managed through the consistent application of sound biosecurity principles at the farm level.
- Evaluate and identify key risk factors on your operation, and develop an Action Plan for making improvements, based on the National Avian On-Farm Biosecurity Standard.
- Begin a Self-Assessment of your operation, leading to an Action Plan that will help you manage those risks. A completed Self-Assessment and Action Plan must be attached to your application to the Farm Biosecurity Program.

These workshops are open to all holders of poultry: commercial and non-commercial; large and small. Upcoming Workshops are scheduled for:

Mt. Forest and District Sports Complex, 850 Princess St, Mt. Forest
Wednesday, February 22 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Note: This will be the final series of workshops for the Farm Biosecurity Program. The deadline for submitting applications is August 31, 2012. All claims and invoices for approved projects must be submitted by December 31, 2012.

These workshops are based on the National Avian On-Farm Biosecurity Standard and are designed for poultry producers. A certificate of participation from a workshop is required when applying for cost-share funding. You may either attach a copy to your Application Form or record the Certificate number in Part A of the Application Form if submitting electronically.

Lunch and refreshments will be provided. There is no cost to attend these workshops, but you must register.

To register:

- Please complete the form on our workshop registration page: Please complete the form on our workshop

registration page: [Farm Biosecurity Program Workshop Registration](#) or

- Please call toll free 1-888-479-3931
-

Online *Advantage* Food Safety Workshop for Producers – Register Today!

Reduce your risk of food contamination and expand your customer base by putting in place a food safety program. OMAFRA is here to help you keep up to date on the latest food safety practices! Join us for these no charge, online workshops from the comfort of your home or business. All you need is an internet and phone connection.

Pre and Post Harvest Water Use – Tuesday, February 14, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm (noon)

Did you know that water can carry germs from dirty produce to clean produce? A pre and post harvest water use program is an important step in reducing risks. During this workshop, evaluate your risks and discuss how to construct and monitor a water sanitizing program.

Register today!

Call **1-877-424-1300** or register online at www.ontario.ca/foodsafety

Registration closes the day prior to each workshop. A confirmation email will be sent following registration with the online presentation and teleconference details.

Additional Opportunities:

Mix and Match Workshops – Select from a range of food safety topics to create a workshop day tailored to your producer organizations' specific needs.

One on One Sessions – Review and discuss specific food safety plans and issues directly with a food safety advisor in Guelph.

For more information on Mix and Match Workshops or One on One Sessions contact:

Toll Free: 1-877-424-1300

E-mail: advantage@ontario.ca

www.ontario.ca/foodsafety

AMI Conference: Global Perspectives for Growing Farm Profits

Join AMI this February 15th & 16th at the Agricultural Management Institute conference to discuss Ontario's business plan for being involved in rising international business opportunities in agriculture.

When: February 15th & 16th, 2012

Location: Guelph Delta Hotel, 50 Stone Road, Guelph ON

For the Agenda and Event Registration [click here](#).

For Speaker Biographies [click here](#).

The Agricultural Management Institute invites you to join us at this important conference focused on increasing on-farm profitability within Ontario agriculture by taking a new approach to the opportunities and strategies we need to build to help feed growing international markets.

This evening and full day conference will feature **Dr. Siwa Msangi** of the International Food Policy Research Institute, **Merritt Cluff** of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation, **Amanda Lang**, Senior Business Correspondent for CBC, **Andrea Mandel-Campbell** renowned author and many more.

Conference Details: February 15 & 16, 2012. **Delta Guelph Hotel** 50 Stone Road West, Guelph ON N1G 0A9 519-780-3700.

To register, visit www.takeanewapproach.ca/events or for more information call 519-822-6618.

The Canadian Farm Business Management Council presents:

[Agriwebinar™ - LEARNING WITHOUT LIMITS](#)

FEBRUARY/MARCH AGRIWEBINAR™ CALENDAR

DATE	SPEAKER	TOPIC
Feb. 13	Kevin Spafford	The Five Keys to Planning Success
Feb. 27	Colette Lebel	Cooperating for Success
Feb. 28	Tarrah Young	Cooperating for Success
Feb. 29	Jean-Philippe Gervais	FCC Presents: Canadian Agricultural Economic Outlook
March 12	Drew Lerner, World Weather Inc.	FCC Presents: Spring and Summer 2011 weather forecast

March 26	Mario Leclerc, Laval University	FCC Presents: Optimizing Dairy Revenue

Register to watch live webinars, view the archive and sign up to their mailing list to receive alerts on upcoming webinars at www.agriwebinar.com/Register.aspx - **it's free!**

The Canadian Innovation & Commercialization Forum

Erie Innovation and Commercialization and their Partners are pleased to present The Canadian Innovation and Commercialization Forum.

Tuesday, February 21, 2012

Elm Hurst Inn, Ingersoll, ON

8:30am-12:30pm

For more information on this event visit www.erieinnovation.com/events

To register for this Free event, please contact shelleyimbeault@ofvga.org

Agents invited to Agricorp information sessions

Agricorp invites you to attend one of five agent information sessions to learn more about the new Risk Management Program (RMP), AgriStability, and AgriInvest. Find out more about the RMP plans for cattle, grains and oilseeds, hogs, sheep, veal and SDRM: Edible Horticulture, including:

- Eligibility and enrolment information
- Cross-program participation requirements and RMP linkages to AgriStability
- Reporting requirements
- Premiums and payment calculations.

You'll also learn how to manage common processing issues for all programs.

Register and mark your calendar today!

February 16	Royal Canadian Legion 100 Reuben Crescent Kemptville, ON K0G 1J0
February 21	Royal Canadian Legion 493 Eighth Avenue Hanover, ON N4N 2K9
February 22	Army Navy Air Force Veterans Banquet Hall 151 Lorne Avenue East Stratford, ON N5A 6S4
February 23	Hellenic Community Centre 133 Southdale Road West London, ON N6J 2J2
February 28	Michelangelo 1555 Upper Ottawa Street

Hamilton, ON L8W 3E2

All sessions run from 1 to 4 pm.

To register for sessions in Kemptville, Hanover, Stratford or London, please RSVP to contact@agricorp.com no later than February 9, 2012. To register for the Hamilton session, please RSVP no later than February 14, 2012.

Send us any specific questions and we'll address them at the session.

Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention

The Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention is celebrating 10 years! To mark the occasion, the convention is moving to a new home, The Scotiabank Convention Centre in Niagara Falls, Ontario. This new, state-of-the-art facility is the perfect setting to deliver a great lineup of horticultural experts and topical sessions as well as an expanded tradeshow with double the space! If you are going to attend a convention in 2012, this is one destination you don't want to miss!

Scotiabank Convention Centre
Niagara Falls, Ontario
February 22-23, 2012

[More>>](#)

Farm Succession Planning (in French)

Alfred & New Liskeard
March 13, 2012
Hosted by the Union des Cultivateurs Franco-Ontariennes
9am - 4pm
Fee: \$10.00 per person for members, \$20.00 for non-members
For more information contact:
Laurence Poirier
par téléphone: 613-488-2929
par courriel: lpoirier@ucfo.ca

Introduction to Hedging and Risk Management for Producers (in French)

Earlton
March 20, 2012
Hosted by the Union des Cultivateurs Franco-Ontariennes
9am - 4pm
Fee: \$10.00 per person for members, \$20.00 for non-members
For more information contact:
Laurence Poirier
par téléphone: 613-488-2929
par courriel: lpoirier@ucfo.ca

Avoiding Farm Succession Planning Minefields

A workshop for any farm business owner or manager

St. Thomas, March 22, 2012
Elgin Business Resource Centre
300 South Edgeware Road
9 am - 4 pm
Fee: \$50 per person (includes lunch)
Hosted by the Elgin Business Resource Centre

To register, contact Debra at the Elgin Business Resource Centre, 519-633-7597 ext 326, dwebster@elgincfdc.ca or fax 519.633.5070.

“A Time For Change”, — 2012 London Swine Conference

When: Wednesday, March 28 and Thursday, March 29, 2012

Where: London Convention Centre, 300 York St London, ON

Registration: Conference fees are \$200 for both days, and \$135 for a one day registration. The fee includes one copy of the proceedings, continental breakfasts, lunches, evening receptions and all coffee breaks. Registration deadline is March 23, 2011.

For more information, or to register: Visit www.londonswineconference.ca or contact Linda Dillon, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, phone 519-482-3333 or e-mail linda.dillon@ontario.ca.

ONTRACEABILITY 2012 presents Cross Country Check-up on National Traceability

OnTrace Agri-Food Traceability (OnTrace) announced the details today for *OnTraceability 2012*, their annual event on the state of Canadian agriculture and food traceability. This year's conference takes place on **Thursday, March 29, 2012 at the Kitchener-Waterloo Delta**.

OnTraceability 2012 speakers will include:

- *Dr. David Acheson, Managing Director, Food Safety, Leavitt Partners* returns to provide an update one year later on of the US “Food Safety Modernization Act”, as well as what the effect of the Harper/Obama meeting on cross border security and regulatory reconciliation means for both US and Canadian agriculture and food business.
- Insights into how traceability affects consumers in the retail environment will be presented by *David Smith, Vice President, Retail and Sustainability* at Sobeys.
- The day's final keynote speaker, *Dr. David Sparling - Professor and Chair of Agri-Food Innovation and Regulation, Richard Ivey School of Business* will provide his unique perspective in “Overcoming the Final Hurdles to Traceability”. Dr. Sparling will explore the prospects for a national traceability system, its effect on public health and sustainability and policy issues within Canada and our U.S. trading partner.

To register for OnTraceability 2012 and for the complete agenda and speaker details visit <http://www.ontrace.ca/ontraceability2012.htm>.

Thanks for reading the OMAFRA Ag Business Update.

Questions or Comments: contact the editor, **John Molenhuis** at john.molenhuis@ontario.ca.

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