
Part I: Results-based Plan 2014-15

Ministry of Agriculture and Food
and
Ministry of Rural Affairs

PART I: PUBLISHED RESULTS-BASED PLAN BRIEFING BOOK 2014-15

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PART I: PUBLISHED RESULTS-BASED PLAN 2014-15

MINISTRY OVERVIEW

Mandate

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)¹ works to advance the government's efforts to promote a more competitive and productive agri-food and agri-product sector, and economic growth and opportunities for rural Ontario. In doing so, the ministry supports rural and urban communities and a high quality of life for all Ontario residents.

By working towards these goals, the ministry will help create a better business climate for the agri-food industry and stronger rural communities that support good jobs, attract investment, and make even greater contributions to Ontario's economic success.

Ministry Contribution to Priorities and Results

Ontario is blessed with thousands of hectares of farmland, a rich diversity of foods produced, and an agri-food industry which is one of the biggest drivers of our economic engine. The sector is strong and resilient, growing during and after the recent recession. In fact, the sector contributes more than \$34 billion to the province's GDP, and supports more than 710,000 jobs – that's 11 per cent of jobs in Ontario.

There are approximately 52,000 farms in Ontario, and Ontario's 3,000 food processors buy 65 per cent of their inputs here at home. With \$11.9 billion in exports for 2013, Ontario is among the leading export provinces and enjoys a well-earned international reputation for high-quality, safe food.

Ontario's agri-food industry is poised for even greater success. Together with clients and stakeholder groups, we will work to bridge the gap between rural and urban Ontario and support economic growth for our agri-food industry.

Promoting Ontario's long-term economic growth is essential to succeeding in today's global economy. To maximize our potential for economic growth across the province, rural Ontario must be at the table to ensure its voice is heard and its unique needs addressed.

¹ On June 24, 2014, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and Ministry of Rural Affairs were amalgamated into the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA). Therefore, OMAFRA will be used to reference the ministry for the purposes of forward looking text in this document.

Rural Ontario's importance speaks for itself. Collectively, its communities contribute more than \$108 billion in economic output – or close to 19 per cent of provincial GDP. And with 2.5 million residents, it doubles Manitoba's population.

It's also home to innovative industrial hubs. From advanced auto production, mining and forestry to an award-winning wine industry and growing retail sector, rural communities embody economic diversity.

But to continue building its economy, rural Ontario's unique and varied interests must be placed front and centre.

The Ontario government is applying a rural lens to its decision-making process and consulting with rural partners to identify key priorities and solutions. We will work together to help rural Ontario become more innovative by creating more good-paying jobs, attracting investment and promoting safer communities.

The result will be a more robust rural Ontario: A highly innovative, economically diverse region that is better-positioned to create well-paying jobs and attract investment. And in the process, build a prosperous, forward-looking Ontario that is truly competitive.

Ministry Programs and Activities

Strong Agriculture, Food and Bio-product Sectors and Strong Rural Communities

In 2014-15, OMAFRA will work to promote a more competitive and productive agri-food and agri-product sector by supporting a strong rural Ontario that strengthens the province.

We will work with the Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure (MEDEI) to design and deliver the new permanent Municipal Infrastructure Investment Initiative.

Our rural communities have great potential for growing new markets, attracting investment and creating new jobs. We will restore funding to the Rural Economic Development (RED) Program to previous levels, to further support the government's commitment to economic growth and to building strong, vibrant businesses and communities in rural Ontario.

We want to accelerate growth in our agri-food sector (including agri-products and bio-economy) by attracting investment, increasing our domestic and international market share, and helping the sector meet the Premier's Agri-Food Growth Challenge.

OMAFRA will support MEDEI's proposal for a Jobs and Prosperity Fund, including an agri-food and agri-product stream, which will:

- encourage further growth/expansion and job creation/retention in food and agri-product processing and related functions (e.g. distribution, aggregation, packaging, etc.)
- build on current programming for agri-food and agri-product processing businesses to help the sector make significant investments and become more productive.

OMAFRA is working with the agri-food industry and academic partners to continue to modernize the approach to agri-food research and innovation in Ontario.

Our plan for economic growth and jobs is focused on making smart investments in people, infrastructure, and creating a business environment that attracts investment and growth.

The ministry will continue to work to decrease regulatory burdens by supporting the government's Open For Business initiatives.

Better Public Health and Environment

OMAFRA will continue to demonstrate leadership and advancement in animal health and food assurance systems.

The ministry is committed to finding a balanced approach to bee health challenges that addresses the important role both pollinators and growers play in Ontario's agri-food industry.

We will continue to work with the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) on the Canada Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health (COA), to deliver on the province's priority commitments for nutrient management and the reduction of harmful pollutants in the Great Lakes basin.

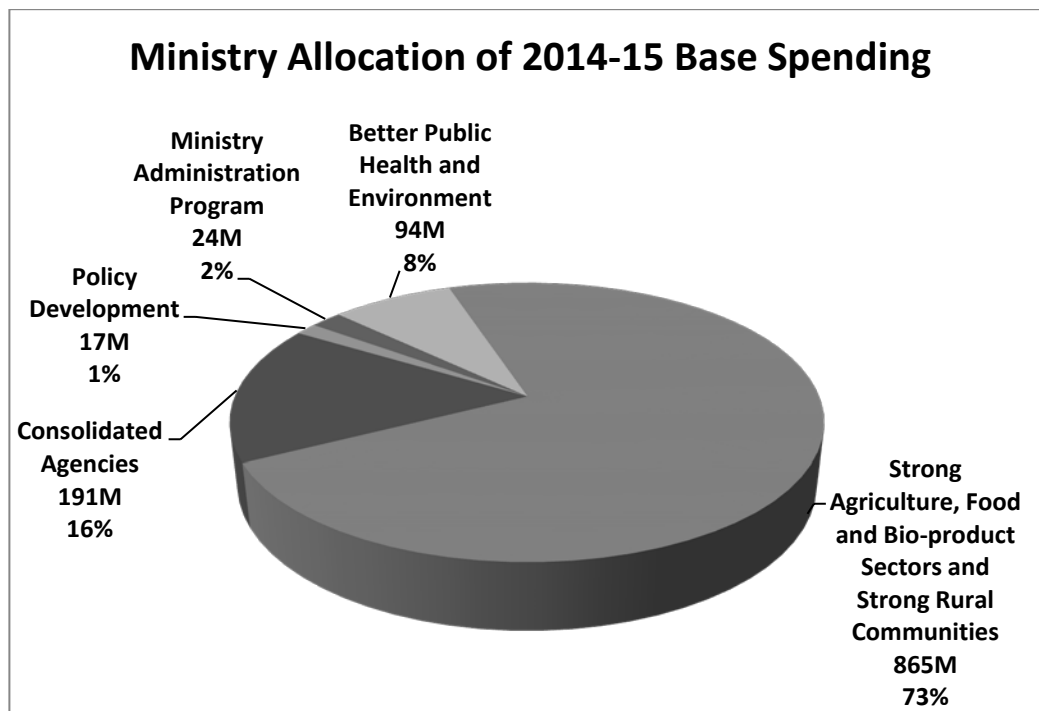
Ministry Administration and Policy

OMAFRA will continue to provide high quality customer service and deliver programs efficiently.

In order to drive the success for rural Ontario, the ministry will ensure rural consideration is given in policy and programs across government and develop key performance measures and metrics for rural Ontario to promote economic growth and opportunities to support a high quality of life for its residents.

Ministry Planned Expenditures 2014-15 (\$M)

Operating	976
Capital	215
TOTAL	1,191



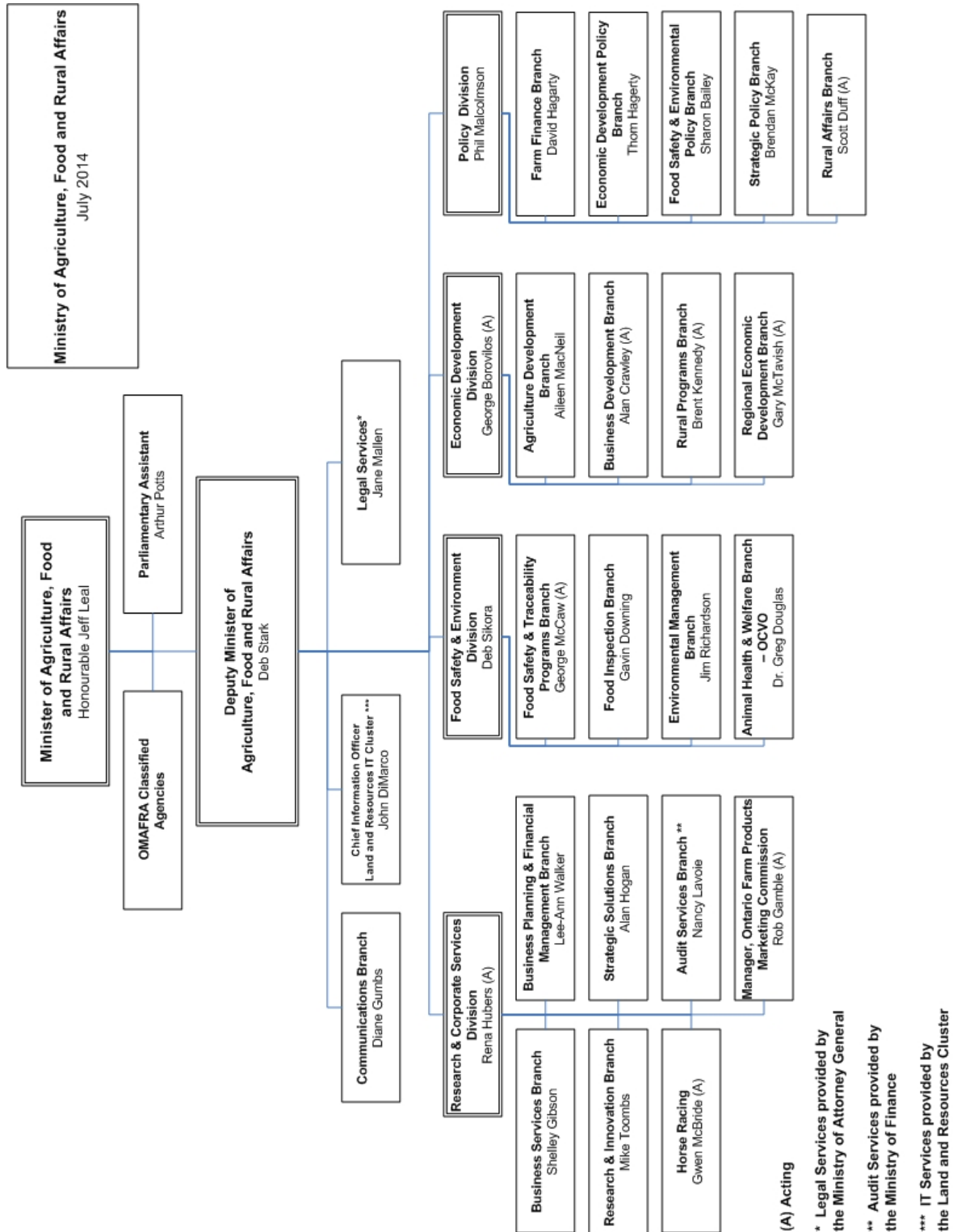
HIGHLIGHTS OF 2013-14 ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2013-14, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and Ministry of Rural Affairs had significant accomplishments.

- Ontario's agri-food industry is responding positively to the Premier's Agri-Food Growth Challenge to double its annual growth rate and create 120,000 new jobs by 2020. In supporting the industry to meet this challenge, the ministry made investments in the food processing sector to create and retain jobs.
- The Horse Racing Partnership Plan (the Plan) was developed with industry input during 2013-14 and came into force on April 1, 2014. The Plan provides stability and confidence for the horse racing industry, encouraging it to continue to invest in horse breeding, ownership and racing activities, and provides a stable foundation for future modest rates of sustainable industry growth by attracting new fans and enhancing wagering revenues.
- The new Local Food Act, along with the Local Food Fund and support for the Greenbelt Fund and other local food organizations, are part of the Ontario government's broader local food strategy to create jobs and expand the province's agri-food sector by making more local food available in markets, schools, cafeterias, grocery stores and restaurants. The new act was proclaimed January 31, 2014. Under the Local Food Fund, 67 projects were funded in 2013-14, representing a provincial commitment of \$11.1 million.
- Between June 26, 2013 and March 31, 2014, the governments of Canada and Ontario committed \$30 million to Growing Forward 2 Strategic Initiatives projects to help agri-food and agri-products businesses and organizations grow their profits, expand their markets, and manage shared risks.
- The Ministry of Rural Affairs (MRA) worked with its partner ministries to develop or enhance relationships, tools, processes and training to allow ministries to more effectively apply a rural lens in policy and program development.
- MRA delivered a number of programs to support the vitality and sustainability of rural Ontario, including:
 - Municipal Infrastructure Investment Initiative (MIII): an \$89 million program that funds asset management plans and capital projects. The capital funding supports critical road, bridge, water and wastewater projects.
 - A new, dedicated \$100 million fund for small, rural and northern municipalities.
 - Rural Economic Development (RED) Program: a redesigned RED program was launched this year to support the development of community improvement plans, economic development plans and workforce planning.

For more successes and highlights, please see the annual report appended to this document.

MINISTRY ORGANIZATION CHART



AGENCIES, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS (ABCS)

Agencies, boards and commissions perform a range of functions, from administering production insurance programs to providing farmers with protection against natural hazards and delivering income stabilization payments. They supervise the province's 20 marketing boards and three representative commodity associations, and fulfill other regulatory, operational, trust and advisory functions.

The following is a complete list of the agencies, boards and commissions as classified under the Agency Establishment and Accountability Directive for which OMAFRA is responsible.

Consolidated Agencies

Only those agencies with assets, liabilities, revenues or expenses greater than \$50 million, or an annual surplus or deficit or outside revenue source of greater than \$10 million, are consolidated in OMAFRA's budget.

Agricorp (Operational Enterprise)

Agricorp was created in 1997 with a mandate to deliver crop insurance and other agricultural business risk management programs. Agricorp currently delivers three core programs, AgriStability, Production Insurance and the suite of Risk Management Programs, as well as several smaller programs, such as Farm Business Registration. Agricorp is governed by a board of directors appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. The Chair of the board is accountable to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario (Operational Service)

The Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario (ARIO) provides strategic advice to the ministry regarding the direction of ministry funded research programs in the areas of agriculture, food, veterinary medicine and household science. The ARIO selects and recommends areas of research for the betterment of these areas while stimulating interest in research as a means of developing a high degree of efficiency in the production and marketing of agricultural products in Ontario. In addition, ARIO owns and manages the province's agri-food research infrastructure, which is critical to the future success of Ontario's agri-food and rural sectors and a key component of overall provincial economic growth.

Ontario Racing Commission (Regulatory Agency)

The Ontario Racing Commission (ORC) is responsible for providing regulatory and economic oversight for the horse racing industry in Ontario, as well as providing industry development programs. The ORC governs and regulates thoroughbred and standardbred horse racing and licenses all racetrack operators. Under the *Racing Commission Act*, the ORC has the power to suspend violators, or to impose and collect fines, should participants breach the rules of racing established in Ontario.

Financial Information for Consolidated Agencies (\$M)

	2014-15 Expenditure Estimates	2014-15 Revenue Estimates	2013-14 Expenditure Interim Actuals	2013-14 Revenue Interim Actuals	2012-13 Expenditure Actuals	2012-13 Revenue Actuals
Agricorp	205.17	197.64	134.01	184.87	216.98	203.20
ARIO	(21.98)	2.10	(7.73)	2.14	(17.52)	3.91
ORC	8.11	8.38	8.12	8.91	8.88	11.19

Non-Consolidated Agencies

Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Appeal Tribunal (Adjudicative Agency)

The Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Appeal Tribunal (AFRAAT) hears and makes decisions on agriculture, food and rural affair issues. AFRAAT makes decisions related to the accreditation of farm organizations, exemptions for religious reasons from registration and/or paying the fee associated with joining an accredited farm organization; farmland classification for municipal taxation purposes; the technical and cost apportionment of projects under the *Drainage Act*; as well as disputes under the *Crop Insurance Act*, the *Farm Products Marketing Act*; the *Farm Implements Act*; the *Agricultural Employees Protection Act*; and various other statutes.

- Board of Negotiation (BON) (Adjudicative Agency)

The BON negotiates settlement in cases where contaminants cause damage to livestock, crops, trees or other vegetation. While the jurisdiction for requesting assistance from the BON falls with the Minister of Environment in legislation, the operation of the BON has been transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Boards under the Farm Products Payments Act

Under the *Farm Products Payments Act*, funds and boards are established to protect producers from non-payment by licensed buyers.

- Grain Financial Protection Board (GFPB) (Trust Agency)

The GFPB collects fees, administers a compensation fund and approves claims made against the fund. The fund was set up under the Grain Financial Protection Program to protect producers of grain corn, soybeans, wheat and canola in the event of defaults on payment by licensed buyers.

- Livestock Financial Protection Board (LFPB) (Trust Agency)

The LFPB collects fees, administers a compensation fund and approves claims made against the fund. The fund was set up under the Ontario Beef Cattle Financial Protection Program to protect producers and other sellers of beef cattle in the event of defaults on payment by licensed buyers.

Business Risk Management Review Committee (Advisory Agency)

The Business Risk Management Review Committee (BRMRC) has the authority to consider requests for reviews and make non-binding recommendations to the program administration for the following programs: AgriStability; Ontario's Risk Management Program; Ontario's Self-Directed Risk Management Program; and, any other program to which the Lieutenant Governor in Council or the Minister assigns responsibility.

Livestock Medicines Advisory Committee (Advisory Agency)

The Livestock Medicines Advisory Committee (LMAC) has a duty to review all legislation and regulations related to livestock medicines and their use, advise the minister on matters relating to their control and regulation, evaluate and recommend procedures relating to their sale and the proper standards for livestock medicine maintenance, handling and storage, make recommendations respecting the description of drugs or classes of drugs for sale under a licence or any class of licence and make inquiries and report back to the minister on any matter as referred.

Normal Farm Practices Protection Board (Adjudicative Agency)

The Normal Farm Practices Protection Board (NFPPB) reviews and resolves disputes respecting an agricultural operation, including the determination of what constitutes a normal farm practice, and makes the necessary inquiries and orders to ensure compliance with its decisions. The NFPPB has this authority under the *Farming and Food Production Protection Act*, 1998.

Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission (Regulatory Agency)

The Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission (OFPMC) develops and implements regulated marketing policy, supervises Ontario's 20 marketing boards and three designated associations. The OFPMC provides leadership in the form of advice, facilitation and direction, as well as educational programs to these boards and associations to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the regulated marketing system.

Ontario Food Terminal Board (Operational Enterprise)

The Ontario Food Terminal Board (OFTB) has a mandate to acquire, construct, equip and operate a wholesale fruit and produce market, and operate such facility for the distribution and handling of fruit and produce.

Rural Economic Development Advisory Panel (Advisory Agency)

The Rural Economic Development Advisory Panel (REDAP) is responsible for providing recommendations to the minister on applications for funding under the Rural Economic Development Program (REDP) and the Local Food Fund, as well as any other program that the Lieutenant Governor in Council or the minister may assign.

DETAILED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Operating and Capital Summary by Vote

Votes/Programs	Estimates 2014-15 \$	Change from Estimates 2013-14 \$	%	Estimates 2013-14 * \$	Interim Actuals 2013-14 * \$	Actuals 2012-13 * \$
OPERATING EXPENSE						
Vote 1: Ministry Administration Program	23,902,300	50,300	0.2	23,852,000	25,760,400	23,361,266
Vote 7: Better Public Health and Environment	93,800,000	8,624,400	10.1	85,175,600	77,251,200	84,843,263
Vote 8: Strong Agriculture, Food and Bio-product Sectors and Strong Rural Communities	622,703,500	97,067,300	18.5	525,636,200	528,629,800	507,265,059
Vote 9: Policy Development	16,644,200	(305,300)	(1.8)	16,949,500	14,623,200	15,304,291
Less: Special Warrants	167,175,000	167,175,000		-	-	-
Total Operating Expense to be Voted	589,875,000	(61,738,300)	(9.5)	651,613,300	646,264,600	630,773,879
Special Warrants	167,175,000	167,175,000		-	-	-
Statutory Appropriations	2,096,014	-	-	2,096,014	528,700	1,878,155
Ministry Total Operating Expense	759,146,014	105,436,700	16.1	653,709,314	646,793,300	632,652,034
Consolidation & Other Adjustments - Agricorp	203,464,500	(30,097,500)	(12.9)	233,562,000	131,627,000	214,392,563
Consolidation & Other Adjustments - Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario (ARIO)	5,625,000	1,832,500	48.3	3,792,500	5,378,100	2,126,571
Consolidation & Other Adjustments - Ontario Racing Commission	8,058,000	(1,666,500)	(17.1)	9,724,500	8,065,000	8,815,903
Total Including Consolidation & Other Adjustments	976,293,514	75,505,200	8.4	900,788,314	791,863,400	857,987,071
OPERATING ASSETS						
Vote 1: Ministry Administration Program	300,000	-	-	300,000	N/A	-
Vote 7: Better Public Health and Environment	500,000	-	-	500,000	N/A	51,400
Vote 8: Strong Agriculture, Food and Bio-product Sectors and Strong Rural Communities	305,000	-	-	305,000	N/A	-
Total Operating Assets to be Voted	1,105,000	-	-	1,105,000	N/A	51,400
Statutory Appropriations	11,800,000	-	-	11,800,000	N/A	4,512,100
Ministry Total Operating Assets	12,905,000	-	-	12,905,000	N/A	4,563,500
CAPITAL EXPENSE						
Vote 8: Strong Agriculture, Food and Bio-product Sectors and Strong Rural Communities	240,627,600	89,282,400	59.0	151,345,200	225,861,800	194,010,408
Less: Special Warrants	40,068,300	40,068,300		-	-	-
Total Capital Expense to be Voted	200,559,300	49,214,100	32.5	151,345,200	225,861,800	194,010,408
Special Warrants	40,068,300	40,068,300		-	-	-
Statutory Appropriations	-	(1,000)	(100.0)	1,000	-	289,664
Ministry Total Capital Expense	240,627,600	89,281,400	59.0	151,346,200	225,861,800	194,300,072
Consolidation & Other Adjustments - Agricorp	1,705,000	(553,400)	(24.5)	2,258,400	2,385,000	2,586,000
Consolidation & Other Adjustments - Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario (ARIO)	(27,606,400)	(14,195,400)		(13,411,000)	(13,106,400)	(19,647,086)
Consolidation & Other Adjustments - Ontario Racing Commission	50,000	(26,200)	(34.4)	76,200	55,000	76,000
Total Including Consolidation & Other Adjustments	214,776,200	74,506,400	53.1	140,269,800	215,195,400	177,314,986
CAPITAL ASSETS						
Vote 1: Ministry Administration Program	-	-		-	N/A	1,102,827
Total Capital Assets to be Voted	-	-		-	N/A	1,102,827
Ministry Total Capital Assets	-	-		-	N/A	1,102,827
Ministry Total Operating and Capital Including Consolidation and Other Adjustments (not including Assets)	1,191,069,714	150,011,600	14	1,041,058,114	1,007,058,800	1,035,302,057

* Estimates for the previous fiscal year are re-stated to reflect any changes in ministry organization and/or program structure. Interim actuals reflect the numbers presented in the 2014 Ontario Budget.

For additional financial information, see:

<http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/english/budget/estimates/>

<http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/english/budget/paccts/>

<http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/budget/ontariobudgets/2014/>

APPENDIX I: ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14

2013-14 Achievements

Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF)

- Ontario's agri-food industry is responding positively to the Premier's Challenge to double its annual growth rate and create 120,000 new jobs by 2020. To support industry efforts, OMAF focused on creating an environment that encourages economic growth and supports jobs by:
 - facilitating a whole-of-government approach (e.g., reviewing regulations, cross-ministry working groups);
 - investing \$417 million over five years, in partnership with the government of Canada, under Growing Forward 2 to improve business and leadership skills, adapt to climate change, develop markets and invest in research and innovation;
 - investing \$30 million over three years in innovative local food projects;
 - growing the wine and grape sector by allowing Ontario wines to be sold at farmers' markets and establishing an Ontario Wine Fund. The new multi-ministry Wine and Grape Strategy supports key winery and vineyard investments, and enhanced local and global marketing; and
 - making strategic investments to secure new investments and create and retain jobs in the food processing industry. For example,
 - the province provided \$1.5 million towards Fiera Foods' total \$34 million investment to install a new fully automated freezer to accommodate increased production, and help the company expand into new domestic and international markets. The upgrades will support 1,000 existing positions and create 52 new jobs.
 - the province also invested \$5 million to help Club Coffee expand its Rexdale facility to accommodate new customized production lines for single-service coffee cups which will create more than 130 high-skilled jobs to complement the existing workforce of more than 300 and help the company to increase its North American market share.
- Three Agriculture and Agri-Food Open For Business Consultation Forums were held in 2013 in support of the ministry's commitment to decrease regulatory burden, with the participation of stakeholders and senior ministry representatives. Stakeholder partners value the role of the forum meetings to address regulatory concerns in a whole of government approach across a number of ministries.

Examples of the work done through the forum include:

- proposing to provide greenhouse operators with more options to deal effectively with waste water;

- streamlining approvals for on-farm anaerobic digester operators; and
- meat regulation amendments that create a more flexible approach to compliance, clarifying regulatory requirements and promoting competitiveness and innovation for the industry without compromising food safety.

Additional regulatory outreach through business case studies and roundtables with a broader range of stakeholders continued to identify concerns and solutions to regulatory issues.

- In 2013-14, the government committed up to \$69.2 million to support live racing in the province. Support was allocated to racetrack operations and industry programs, including the Horse Improvement, Business Case Development, Marketing Innovation and Equine Welfare Programs. Support was also provided to the Ontario Racing Commission (ORC) to ensure readiness for the implementation of government's five-year Horse Racing Partnership Plan effective April 1, 2014.

The province supported the operations of 14 racetracks (two additional racetracks operated without government assistance). Overall, the 2013-14 racing season included 882 race dates (174 thoroughbred, 678 standardbred and 30 quarterhorse).

There were broad stakeholder consultations leading to the development and subsequent approval for all elements of the five-year Horse Racing Partnership Plan (the Plan), part of the Ontario government's plan to foster a dynamic and innovative business environment. The Plan provides support for live racing, integration of horse racing into the province's gaming strategy, investments into the breeding sector, and new accountability and performance measures.

The Plan provides stability and confidence for the horse racing industry, encouraging it to continue to invest in horse breeding, ownership and racing activities, and provides a stable foundation for future modest rates of sustainable industry growth by attracting new fans and enhancing wagering revenues. Industry will be responsible for its own future success by renewing its focus on the wagering customer.

- The new Local Food Act, along with the Local Food Fund and support for the Greenbelt Fund and other local food organizations, is part of the Ontario government's broader local food strategy to create jobs and expand the province's agri-food sector by making more local food available in markets, schools, cafeterias, grocery stores and restaurants.

The new act, which was proclaimed January 31, 2014, also designated the week following the first Monday in June as "Local Food Week" and requires that OMAF produce an annual local food report.

- The Local Food Fund (LFF) was launched on September 16, 2013 with funding of up to \$30 million over three years to support innovative local food projects.

The goal of the LFF is to increase the purchase of Ontario foods leading to improved economic activity (investment, sales and jobs) by:

- increasing awareness and celebration of local food;
- influencing Ontarians to demand and choose more local food;
- ensuring local food is identifiable and widely available;
- helping Ontario's agri-food sector deliver products that consumers want; and
- strengthening local food economies from farm to fork.

Projects are cost-shared, with the provincial government investing up to 50 per cent of a project's eligible cost or, in limited circumstances, up to 90 per cent.

The program has continuous application submissions with several application and review periods. There were 67 projects funded under the LFF in fiscal 2013-14, representing a provincial commitment of \$11.1 million.

- On April 2, 2013, the governments of Canada and Ontario signed a five-year, multi-million dollar bilateral agreement focusing on innovation, competitiveness and market development. It included \$2 billion for federal-provincial-territorial strategic initiatives, which is a 50 per cent increase in cost-shared funding.

Between June 26, 2013 and March 31, 2014, the governments of Canada and Ontario committed \$30 million to Growing Forward 2 (GF2) Strategic Initiatives projects to help agri-food and agri-products businesses and organizations grow their profits, expand their markets, and manage shared risks.

In Ontario, GF2 offers flexible and practical programming options to help producers, processors, organizations and collaborations to grow profits, expand markets and manage risk. Farm, food and agri-product businesses, organizations and collaborations can build their own plan and select opportunities to help grow their profits, expand their markets and manage risks.

- OMAF demonstrated leadership and advancement in animal health and food assurance systems.
 - The ministry created a special biosecurity intake under GF2, specifically for businesses in and related to the swine industry in order to address challenges related to Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea (PED) virus. This program gives producers, truckers, abattoirs, assembly facilities and rendering service providers access to the funds to enhance their biosecurity investments. Ontario pork producers and related businesses are better protecting pigs with more than 1,000 projects and \$8.8 million from a special biosecurity program aimed at reducing the spread of the Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea (PED) virus.

- The ministry has taken a leadership role, bringing together multiple stakeholders to address the importance of bee and pollinator health, including investing \$1 million in research projects. In addition, through partnership with industry, improvements have been made to growing practices and communications, technology advancements and training in support of bee health.
- Under the Canada Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health (COA), OMAF worked with the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) and other partners to lead the development of a new draft COA and a supporting inter-agency work plan to deliver on the province's priority commitments for nutrient management and the reduction of harmful pollutants in the Great Lakes basin.

OMAF is taking the lead in the bi-national subcommittee under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement that is addressing agricultural nutrient loadings to the Great Lakes. The ministry also worked closely with MOE on the Multi-Watershed Study, a multi-year research effort to better understand nutrient dynamics in agricultural landscapes.

OMAF co-chairs the Healthy Lake Huron water quality initiative and has provided valuable input into the Rural Stormwater Management Model Program to help reduce impacts of significant rain events on rural farmland.

- OMAF and MRA worked with the ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Environment, Infrastructure and other partner ministries to:
 - review the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and develop strengthened agricultural and rural policies for the new PPS, and add policies to recognize the importance of local food. The new PPS was released on February 24, 2014.
 - improve implementation of PPS agricultural policies by updating the provincial minimum distance separation formulae and drafting new guidelines on the permitted uses in Ontario's prime agricultural area. Both sets of guidelines are tracking to be finalized in the 2014-15 fiscal year, after consulting with stakeholders.

Ministry of Rural Affairs (MRA)

- The Ministry of Rural Affairs worked with its partner ministries to develop or enhance relationships, tools, process and training to allow ministries to more effectively apply a rural lens in policy and program development. MRA also advocated for rural Ontario to have a greater say in issues that affect their development and future, including rural municipal infrastructure, land use planning, training and skills development programming, youth employment, and Ontario's Immigration Strategy.
- MRA also provided support to other ministries where a rural perspective and engagement was important, including the horse racing industry transition, options for increasing municipal involvement in citing of new green energy projects and the review of the Long-Term Energy Plan. MRA also provided the Ministry of Environment with technical reviews of applications for the Great Lakes Guardian Program.
- MRA successfully partnered with the Rural Ontario Institute to hold the first Rural Summit in Cobourg. Summit organizers made effective use of social media and live streaming, engaging a diverse group of more than 200 stakeholders to identify ways of measuring social and economic infrastructure issues in rural Ontario and ways to support the continued development of a sustainable and prosperous rural Ontario.
- MRA and the Ministry of Transportation held joint information meetings at 10 locations across Ontario in summer 2013 seeking input from more than 500 municipal leaders on a new \$100 million municipal infrastructure program for communities, and a potential permanent program. Consultations were also offered in French to secure input from francophone communities.
- Three regional round tables were held in London, Niagara and Cobourg to learn about the challenges and innovative solutions to a number of issues facing rural communities and regions.
- MRA also engaged with rural leaders and small, rural and northern stakeholders on broad range of challenges and opportunities at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference in August 2013.
- MRA also provided leadership on water quality priorities related to rural and agri-food interests, including the negotiations on the *Canada-Ontario Agreement on the Great Lakes* (COA), *Great Lakes Strategy* and draft *Great Lakes Protection Act*.
- Using a client-centric, one window approach, the ministry also delivered a number of programs to support the vitality and sustainability of rural Ontario, including:
 - Municipal Infrastructure Investment Initiative (MIII): an \$89 million program that funds asset management plans and capital projects. The

capital funding supports critical road, bridge, water and wastewater projects.

- a new, dedicated \$100 million fund for small, rural and northern municipalities. The program encouraged collaborative approaches to projects, including involvement of First Nations.
- Rural Economic Development (RED) Program: a redesigned RED program was launched. Since its launch in October 2013, 66 projects have been approved at total provincial contribution of \$4.8 million. The overall value of approved projects is over \$15 million.
- Broadband in Rural Ontario: expanded broadband infrastructure and access in rural Ontario, reducing the cost of internet service for communities significantly while offering much faster connection.

Ministry Interim Actual Expenditures 2013-14

	Ministry Interim Actual Expenditures (\$M) 2013-14 *
Operating	792
Capital	215
Staff Strength ** (as of March 31, 2014)	878.93

* Interim actuals reflect the numbers presented in the 2014 Ontario Budget.

** Ontario Public Service Full-Time Equivalent positions.