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Welcome to "ON Organic"

Hugh Martin, Organic Crop Production Program Lead, OMAFRA

April appeared to be an early warm and dry spring and many wondered what was to come. During the early part of May we have had more seasonal weather with a few showers, some frost and even some snow (just to keep us on our toes). As a result planting is well advanced in some crops but much more work is to be done. Plan your days carefully to keep on top of weeds and other pests while keeping up on planting ... and I am sure haying is just around the corner. And above all work safely!

I hope you enjoy the May 2010 issue. Thanks to the contributing authors and to OCO and EFAO and others who pass it on to other colleagues in the organic sector.

Subscription to this newsletter is easy and no cost. For details go to the webpage: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/subscribe/indx.html#organic>

The newsletter is also posted on the OMAFRA website at: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/organic/news/news-organic.html>

The French version of these newsletters is available at: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/french/crops/organic/news/news-organic.html>

The OMAFRA Organic pages are linked from: <http://www.ontario.ca/organic> and <http://www.ontario.ca/biologique>

The ON Organic Team

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Hiring with the Team in Mind

by Doreen Collins, Customer Service and Marketing Program Lead/OMAFRA

The warm and dry spring in Ontario has set things in motion a few weeks early and allowed for growers to get a head start on the season. It may also be the time of year you hire staff to be part of your farm team.

Charlie Touchette, Executive Director of the North American Farm Direct Marketing Association (NAFDMA) www.nafdma.com wrote an article a few years ago titled: *A Finer Point of Hiring* that focuses on the importance of hiring with the team approach in mind. With permission, here are some excerpts from that article to consider when putting your farm team together:

“... one of the finer points of hiring is the appreciation that each new hire is part of a team. And often overlooked is that it's the team, not the individual that really propels a business. The team concept is nothing new. But, when we sit across the table to evaluate an individual who is a candidate for a job, too often we lose sight of that team function.

Every functional team needs three components, a visionary, an implementer, and a finisher. People possess varying degrees of these characteristics. But each of us is prone to have more strength in one of these over the other two. To satisfy the whole business objective, a team needs to have all three of these components with as much natural balance as possible.

A **visionary** is one who:

- always sees the big picture
- concerned with process and how all the pieces fit together
- always on their toes looking for new ways to get a job done or new elements that will make the business better
- they love to start new projects and usually moving on to the next big thing well before yesterday's new idea even gets started

An **implementer** is one who:

- wants to get to work and wants to keep working
- they get joy out of life by being in the trenches
- they love a day when it has no staff meetings, no long discussions about the way things could be, and no interruptions in the flow of work
- fulfillment is a full days work with something tangible to show for it at the end

A **finisher** is one who:

- wants to get the job completed, on time, and with outstanding quality
- has an enhanced appreciation for order and cleanliness
- seek out loose ends left by other and completes the task

We all fit into one of these categories more clearly than the other two . . . Imagine a team made up only of visionaries – it would have numerous projects all happening at once – though none of them are completed, and only a few of them are ever productive. The business with too many implementers is very productive but not very progressive; and the business with only finishers is immaculate and pristine but it may not be meeting its full potential in productivity or return on investment. As hiring time arrives yet again, don't limit your attention to that candidate across the table, or how well you think they'll do the job you have in mind for them. Consider how well that person would balance your team and promote your business productivity.”

The Business Management Unit of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs has developed a fact sheet titled: *Creating and Implementing a Human Resource Management Plan* Order No. 07-005. This fact sheet along with other farm business related resources can be found at: www.ontario.ca/agbusiness

Risk Associated with Post-Harvest Water

by Lindsay Arthur, Applied Research Coordinator—On-Farm Food Safety

Ontario research has shown that recycled hydrocooler water, without a proper water sanitation program, increased contamination on crops. In this study, 15% of produce came out of the field positive for generic E. coli, and when they came out of the hydrocooler water, 80% were contaminated. The crops looked clean, but had a greater risk of making people sick.

A five-fold increase in contamination is a huge impact. In fact, there are few practices, which can completely topple all of your previous food safety efforts like an ineffective postharvest water sanitation program. You cannot see, smell, or taste harmful microbes in your water. Even water that looks clean and clear can be full of harmful microbes. If your postharvest water is

contaminated this is bad news, because now harmful microbes have access to all the little crevices on your product via the water. Once food is contaminated, it is next to impossible to remove, unless you are cooking it.

The Canadian Agriculture Products Drug Act states that the last water to contact your product must be potable. This could mean your ice used to keep product cool, hydrocooler water, or water which is sprayed overtop of produce as a final rinse. Potable water is water that is free from harmful organisms and pollution. All individuals, regardless of their health should be able to drink water which contacts produce last, and not become ill.

Where should you start?

Step 1: Take a water sample

- Go to a laboratory, and ask for some sterile water bottles
- For a list of laboratories go to the Ministry of the Environment website <http://bit.ly/bpJTDd>
- Take 1 water sample at two different times of the day (at least) – ensure one of those samples represents water at it's dirtiest, e.g. recycled water at the end of the day
- Keep your water samples refrigerated until you can take it to the laboratory
- Aim to get your water samples to the lab, so they can initiate analysis within 24 hours of when you took the samples
- Request an Aerobic Plate Count - this will tell you if there is anything growing in your water

This may be where your water sanitation program ends, as your water may be potable. However, you need to verify that your water is potable at least twice annually (once prior to use, and once during the season).

Step 2: Assess your System

If you answer yes to the following questions, you have a greater risk of contamination:

- Do you recycle your water?
- If you recycle your water, is the product which contacts the water naturally dirty? E.g. field cucumbers
- If you are harvesting more than one commodity and using the same water, do you wash dirty crops prior to cleaner crops? E.g. root crops prior to treefruit.

Step 3: Your Postharvest Water Sanitation Program
OMAFRA has two new resources to help you assess treatment options:

1. Videos on different treatment options and how to verify those options <http://bit.ly/aH8fMj>
2. Infosheet to identify what should be considered for each treatment option <http://bit.ly/bV9J4h>

Step 4: Verify your Water Sanitation System

- See Step 1

Postharvest water sanitation is a lot to think about. Take a close look at the steps where you use postharvest water. Know where the weak links are and take appropriate steps to eliminate them. If you have the opportunity, design your system at the outset to minimize risks. If your system is already in place, identify the risky steps and intervene before pathogens get a foothold.

Poor postharvest water practices can topple a safe production system. Good postharvest practices can ensure a safe product that your clients can rely on.

Help! I Need a Food Safety Audit— Where Do I Start?

by Sandra Jones, On-Farm Food Safety Program Lead

Your buyer has asked for a food safety audit so now what do you do?

First, obtain a commodity-specific Canadian Horticultural Council's (CHC) On-Farm Food Safety manual and read it. These manuals can be obtained through your commodity association or if you purchase packaging material, you are automatically a member of the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association and are eligible to access the CHC manuals at minimal or no cost. Contact CHC National Office at (613) 226-4880 ext 217 or kmackimmie@hortcouncil to get a username/password to download a copy of the CHC manual from the CanadaGAP website (<http://www.canadagap.ca/>). CHC has manuals for

- Potatoes
- Tree and Vine Fruit
- Leafy Vegetable and Cruciferae
- Small Fruit
- Combined Vegetables
- Greenhouse Production

Go through the manual step by step. Pay special attention to the record keeping templates. You do not need to use the specific templates but you do need to record all the information on these forms in your own records.

You do have a choice to use another food safety manual but be aware that you will be audited against a CHC developed food safety checklist. It will be your responsibility to ensure you are meeting the requirements outlined in the CHC manuals. Next, go on to the CanadaGAP website <http://www.canadagap.ca/> and enrol in the certification program. There are a number of different certification options. Usually your buyer will guide you to which certification option to use. For an individual producer, you can have a fixed audit cycle every 4 years or a random audit cycle. You also must choose your Certification Body – either QMI-SAI Global or Guelph Food Technology Centre. You should call the Certification Body (CB) and ask about their base audit rate, costs for additional audit hours on-farm and costs for auditor travel expenses to determine which CB works best for you.

It is good practice to download a copy of the Audit Checklist (under Tools on the CanadaGAP website) and review the document before the audit. This checklist is what the auditor will use to evaluate your operation. Make sure you understand what is being asked so that you can be prepared. The audit should be done during the production cycle, as close to harvest as possible or at a time when the auditor can get a good picture of your practices. Preparing for an audit can be a bit nerve racking but keep in mind that the purpose of an audit is not to fail you. And if this helps relieve some of that anxiety- at the CHC Annual General Meeting this past March, a progress report of the CanadaGAP program over the past year outlined the average audit score was 91 per cent.

OMAFRA Articles

Stop Moving Soil!

By Anne Verhallen, Soil Management Specialist, OMAFRA

The early spring weather and dry soil conditions have tempted a number of people into early tillage with predictable results – wind erosion! The best way to prevent wind erosion is to keep soil covered; at least for as long as possible. Weather records tell us that the chance of a wind erosion event drops dramatically as the calendar moves into late May and early June – but April and early May are windy almost guaranteed.

Good Options

- **Cover the soil** – A variety of materials can be used to cover the soil, old hay, straw, even corn cobs. About 30% cover is needed to prevent wind erosion. Western research suggests that 900-1100 kg/ha of crop residues if anchored ie corn stalks or undisturbed grains can stop soil from moving. However, for problem areas where soil has been moving expect to double the amount of residue. Larger or coarse residue works best. Anchoring the residue with a light straight disking will help to keep applied residue in place and keep the neighbours happier.

Manure is another option. US research suggests 13 to 18 mt/ha of solid manure will help to hold soil from moving and without a need for anchoring. Even a smaller amount of strawy manure applied to the most wind erosion prone knolls will help to hold moisture and reduce soil movement. However food safety and harvest dates must be considered when looking at manure as an option for wind erosion control.

- **Plant a cover crop** - Got a bit of time before crops go into that field? Plant a spring cereal now. Barley is usually the seed of choice based on the early growth habit but oats will do. The goal is cover for now and a bit of roots to bind the soil until the crops canopy out. Seed heavy to get a fast cover. Consider herbicide options though before planting
- **Create a barrier** – Snowfence, straw bales and wagons have been used to create a wind barrier but it's costly in labour. Target the worst areas. Also a caution - the wind will jet under wagons and scour the nearby soil.

Emergency Options

- **Tillage** – can help to roughen the surface and bring moist, stable soil to the surface BUT this only works for a very short time, after that you just have more loose, dry soil open to the wind.
- **Irrigation** - Overhead irrigation has only limited use in wind erosion prevention. The soil must be fully wetted well ahead of the wind event. This technique will only last for a very short windstorm.

The best plan for wind erosion is to have a plan – keep the soil covered for as long as possible or create permanent wind protection with trees or annual grass strips.

From OMAFRA HortMatters newsletter

Dayneutral Strawberry Production Research in Ontario!

By Becky Hughes, John Zandstra and Adam Dale - University of Guelph

Growers in Ontario are hearing more and more about dayneutral strawberries. Unlike short day or June-bearing strawberries that flower and produce only once a year, dayneutral strawberry plants flower and fruit throughout the growing season, provided that it doesn't get too hot. While this intensively managed crop may not suit all growers, it does give producers the opportunity to produce strawberries almost six months of the year in Ontario. Dayneutral strawberries established in the spring, will produce berries from late summer to early fall the year they are planted. These plants can then be carried over the winter to crop earlier than June-bearing varieties.

We began investigating production techniques for dayneutral strawberries in Ontario in 2005. Most of our production research has been conducted in three environments: in the field in northeastern Ontario at the New Liskeard Agricultural Research Station; and in the field and a high tunnel in southwestern Ontario at the Cedar Springs Research Station.

High tunnels have been used in Europe for the last 10-15 years to extend the growing season and expand the variety of crops that can be grown in an area. We are currently seeing these protected-culture systems introduced in southern Ontario, Quebec and the northern US. These structures extend the growing season and modify the growing environment on a field scale.

Our first trial compared six vegetatively propagated and two F1-hybrid (seed propagated) dayneutral varieties in four environments, the three mentioned above and in the field at the Simcoe Research Station. The results varied with the environment. Based on these trials, we are recommending that Seascope continue to be used as the dayneutral variety in Ontario as none of the others

tested were suitable as a replacement. However, Albion had superior quality and is more suited to certain markets.

This was followed by three trials on production systems in the three environments. The first compared the effect of planting dates from May to September 2006 on production in the first and second picking years of Seascope and Tribute strawberries. Three crown sizes were compared for the early plantings. The second in 2007 compared planting density and the length of blossom removal following planting. The third, planted in 2008 compared Albion and Seascope on six plastic mulches. Last year, we planted a trial comparing three of these mulches with three planting dates for the same two cultivars.

Briefly, these trials showed that the largest crowns planted early gave the greatest yields, that deblossoming may not be needed for as long as recommended, and that the effects of plastic mulches vary depending on the environment and cultivar. Future articles will highlight the results of these trials.

From Ontario Berry Grower OMAFRA newsletter
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/allontario/ao0310a2.htm>

Irrigation For Frost Protection Of Strawberries

By Pam Fisher - Berry Crop Specialist/OMAFRA and
Rebecca Shortt - Water Quantity Engineer/OMAFRA

Summary

- Frost injury can cause significant damage to strawberry plants, especially open bloom, but also to unopened buds if it is cold enough.
- Strawberry fields are often colder at ground level than the weather forecast suggests.
- Irrigation for frost protection works because heat is released as water freezes.
- Irrigation rates must be adjusted to account for evaporative cooling due to winds and relative humidity. More water is required on windy nights.
- Failure to apply enough water can result in greater damage than no irrigation at all.
- When to start up the irrigation is critical. Two tools can determine the optimum time for starting frost protection: dew point, and wet bulb temperatures. Use the dew point and table 5 to determine the temperature at which to start irrigation. Alternatively measure the

wet bulb temperature; irrigation should start before the wet bulb temperature reaches the critical temperature (table 1).

- Dew point is also useful in predicting the lowest expected temperature, and how quickly the temperature will drop.
- In general, the start temperature for frost protection is higher when the humidity is low; the start temperature for frost protection is lower when the humidity is high.
- Where row covers are used, irrigation can take place over the cover. Information on temperatures under the cover can be determined by using digital thermometers and thermocouples.

For full article (including tables) go to OMAFRA HortMatters newsletter <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/frospot straw.htm>

Managing Slugs in Strawberry

By Hannah Fraser - Entomology Program Lead (Horticulture)/ OMAFRA and Pam Fisher - Berry Crop Specialist/OMAFRA

Shredded leaves, small to moderate rough holes in fruit and silvery slime trails (mucus) are tell-tale signs of slug activity in the berry patch. Slugs favour moist conditions and are usually found on plants in the evening, early morning, or on overcast days, so confirm your suspicions by checking their favorite daytime hiding spots under mulch or plant debris, or within the plant canopy.

Slugs are soft-bodied, slimy, tear-drop shaped, legless, worm-like molluscs ranging in colour and size. They can be anywhere from 4 to 18 cm (1 2/3- 7 in.) in length and can be dark grey, black, yellow-grey or brown and may or may not have spots. There are several species that can cause economic damage, including *Deroceras* and *Arion* species. Economic loss results from direct feeding damage to young plants and to fruit, and indirect damage resulting from contamination of fruit by slug faeces, slime or the presence of slugs themselves, all of which may deter PYO customers.

Slugs have two populations: one that is active in the spring and the other in the fall. Damage to strawberry fruit is mainly caused by slugs which hatch from eggs laid the previous autumn. This population hatches just before harvest, and if weather permits the development / survival of large populations, up to half

the crop may be destroyed. High risk factors for slugs include: wet years following mild winters, weedy, trashy areas, clovers or legumes nearby, thick straw mulch and vigorous leaf canopies.

Management of slugs includes both cultural and chemical (baits) control options.

Cultural controls include:

- Irrigate early in the day to allow plants to dry rapidly by nightfall: Slugs do the most injury during damp, rainy seasons, but they can cause damage in dry seasons when plantings are irrigated frequently.
- Good soil drainage: Rows should be kept narrow and weed-free to allow foliage to dry rapidly.
- Canopy and cover management: Lower-density plantings, removal of straw mulch, summer renovation of fields, delay of fall mulching and removal of trash and debris reduce the favourable slug habitats.

For full article go to OMAFRA HortMatters newsletter <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/hortmatt/2010/08hrt10a2.htm>

Just a Spoonful of Micro's Keeps Vegetables Movin' Along

By Christoph Kessel - Horticulture Crop Nutrition/OMAFRA

All vegetables need micronutrients but they all don't have the same requirements. The six micronutrients required by vegetables are boron, copper, iron, manganese, molybdenum and zinc. They are called micronutrients because they are needed in lesser amounts than nitrogen, phosphorus or potassium.

Soil Affects Availability

Micronutrient availability for plant uptake depends on many factors. Soil and environmental conditions can cause temporary or chronic micronutrient deficiencies. Table1 describes soil management and characteristics, and other factors affecting micronutrient availability. Managing these factors will to improve availability.

Soil and Tissue Testing

A soil analysis reports the soil's pH. Knowing and managing your soil's pH is crucial to managing micronutrients. Soil tests give micronutrient levels in part per million (ppm). Unlike testing for

macronutrients such as phosphorus and potassium, micronutrient soil tests can be challenging. For some micronutrients, accurate measurement and relating estimated levels back to plant response or requirements is difficult.

From OMAFRA newsletter Vegetable Viewpoint. This article has 3 large tables of information. For full article go to: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/vegnews/2010/vg0410a3.htm>

Launch of Agricultural Management Institute under Growing Forward

The Agricultural Management Institute is a not-for-profit organization whose goals are to increase awareness, understanding, and adoption of these and other beneficial business management practices by Ontario farmers. To achieve these goals, the Institute will:

- Assess farm business management needs on an ongoing basis;
- Encourage the development of farm management groups through which farmers can work together to address business management concerns and discover new opportunities;
- Coordinate the tools, resources and information from a variety of sources, including Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), Farm Credit Canada (FCC), financial institutions, farm business advisors, commodity organizations and general farm organizations; and
- Continue to fund industry-led projects that capitalize on the creativity and innovative capacity of the agri-food sector.

The Agricultural Management Institute is currently accepting project proposals and is hosting lunch and learns on the development of proposals. Additional details can be obtained by visiting their website at www.takeanewapproach.ca.

HST Information

Canada Revenue Agency - [Excise and GST/HST News – No 75 – Winter 2010](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/gr/news75/news75-e.pdf) <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/gr/news75/news75-e.pdf>

[Proposed Harmonized Sales Tax \(HST\) Benefits for Ontario's Farmers - PDF Version \(162 kb\)](#)

More HST information from Ontario Revenue <http://www.rev.gov.on.ca/en/notices/hst/>

- [Information Notice #1 – Single Sales tax](#)
- [Information Notice # 2 - Helping Homebuyers and the Housing Industry with an Enhanced New Housing Rebate, a New Rental Housing Rebate and Transitional Rules](#)
- [Information Notice #3 : General Transitional Rules for Ontario HST](#),
- [Harmonized Sales Tax Information Notice 4: Additional Information for Homebuyers and the Housing Industry under Ontario HST](#)

Premier's Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence

Agri-Food Innovations Support Local Food—McGuinty Government Recognizes Top Two On-Farm Innovations

Ontario's agri-food industry is growing innovative ideas to meet the demand for local foods.

Two outstanding industry leaders were celebrated at the sixth annual Premier's Summit on Agri-Food with the province's top two agri-food innovation awards. <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/infores/releases/2010/041210.htm>

Starting a Farm in Ontario - A Guide for New Farmers

Whether you currently own farm land or are looking to purchase, rent or lease acreage, starting a new farm business requires planning. The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs has numerous resources gathered in this one location for your convenience.

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/newentrant/newent.htm>

Survey of Ontario Custom Farmwork Rates Charged in 2009

Survey results of custom farmwork rates charged in 2009 are now available online. The Custom Farmwork Report Summary is used by farmers and custom operators alike as a reference in planning and operating their businesses. The results are summarized on a provincial basis and also by 6 smaller regional areas. Where available the provincial average 2006 rates are also listed. The 2006 survey is the previous survey to the 2009 survey.

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/2009customrates.htm>

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/2009customrates.pdf>

Ontario CropIPM

This OMAFRA computer resource is available online at www.ontario.ca/cropipm or in CD format. New in 2010 are Apples and Onions. Also available (strawberries, sweet corn, tomatoes, peppers, vine crops, and brassicas).

Organic Production Guides

These guides are available from New York State, through their IPM program. They now have 10 crop guides (Apples, Blueberries, Grapes, Strawberries, Beans, Carrots, Cole Crops, Cucumbers and Squash, Lettuce, Peas, Potatoes and Spinach) plus Dairy listed. Go to their website at http://nysipm.cornell.edu/organic_guide/

Local Harvest: A Multifarm CSA Handbook now available

By Sean McGovern, SARE Outreach

As a proven strategy for bolstering farmers' business and connecting consumers to the food they eat, community supported agriculture (CSA) enterprises are growing in popularity. Today, more than 2,500 thrive across the country. As CSA numbers increase, however, so does the need for innovative practices to keep them running efficiently and profitably.

Written by former CSA growers and members Scott Franzblau and Jill Perry, *Local Harvest: A Multifarm CSA Handbook* offers clear and straightforward guidance on an innovative practice that is helping CSAs stay strong and viable over the long term: cooperative marketing.

The 126-page book details how farmers can use CSA cooperatives to best market their produce, including advice on staffing, volunteer boards, distribution, legal topics and other practical information.

The book also includes a chapter on crop selection, calculating shares and adjusting to seasonal change, as well as a series of multifarm CSA profiles from around the country. Readers can adapt the book's sample documents to their situations, gaining practical help with planning, marketing agreements, packing standards and the organizational process.

A CSA is considered a partnership between farmer and member, and *Local Harvest: A Multifarm CSA Handbook* offers a framework for how these partnerships can work best to reduce labor costs, assure sales and address the quality requested by CSA members.

Download the book "Local Harvest: A Multifarm CSA Handbook" for free at www.sare.org/publications/csa.htm. To order print copies (\$3.99 plus \$5.95 s/h) visit www.sare.org/WebStore, call 301-374-9696 or send check or money order to SARE Outreach, PO Box 753, Waldorf, Maryland 20604-0753. (Please specify title requested when ordering by mail.)

Discounts are available on orders of 10 or more. Allow 3-4 weeks for delivery. Call 301-374-9696 for more information on bulk, rush or international shipments.

From New Agriculture Network
<http://www.new-ag.msu.edu/Home/tabid/37/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/279/Local-Harvest-A-Multifarm-CSA-Handbook-now-available.aspx>

New OMAFRA Factsheets

10-009: Vermicasting (or Vermicomposting): Processing Organic Wastes Through Earthworms, Agdex 743/537

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/engineer/facts/10-009.htm>

10-011: Cattle Identification, Agdex 420/10;

10-027: Developing an Agri-Tourism Operation in Ontario, Agdex 842;

10-029: Developing a Marketing Plan, Agdex 842;

10-021: Diagnosing and Managing Cash Flow Problems, Agdex 818; b/w, replaces 06-085,

10-023: Components of a Farm Succession Plan, Agdex 812; b/w, replaces 04-073

10-025: Farm Succession Planning Steps and Checklist, Agdex 812; (a companion to 10-023).



Farm Financial Assessments, Advanced Business Plans & More

Looking for ways to optimize the Farm Financial Assessment (FFA) experience for you and your client? Wondering whether an Advanced Business Plan (ABP) is a good fit?

Attend an information session to learn more about Growing Forward Business Development for Farm Businesses and how you and your clients can benefit from this program.

Choose the Date/Location That Works for You

- Monday, May 17, 2010
9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. 1 Stone Road, Guelph
- Wednesday, May 26, 2010
9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Best Western Otonabee Inn, Peterborough

- Monday, May 31st
9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Ridgetown College

The Guelph session is also available live on the web! Instructions will be emailed upon registration.

Program details are located <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/growfwdffa-infosession.htm>

Registration Options

- [Register online](#)
- Call OMAFRA's Agricultural Information Contact Centre (AICC) at 1-877-424-1300

Growing Forward supports the development and implementation of best practices in four key areas; Environment and Climate Change; Food Safety and Traceability; business development; and biosecurity. Participants are encouraged to develop strategies across all these areas to meet their business goals through a variety of information sessions and workshops, as well as one-on-one training and technical assistance.

Food Bulletin

Industry News

New Tool — On-line Co-packer Request Form

Are you looking for a co-packer? Maybe we can help. Ontario has a variety of flexible and cost-competitive firms who are great co-packers and are located close to major North American markets. There are many benefits of contracting with a co-packer to get your food product manufactured. If you in the market for a co-packer, fill in the [on-line request form \(http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/food/industry/bdb-start/co-pack-form.htm\)](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/food/industry/bdb-start/co-pack-form.htm) and we will try to identify potential firm(s) that can best suit your needs. Or, if you are interested in co-packing for other companies, let us know and we will add your company details to our database.

Company names will be held confidential unless confirmation is received that we can release it and all information you provide will only be used for the purposes that you provide it for according to Ontario's privacy regulations.

Funding Opportunities

New program — Applied Research and Commercialization Initiative (ARCI) to assist SMEs with pre-commercialization needs

The Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario) has just announced the launch of a \$15 million initiative to fund applied research at eligible post-secondary institutions in southern Ontario. The **ARCI** is a pilot initiative aimed at addressing the gap between research and commercialization in southern Ontario and encouraging collaboration between small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and post-secondary institutions.

The aim of the ARCI is to encourage greater collaboration and partnerships between SMEs with pre-commercialization needs and post-secondary institutions with applied research development expertise. The goals of ARCI are to accelerate innovation and to improve productivity and competitiveness in SMEs located in southern Ontario.

To access the ARCI guidelines, apply for funding or for more information, go to [FedDev's website http://www.feddevontario.gc.ca/eic/site/723.nsf/eng/h_00261.html](http://www.feddevontario.gc.ca/eic/site/723.nsf/eng/h_00261.html).

Last Call for letters of intent for the Food Safety Research Program - May 21

The deadline to apply to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Food Safety Research Program is fast approaching. The objective of the *Food Safety Research Program* 2010/2011 is to support the implementation of an enhanced, science-based food safety system in Ontario.

Proposals are solicited that will generate new knowledge and/or technologies in the following areas:

- Threat identification and prioritization
- Detection and surveillance
- Pathway analysis
- Prevention and control of disease
- Benefit/cost analysis.

If you are interested in applying to this program, access documentation and program information at <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/research/newseventsindex.htm>.

The deadline for receipt of Letters of Intent is Friday, May 21, 2010 at 4:00 p.m.

OMAFRA Research Partnerships: Innovation That Drives Growth

In 2009, the OMAFRA Research Advisory Network (ORAN) was established to communicate with industry stakeholders on an ongoing basis to ensure research priorities are on target and funding goes where it is most needed.

OMAFRA currently allocates more than \$10 million in annual funding to universities, institutions and industry for research designed to strengthen the agri-food sector and Ontario communities. Key funding programs include:

• New Directions Research Program

Open to universities, institutions and private companies, this program is designed to create new and alternative products or technologies to stimulate the sustainable growth and competitiveness of Ontario's agri-food sector. To learn more, visit:

www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/research/new_directions/index.html.

• OMAFRA-University of Guelph Partnership Agreement

Industry research partners are eligible to share in \$7.6 million in annual funding through OMAFRA's Collaborative Research Agreement with the University of Guelph. To learn more about the partnership and its projects, visit www.uoguelph.ca/research/omafra/.

If you are an industry stakeholder, [contact ORAN](#) with your ideas and comments, and let's put research to work.

Events

May 16-18 — Baking Association of Canada — Bakery Showcase 2010, Mississauga

Join bakers both small and large, as well as suppliers and buyers of baked goods for Canada's national baking trade show and convention event. Held every other year, it is the LARGEST baking specific event produced in Canada. For more information and to register, visit www.bakingassoccanada.com.

May 30 – June 1 - 2010 CIFST/AAFC Conference “Safe and Healthy Food: *Harvesting the Science*” Winnipeg, Manitoba

The Canadian Institute of Food Science and Technology (CIFST) is hosting their 49th conference — the 4th in partnership with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The conference will provide delegates with a unique forum for learning, sharing and networking between industry, government and academia across a broad spectrum of food and agri-food disciplines.

The innovative program includes plenary keynotes, industry symposia and technical sessions, featuring such topics as food and health challenges and opportunities for Aboriginal Peoples, traceability, food safety, emerging technologies, functional foods and nutraceuticals, dietary fibre, meat science; and more. Learn more and register at [2010 CIFST/AAFC Conference https://secure.cifst.ca/default.asp?ID=1167](https://secure.cifst.ca/default.asp?ID=1167).

June 1 - Rooftop Solar: Understanding and Realizing the Economic Opportunity

Have you considered installing solar photovoltaic installations on your rooftop or site? If you would like to educate yourself on the topic, and see if this concept is right for your company, then this information session is for you. Hear from companies like yours about their experiences – the investigation, the installation, and the results.

The economic opportunity is great – but there are pitfalls to be avoided. To help companies get to the facts, the Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, Supply Chain and Logistics Association Canada, Enersource Hydro Mississauga and Partners in Project Green are presenting a half-day information session to help companies realize the economic benefits of rooftop solar.

The half day session is scheduled for Tuesday, June 1st, 2010 from 8:30 a.m. to noon at the Fire and Emergency Training Institute at Toronto Pearson International Airport (2025 Courtney Park Drive East, Mississauga). There is a cost of \$30 for members and \$50 for non-members.

For [more information or to register](#) contact Jennifer Taves at (416) 661-6600 ext. 5570 email at jtaves@trca.on.ca or on the website http://www.partnersinprojectgreen.com/get-involved/events-and-workshops?task=view_detail&agid=112&year=2010&month=06&day=01&catid=38%7C39

June 1-2 — PROFIT New-to-Exporting Seminar, GTA/Buffalo

Learn about the basic requirements for exporting food and beverages to the United States in this hands-on orientation seminar from Ontario Food Exports. Topics include: export financing, product labeling, U.S. tax laws, U.S. food brokerage, U.S. food distribution, U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and U.S. customs brokerage.

For more information, call Jennifer Hannam of Ontario Food Exports at 519-826-3767 or email jennifer.hannam@ontario.ca.

Training

Guelph Food Technology Centre (GFTC)

GFTC is offering many spring training opportunities. See GFTC's course calendar <http://www.gftc.ca/courses-and-training/course-calendar.aspx>.

These include:

May 27-28 - Food Science Series Part II: Food Processing

Understand the basic principles of food processing including freezing and refrigeration, dehydration, thermal processing and irradiation. Advanced technologies and gentle processing techniques as well as an overview of food preservation and safety will be presented. [Learn more and register.](#)

June 16-18 - Processed Meat Manufacturing: Ingredients, Products and Calculations (in partnership with Olds College)

Meat processing is one of Canada's largest industries. The manufacture of processed meat products adds value, providing specific flavor, taste, colour and texture components different from fresh meat. Understanding the

principles involved in the safe manufacture of processed meat products (i.e. sausages, bacon, ham, deli style cuts) is essential in order to properly process and package these products. Gain the knowledge, skills and tools necessary to manufacture a high quality product in this three-day, hands-on meat processing workshop. [Learn more and register.](#)

June 2-4 - Safety, Regulations, Packaging and Sensory Evaluation of Food (Culinology Workshop II)

Distinct from other programs of its kind, this workshop incorporates a multidisciplinary approach that is structured to offer a comprehensive learning experience. Relevant aspects of food preparation/manufacturing, food safety, security, regulations, packaging, shelf life and the sensory evaluation of food are woven together to highlight the key issues that span the life cycle of food production and consumption. [Learn more and register.](#)

Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium (EMC)

Check out EMC's calendar www.emccanada.org/calendar for many excellent training opportunities and events.

June 29, 2010 - Soil Quality Workshop, Talbotville

Interested in learning more about your soil? Soil and your management of your soil is the basis for all your field production. The OMAFRA Soil Team is once again offering an opportunity to get down and dirty with soil during the Soil Management Workshop June 29 in the St. Thomas area. The workshop is a hands-on, in field day long session looking at the basics of soil from texture and structure to nutrients and soil life. The afternoon portion of the workshop focuses on problem solving in field. See the brochure on page 13 and 14 of this newsletter for registration details.

Cost is only \$60 or \$40 for Ontario Soil and Crop members. Participants are limited to 60 to keep the workshop practical and personal. Come prepared to get dirty!

For any questions contact: Anne Verhallen
519-674-1614

Links to Organic Agriculture Information

Organic Council of Ontario (OCO)
<http://www.organiccouncil.ca>

Canadian Organic Growers (COG)
<http://www.cog.ca>

OMAFRA Organic Agriculture
<http://www.ontario.ca/organic>

Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario (EFAO)
<http://www.efao.ca>

Organic Agricultural Centre of Canada (OACC)
<http://www.oacc.info>

Agricultural Information Contact Centre: 1-877-424-1300
E-mail: ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca
Northern Ontario Regional Office: 1-800-461-6132
www.ontario.ca/omafra



SOIL & WATER MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

June 29, 2010: London—St. Thomas Area
9:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

For more information on this and other
OMAFRA Programs:
Agricultural Information Contact Centre
1-877-424-1300
or email
ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca

**Getting to the root of the problem!
Soil quality affects crop performance**

Fine tune the skills and techniques needed for diagnosing soil quality and fertility problems in the field. Identify soil and nutrient management practices you can use to improve and maintain soil health and productivity.

Subject Areas Planned:

- soil water and texture
- soil structure and compaction
- soil management influences on root systems
- drainage
- soil life and nutrient cycling

The morning program will focus on the above topics. The afternoon will look more closely at assessing soil quality and diagnosing problems in field. The workshop is a hands-on, in field exploration of soil management issues.

Cost: \$60 or \$40.00 for Ontario Soil and Crop Members
(show card at registration)

Registration Includes: lunch, refreshments, reference materials

*A confirmation letter and a map to the meeting location will be sent by email/fax to all registrants.

*Dress appropriately – i.e.: work boots, hat, bug spray & sunscreen.

*Bring your own – knife or soil trowel

For more information:

Contact the Woodstock OMAFRA Resource Centre at **519-537-6621**

Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) Continuing Education Credits applied for (SWQ/NM)

DIGGING
BENEATH THE
SURFACE

HANDS-ON
FIELD
DIAGNOSIS
CHALLENGES

PLAN TO
GET DIRTY!

**SOIL & WATER MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP
June 29, 2010
REGISTRATION FORM**

Registration Deadline: Friday, June 18th, 2010

Name: _____

Company: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____

Fax / email: _____

(required for sending directions)

Registration Fee Enclosed: ☐ \$60.00 ☐ \$40.00 – Soil & Crop Member

Please make cheque payable to *Oxford Soil and Crop Improvement Association*

Send to:

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
401 Lakeview Drive
Woodstock, ON N4T 1W2
Phone: (519) 537-6621 Fax: (519) 539-5351

The personal information collected on this form is collected by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) under the authority of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.M.16 and will be used by OMAFRA for the purposes of registration and payment for the Soil Management Workshop. Questions about the collection by OMAFRA should be directed to the Field Crop Manager, Agriculture Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, 1 Stone Road West, 3rd Floor Guelph, ON, N1G 4Y2, (519) 826-3257.

Further, the information will be provided to the Oxford Soil and Crop Improvement Association for the purpose of payment processing. Questions about the collection of information by the Oxford Soil and Crop Improvement Association should be directed to the Secretary-Treasurer of the Oxford Soil and Crop Improvement Association at (519) 463-6374. By signing this form I acknowledge and confirm that I have read the statement above.

_____ your signature here.