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Welcome to “ON Organic”

Hugh Martin, Organic Crop Production Program Lead, OMAFRA

We are now in the middle of summer. Planting is mostly a memory and harvest is a primary concern. A few suggestions for you:

- Plant cover crops. This season has been a bit early which in many cases will give the cover crops more time to grow this fall.
- Don't let weeds go to seed. This year's seeds are the weeds of the future.
- Make notes of what to change in your operation for next year.
- Work safe, your family needs you!

Downy mildew on cucumbers, squash and melons has continued to progress and is quite common on farms across Ontario. Watch for this disease which is relatively new in Ontario. Late blight on tomatoes and potatoes has been found on several locations but so far is not wide spread in Ontario this year but should be managed if you find it.

Thanks to the contributing authors and to OCO and EFAO and others who pass it on to other colleagues in the organic sector. We always appreciate your comments.

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

The newsletter is also posted on the OMAFRA website at:

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/organic/news/newsorganic.html>

The French version of these newsletters is available at:

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/french/crops/organic/news/newsorganic.html>

The OMAFRA Organic pages are linked from:

<http://www.ontario.ca/organic> and <http://www.ontario.ca/biologique>

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What is Your Marketing Plan?

By Dorene Collins, Customer Service and Marketing Program Lead/OMAFRA

Is your marketing plan working for your business? Are you seeing an increase in sales and overall customer loyalty? A new Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs resource, *Developing a Marketing Plan*, fact sheet No. 10-029 provides helpful tips in developing a marketing plan for your business. Key messages contained in the fact sheet include:

Steps to a successful Marketing Plan:

1. Know yourself, your customer and the marketplace – which is achieved through market research.
2. Developing a Marketing Strategy – your marketing strategy captures where your business is headed and includes objectives to meet your strategy statement. Example: Strategy = Grow sales of my XYZ product to young families living in the city of XYZ in the surrounding area. Objectives = Provide a quality product for young families and increase sales by 10 per cent per year over the next five years to reach \$XYZ in gross profit by 2015.
3. Implementation Strategy – How am I going to market and promote my product? What type of advertising and promotions will I implement such as print, website, signs, direct mail, etc.
4. Resources – what financial and management resources do I have to implement my marketing plan. Do I need to hire a marketing firm or do I have strong marketing skills?
5. Developing a Marketing Budget - includes establishing price for your product based on its attributes and deciding how much to dedicate to marketing out of your entire operating budget.

Evaluate, Evaluate, Evaluate – Once you have put your marketing strategies in place you will be able to see if sales targets are meeting or exceeding your expectations. Experience will also tell you what advertising and public relations activities are not working and should not be pursued in the future. Examples of simple ways to evaluate your marketing plan include: Look at sales records, customer surveys, redemption of coupons and other special promotions to determine what is working and what is not working and continually making improvements.

The competition, customer and marketplace will continually evolve and if you can keep on top of such changes, you will be able to adjust your marketing plan to keep your business thriving.

[Developing a Marketing Plan](#) factsheet Order No. 10-029 is just a click away at:
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/10-029.htm>

Risk Management Pilot Program Extended

The province is supporting its grain and oilseed producers by temporarily extending the sectors' Risk Management Program (RMP) pilot for the 2010 crop year.

The program helps farmers offset losses caused by low grain and oilseed commodity prices. In 2010, prices for grain and oilseed have dropped more than 25 per cent - significantly below the cost of production. Participation in the extended program is open to farmers who received assistance in 2008 and/or in 2009, as well as those who began farming on or after January 1, 2008.
2010 RMP Overview

<http://www.agricorp.com/en-ca/Programs/RMP/Pages/Overview.aspx>

Canadian Organic Standards Interpretation

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency, in partnership with the Organic Federation of Canada, has developed the Organic Standards Interpretation Committee (SIC). The objective of the Committee is to provide, to the Canada Organic Office, interpretive guidance on issues related to the National Standards for Organic Agriculture (CAN/CGSB 32.310 and CAN/CGSB 32.311).

To find more about the SIC and their proposed answers to questions go to <http://www.cog.ca/index.php?page=organic-standards#sic>

How to Test Your Irrigation Water

By Sandra Jones, Crops On-Farm Food Safety Program Lead

The current recommendation for irrigation water is that *E.coli* should be at or below 100 colony forming units (bacteria) per 100 ml water. For testing irrigation water, choose an accredited laboratory but make sure the lab knows that the sample being submitted is irrigation water, not drinking water. A list of laboratories can be found on the Ontario Ministry of the Environment website <http://www.enc.gov.on.ca/en/water/sdwa/licensedlabs.php> or the Canadian Association for Laboratory Accreditation site (www.cala.ca).

Ask the laboratory for a sterile bottle to collect your irrigation water sample. The best way to sample irrigation water is to collect the water sample at the point where it contacts produce - such as at emitters or when it leaves the guns or risers, or when it “rains” down on the crop. Carefully remove the cap from the bottle and take care not to touch either the lip of the bottle or the inside of the cap. Fill to the line identified on the sterile bottle, screw the lid on tightly and immediately refrigerate. Transport the sample in a cooler with ice to a water testing laboratory within 24 hours.

You should sample your irrigation water at least once a month within the season to establish a baseline for your particular pond or water source. After that, sampling a couple of times per season will help you detect major changes in water quality. For more information on water testing, see the revised OMAFRA factsheet - Improving On-Farm Food Safety through Good Irrigation Practices 10-037.

From OMAFRA newsletter HortMatters <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/hortmatt/2010/20hrt10a1.htm>

Taxation Frequently Asked Questions - FIT/microFIT Programs

From [Canada Revenue Agency](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca)

For full list of questions and answers on this topic go to <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/bsnss/thrtpcs/nt-ft/q1-eng.html>

What Does Your Water Test Mean for Food Safety?

By Sandra Jones, Crops On-Farm Food Safety Program Lead

If you grow a crop that can be consumed raw, you should be aware that contaminated irrigation water can contaminate your crop. For that reason it is important for you to test your irrigation water on a regular basis. The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment's (CCME) guideline is 100 cfu *E. coli* per 100 mL of irrigation water. If your water is at or below this number then the water is a low risk for contamination. If your water test comes back higher than that value, don't panic. There are a couple of questions you should first ask:

- Did you sample out of your irrigation pond or out of your emitter or irrigation line? Sampling out of a pond is difficult. Depending on how deep your pond is, you may not be sampling close to the intake or you may be dredging from the bottom and getting inaccurate numbers.
- Did you have a heavy rain a few days prior to sampling? Heavy rains can stir up the bottom of the irrigation pond and re-suspend more bacteria into the water.
- Did you accidentally contaminate your sample by touching the lip of the bottle with dirty hands or place the lid down on the ground while you were filling the bottle?
- Was it possible that the sample was not tested within 24 hours of collecting and/or sitting at room temperature for some time? For a reliable test, the sample should be tested within 24 hours and kept at 4°C.

The best thing for you to do is take another sample from the irrigation line and send it in for analysis. If it again comes back much higher than the CCME recommendation now would be the time to do some investigation:

- Has there been a lot of animal activity around your irrigation pond?
- Could run off be contaminating your pond?
- Could there be a change of activities upstream?

In the meantime, if you know your water is at high risk from contamination you need to make some decisions:

- Can you choose a less risky form of irrigation such as trickle irrigation?

- Can you allow the water to settle in the pond between irrigation events?
- Can you find another water source such as a second pond or well source that you could use as back-up?
- Can you divert stream water into a pond before irrigation to allow bacteria to settle?
- Can you reduce the impact of run-off into a pond with a vegetative strip or build a berm?

Irrigation water is an important consideration for food safety. For more information, see the revised OMAFRA factsheet, [Improving On-Farm Food Safety through Good Irrigation Practices](#), Order No. 10-037.

From OMAFRA newsletter HortMatters
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/hortmatt/2010/20hrt10a2.htm>

Protect Your Leader

By Leslie Huffman - Apple Specialist/OMAFRA

Last time I talked about the seeds being the boss of the apple, but when it comes to the tree, the leader is definitely the boss. Growing a tall, strong leader in each tree will help achieve our goal of growing calm, balanced and productive trees.

Trees produce a plant hormone called indoleacetic acid, or IAA, in the growing tips and young leaves. IAA is an auxin that influences many processes in the tree: cell division, shoot growth, root initiation, as well as other things. The IAA produced by the leader is exported down the trunk and causes the scaffolds to grow flatter, which produces more fruit buds. We have all seen trees with no leader, where suckering and poor scaffold development is a symptom of insufficient IAA. Keeping the leader in a dominant position is important. Here are few suggestions to maintain "the boss":

- Leave the leader long at planting if possible. Instead of severe heading, provide the tree with good moisture and trunk support to keep the tip of the leader well above other branches. This position encourages more dominance.
- Tie the leader fairly securely to a stake or trellis, to prevent wind movement while still allowing room to grow. As the tree ages, this may require untying and moving the ties.
- Remove competing side shoots shortly after they

appear. If this was not done earlier, remove them now but avoid tearing the bark.

- If too much crop is growing on the leader, remove it now. This will prevent breakage - and the subsequent problems with loss of apical dominance.
- Ensure adequate nutrition, especially nitrogen levels. Now is the time to sample for leaf analysis to adjust for next year. Extra fertilizer applications are not encouraged at this time of year due to risk of late hardening.
- Note which trees do not have strong leaders - next dormant season will be the time to make a deep heading cut to stimulate growth. This MUST be followed by side shoot removal and tying to ensure that only one dominant leader returns.

The key to success with high density systems like the tall spindle is a strong, dominant leader - because of its influence on cropping and growth on lower branches. Do everything possible to protect your leaders.

From OMAFRA HortMatters newsletter
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/hortmatt/2010/19hrt10a1.htm>

See also [The seeds are the boss of the apple](#), Hort Matters, June 2010

Environmental Conditions that Encourage Downy Mildew in Cucumber Fields

By Michael Celetti, Plant Pathologist-Horticulture
 Crop Program Lead, OMAFRA

Downy mildew can now be found in most, but not all, cucumber fields in Southern Ontario. The conditions for infection, disease development and spore production were ideal over the past few weeks in many regions of the province. Although temperatures above 30°C tend to slow the progress of the disease, temperatures within the cucumber canopy can be considerably cooler than the ambient temperatures. Understanding the environmental conditions that drive this disease helps to explain why cucumber growers in Ontario are experiencing higher disease pressure than would be expected.

The disease spreads by very tiny wind blown spore sacks

(sporangia) that look like dark oval or lemon shaped specks on the under side of the leaf lesion. The spore sacks can best be observed on the underside of the leaf lesion with a good hand lens (12-20x) either in the morning or after a period of rain when the humidity is very high. When these spore sacks land on a leaf surface, they germinate at temperatures between 17-21oC, which were the night time temperatures experienced in Ontario over the past week or so. They also require the presence of free moisture as either dew or rain on the leaf surface which has occurred in many fields each morning over the past week or so. If free water is not present and the conditions are not right for germinations, the spore sacks remain viable for up to 16 days with the relative humidity between 38-71%. When the spore sacks germinate, they release 8-12 swimming spores which tend to swim towards the breathing pores or stomates on leaves where they form a cyst. The cysts then germinate and infect through the stomates and the pathogen colonizes leaf cells within the vicinity of the stomates for a short period of time before producing more spore sacks. More spore sack will be produced from the lesion that develops when the relative humidity at the leaf surface is 100% for approximately 6 hours.

The bottom line is that it only takes 4 days from the time of infection to the production of more spore sacks when night time temperatures are 15oC and daytime temperatures are 25oC. These were close to the conditions experienced in many fields over the past week and are expected to continue throughout the next week. The disease can spread very quickly and become epidemic within a very short period of time. If left uncontrolled, entire fields can be completely wiped out within a week or two under optimum environmental conditions. The disease reduces leaf area responsible for cucumber fruit initiation and filling and therefore can affect yield significantly. In addition, diseased leaves senesce prematurely and exposed any fruit that does develop to sunburn resulting in further losses to the quality of yield.

From OMAFRA Vegetable Crop Update Cucurbit edition <http://apps.omafra.gov.on.ca/scripts/english/crops/agriphone/article.asp?ID=1873>

Identifying and Managing Leek Moth, a Pest of Allium Crops

Hannah Fraser - Entomology Program Lead (Horticulture)/OMAFRA; Margaret Appleby - IPM Systems Specialist/OMAFRA

The leek moth is an invasive alien species from Europe which has become established in eastern Ontario and parts of Quebec. It continues to expand its range, moving west toward the Great Lakes region and east toward the Maritimes. Recent finds include Prince Edward Island (2008) and New York State (2009). Although leek moth does not appear to have reached large allium production areas in Ontario, we anticipate this pest will eventually find its way. Early recognition of leek moth infestations is important in keeping populations at manageable levels.

How does leek moth damage plants?

The first sign of leek moth usually comes in the form of damaged crops. On alliums with flat leaves, including leeks and garlic, larvae feed on top of and inside the leaf material. They bore through folded leaves towards the centre of the plant, causing a series of pinholes on the inner leaves. In the case of garlic, larvae feed on the scapes and the stalks.

Larval mines in the central leaves become longitudinal grooves in the mature plant. Leek moth larvae enter hollow



Leek moth stem damage

leaves, such as those of onions and chives, to feed internally, creating translucent "windows" on the plant surface. Bulbs are occasionally affected.

What does leek moth look like?

Examination of affected plants may reveal a yellowish-green larva with a pale brown head capsule and 8 small grey spots on each abdominal segment, or a reddish-brown pupa encased in a loosely netted cocoon. Most cocoons are found on host plants but can be located on decaying plant matter and neighbouring vegetation. The

adult leek moth is a small, reddish-brown moth with a white triangular mark on the middle of the folded wings. It has a 12-15 mm wingspan and is 5-7 mm long with wings folded at rest. The hindwings of the moth are heavily fringed and are pale grey to light black in colour.

What crops are affected?

The leek moth is a known pest of alliums, including onion, garlic, leeks, chives, green onion, shallot, elephant garlic, wild garlic, etc. There are more than 500 species of allium worldwide with approximately 60 species (wild and cultivated) in North America.

How can I manage leek moth?

There are three flight periods of leek moth per season in Ontario. The insect overwinters as an adult moth in various sheltered areas such as buildings, hedges and plant debris. Adults become active and emerge in the spring when temperatures reach 9.5°C. Leek moth presence and activity can be monitored using commercially available pheromone trapping systems. These should be installed around the field edge in mid-to-late April. Insecticide applications made 7-10 days following a peak flight of leek moth adults can reduce the population and amount of damage it causes. At present, only Warrior (lambda cyhalothrin) is registered (garlic, including elephant; leek; dry bulb onion; green onion; Welch onion; and shallot). Other candidate pest control products remain in the minor use system. Cultural controls may be effective in reducing populations below damaging levels. These include:

- crop rotation / positioning susceptible crops away from infested areas
- delayed planting
- removal of old and infested leaves
- early harvesting (avoid damage by last generation larvae and population build-up)
- destruction of plant debris following harvest

Research in Europe and Ontario has consistently shown that lightweight floating row covers can protect developing plants from leek moth damage. The use pattern of row covers must be adapted to the crop for which it is being used. Row covers should be placed out early in the season with enough slack to allow the crop to push up the cover. The cover can be kept in place with a variety of methods including trench and dirt, fire hose filled with water, sandbags, washed stone bags, etc. This allows the cover to be removed during the day for weeding and harvesting (example: garlic scapes) and then

reinstalled before the leek moth flight during the evening and early morning.

While leek moth is not considered a quarantine pest in Canada, it is considered one by the United States (US), resulting in impacts to Canadian exporters. All Allium spp. with green parts such as leeks and green onions (scallions) destined for the US must be certified free of any life stage of the pest. The impact of the positive finds in New York State in 2009 and 2010 to the quarantine status are unknown at this time.



Leek moth garlic scape boring



Leek moth larvae in garlic stem



Leek moth pupae

Save Water and Protect Your Farm Stream

Donna Speranzini, Nutrient Management Planning Lead/OMAFRA

Fruit and vegetable harvest and packaging operations are running in full force across the province. It is a very busy time of year for farmers as they grade and pack your favorite fresh produce.

This time of year also represents the time when fruit and vegetable operations can generate the majority of their yearly waste materials. Waste waters are generated during the washing process, peeling and pitting practices, blanching, fluming of the produce, cooling and facility cleaning. Solid waste materials are generating from coring, slicing, dicing, pureeing, juicing and wine making process steps. Both the solid and the liquid waste streams must be managed to protect water quality in and around the farm.

Wastewaters although not high in any particular contaminant can still negatively impact stream water quality. Particulate matter in the water can be high in BOD. BOD refers to the biological oxygen demand of a material once it enters a water course. The higher the biological oxygen demand of the material the less oxygen that is available in the water for fish and other organisms to survive.

Growers have several options to manage wastewaters. The first of which involves the prudent use and re-use of water. The less wastewater that has to be treated or managed the better. Data has shown that by switching to low volume, high pressure nozzles for clean up water use can be reduced by 20%. Other low cost management options for the wastewater include the use of aerated ponds for storage followed by irrigation back into the fields, or the use of sub-surface treatment trenches. It is important to understand that it is an offence under the Ontario Water Resource Act to have this wastewater discharge untreated into surface or groundwater.

Growers also have several management options for their solid waste materials. These materials can be land applied and incorporated into the soil, they can be composted in a properly turned and aerated windrow, or they can be transferred to an anaerobic treatment system for use in biogas production.

If your packing operation take in less than 50% by volume of produce from other farmers then the waste that you generate, either liquid or solid, is still considered and agriculture source material. If your packing plant takes in more than 50% by volume of material from other farms, then the waste generated is considered to be Non-Ag Source Material and it is covered under the nutrient management legislation. Most fruit and vegetable waste is Category 1 or 2 NASM.

Reducing your waste and ensuring waste materials are managed is part of a good business plan and will help protect water quality around your farm and throughout Ontario.

From OMAFRA newsletter HortMatters

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/updates/soundadvice/jul10r4.htm>

Hot Temperatures and Not So Hot Nutrient Disorders

Christoph Kessel - Nutrition Program Lead (Hort)/OMAFRA

Ontario has experienced some really warm summer temperatures: great if you are at the beach not so great if you're a tomato plant growing on a sandy loam. When high temperatures are combined with high humidity and limited rainfall, plants can express their stress by exhibiting nutrient related disorders. Even though the soil has adequate nutrients to meet the crop's needs, the combination of heat, humidity and lack of soil moisture restricts plant nutrient uptake and translocation. Calcium and boron are most commonly associated with these disorders. These nutrients, translocated in the xylem, are not readily re-translocated.

The following environmental factors contribute to these disorders:

- high light intensity: plants grow faster, higher demand for nutrients
- high humidity: reduces transpiration as stomata close; for example research has reported increasing relative humidity from 30 to 95%, decreased boron concentration from 16 to 9.9 mg /plant
- high temperature: stomata close reducing

transpiration; high temperatures > 45°C increase respiration

- drier soils: reduces nutrient movement by either mass flow or diffusion to roots
- plant parts, such as fruit, that transpire at lower or slower rates than the leaves
- excess fertilizer: particularly nitrogen.

Crop	Symptoms	Nutrient
beets	corky discoloration of internal tissue	boron
broccoli, cauliflower	hollow stem, brown heart, browning of heads and curds	boron
cabbage, cauliflower	leaf tip burn	calcium
celery	cracked stem, cat scratches	boron
celery	black heart	calcium
lettuce	tip burn	calcium
pepper	blossom end rot	calcium
rutabaga, turnip	water core, brown heart	boron
spinach	twisted leaves, light spots on petioles	boron
tomato	blossom end rot	calcium

Once symptoms have developed, there is little to be done. So to minimize culls due to these induced nutrient deficiencies:

- soil test to ensure that nutrient levels and soil pH is adequate for the crop
- select less susceptible cultivars
- manage irrigation to ensure even soil moisture
- avoid excessive nitrogen fertilizer applications.

For more information on nutrient related disorders and descriptive photos, visit the [Ontario CropIPM](http://OntarioCropIPM) website, select the crop of interest and then choose Diseases & Disorders.

Ensure even soil moist prior to symptoms developing. Once symptoms have developed they cannot be reversed. Foliar applications on stressed plants will not be effective because, to a great extent, foliar applied nutrients are absorbed by through stomata. If stomata are closed but of high RH and temperatures, uptake will be reduced.

Hollow stem (broccoli and cauliflower)

Causes: Heavy nitrogen fertilization, which results in rapidly growing plants, especially during warm weather (no internal discoloration); or boron deficiency (dark brown internal discoloration)

Symptoms: Hollowing of the stem and branches of the head or curd

Remedy: The hollow stem resulting from rapid growth can be reduced somewhat by spacing plants closer together or by reducing the amount of nitrogen fertilizer applied. Hollow stem resulting from boron deficiency can be controlled by soil (preferably) or foliar application of low rates of boron. Boron deficiencies are more common on sandy soils and may be detected in a soil test. Be careful not to over apply boron as high rates can cause toxicity - cupping and scorching of leaves.

Ricing (Broccoli and cauliflower)

Causes: Due to high fertility (particularly nitrogen) and high temperatures combined to favor very rapid growth

Symptoms: Small flower buds develop in the curd creating a fuzzy or velvety appearance.

Remedy: Managing both soil moisture and fertility during curd development can reduce the incidence of ricing.

Browning (Heads and curds of broccoli and cauliflower)

Cause: Boron deficiency (also causes uneven head formation in broccoli) and exposure of cauliflower curds to light during development

Symptoms: Water-soaked areas develop in the center of the stem and the branches of the head and curd stem; stems may become hollow and black inside. The first external appearance in cauliflower is on the surface of the curd. Later, these areas change to a rusty brown that often is associated with hollow stem. Curds affected are bitter, both in the raw and cooked state. Other symptoms of boron deficiency are changes in color of foliage and thickening, brittleness, and downward curling of the older leaves, which is followed by the development of blisters on the upper side of the midrib. In severe cases the small leaves and the growing point may die.

Remedy: Use soil (preferably) or foliar application of low rates of boron. Deficiencies are more common on sandy soils and may be detected in a soil test.

Leaf tipburn (Cabbage and cauliflower)

Cause: localized calcium deficiency due to water stress or uneven watering even with adequate levels of soil calcium present

Symptoms: Younger leaves show signs of browning at the tips (see photo). In cabbage, the browning can be seen only after the head is cut open.

Remedy: If soil pH is less than 6.0, use lime to bring the pH up to 6.5 to 7.0. Avoid using only ammonium forms of nitrogen, and ensure an adequate and even supply of water. Adjust planting date so that head maturation occurs during cooler temperatures. Plant a cultivar that is less susceptible to the disorder. In general, calcium foliar sprays have not been shown to be effective for controlling tipburn incidence. Soil testing in production areas is important because deficiencies of macro- and micronutrients can lead to an unmarketable product. All cole crops are subject to calcium and boron deficiencies and all require manganese, magnesium, and molybdenum; cauliflower also requires copper. Soil application is preferable during seedbed preparation, but foliar sprays can be used for calcium and the micronutrients to correct deficiencies based on soil test results, tissue analysis or visual symptoms. Plant tissue samples can be analyzed to determine nutrient deficiencies and toxicities, but these tests are somewhat more costly and usually provide only an after-the-fact analysis of the problem.

From OMAFRA HortMatters newsletter
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/hortmatt/2010/18hrt10a2.htm>

Career Focus Program - Investing in the Future of Agriculture

The Career Focus Program provides employers with up to \$20,000 in matching funds to create internship opportunities for recent graduates from agriculture-related programs.

For employers, the program offers an economical way to attract new talent and helps provide new graduates with a valuable first job that will help pave the way to a career in the ever-changing agriculture and agri-food industry.

Eligible employers:

Must offer projects that will give graduates meaningful agriculture career-related work experiences in Canada and skills acquisition through mentoring and coaching. Could include organizations such as farm businesses, industry, not-for-profit organizations, provincial and municipal governments, associations, boards, councils, colleges and universities.

Eligible employees:

Must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant.

Must be 30 years old or younger.

Must have graduated from a university, college, CEGEP or provincial institution within the last three years, specializing in biology, agriculture, veterinary sciences or applied technology.

For more information go to <http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1183567066815&lang=eng>

Currently the delivery for Career Focus for the Ontario Region is being handled out of Winnipeg by Jürgen Kohler. His direct phone number is 204-983-0575 and his email address is Jurgen.Kohler@agr.gc.ca.

Food Safety Tip

Warm weather brings with it numerous flying insects that may contaminate your produce and food surface areas. Flies don't just stumble across your packing house - they are drawn to odours so removing culls from the packing house on a regular basis will help. Because flies can deposit germs every time they land, they represent a potential food safety risk. UV light traps or sticky tape can effectively manage these pests but don't place them directly over food or packing lines. If you are using UV light traps remember that the bulbs need replacing at regular intervals as the light emitted decreases over time.

It's summer – and what a great summer it is, too! All across the province fresh local produce is pouring into stores and making its way to Ontario tables. Yet, even in this busy season, it's important to keep an eye on the broader industry news, events and opportunities.

You never know: that special workshop or training that will help you take your business to the next level could be right around the corner.

To learn more, browse this list of topics. Don't miss a single opportunity to help your business grow!

Industry News

Supporting your company's certification program: the Food Sector Manufacturing Innovation Network

The journey to achieve certification can be challenging. The possible roadblocks are real. They include everything from improper or incomplete planning, to poor communication and a lack of top-down support.

In addition, one of the biggest obstacles of all lies in people's built-in resistance to change. It's one of the top reasons these types of initiatives fail.

In a recent blog, Bren McKeachnie of the Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium (ECM) wrote, "Lack of change inhibits our innovative abilities, our opportunities to become more efficient, competitive, perhaps reliable, and along the way stymies the growth and development of our employees - leading eventually to a culture that just "accepts" - completing their tasks without a sense of involvement or belonging - rather than one that challenges the status quo, digs enthusiastically into problem solving and development and generates ideas to continually improve our products, our lines, our efficiencies, our service, our ability to compete."

Clearly, meeting certification standards can represent a big change to your operations. So how do you get started? How do you get your people involved? How do you get your senior managers committed? And how do you support and sustain a successful certification program?

That's where the Food Sector Manufacturing Innovation Network can help. EMC's network project provides:

- peer-to-peer networks
- advanced skills training
- internship opportunities – including \$500 for each new hire, payable after the 3rd month of employment – and
- an online network.

The goal: to help increase the food sector's global competitiveness by sharing resources, best practices and strategies.

Joining the Network can save you time and money. It provides a great opportunity to learn from the experience of others. If you are stuck on an issue and have exhausted your internal resources, you can ask other network members for ideas and input. This will help you find the easiest way to proceed and avoid costly mistakes.

Learn more

- [Join the Innovation Network now](#)
- Read about these [early adopters](#) who participated in pilot programs for food safety with OMAFRA and the Guelph Food Technology Centre.
- Read Bren McKeachnie's complete blog, [EMC Food Sector Network: Embarking on a Certification Journey?](#)

Funding and Related Opportunities

Tap into funding for student work terms

Is your organization looking for a low-cost way to tap into new ideas and innovations? Then consider bringing top graduate students from the University of Guelph whose work relates to your operations. Through the OMAFRA University of Guelph agreement and the Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) Scholarship program, funding is available to:

- Hire a student for a 10-week work term
- Mentor a student through job shadowing.

To qualify, the project or work term must have a research component that ties into OMAFRA's research priorities. Work and job shadowing terms are for 10 weeks.

[Learn more now](#) or contact the HQP program at omafhqhp@uoguelph.ca

Apply now to the Abattoir Competitiveness Program

Deadline to apply: August 16, 2010.

Are you looking for a competitive boost for your operations? Are U.S. trade practices hurting your operations? Here's a grant program that's geared to:

- Help registered cattle slaughter facilities meet short-term competitive challenges.
- Improve management of specified risk materials (SRM).
- Help Canada maintain a critical slaughter capacity for cattle Over Thirty Months (OTM) of age while the industry works to address the cost differential with the U.S.

How much will you receive in grants? Grants are based on the volume of SRM materials produced from OTM cattle during the 2010 calendar year. These amounts are calculated as follows:

- 58 kg per OTM animal, and
- \$0.55 per kg of SRM.

How are payments made? If you qualify, you will receive two payments to cover these two time periods:

January 2010 to June 2010
July 2010 to December 2010.

[Learn more now and apply](#)

Join the Slaughter Waste Innovation Program

Deadline to apply: September 1, 2010.

Are you looking to:

- develop, adopt or commercialize innovative technologies related to the removal, disposal or use of Specified Risk Material (SRM)?
- create potential revenue sources from SRM?

If so, your plans may qualify for support under the Slaughter Waste Innovation Program. This program can help you fund up to 50 per cent of your eligible costs. Certain limits apply:

- The total grant you receive from the program cannot exceed \$10 million.
- The total government funding you receive from all sources (federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal) cannot exceed 85 percent of your eligible costs.

Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada are offering this \$40 million program over three years with two goals in mind:

- To capitalize on the knowledge, experience, and technology advances gained in dealing with the first three years of the Enhanced Feed Ban, and
- To support longer term solutions to improve the competitiveness of the sector.

[Learn more or apply now](#)

Learn about tax credit for Scientific Research and Experimental Development (SR&ED)

Is your organization taking advantage of a major tax break to support your research and development (R&D) efforts? The SR&ED program is a federal tax incentive program. It encourages Canadian businesses of all sizes to conduct R&D in Canada. It offers cash refunds and/or tax credits for your expenditures on eligible R&D work done in Canada.

Ready to learn more? Plan to attend a free public information session. The following chart shows the fall 2010 schedule.

General information sessions (English)

City	Date
Hamilton	September 14
London	December 7
Ottawa	September 20
	October 25
	November 22
Waterloo	November 10

Financial issues seminars (English)

City	Date
Ottawa	October 18

[Learn more now and enrol](#)

Events

Eco-Business Summit: Practical Training to Realize Energy Reductions

This Partners in Project Green summit is focused on giving businesses the skills they need to realize energy reduction opportunities – getting beyond the big picture of why businesses should reduce their costs, and giving hands-on training on how to identify, sell and implement energy projects.

When: September 30 and October 19, 2010

Where: International Centre, Toronto, ON

What you will learn: On Day 1, you'll learn about how to finance energy projects and apply financing models; benchmark your company against 60 of the world's best practices in energy management; build a Sustainable Energy Plan. Day 2 features a tour of local businesses and their sustainability initiatives.

Cost: Members - \$150 for both days, \$100 for one day. Non-Members - \$200 for both days, or \$150 for one day.

[Learn more and register](#)

Leading Innovation: The Art and Science of Food

This one-day program gives you access to seasoned experts and leaders in product development, culinary arts, food science and food safety – including celebrity chef and FoodNetwork star Michael Smith as the keynote speaker. Organized by the Guelph Food Technology Centre. Register early as seating is limited!

When: October 19, 2010

Where: ThinkFOOD! Centre, 6897 Financial Drive, Mississauga, ON

What you will learn: Gain insight into global food trends, sodium reduction strategies in food, the local, organic and sustainable food trend, labelling of foods and food safety.

Who should attend: Chefs, food service managers and staff, ingredient suppliers, owners/operators of food businesses, product development managers and staff, R&D managers and staff.

Cost: \$329

[Learn more and enrol](#)

Grocery Innovations Canada 2010

October 25 and 26, 2010

Toronto Congress Centre

650 Dixon Road, Toronto, ON

[Exhibit planner now online](#)

Will you be at the table at Grocery Innovations Canada? This premier national event is the only one in Canada dedicated to the entire grocery industry. It is the largest one of its kind in the country. If you are planning to exhibit, make sure you apply soon. **The deadline is September 3, 2010** to submit your information to the Official Show Guide.

Learn more

Visit <http://www.groceryinnovations.com/index.html> or contact Irina Costachescu at ICostachescu@cfig.ca or call 416-492-2311 ext. 234.

EMC Food Sector Network Events

Looking to take your planning processes to the next level? Want to learn best practices for supply chain management? The Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium (EMC) is running several sessions for the food industry in September:

Getting Unstuck - How to Get Traction with Your Planning Process

Does your facility struggle to get things done? Do projects or problems drag on? Are you unable to get the results you need?

This very special workshop is hosted by Food Sector member Blommer Chocolate Company of Canada to share best practices, insights and ideas. It's a perfect opportunity to apply team problem solving to a challenge that is holding your business back.

Where: Campbellford, ON

When: September 14, 9 am to noon

Supply Chain Management

This event is open to all food and beverage companies and those directly supplying manufactured product to this industry. Each session will feature a special guest speaker to provide an overview on supply chain management. This chart shows the sessions scheduled for the fall of 2010.

Where	When
Winchester, ON	September 15 – 9 am to noon
Brampton, ON	September 16 – 8 to 11 am
Ingersoll, ON	September 16 – 1 to 4 pm

[Learn more](#)

Training

These courses are all available from non-profit education institutions.

Food Safety (Apprenticeship Level 1)

The first in-class component for the new apprenticeship Process Operator - Food Manufacturing program will be offered by Conestoga College this fall. Sponsored by the Institute of Food Processing Technology.

When: October 18th to December 6th on Mondays and Thursdays, 8am until 3:00pm

Where: Doon Campus, Conestoga College, 299 Doon Valley Drive, Kitchener, ON

What you will learn: Gain a general knowledge of food safety, including food safety hazards, Good Manufacturing Practices and food safety systems. Learn about food plant security and the impact of food manufacturing on the environment.

Who should attend: All those with an interest in food processing and food safety. Registered apprentices will receive admission priority.

Cost: \$145 for apprentices, \$590 for non-apprentices

[Learn more and enrol](#)

Food Processing Safety Techniques

This full-time, one-year program is the only one of its kind in Ontario. It offers a wide range of employment opportunities, including general equipment operators, line workers and equipment maintenance.

When: Starts in September 2010

Where: Durham College, 2000 Simcoe Street North, Oshawa, ON L1H 7K4

What you will learn: Learn all the main safety components required to work in the food processing industry. Ensure safe food production following government regulations and practices using automated high-speed equipment in a global competitive environment.

Who should attend: Students, workers who seek a career in the food processing industry.

Cost: \$2,350 (tuition)

[Learn more and enrol](#)

These courses are all available from the Guelph Food Technology Centre, 88 McGilvray Street, Guelph, ON, N1G 2W1

Canadian Food Regulations

When: August 16-17, 2010

What you will learn: Gain an in-depth understanding of Canadian food regulations. Learn how to strategically use the regulations and regulatory process to optimize your business.

[Learn more and enrol](#)

USA Food Labelling under the FDA

When: August 18, 2010

What you will learn: Understand USA Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations to increase speed to market and confidence at border crossings, avoid costly regulatory errors, and build expertise in U.S. exports.

[Learn more and enrol](#)

Sous-vide and Food Safety

When: August 25, 2010

What you will learn: Learn about the sous-vide process, a cooking technique that creates intensely flavoured and textured foods using vacuum-packed food. Understand how to avoid the significant health risks associated with this method if not practiced correctly – applying Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP's), Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP).

[Learn more and enrol](#)

Integrating Lean into Supply Chain Management

When: September 28-29, 2010

Where: Kitchener, ON

[Course repeats in Hamilton, October 5-6, and in Mississauga, October 19-20]

What you will learn: Understand traditional supply chain management in terms of how your company's supply chain relates to its core competence and strategic goals. Learn to apply lean principles and other best practices.

[Learn more and enrol](#)

Consultations

Wanted: your input on changes to two Ontario regulations

Deadline for comments: August 8, 2010

OMAFRA is moving to modernize two regulations under the *Farm Products Grades and Sales Act*:

- Regulation 384 – Honey
- Regulation 378 – Grades - Fruit and Vegetables.

As a next step, we are seeking input from you, our stakeholders. Notices of the two proposals are now posted on the government's Regulatory Registry.

To provide your feedback:

1. Go to the [Registry website](#).
2. Click on the link provided for Current Proposals.
3. Browse the list and click on the related link to the OMAFRA proposal.

4. You will find a summary and links to an information paper and the legislation. The information paper describes the proposal and sets out the ways you can submit your feedback to the ministry.

These changes are part of the Ontario government's Open for Business strategy. This ongoing plan is designed to make government faster and friendlier for businesses. The proposed changes will help us:

- Clarify food safety standards
- Eliminate red tape related to grade, packing and packaging standards
- Keep up with changes to federal standards
- Focus on food safety and protection from economic fraud.

Next steps:

- We will be meeting with stakeholder organizations to gather more feedback.
- We will also send out a notice to industry newsletters for broader producer information and feedback.

Help us make Ontario's food industry work smarter!

Events

[Organic Week - October 9-16, 2010](#)

This coming October, Canadian Organic Growers, the Organic Trade Association and COG's regional partners will be hosting a nationwide celebration of organic food production!

For more information,

<http://www.cog.ca/organic-week/>

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