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Welcome to "ON Organic"

Hugh Martin, Organic Crop Production Program Lead, OMAFRA

Spring 2011 has proven to be a challenge for some. While it has been unusually wet in many areas this is just one more year to try your patience and point out issues in your farming operation. Hope you have a good summer and are able to enjoy some of the social and learning events that are planned by the various groups for organic farmers and other operations this summer.

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 on how to improve the newsletter.

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/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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A Foodland Ontario marketing survey conducted in 2011 indicated that more than one-quarter of shoppers surveyed would buy organic more often if they knew it was from Ontario. To appeal to Ontario consumers who shop for organic products and help them to choose Ontario organic foods first, Foodland Ontario has a new resource for producers and processors to identify their food as both certified organic and local. Producers and processors who want to use the logo on their promotional and marketing materials will need to verify that their products are certified to the Canadian Organic Standard as well as meet the Ontario food definitions found on the

Foodland Ontario website: <http://www.foodland.gov.on.ca/english/industry/ind-definitions.html>

For more information on how to get the Foodland Ontario Organic logo, contact the Client Services Officer, Sandra Jones, at sandra.jones@ontario.ca or 519-826-3947 (toll free 1-888-466-2372 ext. 63947).



Green is Good For Organic Beef

Mario S. Mongeon, Livestock Specialist, OMAFRA

At last, the cows are back on pasture. Around here, the fields are lush and they are growing fast. With this new, fresh green feed, it is a good thing to have a look at the feeding program, adjust if needed and monitor results.

For me, it is always a pleasure to see those cows in the field harvesting their own forages and then lying in the shade ruminating. For cows, being back on pasture substantially modifies their feeding program. Once they taste that green stuff, they will rapidly move away from hay and silage.

Pasture in early summer can be very nutritious! Depending on botanical composition, the protein content can vary from 20 to 28 percent and energy from 1.69 to 1.82 Mcal/kg. Yes, pasture can be potent stuff! Although very nutritious, dairy cows producing substantial amounts of milk will need to be supplemented with a concentrated energy source and potentially, a bit of protein, to optimize milk output and maintain their body condition score. The genetic makeup of the cows will dictate the amount of milk they can produce. Trying to limit milk output by restraining feed will only bring problems.

Since roughage from pasture in early summer is very digestible, the rate of passage (the speed at which it travels down through the digestive tract of the animal) will be greater than when pasture is older, coarser and less digestible. This means that the concentrates: grains and proteins, will need to be degraded and absorbed by the animal at a faster pace, otherwise, they will end up in the manure.

Grains are expensive and you want the precious energies that they contain to help the cow, not end up in the field. An easy way to make sure you are not spending money on grains that end up in the manure is to have a close

look at the manure that the cows are producing. Have a look at what you find as you walk amongst them in the field. Or even better, take some samples from freshly shed manure and wash it down on a flat surface with water. Do you see pieces of corn or barley? Whole grains? Do they still contain starch or are you finding only empty shells? If you can find whole grains or pieces of grains that contain starch, this means that some of the grain fed to the cows ends up as fertilizer. Economically, this is not good.

One way to alleviate this problem is to adjust the particle size of the grains. We know that as the particle size decreases, the digestibility of the starch increases because more of the starch is exposed to the rumen bugs. In other words, if the rate of passage of forage through the digestive tract of a cow increases then the grains will need to be ground finer. If grains are processed through a hammer mill, changing the screen to a smaller size will help. For a roller mill, tightening the rollers will reduce particle size.

To evaluate the particle size of the processed grain, sieves of different mesh can be used. The mesh should be 4, 8, 16 and 30 per inch. To make calculations easy, the sample of processed grains should weigh one kilo. For dry shelled corn, all the material should go through the first two sieves, 30 percent (300 grams) should be on the 16 mesh sieve and 50 percent (500 grams) on the 30 mesh sieve. About 20 percent (200 grams) should go through all the screens and will be found in the bottom pan. This simple method to evaluate the milling of the grains should be done for each new batch of grains since kernel size may be different.

Concentrates are an expensive part of the ration so making sure cows are getting all the benefits from the grains they receive is a wise investment of time.

Were You Prepared for a Wet Spring?

By Hugh Martin, Organic Crop Production Program Lead

The main activity for the winter months is to prepare a good cropping plan for the spring and summer. Determine your market opportunities, which includes livestock feed. Then determine your crop rotation needs and which crop will be planted in which field. You also use your experience based on your location and soil type to determine which tillage and planting activities will need to happen each week throughout the spring to make the season work out right – or at least that is the plan!

Then along comes a year like 2011 where we have essentially double rainfall during April and May and continuing into June in some areas. Nothing gets done on time, in some cases nothing seems to get done in April or May at all. Plan A, Plan B and C all are out the window. This has been one of the worst springs I have seen in the past 40 years.

So what can learn from it?

1. Be patient planting and summer will come
2. Use your wet days in the spring wisely, make sure equipment is repaired and ready to go when the weather breaks. There is nothing worse than a breakdown that could have been avoided by preventive maintenance in a year like this.

3. Consider increasing equipment size or renting extra equipment so that you can get the job done quicker when the dry days come
4. Do you have enough labour, or can you get more labour to get you over the crunch
5. Reconsider the plans you made last winter
 - a. Were they too optimistic (perhaps based on 2010 that was one of the best springs ever)
 - b. As planting gets delayed you will have to make changes in some crops, perhaps more of some crops, less of others, this will change your overall crop rotation
 - c. Make sure that variety selection does not need to change to account for the later planting and how it will affect the maturity of the crop.
 - d. Will there be any effects on markets or other plans you have for later in the season.

One goal of planning is to be planning for the four years out of six that are most normal but have flexibility to adjust to those years that are abnormal. I would suggest that both 2010 and 2011 are the two years out of six that are abnormal. So I guess that means that next year we are due for a normal spring ... what ever that is ... so be ready.

Plan Early for Your Cover Crop Program

By Dale R. Mutch, Michigan State University Extension (MSUE); Anne Verhallen, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)

Several articles have been written recently about planting cover crops after short-season crops such as wheat, oats, green beans and cucumbers. One way to prepare is to use the new cover crops decision tool (<http://mccc.msu.edu/selectortool/2011ccselectortool.pdf>). You can also work with OMAFRA specialists, CCAs, local conservation authority staff or consultants to help make choices for cover crops.

The benefits of cover crops are well known. They include erosion protection, weed fighting, nitrogen scavenging or nitrogen production, soil building and improving soil quality. To get the maximum benefit from cover crops, they need to become part of your crop rotation, an integral part of your cropping system. Whether you farm with just corn, soybeans and wheat, or have a more diverse rotation with either horticultural crops or livestock and manure, there are opportunities to include cover crops in your production system.

There are a number of possible planting niches for most farm operations. Four to six weeks of growth is usually the minimum required to get enough growth to justify expense. Some growing niches will depend upon the goal you have for the cover crop. Late planting of a cover crop will provide erosion protection even though there

may be limited growth.

Once you make your choices, it is important to purchase seed. Dale recently talked to a farmer who raises cover crop seed and the grower said his supplies dwindle rapidly following wheat harvest. So, now is the time to purchase seed. We have seen it time and again where farmers delay, then seed isn't available or prices increase.

If you plan to seed winter annual cover crops after soybean or corn harvest, remember they will be harvested in July or August, so it doesn't hurt to contract wheat, oats or cereal rye now as well. Over the past few seasons, cereal rye seed has been in high demand, so plan and purchase early.

Like many things, the key is to make a plan. Decide where the cover crops will fit in the rotation and be ready for the planting opportunity when it comes. For many successful cover crop users this means keeping a spreader or drill full of the cover crop seed as the main crop is harvested. Being ready to plant the cover crop makes it easier to get the job done in a timely fashion.

Row Covers and Strawberries

By Pam Fisher - Berry Crop Specialist/OMAFRA

Floating row covers on strawberries have been difficult to manage this year due to winds in April, which made it hard to get them on, and hard to keep them on the fields. With many cool cloudy days, the crop advancement we usually see with row covers is not as dramatic.

Here are some tips on managing row covers in the next few weeks:

Remove covers between 1-2% bloom and 5-10% bloom, depending on the weather. Row covers can affect pollination by excluding pollinators, and they can damage blossoms by abrasion. If excessive heat builds up under the cover, the ultimate results can be a more concentrated harvest, with smaller average fruit size.

New growth under a floating row cover can be soft, succulent, and easily damaged by high winds, bright, hot sunlight, and certain pesticides. The ideal time to remove a row cover would be a cool cloudy day. Allow the plants to acclimatize for a day or two before applying oil-based or copper products.

Row covers can provide several degrees of frost protection, although eventually temperatures can drop below zero under the cover, especially when conditions are very dry. If you are re-applying row covers for frost protection, try to do this earlier in day so more heat and humidity will build up under the cover.

Many pests enjoy the warm weather under a row cover. Herbicides for grasses and volunteer grain are needed sooner. Two spotted spider mites and possibly thrips can build up earlier, especially where covers were used over the winter. This week we saw some clipper weevil activity under a floating row cover.

Be sure to check under your row cover on a regular basis to prevent surprises later.

From OMAFRA HortMatters Newsletter

Orchard Design for the New Apple Orchard

By Leslie Huffman - Apple Specialist/OMAFRA

Designing the orchard requires decisions on where the rows will be and what tree spacing is best. Remember to leave enough space to turn orchard equipment including tractor with sprayer, as well as bin trailer, and possibly platforms in the future. Consider the location of tile

drainage and the source of irrigation and spray water. Larger orchards may also require a location to store bins and load trucks at harvest.

Row direction: A north-south row orientation is preferred so that trees intercept the maximum amount of sunlight through the growing season. This becomes more important as rows are narrower and trees are taller. Some sites may have limitations from air movement, prevailing winds, field shape, or slopes that make this impractical or unsafe. However, rows that run north-south will produce higher yields and better quality fruit.

Tree spacing: The optimum tree density is approximately 1000 trees/acre (range is 900-1300 trees/acre). Research has shown that this density provides the most profitable production in our climate. This tree density can be achieved at several popular row spacings as this chart illustrates:

Tree density per acre at various spacings.

Distance between rows of trees (feet)	Distance between trees in the same row (feet)					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	4840	2420	1613	1210	968	807
10	4356	2178	1453	1089	871	726
11	3960	1980	1320	990	792	660
12	3630	1815	1210	908	726	605
13	3351	1675	1117	838	670	558
14	3111	1556	1037	778	622	519

Tree density per hectare at various spacings

Distance between rows of trees (feet)	Distance between trees in the same row (feet)					
	0.3	0.5	1	1.25	1.5	2
3	11,111	6,667	4,444	3,333	2,667	2,222
3.3	10,101	6,061	4,040	3,030	2,424	2,020
3.5	9,524	5,714	3,810	2,857	2,286	1,905
3.8	8,772	5,263	3,509	2,632	2,105	1,754
4	8,333	5,000	3,333	2,500	2,000	1,667
4.3	7,752	4,651	3,101	2,326	1,860	1,550

Bolded cells show preferred spacing combinations.

Most growers choose a row spacing that suits their machinery, and vary the in-row spacing to adjust for the expected vigour of the scion/rootstock combination. Ontario growers who have experimented with higher densities tend to continue to plant each orchard at a closer spacing, as they become comfortable with the required management. There are some successful plantings at more than 2000 trees/acre, but this system requires much more management.

From OMAFRA HortMatters Newsletter

Late Blight Tips from Field Selection to Hilling

Eugenia Banks - Potato Specialist/OMAFRA

Late blight, caused by the fungus *Phytophthora infestans*, is one of the most devastating diseases of potatoes. If weather conditions are favorable and no effective fungicides are applied, late blight can destroy a potato field in 4 or 5 days. To prevent this, a management strategy is necessary based on preventing or delaying initial infection and slowing the rate of disease spread once late blight is established.

Fungicides must be used effectively to control late blight. Spray applications should be based on weather conditions, crop growth and disease pressure. Short intervals of 3 to 5 days are necessary when late blight has been found and the weather is cool and damp. Intervals can be extended when weather is warm and dry. Fungicides with different modes of action need to be rotated to avoid the development of resistance. Good coverage is essential for fungicides to be effective.

Late blight is a community disease. Once the disease starts, it may be spread long distances by wind affecting many farms and many fields. A coordinated approach to disease control is best.

The cool, wet weather in Ontario this spring has delayed planting. About half of the Ontario crop should be planted within the next 3 weeks. The following are some practices from field selection to hilling that should help to reduce the incidence of late blight during the growing season:

Field selection

- **Select well drained fields.** A field may be considered well drained if water does not accumulate between the rows after a rain. If water persists between the rows, this creates the high humidity that favors late blight.
- **Improve drainage.** Consider to eliminate standing water in low spots or areas near center pivot point.
- **Match soil characteristics with variety growth.** Varieties that develop big canopies should be planted in light-textured fields.

- **Avoid planting potatoes back-to-back.** It is impossible to control volunteers when potatoes are grown in the same field for 2 consecutive years, and late blight may overwinter in volunteer tubers.

Seed selection and seed handling

- **Use certified seed.** Certified seed is no guarantee that the seed is free of late blight but the risk of planting infected seed is less than that of using year-out seed.
- **Grade seed carefully.** Eliminate any suspicious tuber. Tuber infection is characterized by irregularly shaped, brown to purplish areas on the skin. These infected areas appear slightly depressed. A dry, granular reddish-brown rot develops under the skin.
- **Do not mix seed lots.** Keep seed lots separated. It is easier to track problems if seed lots have not been mixed.
- **Disinfect cutting knives between seed lots.** Clean and disinfect cutting equipment periodically and always before cutting a new seed lot.
- **Use a seed treatment labeled for late blight.** Some seed treatments contain mancozeb, a fungicide that provides protection against seed-borne blight. Mancozeb will not cure existing infections, but it should protect healthy tubers from being infected. Seed treated with mancozeb should be dry, not sweating.

Before crop emergence

- **Eliminate cull piles before crop emergence.** Tubers near the top of a cull pile will normally break down and rot, but those in the middle of the pile may sprout and grow in the spring. Eliminate cull piles by burying, freezing or feeding to livestock.
 - **Burial.** Do not bury culls near a water source. Check that the water table is low, and cover the tubers with at least 1.8 meters (six feet) of soil to prevent re-growth. Check the cull site during the summer for volunteers. Pull or spray with an herbicide any plants that develop. Add extra soil if the cull pile settles during decomposition.
 - **Covering cull piles.** This method can be used on cull piles late in the spring when immediate action needs to be taken. Spread the culls out evenly, and cover with plastic, preferably black polyethylene. The tubers will heat up and break down. Make sure the entire pile is covered so there is no plant growth or spore escape. It is recommended to use sawdust or another absorbent material to soak up the potato runoff. Scrape up and dispose of the sawdust. Covered piles should not be placed near waterways.
 - **Use as livestock feed.** Raw potatoes can be fed to cattle. It is estimated that 4 pounds of potatoes equals one pound of barley in nutritional value.

At hilling

- **Form hills that cover the developing tubers with sufficient soil to minimize tuber infection.** During

irrigation or rainfall, spores are washed down from foliage and can easily infect tubers that are near soil cracks.

- **Control weeds.** Weeds can interfere with fungicide coverage leaving potato plants unprotected. If necessary, irrigate after the pre-emergence herbicide treatment to activate the herbicides.

Stay tuned for tips from Crop Emergence to Topkilling!



Figure 1 - Internal symptoms of late blight



Figure 2 - External tuber blight symptoms

From OMAFRA HortMatters Newsletter

Training the New Apple Tree

Leslie Huffman - Apple Specialist/OMAFRA

Finally! Your trees are in the ground and well watered in. The best nursery trees will have 10-12 feathery branches, and the leader will be tall and undamaged. Minimal pruning at planting is recommended to allow the tree to continue to grow calmly and produce fruitful feathery branches.

Here are the important tree training tasks in Year 1:

- Do not cut the leader. Plan to return after budbreak to remove competing side shoots if needed.
- Remove broken or damaged branches.
- Remove feathery branches lower than 18".
- Look at the diameter of the feathery branches, and remove feathery branches that exceed 50% the diameter of the leader. This is critical to preserve the dominance of the leader (especially in Ambrosia). Using a bevel or Dutch cut may allow a weaker side shoot to develop.
- Tie down feathery branches to below horizontal, especially if they are vigorous. Tying can be especially effective with high vigour cultivars like Spy, more vigorous rootstocks, or in the highest density plantings.
- Install the support system as soon as possible and attach the tree to it. At minimum, get the tree supported to prevent wind whipping or damage to the roots. Removing the effect of wind will encourage early cropping.

Remember your goals for this tree for its first year:

- Grow the leader as tall as possible, hopefully reaching the top wire by Year 2. Tall leaders maintain dominance over the tree's growth, encouraging calm growth and early fruiting.
- Encourage terminal growth on feathery branches of at least 6-8", allowing the tree to fill its allotted space. This requires protecting the leaves from diseases and insects so they can produce carbohydrates to feed the tree.
- Establish an effective rooting system to absorb the water and nutrition needed for large crops. Ensure that soil test shows adequate levels. Water the trees regularly and deeply so roots explore the entire soil profile.
- Set fruit spurs and initiate flowers for early cropping. Feathery branches on nursery trees and early-growing feathery branches in the planting year should be able to carry some crop in Year 2. Remember that apple trees begin initiating flower buds in July, so the tree needs to be well established by then.

This is a major change from our previous practice of heavy pruning at planting, which caused the trees to grow vigorously and produce stronger wood. Because the trees are planted closer, with smaller spaces to fill, we are instead directing the tree's energy to growth toward the top wire, and producing many feathery branches that will crop early.

From OMAFRA HortMatter newsletter <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/hortmatt/2011/11hrt11a1.htm>

Assessing Your Water Source in a Wet Spring

Jan Schooley - Crops On-Farm Food Safety Program Lead/OMAFRA

Assessing a water source for food safety risks can be a challenge, especially in a wet spring. After an extended period of wet spring weather your water source may be affected by runoff and flooding. Risks associated with a water source revolve around the presence of human pathogens. These pathogens can be bacterial, such as *E. coli* and *Salmonella*, or they may be viruses, parasites or protozoa (tiny microscopic animals). You can test your water source by looking for the presence of *E. coli*. Tests for other pathogens are difficult and the technology just isn't there to do an accurate job. When you test for *E. coli* you are essentially testing for contamination by fecal material. The human pathogens of concern in a farm food safety program are fecal pathogens and when we find *E. coli*, we make the assumption that others may be present and the risk is elevated. There are two tests that can be done for *E. coli*. One is for drinking water (potable water), and in that test there must be 0 (zero) *E. coli* present. The

OMAFRA Articles (cont'd)

other test is for agricultural quality water and in that test, an E. coli count of 100 colony-forming units (CFU) per 100 ml is acceptable. (See the statement below when determining which test you need) Testing must be done by an accredited laboratory. An accredited laboratory is recognized as a lab that can do appropriate tests for the microbiological quality of water. When you ask for a water test make sure that you stipulate whether you want potable water or agricultural water.

One of the challenges with an agricultural water source is its variability. Rivers and streams are highly variable. Lakes and ponds that are subject to runoff are also variable. Wells are the least variable water source. In a wet spring variability is at a peak. What this means to you is that your water test results today may not be the same as water test results next week from the same source. If you are not sure of the quality of your water source, the risk can be mitigated to some degree by using a trickle or drip system instead of an overhead system. This is not true of all crops. Leafy greens are high risk crops that require careful assessment of any water applied to them. Many food safety programs require that all water used during the production of leafy greens be potable. For other crops, consider whether the edible portion of the crop touches the soil. If it does, the risk is higher

If your water source is a pond then you can mitigate risk from run-off by planting a 3-5 meter plant strip around the pond. This can be any cereal crop. The stems reduce and interrupt the surface water flow, the roots help to filter water that soaks into the soil. You can remove up to 70% of pathogens from such a vegetative strip around a pond. Weather is always a factor in the quality of surface water. Even hot, dry weather has an influence. Water testing before you irrigate is always a good idea and should be done in time to respond to the results. If your test results are too high then do a second test before you abandon your source. If the second test is also too high then you need to consider alternatives such as changing the source or changing how you irrigate.

A list of laboratories accredited to test potable water can be found at http://www.portal.gov.on.ca/drinkingwater/dw_el_prd_042275.pdf on the Ministry of the Environment web site. These labs may not test to irrigation quality standards. You need to make it clear what standards you want.

From OMAFRA HortMatters Newsletter <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/hortmatt/2011/11hrt11a6.htm>

Are You Selling Certified Organic Produce at Farmers' Markets this Season?

Canadian Organic Growers Perth-Waterloo-Wellington (COG PWW) is creating a market price tracker for certified organic produce in Ontario and needs to know what farmers' markets certified organic producers are at in order to source a significant amount of data.

Thanks to funding from the [Agricultural Management Institute \(AMI\)](#)* we are able to develop this online searchable database of certified organic produce prices, but it will only be as good as the data we are able to collect to input into it. Please help support the development of this useful tool by filling out the 2-question survey at this link: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NHM79CY>

We are expecting to run a pilot of this project this season, with a launch in July. This funding also makes possible the development of a certified organic seed database. If you have any questions about either project or think you may like to be involved as a farmer advisor through the development process, please contact Tegan Renner at COG PWW: 226-251-3012 or outreach@cogwaterloo.ca. *The AMI is part of the Best Practices Suite of programs for Growing Forward, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

Heat Stress Guidelines from Ministry of Labour

The MOL has a revised heat guideline dated May 2011. This guideline is intended to assist employers, workers and other workplace parties in understanding heat stress, and in developing and implementing policies to prevent heat stress-related illness in the workplace. Heat stress can happen when hot, humid conditions and physical activity overcomes your body's natural cooling

system. You might suffer cramps and fainting, or even serious heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Heat stroke can kill quickly.

http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/gl_heat.php
<http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/topics/heatstress.php>

Precautionary Labelling Encouraged for Cereal Products

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is now urging manufacturers and importers of any grain-based products to inform consumers of the possible presence of low wheat levels in their products to avoid reactions among people with extreme wheat allergies. Since cereal grains are often grown close to other types of grain and are sometimes harvested using the same equipment it's extremely difficult to exclude all traces of wheat from other cereal grains – which could potentially pose a hazard to some consumers. [Learn more](http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/labeti/allerg/20110520inde.shtml) at <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/labeti/allerg/20110520inde.shtml>

'Ontario Food Cluster' Eyes International Growth and Investment

The newly created Ontario Food Cluster is eager to help expand Ontario's agri-food sector internationally and attract more foreign investment. Last month, the City of Guelph and the University of Guelph formally joined other Ontario Food Cluster partners in the Greater Toronto Area and Waterloo Region to work collaboratively to increase foreign investment and international trade opportunities, while promoting the competitive advantages of joining Ontario's agri-food sector. [Learn more](http://www.ontariofoodcluster.com/) at <http://www.ontariofoodcluster.com/>

A Tool to Attract Investors and Make Connections

A new publication, called the *Agri-Food Asset Map*, contains key highlights of Ontario's competitive advantages, its strengths and success stories. It outlines opportunities in the food sector and provides an overview of Ontario's food processing research and development excellence, as well as research contacts. Jointly created by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and the Ontario Ministry of Research and Innovation, the *Asset Map* is a publication that can help you 'make the case' and get the contacts needed for future growth. A limited number of print copies are available from [Shirley Newell](#), while both the [Executive Summary](#) at <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/research/ktt/agrifoodassetmap.pdf> and the [full document](#) at http://www.mri.gov.on.ca/english/publications/documents/AgriFood_Summary_Nov2010_ENG_AODA.pdf are also available online.

Important Update for Importers and Brokers

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is implementing phased [changes to import notification requirements](#) at <http://inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/invenq/20110505e.shtml> to improve the availability of

information it uses to identify and track food products whenever food safety issues occur. Phase 5 came into effect last month and includes select commodities, which can be found in [Annex 1](#) at <http://inspection.gc.ca/english/fssa/invenq/20110505e.shtml#oncor>. Those commodities have also been added to the CFIA's [Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System](#) (HS Codes) at <http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/eservices/ogd-amg/hs-sh-eng.html>

Importers and brokers are expected to notify the CFIA using the Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) to ensure products coming into Canada are released. If you don't have an EDI profile, you need to get one. The Automated Import System (AIS) Participant's Information Document provides more information on the EDI. To get a copy of this document, contact the EDI coordinator at EDICoordination@inspection.gc.ca or call 613-773-5322. If you have questions about any notification requirements for products in the non-federally registered sector, contact CFIA's Ontario-area import coordinator Latika Mogla at Latika.Mogla@inspection.gc.ca or 416-667-4674.

New Resources from AAFC's Food Regulatory Issues Division

The Food Regulatory Issues Division (FRID) of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is committed to providing the Canadian food and beverage industry with up-to-date information on domestic regulatory issues that have an impact on investment, innovation and competitiveness, particularly in relation to health claims, novel foods and ingredients. To this end, FRID has introduced a [revamped website](#) at <http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1171305709916%26lang=eng>, and a [Canadian Food Health Claim Roadmap](#) at http://wcc.on24.com/event/28/70/38/rt/1/images/player_docanchr_1/aafc_canadian_food_health_claim_roadmap_march_8.pdf to help with health and nutrient-related decisions.

There are also [webcasts](#) at <http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1281029138003%26lang=eng> with up-to-date information on food policy and regulations, the latest news on the [proposed redefinition for dietary fibre and novel food regulations](#) at <http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1300301017128%26lang=eng>, plus a [Summary Report](#) at http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2011/agr/A72-97-2010-eng.pdf that includes marketplace and consumer trends and scientific evidence on food-health connections.

Funding and Related Opportunities

Water Innovation Funding Proposals Due June 24th

The Ministry of the Environment recently announced a new \$17-million funding program, *Showcasing Water Innovation* and proposals must be in by June 24. This program has the potential to advance the food industry through water innovation. It provides funding for between 17 and 25 projects in a representative set of Ontario communities that demonstrate innovative and cost-effective solutions to drinking water, wastewater and storm water challenges. While for-profit businesses cannot be the applicant, they can partner in a project and collaboration is being encouraged. The program is open to Ontario municipalities, municipal corporations, local services boards, Aboriginal communities, public institutions, conservation authorities and non-profit organizations. Small and remote communities are encouraged to apply. For complete information, check out the [program's website](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/funding/showcasing_water_innovation/index.htm) at http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/funding/showcasing_water_innovation/index.htm

Revised SR&ED Claim Forms Obligatory as of August 1st

Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) continues to work on its up-to-date Web-based source for Scientific Research and Experimental Development (SR&ED) policy information. It's hoped this will simplify the SR&ED program and process, especially for small businesses. CRA recently released a revised Form T661 (SR&ED Expenditures Claim) and other supporting documents to help expedite claim applications. The revised guide provides line-by-line descriptions and the Application Policy 2001-02R5 contains useful examples. You can still submit T661(08) or later versions of the form until July 31, 2011. But, beginning August 1, 2011, CRA will **only accept** the T661(11) version of the form for all tax years. The [revised documents are available online](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/bts-eng.html) at <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/bts-eng.html> and the CRA is holding information seminars in Mississauga at <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/cntcts/tsms-eng.html> in early June and Ottawa at <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/cntcts/tstt-eng.html> in September. Here are links to specific forms: (If you want to talk to a CRA advisor call 1-800-959-5525 to find the nearest office.)

[Revised Form T661, Scientific Research and Experimental Development \(SR&ED\) Expenditures Claim](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pbg/tf/t661/README.html?eml20110405) at <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pbg/tf/t661/README.html?eml20110405>

[Revised T4088, Guide to Form T661 - Scientific Research and Experimental Development \(SR&ED\) Expenditures Claim](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tg/t4088/README.html?eml20110405) at <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tg/t4088/README.html?eml20110405>

[Revised Clickable Form T661, Scientific Research and Experimental Development \(SR&ED\) Expenditures Claim](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/pblctns/t661hlp-eng.html?eml20110405) at <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/pblctns/t661hlp-eng.html?eml20110405>

[Revised Example of Form T661, Scientific Research and Experimental Development \(SR&ED\) Expenditures Claim](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/pblctns/xmplt661-eng.html?eml20110405) at <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/pblctns/xmplt661-eng.html?eml20110405>

[Revised - Application Policy SR&ED 2004-02R5 Filing Requirements for Claiming SR&ED](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/pblctns/p2004-02r5-eng.html?eml20110405) at <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/pblctns/p2004-02r5-eng.html?eml20110405>

June 16th Webinar to Explore Loan Opportunities

If you're planning to establish, expand, or improve your small business, an upcoming interactive webinar will explain how you might access up to \$500,000 in financing through the [Canada Small Business Financing Program](http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/csbfp-pfpec.nsf/eng/home) at <http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/csbfp-pfpec.nsf/eng/home>. Geared to for-profit Canadian-based companies with annual gross revenues under \$5 million, the program goals are to increase the availability of loans through financial institutions by sharing the risk. Eligible costs include buying or improving land or property, purchasing or improving leased property, and improving used equipment or investing in new equipment. You must register for either the [English](#) webinar (at 1:00 p.m.) or the [French](#) webinar (at 2:30 p.m.).

For more information on webinars, email SBTBWebinar-DGPETWebinaire@ic.gc.ca. You can also access past webinars at http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/sbrp-rppe.nsf/eng/h_rd02520.html. To consider more options for small business financing, visit the Canada Business section on [How to get money for your business](http://www.canadabusiness.ca/eng/82/150/) at <http://www.canadabusiness.ca/eng/82/150/>.

These courses are all available from non-profit education institutions

EFAO Events

June 28th Oxford Organic Growers Summer Crop Tour - Princeton

June 28th (Tuesday) - 7:30 pm at Yeandle Farms, 747099 Township Rd 4.

Everyone is welcome to join this tour. For more information call 519-424-3113

FarmON Skills Building Field Days – April to October

Join us on our monthly field days to visit ecological farms and learn from experienced farmers! Taking place between April and October, these field days include a morning farm tour. In the afternoon the farmer will teach the group a new skill or lead an in-depth discussion on a particular aspect of the farm. The BYO picnic lunch is a great time to meet other new farmers!

June: Still Hope Farm & Rotational Grazing for Cattle

Join us for our June Skills Building Field Day for new farmers at Still Hope Farm with Chris Litster in Midland, Simcoe County. Chris, current President of the [Ecological Farmers of Ontario](#) (EFO), raises certified organic grass-fed beef and poultry. His 88 cattle include a mix of Shorthorn and Dexter, heritage breeds that are well suited to grazing. Dexter cattle, which have until recently been considered a rare breed, are the smallest of the European cattle breeds, about half the size of a traditional Hereford. Come tour the farm in the morning and learn more about the farm's pasture management, cattle breeds, and their direct marketing approach. In the afternoon, dive into more details around intensive rotational grazing, a system of grazing in which herds are regularly moved to fresh pasture with the intent to maximize the quality and quantity of forage growth. Weather and other factors cooperating, Chris will lead the group in setting up a new fencing area, moving the cattle, and maybe also one of his chicken tractors!

When: Saturday June 25, 2011

Where: Still Hope Farm, 271 Rumney Road, Midland

Directions: 1 km north of County Rd. 23 (Vasey Rd.) on Rumney Rd. Approx. 5 km south of Hwy. 12. [View map](#)

Lunch: Bring Your Own bagged lunch, beverages and snack provided

Cost: \$30, or \$50 per family

RSVP (required): admin@farmstart.ca or call Cherie Bauman (519) 836-7046 ext. 103. Please bring cash or cheque (made out to FarmStart) on the day of the tour.

July 9 - Introduction to Pastured Pigs

Join Tarrah Young of [Green Being Farm](#) as she shares

lessons from her own experiences raising heritage pigs on pasture, as well as innovative and valuable information gleaned from research abroad. Tarrah studied pastured pig production in the US from the likes of Joel Salatin and Allan Nation and will be sharing what she has learned with you!

Topics to be covered include:

- the role of pigs in our ecosystem
- options for grazing pigs on pasture and in the woods
- feeding pigs on whey, nuts, roots, and fruits
- natural health care for pigs, and health benefits of pastured pork for humans!
- to farrow or not to farrow
- selecting a breed
- what to look for in a processor
- marketing and economics

When: Saturday July 9, 9:30am – 4:00pm

Where: Green Being Farm, Neustadt. [View map](#)

Cost: \$95 or \$170 per farm team pair

To register: [Click here](#)

Managing Your Cover Crops for Healthy Soil: Summer & Fall Field Work

Offered in partnership by the Ecological Farmers of Ontario (EFO) and FarmStart.

Cover Cropping is one of the most important tools we have for building up soil organic matter and fertility and managing weeds on organic farms. This practical two-part workshop, led by Ignatius farm manager Lorne Jamieson, will introduce you to different kinds of cover crops and demonstrate how to do the required field work. From ploughing in an old hay field, to discing and cultivating and planting a variety of cover crops, this workshop will provide you with the knowledge you need to manage your own fields. If you have new land that you want to put into production or are looking to start using cover crops on your farm, this is the workshop for you!

July 9th Part I: Introduction to Cover Cropping & Summer Field Work

This first session will introduce cover cropping and the required tools and implements, and demonstrate typical summer field work. Topics will include:

- Why cover crop?
- Different cover crops and their specific characteristics
- Field equipment and when/how to use it
- Demonstration of ploughing down a hay field
- Demonstration of discing, cultivating and planting a summer cover crop (i.e. buckwheat)
- Looking at a variety of cover crops at different stages of growth

Training/Events (cont'd)

October 15th - Part II: Fall Field Work & Winter Preparation

Come back in the fall to learn about the second phase of field work and preparing the ground for winter. Topics will include:

- Choosing the right winter cover crop for your needs
- Demonstration of working in summer cover crops (i.e. mow, plough, disc, cultivate)
- Demonstration of planting a fall cover crop (i.e. rye, oats)
- Discussion on frost seeding, compost/manure application, soil testing and amendments

When: Part I - Saturday July 9 (rain date Sunday July 10), 12:30pm – 4pm

Part II - Saturday October 15 (rain date Sunday October 16), 12:30pm – 4pm

Where: Ignatius Farm, 5420 Highway 6 North, Guelph.

[View Map.](#)

Cost: \$120 (includes both days); \$100 for [Ecological Farmers of Ontario \(EFO\)](#) members

To register: [Click Here](#)

July 24 - Introduction to Pastured Poultry

Join us for this very popular workshop offered by Tarrah Young on [Green Being Farm](#) in Neustadt. Tarrah, who raises chickens and turkeys on pasture, will explain her system from day-old chicks and poults to the finished product.

Topics to be covered include:

- brooder design
- feed requirements
- bird health
- Marketing
- calculating sale prices based on the cost of production

When: Sunday July 24, 9:30am – 4:00pm

Where: Green Being Farm, Neustadt, [View map.](#)

Cost: \$95 or \$170 per farm team pair

To register: [Click here](#)

July 17th Finding the Balance on Soils Course: Reading soil Tests for Organic Farmers - St. Thomas

(Sunday) - 9am- 4pm at Orchard Hill Farm, 45415 Fruit Ridge Line, St. Thomas (near the village of Sparta). The farm is on the south side of Fruit Ridge Line, between Quaker and Yarmouth Centre Rds.

Healthy and well-balanced soils are the foundation of healthy, thriving crops and are essential to the ecological farm system. Join experienced organic farmer-facilitator Ken Laing to look at what a soil test report means if you are

not adding synthetic fertilizers. What should you consider if you're growing vegetables? Hay/pasture? Field crops? Finding the Balance is all about looking at test results with an eye on how to balance each nutrient with others, what nutrients levels are optimal in that balance for different crops, and if and when are organic amendments needed. There will be class time to look at individual soil test results, and of course check out the soils, up close and personal, at Orchard Hill Farm!

Cost: \$70.* EFO members will receive a \$20/day discount on 1 course per year. Join now!

**Special rate for CRAFT apprentices who are or become EFO members: \$40 per course.* To register contact the EFAO office: Tel:1-877 822-8606 or 519-822-8606; Email: info@efao.ca.

July 27th Donnelly Farm Tour – Pastured Waterfowl, Poultry and Cattle - East Caledon

Gerald Donnelly is a long time breeder of exhibition waterfowl and shorthorn cattle. Join us at Donnyweir Farm this July to see Gerald's set up of mixed, small-scale commercial waterfowl breeding and production. Participants will have the chance to see ducks and geese of numerous breeds, as well as chickens and turkeys, and Gerald's set up of dozens of runs for proper flock management. We'll cover nutrition and feeding, watering, shelter, the movement of birds on pasture, predator control, and how to set up a breeding program. As there is interest, more in-depth discussion on breeding management for desired qualities, record keeping, and banding can be had as well. This is a great opportunity to learn how to integrate more diverse enterprises on your small farm, to increase overall financial and ecological viability!

Time 10am – 4pm **Lunch:** Please bring a brown bag lunch.

Cost: Free for EFO members, \$15 for all others. **For more information and to RSVP (required):** Call 519-822-8606 or email info@efao.ca. Tour size is limited to 20 spots so RSVP early to avoid missing out!

Gerald has generously offered to tailor the tour/discussion to focus on participants' particular interests and questions. When you RSVP, feel free to submit any questions you have for the tour, and your specific topics of interest.

August 17th/18th Organic Crop and Large Farm Tour Sarnia area (ON) and Michigan (US).

EFO is excited to announce that we're midway through planning a 2 day organic crop and farm tour for this August 17th and 18th, visiting farms in both SW Ontario and Michigan State.

Training/Events (cont'd)

Tour participants will meet on-the-way to Sarnia Wednesday afternoon and first visit a farm (exact location to be confirmed) in SW Ontario. We'll stay overnight near Sarnia, then head across the border to Michigan first thing on Thursday.

In the morning, we will visit Organic Bean and Grain, owned by fourth generation farmers Mark and Steven Vollmar. The Vollmars manage 1100 acres of organic crops (including blue and yellow corn, black turtle, adzuki, and pinto beans, soybeans, spelt, and soft white and red wheat), and also have facilities for value-added processing of their own and other area producers' grains (spelt dehulling, soy plant, flour mill) for seed, feed, and food. Organic Bean and Grain is additionally a member of O-FARM (Organic Farmers' Agency for Relationship Marketing), a co-operative dedicated to coordinating the efforts of producer marketing groups to benefit and sustain organic producers across the US.

In the afternoon, we will visit Findlay Farm, a large field crop farm run by Bruce and Michael Findlay. Stay tuned for additional farm and itinerary details!

We hope you'll consider joining us to see some excellent examples of scaled-up organic production, cooperative marketing and value-added processing this summer! For newer farmers, we're excited to announce that we will be awarding 2 bursaries towards the cost of the trip as well. If you're interested in receiving more information about the tour or the bursaries, please get in touch with Karen in the office, or keep an eye on upcoming events bulletins and on the Events and Courses page at www.efao.ca.

August 28th Direct Marketing Course - St. Mary's
Time 9am -4pm at Ann Slater's Fresh Organic Vegetables

(at Eshcol Farm), 157030 15th Line, Zorra Twp, Lakeside. Having a great product is different from selling a great product, and both of these things are critical to operating a successful farm business. Join Ann Slater, who has been growing and selling vegetables in the St. Mary's area for over 30 years, on her farm to review all aspects of selling at a farmers market, from promotion, packaging and displays to pricing. CSAs, road side stands, pick-your-own operations and co-ops will be covered as well, as will marketing directly to stores and restaurants. This is an amazing opportunity to see Ann's intensively planted 1.5 acre garden during the growing season, and benefit from her direct-marketing expertise!

Where: Cost: \$70.* EFO members will receive a \$20/day discount on 1 course per year.

**Special rate for CRAFT apprentices who are or become EFO members: \$40 per course.*

For more details and to register contact the EFAO office: Tel:1-877 822-8606 or 519-822-8606; Email: info@efao.ca

Ontario Beekeepers' Association (OBA) 2011 Workshops

The OBA Tech-Transfer team offers three high quality workshops for beginner and experienced beekeepers: Introductory Beekeeping, Beekeeping and IPM (Integrated Pest Management), and Introductory Queen Rearing. These three full day workshops will be offered this spring and summer at various locations.

For more information: contact the Tech-Transfer Office at (519) 836-3609 or e-mail shrewless@yahoo.com. Or visit the [website for updates](#)

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 of Ontario (EFO)
<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