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Welcome to "ON Organic"

Evan Elford, New Crop Development Specialist, OMAFRA

Vibrancy is defined as being strong, vivid and full of life. This month the annual Eco Farm Day conference in Cornwall, Ontario will be focussing on "Vibrant Businesses in Organic Agriculture". It is always encouraging to see how the people involved in the organic sector embody the attributes of 'vibrancy' and no doubt want their businesses to reflect these characteristics as well. For more information on the conference or to register please visit the Eco Farm Day conference website at www.cog.ca/ottawa/ecofarmday/.

If you would like to learn more about agricultural business services and resources in Ontario please visit OMAFRA's Agricultural Business Management webpage. It includes links to workshops and events such as 'Growing Your Farm Profits' and also contains Factsheets on topics ranging from marketing and production to social responsibility and succession planning. To access these resources, follow the link to www.ontario.ca/agbusiness.

Thank you once again to our contributing authors and to COG, EFAO, OCO and others who pass along our newsletter on a regular basis.

We always appreciate your comments and feedback. Help us to improve our service to you by providing feedback which will be used to direct our focus for the upcoming year. This should take one to three minutes of your time. Click here to start: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/onorganic2012>

Subscription to this newsletter is easy and no cost. For details go to the webpage:

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

The newsletter is also posted on the OMAFRA website at:

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

The French version of these newsletters is available at:

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

The OMAFRA Organic pages are linked from:

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

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Timely Tips for Beef Cattle

Brian Pogue, Beef Program Lead, OMAFRA

1. Prepare for the calving season.
 - a. Hopefully the cows are calving on grass in a very natural setting and if cows are in good shape and there has been proper genetic selection, there should not be any calving problems.
 - b. Have a clean new pasture upon which the cows can calve and a system to handle and move baby calves with their mom away from the main cowherd. Avoid muddy areas as they increase the cattle's nutritional needs, and contaminate udders which may result in scours. Increase the feed after calving as the cow's nutritional needs dramatically
 - c. Be sure supplies are ready – calving book, eartags and facilities in case something must be given special attention.
2. Evaluate cows for body condition.
 - a. This has been an easy winter so cows should be in very good shape but if not then provide supplementary feed.
 - b. Thin cows will have poor quality and low levels of colostrum, have calves with less vigour and take longer to re breed.
3. Observe Cattle
 - a. Keep an eye on cows and particularly on heifers when calving just in case of twins or some other complication.
 - b. If at all possible manage young cows separately from the cow herd as they need additional nutrition to continue growing as well as all of the other things expected of a cow.
- c. Be sure that yearling replacements heifers are growing adequately to reach breeding weights = 65% of their mature weight.
4. Herd Sires
 - a. Check out current bulls for health, condition and feet. Consider a breeding soundness test, particularly on older bulls.
 - b. Start looking for a new herdbull. Check out the BIO website for bulls in your area. Consider bulls that have high percentile rankings in the traits that matter most to you.
5. Keep some records
 - a. There are comprehensive record keeping systems available through companies such as BIO.
 - b. At a minimum the birthdate and ID of cow and calf should be recorded. Recording the birthweight with a scale or even as small, medium or large and things like the cow's temperament, condition and udder structure will be valuable in determining which cows should be culled and which heifers should be retained as replacements. (next article)
6. Begin pasture improvement by frost seeding established pastures.

Measuring Social Media and Smartphone Use in Ontario Agriculture

Janice LeBoeuf, Vegetable Crops Specialist, OMAFRA-Ridgetown

Social media and smartphone topics have been popular at farm meetings this winter, and for good reason. Many farmers and other agribusinesses are using these online and mobile tools to streamline and improve their communications and business activities.

Researchers, OMAFRA specialists, and other organizations who want to get current information out to the industry need to take advantage of these tools and be part of the conversation. For the innovators and influencers who are using these tools, it's a timely and efficient way to share information and ideas.

OMAFRA field staff in Ridgetown are leading an OMAFRA/University of Guelph initiative to determine the level of usage of various smartphone and mobile device platforms and communication tools, including social

media, in the Ontario agriculture industry. An online survey has just been launched, aimed at those working in agriculture across the province. The questions will focus on whether you are using social media, smartphones, or other internet, media, and print resources in your agricultural business. Agricultural students are also included in the survey.

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

Measuring Social Media and Smartphone Use in Ontario Agriculture (cont'd)

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

Results will be available early in April and the information will give agricultural organizations and businesses more data to use in deciding where to focus their efforts in mobile tools and online communication with their members, clients, or stakeholders.

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

OMAFRA Articles & Updates

Frost Seeding Works

**Barry Potter, Agriculture Development Advisor,
OMAFRA**

The all terrain vehicle (ATV) roared up and down the field, ripping through the last snow drifts of winter. The passing vehicle slowed, the driver obviously wondering if his neighbouring farmer had finally lost his marbles. But no marbles had been lost. Instead, the spinner on the back of the ATV threw grass seed across the frozen field, to be lost into the slowly thawing soil. This activity would pay off later on, resulting in vigorous new growth in a thickening sward of pasture.

Frost seeding is the name given to the process of spreading seed across fields in late winter and early spring. The thawing/freezing action in early spring acts to work the grass seed into the soil. Moisture from melting snow and spring rains helps the seed germinate. The new seedlings grow to thicken stands, providing more grazing for livestock.



Frost seeding can introduce legumes to improve pasture quality

Recently (2009), at the Agriculture Canada Research Station at Kapuskasing, several fields were determined to have low or non-existent legume content. The cows grazed existing grasses in the fall, leaving little residue. Red Clover seed was spread on the fields by ATV in April of 2010, while snow was still on the ground. The seeding rate was 10 lbs per acre. By early June it was evident that red clover now made up 50 % of the forage stand or greater in areas where previously there was no legume.

In 2011, red clover was spread in additional fields. This time the rate was cut to 5 lbs per acre, and the grass was not grazed off in the fall. Evaluation in the summer demonstrated that the red clover per cent increased only marginally (less than 15 %.)

Frost seeding is a concept that has been around for quite a while. The process imitates the natural process of seed heads shedding mature seed from plants onto the ground in the fall. While forage seed can be spread at any time, typical frost seeding now occurs in late winter/early spring. Farmers are afraid that seed spread in the late fall could germinate in a winter thaw, or be washed away in a spring melt. So usually the seed will be spread on the last melting snows of winter, or the frozen ground of an early spring day. The subsequent morning freezing and afternoon thawing works to lower the seed into the soil, ready to germinate in a sustainable environment as the soil temperature warms.

Frost seeding is especially beneficial in areas where the pasture or hay field has "run out" of legumes. Legumes provide extra yield, and quality in the field, as well as taking nitrogen from the air, and making it available in the soil for grass roots to use.

Clovers, trefoil and alfalfa are the legumes most used in frost seeding. The down side of alfalfa is a built in autotoxicity that allows existing alfalfa plants to kill any new germinating alfalfa seed. If there is existing alfalfa in a field, putting more alfalfa seed into the ground is counter productive.

Red clover and white clover stands can be effectively rejuvenated with frost seeding.

In the Kapuskasing trial, the application of 10 lbs per acre provided a dramatic increase in legume content. However, bear in mind that clovers can cause bloat. Managing pastures with thick clover stands can be a challenge.

An option would be to include 5 lbs of clover and 3 lbs of trefoil. Trefoil does not cause bloat, and provides the same nitrogen fixing capability as clover. However, It can be harder to establish than the clovers.

The experience at Kapuskasing, and research at Wisconsin demonstrates that having the cows graze off the pasture in late fall allows the seed better soil contact and more light to power the newly germinated plants.

Frost seeding can work to rejuvenate old stands. Frost seeding of legumes also adds their nitrogen fixing capabilities to the sod, thus reducing the need to purchase as much commercial nitrogen fertilizer. While frost seeding is not as effective a strategy to rejuvenate a pasture as ploughing and working up the land, it is a much cheaper alternative than ploughing with conventional seeding. It's also a great the way to improve fields that are too rough or hilly to be worked by conventional tillage.

From Virtual Beef newsletter

New 'Herriot' Strawberry from Cornell University Pam Fisher, Berry Crops Specialist, OMAFRA

The new strawberry variety "Herriot" has been recently named by Courtney Weber, at Cornell University. This variety has some promising features which include:

- **High yields.** In trials and with commercial growers in New York, Massachusetts, Illinois, Minnesota and Ontario, 'Herriot' yielded as much as 60 percent more than 'Jewel', the predominant mid-season variety for perennial matted-row production that was also developed by Cornell. In trials at the New York State Agricultural Experiment Station, Geneva, N.Y., 'Herriot' harvest consistently begins two days before 'Jewel' with yields greater than or equal to that variety most years.
- **Beautiful berries.** 'Herriot' produces large (up to 25 grams, averaging about 11 grams), heart-shaped, shiny red berries with a bright green calyx. Fruit is generally larger and more uniform than 'Jewel'. Flavour is sweet and mild with light pineapple overtones.
- **Disease resistance.** 'Herriot' shows good resistance to common leaf diseases, and holds up well to summer renovation, allowing for wider adaptation to variable soils. In Geneva, 'Herriot' blooms in mid-May, avoiding most damaging frosts.

Weber's small fruits breeding program at Cornell is focused on developing improved strawberry and raspberry varieties for New York growers. Previous releases from Weber's program - including 'L'Amour' and 'Clancy' strawberries and 'Prelude', 'Encore', and 'Crimson Giant' raspberries - have shown wide adaptation throughout New England, the Mid-Atlantic States and the Midwest, as well as temperate regions of Europe.

This variety will not be widely available in Ontario for several years, due to the propagation process.

From the Ontario Berry Grower newsletter

Field Testing for Pathogens with a Handheld Biosensor

Don Blakely, Beef Quality Assurance Program Lead

Testing for pathogens has required taking swabs of equipment and utensils and sending those swabs off for analysis in laboratories. Getting results can take several days and by that time the product may be in the food chain and on consumer's tables. Ultimately some contaminated products are consumed before any recall is enacted. This whole scenario is about to change.

Researchers at the Michigan State University have recently developed a handheld nanotechnology-based bio-sensor that can detect pathogen threats such as E. coli, Salmonella and Listeria. Instead of waiting days for results this new device can give results in as little as an hour. If this new device gets widespread use there is huge potential for reducing pathogen contaminated produce entering the marketing system, ultimately reducing the number of consumers getting sick from foodborne illness. For additional information:

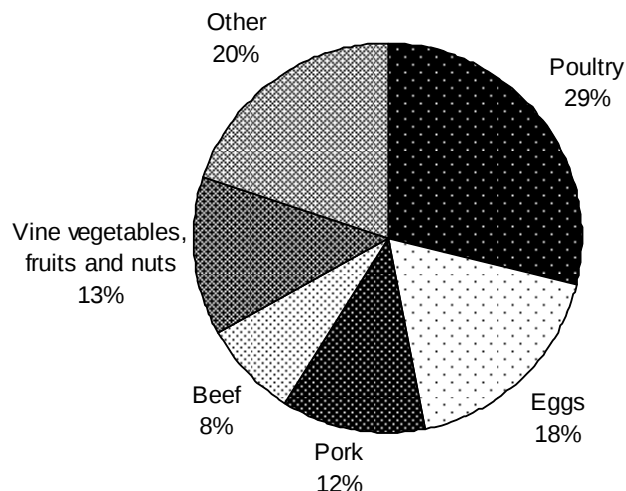
<http://www.foodqualitynews.com/Innovation/DNA-nanotech-development-will-move-pathogen-testing-from-lab-to-field-developer>

More Efforts Needed for Reducing *Salmonella* and its Infection

Wayne Du, Pork Quality Assurance Program Lead

Data from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of the United States shows that salmonella infection has not declined in 15 years. The bug can be found in many different types of foods of both animal and plant origins.

Figure 1. Percentages of salmonella infections caused by different foods



†Other includes: Sprouts, leafy greens, roots, fish, grains-beans, shellfish, oil-sugar, and dairy.

Source: CDC National Outbreak Reporting System, 2004–2008.

Reducing *salmonella* infection requires control efforts from the farm to the table. Effective *salmonella* control at the farm level continues to be a challenge. Here are some of the measures that producers may take to control the tough bug:

- implement prevention-focused good agricultural practices and/or on-farm food safety programs
- conduct a risk assessment on a regular basis to identify potential contamination risks
- take strong and specific actions to prevent contaminations
- develop new prevention strategies for the riskiest foods before and after harvesting

For assistance on how to implement the above measures and for other helpful food safety resources, please call the Advantage program at 1-877-424-1300 or visit our website www.ontario.ca/good-ag-practices.

Small Changes Now, Make a Big Difference Later On

Colleen Haskins, On-Farm Food Safety Program Lead

Are you usually swamped during the production season finding it difficult to get some of the smaller tasks completed in the barn, storage or packing facility? Well, now is the time to do those things that need to get done. Things such as changing the weather stripping around doors and windows, sealing any holes that lead to the outside and installing protective light coverings or shatterproof bulbs, are examples of small changes that will make a big difference later on, especially if you're thinking of implementing a food safety program at your farm.

For more ideas on other changes you can make to help increase food safety on your farm, visit our website at www.ontario.ca/goodagpractices or call us at 1-877-424-1300. Food Safety Question? Ask us.

Risk Management Program Update

Production Insurance Update – May 1, 2012 Organic Deadlines

It's that time of year again and Production Insurance (PI) deadlines for spring-seeded crops are fast approaching.

Agricorp offers PI coverage for both organic and conventional crops. Here are some PI options for your organic crops:

- Specialized organic plans are available for organic corn, organic soybeans, organic fresh market carrots, organic fresh market cabbage, organic winter wheat and organic winter spelt. Proof of certification is required to receive a claim payment at the organic claim price.
- The forage rainfall plan works equally well for both organic and conventional producers. New for 2011, a new coverage option is being piloted for hay that covers excess rainfall during your intended harvest period.
- As always, other crops or crops in transition can be insured under the general production insurance plans.

The deadline to apply for organic corn, organic soybeans and coverage, without winterkill, for organic winter wheat and organic winter spelt, and the forage rainfall plan is **May 1, 2012.**

For more information on these plans please visit agricorp.com or contact us at 1-888-247-4999.

AgriStability commodity code changes for 2011

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

Details available for 2012 RMP livestock plans

Enrolment information is now available on agricorp.com for livestock producers who want to participate in the 2012 [Risk Management Program \(RMP\)](#). Renewal packages will be mailed in February to producers who participated last year. Current participants have until March 16, 2012 to make any changes to the coverage outlined in their renewal. Livestock producers who are interested in signing up for RMP for the first time can apply online or contact Agricorp for more information. Applications for new customers are also due on March 16.

New applications and changes to existing coverage can be made by phone, mail, fax or online by visiting agricorp.com and clicking Online tools.

Keep your receipts handy for RMP

Starting in 2012, participants in the RMP plans for live-stock are required to report their livestock sales, either quarterly or semi-annually, so that Agricorp can determine payment. Producers should keep their sales and purchase receipts or production records in a convenient place so they can easily fill out their sales reports.

What do you need to report?

Depending on which livestock categories you are enrolled in, you may need to report the following information:

- Date of each sale
- Total number of head sold and breakdown by type (heifer or steer, grain-fed or milk-fed)
- Average sale weight for each sale (individual sale weights required for grain-fed veal)
- Weight type (live, rail or carcass)
- Origin of sold animals (number raised from birth and number purchased)
- Purchase date and average purchase weight
- Point of sale including name of auction, private treaty or broker
- Number sold as breeding stock (cattle and hog only)

When do you need to report?

Sales reporting deadlines are quarterly for all livestock categories except cow-calf and sheep, which are semi-annual.

Sales reports will be mailed and made available on agricorp.com in April for quarterly categories and in July for the *semi-annual categories*.

Save time, go online!

In April, you will be able to submit your sales report online by visiting agricorp.com and clicking **Online tools**. By completing your sales report online you will receive a confirmation number immediately. You will also be able to save an electronic copy for your own records.

For more information

For more program details, refer to your *2012 Handbook – RMP for livestock*, available on agricorp.com and mail in your renewal package, or contact Agricorp at 1-888-247-4999, Monday to Friday from 7a.m. to 5 p.m.

Farm Business Registration Update

Producers receiving FBR invoices

This month, producers are receiving their 2012 FBR invoice. The FBR fee is \$220.35 and is due by March 1. To remain eligible to apply for the farmland property class tax rate, all farms that gross \$7,000 or more must register and pay the annual registration fee, under the Farm Business Registration (FBR) program.

The annual fee pays for a membership in an accredited general farm organization (GFO) of the producer's choice.

Funding Opportunities

CAAP Call for Proposals - Sustainability

As a catalyst for innovation, adaptation, and advancement for a profitable and sustainable agriculture and agri-business industry, the Agricultural Adaptation Council (AAC) is issuing a Call for Proposals (CFP) to encourage projects that address agricultural sustainability in Ontario.

Proposal Submission Deadline: Thursday, March 15, 2012 at 4:00 p.m.

The Agricultural Adaptation Council (AAC) is seeking projects under the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP). The AAC is interested in innovative projects that:

Seize opportunities – projects that develop a new idea, product, niche, or market opportunity to the benefit of the sector.

Respond to new and emerging issues – projects that address issues that were not of concern previously, or were not known about at all.

Pathfind and pilot solutions – projects that test ways of dealing with new issues, or find new ways to deal with existing issues. Under CAAP, this is done in two ways:

- Pathfinding projects – projects that look at different options to prepare the sector to face the future and remain competitive.
- Piloting projects – projects that test ideas or approaches to see if it is effective enough to use in everyday applications in the sector.

CAAP information, project and application requirements are available in the CAAP guide. Have an idea that you think would fit for funding under the CAAP program? We're here to help. Contact an AAC staff member to discuss your project idea, or click the links on the right (under important information) to get started. CAAP is funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and administered by the Agricultural Adaptation Council (AAC).

For more information please visit the AAC website: <http://adaptcouncil.org/program-details.php?id=2n2p5h0d2z7n>

Garlic Integrated Pest Management Update

Date: Feb 17, 2012

Location: Carp Agricultural Hall

More info: Contact Margaret Appleby at 613.475.5850

Your Food, Your Choice: The Value of Organic

Hosted by the Canadian Organic Growers - Toronto Chapter

Date: Saturday, February 18, 9 am - 5 pm

Location: U of T Conference Centre, 89 Chestnut St., Toronto

Cost: \$65 (after Feb. 5, \$85); COG members \$55 (after Feb. 5, \$65)

Keynote speaker: Kristin Kimball, author of *The Dirty Life*, recounting her journey from high-heeled urbanite to hoe-wielding farmer.

Topics include:

- Is Organic Too Extreme?
- Something Fishy Here - GE Salmon
- Your Food - Your Health
- Our Organic Neighbours
- Is Organic for Everyone
- Growing Desserts
- Organic for Schools
- Deconstructing Organic Pricing, and more!

Join us for practical answers to serious questions that won't be green washed. It's not about the money; it's about your health and the future.

More info: For more information or to register please visit the website at www.cogtoronto.org/COG_Toronto/Conference_2012.html

Ontario Berry Growers Association Annual Meeting

Date: Feb 21, 2012

Location: Embassy Suites Hotel, Niagara Falls (during the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention).

Watch the conference website for details at www.ofvc.ca

Condensed version of the berry program:

Tuesday, February 21, 2012 - Embassy Suites Hotel, Niagara Falls

- Introducing Summer Evening – A New June Bearing Strawberry Selection, Adam Dale
- Grower Profile – Avonmore Berry Farm, David and Pam Philips
- Virus Diseases in Strawberry and Raspberry, Pam Fisher, OMAFRA
- Innovation and Project Results for Raspberries in California, Mark Bolda, University of California
- The Do's and Don'ts with Herbicides in Plasticulture, Kristen Callow, OMAFRA

OBGA Annual Meeting & Lunch

- New Regulation 119/11 - Implications for labelling and packaging berry crops, Suzete Moniz, OMAFRA
- Employee Recruiting and Management, Michelle Herrle, Herrle's Country Farm Market
- How to get day-neutrals ready for winter and other research results, B.Hughes University of Guelph

Round Table Discussions:

1. Food Safety Audits and Traceability – What you need to know, Colleen Haskins, OMAFRA
2. Labelling and Packaging Regulations, Suzete Moniz, OMAFRA
3. Wildlife Management, Mike Gatt, MNR
4. Employee Recruiting and Management, Michelle Herrle
5. Dealing with Charitable Donations Paul Ralph, Cedar Hill Farm and Alf Krause, Krause Berry Farms

Wednesday, February 22, 2011 – Scotiabank Convention Center, Niagara Falls

- Why Raspberries Like Tunnels, Dr. Adam Dale, University of Guelph
- Marketing and Promotion Opportunities for Berries, Jenn VanDeVelde, Wholesome Pickins, Delhi
- Managing Wildlife on the Farm, Mike Gatt, MNR
- Management of Nematodes in Berry Crops (with or without fumigants), Dr. George Bird, Michigan State University
- Farm Profile – Krause Berry Farms, Alf Krause, Krause Berry Farms, Langley, BC
- National Berry Marketing Initiative Update Karen Fenske, StratPoint Solutions, B.C.
- California Strawberry Production and Innovations, Mark Bolda, University of California
- Biology and Management of Spotted Wing Drosophila in Berry Crops, Rufus Isaacs, Michigan
- Managing Black Root Rot in Strawberries, Michael Celetti, OMAFRA, Guelph

Canadian Organic Science Conference

Date: February 21-23, 2012

Location: Winnipeg, Manitoba

More info: Visit the website at www.organicagcentre.ca/COSC/

Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention (OFVC)

Date: February 22-23, 2012

Location: Scotiabank Convention Centre, 6815 Stanley Ave., Niagara Falls, Ontario (*NEW LOCATION*)

More info: Visit the website at: www.ofvc.ca

Organic Federation of Canada – Annual General Meeting

Date: February 24, 2012. 1-3pm

Location: Ambassador D meeting room of the Canad Inns Destination Centre Fort Garry Hotel, 1824 Pembina Hwy, Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dial-in participation: 1.866.613.5223 or 1.416.204.9354 please enter access code: 9610448

Agenda

1. Convene and introductions – Roll call of the delegates of the members and of the sector participants
2. Adoption of Agenda.
3. Appointment of referee for the minutes.
4. Adoption of minutes of AGM 2010.
5. Report to the Directors (from the President).
6. Reports on Projects:
 - OFC General Management and Communication
 - OFC Members Reports
 - Organic Science Cluster Report
 - Standards Interpretation Committee Report
7. OFC Financial results 2010-2011; appointment of the auditor.
8. Specific issues:

Plan for funding the maintenance of COS –Feedback from participants –

As per CGSB procedures, the Canadian Organic Standards need to be revised; in fact, this revision was due in 2011 but no progress has been made in getting the federal agencies to provide funding for that necessary revision. Being the manager of the Standards Interpretation Committee, the OFC observes some ambiguities in the current standards through the questions addressed by stakeholders and the work list of the CGSB Committee on Organic Agriculture responsible for the standard maintenance includes over 200 items.

The OFC would like to hear from the sector what could be the applicable solution for the standard's revision to be funded.

9. Designation of directors (voting and ex-officio) (to be verified)
 - Terms ending 2011: QC, AB, NL, PEI, NS, NB, OTA (as per 2007 AGM minutes)
 - Terms ending 2010: MB, BC, ON, YK, SK
10. Domestic issues –Next AGM
11. Varia
12. Adjourn

Eco Farm Day 2012

Hosted by the Canadian Organic Growers – Ottawa Chapter

Theme: “Vibrant Business in Organic Agriculture”

Date: February 25-26th, 2012

Location: The Ramada Inn, 805 Brookdale Ave., Cornwall, Ontario

More info: Visit the website at www.cog.ca/ottawa/ecofarmday/ or email enquiries to: info@ecofarmday.ca

Workshop - Making the Transition to Small Scale Organic Production

This workshop is geared to experienced small-scale produce farmers who are interested in transitioning to certified organic production. **The workshop is delivered over two 2-hour sessions via conference call, with some independent work required in-between sessions.** Upon registration, participants will receive a workbook and toll-free number call-in details. The facilitator will be available by phone/email for questions or support with completing workbook activities in-between sessions.

Dates:

- February 28, 2012 1:00-3:00pm
- March 20, 2012 1:00-3:00pm

Format: Conference call

Objectives include helping workshop participants to:

- Learn about the process of transitioning
- Understand the aspects of the Canadian Organic Standards that are directly relevant to small-scale produce farming
- Understand the “who”, “what” and “how” of organic certification
- Understand how to develop a comprehensive organic plan for their farm
- Meet other market gardeners and have an opportunity to network

Facilitated by: Theresa Schumilas, Garden Party

Cost: \$70 (\$60 members), \$35 for additional people from the same farm business

Register with Canadian Organic Growers:

- Online at www.cog.ca/shop/ (click “Events”)
- By email office@cog.ca
- By phone 1-888-375-7383.

More info:

(Ottawa) Colin Lundy, colin@cog.ca, 613-493-0020
(Guelph) Tegan Renner, outreach@cogwaterloo.ca, 226-251-3012

The Making the Transition to Small Scale Organic Production Workshop 2012 may be eligible for cost-share funding through the Business Development for Farm Businesses program, one of the Best Practices suites of

programs under Growing Forward, a federal-provincial, territorial initiative. For more information on program requirements, please call 1-800-265-9751 x64213 or visit: www.ontariosoilcrop.org/en/bdfbhome

Workshop - Growing Strawberries Organically

As a companion to the Canadian Organic Grower's (COG's) newly released Practical Skills Handbook *Growing Strawberries Organically*, this workshop covers important considerations and management strategies for successful organic strawberry production.

The *Growing Strawberries Organically* workshop is for organic growers wanting to diversify their farm or improve the quality and quantity of their organic strawberries, or conventional growers wanting to explore organic strawberries as an option, or simply to reduce their pesticide usage while still raising quality berries.

Date/Location:

- March 3, 2012; Bloomingdale Community Centre (1031 Snyders Flat's Rd)

Cost: Includes lunch and a copy of COG's Practical Skills Handbook *Growing Strawberries Organically*

- \$60 COG members
- \$70 for non-members
- \$35 for additional people from the same farm business (excludes book).
- Additional books are \$15 ea (reg \$19-\$22).

Facilitated by: Rob Wallbridge, Songberry Organic Farm

Register with Canadian Organic Growers:

- Online at www.cog.ca/shop/ (click "Events")
- By email office@cog.ca
- By phone 1-888-375-7383.

More info:

(Ottawa) Colin Lundy, colin@cog.ca, 613-493-0020
(Guelph) Tegan Renner, outreach@cogwaterloo.ca, 226-251-3012

The Growing Strawberries Organically Workshop 2012 may be eligible for cost-share funding through the Business Development for Farm Businesses program, one of the Best Practices suites of programs under Growing Forward, a federal-provincial, territorial initiative. For more information on program requirements, please call 1-800-265-9751 x64213 or visit: www.ontariosoilcrop.org/en/bdfbhome

Funding for these workshops comes in part from Rural Association Partnership Program (RAPP) of the City of Ottawa, and the Agricultural Management Institute (AMI). AMI is part of the Best Practices Suite of programs for Growing Forward, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

Workshop - Record Keeping for Organic Farming

Record keeping is a key component of organic certification for farmers, yet farmers commonly cite the necessity to keep records as a barrier to going organic. In this day long workshop, participants will learn different tools and techniques to maintain efficient records, providing benefit to both the organic certifier and overall farm management.

Record Keeping for Organic Farming workshop is geared towards both conventional farmers wanting to learn more about organic certification as well as organic farmers wanting to improve this aspect of their farm management. Specific information for crops, livestock and fruit/vegetable producers will be covered.

Date/Location:

- March 10, 2012 (Guelph region)

Cost: Includes lunch and a copy of COG's Practical Skills Handbook *Record Keeping for Organic Growers*

- \$60 COG members
- \$70 for non-members
- \$35 for additional people from the same farm business (excludes book).

Additional books \$15 ea (reg. \$21-\$25).

Facilitated by: Maureen Bostock, organic farmer, organic inspector and more

Register with Canadian Organic Growers:

- Online at www.cog.ca/shop/ (click "Events")
- By email office@cog.ca
- By phone 1-888-375-7383.

More info:

(Ottawa) Colin Lundy, colin@cog.ca, 613-493-0020
(Guelph) Tegan Renner, outreach@cogwaterloo.ca, 226-251-3012

Funding for these workshops comes in part from the Agricultural Management Institute, part of the Best Practices Suite of programs for Growing Forward, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

The Record Keeping for Organic Farming workshop is eligible for cost-share funding through the Business Development for Farm Businesses program, one of the Best Practices suites of programs under Growing Forward, a federal-provincial, territorial initiative. For more information on program requirements, please call 1-800-265-9751 x64213 or visit: www.ontariosoilcrop.org/en/bdfbhome.

Ontario Potato Conference

Date: March 6, 2012

Location: Delta Hotel and Conference Centre, Guelph

More info: Contact Eugenia Banks at 519.766.5337

Events (cont'd)

Society of Ontario Nut Growers Technical Meeting

Date: March 6, 2012. 9:30 am – 4:30pm

Location: The Simcoe Research Station, 1283 Blueline Rd., Simcoe, Ontario..

Cost: \$15 includes lunch.

More info: Call Bruce Thurston at 519-740-6220 to register for lunch or visit the website for more information www.songonline.ca.

Organic Council of Ontario (OCO) Annual General Meeting

Date: March 7th, 2012. 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Location: Loyola House, Guelph

Cost: Free to OCO members in good standing, \$35 for non-members. Lunch provided.

Come learn about OCO's activities over the past year, review OCO policy, and set our priorities for the coming year.

Keynote Speaker: John Ikerd, Professor Emeritus of Agricultural & Applied Economics, University of Missouri Columbia . Author of "Small Farms are Real Farms", "Sustainable Capitalism", and "Revolution of the Middle". Professor Ikerd spoke at the 2005 Guelph Organic Conference. His talk will be determined by the attendees! Please review John's work and let us know what you'd like his talk to focus on: <http://www.johnikerd.com/johnikerd.com/Home.html>

Board elections for the following member groups: Producer, Marketer, Processor, Certifier. OCO members (new members welcome) can nominate themselves or others. **More info:** Please contact the OCO office to learn more about the role of the Board and the expectations of its members. Tel: 519.827.1221.

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