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Welcome to “ON Organic”

Evan Elford, New Crop Development Specialist, OMAFRA

The spring of 2012 is drawing to an end. Timely rains in the last week have helped crops in many parts of the province, however we must continually think about our water balances (rainfall and crop requirements) through the growing season. Monitoring your soil moisture and rainfall during the growing season and supplementing with irrigation when necessary is very important for both crop quality and yield. Detailed information on water balances, irrigation scheduling and critical irrigation periods for a variety of crops is available in the Irrigation Management manual from the Best Management Practices series. The manual is available as a free download or hard copy from OMAFRA. Please visit our website for more information: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/environment/bmp/series.htm#5>

As always we welcome your comments and any suggestions for topics in the newsletter.

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

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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Linda Hill – OMAFRA, Client Service Representative

Extended Season Grazing versus Stored Feed for Beef Cows

Tom Hamilton, OMAFRA Beef Program Lead – Production Systems

Beef producers strive to reduce costs while maintaining or improving productivity. Since feed is the single largest cost in cow-calf production, strategies to reduce feed costs are of high importance to the economic success of these farms. One of the trends which has become popular in recent years is extending the grazing season. Keeping cows outside past the traditional end of the grazing season (late summer/early fall) can significantly reduce costs. Savings are found by having the animals do their own feed harvesting and manure spreading, saving machinery costs and labour, and by reducing or eliminating the amount of bedding used.

Four of ways to extend the grazing season are:

1. Stockpiling perennial forages
2. Planting annual crops such as corn or small grains, and grazing them as standing crops
3. Planting annual crops which are swathed, then left on the field for grazing
4. Planting annual crops which are cut and baled, with bales left on the field for cattle to eat

Research Trial

A study conducted at the Agriculture and Agri-food Brandon Research Center by Legesse et al.¹ compared 6 cow-calf production systems over 5 years. The British x Continental cows and their calves (288 pairs/year) were rotationally grazed for the summer on either grass or alfalfa-grass pastures. From October – January, the weaned pregnant cows (240 head/year) were allocated amongst 2 pasture and 3 drylot feeding strategies:

1. Pasture - stockpiled perennial forage
2. Pasture - swathed annual crop
3. Drylot - hay
4. Drylot - barley silage/oat straw
5. Drylot - barley grain/oat straw

Stockpiled perennial forages included:

- a. Oats (swathed)
- b. Siberian millet (swathed)
- c. Corn (standing or left baled)
- d. Triticale (swathed)

After the winter feeding period, but before turn out, cows which had calved at least once were placed on a common diet, in the dry lot. This diet consisted of free choice grass hay and 2.2 lbs/day of a barley based supplement. Females about to calve for the first time were fed separately on a diet formulated to meet National Research Council standards.¹ Calving occurred February-April, in a barn, with post calving cow-calf pairs held in a shed lot for

1-2 weeks prior to turn out on pasture. Cow-calf pairs were rotationally grazed on grass or alfalfa pastures until the end of the traditional pasture season. After this cows were either sent to a dry lot and fed on stored feed, or assigned to one of the extended season grazing groups, for the October – January period. Cows stayed in the same feeding system during each year of the trial.

Cow Performance

Cows on the extended grazing regimes gained less weight from mid to late gestation, and weighed less prior to calving. Weaning time cow body condition scores (BCS) were similar among the winter feed groups. However, pre-calving cow BCS was significantly lower for extended grazing cows than dry lot cows, although the size of difference was small (BCS of 5.14 vs 5.06).

Calf Performance

Extended season grazing of dry, pregnant cows had no negative effect on the growth rate of subsequent calves, relative to those from cows which had been dry lotted and fed hay, barley silage and oat straw or barley grain and oat straw - the weaning weights of calves and their gain on pasture were similar amongst all winter feeding strategies.

Reproduction

Reproductive performance is a critical component of cow-calf production. Pregnancy rate to fixed time AI was similar among feeding groups, as was calving interval and the number of calves born. Also, the prevalence of dystocia, abnormal calf presentation and the number of calves born did not differ. This showed that beef cows can be grazed well into the fall and early winter without compromising their reproductive performance.

Herd Productivity

Overall herd productivity was similar when comparing winter drylot feeding versus extended season grazing. Calf weaning weights were similar, as were calving interval, % calves born, and % assisted births. Although extended grazing cows were somewhat lighter at calving time, this did not negatively impact their productivity or that of their calves. Interestingly, extended grazing cows had a lower culling rate prior to turn out, and a higher rate of calf survival to weaning.

Impact of Weather

Moisture is a critical factor in the growth of all crops, including perennials and annuals planted for extending the grazing season. During years when growing seasons experienced average to above average precipitation, the extended grazing cows were among the heaviest of all feeding groups (Fig.1). However, during below average

Extended Season Grazing versus Stored Feed for Beef Cows (cont'd)

precipitation years extended grazing cows were among the lightest of all feeding groups. The authors also point out that after this study, drought resulted in crop failure of planted annual crops, preventing the extended grazing of annuals trial to continue.

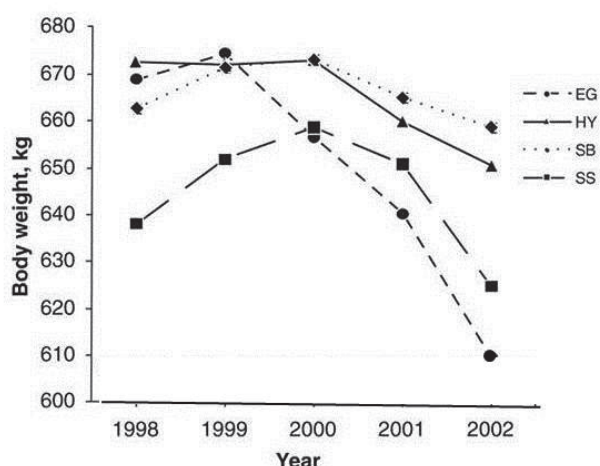


Figure 1. Pre-calving weight of cows on various winter feeding programs^a.

EG= extended season grazing

HY = hay in drylot

SB = oat straw and barley grain in drylot

SS = barley silage and oat straw in drylot

^aadapted from Legesse et al ¹

Snow cover can impact the ability of cows to access feed during late season grazing. In this study monthly total snowfall ranged from 20.9 cm to 9.2cm. Daily snow on the ground ranged from 9.2 cm to 21.7 cm. Research in Ontario has found that snow in excess of 25 cm can restrict the intake of grazing cows. This may be a more important consideration in snowier climates such as found in much of Ontario, compared to the drier regimes found in much of the prairies and parklands of the west.

Summary

Extending the grazing season using stockpiled perennials or annual crops can reduce feed costs and reduce the labour and bedding needed for beef cows. When adequate forage is available, cows on extended seasons grazing perform as well as those fed in conventional dry lot winter systems fed stored feed. However, extended grazing season is subject to weather risk, and producers should plan alternative feeding strategies in case lack of rain or excess snow have major impacts.

¹ Legesse, G., Small, M., J.A., Scott, S.L., Kebreab, E., Crow, G.H., Block, H.C., Robins, C.D., Khakbazan, M. and McCaughey, W.P. 2012. Bioperformance evaluation of various summer and winter feeding strategies for cow-calf production. Can. J. Anim. Sci. 92: 89-102. ¹National Research Council, Beef Cattle Nutrient Requirements.1996.

Foodland Organic Logo Update

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 resource for producers and processors to identify their food as both certified organic and local.

Currently 13 Ontario producers and processors are using the logo on their products. 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:

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).



OMAFRA Crop IPM Scout Training Workshop Schedule

Here are the updated IPM scout workshops available for those who will be scouting horticultural crops this year. To register contact: Agricultural Information Contact Centre at 1-877-424-1300

Workshop	Date & Time	Location	Workshop Leader	Materials needed	Follow-up field training
Asparagus – learn, lunch and field walk	July 10 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (tentative)	Norfolk County	Elaine Roddy	NOTE: 11 am start time Handouts provided. Lunch provided by OAGMB	on request

For more information contact:

Margaret Appleby

IPM Systems Specialist

OMAFRA Brighton, 613-475-5850 Email: margaret.appleby@ontario.ca

OMAFRA Articles and Updates

Spotted Wing Drosophila Update

An OMAFRA team of specialists monitored for spotted wing drosophila (SWD) in 2011 at over 65 sites in 16 counties in Ontario. SWD was detected in 12 of these counties and at over 50% of the monitored sites. Because SWD has spread quickly through many states and provinces in North America, all growers should be aware of this new pest and the risk it poses to fruit crops. Berry crops, especially blueberries and raspberries, and stone fruit such as apricots, cherries, peaches and plums are at highest risk for this pest, but all thin skinned fruit may be susceptible. With support of the Ontario Berry Growers' Association, The Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association and the Farm Innovation Program, we will continue to monitor for spotted wing drosophila in 2012. Check our website (www.ontario.ca/spottedwing) for updates on pest development in Ontario.

(From OMAFRA newsletter Hort Matters)

Cutworm Activity in Sweet Corn and Tomatoes

Elaine Roddy, Vegetable Crop Specialist, OMAFRA, Ridgeway and Janice LeBoeuf, Vegetable Crop Specialist, OMAFRA, Ridgeway

As corn plants start to emerge, keep an eye out for cutworm feeding damage. Early -season cutworm injury appears as plants cut off at, or just below the soil-line. In older seedlings, the cutworms may deeply notch the base of the plants, causing them to wilt. Cutworms are often most active on sandy knolls and in areas that had significant green cover during the early spring. Most species of cutworm do not overwinter in Ontario. In

the early spring, adult moths are transported on the trade-winds from the overwintering sites. Given the mild winter conditions of 2012, it is possible that some species of cutworm moths have overwintered in Ontario this year.

Female moths are attracted to dense, green cover to lay their eggs. Often, when they arrive in Ontario in early spring, the main source of habitat for the females are winter annual or perennial weeds and cover crops. Egg hatch and larval feeding often coincides with planting and crop emergence.

During daylight hours, cutworms remain buried in the soil. They emerge to feed at night. As a result, registered organic pest control products are most effective if they are sprayed in the evening as the cutworms emerge from the soil to feed.

In sweet corn, the control threshold is 10% damage. Keep the crop stage and worm size in mind when making spray decisions. Sixth and Seventh instar larvae (1.5-2" long) are close to pupation and unlikely to cause additional damage to the plants. Once corn plants reach the 4-6 leaf stage, they can sustain larger amounts of feeding without economic injury.

Early-season cutworm can also attack tomatoes. However, this spring, tomato growers should also scout their fields for variegated cutworm, a climbing cutworm. Although there is typically a small overwintering population in Ontario, damage is not usually noticed until July, when moth populations move in from more southern areas. However, with the mild winter there may have been more winter survival in Ontario (variegated cutworm overwinter as pupae) giving potential for an unusual May outbreak.

Fields that had living weeds or cover crops (egg-laying sites) until very close to transplanting could be at risk of variegated cutworm and early-season cutworm feeding this spring.

Unlike early-season cutworm species, the variegated cutworm does feed during the day. Figures 1 and 2 show very small larvae feeding on tomato transplants on a 30°C afternoon in full sun. This field had both clipped plants and plants defoliated by foliar feeding.



Figure 1: Five early-instar variegated cutworm larvae feeding on a newly transplanted tomato plant.

There is no established threshold for climbing cutworm feeding on tomato seedlings, but the general threshold for early-season cutworm is 5% damaged plants. In this case, damage could be counted as clipped or severely defoliated plants.

(From OMAFRA newsletter Hort Matters)



Figure 2: Newly-transplanted tomato plant defoliated by variegated cutworm larvae.

Avoiding Scurf in Sweet Potato Slips

Melanie Filotas, IPM Specialist for Speciality Crops, OMAFRA, Simcoe

As sweet potato growers head into planting season, it's good to keep in mind that some of the activities occurring now can influence pest problems much later in the season. Scurf is a common disease of sweet potatoes that seems to have been appearing more frequently in Ontario over the last few years. Caused by a soil borne fungus, it attacks the skin and outer layers of sweet potato roots, leaving lesions which affect marketability and storage quality.

Symptoms of scurf are generally seen at harvest or in storage; however the disease itself is spread primarily through infected planting material. When a scurf-infected root is used to produce slips, the fungus can spread from the root to the lower (below-ground) portion of the sprouts in the greenhouse or plant bed. The fungus can then spread from infected stems back down to the daughter roots after the slip is transplanted to the field.

This is one of the reasons why growers ordering slips should purchase only certified disease-free material, ensuring that the slip supplier has taken steps to avoid this disease.

Ontario growers who produce some of their own slips should be aware that the scurf pathogen tends to be restricted to the lower portion of the stem closest to the root. Consequently an important method for reducing incidence of this disease is to cut slips at least 2.5 cm (1 inch) above the soil surface, without allowing the cutting tool to touch the soil. Never pull sprouts directly from the roots - although this may be faster, it greatly increases the chances that the resulting slips will be infected with scurf.

The scurf pathogen can persist in the soil for a few years, so do not plant sweet potatoes in the same field two years in a row. This is particularly important for fields where you have had a problem with scurf in the past. In fields with a history of scurf, it may be necessary to rotate out of sweet potatoes for longer periods (3-4 years).

Implementing these sanitation practices now can avoid headaches down the road. Additionally, some of these practices may be helpful in managing other sweet potato diseases.

(From OMAFRA newsletter Hort Matter)

Tall Spindle Orchard Support Systems

Hugh Fraser, Agricultural Engineer, OMAFRA, Vineland and Leslie Huffman, Apple Specialist, OMAFRA, Harrow

The reason most tall spindle orchard support systems fail is because the anchorage is too weak, the in-row posts are too far apart, and/or the wires weren't attached properly. Crop, wind, and snow loads are quite great for tall spindle orchards because all the crop (and/or snow load) is supported on the wires attached to the in-row wood posts and the tall canopy creates a virtual wall that has to withstand strong winds.

The design of the system described below (see Figure 1) is for tree spacing 0.9 m (3 ft); row spacing 3.6 m (12 ft); maximum row length about 150 m (500 ft); top wire height 2.75 m (9 ft); low wire height 0.75 m (2.5 ft); middle wire heights 1.45 m (4.75 ft) and 2.1 m (7 ft). Higher wire heights of 3 m (10 ft) are desirable, but this means taller, more costly in-row posts are needed of 4.3 m (14 ft) or 4.9 m (16 ft). If hail nets are to be installed, in-row posts need to be 4.9 m (16 ft).

1. Tieback anchors

Mechanically driven (pounded) tieback anchor posts

resist pullout better than screw anchors (used in vineyards) but are more difficult, time-consuming and costly to install. Driven tieback anchors should be at least 13 cm (5 in) in diameter, driven at least 1.2 m (4 ft) deep in undisturbed soil.

If screw anchor tieback anchors are used, they must be at least 1.2- 1.5 m (4-5 ft) long, with at least a 19-22 mm (3/4-7/8 in) diameter rod and with at least one 150 mm (6 in) wide plate at the base to resist pullout and bending.

Some suppliers offer a 'double-helix' type screw anchors as shown in the sketch. Screw anchors must be installed in undisturbed soil with special bits for skid steer loaders.

2. End anchor posts

Pressure-treated (CCA) lodgepole pine posts are preferred and they should be driven, or pounded, into undisturbed soil using special equipment. This makes them at least 50% stronger in resisting overturning, compared to augering (not recommended). Every 33% increase in depth doubles these posts' resistance to overturning. For driven posts, the 'small' end of the post goes into the soil first. End anchor posts should be at least 100-125 mm (4-5 in) diameter. Clay soil gives more resistance than sandy soil and dry soils offer more resistance than wet soils.

3. Geometry of anchoring system

The optimum geometry delivering the most strength is an equilateral triangle (60° at each corner) formed by the end anchor post, support wire connected to the tieback anchor, and ground surface. This is easier said than done because; it is more difficult to pound posts on a angle; the angle means at least 4.3-4.9 m (14-16 ft) posts are needed for end anchor posts in order to get the right height of top wire; and growers don't want to 'lose' more land than need be at end of rows. As shown in the sketch, the top wire must go 'over the top' of the end anchor post.

This can split the post, so to help prevent this, place a staple (or two) on their sides underneath the wire on top of the post, held in place with staples driven into the top of the post.

4. High tensile strength wire; Class 3, smooth 12.5ga; 0.1 in diameter galvanized

High tensile strength wire has more strength per unit cost than low-tensile wire and lasts longer. This wire is tricky to work with as it can spring suddenly, so eye protection and gloves are a must. Do not kink this wire as this weakens it. Carefully roll the wire off the rolls using a Spinning Jenny. Do not lay it on the ground and

lift it off. If the wire is not removed from the roll opposite to the way it was rolled on, the wire will behave like a spring and cause you no end of grief. Be very careful when tightening this wire because if it breaks, it recoils with tremendous force. Install the wire first, then hand-tighten it before tying it off.

5. Wire fastener

Fasteners such as the patented TMGrip join wires and can be retightened if needed with a special tool. There are other fasteners and tightening devices.

6. In-row support posts

Because of the loads mentioned, in-row support posts should not be much further apart than 10 m (33 ft). These posts are thinner at 75-100 mm (3-4 in) than thicker end anchor posts and they too need to be pounded in at least 0.84 m (2.75 ft). If 3.6 m (12 ft) posts are installed at this depth, this doesn't allow the top wire to be any higher than 2.75 m (9 ft).

Longer posts are available at 4.3-4.9 m (14-16 ft) but these are much more costly. However if hail nets will be installed, 4.9 m (16 ft) in-row posts can be more justified to support the nets, placed 1.2 m (4 ft) in ground for good anchorage, 3.6 m (12 ft) above ground, and 0.3 m (2 ft) above the 3 m (10 ft) high support wire so there is room for the net to sag between posts without rubbing trees, and to allow hail to shed to the net openings between tree rows.

7. Leader supports

Leader supports are placed at each tree, but because they do not support weight, simply guiding trees, they do not need to be substantial. There are different types of supports including 12-16 mm (1/2-5/8 in) in diameter bamboo; 20 x 20 mm (3/4 x 3/4 in) steel angles; or galvanized steel conduit.

8. Fastener clips

These connect the leaders to the wire so it does not slide along the wire. There are many different types of fasteners including plastic ties, pre-manufactured wire ties, and hand twisted wire ties.

9. Connecting wire to in-row posts

There are two schools of thought on connecting wires to posts. One is to drill small holes through the posts near the top and feed the wire through to give lots of support both vertically and laterally. The other method is to attach the wires to the outside of the post using staples.

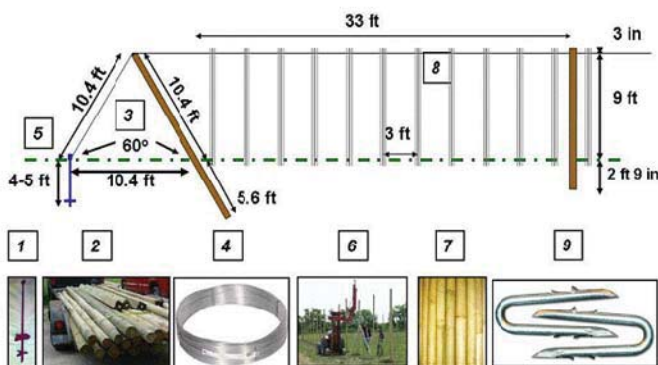
Although drilling a hole gives good support, it can be difficult to do in the field and works best if the orchard is relatively flat because the holes have to be predrilled

OMAFRA Articles and Updates (cont'd)

before feeding the wire through. You do not want the wire aligning 'up and down' along the row as it might tend to pull posts up, or down, over time.

The other more popular and easier way is to use large, galvanized staples connecting the wire against the predominant windward side of the in-line support posts so the wind pushes the wire against the posts and does not try to work these staples out. Never install staples on the top of a post because the end grain of the wood will not hold them. Use staples that are 50 mm (2 in) long, double-barbed, Class 3 galvanized which have substantially more resistance to pull out than the more commonly used 45 mm (1-3/4 in) long ones. Slash-cut points are better than diamond shaped points because the slash shape forces the staple to 'rotate' or screw its legs inside the post away from the flat side as it is driven in. Install two staples for each wire on each in-row post at about 50 mm (2 in) apart. Place the one on the 'left' at 11 and 5 o'clock, the one of the right at 1 and 7 o'clock so they form a sort of 'V'. This prevents the staples from lining up with the grain of the wood which makes the connection weaker, and when the staples are driven in, they rotate to provide a strong connection. Angle the staples slightly 'up' or 'down' against the angle of pull if there is a rise or dip in the land. Never drive staples home because this damages the wire finish and can kink and weaken it. The wire must be able to freely move under the staple. If possible, leave them with about 6 mm (1/4 in) to go.

Figure 1. Cross-sectional view of Tall Spindle Orchard Support System



Photos 2, 6 from Leslie Huffman, OMAFRA
Photos 1, 4, 7, 9 from Finger Lakes Trellis Supply Depot website

(The authors would like to thank Chris Hedges of Orchard Post and Orchard Supply 519-428-4550 for his assistance in this article)

(From OMAFRA newsletter Orchard Network)

Mapping Information You Can Use

Adam Hayes, Soil Management Specialist (Field Crops),
OMAFRA, Ridgeway

Ag Maps Geographic Information Portal

The Ag Maps Geographic Information Portal is a new service launched this past fall by the Geomatics Unit of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. This new page on the OMAFRA website www.ontario.ca/agmaps offers a variety of soil map resources. There are four sections that provide a wide range of information.

1. Agricultural Information Atlas

The Agricultural Information Atlas is an interactive mapping website. It serves as a tool to acquire agricultural information or to create maps. You can view maps with basic road and municipal information, aerial photography, Canada Land Inventory, hydraulic soil groups, tile drainage information, soil drainage, watersheds and more. It is as easy as clicking on and off the layers you are interested in seeing. You can use the tools to measure length, area and to mark areas on the map. The maps can be printed out as well. These maps can be quite handy when you need a farm or field map.

2. Geospatial Data View and Downloads

This part of the website allows the user to view the location on Google Maps of farm markets, OMAFRA offices, equipment dealers and more. The user may also download these files to their computers as a kml or shapefile.

3. Canada Land Inventory (CLI) Mapping

The Canada Land Inventory maps, or CLI maps as they are often known, provide information on the soil capability class of land (Class 1 to 7) in Ontario. The map units are in colour and use the current road names.

4. OMAFRA Program Data Sets

a. Drainage Mapping

The drainage mapping section of the website provides information and links to the agricultural drainage data that OMAFRA maintains.

b. Soil Mapping and Reports

This section provides links to a page on the Soils Ontario project. The objective is to evolve the current soils data into a digital database that is spatially accurate throughout Ontario, consistent, and easily accessible in digital and paper format. A

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link is also provided to the Land Information Ontario website, which has significant soils data sets. Another link takes the user to the CANSIS website, which is maintained by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. This website has PDF versions of most of the Ontario soil maps and reports. Just click on the link that says "view the report". The final link takes you to the Service Ontario website where soil maps, reports and other soils related publications can be ordered.

c. Land Use Data Sets

This section discusses the Agricultural Operations Inventory project, which is complete on a portion of the province. It provides farm and land use information, such as fields, farmsteads, fencerows and ditches. Detailed information includes crop type, row direction, ditch and farmstead locations, livestock raised, irrigation and tillage method used. Also described in this section is the Agricultural Resource Inventory, which was produced in 1983.

It provides a map of general land use at that time - urban, woodland, and cropland (corn system, grazing system, hay system, etc). The final link takes you to a page about Specialty Crops and Canada Land Inventory Mapping for the Feed-in Tariff Program.

These resources represent a lot of work that has gone into creating useful tools for many types of uses. Some of them are easy for farmers to use and others are targeted more toward planners, consultants and others who have the software to map out the data. A few of the resources are complete, many are being constantly updated and improved, while others are still in development.

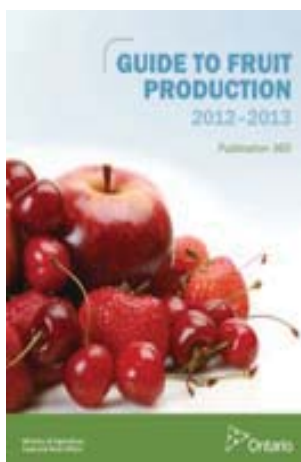
Check these resources out and see which ones are most useful for your situation.

(From OMAFRA newsletter Crop Talk)

New Publications

OMAFRA Publications - The following paid publication is available from
www.serviceontario.ca/publications:

Guide to Fruit Production, 2012-2013, Publication 360 [new title for Pub 360]; the cost is \$20.00; please recycle all former editions of Pub 360 and any supplements.



The following free OMAFRA Factsheets are now available from www.serviceontario.ca/publications:

12-017: *Nutrient Management Act, 2002*, Determining Odour Categories of Non-Agricultural Source Materials (NASMs); Agdex 720/538; New.

12-021: Choosing Breeds for Producing Profitable Market Lambs, Agdex 430/30; New.

12-023: Dairy Genomic Selection, Agdex 410/31; New.

12-025: *Nutrient Management Act, 2002*, On-Farm Liquid Nutrient Transfer Systems, Agdex 720/538; New.

12-027: Legislation and Farming Practices, Agdex 700; replaces 04-071, which should be recycled.

Eco Farm Day 2013: Call for Presentations

Eco Farm Day, hosted by Canadian Organic Growers, Ottawa Chapter, is the leading learning and networking conference for organic agriculture and food in Eastern Ontario and beyond.

Last year's 2012 edition hosted Steve Beauchesne from Beau's All Natural Brewing Company the keynote speaker on the theme of Vibrant Family Businesses in Organic Agriculture, with 12 excellent workshops, over 35 exhibitors, and over 250 participants. The Saturday evening gala featured Lucy Sharratt from the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network on the subject of GM alfalfa. The programs and presentations of the last 5 years are available online at www.ecofarmday.ca.

The next edition is scheduled for Saturday, February 23rd 2013, in Cornwall, Ontario. The theme of Eco Farm Day 2013 is "Water - Emerging Issues for the Organic Producer".

The keynote speaker for 2013 is Maude Barlow on the subject of "Water - Emerging Issues for the Organic Producer". Maude Barlow is the National Chairperson of the Council of Canadians and chairs the board of Washington-based Food and Water Watch. In 2008/2009, she served as Senior Advisor on Water to the 63rd President of the United Nations General Assembly and was a leader in the campaign to have water recognized as a human right by the UN. She is also the author of dozens of reports, as well as 16 books, including the international best seller *Blue Covenant: The Global Water Crisis and The Coming Battle for the Right to Water*.

Call for presentations: anyone with a good educational subject or experience to share with organic farmers,

processors, businesses, and enthusiasts is invited to submit a presentation topic. There is excellent research happening in organic agriculture and food in Canada. There are also many lessons learned as operators improve their performance. While we like to attract presentations linked to the theme of water, we are also open to other useful educational material.

What information can you offer to organic farmers and food businesses to help them improve their overall performance? A workshop presented elsewhere in past years is still relevant. It is valuable to recycle some workshops to include new material and to offer to people who missed previous presentations. Perhaps you know of a presenter or subject. Perhaps you attended an interesting workshop recently that we need to know about.

A donation of speaking time to COG Ottawa is most appreciated. Otherwise, Eco Farm Day offers a speaker's fee of \$200 for each workshop. This can be paid cash or exchanged for an exhibit space for your business or institution. As many speakers are fairly local, Eco Farm Day does not normally pay for traveling; however, opportunities exist to fund distant speakers of particular interest to our audience.

Please send your referral or your own contact information and an abstract to Tom Manley:

Tom Manley
Chair – Eco Farm Day
1 Union Street, Berwick, Ontario K0C 1G0
Tel [613-984-0480](tel:613-984-0480)
Fax [613-984-0481](tel:613-984-0481)
E-mail: tom@homesteadorganics.ca

Funding Opportunities

Traceability Foundations Initiative (TFI) Intake 2
The Traceability Foundations Initiative (TFI) Intake 2 will be accepting applications beginning June 1, 2012 until July 24, 2012.

TFI is a three-year joint Federal/Provincial funding program that provides up to 75 per cent cost share funding to sector organizations and value chains to support voluntary, industry-led information sharing networks that will enhance agri-food traceability. Traceability is an important component of food safety programs. Approved projects may be eligible for up to a maximum of \$5 million in funding per project.

Visit the OMAFRA website at www.ontario.ca/traceability and click on "[funding](#)" to access the new eligibility assessment tool, application, guidebook, and other helpful resources as well as to register for an upcoming education session.

If you would like additional guidance in completing an application, please contact the Agricultural Information Contact Centre at tfi.omafr@ontario.ca or by calling 1-877-424-1300.

Agricultural Management Institute (AMI) Event and Speaker Funding

The AMI currently has funding for speakers and events related to farm business management. Registered organizations, associations, and groups located in Ontario can apply for up to \$5000. For more information on the funding program and to download an application form, please visit the AMI website at www.takeanewapproach.ca/

Learning Opportunities

eOrganic Webinars

Ongoing live and archived organic production webinars hosted by the land-grant universities in the United States are available on the eXtension website: <http://www.extension.org/pages/25242/webinars-by-eorganic>

EFAO Summer Tour to the Rodale Institute

Date: July 19-21, 2012

EFAO will be running a summer bus trip to the Rodale Institute in Pennsylvania to participate in their annual field day. Speakers will present information on current research projects and participants will receive a tour of the research farm. The bus trip will also visit several farms in the area.

Cost: \$175 for members (\$220 for non-members) plus meals and accommodation.

For more information or to register please call the EFAO office to register 519-822-8606, registration deadline is June 15th, 2012.

Permaculture Design Course

Date: July 22 - August 4, Caledon

The Permaculture Design Course is a 13 day (72 hour minimum) intensive program combining theory and practical activities. Through lectures, discussions, slide shows, field trips, and hands-on learning, participants learn the basic permaculture design principles and develop the skills to design and implement sustainable systems. There will be a wide variety of topics covered by Gregoire Lamoureux (experienced permaculture instructor) and invited guest teachers, tours to local sites, and opportunities for hands on learning as well as practice of the design principles.

Cost: \$988 early registration by June 10 for the 13 days. This includes field trips, access to onsite facilities, and a course manual. (\$1088 after June 10) Additional Costs: \$390 for 3 delicious, organic, home-cooked meals per day. \$140 for a campsite and outdoor facilities OR \$210 for trailer accommodation and outdoor facilities OR \$420 for a room in Greenhaven and indoor facilities (if available) OR ask about commuter rates if living or staying nearby. For more information or to register please contact Brenda Dolling at 519-942-4010 or email bdolling@wholevillage.org.

Multi-Disciplinary Advising Workshop for Farm Business Advisors

Sauder School of Business, Business Families Centre (UBC) has developed a unique program for CAFA members to be launched in Ontario this summer, thanks to AMI support.

Dates & Locations (8:30 am - 4:30 pm):

Thursday, July 26, London

Friday, July 27 in Guelph

Monday, August 27 in Kemptville

Cost: \$200 for CAFA members. Space is restricted to 30 participants per session. (If there is any space left, non-CAFA members can participate at cost: \$425). Earns 8 CAFA Continuing Professional Development credits.

This workshop will teach advisors how to avoid giving advice that conflicts with counsel from advisors in other fields while learning to build and function within a team. The fundamental principles of knowing when and how to build multi-disciplinary advising teams that benefit both their clients and their business will be discussed. Advisors will explore the dynamics associated with working as part of a multi-disciplinary team and learn how to apply the concepts to work more effectively with their business family clients.

2012 Ontario Pork Congress

Date: June 19-20, 2012

Location: Stratford Rotary Complex, Stratford, Ontario

For more information please visit the website at:

www.porkcongress.on.ca/

Fruit & Veg Organic XPO

Date: July 12 -14, 2012

Location: St. Williams, Ontario

This year the Canada's Fruit & Veg Tech X-Change will feature an organic category to educate both organic and non-organic producers on the size and scope of the sector, and the exceptional products and services offered to support on-farm organic activities.

The Organic Council of Ontario (OCO) and National Farmers Union (NFU) are supporting partners for the event and will be onsite to provide guidance to both existing and new organic producers.

Willis Equipment will provide live demonstrations of their organic tillers and Underhill Farm Supply will exhibit a plot of radish root to showcase the application of natural soil aeration and organic matter regeneration.

A "Meet the Buyers - Broker Brunch" will take place on opening day, with a chance to meet organic buyers such as Whole Foods Market. Immediately following, the Organic Council of Ontario will be holding an informal seminar on farm transition to certified organic.

For more information please visit the website

www.fruitvegtechxchange.com/organic

Conferences and Events

Feast of Fields

Date: September 9, 2012

Location: Cold Creek Conservation Area

The annual outdoor food event hosted by Organic Advocates brings together farmers, chefs, and the public to raise awareness of organics. A number of celebrity chefs will be attending this year including Michael Smith, Emerie Brine, Ted Reader and more!

Cost: Early Bird Tickets \$75.00

For more information or to purchase tickets please call 905-859-3609 or email tickets@feastoffields.org

Canada's Outdoor Farm Show

Date: September 11-13, 2012

Location: Woodstock, Ontario

For more information please visit the website www.outdoorfarmshow.com or call 519-822-2890
Toll free: 1-800-563-5441

International Plowing Match and Rural Expo

Date: September 18-22, 2012

Location: Roseville, Ontario

For more information please visit www.plowingmatch.org or call 519-631-1234 Toll free: 1-800-661-7569
Email eventadmin@plowingmatch.org

BioFach America - All Things Organic

Date: September 20-22, 2012

Location: Baltimore, Maryland, USA

For more information please visit

www.biofach-america.com

Organic Week

Date: September 22-29, 2012

Organic Week is a national celebration of organics in Canada. Events will be held across the country to highlight the benefits of organic agriculture.

For more information and a listing of events in your area please visit the website at www.organicweek.ca

CanBio Annual National Conference and Trade Show

Date: October 12-13, 2012

Location: Delta Chelsea Hotel, Toronto, Ontario

For more information please visit www.cdea.ca/event/canbio-annual-national-conference-and-trade-show

Eco Farm Day 2013

Date: February 23, 2013

Location: Cornwall, Ontario

Please visit the website as it becomes updated with conference information: www.cog.ca/ottawa/ecofarmday/

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