ON Organic

November 2012

Welcome to ON Organic

Evan Elford, New Crop Development Specialist, OMAFRA

The risk of genetically modified organism (GMO) contamination is an ongoing concern in the organic industry. In September, the Organic Federation of Canada (OFC) posted three recommendations regarding GMO contamination from the Organic Value Chain Roundtable (OVCRT) on their blog. The three recommendations are outlined in this newsletter and you are encouraged to provide feedback on the OFC blog at www.ofcfbc.wordpress.com.

Increased attention surrounding GM alfalfa has also been prevalent over the last month with a meeting hosted by the Canadian Seed Trade Association (CSTA) on October 24th to discuss coexistence. Look for more information about the meeting in the November-December 2012 EFAO newsletter. For additional information please read the GMO Alfalfa article which originally ran in the February 2011 issue of ON Organic: http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/organic/news/2011/2011-02a5.htm

There is still time to register for the 2012 Eastern Ontario Local Food Conference taking place in Kemptville on November 22, details are provided in the events section of the newsletter. Also a reminder that the EFAO will be having their Provincial AGM on Saturday, November 24th at the Marden Community Centre, 7366 Wellington Road 30, Guelph from 4:30-9:15 pm. Guest speaker will be Ralph Martin, Research Chair in Sustainability at the University of Guelph.

Finally, congratulations are in order to the OFC on their 5th Anniversary and to the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada (OACC) on receiving over 100 research proposals for the Organic Science Cluster II (OSC II). The OSC II will run from 2013-2018 as part of the Canadian Agri-Science Clusters Initiative by Agriculture and Agri-food Canada. We look forward to learning more about the science behind organic farming.

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 free. For details go to the webpage:

http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/subscribe/indx.html#organic
The newsletter is also posted on the OMAFRA website at:
http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/organic/news/news-organic.html
The French version of these newsletters is available at:
http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/french/crops/organic/news/news-organic.html
The OMAFRA Organic pages are linked from:
http://www.ontario.ca/organic and http://www.ontario.ca/biologique

In This Issue...

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Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Ontario

Preparing the Cowherd for Winter

Brian Pogue, OMAFRA Beef Program Lead

With the dry weather throughout the province this summer, managing a beef cowherd has been a challenge this year. Winter is just around the corner. Last year, we had a mild winter which cut down on feed costs but caused problems with winter kill of alfalfa.
So what should be done to prepare for this winter?

Dealing with Feed Shortages

Most everyone in the province put up less hay than usual, so producers have gone to alternative feeding strategies. For some this has meant the addition of a TMR mixer which then allows them to blend different feeds to come up with a ration for beef cows that was acceptable both from an expense and nutrition perspective. In the long term, the TMR will pay for itself with a ration that is cheaper and better suited to beef cows.
Some are using feedstuffs they have not used before such as straw, corn stalks, oatlage, turnips, peas etc. Producers have been checking the internet, visiting with other farmers and/or consultants to learn more about these feeds with respect to nutrition, storage and feeding. There have been some things to learn such as when to bale based on how wet or dry the feed should be. Nitrates have been a concern with stressed corn and are now a concern with oatlage, particularly if cut early and stored wet. Nitrate toxicity causes the blood to lose its oxygen carrying capacity so be on the watch for cattle panting, staggering etc. Time and ensiling will see nitrate levels drop, but it is worthwhile to have the oatlage tested at a credible lab. If the level is high, it should be blended with other feeds. Blending feeds is always a good strategy for rumen health and efficiency.

The feeding system strategy has to limit cows to what feed they need without overfeeding and with minimal waste. Spreading feed on frozen ground can be an efficient way to minimize feed waste so long as the cattle are only fed what they need (*Figure 1).*

Figure 1. Spreading feed on frozen ground

Herd Evaluation

Fall is a good time to sit down and do some evaluations on the cowherd by comparing some key performance measures to previous years.

- Pregnancy rate – % of cows exposed that are pregnant
- Weaning weights – adjusted weaning weight – with poor pastures due to dry weather, these are likely to be down unless creep feed was supplied.
- Sale weights
- Sale weights compared to cow weights
- Weaning percentage - % of cows exposed that weaned a calf
- Productivity – lbs of calf per cow exposed

Culling

After looking at the herd measures, then comes looking at individual cows. In a year with short feed supplies, it becomes more critical to cull any cows who will not work well enough to make money for you next year.

- Anyone that is open
- Cows with feet and udders bad enough that will affect their production
- Late calving cows or cows that are poor performers based on the performance measures above
- Cows with attitudes that you can not put up with another year

Similarly it is important to look at herd bulls. The nutritional requirements and thus costs for keeping a bull are generally higher than a cow. Consequently serious consideration should be given to culling bulls:

- With extra age
- Bad feet and temperament
- In excess of a ton
- Bulls with a lot of daughters in the herd
- Whose calves are anything less than outstanding as he can be replaced in the spring with a young bull who is better

As always the winter months will be challenging, but a few management decisions can be made which will make it easier and more profitable.

Organic Value Chain Roundtable Recommendations:

Managing GMO Contamination Risks

Evan Elford, New Crop Development Specialist, OMAFRA

In September 2012, the Organic Federation of Canada (OFC) posted three recommendations from the Organic Value Chain Roundtable (OVCRT) – an industry led initiative developed to better understand the needs of the organic sector in Canada.

The OVCRT recently released the following three recommendations in regards to GMO contamination risk:

- **The government should implement compulsory best practices for GMO users, which would place the responsibility on them for preventing GMO contamination. Agricultural practices would include establishing adequate buffer-zones around the GMO crops to protect surrounding areas.**
- **Modernizing the GMO government approval process to include meaningful environmental risk assessments, consideration of economic impact of cross presence of GMO on non users, and implement the overdue courtesy to Canadian consumers of mandatory labelling of foods containing GMO.**
- **Government should manage a fund financed by the biotech industry which would compensate organic producers for damages associated with contamination, such as the loss of organic markets or costs of product rejection.**

The OFC is looking for your feedback on the three recommendations. To provide your comments and suggestions, please visit their blog at www.ofcfbc.wordpress.com.

OMAFRA Articles and Updates

HORTICULTURE

Research: Spotted Wing Drosophila (SED) in Ontario

OMAFRA Staff

Introduction

SWD is a new pest and we have a lot of questions about how this insect will behave in Ontario fruit crops. Fortunately there is a great deal of research underway across North America which will help us learn how to monitor SWD and how to manage it economically. OMAFRA specialists are working with colleagues in Canada and the USA to collaborate on projects and share information. Here in Ontario there are several projects starting up in 2012.

It is important that stakeholders be connected to these projects as they are in progress. Your input and comments will help keep these projects relevant to the needs of Ontario fruit growers.

Current projects

Development of a reporting and management program for spotted wing drosophila

Project team: Hannah Fraser, Leslie Huffman, Pam Fisher, Denise Beaton, Margaret Appleby, Janice Leboeuf, Wendy-McFadden Smith, Melanie Filotas, Agriculture Development Branch, OMAFRA

Project objectives: Coordination of monitoring of SWD across Ontario as well as the development of a real-time reporting system so growers can track the distribution and activity of SWD in Ontario on-line.

Source of funding: Ontario Berry Growers' Association and Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association, in part through Growing Forward (Farm Innovation Program (FIP)), a federal-provincial-territorial initiative. The Agricultural Adaptation Council assists in the delivery of several Growing Forward programs in Ontario.

Enhanced monitoring and management of spotted wing Drosophila, an invasive pest of soft skinned fruit in Ontario

Project lead: Dr. Rebecca Hallet, University of Guelph

Project Team: Hannah Fraser, OMAFRA; Tara Gariepy, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; Rose Buitenhuis, Vineland Research and Innovation Center

Project objectives: Develop enhanced methods for monitoring SWD including an improved lure, develop action thresholds that support IPM, learn more about the early season population dynamics of SWD in Ontario, identify crops and wild hosts most likely to support SWD early in the year, develop molecular identification tools, assess the presence of endemic parasitoids that may utilise SWD as a host, and develop novel pest management methods that can be used in both conventional and organic production systems (push-pull or lure-infect systems).

Source of Funding: OMAFRA / U of G Research Program 2011/2012 (Production Systems Plants: Plant Protection)

Life history and seasonal movements of the spotted wing drosophila, Drosophila suzukii, in a multi-crop setting

Project team: Dr. Rose Buitenhuis, Vineland Research and Innovation Centre; Hannah Fraser, OMAFRA
Project objectives: Study spotted wing drosophila (SWD) life history and seasonal movement between overwintering sites, alternative hosts and crops, in Niagara; provide industry with knowledge on local SWD occurrence, biology and behaviour which is essential to predict outbreaks and to develop more effective control methods.
Source of funding: Niagara Peninsula Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association

Threat Assessment for the Spotted Winged Drosophila (SWD) in Southern Ontario
Project lead: Dr. Jonathan Newman, University of Guelph
Project team: Dr. Megan Rua, University of North Carolina; Denise Beaton, OMAFRA

Project objectives: Conduct a threat assessment for SWD in southern Ontario, perform spatial and temporal analysis of monitoring data for southern Ontario and the surrounding US States, modify and refine a threat assessment model developed for the western United States and apply it to Ontario climates now and expected for the next 30 years, and develop a phenology model that can be used to assess and predict the number of generations per year that the SWD can complete in and when it establishes and how these predictions vary geographically.

Source of funding: OMAFRA / U of G Research Program 2011/ 2012 (Emergency Management); Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada

(From OMAFRA Newsletter Ontario Berry Grower)

FIELD CROPS & FORAGES

Potato Leafhoppers in Alfalfa: Looking to 2013

Joel Bagg, Forage Specialist & Gilles Quesnel, Field Crop IPM Specialist, OMAFRA

Last summer, potato leafhopper (PLH) certainly lived up to its reputation as the most damaging alfalfa insect pest in Ontario. In many parts of the province, PLH feeding resulted in yield loses of over 1 tonne of alfalfa per acre or roughly a loss of $200/acre. While PLH damage was far greater than normal, it went largely undetected, the lack of growth and stunting being blamed on the hot and dry weather. (*Figure 1*) While the lack of moisture did impact the crop, the bulk of the damage was the result of leafhopper feeding from June to mid August.

Figure 1. Leafhopper damage

Damage
The visual damage of PLH is not as dramatic as the leaf shredding caused by alfalfa weevil. Rather, the insect feeds by inserting its mouth piece at the tip of the leaf and sucking plant juices from the alfalfa plant. While sucking the plant sap, PLH injects a toxin into the plant, which interferes with transportation of fluids and nutrients in the leaves. The result is the characteristic "hopperburn", which starts as a wedge-shaped "V" yellowish pattern at the leaf tips. (*Figure 2)*

Figure 2. Hopperburn symptoms

Loss of Yield and Quality

PLH feeding causes reduced stem elongation, reduced root development, leaf cupping and stunting. The amount of damage caused by PLH is largely dependent on the timing and level of the infestation. In 2012, PLH arrived in Ontario in late May, with the population building rapidly until early August and then crashing by mid-August. By late July, it was not unusual to find alfalfa fields with PLH populations 50 times above the conventional control action threshold. High PLH populations reduced alfalfa yields by more than 1 tonnes per acre, or approximately the equivalent of a mid summer alfalfa cut. PLH feeding also reduced the crude protein level of the alfalfa harvested.

New seedings were particularly hard hit this year, in some cases nearly destroying the new stands. Research indicates that reduced yield and vigour in severely damaged stands carries over to future years, and can result in increased risk of winterkill.

Looking to 2013

PLH do not overwinter in Ontario, but migrate annually from the Gulf States carried on weather-front air currents. (*Figure 3*) As such, this past season's high infestation level has no bearing on next year's infestation levels.

Economic losses from leafhoppers occur long before plant symptoms become visible. The only way to detect the presence of large leafhopper populations before the damage occurs is to scout. It is particularly important to monitor new seedings. Scouting with a sweep net starting in mid June will help determine the level of PLH infestation. For more information on PLH resistant alfalfa varieties, scouting and action thresholds visit: http://bit.ly/N8GaMp .

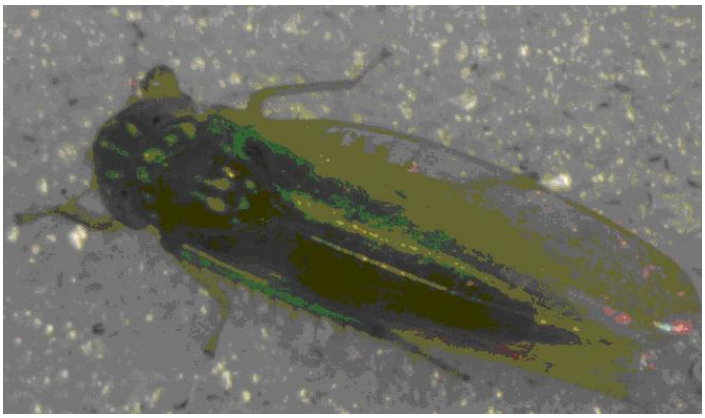

Figure 3. Adult potato leafhopper

(From OMAFRA Newsletter Crop Talk)

SOIL MANAGEMENT

Can Fall Tillage Leave over 30% Residue Cover?

Christine Brown, Nutrient Management Field Crops Program Lead, OMAFRA

Can Fall Tillage Leave over 30% Residue Cover?

Christine Brown, Nutrient Management Field Crops Program Lead, OMAFRA-Woodstock

Leaving 30% crop residue has been proven to minimize top soil losses from wind and water erosion. But what does 30% soil cover look like? Do certain tillage implements leave less than 30% crop residue? Crop residue in the form of corn stalks, soybean stubble, cereal straw, or green cover (growing crops or cover crops) are all effective ways to achieve 30% cover. In a demonstration at the Outdoor Farm Show in 2012 we

learned that if we remove straw from a cereal crop and follow with any type of tillage we retain less than 30% residue. However, the tillage action stimulated a more uniform germination of volunteer cereals which increased total soil cover to well over 30%. The following photographs illustrate crop residue cover after tillage action on two differently managed field scenarios.

Figure 1. 25% cereal straw residue remaining after crop harvest with straw removed and the field worked with a vertical tillage implement. The tillage pass stimulated an even germination of volunteer cereals which brought total ground cover to well over 30%

Figure 2. 70% cereal straw residue remaining after crop harvest with straw spread and the field worked with a vertical tillage implement

Key Learning from Demonstration:

- If the straw is removed and followed with any type of tillage, it is difficult to achieve 30% residue cover. Allowing volunteer cereals to grow or seeding a cover crop will get you over 30% cover.
- 30% soil cover after harvest does not mean 30% will be remaining in the spring. Residue management ranging from type of residue, form of tillage, modifications or adjustments to tillage equipment and combinations using cover crops will all impact the amount of soil cover.

(From OMAFRA Newsletter CropPest Ontario)

LIVESTOCK

Is it Profitable to Pasture Yearlings?

Tom Hamilton, OMAFRA Beef Program Lead - Production Systems

Introduction

Agricultural land in Ontario is a valuable resource. Beef farmers must consider what the best option for its utilization is for their situation. If they have land that could grow annual crops, the plough may be preferred over the cow. Another option is to increase the cow herd to its maximum given the available land base (provided the number of birthings is not already the limiting factor). Or they could custom graze for other producers. The alternative which will be explored here is to use the land to pasture yearling cattle, either their own retained calves or purchased yearlings.

Compared with stored forages and grains, pasture is generally considered to be a low cost source of feed for beef cattle. With perennial pastures, the cost of equipment use for tillage and seeding is minimal over the life of the stand, and little herbicide is required. And if the legume content is significant, fertilizer costs are also low. The fact that we rely on animal power to harvest the feed and spread manure is also a plus. So using pasture as the feed for growing yearling cattle looks promising … but we have to closely examine whole budget picture. The following is intended to help producers make the best decision possible when considering whether or not to pasture yearling cattle.

Pasturing yearling steers provides an option for cow-calf producers to add value to calves they have retained, or for grass farmers who want to buy yearling cattle in spring, grow them on pasture, and then sell them as shortkeeps. The math may look easy at first glance, but we have to take into account all of the costs involved, including establishing and managing pastures, as well as animal costs such as fly tags and salt and mineral. Of course, another major factor impacting on profit is the revenue returned by the cattle. This is affected by the weight gain of the cattle as well as their off-pasture sale prices.

Method

The following economic analysis is based on a Pasture Yearling Decision Guide (Excel spreadsheet). In this example, it is assumed that 725 lb steers go on pasture for 120 days, with an ADG of 2.0 lbs/day, and are sold off pasture at 965 lbs. Budget details are shown in *Table 1*.

Multiple scenarios were run to calculate the **Net Margin** which would result from various combinations of on-pasture and off-pasture prices. The procedure involved fixing the on-pasture price and then running a series of calculations with different off-pasture prices. The results were plotted on a graph (*Figure 1*) to allow visual interpretation of the data. The resulting Net Margin values are measures of the amount of money which would be gained (or lost) from pasturing yearlings and selling them at 965 lbs, compared with selling them at 725 lbs prior to the pasture season.

Table 1. Yearling Pasture Budget*	
Item	**Cost**
On-pasture price range	$1.00 - $1.80 /lb
Off-pasture price range	$0.80 - $1.60 /lb
Health and Vet	$5.00 /hd
Marketing / Trucking	$40 /hd
Implant	$3.00 /hd
Fly tags	$4.00 /hd
Interest rate	4.0 %
Stocking rate	1.0 ac/hd
Seeding	$3.00 /ac
Fertilizer	$25.00 /ac
Maintenance /repair	$5.00 /ac
Cost per lb of gain	$0.43 /lb

***On wt. =725 lbs, Off wt. =965 lbs, 120 days**

Decision Guide
There are 3 steps in determining whether you should pasture yearlings or not:

1. Determine the price per pound you expect to be able to sell your overwintered stockers for in spring (or price you will pay if you are purchasing grass cattle). For this example, we will use $1.20 /lb as the price per pound for 725 lb stockers.
2. Estimate the price that you expect to get for these animals if you pasture them and sell them in the fall. This may require a little more analysis to determine. One way to project the selling price in spring is to look at live cattle futures prices as an indication*. For this example we will predict the price for 965 lb shortkeeps in fall will be $1.15 /lb. (This is a price margin of $-0.05 /lb)
3. Use the net margin graph below to determine if pasturing yearlings are expected to produce a gain or loss.

Figure 1: Net Margin for Various Price Combinations for Pastured Yearlings Based on costs shown in Table 1

Using the Net Margin Graph

In this example, it is expected that 725 lb spring stockers would sell for $1.20 /lb.

Locate the $1.20 on-pasture stocker price line (diagonal) on the graph (Fig 1).

Now you have to estimate what price you would receive for those animals if you place them on pasture and sold them as 965 lb shortkeeps in the fall. In this case, we estimate that those shortkeeps will be worth $1.15 /lb. Locate that price on the horizontal axis on the graph, and draw a vertical line up until it touches the $1.20 stocker line.

From that point, draw a horizontal line across to the **Net Margin** scale. In this case, it crosses that scale at the $50 point. This means that pasturing these yearlings and selling them in the fall would create an additional $50 of added value per head, therefore pasturing would be a profitable option.

The dotted green line on the graph indicates a Net Margin of zero, also called the Breakeven level. This occurs when the additional revenue from pasturing stockers is offset exactly by the additional costs incurred.

In these calculations, pasture and animals costs (including interest) have been taken into account, but not additional labour or risk. There can be wide variation in pasture conditions and productivity due to variables such as land type, fertilizer amount and cost, and grazing management.

Summary

In these examples, pasturing yearlings was always profitable when the margin between off-pasture price and on-pasture cattle was zero or positive [margin = off pasture price -on-pasture price].

Interpretation Corner

Evan Elford, New Crop Development Specialist, OMAFRA

From time to time I receive questions from organic producers regarding production requirements that are not clearly defined under the Canada Organic Standard. In an ongoing effort to better understand the application of the organic standard, questions posed to the Organic Standards Interpretation Committee (SIC) and their accepted answers will be included in this section of the newsletter. The Organic SIC is an advisory body set up by the Canadian Organic Office (COO) with representatives from the organic sector in Canada. A full listing of Q & A's posed to the SIC are available on the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) website (www.inspection.gc.ca) and on the Organic Federation of Canada's (OFA) website (www.organicfederation.ca).
Please note that some certification bodies may have additional requirements to the Canada Organic Standard and you should always contact your certification body for clarification.

Specific Production Requirements

Section 7.1: Apiculture

Question: 7.1.9 states that apiaries must be separated by a buffer zone of 3000 meters from sources or zones where prohibited substances are present. Is there a transition time required between the last use of a prohibited substance in the buffer zone and the production of organic honey?

Answer: There is no transition period required for the 3000 meter buffer zone. No prohibited substances can be present when bees are feeding.

(Reference - Section 7.1.9 states: Apiaries shall be separated by a buffer zone of 3000 m where sources or zones of substances prohibited by par. 1.4.1, or flower-bearing agricultural crops treated with substances not listed in CAN/CGSB-32.311, Organic Production Systems – Permitted Substances Lists (i.e. genetic engineering or environmental contaminants), are present.)

Crop Production

Section 5.1 Land Requirements for Organic Crop Production

Question: Is it parallel production if the same seedling type production is separated by time?

Answer: The growing of visually indistinguishable crops (organic and non-organic) non simultaneously does not constitute parallel production. This rule applies equally to all field crops and greenhouse production, including seedlings.

(Reference – Section 5.1.2 states: The enterprise shall aim at a complete transition of its production. During the transition period, the enterprise can maintain, in addition to the production in transition, a non-organic system of production (split operation) that shall be entirely separate

Interpretation Corner (cont'd)

and identified separately, pending its incorporation into the overall transition process. The enterprise can be converted one unit at a time, and each converted unit shall respect the requirements of this standard. The exception to this norm, parallel production, is only allowed in the following cases: perennial crops (already planted), agricultural research facilities, production of seed, vegetative propagating materials and transplants.

The following special conditions shall be observed for parallel production;

- The operator shall clearly demonstrate that the identity of the crops so produced can be maintained during their production, harvesting, storage, processing, packaging and marketing.
- The operator shall maintain verifiable, accurate records of both non-organic and organic produce and product storage, transportation, processing and marketing.

Note: Parallel production crops both organic and non-organic must be inspected just prior to harvest and an audit of all parallel production crops must occur after harvest.)

Food Safety Snippets

Clean-up of Storage and Product Processing Areas

A food safety program is important for maintaining a competitive advantage for agri-food businesses, and includes proper cleaning and maintenance of storage and product processing areas. Here are some points to remember:

- Ensure storage and processing areas are clean and free of food sources to discourage pests.
- Inspect and repair all walls to prevent points of entry by rodents, raccoons and birds.
- Inspect building structures for any water leaks which lead to moisture accumulation and pathogen growth.
- Ensure lights are covered with shatter proof covering to prevent broken glass ending up in edible products.

Paying attention to your storage and product processing areas will help reduce food safety risks.

Food safety practices keep agri-food businesses competitive, productive and sustainable. For more information, visit the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs website at www.ontario.ca/goodagpractices or call us at 1-877-424-1300.

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Update

Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), Ontario operators with 20 or more employees must file a report on their accessibility plan and actions by December 31, 2012.

The report must demonstrate compliance with the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service that took effect this past January. This standard requires businesses to create a plan and train staff regarding accessible customer service.

Businesses with 20 or more employees in Ontario must also put the plan in writing, provide it in an accessible format to customers on request and report progress to the government online.

The AODA Compliance Wizard is a five-minute online computer quiz that helps you find out what you must do to comply with this law.

For more information please visit: http://www.mcss.gov.on.ca/en/mcss/programs/accessibility/

Limited Time for New Cost-Share Opportunities with the Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan

New cost-share opportunities exist under the Best Management Practices (BMPs) category of the Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan. The funding is available to commercial greenhouse, landscape nursery and vegetable farms and must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Be a legal farm entity with a unique Farm Business Registration Number (FBRN) or equivalent;
- Have a Third Edition Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) deemed appropriate through peer review;
- Have selected a BMP from the eligible list in this brochure that relates directly to an action identified in their EFP, and effectively moves a "1" or "2" rating towards a "3" or "4" (best) rating; and
- Will authorize a declaration stating that the farm business in the 2011 year included a commercial greenhouse floriculture farm, commercial greenhouse vegetable farm, commercial landscape nursery farm or commercial vegetable farm, involved in the production of a horticultural crop (s)

Cost-shares are set at either 30 per cent or 50 per cent, up to the BMPs category caps during the 2012 cropping year. **Applications are being accepted beginning July 19, 2012 on a first come, first served basis** with a Growing Forward maximum contribution per legal farm entity of $30, 000. Invoices dated September 15, 2011 or later will be accepted with a project claim submission deadline of December 15, 2012.

For more information contact the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association by mail at 1 Stone Road West, Guelph, Ontario N1G 4Y2, telephone: 1.800.265.9751 or visit their website at www.ontariosoilcrop.org.

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/

Ontario's Regional Development Funds for Job Creation

The new Southwestern Ontario Development Fund (SWODF) and renewed Eastern Ontario Development Fund (EODF) are now receiving applications from companies for projects that drive innovation, grow Ontario's economy and create local jobs.

The Funds are discretionary, non-entitlement programs with limited funding. There are two funding streams, one for established businesses and a regional stream for economic development organizations including municipalities.

Under the business stream, the Funds may provide up to 15% of eligible project costs to a maximum grant of $1.5 million. For project investments of $10+ million that create 50+ jobs, funding may be available in the form of a secured repayable loan, to a maximum of $5 million in provincial support.

In order to be eligible for the **business stream**, businesses must:

- Employ at least 10 people and meet minimum job creation thresholds as outlined in the Business Application Guide
- Be able to provide 3 years of financial statements
- Be part of an eligible sector
- Be located in, or plan to locate in southwestern or eastern Ontario
- Have a multi-year project that involves a minimum investment of $500,000 in eligible project costs.

Smaller businesses with 5-10 employees may be eligible under the Small Community Pilot, in either the east or southwest regions. Not sure which fund your company can apply to? Check out the EODF map or the SWODF map.

If your project is a food processing initiative, I would be pleased to provide you with guidance in developing your application. Please don't hesitate to contact me for assistance.

EODF: www.ontariocanada.com/ontcan/1medt/econdev/en/ed_eodf_main_en.jsp
SWODF: www.ontariocanada.com/ontcan/1medt/en/swodf_en.jsp

2012 Eastern Ontario Local Food Conference
Date: November 22, 2012
Location: University of Guelph, Kemptville Campus.
This year's theme is **"Collaborating for Success"**. A keynote address will be given by Terry Ackerman entitled **"Collaborating for Success – the Value Chain Model and Profitability"**. This address will provide a practical guide to creating and building profitable value chains based on real life examples of successful value chains in Canada.

The purpose of this event is:

- To provide a forum for Eastern Ontario local food practitioners to network
- To address challenges to local food that are specific to Eastern Ontario
- To share technical information that will help to build the local food sector in Eastern Ontario

For more information and to register please visit the website at: http://2012eolfc.eventbrite.ca/

EFAO AGM 2012
Date: November 24, 4:30-9:30
Location: Marden Community Centre, 7366 Wellington Road 30, Guelph, Ontario
Guest Speaker: Dr. Ralph Martin, Research Chair in sustainability at the University of Guelph.
For more information contact EFAO at 1.877.822.8606 or email at info@efao.ca.

Ontario Forage Focus 2012
Dates and Locations:
November 27: Winchester Community Centre, 577 Main Street West, Winchester, Ontario
November 28: Shakespeare Optimist Hall, 1 Thompson Street, Shakespeare, Ontario
9:30 am to 3 pm - Key Note Speaker, Mike Hutjens of the University of Winsconsin. Other speakers include, Joel Bagg, Forage Specialist, OMAFRA and a representative from Agricorp. Cost is $40, includes conference proceedings and a hot roast beef lunch.

Registration deadline is November 25th. For complete details and to view full agenda, visit http://www.ontarioforagecouncil.com/programs/forage-focus-.html

20th Annual Southwest Agricultural Conference
Date: January 3-4, 2013
Location: Ridgetown Campus, University of Guelph
For more information, please visit the website at: www.southwestagconference.ca

32nd Annual Guelph Organic Conference
Organics…What's The Buzz?
Date: January 31-Feb 3, 2013
Location: University of Guelph
For more information please visit the website at: www.guelphorganicconf.ca

Ontario Fruit & Vegetable Convention
Date: February 20, 21, 2013
Location: Niagara Falls, Ontario
For more information please visit the website at: www.ofvc.ca

Eco Farm Day, 2013
Date: February 23, 2013
Location: Cornwall, Ontario
Theme: "Water - Emerging Issues for the Organic Producer".
Keynote Speaker: 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*.

For more information please visit the website at: www.cog.ca/ottawa/ecofarmday/

Links to Organic Agriculture Information

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

Ecological Farmers of Ontario (EFO)
http://www.efao.ca

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

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

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

FarmStart www.farmstart.ca

Agricultural Information Contact Centre:
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Northern Ontario Regional Office: 1-800-461-6132
www.ontario.ca/omafra