



OCA Weekly Update – December 18, 2009

*Please note that there will be no weekly Update on December 25 and January 1, 2010.
The weekly update will return on January 8, 2010.
Have a very Merry Christmas.*



On behalf of your 2009 Board of Directors and OCA's dedicated staff, I would like to extend my best wishes to you and your family this Christmas.

While 2009 has again been a very trying year for the livestock sector, I truly believe that Progress Starts with Partnership.

We face many challenges and it is only by working together as we move forward, that we will achieve solutions.

As we look forward to a new year with renewed optimism, I remind you to please

*enjoy a safe and happy holiday season.
Best wishes for a prosperous 2010.*

~ Gord Hardy, OCA President



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A) Request for Proposals – Phase II of the Farm Innovation Program (FIP)

The Farm Innovation Program (FIP) is a \$12,000,000 program that is part of Growing Forward, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative. The FIP is one of the Innovation and Science Suite of programs for Growing Forward in Ontario.

FIP is aimed at boosting agricultural research, competitiveness, and productivity in Ontario's agricultural sectors. The FIP will be administered by the Agricultural Adaptation Council (AAC) on behalf of Agriculture, Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA).

OCA will be managing the projects for the beef sector. All applications for beef projects must be submitted through OCA for approval.

Phase II applications are due to OCA by *January 25, 2010* via email to jennifer@cattle.guelph.on.ca.

For more information, a letter from the OCA Research Committee Chair and relevant forms, please go to www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/research/schedule.asp

B) Nominate a Greenbelt Grower/Producer for the Friend of the Greenbelt Award 2010

Do you know a grower/producer in the Greenbelt who deserves to be recognized for their leadership, innovation and sustainable farming practices? If you do, now is the time to nominate them for the Friend of the Greenbelt Award and help us recognize and celebrate growers/producers in the Greenbelt. To enter for a chance to win, applicants must, by January 18th, 2010 email a completed form (available at www.greenbelt.ca) to nomination-at-greenbelt.ca or fax to 416-960-0030 or mail the completed form to:

Greenbelt Growers/Producers Nomination Committee
Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation
68 Scollard Street, Suite 201
Toronto, Ontario M5R 1G2

You can download copies of this form as well as the Official Nomination Rules (including information on the nomination process, the review process and the timeline) at www.greenbelt.ca or contact us at (416) 960-0001 or nomination-at-greenbelt.ca for more information.

C) Attention Greenbelt Growers/Producers - Sign up Now for the Greenbelt Farmers' Online Market

The Greenbelt Farmers' Online Market makes it easy for Greenbelt farmers to connect to consumers and institutions by providing information about their farm – what they grow and when they grow it. Users searching the Marketplace to buy food for their families are directed to pick-your-owns and on-farm markets and corporate/ institution/ wholesalers/ and food service purchasers are directed to farms who wholesale their products.

If you're a grower/producer in Ontario's Greenbelt region, the *Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation* along with the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance and the Greater Toronto Area Agriculture Committee (GTAAAC) are asking you to add your farm profile to the Greenbelt Farmers' Online Market found at www.greenbeltfresh.ca.

Creating a farm profile is free and simple. Visit www.greenbeltfresh.ca and click on "Attention: Growers and Producers" to access the online data sheet. If you would like to fill out a paper form instead simply contact the *Greenbelt Foundation* at www.greenbelt.ca or call us at 416.960.0001.

Are you (or do you know) a University or College student looking for the opportunity to enter a cash prize contest that will allow the participant to share their ideas? Send a video submission to the Excellence Award for Agricultural Students for your chance to earn \$1000!

The Canadian Farm Business Management Council wants to help agricultural students develop their communication skills by providing them an opportunity to give an oral presentation on a subject related to farm management. The oral presentations will be submitted in form of a video blog sent in by email or regular mail. The email can contain the video itself or a link to the video on a site, such as YouTube.

Videos should include your name, year and field of study, program, and school attending. Your video should be 3-5 minutes in length and answer the question "How do changing consumer trends affect farm management responsibilities and styles?" The content should keep the attention of the audience while being informative and innovative.

The five winning videos will receive a \$1,000 cash prize and will be posted on our Web site.

<http://www.farmcentre.com/>

For more information about this year's award click here.

<http://www.farmcentre.com/Features/TheNewFarmer/Resources/StudentAwards/apply.aspx>

D) OnTrace Producer Traceability Workshop Series

See attached flyers

E) Ontario Forum on Agri-Food Traceability

What is traceability and how can I benefit? How should Ontario's traceability system continue to grow?

To answer these and other questions, join us at the Ontario Forum on Agri-Food Traceability. Registration information and the full agenda are now available online at: www.ontario.ca/traceforum. To register for the forum, call 1-877-424-1300.

Register before December 18 for the early bird discount of \$80. Even better, receive a further \$20 discount if you have a premises identification number with the Ontario Agri-Food Premises Registry. To obtain your premises identification number contact OnTrace at 1-519-766-9292 or www.ontraceagrifood.com.

Following the Forum, on January 29, 2010, OnTrace will be hosting an educational workshop on implementing traceability in your own facility. Space is limited so register early.

The Ontario Forum on Agri-Food Traceability is put on by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. For more information, visit www.ontario.ca/traceforum. To register for the forum or to find out more about the OnTrace workshop, call 1-877-424-1300.

F) Growing Your Farm Profits Workshops

Need to start planning for succession?
Looking at expanding your business?
Need a better record-keeping system?

Give yourself every chance of reaching your goals by attending the “Growing Your Farm Profits” workshop. This two-day workshop will give you the tools to assess where you are now and where you could be in the future.

At the workshop, you will:

- Assess your business and identify top priorities.
- Interact with farmers and hear new ideas
- Develop action plans and begin the planning process.
-and much more

We invite you and your management team to start the journey towards managing and planning your farm business success. Sign up for this workshop. It will be time well spent!

Visit <http://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/en/Programs/GYFP091.htm#about> for workshop details, dates and locations.

G) Funding Program to Develop Innovative Pest Management Approaches

The introduction of the cosmetic pesticides ban earlier this year, brought with it the need to develop alternatives to the use of pesticides for cosmetic purposes in the lawn care, landscaping, park maintenance and turf management sectors.

These alternatives are being researched and tested with the announcement of the Cosmetic Use Pesticide Research and Innovation (CUPRI) Program being administered by the Agricultural Adaptation Council (AAC). The Ministry of the Environment made available \$480,000 in funding to help create and evaluate ‘greener’ options to pesticides for landscaping purposes including lawns, gardens, parks and turf grass.

“The Cosmetic Pesticides Ban protects the environment and encourages the growth of innovative green industries in Ontario,” said Ontario Environment Minister John Gerretsen. “The CUPRI program is a key initiative in that effort.”

Throughout the summer, the AAC solicited project proposals from companies, commodity associations, trade organizations and research and academic institutions. The successful applicants were:

University of Guelph *\$112,968.00*
New research projects at the University will evaluate alternatives to cosmetic pesticides to manage weeds in lawns, and fruit and vegetable gardens.

Ontario Horticultural Trades Foundation *\$86,500.00*
Biological control strategies will be identified and developed to address the problem of white grubs in lawns and turf grass.

6310907 Canada Inc. *\$60,000.00*
The purpose of this project is to develop a fungus called *Curvularia* into an effective and selective bioherbicide for crabgrass.

Ontario Turfgrass Research Foundation *\$21,000.00*
The efficacy of the Mustard Bio-product CA-1 will be evaluated for use as a bioherbicide.

Environmental Factor Inc. *\$30,000.00*
Hydrolyzed liquid corn gluten will be evaluated for efficacy in controlling weeds compared to the granular formulation

Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association *\$22,992.00*
This project will look at the effectiveness of using steam and solarization treatments for weed control in ornamental gardens and lawns.

All of these projects will be completed by March 31, 2011.

“The MOE designed the CUPRI Program in recognition that research and innovation is a necessary part of ongoing pest control in Ontario,” says Jim Rickard, Chair of the Board of Directors of the AAC. “The Agricultural Adaptation Council is pleased to help allocate funds to companies and organizations in the sod, turf grass, landscape, and lawn care sectors. These projects will build on the already strong Integrated Pest Management (IPM) system used extensively by landscapers, turf specialists and farmers in Ontario where pest damage is minimized by a number of economically and environmentally sound methods including soil cultivation, resistant crop varieties and natural enemies.”

The Agricultural Adaptation Council sources and provides efficient, flexible and accountable funding programs with a primary focus on the Ontario agriculture and agri-food industry. The financially-assisted projects assist the sector to advance, innovate and improve profitability. The AAC is a non-profit coalition of 72 agricultural, agri-food and rural organizations in Ontario.

H) Cattlemen Satisfied with the First Ranching Task Force Report

The BC Cattlemen's Association is satisfied with report publicly released today by the Minister of Agriculture & Lands, Honourable Steve Thomson, and the Parliamentary Secretary for the Ranching Task Force, MLA Terry Lake. This is the first report from the Task Force which represents several months of intense work by both industry and government to review and address the challenges facing the beef cattle industry.

The report identifies 45 regulatory changes that government can implement in order to removing regulatory barriers for BC's ranching family businesses. 97% of British Columbia ranches are small to medium size family run businesses with small operating margins. Removing these unnecessary hurdles can help strengthen these businesses and position the industry for the future. The 45 recommendations fall under the

priorities set out by the Task Force which are to: secure access to water; secure access to sufficient rangeland and forage; implement low cost, regional animal waste disposal options; and make improvements to the Agricultural Land Reserve.

“The Premier’s announcement last May declaring the Ranching Task Force created an expectation among ranchers that funding would be available to assist us through this difficult time,” explains Roland Baumann, BC Cattlemen’s Association President. “Our industry is in the worst financial crisis we have seen in recent history and this expectation cannot be met with deregulation alone.”

The economic crisis ranchers have been experiencing for the past six years continues to worsen. Many ranchers have gone into debt and borrowed against their equity, and taken off farm jobs in order to carry their families through these hard times. Others, as a last resort, have had to sell out and leave the business that has been in their families for generations. British Columbia’s beef cattle industry has shrunk by one third, the sharpest decline in all of Canada. Without government intervention, it is difficult to say how many more ranchers will decide to exit the industry.

BCCA General Manager, Kevin Boon explains, “These financial losses are not the result of bad business planning. Instead they are the result of things beyond a rancher’s control that have put the industry in this precarious position.”

World demand for beef is rising and at the same time beef production is shrinking. Agricultural economists suggest that by 2012, the beef industry will be in a favourable position because of supply and demand and will have a strong future ahead. British Columbia needs to ensure that we position ourselves to capitalize on these opportunities in both local and international markets. In the meantime, financial assistance is desperately needed to help stop the downward spiral the industry is experiencing. Government’s Business Risk Management Programs were never intended for such a tremendous downturn, and are not providing the financial backstop industry need so desperately.

“Without money, there will be no meaningful outcome. It is unreasonable to create a Task Force but not provide the money necessary to implement their recommendations,” says President Baumann of the Task Force. The BC Cattlemen’s Association put forward a proposal to the Task Force for the province to issue financial incentives to beef cattle producers for achieving a set of high standards for environmental stewardship, food safety, and animal health. The Task Force has agreed to recommend to the Premier that this proposal be implemented when the Province is in a better financial position. This proposal is the equivalent of an economic stimulus and is intended for the short-term. The Association knows that market demand is the only factor that can return the industry to being profitable.

The BC Cattlemen’s Association understands that Premier Campbell will be reviewing the recommendations outlined in the Task Force report and we will continue to work together to address the steep challenges facing our industry.

The Association would like to thank our rancher volunteers who worked tirelessly on the Task Force: Roland Baumann (Vanderhoof), Judy Guichon (Quilchena), and Ed Salle (Barriere). Each of whom took precious time away from their own ranching operations to help move their industry forward during a very challenging time.

I) It’s Official: Grain Farmers of Ontario is Newest Marketing Board: McGuinty Government Supports Agriculture Sector

Ontario’s 28,000 corn, soybean and wheat producers officially have one marketing board as of New Year’s Day, 2010.

Effective January 1st, Grain Farmers of Ontario (GFO) replaces the Ontario Corn Producers’ Association, Ontario Soybean Growers and Ontario Wheat Producers’ Marketing Board.

The announcement caps months of work following a vote among producers that showed the strategy had the necessary support to move forward.

An interim board of directors will be appointed by the province to oversee GFO's operations until an elected board takes office following regional elections. Those elections are scheduled to be completed by the end of January, 2010.

"I look forward to working with our newest marketing board. Congratulations to the producers whose commitment and dedication to their industry made today's announcement possible."
– Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

"Getting the planning and regulatory framework right is essential to the successful operation of Grain Farmers of Ontario. Now producers can steer their new marketing board to capture market development, research and innovation opportunities."
– Geri Kamenz, Chair, Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission

"It is an exciting time for Ontario's grain farmers. This new organization that represents five million acres of farmland and \$2.6 billion in sales will have a positive impact on the province."
– Leo Guilbeault, Chair, Ontario Soybean Growers

"*Adding value* is the phrase we have used throughout the process of developing this organization and it will continue to be the focus of GFO as we move forward."
– Dale Mountjoy, President, Ontario Corn Producers' Association

"We are pleased with the retention of marketing powers for wheat. This is an area where Grain Farmers of Ontario can continue to add a lot of value to Ontario's producers."
– Dave Whaley, Chair, Ontario Wheat Producers' Marketing Board

- Grain Farmers of Ontario merges three producer associations into one. The three former boards and associations include:
 - Ontario Soybean Growers
 - Ontario Corn Producers' Association
 - Ontario Wheat Producers' Marketing Board
- The new board is empowered to collect licence fees from growers in order to work collectively on their behalf in marketing-related activities. The board is financially self-supporting and will be governed by an elected, 15-member board of directors.

J) CCA Congratulates Leaders for Progress Made During Asia Mission

The CCA congratulates Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Minister of Agriculture Gerry Ritz for their hard work, and subsequent positive results, on their most recent trade mission to Asia.

In early December the Ministers wrapped up a trade mission that visited several major Asian markets including China, Hong Kong and Korea. Throughout the mission the key focus was agriculture. CCA President Brad Wildeman was pleased to participate in the mission to provide support and expertise to the Ministers.

The CCA is pleased that the Ministers chose to focus on agriculture as it indicates their understanding of what Canada's beef cattle industry needs to survive these tough times. It is critical that we establish greater access into our top export markets in Asian countries.

Korea – Both Prime Minister Harper and Minister Ritz expressed our concerns to their counterparts about the prolonged lack of access for Canadian beef into Korea. The result of the firm stance taken by Canada is that Korea now appears to be looking for a solution.

CCA believes that Canada must continue its World Trade Organization (WTO) Dispute Settlement Panel against Korea until commercially meaningful access for beef occurs. The formal WTO process commenced last spring and the Panel was established in the fall. We've received promises in the past that South Korea would resume imports from Canada but they never materialized. So while we always look for another solution, we must continue to assert our rights under WTO for a dispute settlement.

China - While further progress for beef was not achieved, discussions were held. Notable access was

established for Canadian pork and canola exports. The re-establishment of export access for Canadian pork should help to improve the domestic Canadian market for all proteins, and is therefore positive news for Canadian beef producers.

Hong Kong - Perhaps the most positive development was the Prime Minister's announcement that Hong Kong will re-establish full access for Canadian beef. In early 2009, Minister Ritz travelled to Hong Kong and reached an agreement on a phased approach for Hong Kong to expand imports of Canadian beef. That agreement was to culminate this month with near full access (excluding certain bone-in products). However, due to the positive performance of Canadian beef exporters over the past year and the resulting confidence of Hong Kong authorities, the Prime Minister's mission provided the opportunity to "trade up" to virtually full beef access according to OIE (World Animal Health Organization) standards.

These results demonstrate the value of having our political leaders travel to our trading partners to go to bat on our behalf. The CCA is very supportive of these activities and will continue to be in the future.

K) Examining Market Power in the Red Meat Packing Sector

In 2006, Dr. Jeffrey Church and Dr. Daniel Gordon examined the extent to which the closure of the border to live animals increased the market power of packers in Canada. The study found that when competitive conditions in Alberta limited the potential buyers for fed cattle to a small number of packers, market power increased; but was not consistent with any coordinated exercise of market power by packers.

Since 2006, a tremendous amount changed in the Canadian fed cattle markets with the further consolidation of the red meat packing sector, recent regulatory such as the implementation of mandatory Country-of-Origin Labeling (mCOOL) in the United States (U.S.) and changing market dynamics. There is also growing concerns over further reductions in packing capacity in light of poor profitability and reduced cattle inventories, which have further raised the issue of the high level of packer concentration in Canada and the impact this has on Canadian cattle prices and long-term industry structure.

Canfax Research Services, with support from the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency, initiated a research project to update and expand upon the 2006 Market Power study.

The research project will examine the changes in market power that have occurred since 2005; assessing the impacts of further improvements in market access with the implementation of Rule Two, regulatory changes and the downsizing and consolidation which occurred within the packing sector. The study will also focus on examining the extent to which changes in market power have influenced fed and feeder cattle prices.

Upon evaluating the extent and impacts of market power, the study will work to evaluate alternative mechanisms for market surveillance. Through analysis of existing mechanisms, as well as engagement of industry stakeholders, the project will work to identify options for managing the impacts of market power and inform potential policy and regulatory decisions in this area moving forward.

The project is scheduled to be complete by January 2012.

L) Costco Canada Launches Premium Beef Program

The Beef Information Centre (BIC) has partnered with Costco Canada to launch a premium beef program that features only Canada Prime beef.

Canada Prime is the highest grade of beef Canada has to offer. Selected for most marbling, Canada Prime provides outstanding flavour, juiciness and tenderness. Less than two per cent of all Canadian graded beef in 2008 qualified to be of Canada Prime level.

Traditionally found at only the finest of restaurants, Costco's Prime program is currently being tested in a number of strategically chosen Costco stores in western Canada with plans to roll out to additional locations nationally over the next six months.

Costco Canada has a long-standing commitment to Canadian AAA beef and is a market leader in the Canadian retail sector. All Costco outlets in Canada display the Canadian beef brand logo on-pack, and on the wall above the fresh meat case. With the new program in select Costco locations, the Canada Prime beef packages display the Prime designation in a specially designed logo, with the Canadian beef brand mark.

These initiatives, along with the new premium beef program, illustrates why Costco Canada leads the market in leveraging the value Canadian beef provides and the positive image Canadian beef has with Canadian consumers.

“The strong commitment by Costco for Canadian AAA beef demonstrates to the entire retail industry that carrying Canadian beef and labelling it with the Canadian beef brand mark offers a competitive advantage in the retail meat case,” says John Gillespie, BIC’s chair and a feedlot operator near Ayr, Ont. “This initiative allows the industry to capture additional value for the carcass by identifying and selling Canadian prime carcasses at a premium versus AAA where they normally would have been sold.”

As part of the new program, BIC worked with Costco to develop an information sheet for consumers, available at the meat case. This promotional sheet describes the attributes of Canada Prime and the exceptional eating experience consumers can expect from this premium product. The promo sheet also directs readers to BIC’s consumer website (www.beefinfo.org) for recipes.

BIC’s efforts to maximize demand for Canadian beef and optimize the value of Canadian beef products is funded in part by cattle producers through the National Beef Check-Off, and through beef industry market development funds provided by the Government of Alberta and the Government of Canada.

M) Better Business Decisions with BIO

It’s a fact that informed beef producers make intelligent decisions. The amount of information you need to know in order to run your business effectively continues to grow - and it can become overwhelming to manage this information effectively.

So let BIO help! Our new bioTrack system, developed with OCA support, lets you capture and use information on an animal – from pedigree to cooler - easily and the way you want to!

bioTrack not only let’s you manage data, it provides: easy and automatic age verification with linkage to the CCIA database every 6 hours; the ability to easily get information (within herd indexes or across herd EPD’s) on your cows; help with sire selection; and feedlot health, management tools and carcass data .

Another important benefit of bioTrack is that you don’t have to worry about losing information if your computer crashes.

If you would like to learn more about bioTrack, please call Brittney Livingston at (519) 767-2665 Ext. 316 or Jamie O’Shea at (519) 400-8974. Ask for a free demonstration of bioTrack either by phone or in person and enjoy special introductory pricing.

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This report prepared with the assistance of Dr. Doug Powell's team at Kansas State University. This service does not allow emails to be sent by responding to this email directly. If you have questions or comments, please contact Lianne Appleby at lianne@cattle.guelph.on.ca

A) Beef industry crisis was planned, says Perth producer

Byline: BY JOHN PHAIR, SUN MEDIA

If the comments made by a Perth County cattleman failed to galvanize those attending a meeting of the Lambton Cattlemen's Association, they certainly raised the ire of Gord Hardy, president of the Ontario Cattlemen's Association (OCA).

Speaking at a meeting in Alvinston, held to discuss business risk management proposals for livestock producers, Bill Jeffrey said he has long been aware that the OCA is adrift with no leadership.

Jeffrey runs a 900-head feedlot near the village of Harmony and is president of the Perth County Cattlemen's Association.

He added that's why he originally became involved with his county organization a number of year's ago and eventually became its president.

"Market conditions in 2007 really brought things to a crisis situation and I, along with other producers, began asking what was happening to our industry," he said.

As a result, he and a dozen other producers formed a committee to conduct an investigation into the industry, noting they set out to see what made it tick and identify the reasons producers were being forced to accept such low market prices for their cattle.

"Some people were offended that we called it an investigation so we changed it to an inquiry," he said, adding that they hired a professional marketing consultant to look into issues affecting the full scope of beef production: cow-calf producers, backgrounders, and feedlot operators.

Jeffrey said they looked into how and why the beef industry had evolved to its depressed state.

"We found that what we are now reaping is the result of policies put in place in Ottawa more than 20 years ago," he said, adding that one of the major factors for the industry's demise was the removal of the Crow Rate, a government policy that for years subsidized rail services to accommodate the movement of grain out of the prairie provinces to ports in British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec, where the bulk of Canada's livestock was being fed.

"This was done at the behest of lobbyists who wined and dined politicians, bureaucrats and policy makers."

Jeffrey added that he had talked to people who involved at the time who suggested these lobbyists also filled the pockets of policy makers.

"This is not unusual. It's something that goes on all the time."

Jeffrey said this situation needs to be fixed but said nothing will change as long as producers and representatives of the OCA sit with their arms crossed.

"Producers are shoving cattle and pigs out their laneways and they (large packers and multi-national food companies) are just giving us whatever they want for them," he said, adding that through the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, Ontario producers are paying to promote Alberta beef in this province.

"If you as producers think this is just a cycle, you're badly misinformed, this is all planned.

Jeffrey insisted that the development of a Canadian label for beef would kill the Ontario beef industry because Alberta and Quebec want the Ontario producer out of business so they can step in and fill this market.

He further contended that finished hogs will never again be worth \$200 a head or beef \$2 a pound on the rail.

"The big market players, the multi-national corporations and the food giants of the world, will never let that happen and it will never change unless grassroots producers do something about it," he said.

Jeffrey insists that the Ontario beef industry needs an Ontario-branded label.

"Ontario consumers want to eat Ontario beef, but they can't find it.

"Why? Because retailers do a wonderful job of not allowing them to identify Ontario-raised beef, and until producers come up with an idea and a marketing plan, that will continue."

When OCA president Gord Hardy was asked to speak to the issues raised by Jeffrey, he said he welcomed the opportunity to bring some reality back to the discussion.

In response to the suggestion that the OCA was not doing anything, Hardy pointed out that the following week it was holding a meeting to discuss risk management programs and is open to producers, advisory councillors, and the presidents of every county organization in the province invited to attend.

"We are going to look at a number of proposals for a risk management plan and we would like to take the best attributes of all the proposals," Hardy said, adding that after hearing all this doom and gloom, he was looking forward to having a good discussion.

"We need some positive stuff in this industry rather than all this negative talk or things won't get better."

Hardy said most proposals contain elements that don't necessarily fit certain sectors, so was important to find the right blend.

He added that last fall the OCA went to the provincial government with a risk management program based on pounds gained, but the organization was turned down flat.

Hardy said that he along with the grains and oilseeds group, pork, veal and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture met with Agriculture Minister Leona Dombrowsky and noted that she was pleased to see a unified group come with the same thing in mind.

Hardy also reminded Jeffrey of an organization called the Ontario Beef Value Chain Round Table, initiated by the OCA.

"This is three years old and we have all the major packers and retailers at the table along with restaurant chains, producers, feeders, dealers and every one of these people is trying to figure out how we can share the value of that industry and make it work.

"Bill, I've been following you around for two years and I still don't know what your plan is and I'm sick of it."

Hardy also reminded him that regarding an Ontario label, there is the Ontario Corn Fed Beef which has been a highly successful brand.

B) New center aims to ensure safety of imported food

By [Ann Bagel Storck](#) on 12/11/2009

The Department of Homeland Security has opened a center devoted to ensuring the safety of foods imported to the United States.

The Commercial Targeting and Analysis Center (CTAC) for Import Safety is operating under the direction of Customs and Border Protection (CBP). It was created on the recommendation of President Obama's Food Safety Working Group.

The Washington-based import safety CTAC is one of CBP's six commercial targeting centers in the United States. It will target shipments of imported cargo, including food, for possible safety violations. USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service and other partnering government agencies, including the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Consumer Product Safety Commission, will provide on-site expertise at the center.

As part of its collaboration with CBP, FSIS will extend its enforcement efforts to target ineligible imports and investigate suspicious shipments based on manifest information filed prior to the arrival of goods at U.S. ports.

"In addition to guarding against terrorism and crime, securing our borders and facilitating legitimate trade involve ensuring the safety of imported products," said Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet

Napolitano. "This new targeting center will enhance the inspection of goods entering our country by centralizing and strengthening federal efforts to protect U.S. consumers."

C) Cdn farmers suggest local food initiatives as way to fight climate change

The Canadian Press

Sun Dec 13 2009

Section: National General News

Byline: BY CIARA BYRNE

TORONTO _ As agricultural experts met in Copenhagen on the weekend to gingerly build consensus on agriculture's role in climate change, some farmers in Canada offered another solution to farming's cost on the environment _ change the way farming is practised.

"We clearly need to reverse directions," said Darrin Qualman, the director of research for the National Farmers Union, which is based in Saskatoon.

"We need to move towards lower emission agriculture and that means changing direction away from industrialized agriculture and globalization of the food system, but farmers need not fear that," he said, reassuringly.

Across an ocean in Copenhagen, Saturday's agriculture and rural development day brought together policy makers and negotiators, producers and the agricultural and climate change community to highlight the importance of agriculture in climate change.

The meeting of 300 delegates coincided with the United Nations climate negotiations.

Agriculture is a key issue for climate change.

The latest figures from the UN Food and Agriculture Organization says agriculture is responsible for almost 14 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions.

Qualman, who didn't attend the meeting, said Canada plays a big part in contributing to these higher emissions.

"Canada has really built possibly the highest fuel use and highest carbon emission food system in the world," he said, blaming ill-thought out trade agreements, more exports and imports, and a "de-localizing" of the food system.

The solution to reduce carbon emissions, according to Qualman, is what some farmers are calling "re-localized agriculture," which brings not only local food to farmer's markets, but also means bringing local beef packing plants and processing facilities into communities.

"The current globalized, industrialized system, boy it's just farm crisis and carnage out there," said Qualman, adding that struggling farmers aren't seeing big profits under the current food production system.

For Colleen Ross, an organic farmer from in Iroquois, Ont., working in a local food system has meant higher profits and a lower carbon footprint for her farm.

"I think as farmers what we really need to do is re-learn how to farm in a bio diverse way," said Ross.

But Ross says the responsibility of changing the way farming is practised nationwide also depends on consumers demanding stores remove the "3,000 kilometre salads," from store shelves.

"The frustration that I have as a farmer is that we're doing all of the right things to heal our food system and our climate, but we need 98 per cent of the rest of Canadians to insist that this is the kind of food system they want back."

In Copenhagen, some farmers see it a different way.

Don McCabe, from the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, admits agriculture is a culprit of global carbon emissions, but he says it can also be a part of the solution.

McCabe said some of the talks have focused on the agriculture industry's ability to be a carbon offset supplier by mitigating and sequestering carbon emissions through improved management and no-till farming.

For McCabe, the issue of climate change is much larger than any local food initiative could fix.

McCabe argues the cost of production in Canada is higher than other parts of the world, which makes it harder for farmers to increase their profits.

"I farm in Southwestern Ontario, and with all sarcasm intended here, I don't grow bananas and oranges yet, even with global climate change," said McCabe.

D) It's not junk food, in moderation

December 14, 2009

Heading into the holidays, here's some good news for anyone anticipating a festive feast: The term junk food is an oxymoron. In the eyes of one of Canada's leading food scientists, junk food doesn't exist.

Dr. Rickey Yada, who holds the Canada research chair in food protein structure at the University of Guelph, says unhealthy diets are to blame for making some food look like junk.

But consumed in moderation, food is...well, food. Not junk.

That's the message Yada delivered earlier this month in Guelph, at a News@Noon seminar at One Stone Road, sponsored by the office that handles the research partnership between the University of Guelph and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. The office holds such events periodically to raise awareness of the activities and accomplishments that accrue through the many research efforts stemming from the unique partnership.

Yada is a pioneer in translating and transferring knowledge gleaned through research efforts – not only his own, but also those of the 75 scientists who are part of Canada's Advanced Foods and Materials Network. With support from Canada's Networks of Centres of Excellence program, he helped found the network six years ago, and is currently its scientific director.

The connection between food, health and nutrition is a big emphasis for the partnership and for Yada's network. And as Yada's presentation shows, that connection is rife with spirited controversy and tough choices.

For example, there are many foods we couldn't consume without them first being processed. In many cases, it makes food better, with added nutrients.

However, through processing, food may take on excessive fat, salt and other red-flag features.

Some manufacturers point the finger at consumers. Last month, a Nestle Canada representative told a House of Commons health committee that consumer tastes prevent manufacturers from reducing the likes of salt, even though it, and inactivity, are killing Canadians.

Apparently we have an unusual attraction to salt. So manufacturers pour it on.

However, Yada says there's no reason to totally avoid what's popularly called junk – such as high-fat, high-salt processed snacks—unless you can't fight the urge to eat the whole bag, box or bowl. Try one serving instead, he suggests. The nutrition label on all food packaging in Canada notes what's considered one serving. Seldom is it the whole bag.

It can be discouraging, if not shocking, to discover how small a serving might be. Part of the problem is in packaging – which, ironically, is often the very thing that makes food widely available to us. If processors and manufacturers sold food by the serving, it would be easier for people trying follow the one-serving limit. But everyday would be like Halloween, with cupboards full of itty bitty packages that look like play food. And the environmental impact of so much packaging would have consumers howling.

So, instead, we get family-size jumbo packs. We dive in. And then wonder why we balloon.

Yada says one of the most maligned foods is potatoes, which also happen to be a focus of his research. In the early 2000s when anti-carb diets were all the rage and people were eschewing potatoes, he stood by carb-rich tubers potatoes and extolled their virtues for providing energy to the body, not to mention their vitamin-C richness.

And that's where he stands today, still working towards improving potatoes by enhancing their long-term storage potential. He's found a way to do so, through genetic modification, and told a different House of Commons committee last month there's no reason to fear such foods.

Or, for that matter, any food ... in moderation.

Owen Roberts teaches agricultural communications at the University of Guelph. Follow him at www.urbancowboy.ca.

E) HST won't hurt much, report says

Ontario's controversial harmonized sales tax is "virtually revenue neutral" and not the cash grab critics say it is, argues a new report to be released Monday.

The report by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives says low- and modest-income families will come out slightly ahead under the Liberals' HST package, which includes increased property and sales tax credits and income tax cuts, while households with incomes above \$100,000 will come out just slightly behind.

"No group is significantly worse off or better off as a result of the province's HST plan," said Ernie Lightman, a University of Toronto economist and professor of social work who co-authored *Not a Tax Grab After All: A Second Look at Ontario's HST*.

Even the researchers admit they were "surprised" to find a vast majority of Ontarians will either be slightly better off or unaffected by the tax changes.

"Assertions that this is a tax grab have no foundation in reality," Lightman said.

Critics have argued the new 13 per cent HST – which blends Ontario's 8 per cent provincial sales tax with the federal 5 per cent GST, and takes effect July 1 – is a way for the province to add \$3.5 billion to its coffers. And the higher tax will apply to far more transactions.

The NDP, both provincially and federally, have roundly condemned the new tax.

"It's basically kicking people when they are already down in terms of their financial situation," Ontario NDP Leader Andrea Horwath said last week.

"Ontarians have loudly and clearly rejected the idea of shifting the tax burden onto the backs of consumers while giving the corporate sector a huge tax giveaway," she added.

Both Horwath and B.C.'s NDP leader, Carole James, emphasized the overwhelming majority of taxpayers in both provinces oppose the tax, which will increase levies on hundreds of goods and services, including home heating fuel, gas, taxi fares, haircuts and legal fees.

But the *Star's* David Olive has reported that economists who have carefully studied the long-term impact of the HST calculate that our cost of living will rise only marginally, by some 0.4 per cent.

Meanwhile, the HST is expected to create close to 600,000 new jobs over 10 years.

That would raise annual incomes by 8.8 per cent over that period as the cost of doing business in Ontario and B.C. drops by \$6.9 billion. That should unleash private-sector spending on job creation and capital investment by a whopping \$47 billion.

The HST will also make private-sector employers in Ontario and B.C. more cost-competitive with the more than 160 nations that already use a harmonized value-added tax.

Monday's new report from the centre, a left-leaning institute dedicated to progressive policy research, says the Liberals' HST tax package – which includes \$1.1 billion in sales and property tax credits and \$2.3 billion in new personal income tax cuts – will actually add just \$133 million annually to the province's tax base, or one-quarter of one per cent.

That works out to a loss of just \$37 a year when averaged over all Ontario households.

But the hits will be harder for some than for others:

People who don't normally file taxes, including low-income households and aboriginal people, will be significantly worse off. That's because they won't have access to new tax credits and income tax cuts without filing a tax return.

Seniors are apparently the only group who will not benefit from the tax changes – largely because they already receive property tax breaks, notes study co-author Andy Mitchell, a senior research associate at the U of T's faculty of social work. The cost? Single seniors will pay an extra \$15 a year on average; senior couples \$150 more each year.

Households with incomes above \$100,000 will be worse off by \$389 annually. But, the study argues, this amounts to just 0.2 per cent of these higher family incomes.

Families with incomes between \$30,000 and \$90,000 should be better off or worse off by no more than about \$50 to \$75 annually, which, given the assumptions and limitations of the data, "amounts to a wash," the report says.

Those with incomes below Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut Off after tax – or \$27,210 for a single mother with two children in Toronto – will be ahead by \$136 annually.

Households with incomes below \$20,000 will be better off by an average of \$92 annually.

The centre embarked on the study last fall out of concern that sales taxes hit low-income families harder because the poor spend a greater proportion of their income on taxable goods and services.

"Our biggest concern is to ensure Ontario's poor aren't hurt by the introduction of a new sales tax," said Mitchell. "After looking at the numbers we find the interests of the poor are relatively well protected."

The Liberals have come under fire from both the Tories and NDP for imposing the new tax on hundreds of goods and services which were not previously subject to the PST.

Tory MPPs Bill Murdoch (Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound) and Randy Hillier (Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington) staged a raucous 44-hour sit-in on the floor of the Legislature earlier this month over lack of hearings on the new tax.

Mitchell said the report is not intended to refute either opposition party position.

"Debate is fine, but let's make it an informed debate," he said.

"My hope would be that (this report) forces the debate away from the knee-jerk, uninformed charges we've been having towards a discussion of what is really at stake, which is a shift from income tax to consumption tax and from business to consumers."

F) Feed study gets \$8M from ALMA; Funds will help identify better links between feed and animal nutrition and influence better use of feed grains

Town & Country

Mon Dec 14 2009

Page: 1 / FRONT

Section: News

Byline: Les Dunford

Source: Town & Country

The cost and effectiveness of feed for livestock accounts for a large portion of the inputs or production costs of raising livestock, whether it be beef cattle, dairy, hogs, goats or sheep.

And last week, the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency (ALMA) said it will invest \$8 million to find better feeds and better use of those feeds.

The \$8 million announcement was made by Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development Minister George Groeneveld late last Wednesday afternoon in Red Deer at the Seizing Feed Grain Opportunities conference held there.

In a release from ALMA, the minister is quoted as saying, "As a beef producer, I know feed accounts for over half my production costs. That percentage is even higher for other livestock producers. So investing in better feed, and better use of that feed, will be a positive influence on the bottom line for producers."

Just how all this will come about is fairly vague at this point. ALMA says the funds will be used to further develop livestock feed, identify better links between feed and animal nutrition, and influence better use of feed grains.

Alberta Beef Producers (ABP) research manager Reynold Bergen says, "I think there's a need. Livestock industries can't exist without feed, there's no question about that, and there's no question that corn is running circles around barley in terms of yield improvements."

Bergen says he sees the \$8 million investment as "pretty long overdue, and we're happy to see it."

He feels investment in feed grain breeding and research is always good.

Bergen points out this government investment is a valuable addition to what ABP, the Alberta Barley Commission and the Alberta Crop Industry Development Fund started a year ago when they contributed \$6.25 million to a feed and forage breeding program in conjunction with Alberta Agriculture at Lacombe.

"They're leveraging industry dollars, so that's good," he said.

G) A Market for Beef Ambles Across a Border

The New York Times

Wed Dec 16 2009

Page: 24

Section: Foreign

Byline: ALEXEI BARRIONUEVO; Charles Newbery contributed reporting from Buenos Aires.

Column: MONTEVIDEO JOURNAL

Dateline: MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay

For decades, the cattle-raising family of Gabriel Pintos looked across the Rio de la Plata with respect and envy at Argentina's legendary tradition for producing beef.

But scanning the vast expanse of his 193-acre ranch here recently, where ducks quacked in a nearby pond while 120 cows nibbled on green grass, Mr. Pintos exuded a new competitive vigor.

"Uruguay today has the maturity to compete with any part of the world with its beef," said the tanned and fast-talking Mr. Pintos, 51. "This is a historic opportunity for us."

For more than a century, Argentina has distinguished its beef as healthier and more natural than meat from most of the world. Cows ambled leisurely across the rich soil of the Humid Pampa munching on green grass, not the grains offered in crowded feedlots in the faster-paced American industry.

But that image could become a memory from a bygone era. Political decisions by Argentina are changing the taste of the famed Argentine steak and threatening to tarnish the country's world-renowned beef industry.

The changes have driven away investors, reduced the size of Argentina's herd and given the nation's smaller neighbor, Uruguay, the chance to capitalize on Argentina's troubles by billing itself as the "last big farm" for healthier, grass-fed cattle.

Argentina, in some ways, is a victim of its own success. Exports rose after a steep devaluation of the Argentine peso in 2002 made the country's beef more competitive globally. But supplies began to dry up for Argentine consumers -- who eat more beef per person than any others in the world, industry officials say -- causing prices to rise and stoking social discontent.

So Nestor Kirchner, Argentina's president at the time, responded with a 180-day ban on exports to tamp down prices in 2006. Later, he put in price controls on certain popular cuts, like roast beef, which in turn led Argentines to eat still more beef.

But faced with a prolonged drought this year and concerns over their profits, many ranchers are converting their pastures into land for soybean cultivation. Now government incentives to fatten cattle faster are deepening a shift toward raising more Argentine beef with grains like corn and oats in often-crowded feedlots, opening the door for Uruguay to claim the grass-fed advantage.

The Spanish introduced cattle to Uruguay more than 400 years ago, and beef has long been its most important export industry. Cows outnumber people more than three to one in this country of 3.4 million, where about 80 percent of the land is used for cattle grazing.

The nation is sandwiched between Brazil, the world's largest beef exporter, and Argentina, which has a cattle herd some five times larger than Uruguay's. Cattle in Argentina and Uruguay were always relatively similar -- both were grass-fed and free-range, and they share similar British genetics. As in Argentina, mustachioed gauchos roam the plains with black berets pulled tight over windswept faces.

Despite its neighbor's problems, Uruguay has struggled to compete with Argentina's global reputation.

Alejandro Berrutti, a beef trader in Montevideo, recalled his frustrating efforts to introduce Uruguayan meat into the market in Denmark this year. At a Copenhagen supermarket, Argentine beef was classified as the best in the world, but workers had never heard of the Uruguayan equivalent, he said. At a restaurant, the main entrees were Danish salmon and "Argentine steak." Mr. Berrutti asked a waiter if there were any other dishes. "Sir, this is the menu that we have had for 25 years, and it works," Mr. Berrutti recalled the waiter replying. At Uruguay's National Meat Institute, which promotes the beef industry, Silvana Bonsignore, the director of marketing, cited a 2004 study of four cities -- Atlanta, Boston, Denver and Washington -- showing that many Americans knew very little about Uruguay the country, let alone its reputation for beef.

"It is very difficult to sell Uruguayan beef when nobody is familiar with Uruguay," she said.

With that in mind, Ms. Bonsignore and her staff came up with a new marketing campaign in 2005 seeking to sell Uruguay -- its wines, its beaches in trendy Punta del Este -- while promoting its beef. Glossy brochures juxtapose images of grazing cattle and plates of beef dishes, with scenes of Uruguayan vineyards and seaside boardwalks.

Ms. Bonsignore has held beef-sampling events in Spain and Portugal, showcasing Uruguayan chefs. In April of 2008, the meat institute organized the "world's largest barbecue," nearly 5,000 feet of grills and 26,000 pounds of beef, earning Uruguay a Guinness World Record.

Uruguay is trying to show the world it is dedicated to "natural" beef -- grass-fed and hormone-free by law. One marketing campaign features a symbol of a supermarket bar code emerging from blades of grass. Another notes that each Uruguayan cow, on average, grazes on pasture the size of two soccer fields.

At the same time, big beef investors have begun betting on Uruguay's more market-friendly policies. Terry Johnson, owner of BPU Meat, is investing \$150 million in Uruguay, including in a plant scheduled to open in January that will be able to process 1,500 cattle in one eight-hour shift. Mr. Johnson, a Briton, sold plants in Argentina and Brazil in 2006 to focus on Uruguay.

"For whatever reason, the Argentine government has tried to bring the agribusiness to its knees," Mr. Johnson said. "The herd is shrinking, land prices have become cheaper. Anybody with anything to do with cattle wants to come out. Uruguay offers a chance to do things right."

On his ranch, where he also raises horses and lamb, Mr. Pintos, a veterinarian by training, said he is looking for ways to increase production while maintaining Uruguay's grass-fed edge.

He comes from a family of farmers, and his wife from a line of cattle ranchers. Now they are teaching the business to their children, and they sent their oldest son to New Zealand for six months to learn about the industry there.

"The Dutch are investing a lot here, the Argentines, the French, the Brazilians," he said excitedly. "I am a humble worker that wants to keep getting better day by day, not just for me or for my family, but for my country."

H) Knowledge and attitudes towards food safety among Canadian dairy producers

05.dec.09

Preventive Veterinary Medicine

I. Young, S. Hendrick, S. Parker, A. Rajić, J.T. McClure, J. Sanchez and S.A. McEwen

http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6TBK-4XVHS41-1&_user=10&_rdoc=1&_fmt=&_orig=search&_sort=d&_docanchor=&view=c&_acct=C000050221&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=10&md5=c7ecfd201e176c0600751d2cc6bd1aa0

Abstract

The Canadian dairy industry has recently begun implementing an on-farm food-safety (OFFS) program called Canadian Quality Milk (CQM). For CQM to be effective, producers should be familiar with food-safety hazards in their industry and have an adequate understanding of on-farm good production practices that are necessary to ensure safe food. To assess their knowledge and attitudes towards food safety, a postal questionnaire was administered to all (n = 10,474) Canadian dairy producers enrolled in dairy herd-improvement organizations in 2008. The response rate was 20.9% (2185/10,474). Most producers (88.7%) reported that they or their families consume unpasteurized milk from their bulk milk tanks and 36.3% indicated that consumers should be able to purchase unpasteurized milk in Canada. Producers who reported completion of a dairy-health management course (OR = 0.74, 95% CI: 0.60, 0.92) and participation in CQM (OR = 0.79, 95% CI: 0.64, 0.97) were less likely to support the availability of unpasteurized milk for consumers, while organic producers (OR = 2.10, 95% CI: 1.27, 3.47), younger producers (aged <30) and producers with smaller herds were more likely to favour this practice. Two-thirds of producers (66.7%) were concerned that antimicrobial resistance (AMR) might preclude successful treatment of sick cattle. Producers who completed a dairy-health management course (OR = 1.37, 95% CI: 1.11, 1.69), organic producers (OR = 2.00, 95% CI: 1.09, 3.69) and producers from Quebec compared to each other province were more likely to indicate concern about AMR.

Most producers reported that Salmonella (74.2%) and Escherichia coli (73.0%) could be transmitted through contaminated beef or milk to humans, while most were not sure or did not think that Brucella (70.3%) and Cryptosporidium (88.5%) could be transmitted via these routes. Most producers did not perceive that any type of farm visitor has a high risk of introducing infectious agents into their herds. Producers rated veterinarians as very knowledgeable about OFFS (90.9% answered 4 or 5 on a five-point scale) and a favoured (73.1%) source of information about food safety. In contrast, only 13.2% and 30.2% of producers, respectively, indicated that consumers and government personnel are knowledgeable about OFFS. Targeted continuing education for dairy producers in Canada should address the major gaps in knowledge and attitudes towards food safety identified in this study, and veterinarians should be included as key knowledge-transfer informants.

I) NEW MEXICO: NM family works to settle suit against Greeley, Colo.-based JBS Swift Beef Co.

07.dec.09

Los Angeles Times

Associated Press

<http://www.latimes.com/business/nationworld/wire/sns-ap-us-beef-recall-lawsuit,0,90213.story>

DENVER -- The family of a New Mexico boy who got sick after eating sirloin from JBS Swift Beef Co. is working to settle a lawsuit seeking unspecified damages against the Greeley, Colo.-based company.

JBS Swift recalled about 380,000 pounds of beef this summer due to connections with outbreaks of E. coli.

Alex Roerick and his mother, Hollie, of Albuquerque filed a lawsuit in July saying Alex developed kidney failure after eating meat from the company.

In documents filed in U.S. District Court in Denver on Monday, lawyers for the Roericks and the company asked that the claims be dismissed, with no money changing hands, so the parties could pursue a settlement.

J) ONTARIO: The big beef

08.dec.09

Ottawa Citizen

David Gonczol

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/life/beef/2314234/story.html>

OTTAWA -- Mark Tijssen and his church friends worry about the quality of animals that end up in the commercial food chain.

The Ottawa area group, which jokingly calls itself the Christian Meat Cutters Association, refuses to have anything to do with what they say is Canada's listeriosis-plagued meat processing industry, so each November they pool their funds and personally select a few locally-grown, healthy beef cattle at a livestock auction in Greely. Their only concession to the beef industry is to allow a trusted and licensed slaughterhouse owner to kill and butcher the animals, leaving them with legally-inspected quarters of meat to share.

After that, they cut the meat themselves into smaller pieces. No one else touches their meat.

That includes a group of intelligence officers from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ottawa police who are in the thick of a criminal investigation into what they think is an illegal slaughterhouse run out of Tijssen's garage. Last month, they set up a stakeout at his house and at another Ottawa area farm. For the past three weeks, they've been stopping vehicles leaving Tijssen's property in a hunt for illegal meat.

Tijssen became aware of the investigation on Nov. 11, when officers stopped a car and seized what Tijssen admits was a few pounds of uninspected and, therefore, illegal pork from a pig killed at his house.

Tijssen said he told investigators that he and a friend had bought and slaughtered the pig together to share the meat, not knowing they had broken Ontario's Food Safety and Quality Act by transporting it off his property.

The seizure spooked the members of the Christian Meat Cutters Association. Fearing confiscation of what they believed to be their legal and properly inspected beef, hanging in Tijssen's garage, they decided to hide it.

By the time four police cruisers and two MNR trucks came "screaming" into his driveway two days later in what Tijssen called a "show of force," the \$2,300 in beef was gone. Despite stakeouts and interrogations, the investigators have yet to lay their hands on the meat or even to identify other members of the Christian Meat Cutters.

K) NEW ZEALAND: Foot and mouth scare prompts \$12m build

09.dec.09

Computerworld

Stephen Bell Wellington

<http://computerworld.co.nz/news.nsf/news/7F7A6CC4B494C9E5CC257686006AC9EA>

Cabinet approves fresh development over an upgrade to AsureQuality's AgriBase

A 2005 Waiheke Island foot and mouth disease scare has prompted the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to develop a new \$12 million computer-based system to hold detailed farm information.

Ground-up development of the system, called Farmsonline, will cost an estimated \$3 million, with a further \$9 million in operational costs over the next five years. The decision to build the system was approved by Cabinet last month after considering an alternative upgrade to existing systems such as AsureQuality's AgriBase.

"Analysis showed that enhancing AgriBase would be more expensive and no faster than building a new application," says a brief on the MAF website. "In addition, there were no unique business benefits with this option that could not be achieved through a contestable procurement process."



If you would like to post your cattle industry news or event, send your information by Thursday at 4pm to lianne@cattle.guelph.on.ca or submit through the OCA Web site: <http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/calendar/calendar.asp>.

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