



OCA Weekly Update – January 22, 2010

Please note that there will be no weekly Update on January 15, 2010.

The weekly update will return on January 22, 2010.

Happy New Year.

Herd Health Problems?



Ask the OCA Vet on Call!

- Valid questions from Ontario beef producers will all be answered in due time
- Out-of-province beef producers' questions will be answered or rejected at the discretion of OCA staff and Dr. Mac Littlejohn, although it is preferred that your provincial resources be exhausted beforehand
 - If you are not a valid beef producer, your question will not be entertained

Submit your question via <http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/ask-a-vet/vet-form.asp>

All submissions will be reviewed for validity before a response is issued.

Please expect at least a 2-day wait, depending on Web traffic.

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A) New Agriculture Minister Brings Renewed Hope for Ontario's Beef Sector

On behalf of Ontario beef producers, the Board of Directors of the Ontario Cattlemen's Association (OCA) would like to extend a warm welcome to The Honourable Carol Mitchell, as she joins Cabinet with her portfolio as Ontario's new Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. The announcement was made yesterday at the Ontario Legislature, by Premier McGuinty.

Ontario's agri-food sector is vital to the province, and beef production is one of the largest sectors. Having served as Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Minister Mitchell is very well known to OCA and very familiar with the agriculture sector.

Gord Hardy, OCA President, is pleased with the Premier's selection. "Right now, agriculture is a challenging portfolio," he says. "We need programs and regulations that work for us if we are to continue to be a sustainable and profitable industry. Fortunately, Minister Mitchell represents a riding that is known for being one of the top beef-producing ridings in the province and we appreciate that the Minister is already well-versed in our issues as she takes on her new responsibilities."

Hardy also wishes the outgoing Agriculture Minister the best in her new portfolio as Minister of Education. "As well, OCA wishes Minister Dombrowsky the best of success in her new position as Minister of Education. On behalf of Ontario beef producers we would like to thank her for her work in the agriculture portfolio."

In conclusion, OCA believes that Minister Mitchell will be a great champion for agriculture in Ontario. Beef producers in the riding of Huron-Bruce have always enjoyed her attention in listening and responding to their issues.

"We anticipate that with her new role, our relationship with Minister Mitchell will only become stronger," concludes Hardy.

The Ontario Cattlemen's Association is a grassroots organization, formed in 1963, that represents the interests of Ontario's 19,000 cattle producers.

The 2010 OCA Annual General Meeting will be held on February 24-25 at the DoubleTree International Plaza Hotel, in Toronto.

B) 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

C) 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.

D) Government of Canada Creating Market Opportunities in Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala and the United States

Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz led an agricultural trade mission to Mexico, Colombia, Guatemala and the United States to create new market opportunities for Canadian farmers.

"Step by step this Government is working to expand and create new trade opportunities for Canadian farmers and processors," said Minister Ritz. "Trade is a key priority of Canada's Economic Action Plan and that's why Canada is working to level the playing field and give industry the opportunity to be stable and profitable."

In Mexico, Minister Ritz announced a \$5 million investment to boost the Mexican appetite and raise consumer awareness of Canada's safe and top quality food. The Canada Brand initiative, part of Canada's Economic Action Plan, will drive promotional activities in Mexico for a wide range of Canadian products, including canola. Canadian agriculture exports to Mexico totaled \$1.6 billion in 2008.

"Mexican families are looking for top quality and healthy agricultural products such as Canadian canola oil when they go to the grocery store," said Minister Ritz. "This initiative will further connect the Canadian maple leaf and our commitment to quality to our Canadian agricultural products."

Minister Ritz also met with Secretary of Agriculture Francisco Mayorga and Secretary of Economy, Gerardo Ruiz Mateos and stressed the need for an expedited scientific process that will reopen the Mexican market to Canadian over-thirty-months (OTM) beef.

Minister Ritz took the opportunity to stop in Colombia to reiterate the Government of Canada's dedication to implement the Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement (FTA). The Minister met personally with Colombian Minister of Agriculture Andres Fernandez, Minister of Trade, Industry and Tourism Luis Guillermo Plata, and Colombian Agriculture Institute General Manager Luis Fernando Caicedo. The FTA will provide preferential access to the Colombian market for Canadian agriculture and non-agriculture products and is an important market for Canadian wheat and pulses. In 2008, Colombia imported \$123 million in Canadian wheat, durum and barley sales and \$72 million of pulse and specialty crops.

Minister Ritz also announced that Canada has successfully completed the process to reopen the Colombian market to Canadian beef. That process began last spring when Minister Ritz traveled to Colombia and secured a process to demonstrate the safety of Canadian beef. The Canadian Beef Export Federation estimates the market to be worth \$6 million.

Meetings between Canada and Colombia resulted in a clear path forward to fully reopen the Colombian market to Canadian breeding stock and genetics. This process will resolve outstanding livestock certification issues. The Canadian Beef Breeds Council and the Canadian Livestock Genetics Association estimates the increased exports of cattle breeding stock and genetics will be worth \$1 million.

The Colombian government also committed to working with Canadian officials to negotiate animal health conditions that would allow Canadian sheep and goat imports.

In Guatemala, Minister Ritz met with Minister of Agriculture, Mario Aldana and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Haroldo Rondas and pressed for full beef market access and duty free access for pork, beef and other agricultural products. Minister Ritz stressed the importance of a mutually beneficial free trade agreement between Canada, Guatemala and other Central American countries. In 2008, Guatemala imported \$32 million of Canadian agriculture.

Minister Ritz also spoke at the State Agriculture and Rural Leaders Conference in Orlando, Florida about the Government of Canada's clear opposition to Country-of-Origin Labelling (COOL). Minister Ritz committed to maintaining a strong partnership built on the fairest conditions for farmers on both sides of the border.

E) Intensive Grazing School Sponsored by Ontario Forage Council (OFC)

*Steve Kenyon
Greener Pastures Grazing Management Ltd.
Busby, Alberta*

*February 16th & 17th at Douro, Ontario
February 18th & 19th at Markdale, Ontario*

This Intensive Grazing School by Steve Kenyon will focus on a number of areas, including economics, finances, human resources and cell design. Steve has a major focus on grazing principles to develop more sustainable pastures to maximize greater profitability on a per acre basis. Steve has a proven track record of delivering an amazing program and has a technique of passing on the knowledge he has demonstrated on his own ranch. Steve does a great job of localizing the information and techniques to encompass the local situation here in Ontario.

This course has been approved for Cost/Share Funding through the Growing Your Farm Profits (GYFP) Program. Contact your local GYFP Program Rep or the Ontario Forage Council (OFC) for details.

This Intensive Grazing Course will certainly provide a practical take-home message that can make a difference. *"Weaning a couple of extra calves off the pasture this year will more than compensate for the investment in this course".*

Registration will be limited, so please enroll early to avoid disappointment. To register or obtain more information, contact the OFC Office. 1-877-892-8663 or 519-986-1484

F) Lake Simcoe farmer benefits from enhanced Farm Stewardship Program

"If you take care of your land, it will take care of you," says David Jewell, who manages a 50-cow beef herd near Bolsover in Durham Region. "My ancestors, from my great-grandparents down through the generations, farmed that way, and I am grateful for their hard work."

Jewell's family has lived in the area since the 1860's, so his ties to the land are close. He has been actively involved in the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) program since 2000, taking advantage of cost-share opportunities over the years to make environmental improvements to his operation.

Most recently the Lake Simcoe Farm Stewardship Program (LSFSP), has offered funding incentives making it feasible for Jewell to construct two covered manure storage facilities. LSFSP is funded by the Government of Ontario. When combined with government contributions available through the Canada-Ontario Farm Stewardship Program (COFSP) associated with EFP, LSFSP provides up to 75 per cent combined cost-

share to farmers implementing eligible Best Management Practices (BMPs) that contribute to protecting Lake Simcoe's water quality.

Support for EFP is provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) through the Growing Forward Best Practices suite. The Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition leads agricultural support for the program, and the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) delivers the program locally.

Jewell completed the first covered manure storage facility, a 50-ft by 45-ft structure, with LSFSP funding in December 2008. Total cost for the drawings, material and labour was \$42,500. A Nutrient Management Strategy was required for the building permit and was also eligible for the same combined cost-share. This past fall Jewell added eaves troughs at his own expense to divert water away from the shed foundation and ensure clean water run-off.

Jewell's previous cost-share projects under EFP also offered benefits for improving water quality in the Lake Simcoe watershed. Butternut Creek flows close by his barnyard on another property. One of his first projects there was to fence his cattle away from the creek. On the barn side of the creek he constructed a 5-ft high pole fence on an earthen berm that acts as a diversion. On the other, electric fence along the edge of the pasture restricts cattle access to the creek. A well and a water line from the creek supply waterers for the cattle.

The benefits have been numerous. Streamside vegetation has re-established. Water quality has improved, as has herd health. Jewell also points out that as vegetation re-established, he noticed the presence of water hemlock and poison hemlock, which explained the previous occasional loss of an animal from grazing on the young growth of these plants.

With additional LSFSP funding in late 2009, Jewell completed a second covered manure storage on the Butternut Creek property. The second structure is also 45' by 50' with 4-ft concrete lower walls, an 18-ft gated access to restrict cattle and an 8-in floor-slope to the back of the structure to contain liquid run-off from piled manure.

Since the structure is located fairly close to the creek, eavestroughs provide clean water diversion by collecting roof run-off and carrying it over the berm, directly to the creek, to avoid contamination from the barnyard.

The berm acts to direct any drainage from the barnyard itself away from the creek to a low hayfield on the other side of the farm buildings. Jewell cut old tile drains in this area to ensure there's no direct transport of run-off to the creek. The hayfield now acts as a settling area for drainage during times of excess run-off.

"As you start working on these projects" Jewell says, "you start noticing other work that needs attention to make the whole project come together." It all counts in making sure we really care for the land."

"Saving time and minimizing the energy costs of tractor and fuel were factors in the design of both manure storage structures, as well," Jewell adds. "The funding support has been welcome, both in making my operation more efficient and providing environmental benefits."

Project Proposal Applications (PPA) for program year two (2010) of COFSP are available now from OSCIA Program Representatives serving counties in the area. The same PPA serves LSFSP as well. Interested producers in the Lake Simcoe watershed who may be interested in making a submission are strongly encouraged to act quickly.

G) Amanda Vandenberg wins inaugural Ontario's Outstanding Young Farmers' Scholarship

Amanda Vandenberg, a second year Honours Math student at Wilfrid Laurier University is the first recipient of a new annual scholarship from Ontario's Outstanding Young Farmers (OYF) program. The \$500 Scholarship was established in memory of the late Martin Streef.

Vandenberg, from Parkhill, Ontario, has been active with the Parkhill Fall Fair, acting as ambassador in 2008. She is also a Level 2 Hockey referee, provides Red Cross training services, teaches swimming lessons and works

part-time on her parent's hog farm. Upon graduation, she plans to pursue a career as a math teacher and hopes to work in a rural high school.

As part of the scholarship nomination, each applicant was required to provide a short essay to answer the question "Why are you passionate about agriculture in Canada?" Amanda's response focuses on her concern about the lack of youth involvement in the agricultural industry. "If we could get them excited about all of the really neat things that are happening in agriculture today, we would see a growing trend of students choosing agriculture as their career path. The possibilities are endless!"

Amanda will officially receive her scholarship at the OYF Ontario regional banquet on March 30 in Belleville.

The OYF Memorial Scholarship was established in memory of the late Martin Streef – president Streef Produce Ltd., a family-run fresh fruit and vegetable business in Woodstock Ontario – to help future generations of Canadians pursue their passion for agriculture. In 1996, Streef was recognized as both Ontario's and Canada's Outstanding Young Farmer. He died in April 2008.

The Martin Streef Memorial Scholarship is available to any full-time student in their final year of secondary school who is about to enter a post secondary institution, or is currently registered in a post secondary institution leading to a degree or diploma. This individual related somehow to an Ontario Outstanding Young Farmer alumni. The application deadline for the 2010 OYF Memorial Scholarship is June 30, 2010. Full details and application forms are available at www.oyfontario.ca

H) 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.

I) Farm Credit Canada Forum – "Big Ideas for Your Future"

March 9
Woodbridge, ON
The Royalton
10:00am - 3:00pm

March 11
Kingston, ON
Kingston Gospel Temple
10:00 am - 3:00pm

Cost: FREE

Deadline: February 28, 2010
Sponsored by: Farm Credit Canada

Join us for this special event. FCC Forums are an opportunity to learn, inspire big ideas and network with business owners and operators just like you. Peter Mansbridge, award-winning anchor and interviewer, is keynote speaker at this year's FCC Forum. Lunch is provided.

Contact: 1-800-332-3301

J) Unique Products Create Retail Opportunities for Canadian Beef

The Beef Information Centre (BIC) works through a number of different channels to get Canadian beef brand messaging out to grocery retailers and their customers. Recently BIC partnered with several different groups to enhance the reach of the Canadian beef brand mark, by networking with key influencers, offering Canadian beef samples to urban consumers and through flyer advertising to rural customers.

Influencing the Influencers at Retail

BIC recently participated at the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors (CCGD) annual conference. With 1,500 delegates from every facet of the retail industry, CCGD members make up over 80 per cent of those involved in the food distribution industry in Canada. This conference presented an excellent opportunity to reinforce the Canadian beef brand mark and to influence this important group of decision makers.

At the conference, BIC worked in partnership with TMF (The Meat Factory) Foods Inc. (a manufacturer of pre-cooked meals) to provide attendees a chance to enjoy TMF's Lou's brand Slow Roasted Beef Tips in Red Wine Gravy, made with 100 per cent Canadian beef. BIC had recently partnered with TMF Foods on the successful launch of their new line of slow roasted beef products at a major Toronto consumer trade show. Today, Lou's Slow Roasted Beef Tips in Red Wine Gravy is available at Sobeys stores in Ontario, Walmart Canada supercentres nationally and in five No Frills test stores in Ontario.

Presenting this new, value-added beef product allowed conference delegates the chance to sample this high-quality meal solution and taste for themselves what a great addition to their meat case this Canadian beef product offered. BIC also provided delegates with promotional materials featuring the Canadian beef brand mark, and had an opportunity to speak with a number of key beef buyers during the conference.

"BIC's attendance and contribution to these high profile events not only helps to enhance the reach and awareness of the Canadian beef brand mark, it positions BIC as a key partner in developing their business with Canadian beef," says Judy Nelson, BIC's vice-chair and a cow-calf operator near Lundbreck, Alta.

In-store demos offer Canadian beef-focused conversations

BIC recently partnered with Sobeys Ontario to hold 82 in-store demos focusing on source grinds. During these events, held the last weekend in November, about 25,000 shoppers sampled Canadian beef.

For the demo, BIC served The Orient Express, a hearty soup that uses Sterling Silver lean ground sirloin and Knorr chicken broth. The recipe can be found in the winter issue of BIC's Make it Beef, which was also handed out to consumers, along with Knorr product coupons.

According to Nelson, in-store demos provide opportunity to deliver key consumer messaging regarding attributes and value of ground sirloin via on-pack labels featuring the Canadian beef brand mark, recipes, in-store sampling and point-of-sale materials.

"This demo represents an excellent example of cross promotion, working with all levels of the chain to enhance Canadian beef brand messaging and drive sales of source specific ground beef," says Nelson. "In-store

demos create the opportunity to Influence consumers' shopping decisions and drives uptake of source specific ground beef."

Reaching out to rural Canada

BIC worked with retail grocery buying group Triple 4 Advertising to leverage flyer activity that utilizes the Canadian beef brand mark and Canadian beef messaging to rural communities. BIC influenced the flyer copy which included proper cooking methods, meal solutions and quality photographs featuring Canadian beef.

The flyers were distributed between western Ontario through to Alberta, in 30 traditional grocery outlets and in over 250 smaller convenience operations.

"The flyers are distributed through local newspapers, so all residents of these communities will be exposed to the Canadian beef brand mark as well as BIC's messaging for cooking or meal solutions," says Nelson. "The potential for reach is vast. Partnering with this buying group exposed the Canadian beef brand mark to customers who might not otherwise come in contact with this messaging."

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.

K) Government of Canada Working to Boost International Demand for Canadian Dairy Livestock Genetics

The Government of Canada is investing \$1.22 million to increase sales of Canadian dairy genetics in international markets through the AgriMarketing program. Parliamentary Secretary Pierre Lemieux made the announcement today at the Dairy Farmers of Ontario 44th Annual General Meeting.

"Canada maintains a global stamp of excellence in genetics," said Parliamentary Secretary Lemieux, on behalf of Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz. "Our Government is steadfast in our support for supply management and is creating opportunities for our producers at home by increasing exports and promoting our top quality dairy genetics around the world."

The investment will help the Canadian Livestock Genetics Association (CLGA) to fund a variety of targeted international market development initiatives to increase the volume and the value of dairy cattle, embryo and semen exports, and raise awareness of our top quality Canadian genetic programs around the world.

As a national association, the CLGA regroups cattle, embryo and semen exporters, breed associations and works on market access and animal health for the benefit of producers in both national and international markets. Canadian dairy genetic exports reached \$177.8 million in 2008, representing an increase of 73% over the previous year.

The AgriMarketing program, a four year \$88 million initiative, assists producers and processors to increase exports of Canada's safe, high-quality world-class products around the world. The program provides funding for industry associations to develop and implement long-term international strategies and to undertake activities such as international market development, brand-building and industry-to-industry trade advocacy.

For more information on the AgriMarketing Program, please write to agrimarketing@agr.gc.ca.

L) Don Ledrew Appointed President and Chief Operating Officer of ACC Farmers' Financial

The Board of Directors of ACC Farmers' Financial (ACC) is pleased to announce that Don LeDrew has been appointed President and Chief Operating Officer effective immediately. Brian Hughes retains the Chief

Executive Officer position, with additional responsibility for special projects, while Don becomes responsible for the day-to-day operations of ACC.

“Don LeDrew is one of the most respected individuals in Ontario agriculture,” emphasized Brad Oakley, Chair of the ACC Board. “He brings extensive experience in government and industry relations, administrative and financial management, farm organization management and coalitions, as well as crop production and crop research.”

Brian Hughes had praise for the man who is taking over much of his responsibility in corporate management. “Proper succession planning is essential for the continued success of ACC Farmers’ Financial; and the appointment of Don LeDrew ensures that ACC will be well managed into the future. For the past seven years, Don has provided excellent leadership from his position as Vice President and Treasurer; in fact much of our success can be attributed to his capable administration.”

Don has 30 years of experience in the Ontario agri-food industry, including General Manager of the Ontario Corn Producers’ Association, Secretary of the Ontario Agricultural Commodity Council, and Research Farm Manager with Dekalb Canada. He is a Professional Agrologist (P. Ag.) and graduate of the University of Guelph with a B.Sc. in Ag (Animal Science) and an M. Sc. in Crop Science.

ACC Farmers’ Financial (ACC) is a not-for-profit that was founded in 1992 by a coalition of 17 farm organizations. Since its inception, ACC has loaned over \$2 billion to Canadian farmers.

M) McGuinty Government Supports Marketing Efforts

Provincial support for marketing projects is feeding people’s appetite for local food and strengthening rural economies.

To promote the local foods that support the people, communities and economies of rural Ontario, the Province is investing in eight new projects through the Ontario Market Investment Fund. Some of these projects are:

- Re-inventing the Kitchener Market with a strong focus on local food
- Promoting the nutritional benefits of Ontario mushrooms
- Showing schoolchildren the goodness of local food with a new, all-Ontario snack

The four-year program has invested more than \$4.75 million in 94 projects to date. The program helps develop economic opportunities through trade events, marketing campaigns and industry research projects. It is part of Ontario’s investment in ‘buy local’ initiatives.

“The strong support communities across Ontario are showing for promoting and buying local food is very good for our economy, for farmers and for the environment.”
— Carol Mitchell, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

- The Savour Ontario program includes 100 restaurants across the province.
- Consumer awareness of the Foodland Ontario brand is at an all time high - 96 per cent of principal grocery shoppers recognize the Foodland Ontario symbol.

N) Ontario Federation of Agriculture Policy Meeting to set direction on the Future of Food in Canada

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is asking its members to help establish the elements of a National Food Strategy – no small feat in a country where no such policy exists.

At this time, Canada has no comprehensive strategy for agriculture and food production, now nor into the future. This has farms floundering and trying, as individual business, to make decisions in a vacuum based exclusively on short-term priorities and personal reading of political winds.

This situation is intolerable from a business perspective. More so, it is incomprehensible in this age of global instability, climate change and political uncertainty, that a nation would not have a strategy to ensure its citizens will have food tomorrow and beyond.

This series of regional Policy Advisory Council (PAC) meetings are being held across Ontario to reach OFA's membership and to help establish sound and forward-looking strategies for food production that will assure Ontario farms may continue to feed Ontarians and ignite the Ontario economy.

Dates & Locations:

- January 18 Douro Hall, County Road 8, Douro
- January 19 Kemptville Campus, U of G, 830 Prescott Street, Kemptville
- January 21 Woodstock Quality Inn, 580 Bruin Blvd., Woodstock
- January 26 Orangeville Fair Grounds, 247090 5th Side Road, Mono Township
- January 27 Sudbury Days Inn, 117 Elm Street, Sudbury

January 21, 26 & 27

1:00 pm: Elements of a National Food Strategy

- Policy Statements
- Next Steps – Plenary session – Facilitated by Bette Jean Crews, President, OFA

News Index:

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B) Wynne, Duguid on the move in Ont. cabinet shuffle: Changes widespread, but finance minister stays: sources

C) Harper shuffles Cabinet to focus on economy

D) Beef industry getting shot in the arm; province introduces new program

E) Burford livestock companies fined;

F) McCausland was farm leader: Man killed in collision Wednesday

G) Coyotes spreading fear; FRONT OF YONGE: 'We're getting to the point where people are afraid to walk down their country roads,' says deputy reeve

H) Cabinet shuffle gets mixed review from agriculture sector

I) MP McLeod takes her 'beef' to Taiwan

J) Agriculture and climate change = trade and energy;

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) Locals laud Mitchell's appointment;

The Owen Sound Sun Times

Fri Jan 22 2010

Page: A7

Section: News

Byline: THE SUN TIMES;

Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound MPP Bill Murdoch expects newly appointed Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Carol Mitchell to have a tough time getting farm issues on Premier Dalton McGuinty's agenda. While Murdoch congratulated Mitchell on her appointment and said he looks forward to working with her, he expects very little to change for Ontario farmers with the move made on Monday. Mitchell replaced Leona Dombrowsky, who becomes minister of education.

"With Carol I am happy for our people in Grey, Bruce and Huron to have someone we can go right and see, who is not hard to find, and so with any of our problems we can go right to her," said Murdoch, who added that Mitchell's biggest challenge will be to get the thoughts of farmers through to McGuinty and his cabinet. Murdoch said that rural Ontario in general has been ignored since the Liberal party was elected and Mitchell has toed the party line.

"She has been a real soldier for McGuinty, she never goes against anything he does, so she certainly deserves to be minister," said Murdoch, who has been called a maverick for not letting party affiliation get in the way of his opinions.

"She has a hard road ahead because I don't believe McGuinty listens to anyone except his own little minions that work for him."

Murdoch said the first thing he would do in Mitchell's position is sit down with the major agriculture organizations -- the National Farmers Union, the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture -- to see what their top priorities are.

Grant Robertson, the National Farmers Union Ontario coordinator, who also has a cattle farm near Paisley, said in a news release he is looking forward to working with Mitchell.

"The NFU looks forward to working on real solutions with Minister Mitchell and we hope her appointment marks a positive change in direction for the provincial government."

Murdoch said he would like Mitchell Quebec's farm stabilization program and see if a similar program can be set up in Ontario.

"I have always thought that if you give farmers a guaranteed price of production you would keep some of them around," said Murdoch. "There have to be rules . . . but we need a guarantee that they get their cost of production."

Murdoch said in the past the government has helped farmers at the wrong time.

"The government seems to like to prop things up. When the commodities go bad there is this bailout money," Murdoch said. "Then they get back going and another one goes. We never seem to have a stable agriculture community and I believe there is a way to make it stable."

In a news release, Gord Hardy, president of the Ontario Cattlemen's Association, said he is pleased with the premier's selection.

"Right now, agriculture is a challenging portfolio," Hardy said in the release. "We need programs and regulations that work for us if we are to continue to be a sustainable and profitable industry. Fortunately, Minister Mitchell represents a riding that is known for being one of the top beef-producing ridings in the province and we appreciate that the minister is already well-versed in our issues as she takes on her new responsibilities."

"I think it's a win-win for Grey Bruce," Bruce County Federation of Agriculture president Lorne Underwood said Thursday. "There's nothing like having the agriculture minister from in your own back yard."

"We've got a good working relationship with Carol . . . She is a very well educated individual. She knows the issue going forward and she's got a good staff behind her," he added.

B) Wynne, Duguid on the move in Ont. cabinet shuffle: Changes widespread, but finance minister stays: sources

Ontario Education minister Kathleen Wynne is to move to the transportation ministry while aboriginal affairs minister Brad Duguid will be promoted to the high-profile energy and infrastructure post in a major cabinet shuffle to be formalized Monday afternoon.

The two moves are the most notable of several changes that Premier Dalton McGuinty made to his cabinet Monday, government sources told CBC News.

The new cabinet ministers will be sworn in at 4 p.m., the premier's office announced Monday morning.

McGuinty was expected to make a statement to the media afterward.

Among the few ministers not affected by the shuffle will be Finance Minister Dwight Duncan.

McGuinty had to replace two ministers who resigned to run in Ontario-wide municipal elections on Oct. 25.

George Smitherman resigned as Ontario's minister of energy and infrastructure, as well as deputy premier, in November. He officially announced on Jan. 8 that he was running for mayor of Toronto.

Liberal MP Gerry Phillips agreed to take over that post on an interim basis following Smitherman's resignation. Phillips is now expected to stay in cabinet, returning to his old role as minister without portfolio.

Jim Watson stepped down as minister of municipal affairs and housing on Jan. 12 to seek the mayor's seat in Ottawa.

Here are the other changes that government sources confirmed are coming in the widespread shuffle:

- Leona Dombrowsky is the new education minister.
- Chris Bentley retains his post as attorney general and takes over as aboriginal affairs minister from Duguid.
- Jim Bradley moves from Transportation to Municipal Affairs.
- Michael Chan moves from Citizenship and Immigration to Tourism and Culture.
- Eric Hoskins is the new citizenship and immigration minister.
- Linda Jeffrey is the new natural resources minister.
- Monique Smith moves from Tourism to Intergovernmental Affairs.
- Sophia Aggelonitis is the new consumer services minister.
- Carol Mitchell is the new agriculture minister.

The shuffle takes place in the wake of a tough year for McGuinty's Liberal government.

In October, Health Minister David Caplan resigned just one day before the auditor general released a scathing report detailing how little value Ontario got for the \$1 billion spent trying to create electronic health records. The Liberals also faced months of criticism over the new harmonized sales tax, which comes into effect on July 1, 2010. The province is struggling with a \$24.7-billion deficit, amid widespread job losses and the ongoing effects of last year's recession.

There's still no word on whether McGuinty will prorogue the legislature to give his new ministers more time to get up to speed on their files and return in March with a throne speech and a budget.

C) Harper shuffles Cabinet to focus on economy

OTTAWA -- Prime Minister Stephen Harper unveiled a new Cabinet Tuesday that saw shuffles in several economic and security portfolios and a range of promotions and demotions.

Although aides had been describing the announcement as a "minor Cabinet shuffle," Mr. Harper made several significant changes:

- Stockwell Day moves from International Trade to Treasury Board;
- Vic Toews moves from Treasury Board to Public Safety;
- Peter Van Loan shifts from Public Safety to take over from Mr. Day as trade minister;
- Lisa Raitt moves from Natural Resources to Labour;
- Rona Ambrose leaves Labour to become the new public works minister.
- Christian Paradis leaves Public Works and is now the natural resources minister replacing Ms. Raitt.
- Jean-Pierre Blackburn leaves National Revenue and is the new veterans affairs minister.

- Keith Ashfield, a New Brunswick MP, keeps his job as minister of state for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and is also the new national revenue minister. He also takes on the responsibilities of minister for the Atlantic Gateway, previously held by Defence Minister Peter MacKay.

As the new Treasury Board President, Mr. Day will have the task of leading what is expected to be an aggressive cost-cutting exercise to wrestle the deficit down.

Speaking to reporters after the ceremony at Rideau Hall, Mr. Harper said the president of the treasury board plays "a critical role in overseeing government expenditures" and that he is assigning the task to one of his most senior members of Cabinet. The prime minister said Mr. Day has "distinguished himself in every portfolio that he has held."

Mr. Harper said his government's priority continues to be the economy.

"On that front we are completing implementation of our economic action plan. We are planning for deficit reduction once the economy has recovered and we are building for future jobs and economic growth," said Mr. Harper.

"The government has been working hard and we will keep working hard. This is the Cabinet that will lead us through the second and final phase of our economic action plan," said Mr. Harper.

While some of the changes mean promotions for MPs including Ms. Paradis, Mr. Ashfield, Ms. Ambrose, and Mr. Toews, Ms. Raitt's move from Natural Resources to the less-busy labour portfolio is seen as a step down. At Natural Resources, her chief file has been Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. and that Crown corporation's mismanagement of the isotope-producing reactor at Chalk River, Ont. She experienced a string of gaffes last spring. She privately called the medical isotope shortage "sexy" and made other controversial comments that were inadvertently recorded and made public, and one of her aides also left documents at an Ottawa news bureau for more than a week. She did not heed the calls for her resignation from the opposition parties.

On Tuesday, the prime minister said Ms. Raitt has "a great future" and that the move to labour will give her more varied experience in government.

Aides in several ministers' offices, speaking on condition of anonymity, also said Ms. Raitt was not the only minister that Mr. Harper and his inner circle were dissatisfied with: they were also said to be unhappy with Mr. Van Loan on the public safety file.

The National Post reported Tuesday that Mr. Harper recently ordered the most sweeping public safety review since 9/11, a possible prelude to giving a new minister a new mandate there.

The Cabinet shuffle was partly predicated by the prime minister's need to find a new representative at the Cabinet table for New Brunswick.

New Brunswick MP Greg Thompson resigned his position as minister of veterans affairs on the weekend. He was the only New Brunswicker to have a seat at Mr. Harper's Cabinet. Now Mr. Ashfield, a Fredericton MP, will represent New Brunswick around the Cabinet table.

Rob Moore, an MP representing Fundy Royal in New Brunswick, was also moved up the ranks and was made minister of state for small business and tourism on Tuesday.

Diane Ablonczy held that role but she was made secretary of state of seniors.

Senator Marjory LeBreton, leader of the government in the Senate, formerly held that file.

While the Cabinet shuffle involved changes in responsibilities for a dozen people, it did not mean moves for major Cabinet players including: Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, Transport Minister John Baird, and Industry Minister Tony Clement.

Charging Mr. Ashfield with the job as minister of the Atlantic Gateway was likely to lessen the full load carried by Peter MacKay as defence minister.

At the conclusion of the brief ceremony where the new ministers were sworn in, Gov. Gen. Michaëlle Jean had tears in her eyes as the national anthem was played.

Ms. Jean is originally from Haiti and has many friends and family in the earthquake-devastated country.

D) Beef industry getting shot in the arm; province introduces new program

The Daily News (Truro)

Tue Jan 19 2010

Page: 3

Section: Colchester County

Byline: Jason Malloy

Nova Scotia's hurting beef industry is getting some short-term assistance as it tries to weather the storm associated with a deprecated market.

The province announced a \$2-million program on Monday to enable beef farmers to pay down loan interest from 2009 to 2011.

"This program is needed, it's required," said David Oulton, president of the Nova Scotia Cattle Producers.

"Our producers are looking forward to it. Some people will be able to take advantage, some won't. Is it the answer - the be-all, end-all? No."

The program will likely require some farmers to refinance existing credit limits in order to take advantage of the program. But some farmers' debt load is already too high and will not be able to access the new funding.

"I've spoken with a number of farmers who have reached the point of being scared to answer the phone because of collection agencies," said Liberal agriculture critic Leo Glavine.

He is calling on the government to implement recommendations from the Kelco report that was prepared a few years ago for government. He said only 10 per cent of beef found in Nova Scotia stores is raised in the province and during the past seven years the number of farmers has dropped from 1,400 to 700.

Oulton said he has heard "mixed" reactions from his members but said it is pleased to receive funding given the demands on the province's finances.

"We welcome anything that can be brought forward," he said. "This is a start. "

The cattle producers have a long-term plan for their industry and have been talking with the province since the summer about funding.

The program will be administered by the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture. Details can be obtained on its website at (www.nsfa-fane.ca) programs_and_projects or by phoning 893-2293.

E) Burford livestock companies fined;

The Brantford Expositor

Fri Jan 22 2010

Page: A6

Section: News

Byline: ;

A Burford resident and two Burford companies have been convicted and fined \$5,000 each for dealing cattle without a licence.

On Jan. 11, Richard Walter (Butch) Clare and two companies -1553603 Ontario Inc. and 1648291 Ontario Inc., operating as Butch Clare Livestock -were fined \$5,000 each plus the victim fine surcharge.

Clare and the two companies had been convicted of 11 counts each after a trial on Oct. 9, 2009 in Ontario Court in Brantford.

They were fined on one count and received suspended sentences on the remaining counts.

The charges arose from an investigation by the Ministry of Natural Resources.

The court found that between July 16, 2007 and Sept. 29, 2007, the defendants engaged in business as livestock dealers without a licence, contrary to the Livestock and Livestock Products Act.

They purchased 2,156 head of cattle from various licensed livestock dealers in the amount of about \$1.35 million.

The Livestock and Livestock Products Act provides for the licensing and regulation of livestock and livestock product dealers, and for the inspection, grading, packing and marketing of livestock and livestock products, including eggs.

All livestock dealers in Ontario, including abattoirs, associations, livestock auction markets, country dealers and packing plants, are required to be licensed under the act.

Anyone with information regarding potential violations of provincial food and inspection legislation may call the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Regulatory Compliance Unit at 519-826-4537 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

F) McCausland was farm leader: Man killed in collision Wednesday

Posted By SCOTT DUNN , SUN TIMES STAFF

Meaford-area farm leader and Tommy Cooper Award winner Wayne McCausland died in a crash east of Keady Tuesday night.

Grey County OPP identified the 56-year-old as the victim of the fatal crash involving his eastbound pickup truck and a southbound medium-sized delivery van.

Mr. McCausland was on his way home from work at Penner Farm Equipment in Tara, said his brother, Don McCausland, a former Grey County warden.

The crash was just before 7 p.m. at County Rd. 16 and Con. 5, Grey County OPP said. Mr. McCausland's pickup truck and the delivery van came to rest off the roadway near the intersection, which is east of Keady and south of Mennonite Corners.

The driver and passenger in the delivery van remained in hospital in stable condition Wednesday afternoon, an Owen Sound hospital spokesman said. The passenger went to hospital with life-threatening injuries, police said.

Funeral arrangements for Mr. McCausland are being handled by Ferguson Funeral Home in Meaford.

People who knew Mr. McCausland described his strong leadership, his work ethic and his deep agricultural knowledge.

His brother Don said he'll miss his brother's companionship. He was a friend he could talk to when he had something on his mind. They were neighbours, partners for 20 years in their dairy farm and they snowmobiled together.

"He lived his life to the full. He was a hard worker."

Mr. McCausland was born in Orillia hospital when the family was living in Beaverton. In 1959 the family moved to a dairy farm near Hillsburgh, Ont., near Guelph.

In the 1970s, after earning an agriculture degree at the University of Guelph, Mr. McCausland worked for the Ontario Milk Marketing Board.

G) Coyotes spreading fear; FRONT OF YONGE: 'We're getting to the point where people are afraid to walk down their country roads,' says deputy reeve

Brockville Recorder And Times

Wed Jan 20 2010

Page: A1

Section: News

Byline: CHRISTINE ENDICOTT , STAFF WRITER

Dateline: MALLORYTOWN

The growing coyote population in Front of Yonge Township is killing pets and livestock and scaring local people, councillors say.

"We're getting to the point where people are afraid to walk down their country roads because of the coyote situation," said Deputy Reeve Carson Massey.

Council plans to ask the province's minister of Natural Resources for help after ministry officials advised that a bounty on coyotes could not be introduced.

"I think the ministry needs to wake up," Massey said. "I was out walking the dog the other night and there was a fairly large pack running a deer.

"And I'm not talking six or seven coyotes. I am talking 12 or 15 of them....It's getting quite scary."

Reeve Roger Haley said the farmers can shoot coyotes, "but there are packs of them."

Coyote complaints and livestock claims from farmers have increased in recent months, he said.

In Athens, livestock claims are also high, said Mayor John Conley.

"This has been the worst year that we have ever had," he told Front of Yonge councillors.

Elaine Covey, clerk for Front of Yonge, said she was advised bounties cause "compensatory reproduction" as the packs grow despite being hunted in earlier years.

However, the situation is becoming dire in the township, she told council.

"There are certain roads in our township where there is not one cat or small pet left. When they're let outside, they're gone."

Covey said coyotes are rampant in the area around the Third Concession and Junetown, Caintown and Ballycanoe roads.

"We need a solution," said Councillor Sean Burns, adding the "experts" at the ministry should find that answer.

Haley said council will lobby Minister of Natural Resources Donna Cansfield "to find a way to control the (coyote) population."

The reeve said the growing problem with coyotes is affecting the township residents' quality of life, as people are growing reluctant to walk down their roads and pets and farm animals disappear.

Donald Haffie, who has a farm on the Thousand Islands Parkway near Mallorytown Landing, said there are "definitely more" coyotes in recent years. Haffie has been farming for more than 40 years on a family farm owned for generations.

In December, a cow and two calves were killed from his herd of 80 beef cattle, even though his family shot eight coyotes in 2009, he reported.

On Dec. 24, a newborn calf was found partially eaten on his property, he said.

"There were numerous coyote tracks and trails leading in several directions," he reported. "I believe the cow had tried to chase off the coyotes, but the number of them made it impossible to protect the calf."

On another occasion, both a cow and a calf were killed, he said in an interview Tuesday.

"We hear them at night and the tracks are all over the place, but they are pretty cunning," Haffie said.

"I really don't know what the answer is to control them," he said. "We shoot them when we see them."

The township compensates farmers for lost livestock and makes a claim to the provincial government. A calf valued at \$720 nets \$504 in compensation, according to livestock valuation reports.

Other farmers in the township are also shooting coyotes and improving fencing to prevent livestock losses.

"I think the deer population is declining due to the coyotes," Haffie said. "A lot of hunters this fall didn't have very good success hunting deer."

Coyote problems have also been reported in other areas of eastern Ontario.

In Osgoode Township, the Fish, Game and Conservation Club is sponsoring a coyote cull contest, the Ottawa Sun reported earlier this month.

Hunters are to bring in proof of their coyote kills. For \$2, their name is entered in a draw for prizes including a shotgun.

Last September, Joey Schultz, 16, of Osgoode reported a coyote attacked him, but he was able to kick the animal and escape, according to a report in the Sun.

Ottawa officials reported 250 livestock deaths that were attributed to coyotes or wolves in 2009, up from 176 the year before.

H) Cabinet shuffle gets mixed review from agriculture sector

Okotoks Western Wheel

Wed Jan 20 2010

Page: A6

Section: News

Byline: Don Patterson

Source: Okotoks Western Wheel

In Premier Ed Stelmach's cabinet shuffle on Jan. 13 Highwood MLA George Groeneveld was pushed to the backbenches.

Groeneveld was stripped of his post as Agriculture minister, a post he held since Stelmach became premier, and will be replaced by former Infrastructure minister Jack Hayden, who is MLA for Drumheller-Stettler.

In another move Foothills-Rockyview MLA Ted Morton will take on the high profile Minister of Finance portfolio moving from Sustainable Resources.

Perhaps the most surprising move in Stelmach's cabinet shuffle is Groeneveld was not given another portfolio despite being one of the first MLAs to officially back Stelmach during the Conservative leadership race to replace Ralph Klein.

Groeneveld's ousting is receiving mixed reviews from some in the agriculture sector, while local municipal leaders applaud the work Groeneveld has done for the Highwood Constituency while on cabinet.

Chuck MacLean, Alberta Beef Producers board chairman, said Groeneveld and Alberta Beef Producers "agreed to disagree" on most days.

"We probably all wanted the same things, but it's how you arrive at the end point that always creates problems," he said. "There were days he wasn't that wonderful and there were days that he wasn't too bad."

MacLean said the beef industry has seen a lot of problems that are out of Groeneveld's control, particularly regarding world prices for beef and Country of Origin Labeling rules in the U.S.

However, he said some support programs set up for the cattle industry in the past few years have benefited the sector.

Herman Simons, chairman of Alberta Pork, said Groeneveld was a man who stuck to his guns and it was difficult to change his mind no matter what arguments were brought forward.

"What I appreciated of Minister Groeneveld was he had his own ideas and if he made a decision he stood for it. He would continue to follow it through regardless of the criticism he would get from anyone," said Simons.

While Groeneveld's steadfastness could sometimes be frustrating, Simons said it was also a positive trait.

He said Alberta's pork sector has gone through a prolonged crisis and the Province responded with programs to assist the industry.

"It did have some hiccups, but they did try to do something," said Simons.

As the industry went from bad to worse, he said it was difficult to get assistance from any level of government.

According to Simons, Bill 43, which allowed producers to receive the levy paid to four commodity associations - including Alberta Pork and Alberta Beef Producers -- back as a refund has not supported the organization in its work to strengthen the pork industry.

Alberta Liberal leader David Swann said Groeneveld wasn't able to connect with rural voters and the Premier didn't have much choice.

"He has not stood up for some in the agriculture industry, especially the cattle industry. He has not been strong in his leadership in the ministry," he said.

When it comes to his record as Highwood MLA, Okotoks Mayor Bill McAlpine said Groeneveld has been a big help to the town.

"I always enjoyed working with George. He was always receptive and he has always made himself available," he said.

McAlpine cited a long list of projects and areas where Groeneveld was able to help the Town.

He said Groeneveld helped the Town obtain grants for many different projects including the 32nd Street bridge and upgrades to outdoor sports fields, the Recreation Centre and the Rotary Performing Arts Centre. He said Groeneveld was also supportive of the RISE Initiative and the regional field house proposal.

I) MP McLeod takes her 'beef' to Taiwan

Kamloops This Week

Tue Jan 19 2010

Page: A3

Section: News

Byline: Jeremy Deutsch

More than a year after being elected, a local MP got a modest taste of life on the world stage.

With Parliament suspended for two months, Kamloops-Thompson-Cariboo Conservative MP Cathy McLeod took her first trip abroad as an elected official.

The MP joined a handful of her colleagues on a week-long trade mission last week to the island country of Taiwan.

McLeod, along with the rest of the delegation, had a face-to-face meeting with Taiwan President Ma Ying-Jeou for more than an hour.

The two big trade issues discussed could eventually have a direct impact on the Kamloops area.

The delegation explored the importation of Canadian beef to the Asian country, along with building reforms that would see more construction of wood-frame homes.

With a population of 23 million, McLeod suggested having Taiwan's border open to local beef could be a boon to the struggling cattle-ranching industry.

Another important industry in the Kamloops region could also get a kick-start from the trip.

Taiwan is considering regulatory-construction reforms that could benefit Canada's ailing forest industry.

McLeod said the group reinforced the benefits of wood-frame construction, especially since the country lies in an earthquake zone.

Though the group of MPs had the president's ear, nothing was officially put into place.

But McLeod indicated Taiwan's leader was listening.

The two countries also discussed H1N1 flu-preparedness and immigration and visa issues facing Taiwanese-Canadians.

After touching back down in Kamloops on the weekend, McLeod said the trip was "absolutely worth it," suggesting value in building a close relationship with a densely populated democratic country.

"It will ultimately increase trade," she said.

McLeod also noted the trip was paid for by an organization in Taiwan and wasn't at Canadian taxpayers' expense.

J) Agriculture and climate change = trade and energy;

The Post (Hanover)

Fri Jan 22 2010

Page: A5

Section: News

Byline: BY DON MCCABE, VICE-PRESIDENT, OFA;

Canadian farmers have been leaders in adopting technologies and production methods when a true improvement can be seen on the bottom line.

Activities such as renewable energy production, no till farming, higher feed efficiencies, are all the result of many years of research, both academic and farm based, now employed on farms. What is usually not noted is the beneficial impacts these practices are giving to society.

So whether we at the farm gate believe in the issue of climate change or not, society has decided it is an issue. That's why OFA/CFA attended the United Nations Climate Change Conference to promote and defend our environmentally sustainable practices that are needed to feed nine billion people by 2050.

Carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxides are all greenhouse gases produced on farms. Agriculture is responsible for 10 per cent of the greenhouse gases in Canada, but can provide 20 per cent of the solutions to deal with this build-up.

The Copenhagen meeting helped cement the fact that only farmers and foresters can really put carbon dioxide back in our soils.

Policy to address climate change by provincial governments is now on Canadian farms. Today in British Columbia, greenhouse growers have to pay an extra \$10,000 on average in fuel costs due to a carbon tax. Similarly, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba farmers will be absorbing this cost to move grain to Vancouver. However, Alberta farmers receive cheques for completing no till or direct seeding on their farms through a cap and trade system. Alberta farmers voluntarily choose to participate.

So as 192 governments present in Copenhagen were deciding how to move forward, they heard directly that agriculture is a solution provider given the right rules. I had the honour to represent 600 million farmers as I spoke to a plenary session to convey this message from the International Federation of Agricultural Producers. Opposing views to agriculture's current best management practices were present in full force. Groups were calling for all beef production to be halted, and fertilizer use to be stopped, for example. Farmers were there to defend our practices, and give science-based answers to government questions.

The Canadian government announced its involvement in an international research alliance on greenhouse gases. Hopefully, new opportunities for Canadian farmers can be rapidly gained in this process. Research always feeds the bottom line.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture have major roles to play as we move forward on climate change issues. Federally, Minister Prentice wants a harmonization with the United States. Provincially, Ontario is in policy discussions with other provinces and U.S. states for a system to be implemented in 2012. Farmers voices have to be heard at these venues.

Agriculture will have a key role to play at future United Nations conferences on climate change. The initial science to defend our role is done for agriculture's case, we have planted seeds for proper policy -we just have to have it legally recognized by the U.N. framework.

So remember, even if you think climate change is silly, the world doesn't. We have to show a positive attitude while being able to avoid negative impacts to agriculture's bottom line, because this really is a trade and energy discussion.



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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