



OCA Weekly Update – March 5, 2010



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.*

In Brief Index:

- A) 2010 Annual General Meeting Results in Two New Leaders and Two New Faces**
- B) Budget 2010 Looks Promising for Canada's Cattle Producers**
- C) Ontario Independent Meat Processors Honours Industry Achievements and People's Choice Winners at The Meating Place**
- D) Announcing the Finalists for the 2010 Ontario's Outstanding Young Farmers' Program**
- E) Minister Mitchell Announces \$200,000 Transition Investment to Rural Ontario Institute**
- F) Cost of Production Calculator Available Online**
- G) Social Networking is vital for a Competitive Agricultural Industry in Ontario**
- H) Food Safety and Traceability Initiative Under Growing Forward**
- I) Canadian Beef Brand Consumer Campaign Launches in Ontario and Alberta**
- J) Canadian Beef Radio Ads and a New Contest from BIC**
- K) Rural Summer Job Service**
- L) Farm Innovation Program**
- M) Grower Pesticide Safety Course**
- N) Better Business Decisions with BIO**
- O) LICC - CAHRC Ontario Forum Invitation**
- P) Farm Credit Canada Forum – "Big Ideas for Your Future"**
- Q) Profitable Pastures**
- R) Date Changes: OnTrace Producer Traceability Workshops**

S) Hillcrest Farms & Guest BIO-Developed Bull sale
T) 2011 Nuffield Farming Scholarship Applications Open

A) 2010 Annual General Meeting Results in Two New Leaders and Two New Faces

Over 500 beef farmers and industry representatives from across Ontario congregated in Toronto last week for the Ontario Cattlemen's Association (OCA) Annual General Meeting, themed "*Progress Starts with Partnership*". Guest speakers at the meeting included: Peter Chapman of GPS Business Solutions, [Connecting with Consumers] and Al Mussel of the George Morris Centre [Cost of Production]. Other presentations included a report from the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, an update from the Ontario Farm Animal Council and a report on environmental issues.

Again this year, the AGM included a special panel discussion: "The Power of Partnerships". Panelists included: Lambton County producers, Murray Shaw and Ralph Eyre; Steve Loshaw of the Rainy River Regional Abattoir; and Barb Smith of the Foodland Ontario program. The focus this year was on how various sectors of the value chain leverage partnerships in order to stay profitable.

Elected as President of OCA for 2010 is Curtis Royal of Simcoe County. Royal operates a feedlot near Creemore, ON. Royal has, for the past two years, served as OCA Vice-President and is well-used to speaking on behalf of producers.

"There is a tough job ahead of the beef industry in this province, because there are many factors affecting our profitability" says Royal. "The sooner we figure out that working together is the only way forward, the better. Government wants to hear solid, well-thought out requests coming to them through OCA and we intend to do that, so that progress is not jeopardized. I thank Ontario's producers for putting their faith in me over the next 12 months and also thank Gord Hardy for his service over the past two years."

Another new leader, Dan Darling, was elected as the 2010 OCA Vice-President. Dan and his family live and farm in Castleton, in Northumberland County. Darling has served on a number of OCA Committees and he also brings a wealth of lobbying knowledge to the position.

Re-elected to the Board was Paul Sharpe of Wellington County, representing feedlot producers. Also re-elected was Bob Gordanier, of Dufferin County this time representing the cow/calf sector rather than serving "At-Large" as he did with his first term. He replaces Kim Sytsma who had completed the maximum three consecutive terms. Tom Wilson of Corunna in Lambton County was elected as Director from the South, replacing Gord Hardy who stepped down this year. John Lunn of Peterborough County was elected as Director-at-Large. John farms in Norwood, ON.

Continuing to serve out their terms are cow/calf producers Rick Hobbs from the Ottawa District and Dan Darling of Northumberland County. As well, Feedlot Directors Curtis Royal of Simcoe and Doug Kaufman of Oxford continue to sit on the Board. Matt Bowman of Temiskaming continues to serve as Director from the North and Gerald Rollins continues as Director from the East. Finally, rounding out the 2010 OCA Board are Director-at-Large, John Gillespie of Waterloo County and Bill Herron of Grey County, representing the Backgrounder sector.

The Ontario Cattlemen's Association represents the interests of 19,000 Ontario beef producers. Following a 2003 restructuring of the organization, OCA's Board of Directors consists of 12 elected officials – three from the cow/calf sector, three from the feedlot sector, one from the backgrounder sector; three representing geographic regions of Ontario and two elected on an At-Large basis. Directors are elected for three-year terms on a rotating basis. Each year, voting delegates to the AGM elect three members to the Board.

The complete 2010 OCA annual report can be viewed on the OCA Web site at www.cattle.guelph.on.ca.

B) Budget 2010 Looks Promising for Canada's Cattle Producers

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) is encouraged by measures contained in Budget 2010 aimed at ensuring producers have access to competitive cattle processing operations in Canada.

Of particular note is the \$25 million in 2010–11 targeted at cattle processing plants that handle over thirty month (OTM) cattle. The funding will address costs associated with OTM slaughter. It costs more to slaughter an OTM animal in Canada than in the United States, due to the different approaches the two countries take in disposing of Specified Risk Materials (SRM).

The cost of collecting and disposing of SRM in Canada has been a major issue since 2007. Cattle processing plants have closed, scaled back or changed policy to deal with the added costs. The CCA has asked the Government of Canada to address this issue, and is pleased to see the measure in Budget 2010.

"Today's budget measure of \$25 million to manage the cost of processing over thirty month cattle will help to address this issue in the short term," said CCA President Brad Wildeman. "Long term change, including regulatory alignment with the U.S., also needs to occur."

The CCA continues to work with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) on this front.

The Government of Canada also announced that funding available under the Slaughter Improvement Program will be increased by \$10 million in 2010–11 to support the introduction of new, cost-effective technologies. As well, \$40 million will be provided over three years to support the development and commercialization of innovative technologies related to the removal and use of SRM to reduce handling costs and create potential revenue sources from these materials.

Wildeman noted the \$40 million investment for new technology for managing SRM is welcome as well. "These measures address a real threat to the long term profitability of the Canadian cattle industry. We hope as we transition to a more North American regulatory environment this will help to keep Canadian cow processing in Canada."

The CCA looks forward to details of implementation following passage of the budget. The CCA works continuously to improve the competitiveness of the industry and we look forward to working alongside the Government of Canada to ensure these projects work as intended.

C) Ontario Independent Meat Processors Honours Industry Achievements and People's Choice Winners at The Meating Place

Ontario Independent Meat Processors (OIMP) recognized outstanding industry achievements and crowned the 2010 People's Choice Award winners during its 30th Anniversary Awards Banquet at The Meating Place on February 27 in Niagara Falls, Ontario.

The 2010 Meat Industry Achievement (MIA) Award was presented to Springer's Meats, an independent meat processor and retailer owned and operated by the Mueller family in Hamilton, Ontario.

"The MIA Award is given to an OIMP Member Company or individual that our membership feels is deserving of recognition for their achievement in the meat industry," said Laurie Nicol, Executive Director, OIMP. "The Mueller's have been important contributors to the OIMP and the industry for many years."

An enthusiastic crowd of 175 guests sampled a total of 12 People's Choice Competition entries in the Pepperoni Snack Stick and Jerky categories and cast ballots for their favourites. The 2010 People's Choice Awards winners are:

- "Big Bruce" Honey Garlic Beef Stick - West Grey Premium Beef, Durham, Ontario
- "Pork Teriyaki Jerky" - Brian Quinn's Meats, Yarker, Ontario

"Our members consistently produce high-quality products, so the People's Choice is always a tight race," said Tony Facciolo, President, OIMP. "It was essentially a photo-finish, but West Grey and Brian Quinn's edged out the competition."

Among the other honours of the evening included recognition of OIMP's 10-Year Members for their support of the association and the 2009 Food Handler Training program graduates for their commitment to food safety.

Ontario Independent Meat Processors (OIMP) is the representative voice of the independent meat processor in Ontario, working closely with agricultural and commodity organizations and various levels of government for over 30 years. OIMP's membership includes 205 Business Members (meat and poultry processors, retailers and wholesalers); 62 Associate Members (industry suppliers); and six Affiliate Members (not-for-profit organizations that support OIMP's objectives). The meat sector represents 20% of Ontario's food manufacturing industry, contributing over \$6.5 billion to the province's economy.

D) Announcing the Finalists for the 2010 Ontario's Outstanding Young Farmers' Program

The finalists for the 2010 Ontario's Outstanding Young Farmers' (OOYF) competition have just been announced. Selected from a record number of 36 nominations, the top six farmers are:

- Steve and Lisa Cooper, horticulture, goats, agri-tourism, Zephyr
- Matthew Fischer, turkeys, Listowel
- Hugh and Arlene Hunter, dairy, Smith Falls
- Katie Normet, goat cheese and soaps, Arthur
- Anthony and Marj Sjaarda, dairy goats, Wyoming
- Amy Strom, sweet corn, agri-tourism, Guelph

More information on the finalists can be found in the attached backgrounder or on the OOYF website at www.oyfontario.ca.

These six finalists now head to the Provincial Convention being held at the Ramada Hotel in Belleville from March 29 - 31st where their interview and presentations skills will be evaluated by a panel of judges. The winner will be announced at the Awards Banquet on Tuesday March 30th and amongst other benefits, will receive a trip to the National Awards Program, to be held in Victoria, British Columbia, this November. Banquet tickets are available for \$45 each by contacting Karen Daynard, OOYF Coordinator, at 519-836-2583 or kdaynard@sympatico.ca. Ticket sales end March 22.

Celebrating its 30th year, Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers' program is an annual competition to recognize farmers that exemplify excellence in their profession and promote the tremendous contribution of agriculture, and rural Canada. Demonstrating leadership in the agricultural industry, nominees are judged according to the following criteria:

- Progress made in their agriculture career
- Environmental and safety practices
- Crop and livestock production history
- Financial and management practices
- Contributions to the well-being of their community, province, nation

The 2010 event is sponsored by Pioneer Hi-Bred Limited, TD Canada Trust, Syngenta, and Growmark Inc.

E) Minister Mitchell Announces \$200,000 Transition Investment to Rural Ontario Institute

A provincial government investment will help the new Rural Ontario Institute make a strong, smooth transition from the amalgamation of The Centre for Rural Leadership (TCRL) and The Ontario Rural Council (TORC). Grants totaling \$200,000 were announced by the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Carol Mitchell, in Toronto on February 23, 2010.

“We’re absolutely thrilled with this new funding and sincerely thank Minister Mitchell for delivering the great news,” says Rob Black, executive director of The Centre for Rural Leadership. “This type of financial support is a great endorsement by the provincial government of the important role the new organization will play in the health of rural Ontario. We look forward to developing a close working relationship with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.”

This provincial announcement includes \$160,000 for the transition to the Rural Ontario Institute, and an additional \$40,000 investment in the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program – a program of The Centre for Rural Leadership that will continue under the Rural Ontario Institute.

“For many years, the two organizations have been catalysts for leadership and progress in rural Ontario,” said Minister Mitchell. “Now that they have decided to join together, the positive effect of their work will be even greater, and we are pleased to continue supporting the newly amalgamated Institute.”

The Rural Ontario Institute will officially begin operations on April 1, 2010 with a mandate to provide rural leadership development and a mechanism to engage rural and multi-sector stakeholders for the purposes of informing and influencing rural policy development. Three core services will be provided – leadership training, stakeholder engagement and third-party program delivery.

“These resources will ensure the Rural Ontario Institute has a tremendously strong start, right out of the gate,” says Harold Flaming, executive director of The Ontario Rural Council. “We expect initiatives focusing on stakeholder engagement covering a wide range of emerging rural issues and opportunities to benefit from this critical investment in the Rural Ontario Institute. Partnerships with universities and other organizations will be enhanced as a means of more effectively articulating the rural voice on issues impacting rural Ontario.”

The Rural Ontario Institute will soon be announcing its 12-member board of directors, CEO and staff members.

The Centre for Rural Leadership (TCRL) offers programming to develop and support current and emerging leaders through a continuum of programs and resources to strengthen and diversify rural communities and the bioresource sector. Programs include the long-running Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) and the Steps to Leadership series, launched in 2008. TCRL also supports and delivers a variety of personal and organization development training workshops.

The Ontario Rural Council (TORC) was formed in 1998 as a member driven, multi sector provincial rural organization with a mandate to act as a catalyst for rural dialogue, collaboration and advocacy. As a vehicle for rural engagement, TORC offers a vital venue for the province’s collective rural voice. It is the aim of TORC to broaden the understanding of the rural perspective and work toward ensuring the collective rural voice is heard by the province’s policy and decision makers.

F) Cost of Production Calculator Available Online

OMAFRA’s cost-of-production calculator is now available online at <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/bear2000/Budgets/budgettools.htm>, and clicking “Livestock,” then clicking your commodity. Cost-of-production calculators are also available for other commodities.

G) Social Networking is vital for a Competitive Agricultural Industry in Ontario

Farmers, Ag Associations and Ag Businesses can now harness the collective intelligence of Ontario agriculture

Networking is about making connections and building mutually beneficial relationships with people that share the same interests and goals. This has never been easier than now for those involved in Ontario's diverse and productive agriculture and food industry.

OntAg (www.ontag.farms.com) is a free, social networking website - for farmers, ag business and farm associations and groups, where they can share opinions, ideas and information to solve problems or create new opportunities. The OntAg.Farms.com website uses new generation 2.0 Internet technologies, similar to other social networking websites like Facebook.

Andrew Campbell, of Farms.com stated, "We know that online sharing is a great way to harness the knowledge and experience of the Ontario Agriculture community and we have been impressed with how OntAg has been developing." "In January and February 2010, there were over 8,000 visitor sessions to the website."

The OntAg (www.ontag.farms.com) website has been launched and the number of members continues to grow on a daily basis. Once you join the network and become a member, you'll be able participate in groups, connect with and invite friends, chat with other farmers, share pictures, find or post local ag and food events, as well as view the latest Ontario agri-news.

What to do? Visit the www.ontag.farms.com website. Join and become a member, view the information presented by other members and share your opinions, ideas and experiences. If you have any questions Andrew Campbell will be happy to help, phone 1-877-438-5729 ext. 5023 or e-mail andrew.campbel@farms.com.

About Farms.com:

Farms.com Ltd. is a leading provider of innovative information products and services for the global agriculture and food industries. Farms.com can be accessed through its internationally recognized agriculture information portal, which has business services and resources for up to 20,000 agribusiness professionals and livestock and crop producers who use it each day. The Farms.com family includes AgCareers.com -- the leading human resources website for the agriculture and food industry; Farms.com Risk Management -- a crop and livestock marketing advisory service to producers across North America. PigCHAMP.com is the leading software company for the global pork industry. Farms.com operates across North America with offices in Ames, Iowa; Clinton, North Carolina; Fresno, California; and Guelph and London, Ontario. For more information, visit: www.Farms.com.

H) Food Safety and Traceability Initiative Under Growing Forward

Cost share funds for year two (2010-2011) of the Food Safety and Traceability Initiative (FSTI) have been fully subscribed. As a result, FSTI is no longer able to accept applications for 2010-11 funding.

Under the FSTI, program funds are allocated annually on a first come, first served basis. Once the annual program funds are fully committed, applications for cost-share funding for that fiscal year can no longer be accepted. All applications are currently under review and applicants will be notified of the status of their applications within eight weeks. Applicants whose applications were not accepted for the 2010-11 intake are encouraged to re-apply next year.

Growing Forward is a commitment by Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments to support the development of a profitable, innovative agri-food sector that is adept at managing risk and responsive to market demands. Growing Forward runs until March 31, 2013.

I) Canadian Beef Brand Consumer Campaign Launches in Ontario and Alberta

The Beef Information Centre (BIC) is launching the 2010 Canadian beef multimedia consumer campaign this week, with the aim of driving consumer demand for Canadian beef.

The campaign, focused mainly in Ontario and Alberta, will reach the Canadian consumer in multiple ways, encompassing tactics across Canada and integrating radio, print ads, outdoor billboards, a radio contest, website components, recipe booklets and grocery store initiatives.

The campaign focuses on the consumer brand position that Canadian beef is nutritious and lean. It aims to improve attitudes towards the healthfulness of Canadian beef and to increase awareness of the Canadian beef brand.

"Beef's great taste and convenience are also leveraged," says John Gillespie, BIC's chair and a feedlot operator at Ayr, Ont.

The three-month campaign runs from March through May targeting the beef consumer who eats beef one to two times per week with a specific focus on mothers 25-49 years of age, the food decision makers of the family. About 95 per cent of the target audience will see or hear various campaign components an average of 27 times, resulting in about 100 million impressions.

"The 2010 campaign drives a stronger 'call to action' to purchase Canadian beef, using radio, print advertising, outdoor billboards, online advertising, a radio contest, public relations, recipe booklets, grocery store programs and health professional initiatives," says Gillespie.

Within Ontario and Alberta, the campaign will include three, 30-second advertisements plus 10 second radio tags; outdoor billboards that illustrate that Canadian beef is 'Strong on Nutrients'; and online advertising on Google, Facebook and Yahoo that will direct consumers to the Canadian beef campaign micro-site that highlights the healthfulness of Canadian beef, recipes and a link to the [beefinfo.org](http://www.beefinfo.org) site. Across Canada, campaign components include a fun and interactive radio contest that focuses on the health benefits of Canadian beef, aired at over 100 radio stations; a series of full page print ads in key consumer magazines across English Canada, focusing on the nutrient benefits of Canadian beef with a one-third facing page featuring a Canadian beef recipe that features Canadian source grinds to optimize the value of Canadian commercial beef products; Canadian beef brand recipe booklets distributed to 1.2 million consumers through magazine inserts and grocery retail; and advertorials on 'Naturally Nutrient-Rich Canadian Beef' that will reach 6,000 dietitians across Canada.

The multimedia campaign is also leveraging key grocery retail partners including 220 Safeway stores in Western Canada, 169 Sobeys stores in Ontario and the Atlantic, and 77 Costco stores across Canada. Throughout the campaign, the Canadian beef brand will have significant presence in Sobeys and Safeway retail flyers, in Canadian beef branded labels applied at the full serve meat counter and at point-of-sale. Costco will prominently feature Canadian beef on in-store televisions in a custom-made video; retail partners will have website links to the BIC consumer website; and new 'Nutrient Rich' consumer pamphlets will be distributed at partnered retail pharmacies reaching 6,500 consumers.

Consumer survey tracking in Ontario and Alberta will measure consumer awareness and attitude changes of the Canadian beef brand campaign, while Nielsen homescan research will measure sales impact of the campaign.

This new multimedia campaign is truly a national effort across all program areas at BIC. To access the campaign micro-site, go to www.beefinfo.org and click on the 'Bright Idea' link, or go there directly: <http://www.beefinfo.org/site/goodnessineverybite/index.html>.

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.

J) Canadian Beef Radio Ads and a New Contest from BIC

New radio advertisements in Ontario and Alberta, touting the healthfulness of Canadian beef, are now airing as part of the Canadian beef multimedia consumer campaign launched earlier this week by the Beef Information Centre (BIC).

The campaign focuses on the consumer brand position that Canadian beef is nutritious and lean. It aims to improve attitudes towards the healthfulness of Canadian beef and to increase awareness of the Canadian beef brand. The three-month campaign runs from March through May targeting the beef consumer who eats beef one to two times per week with a specific focus on mothers 25-49 years of age, the food decision makers of the family.

"As the primary media vehicle for the multimedia campaign, radio delivers high reach to the target group and allows for significant levels of frequency," says John Gillespie, BIC chair and a feedlot operator at Ayr, Ont.

The 30-second radio advertisements promote not only the healthfulness of Canadian beef, but also its great taste and convenience, and they do it in a fun way. The ads are airing on the top four most popular radio stations in each of Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, Red Deer and Lethbridge.

The ads are also airing in the Alberta towns of Whitecourt, High River, Edson, Camrose and Taber.

"Radio provides the best combination of cost-effective mass reach, and the emotional and informative format required to change consumers' habits," says Gillespie.

To listen to the radio advertisements, visit www.beefinfo.org, click on 'A Bright Idea', then click on 'Check out the Campaign Ads' button.

Radio contest launches

To encourage increased purchase and enjoyment of Canadian beef, BIC is running a five day radio contest on 110 radio stations across Canada.

Beginning Monday, March 8 and running through March 12, the contest offers prizes funded in part by retail and packer partners.

The radio contest features a fun and interactive quiz that focuses on the health benefits of Canadian beef, and will help drive winners into retail partner stores.

"The contest will reinforce and extend the messages that Canadian beef is lean and nutritious, and part of a healthy diet for the whole family," says Judy Nelson, BIC vice-chair and a cow-calf operator at Lundbreck, Alta.

The challenge of the radio contest and the opportunity to win a prize will encourage listeners to stay tuned, adds Nelson.

"By offering a fun quiz, built around nutrition, convenience, quality and taste messages on beef, along with worthwhile prizes, we can encourage broadcasters to talk about beef for the entire week."

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) Rural Summer Job Service

The 2010 Rural Summer Jobs Service program will begin accepting applications on February 24 and will continue until April 16, 2010. Each eligible applicant has an equal opportunity regardless of when the application is submitted so long as it is received before the deadline. The online application form can be completed in 10 minutes and we will acknowledge your online application via email.

Paper applications can be obtained upon request by calling 1-888-588-4111 or visit www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/rural/rsj/rjs_index.htm.

L) Farm Innovation Program

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. The FIP is aimed at boosting agricultural research, competitiveness, and productivity in Ontario's agricultural sectors. The FIP is 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). The AAC have issued this Intake of Proposals to solicit project proposals for funding consideration under the FIP.

The overall goal of FIP is to increase the development, adaptation, assessment, and adoption of on-farm innovative technologies that help agricultural producers respond to changing demands. Approved projects will undertake research and innovation to:

- Increase awareness and access to credible, Ontario-based information on applicable innovative on-farm technologies in each sector.
- Provide industry-directed funding to agricultural commodity organizations and to individual farmers or groups of farmers for applied research projects and on-farm demonstrations that focus on innovative technologies for on-farm application.

Eligible recipients must be a Canadian legal entity and may include:

- Non-supply managed organizations designated by the Ontario Agricultural Commodity Council OACC . Applications must be submitted by the organization.
- Individual farmers or groups of farmers may access FIP funding but must apply in partnership/collaboration with a non-supply managed organization of OACC ([click here for a list of non-supply managed organizations of OACC](#)). *Applications must be submitted by the organization.*

For more information, visit <http://www.adaptcouncil.org/e/current-programs/fip.php>

M) Grower Pesticide Safety Course

If you are an Ontario farmer and want to buy and use Class 2 or 3 pesticides your farm, you must be a Certified Farmer. There must be at least one Certified Farmer for each farm operation. Click <http://www.opep.ca/growertraining/courses.cfm> for a list of courses and exam-only sessions offered across Ontario. You can pick up a manual from the Woodstock OMAFRA Resource Centre. To register for a Grower Pesticide Safety Course or GPSC Exam-Only Session call 1-800-652-8573, fax 519-674-1589 E-mail: opep@ridgetownc.uoguelph.ca, or click [Register](#) to E-mail your request.

N) 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.

O) LICC - CAHRC Ontario Forum Invitation

The Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) has requested our assistance in distributing **the attached information (word documents)** to producers (targeted to employers and supervisors) within Ontario commodity and general farm organizations.

The Council is planning to hold a forum at the Delta Hotel and Conference Centre in Guelph on March 11th in order to provide primary agricultural stakeholders with the opportunity to interact with experts under the theme of "Today's and Tomorrow's Farms: Employment and Skills Development." Members from their Board of Directors will also be present at this session, notably, Ron Bonnett and Mark Wales, who will both also participate at the meeting.

CAHRC wishes to bring together agricultural producers from across the region, joined by members of general farm organizations, representatives from post-secondary institutions and government. The Council is particularly interested in learning more about how CAHRC can contribute to addressing human resource issues to ensure that Canada's agriculture sector has access to a consistent supply of the skilled workers required to remain competitive in today's economy.

Some of the items on the agenda will include panel discussions and presentations on the Council's vision and mandate, agricultural leadership, employment and skills development.

Please note that CAHRC will cover all participant travel costs, including hotel accommodation and meals, as per Treasury Board of Canada guidelines.

The Council recently held its first forum in Moncton, New Brunswick, which had approximately 50 participants from the four Atlantic provinces and was very well received by those in attendance. They hope to attract at least 30 attendees to the Ontario session. Additional meetings are also being planned in Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec; Abbotsford, British Columbia; and Calgary, Alberta; over the coming months. CAHRC was created in 2006 to address the human resource issues facing agriculture businesses across Canada. The Council works with stakeholders to develop and implement programs and activities that deal with these pressing challenges faced by the sector. CAHRC has already completed a number of projects, which are detailed on their Web site at www.cahrc-ccrha.ca.

Although the Council is open to participation from farm organization representatives, their primary target audience for this initiative is producers (employers and supervisors).

P) 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

Q) Profitable Pastures

Profitable Pastures will be held in Elmwood March 29th, Elmvale March 30th and Cobden March 31st.

Key Speakers: Duane McCartney recently retired from Agriculture Canada in Saskatchewan and Alberta & Bill Gallagher from Gallagher Animal Management Systems

Their vast experience will provide a practical take home message

Call 1-877-892-8663 to register by March 26th

Visa or Mastercard Pre-registration is necessary to ensure dinner. Conference registration is \$35 and includes a hot roast beef dinner. For more info visit www.ontarioforagecouncil.com

CEU Accredited

See attached flyer

R) Date Changes: OnTrace Producer Traceability Workshops

OnTrace has adjusted its Producer Traceability Workshop series dates for the remainder of the spring, so as not to interfere with spring planting season and to better serve their producer audience.

The new schedule has all workshops ending by the end of March 2010.

Please see attached the revised ads, one with location detail information and one with workshop detail information.

Please be aware that the Guelph and Kemptville sessions are very close to being at capacity, so please sign up without delay.

S) Hillcrest Farms & Guest BIO-Developed Bull sale

Saturday March 20, 2010 @ 1pm

28352 Kerwood Rd.

Kerwood, ON

519-247-3660/519-661-8713

Contact Mike

Viewing anytime

www.earleystock.com

T) 2011 Nuffield Farming Scholarship Applications Open

The Canadian Nuffield Farming Scholarship Trust is accepting applications for their 2011 program. Applications are due by April 30, 2010 and forms can be downloaded from the Nuffield Canada website at <http://www.nuffield.ca>.

Nuffield Farming Scholarships are awarded to enthusiastic individuals, between the ages of 25 and 45, who wish to explore topics of their choice in agriculture, land management, horticulture or the food chain. Three scholarships of \$15,000 each are available for 2011.

"The Canadian Nuffield Farming Scholarship provides innovative Canadians with the funding to travel internationally to expand their personal horizons while exploring agricultural issues and opportunities in a global context," said Barry Cudmore, Chair and 2004 Scholar. "We are focused on developing the practical, managerial and commercial capacities of each scholar to enable them to be better farmers and business managers and to make a significant contribution to the future of Canadian agriculture."

The scholarships are awarded to men and women who are judged to have the greatest potential to create value for themselves, their industries and their communities through the doors which will be opened and the opportunities provided for life-long learning and improvement. The scholarships are awarded on the strength of the applicants' vision, enthusiasm and determination to pursue their farming goals.

A Nuffield Farming scholarship is a life changing experience. Scholars receive a 'golden key' to the best production, management and marketing systems in every corner of the world. In addition to embracing the 'world's best' in agriculture, scholars gain life-long friends from around the world, and a deep understanding, and global perspective, of the politics, cultures and challenges of world agriculture.

A key part of the scholarship is the opportunity for winners to study a topic of interest to themselves through out their travels. Scholars must complete their project within two years of the award and are required to travel and study for a minimum of two months in total. On return from their study tour, Scholars are expected to produce a written report and present their findings at the annual general meeting as well as to others in their industries.

Canadian Nuffield Scholars are also required to participate in the Contemporary Scholars Conference (CSC) where they will meet with scholars from other countries including the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and France to exchange ideas and experiences, and join a network of people who are at the cutting edge of primary industry. The 2011 conference will be held in Auckland, New Zealand.

Applications must be received by April 30, 2010. Application forms are available from the Nuffield website www.nuffield.ca

For more information on Nuffield Canada, visit www.nuffield.ca or on Nuffield Farming Scholarship Trust (the United Kingdom site) – www.nuffieldscholar.org.

News Index:

- A) CCA supportive of federal funding commitment to OIE**
- B) Future of beef industry is at risk: You can help**
- C) Cattlemen oppose traceability costs**
- D) Cattle farmers receive boost**
- E) No fairytale ending for big bad wolves**
- F) Tradition makes way for next generation; Cattle breeders cast eye on global market**
- G) 'Green' farming efforts bring honour to Sytsmas; ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AWARD: Eighth Line Farm singled out in Ontario**
- H) Cattle association wins award;**
- I) Farmers and foodies to connect online**

This report is prepared and distributed 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) CCA supportive of federal funding commitment to OIE

The Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA) fully supports Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Gerry Ritz's announcement that the Government of Canada is making an additional investment of \$2 million to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). The OIE sets the international science-based guidelines that govern international trade while safeguarding the food and feed systems.

"The CCA commends the Minister and the Government of Canada for demonstrating a leadership role in recognizing the value of supporting the OIE infrastructure," said CCA President Brad Wildeman.

The OIE was instrumental in developing international consensus that recognizes the control mechanisms Canada has in place to deal with BSE and other animal health diseases. BSE, or bovine spongiform encephalopathy, was detected in Canada in 2003. Canada took the appropriate steps to eliminate BSE from the Canadian herd and in 2007, based on our multi-layered safeguards, was classified as a 'controlled risk' country for BSE by the OIE. The controlled risk status tells the rest of the world that Canada is a safe trading partner.

The industry and the Government of Canada continue to work to restore full trade with all markets for Canadian beef and cattle.

"Ultimately, we want all member countries of the OIE to respect and adhere to the science-based guidelines set by the OIE," Wildeman said.

Minister Ritz made the announcement in Paris this week during an agricultural trade mission to the OIE and Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The investment, to be made over the next four years, will help provide Canadian expertise to support the OIE's headquarters and regional capacity building activities.

The funding commitment builds on the success of Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Ritz's recent mission to China.

B) Future of beef industry is at risk: You can help

Edmonton Journal

March 5, 2010

Canada's agricultural legacy is in jeopardy, and it's up to Canadians to save it! It may seem like a surprise to you that farmers are struggling when you are paying good money for beef.

One must ask, where is your money going? Well sadly, it is not to the farmers.

Canadian retail prices for beef have gone up by \$5.87 a kilo in the last 15 years and the producers received 17 cents of that. Looking at lean ground beef selling for \$8.50 per kilo, the packer gets \$3.50 or \$3.25 per kilo at best.

Does it cost \$5.25 to put beef through a grinder and put it in a tray?

The retail margins are one of the things killing the farming industry. It's retail concentration and to some extent, packer concentration.

Why is it that Canada has the cheapest food in the world, second to the United States, and our producers are faltering?

There are so many natural and organic beef producers now in the U.S., they are competing on price rather than quality and are receiving little more than their commercial cattle counterparts.

It's about \$150 per head less expensive to kill the same animal south of the border, mainly because of enhanced regulations our government has placed on our industry, yet it lets imports into the country that do

not have to meet these same high standards. This does not create a level playing field for our producers and if this trend continues you will soon be unable to find Canadian beef on the shelves.

It is up to all of us to keep Canadian agriculture alive. Changing this sorry situation starts by us all making a little noise and taking responsibility for its future.

Where can it start?

As close as your local grocery store. Please, next time you buy your beef, check and make sure that you are supporting your Canadian farmers, and challenge our grocery stores and franchises to support the Canadian legacy of world-class beef.

For information on Prairie Heritage Natural Beef, please visit our website at www.prairieheritage.ca

Lyndell Swann, Camrose

C) Cattlemen oppose traceability costs

February 27, 2010

Few details of a proposed national system are known but it's expected to be in place by 2011

by BETTER FARMING STAFF

Ontario's new agriculture minister Carol Mitchell is sure that traceability is going to be good for the beef industry and extolled its virtues when she spoke to the Ontario Cattlemen's Association at its annual meeting in Toronto on Wednesday. She may have a selling job ahead.

A few hours earlier, delegates to the convention, which represents beef producers across the province, made it clear that the benefits of traceability are still up in the air as far as they are concerned. "We aren't interested in regulations that make Ontario producers uncompetitive compared to producers in other provinces and other countries," Kent County producer Mike Buis told voting delegates. They subsequently passed a resolution that reflected Buis' concerns.

Beef producers in Canada are going to be dealing with mandatory traceability some time in 2011. "We as producers don't know the details," Buis said.

Nor did Mitchell provide any in her speech. The provincial government is committed to traceability. Mitchell said. OMAFRA recently hosted a traceability forum. She says it will help producers "capitalize on new market opportunities," She pointed out that MacDonalds Canada, one of Canada's largest fast food companies and a major user of beef "has put its full support behind" traceability in the food industry. McDonalds is not a new customer for Canadian beef.

Later, Mitchell's chief of staff, David Spencer, said the province is promoting traceability as a voluntary measure, for now.

"Once people think about it, the value of it is self-evident," Spencer says. "People know that if a problem is found there is a way to trace it back to the source in a way that would otherwise not be the case." He described the traceability forum sponsored by the province in late January to talk about what traceability means to producers as "quite well received and quite well attended." BF

D) Cattle farmers receive boost

The Peterborough Examiner

Fri Mar 5 2010

Page: B6

Section: News

Byline: GALEN EAGLE , EXAMINER STAFF WRITER;

Among the winners in the 2010 federal budget, Canadian cattle farmers will receive millions in funding and the government will work towards rebuilding the country's domestic meat processing plants, Peterborough MP Dean Del Mastro said.

Funding available under the Slaughter Improvement Program will be increased by \$10 million in 2010-11 to support the introduction of new, cost-effective technologies and \$25 million in 2010-11 will be targeted to cattle processing plants that handle cattle over 30 months of age.

The federal government will also provide \$40 million over three years to support the development and commercialization of innovative technologies related to the removal and use of specified risk materials to reduce handling costs and create potential revenue sources from these materials.

These measures will be funded from the existing Agricultural Flexibility Fund.

The budget will also deliver \$75 million over three years to support investments by Canadian cattle processing plants to help improve their operations to ensure cattle producers have access to competitive cattle processing operations in Canada.

"They're important initiatives. They're things that have been mentioned by cattlemen, time and time again," Del Mastro said.

In the aftermath of the BSE crisis, most of Canada's processing facilities were absorbed by the United States, Del Mastro said.

"There have been significant investments made to re-establish a Canadian processing industry," he said. "It's important to preserve the Canadian processing industry."

Local cattle farmer Sam Wood said investing in domestic processing is a great idea, but it won't mean anything if there are no more cattle farmers left.

Until cattle farmers in Canada can compete with their American counterparts, Canada will continue to lose beef producers, Wood said.

"It's a step in the right direction, but until we have the same deal they have in the United States, we're behind the eight ball," Wood said.

"Unless they get some kind of program in place to support the cattlemen so they can keep operating, we won't have the cattle to put in those plants.

"We're losing cattle producers every day, big time."

Investments in technologies related to the removal and use of specified risk materials will help as well, but won't remove the need for parity between American and Canadian producers, Wood said.

"They have to get those regulations straightened out so it's equal on both sides of the border," he said.

"Between Canada and the states it costs us about \$100 more to process a cow."

E) No fairytale ending for big bad wolves

Selkirk Journal

Fri Mar 5 2010

Page: 10

Section: News

Byline: BY DONNA DELAURIER

Residents of the Beausejour area might be surprised to know that a local resident and an outfitter recently trapped three timber wolves in three days - all within about two miles of town.

Tom Turner and Ron Alexander also trapped more than 30 coyotes during the three-month season that ended Feb. 28.

Alexander, a retired outfitter, said if wolves are around, there's bound to be trouble.

"These guys can't count," Alexander said while showing the dead wolves to a reporter.

"They kill everything."

Turner said he didn't realize how many coyotes there were until he began hunting a few years ago.

"Last year was the most I'd ever seen," Turner said.

"A lot of people don't realize they're here."

The wolves came as a surprise to him. He said he'd seen tracks, but never actually came across one. But when Alexander got three in three days near his property, he couldn't believe it.

"That close to town, that was shocking."

Jim Kebernik works on his family beef and grain farm - Black Rose Ranch - about seven miles north of Beausejour and the presence of coyotes and timber wolves isn't shocking to him.

About four years ago, Kebernik lost 17 calves to predators. Some of his cattle were attacked, but survived. Kebernik said it cost him money in vet fees for the animals, who the predators had tried to "hamstring". He said some were missing tails and had bite marks on them.

"We had to take a lot of time and effort and cost to salvage the animals," he said, noting a wolf bite causes severe infection.

A trapper came in and reduced the predator problem, but Kebernik said they're back, perhaps not as bad, but numbers are creeping up again.

In the 40 years his family has been farming in the area, he's never seen predators in such high numbers. In fact, he said he never used to see them at all. But he sees them now.

"The animals have gotten really aggressive," Kebernik said.

"Very bold, very aggressive."

And wolves, Kebernik said, are a bigger problem than coyotes.

"The coyotes also cause damage, but a large percentage of the attacks (on his farm) were confirmed to be timber wolves," he said.

"The population's just exploded."

Kebernik said the government offers compensation for animals killed by predators, but it's not nearly enough and you need proof in the form of a fresh carcass - a difficult, if not impossible, task.

"By the time you find it, there's not much left. A couple of bones, an ear tag, that's all that's left."

And, he said, it costs about \$750 to get a calf weaned, but all the government program offers for a dead calf is about \$100.

He said his complaints to government four years ago fell on deaf ears. He said the compensation needs to be increased, but the province also needs to manage the population better.

Sheila Mowat, general manager of the Manitoba Cattle Producers Association, said coyotes and wolves are a problem right across the province. Their field reps say they hear about them everywhere.

"When you're getting it from all across the province, it's an issue," Mowat said.

"It's the most frequent thing we're hearing about, besides the state of the industry. So it's a problem."

Mowat said MCPA passed a motion in December 2008 to lobby the province for a bounty on coyotes and wolves - \$300 for wolves and \$50 for coyotes.

Mowat said there was no action taken, so MCPA passed a second motion in December 2009 to lobby for the use of cyanide guns.

According to MCPA, 478 claims for livestock killed by predators were filed in 2000, costing the government \$152,700 through the Manitoba Agriculture Services Corporation. By 2007, claims had risen to 1,462 and the cost rose to \$448,767.

Mowat said MCPA is working with the Manitoba Trappers Association, hoping to force a change. She said they're not talking about eliminating predators all together, just taking the problem animals out. If that can be done, money spent on claims for lost animals will go down, and farmers will be better off.

"You won't see as many claims as we have in previous years," Mowat said.

"You've got to get the balance back."

F) Tradition makes way for next generation; Cattle breeders cast eye on global market

Calgary Herald
Thu Mar 4 2010

Page: B1

Section: City & Region

Byline: Richard Cuthbertson

Source: Calgary Herald

Gavin Hamilton still marvels at the fortitude of his grandfather who in 1891 homesteaded east of Innisfail after arriving from Scotland.

"There was no roads, there was no transportation," Hamilton said Wednesday. "They basically lived off the land. Everything they did was physical labour."

Raising beef cattle has been a long tradition in the Hamilton family and there is no better way to illustrate that history than through the Calgary Bull Sale.

The sale was founded in 1901, and Hamilton's grandfather attended one of the first.

Jump forward more than a century and on Wednesday Hamilton's son was in the show ring handling this year's new Angus grand champion for the 2010 sale.

Colton Hamilton and his sister Quinn are the next generation of beef cattle breeders. Colton still lives on the homestead his great-grandfather built and the farm remains in family hands.

The Calgary Bull Sale show took place Wednesday and the sale will be today.

But if the event shows something else, it is how much beef cattle breeding has changed during the 110 years the sale has been held.

Local farms may still be run on the backs of families, but those operators now have a shrewd eye on the global market.

And then there is the technology.

Take the Hamiltons' winning bull -- one-year-old Belvin Wanderlei 25'09. His more traditional measurements include weight (1,423 pounds) along with the apparently important scrotal circumference of 41 centimetres.

But there's more to this beefy bull. An ultrasound has been performed to determine measurements for back fat, rib-eye and marbling, all important indicators to the breeder and buyer.

Also helping breeders along is artificial insemination and embryo transplants -- mechanisms that have an international scope.

Colton Hamilton said some of their best cows have been sold to buyers overseas, but still remain on the Alberta farm. Embryos are simply collected, frozen, and transported to the owner.

"Nowadays, genetics can be sold around the world," he said.

Artificial insemination allows breeders to obtain semen from prized bulls that are otherwise far too expensive to purchase, Hamilton said.

Embryo transplants help produce far more offspring from high quality cows.

Buyers of bulls at the Calgary Bull Sale 110 years ago would have approached their potential purchases much as Wayne Burgess observed the livestock on Wednesday.

The Carstairs man was one of the judges of the show, and selected Belvin Wanderlei Angus grand champion. He used visual inspection and years of experience to make the call.

"For 110 years they've been coming here to pick their genetics," Burgess said of the Calgary Bull Sale.

Getting that prized bull ready for its grand tour of the ring is a lot of hard work.

But unlike their aggressive compatriots who buck at rodeos, these bulls are fairly docile. They are washed, blow dried, and groomed before making their show-ring appearance.

"It's kind of like a beauty parlour," Gavin Hamilton says.

Also in discussion at the Calgary Bull Sale is the future of the industry. BSE and its aftermath still prove daunting. Prices have also been depressed.

Some, like farmer Larry Strom, feel like the cattle producer is the one being pinched with unnecessary government-imposed costs and low prices. He said prices may go up for short peaks, but come back down again.

It's also unfortunate that fewer families are continuing to breed cattle, Colton Hamilton said. But he also holds some optimism.

"The cow herd in Canada is downsizing, so eventually, hopefully, we'll get to a place where the prices for calves are viable for producers. They haven't been over the last few years just because there's been too many calves sold. It's just supply and demand."

Burgess is also buoyant, for the same reason.

"I believe we're on the edge of a turnaround," he said.

G) 'Green' farming efforts bring honour to Sytsmas; ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AWARD: Eighth Line Farm singled out in Ontario

Brockville Recorder And Times

Wed Mar 3 2010

Page: A4

Section: News

Byline: NICK GARDINER , STAFF WRITER

Dateline: ATHENS

Charleston Lake trout have nothing to fear from 480 Red Angus beef cattle and heifers on Charlie and Kim Sytsma's Eighth Line Farm upstream on Elbe Creek.

More than 1.5 kilometres of cedar-rail fencing protects the stream from "cattle nutrients," or cow dung, that would otherwise wash downstream through different tributaries to Charleston, Temperance and Wiltse Lakes. Moreover, a series of solar-powered water stations render a trip to the creek redundant for a thirsty cow while a reforestation project has restored the natural shoreline of the creek and attracted more wildlife.

The ongoing labour of love, funded by a family investment of \$70,000 over nine years and the same amount in federal and provincial funding, has done little to improve productivity or bring in extra revenue, said Charlie Sytsma.

"The return on what we do is extremely marginal," Sytsma told The Recorder and Times during an interview at the farm Tuesday.

"But the plus side is it's not only good for the environment, but it's also sound farm management."

Sytsma said the work has extended the life of a series of grazing paddocks used in rotation, increased the viability of marginal land and improved the esthetic beauty of the property.

Their efforts have not gone unnoticed as the Sytsmas recently received the 2010 Environmental Stewardship Award at the annual general meeting of the Ontario Cattlemen's Association in Toronto.

The award, which comes with a plaque and \$500 cash, is cosponsored by RBC Royal Bank. Bank representative Sheila Smart made the presentation.

Kim Sytsma said they were made aware in advance the honour would be presented, so they were prepared with a 40- slide presentation about the farm and the environmental innovations.

But that didn't diminish their sense of gratitude, she said.

"It's an honour to be nominated and we're extremely honoured to win. There's 19,000 beef farmers in Ontario."

Among a small number of beef cattlemen in Leeds County, the Sytsma operation stands out, said Martin Streit, co-ordinator for the Leeds County Stewardship Council which submitted the family's name for consideration, in concert with the Charleston Lake Association.

"Of our beef cattle farmers, they've done by far the most work," said Streit.

"It's fantastic that they won. It's nice for the recognition of what they have done."

Streit said the stewardship council and lake association have been active partners in planning projects with the Sytsmas as well as sources of funding from senior levels of government.

He said the family has had a positive influence on the environmental practices of farmers around the area and freely hosts tours and deliver presentations about the innovations.

People who may be reluctant to consider a voluntary partnership with the stewardship council have changed their mind after talking with Charlie or Kim Sytsma, said Streit.

"Most of our projects (attract farmers) through word of mouth from people like the Sytsmas," he said.

Similarly, they were among the first family farm to establish ties with the Charleston Lake Association and join the stream rehabilitation plan, said president Bill Hallam in a statement.

Hallam said the award-winning couple has demonstrated how co-operative efforts can lead to meaningful environmental improvements.

The nomination also had the support of Athens Township Mayor John Conley, who lauded the innovative practices and dedication to the environment shown by the Sytsmas.

The couple, who have two daughters, two sons and a two-month-old grandson, said they plan to attend the national competition at the Canadian Cattlemen's Association meeting in Calgary in August.

H) Cattle association wins award;

The Chatham Daily News

Tue Mar 2 2010

Page: A8

Section: News

Byline: TREVOR TERFLOTH, THE DAILY NEWS;

The Kent Cattlemen's Association received a provincial nod for its efforts on Saturday.

Buis Beef Ranch was recognized by the Ontario Cattlemen's Association in the best project competition for an educational tour held last September.

The first-place award was given at the KCA's annual dinner at Canadian Auto Workers Hall.

"It's pretty exciting," Mike Buis said beforehand. "It's quite an honour."

It was the first time the KCA won the award, which included \$500.

The September event, part of the Round the County Agri-Tour, was geared to all ages, with people learning about animals, equipment and even recipes.

Buis said the goal was to put a friendly face on beef production.

"We had about 600 people," he said. "A lot of families came out."

Buis said people often pass farms and may be curious as to what actually goes on.

"They drive by and think about the questions, but don't have a person to ask," he said.

Approximately 220 guests attended the dinner.

I) Farmers and foodies to connect online

Posted By MATTHEW VAN DONGEN STANDARD STAFF

Posted 7 days ago

Are you a lonely local foodie hungry for love? A friendly farmer seeking a lucrative new relationship?

The Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation is about to launch a new agricultural matchmaking website just for you.

The foundation is test-driving a new online "fresh-food finder" that is meant to hook up consumer and bulk food buyers to farmers throughout the provincial greenbelt, including those in Niagara.

"It really is a sort of matchmaking site," said foundation spokeswoman Susan Murray, who previewed the unfinished "food finder" for farmers at the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Conference at Brock University Thursday. "The goal is to make it easy for consumers to find local, fresh food, and fast."

The foundation isn't the only organization trying to make that connection. Niagara already has a "Culinary Trail" founded by local food writer Lynn Ogryzlo, while the Niagara Local Food Co-operative even sells local produce online.

The website won't be selling food, Murray said.

"What we want to do is facilitate contact between producers and consumers," she said. "We think Ontario doesn't realize what it's got.... We want to spread the news."

The food finder is meant to be simple and searchable. For the consumer, it enables searches by food variety, farm type, travel distance and farm practice.

So in theory, a local food search for carrots, grown organically, within a 50-kilometre trip, should yield a map pinpointing all matching farms, each with links to individual farm profiles.

The idea appealed to Holland Marsh farmer Jason Verkaik, who has added his profile information to the site along with around 400 other greenbelt farmers so far.

"I think people are starting to want to connect with the farmers that make their food again," said Verkaik, who grows carrots, onions and beets. "They want to know who grows their food, what kind of farm it comes from. We can help them make better choices."

Murray said the site has a search engine aimed at larger "bulk buyers" like nursing homes, hospitals and schools.

The site, www.greenbeltfresh.ca, is already up and running with information about farmers markets and the benefits of local food.

The new local food finder won't be launched until April, but farmers can sign up and add profile information online now.



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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