



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ontario Pasture Award winner named

October 25, 2013 – Guelph– Bill McCutcheon of Mulmur Vista Farm at Grand Valley in Dufferin County is the winner of the 2013 Sheep Pasture Award. The award is sponsored by MAPLESEED.

Bill McCutcheon of Mulmur Vista Farm near Grand Valley in Dufferin County is the winner of the 2013 Sheep Pasture Award. The award, sponsored by MAPLESEED Canada, the Ontario Forage Council and the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency (OSMA) was presented today at OSMA's Annual Meeting. For their environmental and pasture improvements and management, the McCutcheon's receive \$500 and a bag of forage seed.

The McCutcheon flock consists of approximately 1000 ewes plus their offspring. Bill depends heavily on good quality forage and during the main pasture growing time he grows a mixture of predominantly orchard grass & white clover or tall fescue & white clover. He pastures about 150 acres and is a strong advocate for rotational grazing. Bill has the ability to divide the pastures into 42 different paddocks, and provide water to each one.

The paddocks are fenced using a variety of fencing, including hi-tensile electric, polywire and flexinet. Some page wire is used for exterior fencing. Bill has been an active participant in the Environmental Farm Plan program, and has fenced the sheep out of the drainage ditch and also the river at the back of the farm. Bill also practices strip grazing on the stockpiled grass in addition to grazing corn, turnips and kale. He also stockpiles tall fescue and or orchard grass. As Bill comments, "We usually have lots of moisture in our soil, so we can always grow grass. Our land is better suited to growing pasture because of the lower CHU, cooler nights and early sunshine."

Bill likes to get the ewes out on grass by mid April and usually finish grazing in mid December. Bill states he is increasingly trying to extend his pasture season by stock piling tall fescue or orchard grass and by pasturing turnips, kale, oats and corn. As Bill says, "If we had less predator issues, we would put lambs on grass as well".

Bill is quick to comment that "In addition to good quality pasture, fresh water is readily available in each paddock and is an essential feature".

Barry Robinson, Sales Manager with MAPLESEED said, "The McCutcheon's are ideal candidates for the 2013 award, because of the innovation and consistency they have shown in their farming operation and their willingness to share ideas for the benefit to agriculture and the industry in general.

Ray Robertson, Manager of the Ontario Forage Council says, "This year's Ontario Sheep Pasture Award winner exemplifies many of the management techniques that have been promoted and put into action for a sustainable long term operation, and can be utilized on many sheep operations".

The deadline for applications for the 2014 Ontario Sheep Pasture Award is Oct1/14. For details call the Ontario Forage Council at 1-877-892-8663 or visit either the Ontario Forage Council's website at www.ontarioforagecouncil.com or the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency's website at www.ontariosheep.org.

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