

The Monthly Messenger



December 2014

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OASC Leaders Welcome the Removal of Mandatory AgriStability Participation from Enrollment Criteria for Provincial RMP Program

In the spring of 2011, farmer leaders across commodity groups came together with the provincial government to design a made-in-Ontario solution to help bring predictability, stability and bankability to their business operations. Established with much fanfare, a new provincial cost-shared Risk Management Program (RMP) was created to help stabilize the industry as many costs and prices are global in nature and far beyond the farmer's control.

In the fall of 2013, Premier Wynne tasked the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food and senior ministry staff to work collaboratively with Ontario Agricultural Sustainability Coalition (OASC) leaders to review the RMP program and ensure the existing program and its funds were best serving farmers.

After a year of working with senior Ministry officials, our detailed analysis, measured against clear criteria have led OASC to conclude that the current RMP program is far superior to any of the other alternatives with respect to assisting job creation, bankability and predictability.

Through that review, it also became clear the mandatory requirement that all RMP participants also enroll in the federal AgriStability program was doing more harm than good given cuts to the AgriStability program and other challenges with the way AgriStability is currently operating.

The provincial government and farmers have worked well together in the creation of RMP and must continue to do so in order to convince the federal government to fix their broken safety net programs and work together in the interest of all of Canada's rural and urban economies.

OASC would like to thank the Premier for establishing the informal joint RMP working group, as well as Minister Jeff Leal, Deputy Dr. Deb Stark and a long list of Ministry officials who treated us as trusted partners. We believe all ministries would be wise to examine the approach utilized by OMAFRA for use as a model for future government / stakeholder collaboration.

Quotes:

“Ontario is a national leader in providing risk management support to farmers. We worked directly with farm leaders across commodity groups to develop Ontario's own Risk Management Program (RMP). Farm leaders, together with government, have determined that RMP is far superior to any other program in terms of assisting job creation, bankability and predictability for the agri-food sector. We need federal business risk management programs that, like RMP, work for Ontario's farmers. Unfortunately, program cuts and design flaws have resulted in an eroded federal AgriStability program that is no longer meeting producer needs. I support OASC's request to remove the AgriStability requirement for participation in the provincial RMP. This will allow Ontario farmers to have greater flexibility to choose the portfolio of tools that best meets their needs.”

Hon. Jeff Leal, MPP
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Major Improvement to Ontario Lambs and Sheep Advance Payments Program

Great News! Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada has enhanced the Advance Payments Program (APP) positively impacting Ontario lamb and sheep producers who run a continuous flow operation.

A continuous flow operation is a farming operation where livestock or animals that are sold, are constantly replaced by new ones so that the number of livestock/animals in inventory remains constant and sufficient to support the outstanding advance.

Producers operating a continuous flow operation for lamb and sheep may now receive a loan advance without having to make repayments (with proof of sales), on the advance until fifteen calendar days following the twelve month period from the date the advance was made, but no later than the end of the Production Period, whichever is earlier.

Advance rates are based on weights at which the livestock are to be marketed. Rates for the 2014/15 program year are as follows:

Lambs (61-79 pounds): \$72.00/head

Lambs (80-109 pounds): \$84.50/head

Lambs (more than 110 pounds): \$93.00/head

Sheep: \$66.00/head

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Advance Payments Program (APP) provides benefits to producers by giving them access to short-term financing to a maximum of \$400,000 at preferred interest rates. Up to \$100,000 is interest-free! Producers must continuously own the agricultural product(s) being applied for. In order to determine if you are eligible to benefit from this remarkable government loan advance, you simply need to complete an Agricultural Credit Corporation application which is as easy as 1-2-3! If you have any questions or require assistance in completing an application, we can help! Simply call us at 1-888-278-8807, advance@agcreditcorp.ca or visit www.agcreditcorp.ca.

Economics of Infrastructure: Module 6 Master Shepherd Course

Wednesday, January 7th, and Thursday, January 8th, 2015
Holiday Inn Express, 100 Pony Drive, Newmarket

A two-day infrastructure module, part six of the Master Shepherd's Course, will be taking place on Wednesday, January 7th and Thursday, January 8th 2015 at the Holiday Inn Express in Newmarket, Ontario. Lamb producers who wish to improve their farm infrastructure will want to attend. The objective of the module is to motivate and support producer learning and adoption of best management practices. The information and skills acquired through the module will help producers assess their own farm operation and determine its strengths, weaknesses and areas where improvement is possible. This program will be geared toward shepherds who are looking at lamb production as a financially sustainable farm business enterprise.

The curriculum has been developed to foster the cooperative work ethic of the participants and to demonstrate the beneficial sharing of agriculture management practices and innovations.

We have confirmed Anita O'Brien, sheep producer, John Steele, sheep producer, Don Metheral, Professional Shearer, Peter Doris, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food Environmental Specialist and Tim Prior, Brussels Agri-Service as the speakers for this event. The following topics will be covered:

- Permanent and Temporary Handling Facilities
- Understanding Sheep Behaviour
- Various Types of Housing Facilities
- Ventilation Principles
- Effective Floor Plans
- Shearing Facilities
- Permanent and Temporary Fencing
- What You Should Know About the Nutrient Management Act

The students will learn the key elements required to utilize the available structures and match them to the feeding systems for their sheep flock. Students will be encouraged to discuss building plans and animal behaviour issues. They will receive input from experienced shepherds as well as instructors. The registration cost for this module is \$250 per person for two days of instruction. A late registration fee of \$350 applies after the registration deadline of December 18th, 2014. Send your request for individual module registration to mastershepherds@outlook.com. Don't miss this opportunity to take your farm business to the next level. Please make cheques payable to Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency, and mail them to 130 Malcolm Road Guelph, Ontario, N1K 1B1.

The overall goal of the Master Shepherd's Course project is to support growth of the Ontario sheep industry and to assist Ontario producers in running financially sustainable farming operations which can be competitive with imports.



Investment in this project provided in part by *Growing Forward 2 (GF2)*, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative. The Agricultural Adaptation Council assists in the delivery of *GF2* in Ontario.

Erbcroft Farm Won Premier's Award

The Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency extends their congratulations to Luann and Tim Erb of Erbcroft Farm for winning the Premier Award this year. These Perth County producers began producing lamb bacon, burgers, curry pies, mutton sausages and more to ensure that no part of the carcass goes unused. They also sell soup bones and tanned hides. Erbcroft Farms is growing thanks to products that entice consumers to choose lamb year-round.

Ontario's Outstanding Young Farmers Program: Nominate Today

It's that time of the year again. Do you know of an outstanding young farmer worthy of recognition? Please visit <http://www.oymfontario.ca/nominations.html> for nomination forms and more information. It's a great opportunity to recognize good young farmers for doing a great job.

Ontario's Outstanding Young Farmers Program is a grassroots organization that publicly recognizes and awards successful young farmers who are innovative and progressive in their farm practises. Do you know of someone in your personal part of Ontario's agricultural industry who is excelling and may be a potential candidate? Your organization will receive recognition for the nominee, and the nominee will receive an opportunity to network with other like minded farmers from across Ontario and Canada at our annual event in 2015.

We are currently seeking nominations for 2015, the cut-off date for this year's nominee harvest is **December 15, 2015**. The nomination form is simple, it can be found at <http://www.oymfontario.ca/nominations.html>

Please consider nominating someone who you know excels in Agriculture and is below the age of 39.

OSMA Congratulates Menzies on Receiving the Carl Block Award

November 26, 2014– Guelph, ON – The Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency (OSMA) congratulates Dr. Paula Menzies, from the University of Guelph, on receiving the Carl Block Award. The award, presented at the Canadian Animal Health Coalition's Annual General Meeting, recognizes Menzies' contributions to the sheep industry and animal agriculture as a whole.

“Paula's contribution to the sheep industry is lengthy and worthy of recognition” says Dennis Fischer, Chairman of OSMA who went on to say that “she has dedicated herself to the health of small ruminants through research and producer and veterinary education.” Dr. Menzies is a full professor in the Department of Population Medicine at the Ontario Veterinary College where she also conducts clinical practice, research, teaching and graduate level training. She is also a Diplomat in the European College of Small Ruminant Health Management and the Vice President of the International Sheep Veterinary Association.

Dr. Menzies is responsible for the development of health management programs for sheep including the Ontario Maedi Visna Flock Status program, the Ontario Sheep Health program, the Handbook for the Control of Internal Parasites for Sheep and Goats and a course for udder health for dairy sheep and goats. Responding to the need of producers to have access to veterinarians who are well versed in small ruminant health, Dr. Menzies helped form the Small Ruminant Veterinarians of Ontario.

The award was named in honour of Carl Block, a cattleman whose tireless dedication to Canadian agriculture and commitment to animal health will long be remembered. He was the first chair of the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency-the agency responsible for administering the national cattle identification program. He was also a Director of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, the inaugural chairman of the Canadian Animal Health Coalition and a former President of the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association.

The Canadian Animal Health Coalition (CAHC) was formed in 2002 following an early life as an informal coalition of organizations with an interest in animal health issues in Canadian flocks and herds. Since that time, the organization has flourished as a project based organization addressing issues of concern to industry and government through projects funded by industry and government.

Have Your Say! Help Find Solutions for Farm Labour Shortages

How much farm work is done by family members and how much is done by employees? What work is done by domestic and or foreign workers? Is there a growing reliance on hiring employees to support farm operations? What labour challenges are producers facing today?

The Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC) has launched a Labour Market Information (LMI) research survey to examine Canada's agricultural workforce from every commodity and region.

The Canadian Agricultural HR Council needs your help! We encourage you to fill out this survey and let your members or your circle of contacts know about this important survey opportunity. By taking the time to complete a short 10 – 15 minute online survey farmers' worker needs will included in this important work that will help government and educators create policies and programs that will shape future farm labour requirements. Please complete the online survey at <http://www.cahrc-ccrha.ca/node/2166>

For questions and more information contact Debra Hauer, Project Manager at 613.745.7457 ext. 227 or hauer@cahrc-ccrha.ca

Chute Improves Animal Handling, Maximizes Labour Productivity By Lilian Schaer for Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

Sometimes a small change on a farm can make a big difference.

At The Greenhill Farm, that small change was a mobile handling chute for sheep that has helped improve animal care and reduce labour stress for people working in the barn.

Leny and Wietze Raven farm between Belwood and Grand Valley, where they have 450 sheep, a nursery pig barn, and grow cash crops.

They needed something to make it easier for them to work with their sheep one-on-



Leny Raven with her new mobile handling chute.
Photo Credit: Lilian Schaer

one, from breeding and vaccinating to scanning ear tags.

A large handling facility would have been a significant expense, so after some research into suitable alternatives, they ended up purchasing a mobile handling chute in April 2013.

The unit can easily be set up in their barn's alleyway, or moved from building to building as needed, and it's made a real difference in how the Ravens can handle their flock.

"The chute makes it easier for us to treat the sheep and gives us more time with each one to check them over," says Leny. "Being able to use the chute reduces stress on both the animals and on us as we can handle them more easily."

The unit has also made the process of scanning each animal's ear tag much easier. This helps capture information the Ravens use in their on-farm traceability program, allowing them to meet growing requirements in that area.

They were able to access cost-share funds from the Implementation Funding Assistance Program under Growing Forward 2 (GF2) for their chute. And although this time it was only a small project, Leny says it has helped lay the ground work for other, larger projects they'd like to do on their farm.

"It's a small project for a small amount, but it is still money and that makes a difference. When we want to do a bigger project in the future, we now know how the process works," she says.

She adds that she regularly refers to the GF2 materials to see whether any of their new project ideas, such as segregated feed storage bins for food safety, might qualify for funding. She also keeps an eye out for notices about GF2-related workshops to keep on top of the latest developments and opportunities.

GF2 is a federal-provincial-territorial initiative aimed at encouraging innovation, competitiveness, market development, adaptability, and industry capacity in Canada's agri-food and agri-products sector.

The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) delivers educational workshops and funding assistance supported by GF2 to farmers.

More information about GF2 funding opportunities for farmers is available at http://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/en/programs/growing_forward_2.htm or by contacting the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association's Regional Program Leads at http://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/en/programs/workshop_leaders.htm.

Upcoming Events

For more information on any upcoming events please visit the OSMA website at: www.ontariosheep.org/Events.aspx or contact the OSMA Office at 519-836-0043.

Have Something to Add?

Contact Jillian Craig at
jcraig@ontariosheep.org

Additions are due the
20th of the month.

- Dec 19 District 8 Christmas Social. Time: 6pm. Location: Waterfront River Pub and Terrace, 22 Water Street, Napanee. RSVP is appreciated but not required. For more information or to RSVP please contact Al Whitlam 613-659-3987 or Michelle Voskamp, michellevoskamp@gmail.com
- Jan 10 Grey Bruce Farmers Week: Sheep Day. Registration Price (at door): \$25 (includes hot roast beef and lamb dinner. No Pre-registration is required. For further information, please call Lorie Smith at 519-986-3756, or email Lorie at info@greyagservices.ca. Location: Elmwood Community Centre, Fire #38 Queen Street West Elmwood, Ontario.
- Jan 14 District 10 ‘Hoof to Hook’ evening. Time: 7:30 pm. Location: Dunvegan Recreation Association Hall, 19053 County Road 24, Dunvegan, ON. For more information contact Laurie Maus at 613-527-1897 or info@hawkhillfarm.ca Or visit D10 Facebook Page at <https://www.facebook.com/OSMAD10>
- Jan 15 District 10 ‘Hoof to Hook’ evening. Time: 7:30 pm. Location: Kemptville at the Grenville Mutual Hall, 380 Colonnade Drive. For more information visit D10 Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/OSMAD10>
- Jan 17 Coyote Workshop. Location: Elmwood Community Centre ~ Grey Bruce area Time: 9:30 a.m. Cost: \$10.00 pre-registration / \$20.00 at the door. Lunch provided. More information will be available shortly at www.ontariosheep.org/events.aspx
- Jan 21 District 4 Event. 7:30 pm at Ancaster Fairgrounds. Guest Speaker: Dr. Jocelyn Jansen will speak on Antimicrobial Resistance and prudent drug use. All Districts welcome. Contact Jay Mycroft at jay.mycroft@xplornet.com or 905-957-1114 for more information.
- Jan 24 Coyote Workshop. Location: OPS Community Centre ~ Lindsay area Time: 9:30 a.m. Cost: \$10.00 pre-registration / \$20.00 at the door. Lunch provided. More information will be available shortly at www.ontariosheep.org/events.aspx
- Feb 21 District 10 Sheep Day. Registration at: 9:30 am. Location: Knights of Columbus Hall, 5 rue Forget, Embrun, ON. \$30 includes lunch. More information on D10 Facebook Page at <https://www.facebook.com/OSMAD10>
- Feb 26 Central Ontario Ag Conference: Sheep Day. Automotive Building, Georgian College, 1 Georgian Drive, Barrie, ON. Register online before February 20, 2015 for only \$35.00. Hot dinner, parking and HST included. Please be sure to print off and bring your proof of registration to the conference. Registration also available at the door for \$50.00 (includes hot dinner and parking). Or \$40.00 for registration only. (HST included in both prices). More information will be available shortly on the website: www.centralontarioagconference.ca or contact Connie Brown at 705-726-9300 ext. 1224.

District Information

Note: For further information and details about your District please contact your District Secretary

DISTRICT	CONTACT	INFORMATION
Dist 1	Marlene Raymond at (519) 683-6635 or triplerfarms@kent.net	http://osma_district_1.tripod.com/ December 4 - Christmas potluck @ Christian Reformed Church in Wyoming (4524 Confederation Line) @ 7pm.
Dist 2	Kyle Harrison at 519-334-3928 or kyleharrison22@hotmail.com	December 4 – 7:30 pm District 2 Meeting. Location: Sprucedale Agromart, 24 Sideroad 25N, between Walkerton & Hanover. For more information contact Kyle Harrison 519-334-3928 Next Meetings: February 5, 2015 at 7:30 pm. Grey Ag Services, Markdale, ON March 5, 2015 at 7:30 pm. Lewis Land & Stock. 392242 Grey Road, 109, Holstein, ON April 2, 2015 at 7:30 pm. Location to be announced. For more information contact Kyle Harrison at 519-334-3928.
Dist 3	John Rock at 519-621-5776	
Dist 4	Jay Mycroft at jay.mycroft@xplornet.com or 905-957-1114	Meetings tentatively to be held the 3 rd Wed of the month starting in January 2015 at 7:30 at the Ancaster Fairgrounds (630 Trinity Road, Ancaster). The topic for the Wednesday January 21, meeting will be antimicrobial resistance and prudent drug use. Contact Jay Mycroft for more information.
Dist 5	Dianne Orr at 519-928-5302 or orr7@sympatico.ca	Meetings are usually last Wed. of every month, Location TBA
Dist 6	Karen Harvey at 905-729-3196 or pkharvey@zing-net.ca	
Dist 7	Judy Dening at 705-324-3453 or theshepherdsgate@xplornet.com	
Dist 8	Michelle Voskamp at 613-969-6553 or michellevoskamp@gmail.com	Meetings: District 8 Christmas Social December 19th at 6pm - Waterfront River Pub and Terrace, 22 Water Street, Napanee RSVP is appreciated but not required. For more

		<p>information or to RSVP please contact Al Whitlam 613-659-3987 or Michelle Voskamp, michellevoskamp@gmail.com</p> <p>Our monthly meetings are normally held on the 3rd Monday of every month at Napanee High School, Napanee, at 7.30 p.m. For more information visit: www.osmadistrict8.ca/</p>
Dist 9	Tyler Armstrong at 613-433-8255 or pinnaclehaven@gmail.com	
Dist 10	Christine Power at 613-816-0846 or msloboda2003@gmail.com	<p>District 10 Meetings</p> <p>District 10 will be holding a free informal "Hoof to Hook" evening to view the video of the same name showing the evaluation of lambs and carcasses. To accommodate as many people in the district as possible, there will be two sessions of the same video:</p> <p>Jan 14, 2015 at 7:30 pm - Dunvegan Recreation Association Hall 19053 County Road 24 Dunvegan ON. For more information contact Laurie Maus 613-527-1897 or info@hawkhillfarm.ca</p> <p>Jan 15, 2015 at 7:30 pm - Kemptville at the Grenville Mutual Hall, 380 Colonnade Drive.</p> <p>Feb 21, 2015: District 10 is also planning another SHEEP DAY. Theme: 'How to Build a Better Lamb' 9:30 am to 3 pm - Knights of Columbus Hall, 5 rue Forget, Embrun, ON. \$30 includes lunch. Check out our Facebook website page for details: https://www.facebook.com/OSMAD10</p> <p>For more information visit: www.osmadistrict10.ca/</p>
Dist 11	Debra Garner at 705-563-2761 or bill.debgarner@gmail.com	

Other Organizations and Reference Information**Victoria County Sheep Producers**

Third Wednesday every month starting at 7:30 Sunderland Co-op Boardroom at Oakwood Location (Taylor Road, Oakwood)

Membership is \$20 per farm per year. Contact: Jillian Craig at jillian_stoneybrookfarm@hotmail.com

December 10 – Christmas Party. Bring a potluck item, live auction item, plate and utensils. Come prepared for a good night. Location: Oakwood Elevators. **Time: 6 pm.**

Western Ontario Lamb Producers

District 2 and 3 area

Please contact Lisa Ernewein at l.sernewein@wightman.ca

Southwestern Ontario Sheep Farmers

Formerly known as Middlesex Sheep & Lamb Producers

Meetings 4th Thursday of the month: January to April

Coldstream Community Centre; 10227 Ilderton Road, 519-666-2423

Chair – Wendy McGowan, 519- 657-5197,

Secretary – Geraldine Pennings, 519-764-2455

Grey Bruce Sheep Management Club

Location: Grey Gables in Markdale

Ontario Suffolk Sheep Association

<https://www.facebook.com/ontariosuffolk>