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April 5th, 2013

Dear Members of Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency;

I am contacting you to ask for your assistance in completing a brief questionnaire for livestock producers in the province of Ontario. This questionnaire is part of a larger study which is examining the level of emergency preparedness practiced by livestock producers and their support network in the province of Ontario.

As a member of the Ontario Agricultural community you are being contacted as an important resource to assist us in learning more about producer's perceptions of emergency response within their communities, the emergency response plans you have currently adopted and the roles and expectations of supporting agencies in the event of an emergency situation involving livestock.

Results from these questionnaires will be invaluable to determine what the level of emergency response preparedness practiced by producers across Ontario. This will support the development of strategic response plans by municipalities and provincial and federal government bodies as well as commodity groups to ensure continuity of the agricultural sector and animal health and welfare during times of large scale emergencies, whether they are civil or infectious in nature.

Your answers are completely confidential and will be assimilated into summaries where individual responses are not identified. This survey is completely voluntary. However, it would be so very helpful to us if you would consider taking a few moments of your time and sharing your thoughts and experiences with us.

For your convenience, the survey is offered ON LINE at:

<https://surveys.ccs.uoguelph.ca/limeSurvey/index.php?sid=78975&newtest=Y&lang=en>

Should you wish to complete the survey in a hard copy format, please send an email to cfurness@uoguelph.ca and we will forward a copy to you immediately.

As a small token of our appreciation we are offering a random draw of 20 gift cards (a \$20.00 value) to all people in your commodity group who respond to the survey. The chance to win a card will be dependent on the number of surveys returned. If you wish to enter the draw, please follow the link at the end of the survey. To be entered in the draw, please complete the survey by **May 15th, 2013**.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, we would be happy to discuss them with you. We can be reached at (519) 824-4120 ext. 54263 or by email at cfurness@uoguelph.ca.

Thank you very much for lending a hand with this important research project.

Sincerely,

Cathy Furness DVM, MSc