



The Messenger

OSMA and the Industry

December 2016

This is the last edition of the Messenger for 2016. It will return in January 2017.

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Please send all submissions to Heather Hargrave at hhargrave@ontariosheep.org, or call (519) 836-0043 ex. 29 with any questions.

Out and about

December 5	OASC meeting
December 6	Safe Harbour Policy workshop
December 7	Premier's Summit
December 8	Ontario Sheep board of directors meeting
December 8	Agricultural Adaptation Council annual meeting
December 12	OACC meeting
December 13	LRIC meeting

December Ontario Sheep board meeting notes

Ontario Sheep Convention and annual general meeting review

The board spent time at the December board meeting reviewing the feedback from the Ontario Sheep Convention and the **annual general meeting** (AGM). The reviews of the meeting were positive, with some areas for improvement identified, including the poor audio system and the physical layout of the facilities, which were difficult to navigate for people with mobility issues. Requests for more interactive question and answer periods, more practical presentation topics and information sharing, and a focus for more experienced producers was also identified.

Based on the positive feedback, the Nottawasaga Inn Resort has been booked for next year's Convention and AGM.

Resolutions

The board reviewed the **resolutions** that were presented and voted on at the annual general meeting. Each district that put forward a resolution will have a letter sent to them from the board regarding their resolution. A complete listing of the resolutions along with the board's response will be available in a future edition of the Messenger e-newsletter.

Board governance training

As part of the **board governance training**, Wes walked the board through the licence fee collection structure as a demonstration of where and how OSMA gets their income. An update on the new collection system was provided and forms will be up on the website and available in the Ontario Sheep News magazine for producers in the new year.

Production insurance

As OSMA continues to work with OMAFRA to investigate whether or not **production insurance** will work for the sheep industry, they have put together a working group that will be responsible for helping staff work through some of the questions that OMAFRA is posing. Such questions include (but are not limited to):

- How does the industry define productivity?
- What factors have the greatest negative effect on productivity?
- How is mortality measured?

Live cycle analysis project

The board has agreed to submit a project application to the Agricultural Adaptation Council to develop a **life cycle analysis** of the sheep industry. This project will provide an environmental baseline for the industry that will enable it to identify priority areas for footprint reduction and mitigation.

Industry events update

The chair updated the board on OSMA's attendance at the Federation des producteurs d'agneaux et moutons du Quebec's annual general meeting. While attending that meeting, OSMA also met with representatives from Agri-Traceabilite Quebec, as well as with two processors; Mont Pac and Forget.

Marc Carere, Heather Little and Rob Scott attended a Queen's Park Lobby Day in November. The focus was on lobbying for RMP. During question period the next day OASC was raised and OSMA was specifically mentioned.

In keeping with OSMA's commitment to build stronger working relationships with other sheep organizations, the decision was made to send a delegation to the **American Sheep Industry** meeting in Denver this January. Given the size and scope of the meeting, it was felt that it was important to have a number of OSMA representatives attend.

CFIA on-farm audits

Producers in Ontario have been receiving letters from the **Canadian Food Inspection Agency** (CFIA) indicating that they will be doing **on-farm audits**. The letter indicates that this is part of the CFIA and traceability requirements to audit 5% of sheep producers annually to look at record keeping requirements, specifically with respect to animal movements. The CFIA has indicated that the intention of these audits is not to penalize people, but to educate and open up dialogue between the CFIA and producers.

The CSF

The board was updated on the request of the **CSF** for a sustainability meeting prior to the CSF AGM. Given the short notice, OSMA representatives were unable to attend this meeting.

Alberta, Quebec and Ontario are committed to moving forward outside of the CSF and the chairs and vice chairs of these three provinces are having a teleconference call shortly to discuss some the questions regarding the National Sheep Network (NSN). There was some discussion that the NSN was not a formal replacement for the CSF, but rather the top three producing provinces in Canada getting together to discuss and collaborate on issues of common concern. There is a desire to have a national voice, but not necessarily a national organization.

There is a need for OSMA to communicate some of the issues with the CSF including the lack of engagement, transparency, and feedback to member organizations. Additionally, the current structure of the CSF is unsustainable unless there is a significant increase in funding to the organization. The question is how does the industry come up with a national voice with an affordable structure?

Report on the state of animal welfare in Ontario

Zoocheck and Animal Alliance are sponsoring a report on the **current status on animal welfare in Ontario** and they have contracted Mike Zimmerman to produce it. Zimmerman is a former Manager of Animal Welfare for the Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services. Both groups believe that the “animal protection system has deficiencies that need to be addressed” and he has contacted the livestock organizations in Ontario with a list of questions that he would like the groups to answer.

Direction was given that OSMA will not be responding as an individual commodity, but would work on a response with OFA and Farm & Food Care.

Presentation on Food Fraud

Cory Van Groningen joined the board to discuss the issue of **Food Fraud**, something that he is very passionate about. Cory has fingerprinted his family’s beef herd using Oritain. Oritain can prove the true origin of food products using scientific traceability. They use nuclear science to measure naturally occurring properties that exist in food (isotopes and trace elements) and build a database profile of the genuine product. Product samples can then be taken from the market and tested against the database to determine if product is true to its claimed origin. The method can verify products to the country, region or farm of origin. Of course the more samples they test, the higher the accuracy. The unique difference of Oritain versus other traceability methods is they use science and test the actual product - they do not use packaging or codes which are susceptible to counterfeit.

Next meeting date

The next board meeting is February 8 and 9, 2017.

2016 resolution responses

Resolutions were presented and adopted at this year’s annual general meeting. The board of directors recently reviewed these resolutions and have provided the responses to each below.

District 5 Resolution 1

Whereas:

OSMA’s success relies on a strong and vibrant board, producers need to ensure that our board has the proper tools and compensation to operate at its finest. We feel it is good business to complete proactive reviews of our business.

Therefore be it resolved that:

District 5 would like OSMA’s board and executive to complete a full review of our current board policy and governance. As well as investigate any changes that could add value to our current board structure.

While the board may conclude, no need for any changes, we would ask for specific review into the following:

- Director per diems and compensation;
- Board size and consideration of directors at large;
- Director duties and expectations;
- Termination process of directors who fail to complete their duties;

- Succession planning for the board;
- A plan and timeline to complete future board reviews.

Response

OSMA will undergo a not-for-profit health check assessment to be conducted by RLB. The assessment is designed to indicate whether or not an organization is well structured and member focused. The indicators that it would examine include: board governance; financial management; vision, mission and strategic plan; internal controls; human resources; succession planning; tax compliance; information technology and; management control.

District 5 Resolution 2

Whereas:

Ontario sheep producers are seeing the effects of interprovincial and international trade. It is important for Ontario sheep producers to be informed and have our voices heard outside of our province.

Therefore be it resolved that:

That District 5 would like OSMA to focus on and continue to build relationships with other Canadian and global sheep organizations. As well as develop a plan for this board and future OSMA boards to ensure that Ontario producers are informed and have a strong voice when national level matters arise.

Response

The OSMA board is also concerned about ensuring that Ontario producers have a strong voice, and are committed to building stronger relationships, which is why we were present at the *Federation des producteurs d'agneaux et moutons du Quebec's* annual general meeting this fall, and why we will be sending representatives to the American Sheep Industry's Convention in January.

District 7 Resolution 1

Whereas:

The U.S. border has been closed for a number of years to Canadian breeding stock.

And

This has had a detrimental effect to the profitability of producers selling said breeding stock.

Therefore be it resolved that:

The producers of District 7 ask OSMA to work with both Canadian and American governments to open the border to Canadian breeding stock.

Response

On January 18, 2016, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) released their proposed rule for the *Importation of Sheep, Goats and Certain Other Ruminants*. Comments on the proposed rule were due on September 16, 2016. The USDA is currently reviewing the comments and the duration of that review depends on the number and complexity of comments received.

District 7 Resolution 2

Whereas:

The genome for sheep is being exploited in terms of marker genes worldwide.

And

There has been minimal work done in this area in Ontario and attempts to include research and widespread use of existing facilities and technologies has not been fruitful.

And

The breeding stock committee established by OSMA (in the past) has failed to be effective in getting this technology acknowledged as critical for the advancement of the sheep industry in Ontario.

And

All other sectors of livestock production are utilizing this type of knowledge to their advantage.

And

Ontario sheep producers are currently relying on offshore testing to determine economically valuable marker genes.

And

There are at least two Ontario universities with appropriate resources, technology and personnel willing to become involved in this area of research.

And

There exists evidence that marker genes can be effective in terms of improving flock health, productivity, carcass quality, financial returns and consumer satisfaction.

And

The sustainability of sheep production will be influenced by “off shore” product that could well negatively impact the consumption of Ontario lamb.

Therefore be it resolved that:

OSMA institute a policy that gives very high priority to exploiting the genome for sheep and ensure that the commitment to the project be significant and ongoing.

Response

Recently OSMA has provided research dollars to Dr. Angela Cavanos at the University of Guelph, whose area of focus is genomics. Additionally, OSMA will be investigating the cost and availability of genomics testing kits in Ontario.

District 10 Resolution 1

Whereas:

OSMA offers producer programs (e.g., Maedi Visna Program, Ontario Flock Health Program, GenOvis genetic performance evaluation) that benefit the whole sheep industry.

And

These programs have been in existence for 10+ years with little or no producer input or review of program protocols.

And

Producer input to review and improve these programs would be beneficial.

Therefore be it resolved that:

OSMA develop a programs working group made up of experienced producers familiar with the MV program and/or the Ontario Flock Health program to discuss and provide input on program changes with the goal of improving flock participation levels and awareness in these programs as well as contributing to improvements to the health of all Ontario sheep flocks.

Response

Prior to the AGM, the OSMA board had developed terms of reference for a programs committee that will be responsible for review all programs that are available to Ontario sheep producers - not just the Maedi Visna and Sheep Flock Health Programs. The committee is currently being populated, and staff have been instructed to contact producers that the board has identified as potential candidates for being members at large.

Changes to FCC's Young Farmer Loan Program

Farm Credit Canada is increasing its support for young farmers, doubling the amount of credit available under the **FCC Young Farmer Loan**.

"A big focus of FCC's mandate is to provide innovative financing products and knowledge to assist the next generation of Canadian farmers," said Michael Hoffort, FCC president and CEO. "Changes to the Young Farmer Loan recognize the rising cost for young farmers to become established in the industry."

In addition to doubling the credit limit to \$1 million from \$500,000, FCC has lowered the possible minimum down payment required for a Young Farmer Loan to 20 per cent from 25 per cent of the value of the loan, which supports the purchase or improvement of farmland and buildings. This potentially makes more working capital available to qualified producers, under age 40, as they look to enter the industry or grow their business.

FCC will continue to offer a variable lending rate at prime plus 0.5 per cent, as well as offer a special fixed rate if producers choose that avenue of repayment. No loan processing fees are charged on the Young Farmer Loan, which was introduced in 2012.

[Click here for more](#)


In a statement released by Ontario Sheep November 30, it was implied that the sheep involved in the Montana Jones scrapie investigation had tested positive for the disease when in fact they had not tested positive. Ontario Sheep regrets the implication and apologizes for insinuating this.

Survey: Ontario hay prices

Thomas Ferguson, OMAFRA's Forage and Grazier specialist, is looking to increase the reliability of Ontario hay prices. Monthly, he will be conducting a survey on prices for the following:

	Small squares (approx 50 lbs)	Large bale (approx 700 lbs)
Horse hay		
Alfalfa-grass utility grade		
High quality alfalfa		
Straw		

You can participate in the survey by contacting Thomas directly at thomas.ferguson@ontario.ca or by calling (705) 324-5855.



Nutrient Application: *Timing Matters*


Phosphorus in manure and other nutrients can be lost to runoff when applied at the wrong time:


- on frozen and snow covered ground
- before it rains
- when soil is saturated

Applying at the wrong time can lead to reduced water quality and algal blooms in our streams, rivers and lakes. Instead, apply when crops and soil are able to use the nutrients. The right timing can increase your profits while minimizing harmful environmental impacts. **It's the right thing to do.**


ontario.ca/nutrientuse

Developed in co-operation with Chicken Farmers of Ontario, Ontario Pork, Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Beef Farmers of Ontario and the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency.





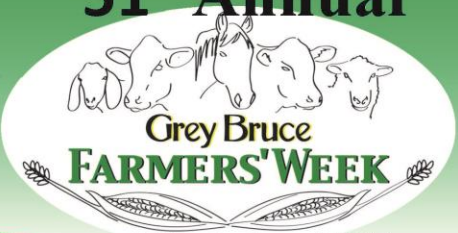
Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs



Grey Bruce Farmers Week Sheep Day – Saturday, January 7, 2017

51st Annual

Elmwood Community Centre
#38 Queen St. W



Grey Bruce FARMERS' WEEK

Sat. Jan. 7 2017
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.


and Tradeshow 2017

Sheep Day


Elmwood is located 8 kilometres north of Hanover






Adults \$25 (Includes a hot dinner of roast lamb and beef)

Dinner Sponsored by:



Breaks Sponsored by:
Elanco & WOLPA

 Premier Event Sponsors:

Grazing Cover Crops,
Thomas Ferguson, Forage and Grazier Specialist, OMAFRA

How to Select a Ram to Succeed!,
Johanne Cameron, agr. M.Sc., Sheep Specialist Advisor, Manager of Research Projects, Centre d'Expertise en Production Ovine du Québec (CEPOQ) & Co-Owner of Les Bergerie Marovine (MH) senc.

Total Mixed Rations for Sheep.
Dr. Alan Vaage, Ruminant Nutritionist, Jaylor

District 2 Committee Introduction and Activities,
Barb Zettler, Chair, OSMA District 2

Addressing the Challenges of Anthelmintic Resistance In Your Flock.
Dr. David Lamb, Technical Consultant, Elanco Animal Health

Panel: Livestock Marketing Partners,
Steve Hutchison and Chris Ferraro, Brussels Livestock;
David Ropp, Ontario Livestock Exchange;
Howard Greig, Keady Livestock Market.
Facilitated by Jason Emke

A Big Thank You is Also Extended to the Following Sheep Day, and Speaker Sponsors

Follow us on Twitter and Facebook @GBFarmersWeek #GBFW17

For more information on Sheep Day call 519-986-3756, email info@greyagservices.ca or go to www.greyagservices.ca

Ontario farmers take full advantage of funding for helping species at risk

From a press release issued December 7.

The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association is pleased to announce that the funding available through the 2016 Species at Risk Farm Incentive Program (SARFIP) has been fully allocated to Ontario farmers. With over 100 on-farm projects in 27 counties across the province that support valuable farm habitat for species at risk (SAR), this year's SARFIP has benefitted more farmers and SAR than ever before!

"We're thrilled by the commitment that Ontario farmers are making to support species at risk on their farms," said Christine Schmalz, Environmental Programs Manager at OSCIA. "the overwhelming response this year is very encouraging and showcases the strong stewardship farmers feel for helping species at risk."

Of the over 100 projects funded, SARFIP supported projects from nearly all commodity groups in the province. Collectively, SARFIP projects this year will: manage invasive plant species on approximately 60 acres of farmland; restore over 20 acres of wetlands; install 16,000 meters of permanent fencing to exclude livestock from environmentally sensitive areas, like forests and streams; and plant over 32,000 trees across Ontario.

"A big thank you goes out to all of the farmers completing SARFIP projects this year," expressed Andrew Graham, Executive Director of OSCIA. "the actions they're taking are contributing significantly to the health of the environment and the critical habitat that's on farms across Ontario."

Applications are no longer being accepted for the 2016 Species at Risk Farm Incentive Program, but producers are encouraged to check back for new SARFIP opportunities in the spring of 2017.

The Species at Risk Farm Incentive Program is funded by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry through the Species at Risk Stewardship Fund and the Government of Canada through the Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk.

Organic Council of Ontario survey

The Organic Council of Ontario (OCO) needs your input!

Ontario boasts over \$1 billion in sales of organic foods and yet only 2% of all agriculture in the province is organic. Why is the organic sector in Ontario growing so slowly in relation to demand? How can government and the industry help Ontario businesses capture this growth opportunity?

Help guide the future of organics in Ontario. Take the survey by January 28, 2017.

Non-organic producers

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/nonorganicproducers>

Non-organic operators

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/nonorganicoperators>

Upcoming International Sheep Veterinary Congress May 2017

The 9th International Sheep Veterinary Congress is being held in 2017 - May 22-26th in Harrogate, Yorkshire England (James Herriot's part of the world).

For more information visit <http://www.sheepvetsoc.org.uk/isvc2017>.

Tax credit for farmers who donate food

Established in 2014, the Food Donation Tax Credit for Farmers gives farmers a tax credit valued at 25 per cent of the fair market value of the agricultural products they donate. Community food programs, like the student nutrition program, also benefit by receiving more fresh local food for distribution to Ontario families.

This credit helps to ensure that more locally grown food ends up on people's plates, and that includes the people who need it most in our communities.

For more information visit <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/credit/cfpdct/index.html>.

Looking for hay or forages? Check out the hay listing service

The Ontario Hay Listing Service, created by the Ontario Forage Council, provides livestock farmers with information on forage availability. The interactive tool provides an easy and effective process by bringing together hay producers and buyers. The service is offered free of charge.

For more information visit www.ontariohaylistings.ca.

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.

January 7	Sheep Day Grey Bruce Farmers Week http://bit.ly/2gBrcBq
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Other organizations and reference information

Victoria County Sheep Producers

Third Wednesday every month starting at 7:30 Oakwood Elevators (Taylor Road, Oakwood)
Membership is \$20 per farm per year. Contact: Peter Craig at pdcraig@outlook.com

Western Ontario Lamb Producers

District 2 and 3, for more information email westernontariolambproducers@gmail.com

Southwestern Ontario Sheep Farmers

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

DISTRICT	CONTACT	INFORMATION
1	Dave DeKay at 519-666-0626 or dmdekay@isp.ca	http://osma_district_1.tripod.com/
2	Matt Zehr at 519-363-2029 zehr.matt@gmail.com	
3	Sandi Brock at 519-263-2325 brocksandi@hotmail.com	District 3 Facebook Page
4	Marusha Kostuk at 519-865-6874 or mushie.mk@gmail.com	Meetings tentatively to be held the 3 rd Wed. of the month at 7:30 at Ancaster Fairgrounds (630 Trinity Rd, Ancaster)
5	Lisa de Kleer at 519-994-1499 or ldlekleer@gmail.com	Check out the District 5 Facebook Page!
6	John Hemsted at 705-487-2466 or sheep@vanam.com	
7	Jenny Carnaghan at 905-986-5120 or jenny@durhamlamb.ca	
8	Linda Huizenga at 613-477-2314 or fhuzenga@xplornet.ca	Meetings are normally held on the 3 rd Thurs of every month at 7 pm at Napanee High School. District 8 Facebook Page
9	Lyndsey Smith at 204-807-5897 or realloudlyndsey@gmail.com	
10	Christine Power at 613-686-1892 or christine.power@ic.gc.ca	Check out our Facebook page!
11	Amy Oriet at 705-563-8484 or gaoriet@hotmail.com	