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Breaking Ground
(in Northeastern Ontario)

FALL 11

A Publication of the North Eastern Ontario Soil & Crop Improvement Association (NEOSCIA)

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Grant Reliable Elevators Host Canola Council Tour

President Peter Grant and Operations Manager Andrew Grant opened their new custom drying and storage facility in a grand manner by hosting the annual Ontario Canola Council summer tour in July. The newest infrastructure component in Temiskaming is located on Uno Park Road (just off Hwy #11) a few kilometers north of New Liskeard. The Grants topped off the day by also hosting the local Temiskaming SCIA summer tour in the evening. Two banquets were sponsored in the gigantic garage and workshop facility that day, one for each visiting organization.

The Grants will fill their 500,000 bushel facility with core products from their own 6000 acre operation, and purchase additional grains and oilseeds from other local farmers. They believe that in today's challenging global market, a seller with a huge tonnage of grain to market will receive a premium over a smaller traditional operator. It also offers the long term possibility of associating secondary facilities (such as a canola crushing plant) as an adjunct to the main operation.

One element of the facility that pleased the farmers attending the event was the siting of the facility. Instead of building the massive structure on the flat, highly productive farmland, the Grants blasted out and leveled a non-productive limestone ridge located at the edge of the fields. This respect for both the environment and

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NOTE: ***Sponsors/Advertisers needed for coming year. $500 for 4 issues!***

This newsletter is published 4 times per year. Articles can be submitted in either English or French and should be submitted to the Communication Coordinator *(see below)*. Please supply translation, if available.

Material in this newsletter is based upon factual information believed to be accurate. Action taken as a result of this information is solely the responsibility of the user. We reserve the right to edit articles.

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Grant Reliable Elevators Host Canola Council Tour

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the sanctity of rich agricultural soils will be appreciated for generations.

The Canola Council summer tour has become a major attraction, with attendees from across the Province. A huge contingent from the South were very impressed with production in the North this year, as many had been decimated by drought conditions that had covered their farms this year. They spent a sunny morning touring the Grant canola fields, listening to company reps, then held an indoor slide show event in the cool of the garage facility in the afternoon, followed by attending the TSCIA evening bus tour that closed off the day.

Ben Schapelhouman of Grant Farms led off the mornings talks by sharing his on-site experience with the assembled guests in mid-field. He noted that the area soils have a natural shortage of sulphur that has to be improved upon for ideal crop production. They have been using granular sources of sulphur in the past, but are now moving to liquid formulations. They are also trying "biosolid" pelletized products from the City of Toronto, but these are limited by the unpredictability of their slow release organic content. Equipment has been upgraded with the purchase of a massive new tractor (on treads to reduce soil compaction) and a Morris contour drill. All fields will use the "tram line" spraying concept to maximize chemical efficiency.

Bayer Crop Science rep Marieke Patton spoke about the work and time involved to test their extensive replicated trials around the Province. She also informed the growers that all "Invigor" lines for "Liberty Link" products will in the future be identified with the letter "L" (such as L159). The Brett Young company from Manitoba was represented by the staff of Labonte Seed (New Liskeard). A highlight of their chemical line-up is a product called "Jump-Start" that encourages early emergence. Local Co-Op rep Terry Phillips noted that the crop value was high this year. He commented that canola growers should be considering boron as a stress relief for farms where hot weather was common, as boron could reduce flower abortion. Janet Porchak of UAP spoke to the Sclerotinia issue and the fungicides that could combat the problem. UAP carries "Serenade", that has the same timing as "Proline". It is from a different group of fungicides, making a rotation of chemicals possible.

A new canola harvest management system is being tried. Instead of swathing, they are 'pushing' canola. This is the intentional lodging of the crop. It turns the ripening crop into a thick mat about a foot off the ground. The result is a reduction in pod shatter during the combine harvest. An alternative to reduce pod shatter is to apply "Podseal".

COMING EVENTS

RAIN Agriculture and Agri-Food Symposium

The Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre and NORDIK Institute are hosting an Agriculture and Agri-Food Symposium on November 4th and 5th at Algoma University in Sault Ste. Marie. The symposium aims to create opportunities for collaboration between farmers in Northern Ontario and researchers in the agricultural sector. The symposium will feature presentations and panel discussions for local farmers and researchers alike. Topics include:

- Policies and Programs to Grow Agricultural Capacity in the North
- Sustaining Soil and Crop Productivity
- Crop Trials in Northern Ontario
- Specialty Foods and Value-Added Products
- Livestock Production in Northern Ontario
- Healthy Food for Sustainable Communities

Challenges and Opportunities

Speakers for the two day symposium include Keynote Speaker Ron Bonnett (President of Canadian Federation of Agriculture) who will talk about the future of agriculture in Northern Ontario from local and international perspectives. Other speakers include Dr. Pedro Antunes (Algoma University), Dr. Tarlok Sahota (Thunder Bay Research Station), Dr. Connie Nelson (Food Security Research Network), and Ira Mandell (U of Guelph) and others. For a full agenda of the event, visit *rainsymposium.evenbrite.com* This event is sponsored by the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, the Community Development Corporation of Sault Ste Marie and the University of Guelph

Registration is $50 and includes meals.

Errol Caldwell
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THE SOLAR FUTURE

Editorial by Graham Gambles, NEOSCIA
Regional Communication Co-ordinator

Across the North, there have been many solar energy production units set up on traditional farms. They usually consist of one or two units, situated on concrete bases and located near the farm buildings. Sometimes they can be seen on the roof of a strongly supported barn or machinery shed. They co-exist with and enhance the viability of the family farm. The structures are a product of the Provincial MICROFIT energy production opportunity that (most) landowners are allowed to join.

However, there is a new solar energy production program that is about to make an appearance in the North. These large scale energy production facilities are part of the "FIT" (Feed-in-Tariff) Provincial program. Individually, these units are no larger than those that individual farmers are erecting under the Micro-Fit program, but they are constructed in large herds that will dominate the landscape, depending on the angle that they are viewed!

This feature has been proposed for three farms on the western outskirts of Temiskaming Shores. Each will produce a total of 10MW energy. Operated by Canadian Solar Solutions Inc., the site is proposed to be developed in the next two years. One farm will be on abandoned land adjacent to a former garbage dump, but the next two will be on class three and four farmland currently used for livestock (beef) production. (Note that government legislation prevents these facilities from being built on class 1 and 2 land.)

On the face of it, this appears to be a good opportunity for all. The original land owners have received excellent payment for their property. A number of jobs will be created during construction, although only part time property management jobs will be available over the 20 year life of the project. The sites will be cleaned up and restored to agricultural purposes at the end of the production period (unless a new generation contract is put in place). The properties will be fenced off to protect the public from straying into an electrical generation area. The municipality will receive taxes. The solar company will make money on their investment.

There are only two potential shortcomings that can be seen at this point. First is weed management. Uncontrolled weed seed production could have a negative effect on nearby farms. Control of this problem can be achieved by chemical, mechanical, or grazing solutions. It is up to the farm community to insist that the new neighbours have an acceptable means of control.

The second limitation is the loss of the agricultural land base to non-agricultural competing interests. True, it is no different than the pressure on farmland evident in encroaching suburbs and industrial parks, but it is an economic loss to the AGRICULTURAL community all the same. Note that the area taken up by the generating units is much less than the entire area of the current farms. What happens to those pasture and cropland areas that will be held in reserve?

Consideration by the proponent - and municipal authorities - should be given to the proper economic management of all parts of the energy farm. Yes, by all means develop the site for energy production, but build a viable agricultural management option into the overall site management scheme. Elsewhere in the world, the grazing of sheep around the generating units is the standard for weed control. Reserve lands beyond the solar cells can be used for beef production. Hay and other crops can continue to be harvested on a well managed site. What is required is the development of an agreement between the solar proponents and a farm (co-op?) association. Alternatively, the hiring of a solar farm manager with agricultural experience and the authority to develop a thriving farm in conjunction with the solar production priorities would be a viable option.

But it only a few hundred acres you say? Right now it is, however many more solar farms in Temiskaming and across the North are proposed. All in flat, cleared, agricultural areas. What will the effect be on the farm industry within a decade? It is right now that this issue must be decided so that both agricultural and solar producers can live side by side in harmony, to the benefit of each other.

Nipissing University Agricultural Research Project Receives Provincial Approval

by Dan Walters, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Geography, Nipissing University

While collaboration between farmers in north eastern Ontario and faculty at Nipissing University began nearly three years ago, we can now announce the official beginning of the research project in web-based visualization and decision support for agriculture. In July we received notice from FedNor that financial support was not forthcoming. We were obviously very disappointed with their decision. However, despite this setback, NOHFC were willing to increase their percent coverage of eligible expenses. With this decision, we can continue to employ undergraduate and graduate students to assist with field work and software development. Three graduate students will begin this fall at Nipissing University's new Master's of Environmental Studies (MES) and Master's of Environmental Science (MESc) program.

We had an opportunity to give a brief update at the Temiskaming Crops Coalition Crop Tour, hosted by Grant Farms, and the Verner Crops Tour. Recent project developments include an additional weather station in Belle Valley, new imagery, and major improvements to the software. To access the weather data please go to the following website: http://www.nipissingu.ca/weather. We hope to install an additional weather station in Charlton this fall.

Over the winter, we will be asking you for your input on data accessibility, software design, and data visualization. We want to know how to improve access and availability of relevant information. Also, we need to identify locations in Verner and Temiskaming Shores to install a network of soil moisture probes. We appreciate all the comments and suggestions given thus far. Please continue to share with us how you are using the information on the website. We want to thank Stephen Roberge and Norm Koch Farms for their support continuing of research projects this year. In the interim, if you should have any comments or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Mark Wachowiak (705-474-3450 ext. 4115; markw@nipissingu.ca) or Dr. John Kovacs (705-474-3450 ext.4336; johnmk@nipissingu.ca).

TCC Annual Meeting

The Temiskaming Crop Coalition (of which Temiskaming Soil and Crop Improvement Association is a partner) has decided to delay their normal November annual meeting for a couple of months. It is proposed that it will run on January 12, 2012, at the Kerns Hall. The reason for the change is to accommodate a request from the northern district of the Ontario Grain Growers to hold the meetings of the two organizations together.The members of the groups are interlinked, and this is one way that we can reduce the number of meetings that many volunteers are required to attend. The specifics will run in the Christmas edition of Breaking Ground.

Save Your Seed!

As harvest is nearing an end, now is the time to save samples of your best canola, wheat, barley, and any other crop that you have grown. WHY? Each spring, many of our local districts feature a "forage and seed show". Right now, you know where your best material is being kept. Before it moves off the farm, collect a few litres of your best and stash them away for future displays and competition. It is also worthwhile to hang onto a sample or two for the long term as a ready comparison to different varieties that may be planted sometime in the future.

Likewise, identify and save that special sample of forage that you would like to brag about next spring. It would be in a whole different competition if it has already been fed to the livestock before the main event!

TCC (TSCIA) Bus Tour

by Graham Gambles, NEOSCIA Regional Communication Co-ordinator

The Temiskaming Crop Coalition held its annual summer crop tour on the evening of July 21, following a wonderful BBQ hosted by Grant Farms at their new drying and storage facility.

Earlier in the day, many TCC members were part of the annual Canola Crop Tour. That event also featured a "combine clinic" presented by Les Hill of the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute, with the assistance of Jihn Deere & CASE Tec Engineers. Topics discussed started with the basic combine functions, and then proceeded to the crucial topic of understanding "Combine Loss". Farmers need to understand what their loss is telling them about the combine performance, based on where the loss is coming from and how to quantify the loss. As Hill said, "Unless you get out and measure loss on the ground, you have no idea what the monitor is telling you!" He then proceeded to step by step combine adjustments to determine what to look for and where to make the changes.

The bus tour first viewed the Grant Farms wheat plot variety trial, which was followed by an evaluation of Don and Laurie McLean's Barley crop and Prescott Oat field. The near-by NEOSCIA Bedstraw control plots that features the use of the chemical "Milestone" was visited.

Dave Schill and Wayne Brubacher invited the participants into their Corn plot variety trial just prior to Terry Phillips discussion of his Soybean crop. Terry also spoke on his twin solar collection panels that are located beside his house. As twilight descended, the tour walked along Dave Schill's Spring Wheat Variety Trial where the replicated tests provided a great visual evaluation of the differences between the varieties. (We can hardly wait for the production results!) The evening was capped off with a return to the Grant elevator, where the remaining treats and pops were dealt with.



CROP TALK

OMAFRA Field Crop Specialists – Your Crop Info Source

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs, Crop Technology Branch

Agricultural Information Contact Centre: 1-877-424-1300
Publication Order Centre: 1-888-466-2372
Northern Ontario Regional Office: 1-800-461-6132
OMAFRA Web Site: www.omafra.gov.on.ca

Additional Information from OMAFRA

Cropline 1-888-449-0937

En françcais!

L'inforation du Ministère de l'agriculture it di lalimentation de l'Ontario est disponible sur le site web du MAAARO en françcais au www.omafra.gov.on.ca

Brought to You by the Following OMAFRA Crop Specialists

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Hugh Martin, Organic Crop Production Program Lead
Horst Bohner, Soybean Specialist
Ian McDonald, Applied Research Coordinator
Albert Tenuta, Field Crop Pathologist
Jack Kyle, Grazier Specialist
Brian Hall, Canola & Edible Beans Specialist
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Do Soybean Inoculants Always Provide More Yield?

by Horst Bohner, Soybean Specialist, OMAFRA

There has been a marked increase over the last 5 years in the use of soybean inoculants on fields with a history of soybean production. The majority of fields now receive an inoculant every year. There are a number of reasons for this widespread adoption. Expectations of a yield increase, along with higher commodity prices, are certainly two good reasons. Another reason is the convenience of "pre-inoculants". These products can be ordered ahead of time and come already applied to the seed, eliminating the issue of application on the farm.

Inoculant Research Plots

Large scale replicated farm trials and small plot trials that we have conducted every year since 2004 have shown an average yield increase every year from inoculant use. The overall average has been 1.25 bushels per acre (bu/ac), with responses as high as 6 bu/ac. A good return on investment can be expected based on these results because the product cost is relatively low. However, not every field or every producer will see a benefit. Being able to predict when a response is more likely could be helpful in making management decisions.

Ammonium Soil Test

Predicting the likelihood of a response has proven to be difficult because of the complexity of soil biology. One thing that is believed to impact nitrogen fixation is the amount of nitrogen readily available in the soil. If soil nitrogen levels are high, N fixation will be reduced. To determine what could be used as a predictor of yield response to inoculants, we conducted some experiments testing for soil nitrate, soil ammonium, and other factors. None of the factors we looked at, including soil pH, organic matter, and soil nitrate levels, corresponded well to the yield response associated with an inoculant. However, the one thing that did show some promise was an ammonium soil test. Ammonium levels did show a reasonably strong correlation to the level of yield response. (Figure #1)

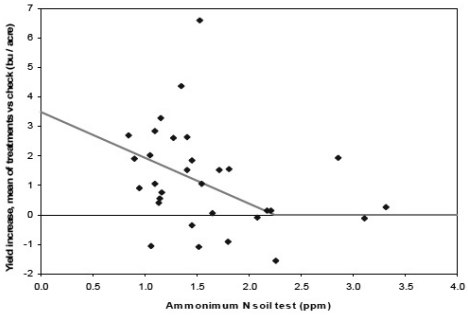

Figure #1. Soybean Yield Response Versus Soil Ammonium-N Soil Test in 38 Ontario trials from 2007-2009

Figure #1 shows the "best fit plateau regression" of the yield response to inoculation on soil ammonium-N. What this suggests is that there is no yield response to inoculation above a soil ammonium-N test of 2.25 ppm. Below 2.25 ppm, the predicted benefit is 1.55 bu / acre per 1 ppm drop in soil ammonium-N. Although the results are statistically significant, as is evident from the graph, the response is not a perfect fit. A soil test for ammonium may provide some indication of the likelihood of response, but it is not a sure thing. This is probably because there are numerous other factors which will dictate the level of soil.

How Does Tillage Affect Glyphosate Performance?

by Mike Cowbrough, Weed Management Field Management Program Lead, OMAFRA

In wheat stubble fields to be planted with corn, there was an unacceptable level of volunteer wheat plants that had emerged after the late September glyphosate application. Volunteer wheat is worth controlling since a modest density of 20,000 plants/ac, when left uncontrolled has resulted in corn yield losses of 5% in Ontario*. It's best to control volunteer wheat prior to planting corn, especially if you are planting non-glyphosate tolerant hybrids. The following questions were asked this spring concerning management of volunteer wheat:

1. Will tillage control volunteer wheat?

Answer: No, not with secondary tillage tools (e.g. disc, cultivator). Yes if using a moldboard plough. For the majority of producers, the type of tillage they use prior to planting corn will only kill about 50% of the wheat stand.

2. I want to work the ground first and then spray glyphosate after to control any plants that escaped tillage, how long should I wait to apply glyphosate?

Answer: Ideally a week, or until you can see visible signs of growth on the plants that have escaped the tillage pass. The photo below shows volunteer wheat control 10 days after glyphosate was sprayed one day after the tillage pass. The control is not acceptable. During this demonstration, it appeared that when tillage did not kill the plant, it would injure it enough to significantly reduce the uptake and movement of glyphosate within the plant. When we followed up with another pass of glyphosate 10 days after tillage, control was excellent because the injured plants had started to actively grow again.

Control of volunteer wheat 10 days after glyphosate was applied 1 day after tilage.

3. If I spray glyphosate first, how long should I wait to work the ground?

Answer: For small annual plants, all glyphosate labels specify to wait 1 day between application and tillage. As annual plants get bigger, it would be prudent to increase that time to 3 days. The photo below shows the control of volunteer wheat 10 days after glyphosate had been applied 3 days prior to tillage.

Control of volunteer wheat 10 days following a 3 day pre-till glyphosate application

4. How long must you wait to till a field after applying glyphosate for other weed species?

Answer: It depends on the targeted plant and its stage of growth. Most glyphosate labels state 7 days for the majority of perennial weeds (using the "when in doubt" strategy I assume) otherwise there are weed and stage specific guidelines:

- 1 day or more: annual weeds
- 3 or more days: dandelion (small), quackgrass (twitch grass)
- 5 or more days: Canada thistle (bud stage), alfalfa,
- 7 or more days: dandelion (large), Field bindweed, milkweed, toadflax,
- 10 or more days: Canada thistle (rosette stage)

Source: Wilson et al., 2010. Volunteer wheat (Triticum aestivum L.) competition in corn (Zea mays L.). Can. J. Plant Sci. 90:919-924.

Scout Corn Ears for Western Bean Cutworm Damage

by Tracey Baute, Field Crop Entomologist & Greg Stewart, Corn Specialist, OMAFRA

This has been quite a year for western bean cutworm (WBC) activity in Ontario. Over 120,000 moths have been captured in our traps so far this season. Moths started to emerge and fly right on schedule, despite the delay in planting, putting much of our corn acreage at a higher risk of egg deposition. Moths prefer to lay their eggs in fields that are in the pre-tassel to full-tassel stages. Unfortunately most counties had some fields within those stages for longer periods than normal.

Figure 1. Full grown western bean cutworm larva. (T. Baute, OMAFRA)

An increased risk of egg laying also means an increased risk of ear damage and ear rot this fall. Some fields may be at risk of extended WBC feeding this fall, particularly those that are late planted or where egg laying occurred over a wider window. More mature corn and warm temperatures can contribute to quicker

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A Tough Spring on Soils - Now What?

by Adam Hayes, Soil Management Specialist – Field Crops, OMAFRA

The spring of 2011 was a lot different than the springs we have experienced for a number of years. The cool, wet weather in many areas made it difficult to get crops planted on time. As the calendar moved forward the pressure to get on the field increased, resulting in fieldwork being completed in less than ideal conditions. A number of issues arose and many still remain. The biggest was the amount of rain. This caused significant soil erosion in many areas, especially on steep slopes and where there was little cover on the soil. Significant rainfall also resulted in ponding in parts of fields for long periods of time. These soils became compacted and sealed off leaving the area wet for most of the season. Saturated soils impeded the exchange of oxygen and slowed root growth in the soil. Soils with poor drainage experienced denitrification. In soils with good drainage, nitrogen moved down through the soil profile. The push to get the crop planted resulted in soil compaction, especially in or near areas that were slower to dry out. Growers who were on the fields before they were fit soon saw the negative impact on the crop. Those who waited generally were glad they did.

So what can be done to address these issues?

Areas Where Water Ponded

* When the area is dry enough, run over the area with something to break the crust such as a coulter cart, rotary hoe, cultivator or a small disk.
* Once the crust is broken, plant a deep-rooted cover crop that will send roots down and help to create pores for water movement and crop growth. You could also consider planting a cereal crop with the deep-rooted cover crop to help create some soil structure in the topsoil. A winter cereal, such as wheat or rye, left to grow until spring can help to draw moisture out of the soil, especially if it is not killed off until close to planting.
* Unless you have been missing the recent rains, the area will not be dry enough to do any deeper tillage to open it up. The best bet may be to put the field into winter wheat as soon as possible and hope that it is dry enough after harvest to till with a chisel plow or deeptillage implement. Once that is done, plant a cover crop to help keep the soil open.
* Finally, if this area has been a problem for some time it may be worth considering improving the drainage in that area of the field. It can be accomplished by adding more tile to the area or by adding surface drainage.

Areas Where Soil Erosion Is Occurring

* Increase the amount of residue on the soil surface, consider planting a cover crop and/ or perform operations across the slope.
* Where more significant soil erosion is occurring, also consider erosion control measures or structures such as grassed waterways, diversion terraces, and water and sediment control basins to manage water flow over the field.

It is hard to plan for the spring we experienced this year. But creating a healthy soil environment provides the soil with a resiliency that can help buffer the effects of adverse weather. A good crop rotation that returns lots of organic matter to the soil and includes crops with fibrous root systems helps to build organic matter and soil structure. This will improve soil drainage, help the soil resist erosion and soil compaction, and improve water holding capacity for those dry years. Minimal- or no-tillage leaves much of the soil structure and the macropores intact. Manure or other organic matter additions are also beneficial. The bottom line is that a healthy soil will go a long way towards handling what Mother Nature throws at us.

Harvest Time in Temiskaming -2011

Scout Corn Ears for Western Bean Cutworm Damage

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termination of WBC feeding.

There were a few infestation "hot spots" this year, including Bothwell to Strathroy and south of Tillsonburg. These fields experienced infestations as high as 30 to 80% of the plants having egg masses on them. Fields that were not sprayed in these areas are now seeing significant ear damage. Even fields planted to Herculex or SmartStax Bt corn that contain Cry1F are seeing greater amounts of damage than growers were expecting. These Bt hybrids provide only approximately 70 to 80% control, so under heavier pressure, the damage can be significant.

All corn producers need to get out this fall and assess what kind of damage they have experienced. Scouting will identify areas at risk of higher overwintering populations and therefore infestations occurring again next year. Scouting will also help in the decisions to harvest the crop earlier, or to segregate grain from those fields to reduce risk of ear rot and vomitoxins.

What Does WBC Damage Look Like?

Western bean cutworm larvae either enter the ear from the silk channels or enter through a hole they drill along the side of the cob. Once inside they can feed on quite a few kernels and expose the ear to ear rot organisms. There is also always evidence of frass at the ear tip or at the entry hole where the feeding has occurred. Once the husk is peeled back, the guilty larva is revealed.

Figure 2. Typical western bean cutworm ear damage. (T. Baute, OMAFRA)

Scout random areas of the field. Look at 10 consecutive ears in a row. Peel back the husk and determine if larvae are present and make note of how extensive the feeding damage is. Birds diving into fields is also a good indication that WBC is present and unfortunately they will also contribute to the ear damage.

Once the larvae reach the 6th and last instar, they drop to the soil and tunnel down deep to overwinter there. If larvae are nowhere to be found in the field, it is a good indication that they have already started to get ready to overwinter.

Growers in the hotspot areas of Bothwell / Strathroy and south of Tillsonburg (particularly those concerned about ear rots and vomitoxins) should consider planting Agrisure Viptera Bt corn hybrids next year, because that Cry is the only one known to provide 99 to 100% control of WBC.

Planting early is a good strategy for all growers as it avoids having fields in the pre-tassel to full tassel stages when most of the WBC moths are flying around in mid to late July. When later planting is unavoidable, like in 2011, extra emphasis will need to be placed on hybrid selection, scouting, and control.

For more information on western bean cutworm, refer to the following websites and publications:

Baute Bug Blog:
http://bautebugblog.com/tag/western-bean-cutworm/

OMAFRA Publication 811, Agronomy Guide for Field Crops:
http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/ pub811/13corn.htm#wbcutworm

Ontario WBC Trap Network:
http://www.cornpest.ca/default/index.cfm/wbc-trap-network/

Set the Stage for BIG Wheat Yields!

By Peter Johnson, Provincial Cereal Specialist OUCH! 2011 had the lowest provincial wheat yield since 2005. Despite a great start, and lots of better management applied, the outcome was sorely disappointing. What do we do this fall to avoid this happening again in 2012?

1. Pick the right variety: There are lots of new options and even new types of wheat available. Check out what will do best on your farm at www.gocereals.ca.
2. DRAINAGE! Whether tile or surface drainage, nothing has a bigger impact on long term wheat yields than drainage. You pay for drainage whether you have it or not……
3. Set the combine: Good wheat crops start at the combine. If the trash is not being spread across the width of the cut, you can guarantee less than optimal wheat performance, and variable growth that will impact spring management. Chaff spreaders are a MUST!
4. Plant early: Every day delay in planting reduces yields by 1 bu/ac. Whether it means rushing soybean harvest or working all night, do everything you can to get the wheat planted immediately!
5. Don't bother with tillage: If the combine is doing a good job spreading the trash, there is no benefit to tillage. Use surface tillage only when necessary to dry soils out and speed planting.
6. Fall weed control: The best control of perennial weeds comes in the fall. Spray glyphosate either as a preharvest burndown, preplant, or postplant, but get it on!
7. Treated seed: with dwarf bunt rearing its head in 2011, the value of seed treatments was driven home yet again. No wheat seed should go in the ground untreated, and growers with dwarf bunt need to take extra precautions.
8. Seed the right rate: New data is showing more interaction between seeding date and seeding rate, especially when managing wheat for top yields. When you are early, target 17 seeds/ft, when seeding late drill 27 to 30. In the normal window, 22 seeds/ft is the target (1.5 million seeds/acre).
9. Set seeding depth accurately! 90% of problem calls in the spring can be related back to planting depth, and mostly the wheat is too shallow. Target 1 to 1.5 inch depth. Plant to moisture, and set the drill in the "tough spots".
10. Starter fertilizer: The benefits of seed placed starter in wheat are well documented. New research shows that 5 gal of liquid, or 40 pounds of dry, are a minimum application to get good in furrow distribution and crop response. If you don't have seed placed capability, broadcast fertilizer still helps. While not as good as seed placed, wheat responds to broadcast better than other crops. Plant WHEAT! Economics may currently favour corn, but the value of wheat in the rotation can not be overlooked. 10% higher corn and soybean yields, options for different weed control products and timings, the list is too long and extensive to include it all. While 2011 wheat yields were disappointing for many, 2012 is a whole new start. Follow the suggestions above, and let's get set up for a new RECORD wheat yield in 2012!!!!!!



BULLETIN GRANDES CULTURES

MAAARO – des spécialistes en grandes cultures

Info Culture
1-888-449-0937

En françcais!

L'inforation du Ministère de l'agriculture it di lalimentation de l'Ontario est disponible sur le site web du MAAARO en françcais au www.omafra.gov.on.ca

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Plus d'applications intelligentes visant l'agriculture dans les téléphones intelligents des agriculteurs – la base

Ian McDonald, coordonnateur de la recherche appliquée, MAAARO

La technologie continue de jouer un rôle croissant dans l'agriculture d'aujourd'hui. Nous entendons tous maintenant parler d'agriculture de précision, de guidage GPS RTK, d'application à doses variables, de fonctions de

contrôle par ordinateur de l'étable et d'autres technologies. L'une des plus récentes explorée à l'heure actuelle par les producteurs sur la ferme est le téléphone intelligent. J'ai voyagé de par la province pour présenter des séminaires sur les utilisations des téléphones intelligents en agriculture. Je suis surpris du niveau d'intérêt à ce sujet. Je suis encore plus surpris que des gens m'appellent et me disent qu'ils s'en sont acheté un et qu'ils souhaitent maintenant s'en servir plus « intelligemment ».

Un bureau dans la poche

Pourquoi les téléphones intelligents sont-ils si importants pour les fermiers? Vous êtes-vous déjà trouvé assis dans votre bureau très irrités du fait que vous devriez plutôt être ailleurs? Les téléphones intelligents permettent aux fermiers et aux entreprises agricoles d'effectuer la plupart des tâches « administratives » de leur entreprise tout en étant dehors en train de s'adonner à « des travaux agricoles ». Les agriculteurs n'ont plus besoin d'être à leur bureau pour effectuer la gestion des registres, la gestion financière, la commercialisation, la cueillette de données, le suivi des tâches, la surveillance des bâtiments ou des systèmes, le contrôle à distance de l'équipement et des systèmes, etc. Le téléphone intelligent est comme « votre bureau de poche ».

Même s'ils sont souvent perçus comme des outils pour spécialistes ou grands dirigeants, cette perception est en train de changer. Ces appareils impressionnants prolifèrent dans la vie quotidienne et dans tous les types d'entreprises. Qui d'autres que les fermiers et leurs conseillers passent moins de temps au bureau mais se doivent d'être toujours au fait des questions importantes pour lesquelles il faudrait qu'ils restent à leur bureau? Plus onéreux que le téléphone cellulaire, le téléphone intelligent procure des avantages financiers et d'affaires qui compensent rapidement les coûts supplémentaires. L'appareil intelligent que vous avez aujourd'hui à la hanche est doté de plus de puissance informatique que le lourd appareillage qui trône sur dans votre bureau et pour lequel vous avez payé le prix fort il y a quelques années. Les usages d'un téléphone intelligent sont presque illimités dans ce qu'il vous permet d'accomplir, même s'il ne pourra pas remplacer une clé universelle ou un marteau. Évidemment, il vous permet de communiquer comme tout autre téléphone. Vous pouvez aussi texter, envoyer un courriel, aller sur le Web, sauvegarder et emmagasiner des données, contrôler des dispositifs à distance et faire fonctionner de l'équipement, aussi vous en servir comme service de localisation GPS et prendre des photos ou tourner des films vidéos.

Quel type de téléphone intelligent dois-je acheter?

Votre décision est prise et vous voulez passer à une version améliorée et vous

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Plus d'applications intelligentes visant l'agriculture dans les téléphones intelligents des agriculteurs – la base

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en procurer un. La première question est en deux volets, « quel type d'appareil acheter? » et « quel fournisseur de service choisir? » À l'heure actuelle le choix est vaste et continue de s'agrandir. Cependant, voici les quatre principaux types qui sont en exploitation présentement : Maîtrise du blé spontané 10 jours après application de glyphosate, trois jours avant le travail du sol

1. les iphones d'Apple;
2. les blackberry;
3. les appareils Windows;
4. et les appareils Android.

Même si les arguments de vente affirment que l'un est plus avantageux que l'autre, ils font essentiellement les mêmes choses. Les caractéristiques du téléphone, la grandeur de l'écran, sa résolution, le clavier et les logiciels vont influer sur votre choix. Il vaut mieux pour vous de les essayer pour savoir ce que vous préférez. Discutez avec vos voisins et vos relations d'affaires pour savoir quel appareil

ils utilisent et pourquoi.

Comment choisir le fournisseur d'accès Internet (FAI)?

Quel FAI devriez-vous choisir? À nouveau tous les fournisseurs vous affirmeront qu'ils sont les meilleurs, et les nouveaux services et mises à jour de l'équipement évoluent constamment. Ce qui est primordial pour vous, c'est que les services de votre fournisseur fonctionnent bien dans votre emplacement géographique. De nouveau vous pouvez vous renseigner auprès d'utilisateurs de téléphones intelligents dans votre secteur pour vous assurer que le fournisseur que vous choisirez est celui qui vous convient. Autre élément à considérer, les options de regroupement avec d'autres services, comme le téléphone et l'Internet à domicile. Attention vous aussi aux politiques de remplacement et de mise à jour, la technologie change si vite. Il arrive que l'on échappe ces précieuses petites choses dans l'eau!

Logiciels

Les téléphones intelligents (et les téléphones cellulaires) n'ont pas été conçus spécifiquement pour les fermiers. Les logiciels qui répondent aux besoins des entreprises agricoles en sont encore à leurs balbutiements. Cela dit, les caractéristiques standard de ces appareils sont tout de même très utiles en agriculture. Des applications spécifiquement conçues pour l'agriculture arrivent de plus en plus sur le marché. C'est là que les agriculteurs et les entreprises agricoles pourront constater le vrai pouvoir de la technologie. La question la plus importante reste encore pour quelle « plateforme » (p. ex. blackberry, iphone, système d'exploitation Android) les applications seront développées. Les quatre principaux systèmes d'exploitation sont assez différents, de sorte qu'une application développée pour l'un doit être mise au point séparément pour les autres. Si les fermiers commencent à fixer leur choix sur l'un des systèmes d'exploitation, l'élaboration des logiciels suivra. Si vous n'adoptez pas la bonne plateforme, vous risquez d'être laissé pour compte ou de prendre du retard par rapport aux nouvelles applications informatiques. Seul le temps le dira. À l'heure actuelle, aucun des systèmes n'a remporté la partie.

Quelques applications pour commencer

GFO Smart Sell
Information sur le marché céréalier
http://www.gfo.ca/sellsmart.aspx

Weather Eye from The Weather Network
Prévisions en temps réel, radar et satellite, pour les emplacements choisis
http://www.theweathernetwork.com/mobile/applications

YouTube
Chercher et visionner des vidéos
http://m.youtube.com

Nouvelles du jour dans le secteur agricole, de Pioneer
http://www.pioneermobilesite.com/mobile/

Sélection des hybrides, de Dekalb
http://dekalbmobile.ca/

Nouvelles du monde agricole
http://www.agreader.ca/

Pour d'autres ressources sur vos téléphones intelligents, visitez le
http://www.uoguelph.ca/farmsmart/presentations/2011/Agsmarts_Smartphones_IMcDonald.pdf

Des pâturages efficaces pour les vaches laitières

Jack Kyle, spécialiste des animaux de pâturage, MAAARO

Le pâturage est une source efficace d'aliments fourragers pour les vaches laitières, les vaches taries et les génisses. Un pâturage bien géré peut donner des résultats comparables à tout autre usage que vous en feriez avec une autre culture.

Pour optimiser à la fois la production fourragère et celle du bétail il faut gérer le pâturage pour en tirer une croissance maximale et une grosseur de bouchée optimale pour les animaux qui y paissent. Si le bétail en pâture ne peut pas prendre une grosse bouchée de fourrage de qualité, la production en souffre. Lors de l'entreposage des aliments, beaucoup d'efforts sont mis pour obtenir une longueur appropriée et une excellente sapidité d'un fourrage de qualité optimale. Si le pâturage est géré avec la même diligence que celle accordée à la gestion des auges d'aliments pour le bétail, le producteur verra les bénéfices s'accroître. Dans le cas des pâturages, il ne s'agit pas seulement de prise alimentaire de l'animal mais aussi d'une bonne croissance des fourrages, pour optimiser le rendement et la qualité.

Optimiser la croissance des plants

Pour que les plantes fourragères offrent une croissance maximale elles doivent pouvoir pousser rapidement et le plus longtemps possible pendant la saison de croissance. Avec une hauteur du fourrage à brouter entre 10 cm (4 po) et 30 cm (12 po), les plantes bénéficient d'une bonne croissance et peuvent capter tout le rayonnement solaire nécessaire à la photosynthèse. Cette hauteur des plants assure aussi que la plante possède un système de racines substantiel capable d'emmagasiner l'eau et les éléments nutritifs tout l'été, et de minimiser les risques d'une période de dormance estivale si le temps devenait très chaud et sec. Pour conserver ce niveau de

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Des pâturages efficaces pour les vaches laitières

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croissance du fourrage, le gérant de pâturages voudra déplacer le bétail vers des pâturages frais environ aux deux jours. Si trop de pâturages sont offerts en même temps il y aura du broutage sélectif, et les plantes moins désirables ne seront pas broutées et atteindront la maturité. Après que la plante a été broutée il lui faut une période de repos, puis elle doit reprendre sa croissance; le repos et la récupération sont deux éléments clés de la gestion des pâturages.

Optimiser la prise alimentaire de l'animal

Du point de vue de la conduite de l'animal, c'est la grosseur des bouchées qui est à la clé d'une bonne productivité. Les bovins prennent des bouchées à un rythme assez constant pendant environ huit heures par jour. La grosseur des bouchées est la seule variable sur laquelle il est possible d'influer. Si le pâturage offre des bouchées d'une grosseur optimale pour l'animal (10 – 30 cm), la première étape pour maximiser la prise alimentaire est accomplie. La deuxième étape consiste à offrir du fourrage frais en tout temps. Le bétail n'est pas attiré par du fourrage qui est aplati parce que des animaux s'y sont couchés, ou qui est souillé de fumier ou d'urine. Plus longtemps les animaux restent dans un enclos donné, plus ce dernier comptera un pourcentage élevé de fourrage devenu impropre, d'où l'importance de transférer fréquemment le bétail à des pâturages frais.

Clôtures, eau et allées

Les clôtures sont des outils privilégiés pour la conduite du bétail et offrent le temps nécessaire à la repousse des fourrages, à la gestion de la quantité et de la qualité qui est disponible pour les bovins. Des clôtures électriques semi-permanentes ou temporaires, à fil simple ou double, permettent de déplacer le bétail pour atteindre une meilleure performance à la fois des pâturages et du bétail.

Le déplacement du bétail vers un pâturage frais tous les un à deux jours permet d'optimiser la croissance en offrant aux plants le repos et le temps de récupération adéquat (il faut de 15 à 20 jours pour récupérer du broutage en début de saison et de 30 à 45 jours à la fin de l'été). Ces mêmes déplacements d'un ou de deux jours favorisent une grosseur des bouchées optimale pour le bétail tout en lui assurant du fourrage frais.

Le bétail au pâturage doit avoir accès facilement et rapidement à de l'eau fraîche et propre. L'eau doit être disponible dans l'enclos où le bétail broute. L'animal qui doit se déplacer pour aller vers l'eau boira moins, et de ce fait il mangera moins. S'ils doivent s'éloigner du pâturage et marcher pour boire, les animaux laissent en même temps sur leurs traces du fumier et de l'urine dans les allées qu'ils empruntent et autour de la source d'eau, ce qui n'est pas très bon pour les pâturages. La façon la plus simple d'assurer l'approvisionnement en eau consiste en un réseau de canalisations en plastique noir installé à la surface le long d'une clôture.

Pour les vaches laitières qui vont et viennent de l'étable deux fois par jour, de bonnes allées sont essentielles pour que leurs déplacements soient faciles et confortables. Il faut une surface ferme bien drainée pour faciliter le déplacement des vaches même par temps pluvieux. Cette combinaison de fourrage de haute qualité disponible et facilement utilisable favorise une production fourragère de qualité et optimise le rendement du bétail. En appliquant ces deux éléments clés à votre système de pâturages, vous rentabilisez au mieux cette partie de votre entreprise agricole.

Établir le prix du maïs d'ensilage en 2011

Joel Bagg, spécialiste de la culture des fourrages et Greg Stewart, spécialiste de la culture du maïs, MAAARO

« Que vaut le maïs d'ensilage quand les prix du maïs tournent autour de 7 $ le boisseau et plus? » Les prix du maïs ont atteint des sommets sans précédent et vont jouer un grand rôle cette année dans l'établissement des prix de l'ensilage de maïs. La culture du maïs est aussi assez variable partout dans la province et a combiné des retards dans les semis, un début d'été très sec, des orages et des averses extrêmement variables à la fin de l'été. Le prix de l'ensilage doit être déterminé en tenant compte de chaque situation individuelle.

En fin de compte, c'est le jeu de l'offre et de la demande sur le marché local et la négociation entre acheteur et vendeur qui déterminent le prix de l'ensilage. Comme les prix du maïs sont aujourd'hui assez élevés, le prix du maïs d'ensilage semble très différent de ce qu'il était il y a un an ou deux seulement. Il importe que vous arriviez à vos propres conclusions quant à votre situation et que vous calculiez ce que vous estimez être un prix acceptable. Il vous restera alors à négocier du mieux possible.

Exemple de calculs

Une méthode pour établir le prix du maïs d'ensilage consiste à faire une comparaison avec la valeur locale du maïs grain pour déterminer un prix minimum (voir le tableau 1). En tant que vendeur, vous n'êtes pas prêt à vendre votre maïs sous forme d'ensilage à un prix inférieur à celui que vous en retireriez si vous en vendiez le grain. Les acheteurs qui donnent du maïs d'ensilage à leur bétail sont peut-être prêts à débourser davantage pour s'en procurer, en fonction de la disponibilité des autres types de fourrages. Du point de vue de la nutrition, l'ensilage de maïs prend, dans la ration des animaux, une valeur qui peut être supérieure au prix pratiqué sur le marché.

Les valeurs calculées du maïs d'ensilage ne correspondent pas forcément aux coûts de production, ni aux valeurs nutritionnelles, mais elles reflètent aussi la valeur sur le marché des autres possibilités de récolte (p. ex. récolter comme maïs grain).

D'un champ à l'autre, on peut voir d'amples variations de rendement et de qualité. Beaucoup de champs auront un bon potentiel de rendement et de qualité, d'autres non. Un rendement plus élevé abaisse les coûts de récolte à la tonne et augmente la proportion du grain et donc la teneur en énergie. La proportion de grain par rapport aux tiges est plus importante dans les champs dont les rendements sont plus élevés et ces derniers donnent des fourrages ayant une énergie digestible supérieure aux résidus de maïs.

La valeur attendue du grain doit être rajustée en fonction des frais de battage, de séchage et de transport par camion afin d'obtenir la valeur de la récolte dans

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Établir le prix du maïs d'ensilage en 2011

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le champ. La valeur des éléments nutritifs supplémentaires du sol (P et K) retirée dans les cannes de maïs (résidus de maïs) est importante, à environ 3,50 $ par tonne de maïs d'ensilage. Le coût à la livre ou à la tonne de matière sèche peut vous aider à considérer le maïs d'ensilage en rapport avec ce que le marché accorde comme valeur au foin dans le champ. Si le vendeur remplit le silo pour l'acheteur, les frais de remplissage à forfait du silo doivent également être rajoutés. Les guides liés à l'établissement du budget des récoltes et l'enquête sur les tarifs agricoles à forfait sont offerts sur le site Web du MAAARO au www.gov.on.ca/OMAFRA/french/busdev/agbusdev.html. Les frais d'entreposage, les pertes à la fermentation et à la dégradation ne sont pas inclus.

Étant donné les hausses du prix du maïs grain, les prix de l'ensilage de maïs ont presque doublé par rapport à l'an dernier et triplé en relation avec il y a seulement quelques années. La teneur en eau (%) aura une grande incidence sur le prix, il faut donc échantillonner et pouvoir fournir des résultats précis sur la teneur en eau. Une erreur de seulement 5 % sur la teneur en eau (p. ex. l'estimer à 65 % plutôt qu'à 70 %) équivaut à une différence de presque 8 $ par tonne.

Pour récupérer une mauvaise récolte de maïs

Les agriculteurs qui tentent de sauver des champs de maïs ayant subi des dommages à cause d'un manque de précipitations en les récoltant sous forme d'ensilage doivent tenir compte de certaines répercussions que la situation peut avoir sur la récolte et sur la valeur nutritionnelle du fourrage. Pour plus de détails sur la récolte et l'entreposage du maïs d'ensilage, consulter le site Web du MAAARO et voir les rubriques « Récolte du maïs à ensilage à la bonne teneur en eau », « Ensilage de maïs endommagé par la sécheresse », et « Des résidus de maïs pour le pâturage » à l'adresse http:// www.omafra.gov.on.ca/french/crops/field/forages.html.

Des variations peuvent survenir dans les champs de maïs stressés par la sécheresse. Certains champs auront des plants plus petits avec des épis normaux, la proportion de grain par rapport aux résidus sera sensiblement normale. Les rendements seront réduits, mais la qualité du fourrage peut être assez normale aussi. D'autres champs peuvent avoir des plants de hauteur habituelle mais qui présentent des épis très petits. Ces champs auront une proportion de grain par rapport aux résidus très faible, beaucoup plus que la moyenne générale de 7,7 boisseaux la tonne (7,0 boisseaux/tonne) d'ensilage à une teneur en humidité de 65 %, dans une bonne culture.

Autres considérations

L'offre et la demande locales du maïs d'ensilage et des autres fourrages auront une influence sur son prix. Les possibilités d'entreposage pour l'ensilage et les facteurs économiques de l'affouragement sont également des éléments dont il faut tenir compte. Les vendeurs qui possèdent une assurance récolte devraient communiquer avec Agricorp (1 888 247-4999) pour déterminer dans quelle mesure la vente du maïs sous forme d'ensilage de maïs influera sur une demande d'indemnité. De bonnes estimations du rendement et de la qualité sont importantes et doivent tenir compte des poids réels et du pourcentage d'humidité. L'élimination de la matière organique des tiges de maïs doit également être prise en compte.

Cet exemple vise seulement à donner des indications générales aux agriculteurs et il devrait être utilisé comme point de départ dans les négociations entre acheteur et vendeur. À chacun de formuler ses propres hypothèses et de calculer les coûts propres à sa situation.

Tableau 1 – Exemple de calculs du prix du maïs d'ensilage (valeurs minimales)		
Exemple 1 « maïs normal	Exemple 2 « Maïs endommagé	
Rendement en grain (boisseaux / acre	160	10
Rendement en grain (tonne métrique [tm]) / acre	4,1	2,5
Boisseaux de grain / ensilage (tm) (15,5 % d'humidité)	7,7	6,5
Rendement en maïs d'ensilage (tm) / acre (65 % d'humidité)	20,8	15,4
Prix du grain $ / tm (classe 2, livraison à l'automne, local)	280 $	280 $
Valeur en grain brute/ acre (rendement X prix)	1 148 $	700 $
- séchage (24 % d'humidité @ 22 $ / tm)	-90,20 $	-55,00 $
- moissonnage battage	-35,00 $	-35,00 $
- camionnage (@ 8,00 $ / tm)	-32,80 $	-20,00 $
= valeur brute du grain / acre moins les coûts de récolte du grain	990 $	590 $
+ P et K exporté du sol par suite de la récolte des tiges et des feuilles (~3,50 $/tm d'ensilage)	+72,80 $	+53,90 $
Valeur sur pied du maïs à l'acre	1 062,80 $	643,90 $
Valeur du maïs sur pied par tonne métrique (tm)	51,10 $	41,81 $
¢ / lb de matière sèche	6,6 ¢	5,4 ¢
$ / tonne de matière sèche	146 $	119 $
+ mise en silo (175 $/ heure, 2,5 acres/heure)	+70,00 $	+70,00 $
À l'acre	1 132,88 $	713,90 $
Maïs d'ensilage récolté par tonne métrique (tm) (avant les pertes en silo, la détérioration et les coûts d'entreposage)	54,47 $	46,36 $

Une dose de coopération pour soulager les maux des agriculteurs Partie 1 : l'environnement naturel

Christian Howald, Agent de développement, région du Nord, Conseil de la coopération de l,Ontaio

Ce texte est le premier d'une série de six articles traitant des obstacles que rencontrent les producteurs agricoles de la région de Nipissing-Sudbury. Il est le résultat d'une recherche qualitative à laquelle vingt agriculteurs de la région ont participé afin de partager les enjeux auxquels ils font face ainsi que les solutions qu'ils ont à offrir. Nous préservons l'anonymat des répondants car certains points de vue portent des jugements. De leurs entrevues sont ressortis six facteurs clés ayant un effet direct sur l'agriculture de la région : l'environnement naturel, la clientèle, la compétition, l'accès au marché, les interventions gouvernementales et les associations agricoles. Ce sont des facteurs qui agissent sur la capacité des agriculteurs en région de produire, faire transformer et de vendre leurs marchandises. Par-dessus tout, un élément clé ressort : les agriculteurs font eux-mêmes partie de la solution. Ils ne sont pas de simples victimes de l'infrastructure, mais des joueurs clés d'un écosystème complexe. La solution revient à leur réinvestissement dans les valeurs coopératives, surtout l'entraide et la solidarité, abandonnées au profit de la mécanisation et de l'individualisation, un retour aux principes coopératifs qui fleurissaient en région au milieu du dernier siècle lorsque le mouvement coopératif était en plein essor dans le Nord de l'Ontario.

Le premier facteur ayant un effet direct sur la rentabilité de l'agriculture dans la région de Nipissing-Sudbury est l'environnement naturel. Selon les agriculteurs questionnés, c'est une région qui nécessite une grande adaptation. Les communautés sont peu peuplées et éparpillées sur de très grandes distances et l'hiver y est long et froid. À la base, les fermes y sont entrelacées de rochers, de cours d'eau et de forêts au lieu de former un peloton de terre esthétiquement plaisant comme les fermes du Sud. La grande culture n'y est pas aussi facile parce que les champs sont petits et parsemés et le terrain est accidenté. Les coûts de réparations des équipements reflètent directement cette situation. De même, le climat n'est pas aussi propice que dans les régions plus chaudes. Cela a un effet sur la variété des produits disponibles. En fait, la région ne jouit en moyenne que de 59 jours sans gel et un grand nombre de plantes, tel le maïs, ont besoin d'au moins 70 jours avant d'être récoltées. La faible densité de population à un effet sur l'accès à la main d'œuvre et aussi à l'accès à la clientèle. Les marchés niches de la région ne consistent souvent que de quelques personnes tandis que dans les grandes villes, les nombres s'élèvent aux milliers. De même, les coûts de transport et de livraison sont plus élevés à cause des plus grandes distances à couvrir.

Cependant, les agriculteurs peuvent s'adapter à leur environnement. Ils réalisent qu'il leur faut sélectionner des produits qui prospèrent dans le climat. Certains disent que la grande culture devrait être laissée aux producteurs du Sud. La région est idéale pour le pâturage. Malheureusement, un grand nombre d'agriculteurs de la région ont complètement abandonné la production de cheptels pour des grandes cultures céréalières peu adaptées à la région. Ils ont reçu des subventions gouvernementales pour faire drainer leurs champs et y avoir accès plus tôt au printemps. Ensuite puisqu'ils n'ont plus de fumier à épandre sur leurs champs, ils emploient des engrais chimiques, au détriment de nos cours d'eau. . Le terrain de la région est semblable à celui des régions montagneuses et dans ces endroits, les agriculteurs ont réalisé depuis longtemps que les animaux sont beaucoup mieux adaptés que la machinerie.

L'avantage des grandes distances et de la faible densité de population dont peuvent profiter les agriculteurs de la région, est qu'il y a encore tout un éventail de possibilités quant au développement de marchés. Contrairement aux régions où il y a déjà des centaines de producteurs qui exploitent un domaine et où les barrières institutionnelles sont manifestes, dans une région faiblement peuplée, nous pouvons encore explorer et être vecteurs de changement.

Dans un esprit coopératif, les agriculteurs peuvent s'entraider avec le transport de denrées. Ils peuvent aussi se complémenter en cultivant une variété de produits et en faisant une rotation annuelle des cultures afin de prévenir la dénudation que cause la monoculture. Les opportunités permises par la production de légumes en serres semblent également illimitées. C'est en se rencontrant, en discutant et en s'entraidant qu'une telle approche peut fonctionner ; à nos bons agriculteurs de la mettre en pratique!

Une coopérative alimentaire régionale

Christian Howald, Agent de développement, région du Nord, (CCO)

L'agriculture du Nord de l'Ontario génère un PIB de 190 millions de dollars annuels. Par ailleurs, avec 307 660 logements privés qui dépensent en moyenne 7 284 $ annuellement en alimentation et plus de 7 millions de touristes qui passent plus de 24 heures annuellement dans la région une valeur économique de plus de 2 milliards et demi de dollars est obtenue. Dans ce cas, pourquoi l'agriculture du Nord de l'Ontario n'est-elle pas plus puissante? C'est que 85 % de la nourriture vendue au Canada provient de fermes industrielles situées dans d'autres pays. Celle-ci est traitée comme une commodité de marché. Depuis l'avènement du libre-échange, les revenus des agriculteurs canadiens n'ont cessé de chuter tandis que ceux des multinationales explosent. Ensuite, 80 % de l'argent dépensé aux supermarchés va aux distributeurs et seulement 20 % aux producteurs qui font tout le travail. C'est que l'épicerie en Ontario est contrôlée par Loblaw's, Sobey's et Métro. Il faut traditionnellement transiger avec leur siège social pour vendre des produits sur leurs étalages. Leurs épiceries ne vendent pas de viande du terroir parce que leur contrat de distribution stipule qu'ils ne peuvent vendre que de la viande inspectée par le gouvernement fédéral. En effet, ces épiceries se soumettent à des lois fédérales pour éviter le fardeau bureaucratique que des lois ontariennes tout aussi minutieuses pourraient engendrer.

Même si la plupart des épiciers sont libres d'allouer 5 % de leurs étalages aux produits « locaux », en Ontario, la définition du mot « local » varie selon les distributeurs. Pour certains, celle-ci s'applique aux produits du Canada. Il est alors facile pour un grand producteur de contourner les définitions afin d'obtenir des produits estampillés locaux.

Dans ce milieu, le lobbying politique est difficile d'autant plus que les gouvernements sont liés par des ententes internationales.

Le Conseil de la coopération de l'Ontario est d'avis que la solution du plein épanouissement de l'industrie agricole ontarienne se retrouve dans les valeurs coopératives, surtout l'entraide et la solidarité. Les Ontariens doivent s'approprier le processus complet de la production à la transformation jusqu'à la vente à l'étalage des produits agricoles. Il faut ajuster le système en s'appropriant le contrôle de l'alimentation régionale et effectuer un retour aux principes coopératifs.

Rien de nouveau

Ce n'est pas une révolution, mais une approche ayant fait ses preuves. Il existe déjà 150 coopératives de marketing agricole au Canada. De même, en 2009 fut créée la Hometown Grocers Co-operative dans le Sud-ouest ontarien, 9 épiceries ont déjà joint leur pouvoir d'achat afin de pouvoir vendre des produits de la région. Dale Kropf, l'homme à la tête du projet, affirme que de plus en plus de consommateurs souhaitent acheter des produits locaux dans le but de supporter les agriculteurs de leur région et de se protéger des rappels fréquents qui affligent les produits importés. En joignant leurs forces, ces épiciers ont réussi à signer une entente avec Sobey's pour leur approvisionnement en produits manufacturés tout en pouvant dorénavant vendre des produits alimentaires provenant d'un rayon de moins de 60 kilomètres de leurs magasins. Pour les aliments hors saison, la coopérative a embauché un acheteur qui se rend au Marché des produits alimentaires de l'Ontario à Toronto (Ontario Food Terminal) pour sélectionner les produits les plus frais.

Une question de sécurité alimentaire

C'est un sujet de sécurité alimentaire : il consiste à supporter les agriculteurs locaux afin qu'ils puissent continuer à offrir des produits de qualité et d'investir dans l'économie régionale tout en réduisant leur empreinte écologique. Cela nécessite une coopérative à partenaires multiples, une association autonome de personnes volontairement réunies pour satisfaire leurs aspirations et besoins économiques, sociaux et culturels communs au moyen d'une entreprise dont la propriété est collective et où le pouvoir est exercé démocratiquement. Afin d'être rentable, la coopérative doit être impliquée dans tout le processus de l'alimentation allant de la culture et la production, à la transformation, au transport et jusqu'à la vente à l'étalage et à la consommation. Développer un réseau de production, de transformation et de distribution, supporté par des consommateurs engagés et prêts à travailler ensemble permettra de rendre plus direct le contact entre le producteur et le consommateur et de conserver l'argent en région.

Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program

On July 1, 2011 the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation program took effect. This program provides for enhanced compensation for livestock owners for damages caused by predators. The list of eligible livestock species has been expanded as well as the list of predators causing damage for which compensation can be paid.

The underlying principal of compensating an owner with a dollar amount that reflects what it would take to replace the predated animal in the marketplace has not changed however the maximum amounts of compensation have been increased.

There is no longer a requirement that the livestock owner file an affidavit with their claim however the owner will be asked for both a Farm Business Registration Number and a Premises ID number as part of the application process.

The Ministry has agreed to phase in the requirement for a Farm Business Number and a Premises ID number. The phase in period will be determined in consultation with the Agriculture Wildlife Conflict Working Group and a date for implementation will be communicated to livestock owners and municipalities well in advance of the implementation of this requirement.

Program guidelines and related information can be found at www.ontario.ca/predation

With these changes related to predation the Protection of Livestock and Poultry from Dogs Act has also come into force. This act addresses damage to livestock and poultry caused by dogs. Of particular note is that for the purposes of this act the definition of livestock has NOT changed however the maximums for those livestock species is the same as the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation program.

Traceability Foundations Initiative

A new program coming to Ontario will strengthen the agriculture industry and help keep our food safe by improving the way food products are tracked from the farm to the dinner plate.

This is a three-year, $21.5M federal-provincial costshare initiative, established under the Agricultural Flexibility ("AgriFlexibility") Fund. Approved projects may be eligible for up to a maximum of $5 million in funding per project.

The Application Form and Application Guidebook version 1.0 are now available on the Traceability website: www.ontario.ca/traceability.

For further details visit www.ontario/ca/traceability

Earlton Farm Show

Earlton Farm Show

Grassroots Innovation
Since 1939

OSCIA NEWS

A NEWSLETTER TO UPDATE OSCIA MEMBERS, PRESIDENTS, SECRETARIES, TREASURERS, DIRECTORS, AND OMAFRA AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT CONTACTS

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Message from the President - Max Kaiser

Greetings from your President...

It's been a rather nice summer after all. Some of us were too dry or too wet at times, but I think that in the end, if we end up near average or better, then we have much to be happy about. Certainly, the rains gave us time to catch up on tasks, or with family, perhaps.

Our summer meeting in Blue Mountain was much enjoyed by all. Such scenery! Thanks to James, Joan and Robert McKinley for hosting us in such a beautiful resort and treating us to some very memorable sights and sounds. Oh, yes, and of course there was business done by our Board. While it is an opportunity for social time for the Board and families, the full Board of Directors met on the Monday for a full day's agenda; from finances, to communications, to programs, to new opportunities.

Communication was a key focus for a recent training session for our Regional Communications Coordinators (RCCs) when they met in Toronto for two days. Building on the strength of the individuals within, they shared experience and knowledge in a very open and informal setting. I, for one, was very pleased to see the opportunity taken and put to good use; leading to the growth of the skills in each member of that team. I am certain more of our members will be seeing the RCC presence in the newer media and networking sites increasing as time goes by.

I am never quite sure what to share about the Office activities. To be sure, we have a very dynamic and busy team in Guelph, constantly evolving, constantly endeavouring to provide more service not just to our members, but also, to the rest of Ontario Agriculture through programs with government and/or non-government partners. Every month at our Executive Committee meetings there are new opportunities laid on the table for our input and consideration.

So, fall is approaching, there is silage corn coming off in eastern Ontario, at least. The beans have a ways to go before we can think about planting fall wheat, though it is good to know the seed is on it's way! Perhaps a little more time can be used to our advantage!?! Environment Canada is forecasting a warm dry fall (... when I see it!) and I know many of us are hoping for that.

Something to remember: Super glue is FOREVER! Cheers!

Max

OSCIA Staffing Changes

Roxane Legault - GYFP workshop leader and program representative for Prescott, Russell, Stormont and Glengarry

Roxane was raised in Eastern Ontario. She studied Health Science at Ottawa University from 1983 to 1986 and obtained a diploma as a computer programmer in 1994 from La Cité collégiale. Roxane started her career working at Statistics Canada providing computer training for executives. She also worked 14 years with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade developing computer applications used by Trade officers in Canadian embassies and consulates.

In 2007 she and her husband adopted two young children and purchased a 64 acre farm in Eastern Ontario where they have cattle and goats, and have plans to grow spelt. Roxane looks forward to working with producers in her counties to deliver the Business Development for Farm Businesses program.

◇

Claude Péloquin - GYFP workshop leader and program representative for Nipissing, Sudbury, Temiskaming, Cochrane and Parry Sound.

Claude was born and raised on a dairy/cash crop farm in St. Pierre Jolys, Manitoba and received a Bachelor of Science degree in agricultural economics from the University of Manitoba. He worked as an assistant and associate agricultural representative for OMAFRA in Russell County for 13 years, as an agricultural representative in Nipissing District for nine years and as the Regional Director for Northern Ontario for 12 years.

Prior to the Regional Director position Claude specialized in farm business management and assisted producers with various government programs. Since retiring from OMAFRA, Claude has worked on a part-time basis with Ridgetown College delivering Nutrient Management Act and Ontario Pesticide Safety Program courses. Claude looks forward to working with producers in his region to deliver the Business Development for Farm Businesses program.

◇

Katie McNamee - Program Assistant for the Business Development for Farm Businesses program (maternity leave position for Bridget Greb)

Katie is from London, Ontario and currently resides in Guelph. She completed an undergraduate degree in International Development with a focus on Economic and Business Development at the University of Guelph and most recently finished a Certification in Environmental Conservation, also from the University of Guelph. She is interested in various aspects of economic and environmental development. Katie is currently training with Bridget so that she will be ready to take on her role later in September. She is excited to be a part of OSCIA and looks forward to working with staff and participants in the program.

◇

Amber Van De Peer - Administrative Assistant for OSCIA & OSGA in the Provincial Office

Amber grew up on a farm near Perth in Eastern Ontario, has a Bachelor degree in Biological Science from the University of Guelph and has worked for several years as a buyer and inventory control at Sheridan Nurseries Ltd. She is looking forward to learning the in's and out's of OSCIA over the next few months.

Exciting Changes in the Business Development for Farm Businesses Program

The Business Development for Farm Businesses (BDFB) program is launching several initiatives September 15 to make it easier for participants to apply for cost-share funding. Our objective is to make all forms and documents easier to complete and understand, improve producer satisfaction with the application and claim process, and increase overall participation in the program.

Some of the changes include:

• The project application form and 13 project proposal forms have been replaced with 4 types of applications. There is one application for each type of cost-share opportunity:

  • Farm Financial Assessment Cost-share Application Form

  • Agriculture Skills Development Cost-share Application Form

  • Advanced Business Planning Cost-share Application Form

  • Business Plan Implementation Cost-share Application Form

• Cost-share application forms will be available on-line at www.ontariosoilcrop.org/en/bdfbapplications.

• All forms and supporting information have been re-written so they are easier to understand.

• All applications have been re-designed so that they are easier to fill out.

• The Program Eligibility Policy and Procedures has been replaced by the Program Guide, which will be available at www.ontariosoilcrop.org/en/bdfbhome

• To increase awareness of training activities eligible under Agriculture Skills Development, examples of previously approved training activities will be available at www.ontariosoilcrop.org/en/bdfbresources.

• Producers who have completed a farm financial assessment will automatically be approved for the share funds are available. Producers no longer need to apply for the follow-up review.

We are looking forward to implementing these initiatives so that Ontario producers can more easily get involved in cost-share opportunities to put their plans into action.

Seed Bytes - Speaking Up for Agriculture

Hamilton Ontario was the site of the annual conference for the Canadian Seed Growers' Association (CSGA). This annual event was hosted by the Ontario branch, an honour that comes to Ontario every seven years. The growers' program was built around the theme: 'Speak Up for Agriculture'.

Keynote speakers included:

Jay Bradshaw, President, Syngenta, Canada
Wallace Pigeon, President, Brick and Ball Media
Shaun Haney, President, RealAgriculture
Chet Boruff, Executive Director, Association of Official Seed Certifying Agencies (AOSCA)

Check out these speakers' presentations at: http://www.seedgrowers.ca/news/current_news/news_AGMpresentations2011.asp

OSCIA 2012
ANNUAL MEETING

Mark the Dates NOW
February 7 & 8, 2012

Best Western Lamplighter Inn & Conference Centre
591 Wellington Road South
London, ON N6C 4R3

The Twilight Meeting of the Algoma Soil And Crop Improvement Association

The Twilight Meeting of the Algoma Soil And Crop Improvement Association was held at the farm of Brian and Francine Whelan in Little Rapids, near Thessalon.

Murray Cochrane introduced Joel Bagg, a Forage Specialist from OMAFRA, who focused on "Making Quality Forages in a Difficult Year".

Joel stated that farmers need to produce a good quality forage to recoup their costs. At the moment, there is a shortage of hay production in North America, and this will affect the beef industry eventually. Tile drainage and cash crops such as soybeans are influencing forage production by driving up the land rental cost. Joel told the fifty-some farmers in attendance that hay markets could be found in Florida, Kentucky, the Middle East and China. Farmers need to focus on marketing and quality to capture these markets. The cost of replacing phosphate and potassium used in hay production is approximately $20 for an 800 lb. round bale that sells for $22-$25. Joel suggested that it is more cost effective to buy "standing hay'.

Joel reminded the farmers that they need to do soil testing regularly to know the phosphate and potassium levels so they can replenish these to get as much return on their land as possible. Crop rotation is important. Nitrogen is necessary to grow grass and its cheapest source is manure; however, it needs to be worked into the soil.

Joel fielded questions from the audience:

- What is the "critical date" for the last cut in the fall? – This is usually 6 weeks before a killer frost. Alfalfa needs enough food stored in its root to survive the winter. He suggested that it is best to leave the third cut in the fall and get a better crop in the spring.
- When is the best time to apply fertilizer? – Within 5 days of cutting the forage.
- When does "winter-kill" of forage happen? – If there is no snow and cold weather.
- Can hay bales be left in the field? Farmers need to get bales off the field and into storage as soon as possible because their costs are escalating and improper storage causes spoilage of the hay.

Joel then discussed some of the advantages and disadvantages of some of the common forage crops. For example, timo-

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OMAFRA'S Joel Bagg At NEOSCIA Temiskaming Forage Tour

Joel Bagg, Forage Specialist.

NEOSCIA ran the 3rd "Crop Caravan" in the past three years across many of the Northern districts. Funding for this feature has come from a special grant negotiated with OSCIA head office when the 3 Northern SCIA Regions were amalgamated into one unit, a few years ago. This year, Joel Bagg of OMAFRA undertook the tour, highlighting modern Forage Production challenges and opportunities. The presentations are always unscripted, and the invited speaker views the fields at hand, commenting on potential problems and illustrating good practices. The fun part comes when the attendees throw out questions for the specialist to grapple with at a moments notice!

This year, the local districts chose the sites and did all the preparation work for the event. It is expected that NEOSCIA will continue the Caravan next year. Got a suggestion for the event? Call Regional Director, Mack Emiry, and pass on your ideas!

Farm Owner Darren Grey (in white) highlights alfalfa field.

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture in Algoma for 100 Years this Fall

It is a 100 years since a full time agricultural representative was appointed to Algoma. There have been many changes in government policy and in farming since Archibald (Archie) Stanley Smith was officially appointed in the fall of 1911 after serving as a summer representative. In 2000, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture closed all 35 county offices in eastern, western and central Ontario. These offices were replaced by 13 regional offices, a 1-800 number and the Internet. Northern Ontario kept six agricultural representatives. The Agricultural Representatives over the last 100 years have been active in encouraging Algoma farmers to showcase what their area had and has to offer to Ontario and the world. The representatives have brought new ideas and government programs to the Algoma area.

Archie Smith

Mr. Smith spent six years promoting agriculture and showcasing produce grown in Algoma. He organized the first school fair in Korah Township, now part of the city of Sault Ste. Marie, in 1912. This fair continued until 1954. He encouraged good farming practices establishing Live Stock Breeder Clubs and loaned bulls, rams, boars and stallions for breeding. He took Algoma grown agricultural products to the Toronto Fair to show "old Ontario" that quality produce could be grown in northern Ontario. He taught agricultural courses at the Sault High School and Technical Institute to farmer's sons. Archie Smith served as representative for Ontario's Department of Agriculture till September 1916 when he accepted the superintendent position at Dunbar Agricultural School in McCarron near Sault Ste Marie, Michigan. He returned to Algoma in 1921 and settled at Sailor's Encampment on St. Joseph's Island. He was weed inspector for the Department of Agriculture until he retired.

Archie Smith on his boat with weed sprayer

An article, "Agriculture in Algoma" in the OAC Review by R.H. Elgie'16 recounts, "Agriculture in this district has been greatly helped by the District Representative of the Department of Agriculture (Archie Smith). He has rendered an invaluable service to the farmer. Institute work has been carried on. School gardens and school fairs have been inaugurated and proved a success. Short courses in agriculture have been held during the winter months for the young men, and in many other ways interest has been stimulated in farm life for the betterment of conditions, and for the better methods of production in a district which is destined to be a deciding factor in the markets of Ontario (p.304).

J.W. Wadsworth was appointed representative from 1916 to 1919. He completed the tile drainage projects initiated by Archie Smith in Korah Twp., Bar River and Thessalon.

In September 1919, J.M. MacIntosh was transferred from the Temiskaming district to Algoma. He remained as agricultural representative until 1960. He attended Farmers' Clubs, Women's Institutes, Agricultural and School Fairs, and Live Stock Clubs. He distributed hatching eggs to the rural schools. In the 1920s, a Lamb Fair was set up on St. Joseph's Island where over 600 lambs were graded. Mr. MacIntosh promoted the sheep industry in Algoma by setting up dipping centres in each area and supervised the dipping. Castration and docking demonstrations were held throughout the area.

Under his tenure, many groups were formed that still exist today in Algoma.

The Crop Improvement Association was formed in 1939 with 79 members. One of its first projects was to test rust resistant varieties of oats and barley. Mr. MacIntosh reported in his review that these test plots changed the variety of oats and barley planted in Algoma. This organization has become the Algoma Soil and Crop Improvement Association and has over 80 members who continue to do test plot projects. A Plowmen's Association was organized in January of 1930 and the first match was held in October with 26 entries and over 700 people attending. Plowing Matches are held annually in Algoma to this day. In 1950, the Algoma Co-operative Livestock Sales started. Beef farmers had a yearly auction sale at Thessalon. Today, there is a spring sale, a large yearling sale in September (this year 1200 yearlings were expected.) and a calf sale in October. Mr. MacIntosh was instrumental in introducing artificial insemination to the district in 1950. He retired in 1960 after 41 years of service to Algoma.

Grant Mitchell came to Algoma on Mr. MacIntosh's retirement. In his report written in 1966, he mentions that beef production was still the main farm activity. Dairy farmers shipped their milk to the Sault Ste. Marie market and a provincially inspected slaughterhouse was organized at Portlock (near Desbarats) and is still in operation. The 4-H movement was increasing in the '60s and there were 18 different projects in 1966. Bus tours for farmers were organized while Mr. Mitchell was agricultural representative. He retired in 1984.

Larry Ritchie from Peel County was Agricultural Representative for Algoma from 1984 to 1988. Land was purchased for the Algoma Community Pasture; new dairy farms were started under Farm Start programs, and Farmer Week was re-established under Mr. Ritchie. In 2009, he was the recipient of ASCIA's Award of Merit. At the meeting, it was mentioned that many Algoma farmers felt his time in Algoma was the "golden years" of agriculture in the area. He encouraged the area farmers at "Town Hall" meetings.

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Jeff Warner, 2010 Giant Pumpkin Growing Champion retains his crown and holds the record for largest pumpkin

*2010 Giant Pumpkin Grower Jeff Warner is proud of his winning, and still champion, **636** lb. pumpkin*

During 2011, NOAFEM distributed 1,700 giant pumpkin seeds throughout Northern Ontario. Besides the fun of watching pumpkins grow, competition participants are challenged by the weather, soil conditions and personal 'secrets of success'. Extreme fluctuations in temperature, too much, or too little rainfall and early frosts will impact the final outcome. These factors are dealt with in agriculture on a regular basis.
Once again, New Liskeard Fall Fair captured the winning entry. Our 2010 Junior Champion **Miriam Desmarais** of New Liskeard, is the overall Giant Pumpkin Competition winner with an entry weighing 496 lbs. beating her last year's win by 1 lb.
Debbie Legrow, organizer of the competition for the New Liskeard Fall Fair stated that Jeff's 2011 entry split as he loaded it while another grower discovered a family of groundhogs had burrowed into their biggest pumpkin, making it a home.
Edith Orr, organizer of the Desbarats Farmers' Market had no entries in this year's competition.
Arlene Hummel of the Powassan Farmers' Market, a new weigh in site for 2011, reported 11 entries with Brian Berg winning with his 102 lb pumpkin. George Evanoff was the official judge for this event.
Central Manitoulin PS Fall Fair in Mindemoya had 5 entries. Aaron Lewis of Providence Bay won with his entry weighing 134 lbs.
Anderson Farm Fall Fair in Lively hosted 3 entries with the pumpkin grown by Ron Lewis of Naughton winning with a weight of 150 lbs.
Although the record is yet to be beaten, a large number of giant pumpkins were entered in 2011. Congratulations to the winners and to everyone who spent some time planting, nurturing and harvesting their pumpkins.

Did you know there are 3,016 farms in the 11 Districts of Northern Ontario?

Many of these farms grow products that can be found at one of the 20+ Farmers' Markets throughout Northern Ontario. When in season producers display fruits, vegetables and berries, all grown on the farm. Meats, fish, honey and maple syrup are often available year round as well as value-added products such as jams, jellies and yarns.
As the demand increases, new market sites are piloted, as happened in Sudbury this year where a satellite farmers' market site was introduced at Anderson Farm Museum in Lively. The market was scheduled in conjunction with the '*Rock the Farm'* concert series on five Wednesdays in June, July and August. The organizing committee ensured that all vendors at the market grew and/or processed the product that they offered. Eight vendors showed up to market their products. The new market proved successful with consumers requesting more consistency by having a weekly market available.

NEW Partnership! New Exhibit – A Corn Table

Strong Agricultural Society has donated their corn table which will be available to fairs and events. The table is most popular for children up to 8 years of age. A variety of farm machinery are included in the play area.

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture in Algoma for 100 Years this Fall

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Picture of Larry Ritchie accepting Award of Merit

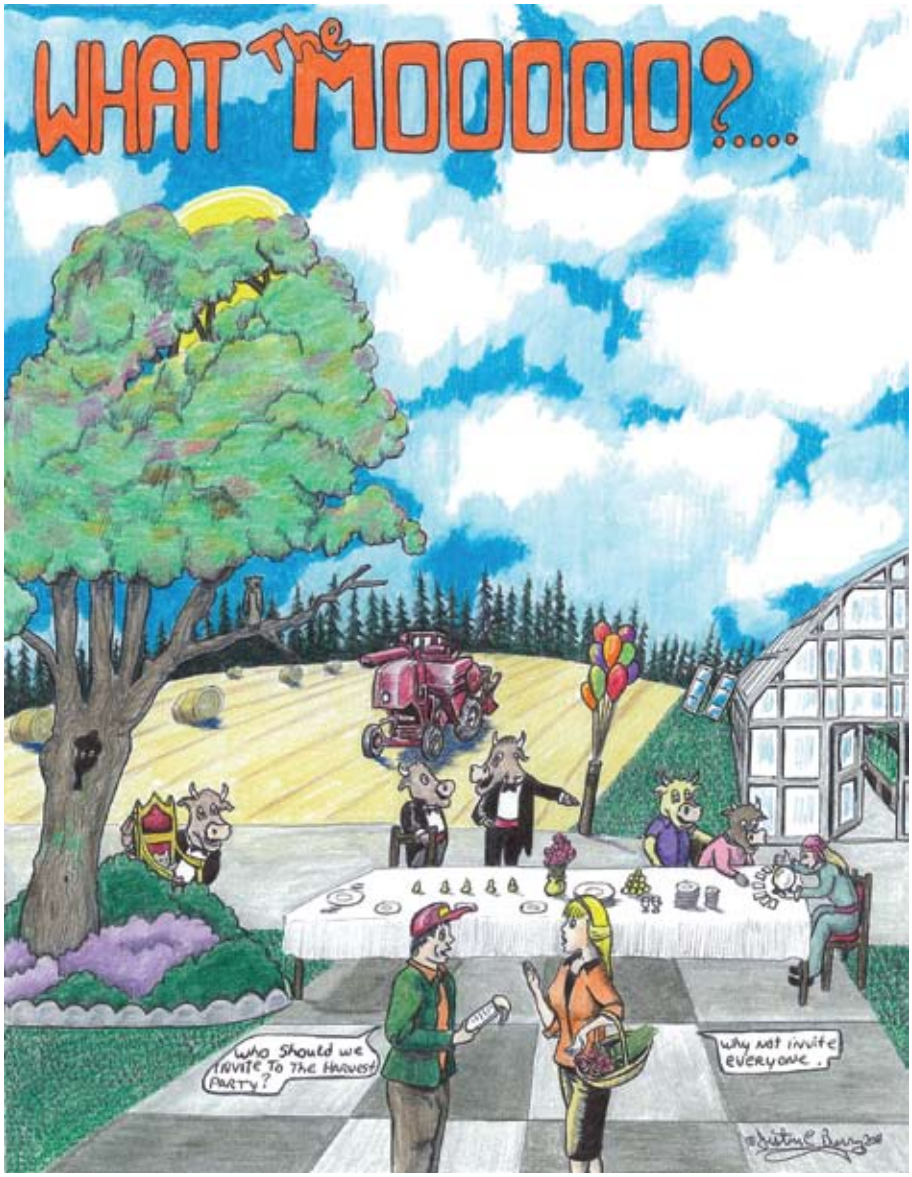
Under Judy Hone's tenure from 1989 to 1995, the first rounds of NOHFC individual projects funding for agriculture were implemented.

Brian Bell, Provincial Ruminant Nutrition Specialist, filled in after Judy left till 1996 when Darryl Well was appointed to Algoma. Darryl transferred to MNDM in 1998 and Brian did double duty until David Trivers arrive in May 1998.

During David's over 10 year period, the first Algoma NOFHC consortiums were funded through East Algoma CFDC, the Algoma Soil and Crop Improvement Association has been revitalized, and to the chagrin of area farmers, the Ministry of Natural Resources has introduced the elk to Algoma.

In the last 100 years, Algoma has been well served by the various agricultural representatives. The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture has downsized its presence and services in rural Ontario. The large office in Sault Ste Marie was moved to Algoma Co-operative Building in Echo Bay in 1998 and finally to what it is today, an office in the Algoma Social and Family Service building in Little Rapids. The various agricultural representatives have provided an on-going valuable service to the Algoma farmer in spite of the changes the government of the day has instituted.

(Writer would like to thank Neidre Powis-Clement, Brian Bell and David Trivers for their assistance in this article.)



This month's artwork comes from Justin Burre of Englebart. View more of his work at http://justin-burry.tripod.com

The Twilight Meeting of the Algoma Soil And Crop Improvement Association

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thy is easy to establish and manage but has only one cutting per year. Perennial rye grass is the number one forage crop in the world, but in Ontario it is an annual crop.

Joel finished his presentation with a few comments on the horse hay market. To capture the horse hay market, he says to give the horse people what they want: green colour and good odour.

Marc Cote, a consultant for the Macerator, explained the advantages of this $30 000 machine that needs 70 to 80 hp tractor to pull it. It takes the wax off the stems and flattens the straw so the forage dries in 48 hours. It can be used for forage crops, such as alfalfa, timothy, corn and green oats. The hay is softer and has a better odour. With reduced water content, hay produced with a Macerator is cheaper to ship especially to the Middle East and China. Marc also illustrated the $500 adaptors for a tedder. They will flip the hay over so it will dry faster.

Bill Siddall of Laird Twp. brought his Agland Macerator to demonstrate its use. Brian Whelan illustrated his tedder and windrow inverter. He explained the advantages of using acid on forage crops destined for the horse hay market.