Breaking Ground
(in Northeastern Ontario) SPRING 2008

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

OSCIA Restructuring

by Janet Parsons

NEOSCIA will have one rather than three board members on the OSCIA board beginning in 2009. The restructuring proposal was accepted by delegates at the OSCIA annual meeting in February. NEOSCIA is currently rewriting its constitution to comply with the new structure and this will be voted on at the annual meeting in April.

In order to strengthen NEOSCIA it is proposed that each district president and one district delegate be members of the NEOSCIA board of directors.

NEOSCIA has submitted a business plan to OSCIA for increased funding for meetings and communications.

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New Feature for Breaking Ground:

Inside the back cover… OFA News in Northeastern Ontario

The Northeastern Ontario local Federations of Agriculture have decided to purchase the inside back cover of Breaking Ground to keep in touch with members on a regular basis and let them know what is happening across the north.

West Nipissing East Sudbury Federation of Agriculture is sponsoring the first issue because of a strong commitment to communication. Rheal Brouillete, President, says that "by telling the farmers in the northeast what each district association is working on, we can work together and make things better for us all. Some of our problems and needs are particular to the north and we need a strong unified northern voice." Manitoulin and Algoma Federations have also signed on as sponsors.

Cooperation between landowners and other stake holders in setting back fences from the Manitou river. Also note the structures placed in the river and the reforestation of the stream perimeter to enhance the shading and cooling of the river to improve fish habitat.

PHOTO COURTESY OF: Neil Tarlton, OFA Representative

Klaus Wand, OFA director for West Nipissing/East Sudbury Parry Sound and Muskoka explained how there was a northern caucus meeting at the OFA annual meeting in November. "Once again the north is meeting to deal with northern issues. It's important that all farmers in the north are aware of OFA activities and The Northwest Link (northwestern Ontario) and Breaking Ground in Northeastern Ontario are excellent publications to keep

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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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Canada | Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition | Ontario

Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan

- protect soil and water resources
- enhance production returns
- show due diligence
- minimize environmental risk

Funding is now available through Federal and Provincial cost-share programs for beneficial management practices.

Contact the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

1-800-265-9751

Programme de planification environnementale à la ferme Canada-Ontario

- Protéger les ressources en sols et en eaux
- Augmentez vos rendements de production
- Faites preuve de diligence raisonnable
- Minimisez les risques pour l'environnement

Vous pouvez maintenant obtenir une aide financière de programmes fédéraux et provinciaux à frais partagés pour l'adoption de pratiques de gestion bénéfiques.

Communiquez avec l'Association pour l'amélioration des sols et des récoltes de l'Ontario

1-800-265-9751

www.ontariosoilcrop.org

The Agricultural Policy Framework (APF) A Federal-Provincial-Territorial Initiative
Le Cadre stratégique pour l'agriculture (CSA) Une initiative fédérale-provinciale-territoriale

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705 **594-9194**

NORTHERN POWERPAC
Vente De Taureaux et de Génisses
Bull & Heifer Sale

Saturday, April 12, 2008
Samedi, le 12 Avril
2:00 pm

Temiskaming Livestock Exchange
New Liskeard, Ontario

Evaluated Bulls & Heifers
Taureaux et Génisses évalués

Angus (Black & Red), Charolais, Gelbvieh, Hereford, Limousin, Simmental and Cross-breds

For a sale catalogue with complete performance information or if you are unable to attend our sale please contact:

Pour recevoir un catalogue avec l'information de performance òu ci tu ne peu pas te rendre a la vente appeller:

Diane Johnston: 705-563-2083 dianejd@ntl.sympatico.ca

NEOSCIA Members *Classifieds*

Are you a member of your local Soil & Crop Improvement Association in Northern Ontario? If so, that membership entitles you to one free classified ad each year in this newsletter (that goes out to over 1000 farmers across the North). Subsequent ads will cost $10.00 per issue. Next deadline is June 01, 2008.

Note that the editor may "shrink" the amount of info in any given ad due to space limitations in a specific issue.

For more information, Contact Graham Gambles, editor, at 705-672-3105 or e-mail to gamblesgraham@yahoo.ca

USED EQUIPMENT

FOR SALE: 1998 Kubota (85HP) FWD (5000 hr.) plus #660 Alo Loader SL & 4 post ROPS/sunroof. Maintained regularly & shedded.

300 USgal Century Sprayer with new PTO pump (21 tip x 20 inch on 35 ft boom).

3 ton tandem fertilizer spreader (stainless steel) with 40ft spread.

Contact: Darren Gray 705 676-6710

YOUR AD!

YOUR AD could have been Here!

RESOURCES • E-Bulletin

Parry Sound, Nipissing, Sudbury East
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
Northern Ontario Regional Office (NORO)
Toll Free: 1-800-461-6132
Fax: 705-594-9675

Please note that the target publication date of this bulletin is the first Friday of each month. Submissions for the bulletin and requests to subscribe/unsubscribe may be forwarded to: pierrette.desrochers@ontario.ca.

Upcoming local events:

1. 2008 Rural Municipal Drainage Course & Calculating Drainage Act Assessments Course, April 23-24th

April 23rd- Rural Municipal Drainage Course

April 24th- Calculating Drainage Act Assessments

Pinewood Motor Inn, 378 Centre Street, Espanola

Registration deadline: April 11, 2008

For more information, contact the Northern Ontario Regional Office @ 1-800-461-6132 or Valerie Anderson @ 1-877-424-1300

2. 11th Annual Powassan Maple Syrup Festival, April 26th

9:00 am - 4:00 pm, Main Street, Powassan

Activities include: pancake breakfast, live street music, loggers' competition, trade show at arena, bus ride to the sugar bush and much more. Local maple syrup producers will have plenty of maple syrup and products for sale

Upcoming provincial events:

1. Profitable Pastures – March 26th

Elmwood, 27th: Manvers Hall near Bethany, 28th: Almonte.

Keynote speaker: Don Campbell, Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan, "Building a Profitable Sustainable Farm".

Pre-registration is required: $35, 519-986-1484 or 877-892-8663 or info@ontarioforagecouncil.com

2. Ontario Large Herd Operators (LHO) Bus Tour to Eastern Ontario and Québec, March 31st, April 1st , 2nd ,3rd

Join LHO as they visit 16 "State of the Art" Free Stall Dairy Herds. For more information, contact Carol Anne Pinkney @ 519-846-8756 or email: capinkney@sentex.ca Visit: http://www.lho-ontario.ca/

3. London Swine Conference, April 1-2nd

London Convention Centre, London

For more information, contact: 519-482-3333 or www.londonswinceconference.ca

4. Growing the Margins: Energy, Bio-products and By-products from Farm and Food Sectors Conference and Exhibition, April 2-5th

London Convention Centre, London. For more information, visit: www.gtmconf.ca

5. Poultry Industry Conference, April 9-10th

Western Fair, London. For more information, visit www.westernfair.com/shows/poultry.html

6. AGCare and Ontario Farm Animal Council Annual General Meetings and 20th Anniversary Banquet, April 17th

Guelph Place, 492 Michener Road, Guelph. For more information, visit: http://www.ofac.org/annual_meeting/agm2008.php

Resources

1. New & revised publications – Available through Northern Ontario Regional Office @ 1-800-461-6132

a) Publications:

Publication 60; Field Crop Budgets 2008, also available online @ http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/pub60.htm

Publication 75; Guide to Weed Control 2008-2009

Publication 363; Vegetable Production Recommendations 2008-2009

BMP 19E; Best Management Practices: Streamside Grazing (The intent of this book is to help livestock graziers identify environmental risks in riparian areas and select suitable BMPs to address identified risks.

b) Factsheets:

Agdex 410/20; 07-071: Pedometry to Improve Reproduction,

Agdex 720; 07-063: Building Permit Requirements for Livestock Operations

Agdex 410/20; 07-065: Precision Dairy Management and the Future of Dairy Production in Ontario

Agdex 887; 07-067: Identifying and Managing Stress, a Business Owner's G3.

New Business

1. Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS) - Program is extended and new applications are strongly encouraged

Providing farmers and their spouses opportunities to access skills assessment and training to improve their farm profitability and net family income is the primary goal of the Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS).

CASS provides qualified applicants with no-cost access to a professional advisor who will meet with you and focus on understanding your existing skills, your plans and goals, and provide you with a clear path on how to achieve them.

The CASS program is here to assist you in acquiring the skills required to meet your goals. If eligible, CASS funding is available to pay for specialised training and associated expenses. The CASS Skills Assessment Advisor can help you find the most appropriate training for individual needs. CASS participants have taken training in a wide range of areas, including, but not limited to:

- A/Z training
- Commodity marketing
- Book keeping and accounting
- Hospitality training
- Farm diversification (eg. organic agriculture, working with new commodities)
- Goal-setting and business planning

For more information about CASS eligibility, the application process, or any other questions, please contact the CON*NECT CASS Centre toll-free at 1-877-830-0200 or check out the CASS website at www.ontario.ca/cass

Circumpolar Conference – An idea from Norway

By Janet Parsons

"We make the impossible possible" is the slogan of the Norway Arctic Agricultural Think Tank. Bjorn Mathisen, a farmer and chair of the North Norwegian Agricultural Council, is full of enthusiasm as he talks about this farmer initiated project which has brought renewed interest and a level of stability to agriculture in northern Norway.

Bjorg shared the concept and the mechanics of the 'Think Tank' at the Circumpolar Agricultural Conference held in Goose Bay Labrador, last October. Rural and regional development around the north Atlantic rim was one of the main themes at the conference. Dr. Rob Greenwood, Director of the Leslie Harris Center of Regional Policy and Development, Memorial University, spoke about rural and regional development in the north. He pointed out how often the northern communities look to national centres of decision-making for models and approaches, which are often developed for conditions that are very different from northern requirements. He went on to say that by partnering with similar regions around the north Atlantic Rim, and elsewhere, lessons can be shared which will lead to appropriate strategies and processes for long term rural development. Bjorg shared just such a lesson learned, a down to earth success story, an idea that got results. An idea that NEOSCIA is considering implementing in northeastern Ontario.

The farming community in northern Norway was in decline and discouraged. The farmers decided they needed a forum for enthusiasm, joy and to work towards a better income and initiate a better use of resources. The concern developed into a co-action between farmers, researchers, economic development agencies, ag authorities and ag industry players. The result was a 'Think Tank' composed of a managing group (we would call it an executive committee) of 4 or 5 members which is representative of the partners, and three working groups also composed of a mix of partners.

The 'Think Tank' meets twice a year in a workshop format. The task of each working group is to develop 1 or 2 ideas for research projects. The ideas are prioritized and then the managing group applies for funding or/and goes about moving the idea forward.

NEOSCIA has developed a strategic plan as part of the restructuring of OSCIA. One vital component of the plan is the establishment of an 'Agricultural Research and Innovation North' Think Tank along the lines outlined above. It's about time all those involved in the future well being of agriculture in the north came together. But the best part is that it's the farmers that are instigating the development.

Dr. Greenwood was emphatic when he said that you "cannot 'do' development 'to' people. Every success of top down development puts us back a step." In this case we, as farmers in northeastern Ontario, will be stepping forward because we're initiating the change. Bring on the future! Thanks Norway for a great idea.

For more information on this event, go to your web search engine and type in: Circumpolar Conference + Labrador

Agriculture in Newfoundland?

A view of the Circumpolar Agricultural Conference in Happy Valley/Goose Bay, Nfld.

The 6th Circumpolar Agricultural Conference in Happy Valley/Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador: Northern Agriculture - Evolving with a Changing World. When I first heard those words, pictures came to mind of people talking about farming at the North Pole. Do they even have farms in Newfoundland and Labrador? Could I consider Thunder Bay, Ontario to be that far north? Would the issues even relate to farming in Northwestern Ontario? What I found was a group of agricultural producers, academics, organizations and government that were extremely dedicated to using the resources around them in northern climates to produce agricultural products to grow healthy communities. Northern growers have similar issues on all sides of the globe, as seen in presentations from Norway, Sweden, Canada and the USA.

The conference took place from September 28 to October 3, 2007. The first three days included a tour of the West Coast of Newfoundland with 44 other attendees. Participants had a chance to see Rideout's Vegetable Farm (a farm run by descendants of WWII veterans who were provided government assistance to establish farms), Headline Holstein (a 360 milking, 60 dry and 330 heifer cow farm on approximately 915 acres of land, including some newly cleared land), Dark Tickle (a wild berry processing facility), Gros Morne National Park and L'Anse Aux Meadows (two UNESCO World Heritage Sites). Upon arrival in Happy Valley/Goose Bay by charter plane, we were greeted at the airport by the President of the local Chamber of Commerce, who organized our luggage and transportation to the conference hotel. Presentations were made over the next three days. Organizers took the 120 participants on two different tours in the local area: a land clearing demonstration and a tour of North West River, including the Hudson Bay Company Store and the Historical Interpretive Centre. The conference concluded by means of a banquet on the military base with Gwynne Dyer speaking on climate change and international relations.

Many lessons were learned through networking, tours and speakers. Corn production in northern climates, community gardens, sheep and dairy production, and biofuels were just some of the topics covered in the seminars given at the conference. Marketing of local resources such as wild berries and game (caribou) to create businesses was also a great inspiration. Learning the history of

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Circumpolar Agriculture

The Circumpolar Agricultural Association was founded in 1995 on the ideas of the first Circumpolar Agricultural Conference which was held in Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada, in 1992.

The objectives of the association are to encourage the exchange of information, material and technology of agriculture in circumpolar areas and to maintain relations with others with similar objectives. It is an opportunity for circumpolar countries to discuss food and agriculture challenges facing the Northern Regions.

Membership is open to any individual or organization which promotes the aims of the organization.

A conference has been held every three years. The second was in Norway in 1995, the third in Alaska in 1998, the fourth was in Iceland in 2001, the fifth in Sweden in 2004, and the sixth was held in Happy Valley – Goose Bay, Labrador, October 1 to 3, 2007. The theme of this conference was "Northern Agriculture: Evolving with a Changing World".

Northern Ontario became involved for the first time in 2007. Five delegates attended; I was fortunate enough to have been selected as one of these delegates.

There was a pre-conference two-day tour of the West Coast of Newfoundland, September 29-30. We visited a large dairy farm, Gros Morne National Park, a wild berry processing facility, and L'Anse Aux Meadows where the Norsemen first landed in North America.

We arrived in Happy Valley-Goose Bay in the evening of September 30, and checked in to the Hamilton Hotel (this is the Conference Hotel). After registration, we shared refreshments and became acquainted with the other delegates.

The conference commenced on October 1 at 8:30 a.m. There as a keynote speaker each morning for one hour, and the rest of the day had presentations on various topics from all around the Circumpolar region. There was a presentation on goat production in Norway, reindeer farming in Alaska, gardening in Northwest Territories, and silage in Sweden.

Lunches were provided by the Masonic Lodge and Royal Canadian Legion.

On day two, we had a tour that took us to see a land-clearing operation and then on the North West River. North West River is one of the oldest communities in Labrador. Here we visited a local museum, the Labrador Interpretation Centre Craft Shop, and local gardeners. This concluded with a dinner of all local produce, local entertainment, and ended with a dance.

The final day, there were presentations a general meeting of the CAA. The conference came to a with a banquet at the Canuck Club. The guest speaker, Gwynne Dyer, spoke on "Northern Agriculture and the Climate Wars".

I feel that this was one of the most rewarding conferences I have ever attended and extend my sincere thanks to the organizations which made this possible.

Partial funding for Northern Ontario participants to the Circumpolar Agriculture Association Conference was provided by the Agricultural Adaptation Council and Agriculture and Food of Canada, through CanAdvance.

This project was developed in partnership with the Northern Ontario Agri-Food Education and Marketing Inc., and the Northern Federations of Agriculture.

If anyone wishes more information about the conference or would like a presentation, please feel free to contact me.
Robert Wall, 807-937-4357

Agriculture in Newfoundland?

A view of the Circumpolar Agricultural Conference in Happy Valley/Goose Bay, Nfld.

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Newfoundland and Labrador from the agricultural perspective gave participants an understanding of why and how the industry has developed since the first Norse settlements in the 1700s. Using local vegetables for school fundraisers teaches a healthy lesson to children. Many other ideas, connections and lessons could be learning from talking with local participants, like Norwegian dairy farmers, Newfoundlander greenhouse producers and Alaskan entomologists.

My thanks to the Northern Ontario Agri-Food Education & Marketing Inc for choosing me to represent Northern Ontario at this conference. Partial funding for the project was received from the Agriculture Adaptation Council and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through CanAdvance. This project is developed in partnership with the Northern Ontario Federations of Agriculture. If you would like to know more about the conference, or would like me to speak at one of your organizations meetings, feel free to contact me at christinamol@hotmail.com or call me at 475-5193.

Nipissing/Parry Sound/Muskoka SCIA News

by Janet Parsons

The West Nipissing Seed Fair and Conference is being held on April 2 at 10 a.m. at the Verner Arena. John Rowsell will once again share research results from the plots and the BMP nitrogen and sulphur trials. Rheal Brouillette will be speaking on hay production. Another topic is crops for alternative energy sources e.g. switch grass. Finally, I'll be speaking about the Circumpolar Agricultural Conference and agriculture in Newfoundland and Labrador. For information on seed and forage classes, call Norm Delorme at 594-2324. The traditional hot dinner is available at noon. Everyone is welcome.

Congratulations to Norm Delorme for winning the West Nipissing East Sudbury Forage Masters Competition. Second went to James Parsons, followed by France Beaudry. Special thanks to the sponsors - Pickseed and Agri-Food Labs.

Muskoka is boasting of a new agricultural enterprise – shiitake mushrooms. Jack Hay and his wife Kazy of Mactier, started Moon Bay Shiitake Farm in 2005. The mushrooms grow on logs implanted with spawn and Jack hopes to develop new strains for the region. This is a niche market and could handle 30 new producers in the next 5 years. One person can handle 1000 logs which in turn produce 500-2000 lbs of mushrooms per year for a total of $6000 to $32000. The logs produce for five years. Jack is putting on seminars for potential growers.

Contact: *jack.hay@utoronto.ca*

Katya Riley reports that Savour Muskoka has received funding from FedNor, enabling the program to continue for a further three years. Muskoka was designated a Provincial Culinary Tourism Destination with the Savour Muskoka program. More information on membership, events and even recipes can be found at *www.savour muskoka.ca*

Nipissing East Parry Sound District had their Agriculture Symposium in early March.

One of a number of pilot locations for the OSCIA project "Growing Your Farm Profits: Planning for Business Success" was held in Verner at the end of February. The program follows the EFP format of self assessment and preparing an action plan. There is no peer review. Depending on the response to the pilot, the program will be fine tuned and offered in every district next year.

It looks like a bumper crop could cause handling and storage problems this fall at the local elevator in Verner. With prices at record highs, grain and oilseed crops will be planted on every available acre. There were some problems last year so with the increased acreage we're heading into a serious bottleneck. Be prepared and consider your options.

A Northern Ontario Farmer Run Business in 108th year

Business's everywhere come and go, especially in Northern Ontario, so one that has persisted , indeed thrived, for 108 years is an exception. And a point of pride for the farm community in Northern Ontario is that this business is directed by farmers.

In January 1899, a group of "shakers and movers" in the Sault Ste Marie area were sufficiently upset with the way they were being treated by southern Ontario businesses, that they decided to found their own company. That company still exists and is doing very well with it's head office in Thessalon. It's Algoma Mutual Insurance Company and it has the distinction of being the only insurance company with it's head office in Northern Ontario.

One can only imagine the frustration in the room when the following motion, taken from the original handwritten minutes , was passed at the January 19th, 1899 meeting in Sault Ste Marie.

"Moved by W.G, Sims, sec by Robert Rush that whereas the business men and other property owners of Sault Ste Marie feel that the tariff of the Canadian Fire Underwriters Assoc. as applied to them is unjust and discriminating by reason of an additional charge of fifty percent because of we are situated west of a certain line and whereas the insurance companies have refused to throw off this obnoxious fifty percent charge. Therefore be it resolved that it is expedient and necessary to organize a mutual fire insurance company for the districts of Algoma and Nipissing which shall have powers to transact fire insurance business in the farms and villages and rural portions of said districts and that this meeting pledge itself to support and patronize such a company and to encourage its establishment and maintenance in every proper and legitimate manner."

Photo from left to right: Dennis Kirby, Will Samis, Wayne Finday, Cameron Ross, Vernon Bailey, Lynn Kent, Daryl Trivers

The company came into being in that year. Several of the people at that formative meeting were farmers and over the last 108 years the company has become one of the approx. 50 Farm Mutuals in Ontario and is directed by a board of six farmers.

Board chairman Daryl Trivers explains that while occupations of Board members over the last 108 years is not known, the Board over the last couple of generations has always been farmers.

Company CEO and manager, Cameron Ross, a farm boy from St. Josephs Island explains that Algoma Mutual is about the middle of the pack in terms of size among Ontario's Mutual Insurance Companies.

"The best thing about Mutuals is that they are providing insurance at cost. Each policyholder is an owner and six farmer/owners oversee this company says Ross. He believes that being a northern based company gives them an advantage when servicing the north in that the culture of the company is in near perfect tune with the culture and values of the farms and communities they serve.

He further explained that having six northern Ontario farmers as the potential final arbitrator on any and all claims is a distinct advantage. " We can probably never be the least expensive place to buy insurance but we try to be the best if you have a claim"

Ross explained that the company sells it's product through independent brokerages that are located around northeastern Ontario. The original company area has been expanded from Algoma and Nipissing to now include in addition, Cochrane, Temiskaming, Manitoulin, Sudbury, Parry Sound, Muskoka and Haliburton.

The Chairman of the Board and Company President is Daryl Trivers, a beef farmer from Kynoch, Ontario. Daryl has been on the Board for about ten years and .along with his wife Diana and four children operate their farm which includes some local freezer beef and a small maple syrup operation. Daryl's Uncle Len Trivers was president of OSCIA in 1965. Daryl has been a peer reviewer for Environmental Farm Plans since it's inception and before that the land stewardship program

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Algoma Fertilizer Best Management Practise Project

By Murray Cochran

BACKGROUND

We had been asked by local industry to provide bio-mass for a co-generation plant. We felt that we needed to know what our actual cost of production was before entering into a long term arrangement to supply such product. The crop of choice was reed canary grass. Continual hay production has created a large area of lands with low phosphorus levels. Some farmers in the past have reported lower than expected results from their fertility program. Maybe this could be because to much emphasis was put on nitrogen causing a further reduction in phosphorus and potash levels. PH, phosphorus and potash have to be maintained if we want to produce biomass predictably, economically and at a sustainable level. This is a three year project, 2007 being year one. There were two sites, one near Thessalon and the other on St Joesph's Island. Due to high deer foraging pressure there was no credible data on the St Joe's sight. Data for the Thessalon site was as follows

- 2nd year stand of Reed Canary Grass
- Fertilizer applied July 20, 2007
- 10 20X50 plots, replicated 3 X
- Soil type: Noelville silt loam
- Soil test: showed low levels of Phosphorus & Potash
- pH : 5.9

Each replicate of ten plots was set up as shown in table 1.

Table 1:

No lime, no fertilizer	70# N/ac	70# N/ac 120# P/acre	70# N/ac 120# P/acre 215# K/acre	70# N/ac 215# K/acre
No lime, no fertilizer	70# N/ac 2 TN lime/acre	70# N/ac 2 TN lime/acre 120# P/acre	70# N/ac 2 TN lime/acre 120# P/acre 215# K/acre	70# N/ac 2 TN lime/acre 215# K/acre
1	2	3	4	5

The results, taken on November 7, 2007 were as shown in Table 2:

Note: There is some significant deviation between replicates, this is most likely as a result of water availability, or lack thereof

Table 2:

Plot		
Weight (g)for 1ft^2		
	Lime	No lime
Average		
1	28	27
2	32	46
3	61	55
4	73	55
5	61	33

Summary:

In general, we see consistently higher weights for the limed portion in the Wolgemuth test plots than in the unlimed portions. The exact reason for this is unclear, as experience tells us that lime usually has minimal effects until the year following application. Marked increase is also shown by the plots receiving Phosphorous and/or Potassium over those receiving Nitrogen only.

A Northern Ontario Farmer Run Business in 108th year

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The vice-president is Will Samis, a beef farmer near Iron Bridge. Will has been on the board for about nine years. Will and his wife Elaine have operated Applehill farm for thirty years and are shareholders in Northern Quality Meats, Algoma's only licensed Abbatoir, and are also one of the nine farm owners who have recently incorporated as Penokean Hills Farms Inc. to market locally raised and finished beef in Algoma .

Will is chairman of the Algoma Community Pasture and was provincial Chairman of that Association when it was formed to take over ownership of the former ARDA community pastures. He also served on municipal council.

Company Executive Director is Lynn Kent from St. Joseph's Island. Lynn and his wife run a large Maple Syrup Operation and Lynn is also an electrician and building contractor. Their Maple Syrup business is a third generation endeavour that is well known is the business. Lynn is a past president of the Ontario Maple Syrup Producer's Assoc. and is very active with The legion and the Reserves and a long time member of the Pipe band out of Sault Ste Marie.

Wayne Findlay from Echo Bay is a board member and immediate past-president. Wayne and his wife Carol operated a dairy farm for many years near Echo Bay. His great grandfather was on the first Board of Algoma Mutual in 1899. Wayne has served as director on the milk Board and the Co-op Board and also served as Chairman of both.

Dennis Kirby from Dayton, Ontario has been a Board member for about 16 years and has served a term as Chairman and President during that time. Dennis and his wife Debbie run a larger beef operation and Dennis is the manager of The Algoma Cooperative Livestock Sales in Thessalon. Dennis has been a board member and chairman of most farm associations in Algoma as was his father Len before him. Dennis has previously served on municipal council.

Vernon Bailey from Sault Ste Marie has been on the Board for about 15 years and is well known around Northern Ontario as an Auctioneer. Vernon was Canada's champion Auctioneer a few years ago and he does many farm and cattle auctions around the north. Until recently Vernon operated a beef farm near Thessalon which has now been taken over by his son's Scott and Ben.

Vernon's memory is legendary and he's often called upon to recite poetry at functions, especially Robert Services works. Vernon does many charity auctions each year and has recently been appearing in Musical comedy guild productions in Sault Ste Marie.

Ross believes that the collective skill sets and record of Community involvement the Boards, past and present, has brought to Algoma Mutual has given it great strength when providing the best insurance possible for Northern Ontario Farmers.

Conflict on the family farm

When I complete a farm succession plan with a farm family I assume that from time to time there may be conflict or potential differences between the members of the family. When conflict arises, the farm families should have a strategy in place to handle such situations. Everyone should understand that conflict arises as a result of differing values and/or principles. Farm families for the most part have similar values and principles; however, there can sometimes be generational differences, especially if the parent or grandparent generation were immersed in a different culture. We all know you cannot change other people so trying to enforce a specific value or principle on someone will not work. History and relationships can really compound the issues and have a profound impact on the perceptions people have and their reaction to events. Since we cannot change the past, you need to recognize them for what they are. A person today may be very different from that person in the past.

Moods or personalities will affect the situation differently from day to day. In most cases, these are things that are hard to change so you should not dwell on these if there is any hope of resolving the conflict.

If conflict results, a good place to start would be to have all parties realize the factors above, put them behind them and start by focusing on a common interest. Everyone has to buy into this interest and it has to be "the big picture", a picture of the future that can be visualized by everyone involved. It has to be clear and it has to be a unified direction that is critical to the continuing business.

When families start to drift apart because they have different views on what should happen on the farm they need to:

- Define the common interest
- Identify the structures needed to resolve problem areas
- Provide the facts needed to manage the conflict

All farm family members need the correct information in order to play their part. We often make decisions on what we perceive and perception becomes reality. Facts need to be put squarely on the table so that everyone is working from the same source of information.

In many cases farm families do get along but as time goes on circumstances change or someone said or did something other members of the family disapproved of. When this happens and if conflict does arise, they need to minimize and/or diffuse:

- Past values and principles
- Past and current relationships and history
- Current moods and personalities
- They should spend their energies dealing with:
- Identify or establish a common interest
- Set up a structure where all can be heard and steps clearly identified to eliminate the conflict
- Make sure the facts are correct and everyone is working with the same facts

There are times during a succession process that this arises and we have to deal with it before we move on. When I am sitting at the table and this happens I ask the parties to also:

- Hear what everyone is saying and to do this only one person talks at a time and another person under no circumstances cuts another person off.
- Each person is empathetic to the other person's views.

Being empathetic means that you try to see why that person thinks that way by putting yourself in their shoes. By doing this does not mean you are agreeing with them but it does help you understand why they feel that way.

If farm families are faced with this situation and they take these approaches in the future, they will greatly increase their chances of resolving the conflict.

Disclaimer –Neither Freedom 55 Financial, a division of London Life Insurance Company or its financial security advisors are engaged in the giving of tax, legal or accounting advice. You should seek independent professional advice from your lawyer and/or accountant before implementing any concepts discussed on estate planning.

Improving canola yields with sulphur fertilization

by Graham Gambles

Over the past 3 years, NEOSCIA has undertaken an extensive field study that was designed to evaluate the need for extra sulphur fertilization for optimum CANOLA production in Northern Ontario. The project was funded by OSCIA, Ontario Agri-Food Technologies, the MNDM "Northern Heritage Fund", and Agri-Food Laboratories (Guelph).

The field study was based in Timiskaming and Nipissing, but extended into the Districts of Cochrane, Sudbury, Manitoulin and Algoma. The project encompassed 33 farms with over 20 soil types, and included 83 plant tissue tests and 314 soil tests. Nine major trials of 3 replicates each were conducted.

The study was done because sulphur was not recommended for fertilizing Canola in our region by OMAFRA. (Sulphur is an essential element for superior canola growth.) It has been believed that sufficient atmospheric sulphur was available for Ontario canola crops. However, Manitoulin growers thought that they seen a yield increase when sulphur was applied. It was noted that industrial sulphur emissions had decreased, and canola growers in western Canada were achieving better yields with added sulphur.

Due to the wide scope of this field study, the results CAN NOT be considered to be "Proof", but the results certainly INDICATE that superior canola yields might be achieved with sulphur fertilization.

Note that the weather was highly variable over the three years of study. One year was excessively hot and dry, a second was cool and wet, while the third could be considered "Normal". Also note that 3 of the 9 replicated trials were lost due to insect problems and management difficulties.

Annual atmospheric sulphur deposition in northern Ontario reached a peak in the 1980,s when industrial air pollution from the USA was still unchecked. This was the period of original canola expansion into the region. At that time, our area may have received 25kg/ha of annual sulphur accumulation through precipitation. Federal documents indicate that by the year 2000, this had been reduced to about 15 kg/ha. There are no records after that date, but it is well known that industrial sulphur emissions are continuing to be reduced. Governments are aiming for sulphur pollution to be cut by another 50% between 2005 and 2015. Therefore, farmers cannot expect "free" supplies of sulphur on their canola crops in the future!

The study also found that sulphur does not accumulate in mineral soils, although it is stored to some extent in black muck and peat soils, as well as in untitled land. Conversely, in tiled land, the soluble sulphur is washed out of the soil with the spring run off. The greater the snow accumulation over winter, the greater the snow melt, consequently producing the greatest reduction in spring soil sulphur levels.

FALL soil tests, even to a depth of 24", always indicated that soil sulphur was adequate. (However, the 12" to 24" SPRING analysis always showed a sulphur deficiency!) Over the whole soil profile, 61% of the soil tests showed sulphur deficiency in the spring. That level was raised to 78% soil sulphur deficiency over the 24" soil profile at bloom, the period when the plant needs sulphur the most.

Therefore, testing soil for sulphur content

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2008 Monsanto Scholarships

Monsanto Canada has released details of its 2008 Opportunity Scholarship program for grade 12 graduating students from farm families who plan to pursue post-secondary education in agriculture or forestry. 2008 Monsanto Canada Opportunity Scholarships are available to eligible students entering their first year of post-secondary education in agricultural sciences or forestry at a recognized Canadian educational institution. In 2008, Monsanto will award approximately 50 to 60 deserving students with a $1,500 scholarship to help pay for their studies. Entering its 17th year, the Monsanto Canada Opportunity Scholarship Program has awarded almost $1 million to thousands of deserving students since the program's inception in 1991.

"Our scholarship program continues to grow and it is certainly one of the most rewarding programs we provide through our corporate giving program," said Trish Jordan, public affairs director with Monsanto Canada. "Every year we are impressed by the achievements and commitment of the students who apply and it is terrific to see the very best and brightest wanting to pursue careers in agriculture or forestry."

Monsanto Canada Opportunity Scholarships are available to students who meet the following criteria: - Students must come from a family farm and/or forestry background with confirmed plans to enroll in their first year of post-secondary education in an agricultural sciences or forestry program; - Students must have demonstrated academic excellence, leadership capabilities, and a keen interest and involvement in their rural community; - Students must submit a completed application form, which includes an essay that outlines what area of agriculture or forestry they would like to work in and why; - All completed application forms must be post-marked no later than May 16, 2008.

Improving Canola Yields with Sulphur Fertilization

Continued from page 9

in the fall is only of value if you are planting winter canola. Most farmers in this region plant spring canola, and soil tests for sulphur would have to be done AFTER snow melt, in order to provide meaning full results for the spring crop.

Whole plant tissue analysis indicated that 94% of the plots were deficient in sulphur at bloom. (NOTE: these results are in question as the CURRENT standard says that only the top leaf at bloom should be considered in the analysis.)

It must be noted that many of the Tissue tests indicated that the plants actually had Excessive levels of nitrogen in the tissue. Similarly, some soil tests showed that fall soil nitrate levels are quite high in many organic soils and in some mineral soils, depending on the farm evaluated. More study needs to be done to determine if farmers may actually be applying excessive levels of this expensive nutrient.

On the triple replicated test sites, we attempted to add an additional 10#/ac of sulphur from various fertilizer sources. Note that only 6 of the 9 sites were taken to completion. The best site indicated that we obtained a 15% improved yield. A second improved yield by 7%, and a third by 4%. (The worst site suggested a loss of 5% yield over the entire site, although 2/3 of the plots indicated a positive response.) One site had "elemental sulphur" added and there was NO difference in yield across the plots.

There is no attempt to evaluate these yields economically due to the current wide swings in both fertilizer costs and crop value. This must be done by the farmer on an annual basis.

Positive yield results were achieved with three sulphur sources. These were Magnesium Sulfate Tetra hydrate (Epsom Salts), Ammonium Thiosulphate and Ammonium Sulfate. Elemental Sulphur does not become active until 18 months after application.

There are indications that considerably more than 10#/ac of sulphur could be successfully applied for economically improved yields. It was noted at the Ontario Canola Growers Association meeting this past winter that one farmer in southern Ontario is actually applying up to 34#/ac of sulphur with his canola crop. Interestingly enough, he achieved the greatest yield in the province in 2006 at 3433#/ac.!

At the very least, the field studies indicate that the canola farmer should apply some sulphur to reduce risk. Sulphur is also much more economic to apply than is Nitrogen. If any element is to be applied as an "insurance' for a good yield, Sulphur is certainly the one to be considered!

New Feature for Breaking Ground:

Inside the back cover… OFA News in Northeastern Ontario

continued from page 1

our membership informed."

Each issue of Breaking Ground will have the inside back page devoted to OFA activities in the northeast. The two service representatives, Neil Tarlton and Bob Norris, will co-ordinate the content. If you have comments or ideas on the content of this page please contact either Neil or Bob.

OSCIA Restructuring

Continued from page 1

Allowance for delegates accommodation and travelling expenses to the summer and annual meetings are part of the request.

The proposal also recommends having remote contributors to Breaking Ground so articles will be included from all districts of the northeast.

Finally, the proposal includes the 'Agriculture and Innovation North Think Tank' (described in another article).

The business plan and associated funding will not come into effect until 2009.

Plan to attend the NEOSCIA Annual Meeting, Trade Show and Conference in Earlton on April 4 & 5, 2008. We look forward to seeing you.

Northern Canola Field Trials Summary 2007

Paul Oikari - Echo Bay								
Hybrid	**Planting Rate(lbs/Ac)**	**Seed Treatment**	**Trait**	**Width Harvested**	**Length**	**Area(Ac)**	**Total Weight Harvested**	**Yield (T/Ac)**
5030IN		6 ?	Invigor®	28.5	968	0.633333333	708	1.117894737
71-45RR		8 Helix Xtra	Roundup Ready®	28.5	968	0.633333333	752	1.187368421
70-20CL		9 Helix	Clearfield®	28.5	968	0.633333333	734	1.158947368
Jean-Guy & Lize Seguin - Verner								
Previous Crop	Alfalfa							
Planted April 28, 2007								
Hybrid	**Planting Rate(lbs/Ac)**	**Seed Treatment**	**Trait**			**Area(Ac)**	**Total Weight Harvested**	**Yield (T/Ac)**
70-20CL		5 Helix	Clearfield®	0	0	6.9	6090	0.882608696
71-45RR		5 Helix Xtra	Roundup Ready®	0	0	10.2	11410	1.118627451
70-20CL		5 Helix	Clearfield®	0	0	8.6	8720	1.013953488
5030IN		5 ?	Invigor®	0	0	9.9	11340	1.145454545
Sean Mackey - New Liskeard								
Previous Crop	Alfalfa							
Planted May 19, 2007								
Hybrid	**Planting Rate(lbs/Ac)**	**Seed Treatment**	**Trait**			**Area(Ac)**	**Total Weight Harvested**	**Yield (T/Ac)**
5030IN	5.5.	?	Clearfield®	22	2230.14	1.126333333	877.9491833!	0.779475451
70-20CL	5.5.	Helix	Clearfield®	22	1467.84	0.741333333	335.753176	0.452904464
71-45RR	5.5.	Helix Extra	Roundup Ready®	22	1432.86	0.723666667	526.3157895	0.727290359!
Brian Wiley - Collingwood2007		OCGA CPC Trials						
Planted May 15, 2007								
Date Harvested August 28, 2007								
Company	**Variety**	**Area**	**Yield - lbs**	**Moisture**	**lbs / acre**	**adj to 10%**	**Yield (T/Ac)**	
Invigor	5030	16875 sq '	1110	10.1	2865	2862	1.298548094	
Pioneer	45H21	16875 sq'	1135	9.7	2929	2937	1.332577132	
Pioneer	45H26	16876 sq '	1130	9.8	2916	2921	1.325317604	
Pioneer	45H25	16875 sq '	1160	9.1	2994	3020	1.370235935	
De Kalb	71-45	16875 sq '	1190	9	3071	3101	1.406987296	
Invigor	5440	16700 sq '	1160	11.8	3025	2971	1.34800363	
4 Plots								
Summary	**Yield Average(T/Ac)**							
71-45RR	#REF!							
Invigor® 5030	#REF!							
3 Plots								
Summary	Remove Mackey Plot							
71-45RR	1.24							
Invigor® 5030	1.19							

OSCIA News…

March 2008

A NEWSLETTER TO UPDATE OSCIA MEMBERS, PRESIDENTS, SECRETARIES, TREASURERS, DIRECTORS, AND OMAF CROP TECHNOLOGY CONTACTS —

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OSCIA 2009
ANNUAL MEETING

Date: February 3 & 4, 2009
Place: Sheraton Fallsview
Niagara Falls

Message from the President

Pat Lee

As the winter of 2007-2008 draws to an end, we look forward to the upcoming spring season. Most of the province has had adequate moisture (even those areas hit with severe drought) and with commodity prices the best they have been in years, we look forward with optimism to this year's growing season.

The past winter has been a busy time for OSCIA. Your Executive attended many annual meetings across the province and will continue to be available as the year continues.

The provincial annual meeting was held at the Sheraton Fallsview Hotel in Niagara Falls. We were able to provide excellent and knowledgeable speakers such as Kevin Hursh (Hursh Consulting and Communication Inc., Saskatoon) – **'Let the Good Times Roll'**; Dr. Jane Johnson (ARS.USDA, Morris Minnesota) – **'A Matter of Balance: Conservation and Renewable Energy – How soil quality is affected by removal of biomass';** Doug Johnston (Perth County), **Ontario Forage Master**, and; Dr. Ralph Hardy (President, National Agricultural Biotechnology Council, Ithica, NY) **– Future Effects on Producers from Fuelling our Bio-Fuels Industry**.

Each county was well represented by enthusiastic delegates participating in question opportunities of speakers and those who gave reports. An informative presentation was given by OMAFRA's Peter Johnson and Scott Banks on crop production, followed by a lively comment period. County and regional groups presented the results of their Major and Partner Grants.

The Grant Guidelines for 2008 have been prepared and distributed, and we encourage counties and regions to submit projects. Regions should take note of the one-time Education Grant available this year only.

A very successful Canada-Ontario EFP program continues into 2008. Office staff continue to be very busy processing claims and issuing cheques. To the middle of February, 11,428 projects have received $49,480,567 in

federal dollars. It appears that only a small percentage of farmers will not have completed their proposed projects.

We are pleased to hear that our federal and provincial partners have supported continuation of the EFP with new details of the cost-share opportunities to be released shortly. The 'Growing Forward' program is anticipated to have new opportunities for producers. We also look forward to our continued partnership with AAFC, OMAFRA and the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition as we enter the next five-year series of programs.

OSCIA, in cooperation with OMAFRA and with funding from AAFC through the Ontario Agricultural Adaptation Council has just concluded a series of workshops in seven locations across Ontario to pilot test a new approach to engaging farmers in the **'Growing Your Farm Profits'** business planning project. An evaluation report of the workbook, workshops and process for 'Growing Your Farm Profits' will be provided later this spring. This will provide direction for a potentially expanded program delivery with this self-assessment, adult education and training program. The OSCIA Directors feel that the business side of managing our soil, water, air and crops is of great value while at the same time, dedicating resources to production issues.

On behalf of OSCIA, I wish you a safe and successful planting season. A little cooperation from the weathermakers would be welcome as well.♦

OSCIA Annual Meeting

The OSCIA Annual Meeting in February was well attended by members, executives of the local associations, provincial government crop specialists, and agri-business.

The theme of this year's meeting was *"The Bio-Economy Effects on Soil/Crop Management"*.

A number of excellent speakers were featured whose presentations reflected this theme. Their presentations will be summarized in each issue of OSCIA News in 2008 by members of the OSCIA Regional Communication Coordinator team. Following is the first article.

"OPPORTUNITIES FOR FARMERS TO PROVIDE BIO-AGRICULTURE FOR THE FUTURE"

- Neil Moore, RCC, East Central & Quinte Regions

According to Dr. Ralph Hardy, President, National Agricultural Biotechnology Council, Ithica, New York, "Farmers Feed & Fuel Cities" is the motto that should be used to promote the role of agriculture in the 21st Century. Agriculture can provide society with food, feed, and fiber, and at the same time provide part of fuel, energy, and chemical requirements.

There are positive megatrends that will influence agriculture.

The age of Biology - GMO – we are just skimming the surface of this potential. As the human genome and DNA sequencing is perfected, there will be opportunity to use biology to introduce synthetic chromosomes to design crops to meet specific uses. Expanding market potential in China is huge.
Petroleum is a finite resource and watch price change after the peak production is reached.

Greenhouse Gas and Global Warming – we need to reduce net CO_2 emissions and agriculture is the solution as we reduce our environmental footprint. Agriculture also provides sustainability, but corn will be a small piece of bio fuels.

Technology investment requires an integration of research, product development, and regulation activity. In the US there are 3 centers of research for the bio-technology industry - the presence of government mandates and subsidies provides investor security. 20th century was fossil based and 21st will be a hybrid of fossil and bio sources.

Healthy foods - topics include organic, GMO, Omega 3, vitamins, anti-oxidants, food allergies, and natural food toxicant issues.

The Road Forward:

- the past - commodity crops used for food, feed and fiber
- the present - commodity crops used for first generation of energy chemicals and materials
- the present efforts - new biomass crops/trees and residues for next generations of energy chemicals and materials
- future - new food/feed crops with improved healthfulness.

Agriculture has the solution for the 21st century and to be successful, producers should focus on value added, by sharing in the products being produced through co-operatives that are mainly owned by producers, not just producing biomass crops.♦

Be sure to watch for additional summaries of speakers in future issues of OSCIA News.

OSCIA Seed Fair Grants

OSCIA is sponsoring pedigreed seed fairs/shows during the fall and winter of 2007/2008.

OSCIA is providing up to $300 each to ten local association pedigreed seed fairs/shows. The grant will promote the growing of certified seed as a preferred farm management practice.

To date, grants for the 2007/2008 season have been approved to Grey, Renfrew, Stormont, Dundas, Dufferin, Prescott, Middlesex, Nipissing West, and Glengarry. ♦

Membership

OSCIA continues to look for new opportunities to create extended value for membership, and to support the good work of the local associations. Increasing membership by 10% across the province was a goal the provincial Executive set for 2005-2008. With joint efforts from the local/district associations, regional associations, and provincial association, the goal of increasing our 2005 Membership value by 10% has been reached. **Congratulations for everyone's efforts to keep OSCIA as a vibrant grassroots association!**

This winter, OSCIA members benefited from receiving discounts at regional events.

- $10 off South West Agriculture Conference, Ridgetown, Jan 3-4, 2008; or $10 rebate towards the purchase of a 2008 membership. **(72 new members registered, 2008)**
- $15 off Farm$mart Conference, Guelph, Jan 19, 2008, or non-member admission rate includes OSCIA membership. (**139 new members registered, 2008.)**
- $5 off Eastern Ontario Crops Conference, Kemptville, Feb 21, 2008.
- Free admission to the East Central Farm Show, Lindsay, March 5-6, 2008.

2008 will continue to be an active year of regional events that support OSCIA's goals, and provide our members with information and advantages.

- $15 off Soil Management Day, August 19th, Guelph area.
- $15 off Farm$mart Farming Systems Expo, Elora, July 3-4.
- Free Admission (vouchers to be provided) to Canada's Outdoor Farm Show, including the Bayer CropScience "Where Crop Farmers Meet" – VIP Brunch September 9, 10, 11.

A flyer outlining the benefits of being a Soil and Crop member is available in French and English for local associations to print and use as a promotional tool for new members. Please contact Deanna Deaville in the provincial office for the file to be sent to you. (800-265-9751 Ext 64219) ♦

Hot off the Press!

A copy of all the project reports from OMAFRA and OSCIA is available in the 2008 **Crop Advances** publication. A copy was provided to each delegate who attend the OSCIA Annual Meeting in February, and one copy has been sent to the secretary of each local association to share with members at meetings.

Local/regional association secretaries can order additional copies from the provincial office at a cost of $12.00 for the hard copy, and $3.00 for a CD. (Plans are under way to post these reports to the OSCIA website.)♦

OSCIA Supplies

Supplies are available to local associations through the OSCIA office in Guelph.

Among items available are:

"Freddy's Friends", a 14-page story/colouring children's book about forages. Created by the American Forage and Grassland Council, this is one of the first of many plans to educate children about forages.

Local associations may order Freddy's Friends for an upcoming event where children will be present. They are provided free of charge.

OSCIA Farm Gate signs, an aluminum pre-drilled gate sign measuring 5" x 17.5" with OSCIA name and local member designation. This sign is available in English and French. Local associations may order these signs to present to a member who has helped out in some way. They can also be purchased by the local associations for resale to their members. The signs are $10 each.

Rain gauges are also available to local associations for distribution to their membership. The style in stock are the round type, calibrated in millimeters.

Please contact Evelyn Howse at the Guelph office should you wish any of these items. ♦

2008 Ontario Forage Masters Program

Plans for the 2008 Ontario Forage Masters Program are well under way, with guidelines distributed to local associations in February.

PICKSEED® good things growing...

AGRI-FOOD LABORATORIES

The sponsors - Pickseed Canada and Agri-Food Laboratories - are again offering valuable prizes to the top winners from each local association.

For a listing of prizes, the guidelines, and how to enter, you are encouraged to contact your local association

president or secretary, who have recently received complete details.

The guidelines will also be posted on the OSCIA website in the near future.

The deadline for local associations to submit entries to the provincial office is April 18, so don't delay. Contact your local association secretary today.♦

Fertilizer BMP Grant

This project is supported by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food Program Fund), the Agriculture Adaptation Council (CanAdvance Fund) contributing $40,000, and The Fertilizer Institute Grant contributing $10,000. Support is provided by the Ontario Agri-Business Association, Research and Environment Committee, the Certified Crop Advisers, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the participating local Soil and Crop Improvement Associations and Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association. This project is a great example of partnership and leveraging funds to achieve worthwhile results at the grassroot level.

The objectives of these grants are to: 1) reduce the potential of nutrient loading in the environment and 2) provide an opportunity to create a niche market product. This is a three-year grant (2006, 2007, 2008). Approved projects are:

1. Micro Essentials®SZ Trial – *Thunder Bay SCIA*

2. Sulphur and Zinc Micronutrients to Improve Corn Yields – *York SCIA*
3. Examining the Effect of 15-15-3 Sidedress Fertilizer Applied at Planting by Adjusting Rates – *Essex SCIA*
4. Fertilizer Application Methods – Nitrogen Placement for Canola Effects of Sulphur on Canola Yields – *Nipissing West SCIA*
5. Starter Fertilizer for Corn on Livestock Farms – *Oxford SCIA*
6. Nitrogen Rates on Hard Red Winter Wheat – *Grey SCIA*
7. Demonstrate the Effectiveness of Fertilizer/Lime on Low Fertility Soils for Energy Crops – *Algoma SCIA*
8. Solid Manure Compared to Composted Manure – *Norfolk SCIA*

9. Economic Return of Lime vs. Fertilizer on Low pH, Short Term Rental Land – *Niagara North SCIA*
10. ESN Controlled Release Fertilizer – *Renfrew SCIA.*♦

Cover Crops' Ability to Carry N to Subsequent Field Crop Results

This project has been funded by the Adaptation Council of Canada (Cord IV Fund) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. OSCIA is cooperating with the University of Guelph and OMAFRA to address the possibility that where manure is applied to Ontario fields in the summer or early fall, cover crops such as oats could sequester Nitrogen and relay it into the corn crop the following year.

Results summarized by Greg Stewart, OMAFRA, show that while some nitrogen sequestering occurs in the fall, August-seeded cover crops did not appear to a) increase available soil nitrate the following June or b) improve corn yields in situations where the crops were relying on

manure as the only N source, when compared to a no-cover-crop situation. Cover crops did not appear to have any significant yield enhancement to the subsequent corn crop. This observation is drawn from a fairly wide range of growing conditions and fertility regimes in 2007.

This project compared manure application on 10 farm co-operator fields across Ontario. Results indicate that the average nitrogen credit for these manure applications was 41 lbs/ac. At a nitrogen price of $0.52/lb, the value of that manure credit would be a savings in nitrogen fertilizer costs of $21.32/ac. Even in the absence of cover crops induced Nitrogen savings, producers should be attentive in taking manure credits into account in order to improve profitability and reduce over application of nitrogen fertilizer.

There may be longer-term benefits to having cover crops in rotations. Benefits may include: soil organic matter additions, soil structure improvements and weed suppression in the post-harvest period. These other potential benefits could not be measured in short-term duration of this project (one cropping sequence). ♦

Planning a Successful Meeting

OMAFRA offers a Fact Sheet on Successful Meetings. Following are a few tips printed from that Fact Sheet that may assist local and regional associations in planning upcoming meetings:

Before the Meeting:

1. Define the purpose of the meeting - a clear purpose is required for every meeting.
2. Plan the agenda as an outline of the topics to be discussed at the meeting. The chair should consult the secretary, treasurer and committee chairs when planning the agenda and organizing the materials and resources - ensure that critical items are discussed first, with the appropriate time allowed.
3. Send out the agenda and background information prior to the meeting. This will remind people of the meeting, ensure important issues are not overlooked and help members focus on the issues and be prepared to discuss them.
4. Ensure all reports and information are available. Confirm that the required person or a suitable alternate is available to attend the meeting and make a report.

TIP: Schedules are busy and fill up quickly, so keep your members aware of meeting dates well in advance.

For more information, you may access the OMAFRA Fact Sheet: Successful Meetings through their website at www.omafra.gov.on.ca. ♦

OSCIA Membership Display

OSCIA has revamped and revitalized the OSCIA membership display which is available to local associations for meetings and events.

Please contact Evelyn Howse at the Provincial Office (1-800-265-9751) if you wish to borrow the display.

Growing
the Margins:
Energy, Bioproducts and Byproducts from Farm and Food Sectors

April 2 - 5, 2008

conference and exhibition

To be held at the London Convention Centre, London Ontario

Growing the Margins will offer a special one-day tour of several renewable energy, energy conservation and other projects relevant to the conference, followed by two days of plenary sessions and concurrent technical sessions tailored to audience interests.
Further conference information may be found at www.gtmconf.ca.

OSCIA WEBSITE
VISIT US AT
www.ontariosoilcrop.org



CROP TALK

OMAFRA Field Crop Specialists – Your Crop Info Source

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

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Soybean Fungicide and Insecticide Seed Treatments

by Horst Bohner, Soybean Specialist, OMAFRA

The majority of soybeans planted in Ontario do not receive a fungicide seed treatment. The rationale is that since soybeans tend to be planted later than corn, soil conditions are generally more favourable for rapid germination and emergence. However, when conditions are wet and cool, soil borne diseases cause considerable seed and seedling damage. The extent of the damage depends on moisture, temperature, overall plant health, and soil type. Cold wet soils, crusting, heavy rains, compaction, and even post-emergent herbicides can all cause plant stresses, that make the seedlings more susceptible to disease.

Early season soybean insect feeding has become more of a problem during the past few years. In the spring of 2007, growers experienced very high overwintering bean leaf beetle populations and the earliest ever appearance of soybean aphid populations. The introduction of thiamethoxam (Cruiser) by Syngenta Crop Protection offers growers a new tool for controlling early season soybean insects.

A project was initiated in 2004 by University of Guelph and Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to evaluate the efficacy of soybean seed treatments on new and expanding pests such as aphids, bean leaf beetles and early season root rot.

Methods

Plots were established in 35 fields across southern Ontario from 2004 to 2007. Multiple locations across a wide area increased the potential for fields with varied insect and disease levels. Treatments were in a strip plot design, 10 by 410 feet, with 3 replications per treatment. Check plots were monitored twice a week from soybean emergence to the V2 stage for the presence of root disease and soil pest insects, such as European chafer, wireworm, and seed corn maggot. Plant populations were determined 21 days after emergence. Vigour ratings were determined subjectively on a scale of 0100%. The plots were monitored weekly from late-June until mid-August for additional insect pests, such as bean leaf beetle, potato leafhoppers, and soybean aphids. When aphids were detected, counts were recorded. Seed yields and harvest moistures were recorded.

Treatments:

1 UNTREATED CHECK (no fungicide or insecticide seed treatment)

2 MAXIM APRON

3 MAXIM APRON + CRUISER @ 50 g per 100 kg of seed

4 MAXIM APRON + GAUCHO @ 120 g per 100 kg of seed

Results and Summary

Plant stand counts were taken 21 days after seeding. Averaged across all sites, counts were higher by approximately 3% (4,300 plants/acre) for the Maxim Apron, 7.5% (10,500 plants/acre) for the Maxim Apron + Cruiser and 6.7% (9,400) for the Maxim Apron + Gaucho compared to the untreated check. Refer to Table 1.

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Soybean Fungicide and Insecticide Seed Treatments

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Table 1: **Soybean Seed TreatmentEffect on Plant Stands**

	Plants/ac	Seed Treatment Advantage Over Check
Untreated	139,700	
Maxim/ Apron (M/A)	144,000	4,300
Cruiser + M/A	150,200	10,500
Gaucho + M/A	149,100	9,400

(2004 = 10 fields x 3 reps, 2005 = 12 fields x 3 reps, 2006 = 8 fields x 3 reps, 2007 = 10 fields x 3 reps)

Yields were higher for Maxim-Apron in 21 of 35 trials compared to the untreated check, but this yield increase was "statistically significant" in only 3 of the trials. ($p < 0.10$). Maxim Apron plus an insecticide seed treatment yielded higher at 28 of 35 sites, but only 6 of these were statistically significant ($p=0.10$). Refer to Table 2.

Table 2: **Soybean Seed TreatmentEffect on Yield**

	Bu/ac	Seed Treatment Advantage Over Check
Untreated	49.2	
Maxim/Apron (M/A)	50.4	1.2**
Cruiser + M/A	51.1	1.9***
Gaucho + M/A	51.3	2.1***

, * = statistically significant from untreated at $p=0.01$ and $p=0.001$ respectively

(2004 = 10 fields x 3 reps, 2005 = 12 fields x 3 reps, 2006 = 8 fields x 3 reps, 2007 = 5 fields x 3 reps)

The magnitude of soybean response to seed treatments depended mainly on the presence of root rot diseases, insect pressure, soil type, and weather. The greatest yield response was on clay and clay loam soils. Fields that suffered from soil crusting after planting had a greater response than those with little or no emergence problems. At one site where crusting was evident, Maxim-Apron increased plant stands by 38%. At the sites with a statistically significant yield response, rhizoctonia and pythium root rot were the main disease problems. At two sites where pythium reduced plant stands, yields were increased by an average of 32% or 11 bu/ac. Averaged across sites, Maxim Apron + Cruiser increased plant stands by 10,500 plants/acre and increased yields by 1.9 bu/ac. Maxim-Apron + Gaucho increased plant stands by 9,400 plants/acre and increased yields by 2.1 bu/acre. Seed treatments containing insecticides significantly reduced early populations of bean leaf beetle when they were present (up to a 60% reduction).

Significant aphid populations were only observed in these trials during 2005. Insecticide seed treatments kept aphid levels lower than the untreated check for the first 40-60 days after planting, but they had little affect on aphids after that point.

In this set of experiments, the fungicide Maxim-Apron increased yields by up to 32% when high levels of root rot were present and when fields suffered from crusting. This occurred in 3 out of 35 fields. When conditions were excellent for emergence and early growth, no yield benefit was realized. The use of an insecticide was only beneficial when early season bean leaf beetle, aphids or seed corn maggots were a problem.

Pasture Boosters and Supporters

By Jack Kyle, Gazier Specialist, OMAFRA, Lindsay

Frost Seeding

Late winter and early spring is the ideal time to frost seed pastures. Broadcasting 1-3 lbs of legume seed in March will provide several benefits to the pasture productivity. A pasture that has 35% or greater legume content should provide sufficient nitrogen to meet the needs of the grasses. This nitrogen will promote increased grass growth and improved feed quality. The clover or trefoil provides excellent quality feed that compliments the grass species in the pasture.

Frost seeding is most successful when the existing stand has been grazed short in the fall, providing an opportunity for the seedling legumes to establish with minimal competition. The seeding year will see minimal or limited growth. If germination is successful, it will be the second year (possibly the third) before you will see many plants. Patience is a requirement.

Grass species do not usually establish well with frost seeding. The light seed and rough seed coat prevent the grass seed from getting good seed-tosoil contact. Under ideal conditions, some limited success has been achieved with rye grass and orchard grass.

Annual Pasture Crops

Annuals can be an important part of a grazing program. Cereals, turnips, sorghum-sudan and corn are ideal crops for grazing. These annual crops can provide feed from mid-July through to the end of the year. Sorghum-sudan or corn should be planted in late-May. The sorghum-sudan should be ready to graze by mid-July and the corn can be grazed anytime from mid-August through the winter. The turnips and cereals are best planted in late-July or very early-August to begin grazing in late-September.

Do you have a suitable field with fencing or one that can be fenced? Can you provide water to that field? Grazing an annual crop will take pressure off your permanent pastures and prevent over-grazing in the late-summer and early-fall. A few weeks of feed from one of these crops can make a significant impact on stretching your pastures with out causing undue stress.

For further information refer to: Annual Forages for Grazing or Stored Feed www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/field/news/ croptalk/2005/ct_0305a11.htm

Frost Seeding a Cheaper Alternative www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/98-071.htm

Forage Production from Spring Cereals and Cereal Pea Mixtures www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/98-041.htm

Starting Canola Off Right

by Brian Hall, Canola & Edible Beans Specialist, OMAFRA

There is an old adage that the two most important days for a crop are the day you plant and the day you harvest. Establishment is the greatest challenge in growing canola, because it is sown shallow where the soil that is most subject to rapid drying. Consider these tips for quick, even emergence, rapid canopy closure, and higher yields.

- Don't let soil compaction squeeze your profits. Roots care about how deep they go. Most soil compaction and damage is done by the first trip over the field in the spring. The push to plant more acres and seed earlier can push you to go into fields when soils are marginally fit and compact the most. Yield losses of 15% to over 30% have been documented. Check soil conditions at tillage depth. Soil should crumble easily and not form a ball or ribbon when rolled in your hand.
- Be aware of residual herbicides used in the previous crop. Carry over can be greater following a dry year. Refer to OMAFRA Publication 75, Guide to Weed Control and product labels for more information.
- Seeding rates are usually given in lb/acre, but a preferred method is to begin with the desired final plant stand. The optimum plant stand is 7 – 10 healthy plants/sq foot. In 7.5 inch (19.5 cm) rows this is equivalent to 4.5 to 6 plants per foot (14.8 - 19.7 per m) of row. Target seeding rates need to account for large differences in seed size between varieties.

1000 Seed Weight gm	Target Seeding Rate (lb/ acre)	Seeds/ foot	Grams of Seed per Opener per 100 feet of travel
3.5	3.3 (3.63)	5.7 (18.7)	2
4	3.7 (4.07)	5.7 (18.7)	2.3
4.5	4.2 (4.7)	5.7 (18.7)	2.6
5	4.7 (5.2)	5.7 (18.7)	2.8
5.5	5.1 (5.7)	5.7 (18.7)	3.4
6.0	5.6 (6.2)	5.7 (18.7)	3.4

Note: seeding rate is based on 72% final stand and target population of 7 plants/sq foot (75 plants/sq m). Seeding rates should be adjusted 5 % - 10% higher on soils prone to crusting, when seeding very early, or very late. A seeding rate calculator is on the Alberta Agriculture website: http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca/app19/ calc/crop/otherseed-calculator.jsp

- Calibrate seeding equipment before heading to the field! Bulking of seed with MAP (11-52-0), pelletized sulphur, or corn cob grits are options for improving seeding rate accuracy. Seeding through the grass seed box with the seed tubes inserted into the disc openers is another option.
- Speed kills. Even emergence is more important than plant spacing. Drill bounce is more of a problem at speeds over 5.0 mph. A speed of 5.5 mph required an extra 1.5 lb/ac (1.7 kg/ha) more seed to achieve the same plant population compared to 5.0 mph.
- The ideal target seeding date is when soil temperatures are 5 ^{0}C or higher, but let soil conditions guide you on when to seed.
- Seed 1/2" to 1" deep into a firm and slightly cloddy seedbed, keeping moisture near the surface. Deeper seeding reduces emergence and vigour, decreases seedling and root growth, and increases risk of crusting. Pack before and after planting in a dry year. If moisture is more than five cm (2 inches) deep, it is advisable to wait for moisture. Avoid having the seed start to germinate and run out of moisture.
- Soil test before you invest! Build a precision fertility program for each canola field by soil testing, and potentially save fertilizer dollars.
- The optimum nitrogen rate is 90 – 100 lbs/acre (102-114 kg/ha).
- The recommended maximum rate of phosphorus fertilizer with the seed is 18 lb/ac (20 kg/ha). Nitrogen (except as MAP) or potash should not be applied with the seed. Canola is very sensitive to fertilizer placed near the seed. Canola takes up 3 lbs/ac of phosphorus by the 5 leaf stage. In comparison, corn takes up 4 lb/ac and wheat 15 lb/ ac in the first 30 days. Crops planted under early, cool conditions benefit the greatest from starter applied phosphorus. Western research has shown an economic response with an initial 10-15 lbs/ac (11 – 17 kg/ha) of phosphorus at planting time.
- Apply 20 – 30 lbs/ac (23-34 kg/ha) of sulphur as 'insurance' against deficiency. A least cost approach for providing sulphur is to replace part of the spring urea application with ammonium sulphate (21-0-0-24). Replacing 50 pounds (22.7 kg) of urea with 100 pounds (45.4 kg) of ammonium sulfate will supply the same amount of nitrogen and 24 lbs (10.9 kg) of sulphate –S. Broadcasting is as effective as through the drill. Ammonium thiosulphate (liquid 12-0-0-26S) is another common source of sulphate-S.
- Heavy flea beetle pressures can thin stands, even where a seed treatment is used. Populations can explode under warm, sunny conditions. Flea beetles migrate in from overwintering sites, so scout the margins of fields first. Control is warranted when more than 10% of leaf area is lost. If caught early, only field margins requires a foliar spray.

Spray weeds early for higher yields! Trials have shown a 10% yield improvement (i.e. $59.00/acre @ $650/t canola price) by spraying at 1-2 leaf stage versus the 5–leaf stage. Concentrate on controlling weeds that emerge with the canola, and less on weeds that come up after the 4-6 leaf stage.

Payback From Good Soil Management

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

Do you know the benefits or payback from managing your soil well? It is often difficult to compare the benefits of your good soil management of a field to a neighbouring property with poorer soil management. There can be a lot of variables between the two fields and yield comparisons may not always be reliable.

Reduced Impact From Adverse Weather

The goal of good soil management is to develop a healthy soil. Good soil quality will help "even out" the seasons. This means that adverse weather or other crop stresses will not have as great an impact on yield as on soils with poor soil quality.

Organic Matter

A big part of what makes a soil healthy is the amount of organic matter. Organic matter plays a role in soil structure, nutrient cycling and water holding capacity. Research has found that as soil organic matter level increases from one to four percent, there is a significant increase in biological activity in the soil, and an even greater improvement in soil structure. That additional organic matter will also cut the soil erosion potential by about one-third. It is hard to put an actual dollar figure on these, but they do contribute to increased yields.

Improved Nutrient Recycling

Research shows that on a degraded sandy loam soil, a 0.5% increase in the soil organic matter will result in a 15% increase in nutrient holding ability. Increases in organic matter will also increase the availability of many essential micro nutrients. As the cost of fertilizer continues to climb, holding on to nutrients can reduce the amount of fertilizer applied, saving input costs. Higher soil organic matter levels can also increase the amount of available nitrogen. A good example of this is the reduction of nitrogen rates for corn on well managed soils. Some growers are able to reduce their nitrogen rate to 100 lbs/ac or less. With a crop removal of 240 lbs/ac for a 150 bu/ac crop, the soil (largely from the organic matter) is providing 140 lbs N/ac or more for the crop. With increasing nitrogen prices, that can be a significant payback.

Water Holding Capacity

Research also shows that on a sandy loam soil, a 0.5% increase in organic matter will provide a 12% increase in the water holding capacity of the soil. This means that a crop would go a week longer before it would suffer moisture stress. For those irrigating crops, it would add a day or two before irrigation would be required. This can translate into real dollars in yield or fuel savings for those using irrigation.

Water Infiltration & Pore Space

A good quality healthy soil will have improved water infiltration and more pores for air exchange. This is the result of good soil structure and a wealth of soil life, including the activity of the large earthworms. Good pore space can lead to improved root growth. Improved infiltration can make the soil fit to plant earlier in the spring. An abundance of soil life can assist in root and plant health by keeping diseases and pests in check.

Yield, Yield, Yield

The final good news story is that good soil management can pay off directly in increased yield. Studies have shown that soils that have adequate organic matter and fertility levels will yield 10% more than soils with low organic matter and adequate fertility. The yield benefit was even higher if the low organic matter levels made the soils more prone to moisture stress or reduced emergence due to crusting.

The payback from good soil management due to increased yields, earlier planting, potential improvements in nutrient use and better drainage can be significant.

Soil Test Categories Have Changed to Probability of Response

by Keith Reid, Soil Fertility Specialist, OMAFRA, Stratford

The soil test categories have changed to reflect the probabilities of response to added nutrients, rather than the amount of nutrient extracted. Note that this change does not affect the fertilizer recommendations for each crop.

The rating based on probability of response will be specific to each crop (or group of crops), because there are differences in the way these crops respond to added fertilizer. For soil test reports where the crop to be grown has been indicated, the response category shown in Table 1 will be displayed on the report beside the numeric value for the soil test.

Table 1: **Probability of response to applied nutrients at different soil test levels**

Response Category	Probability of profitable response to applied nutrients
High Response (HR)	High (most of the cases)
Medium Response (MR)	Medium (about half the cases)
Low Response (LR)	Low (few of the cases)
Rare Response (RR)	Rare (very few of the cases)
No or Negative Response (NR)*	Not profitable to apply nutrients*

**adding nutrients to soils with these levels of nutrients may reduce crop yields or quality by interfering with the uptake of other nutrients.*

Response to added fertilizer is not exactly the same in each field or each year. As a general rule, with low soil tests the crop will usually respond to added fertilizer, and the difference between the fertilized and unfertilized yields will be large. As the soil test values increase, the probability of a profitable response to fertilizer declines, as does the size of the expected yield or quality response. In the Low Response category, most crop responses would be improvement to the early growth of the crop from a starter effect. Fertilizer application to soils in the Rare Response category may cause an improvement in early growth, but is more commonly done to replace nutrients removed by the crop, or to provide nutrients to pockets within variable fields that are lower i n fertility. Any yield response is unlikely to be large enough to pay for the added fertilizer. The No or Negative Response (NR) rating signifies that application of this nutrient in fertilizer or manure may lower crop yield or quality. Phosphate additions to these soils can induce zinc deficiency on soils low in zinc and can increase the risk of water pollution. Potash additions may induce magnesium deficiency on soils low in magnesium.

More information on Soil Test Categories refer to
www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/soils/testcategories.htm

No Holds Barred!!

by Peter Johnson, Provincial Cereal Specialist, OMAFRA

About time! After years of limiting crop inputs with the economics just not quite good enough, we can throw those old ideas out the window. We have hit the mother lode! With most of the winter wheat planted on time last fall, or even a few days early, we have the yield potential to take advantage of more inputs. With wheat prices at record levels, and our inputs still at last year's prices, it's time to GO FOR BROKE!

Nitrogen -add 10 pounds to your normal application.

Dr. Dave Hooker, University of Guelph, is currently working on a "Wheat Nitrogen Calculator", similar to the corn nitrogen calculator. While it is not yet available for growers, when Dave runs through this year's numbers using wheat at a 100 bu/ac yield potential, a $8.00/bu price, and urea at $550/ tonne, the optimum N rate is 100 lbs per acre. Subtract 10 lbs/ac for 80 bushel yields, and add 15 for 120 bushel yields. For most growers, that equates to an additional 10 pounds over the normal N application. However, watch your standability on varieties with lodging concerns. Refer to www.gocereals.ca for variety information.

Early fungicides will pay!

Over the years, early fungicide application has returned 2 or 3 bushels in additional yield, just barely enough to cover the cost of the fungicide. With current wheat prices nearly double what they were a year ago and with fungicide prices a bit lower, suddenly you can easily double your money. Table 1 summarizes the yield advantage of Stratego in 6 Thames Valley Soil & Crop trials. With early wheat, the potential for lots of early disease, and a three or four bushel yield increase very possible, put that fungicide in the tank with the herbicide!

Table 1: **2007 Fungicide With Herbicide Winter Wheat Trials -6 sites**

	Check	Stratego	Yield Advantage
Bu/ac (tonnes/ha)	77.8 (5.23)	82.0 (5.51)	+ 4.2 (+ 0.28)

Thames Valley Soil & Crop Improvement Association

Fusarium control will pay!

In the past, fusarium fungicides were a break-even proposition. The fusarium protection was like free insurance, but often you didn't put many dollars in your pocket. Double wheat prices, and the story changes. Which product should you use? If the risk of fusarium is high, spray Proline. If the risk of fusarium is low, spray Folicur. Proline is much better on fusarium, Folicur is better on rust. Table 2, 3 and 4 summarize some winter wheat fungicide Soil & Crop trial data.

Table 2: **Effect of Folicur on Winter Wheat Yield Summary of 2003-2006 Trials**

		Yield bu/ac (tonnes/ha)		
Year	# Trials	Check	Folicur	Difference
2003	27	93.8 (6.31)	101.4 (6.82)	+8.1 (+0.54)
2004	29	83.0 (5.58)	89.6 (6.03)	+6.6 (+0.44)
2005	23	85.4 (5.74)	88.2 (5.93)	+2.8 (+0.19)
2006	24	99.7 (6.70)	103.9 (6.99)	+4.2 (+0.28)
Avg. 03-06	103	90.3 (6.07)	95.7 (6.44)	+5.4 (+0.36)

Ontario Wheat Board, OMAFRA

Table 3: **2007 Trial Summary- Proline vs Folicur**

	Yield bu/ac (tonnes/ha)		
# Trials	Check	Folicur	Proline
6	85.2 (5.73)	90.0 (6.05)	93.2 (6.27)
9	-	88.5 (5.95)	91.6 (6.16)

Oxford Soil & Crop Improvement Association

Table 4: **2007 Stratego Plus Fusarium Fungicide Trials**

	Yield bu/ac (tonnes/ha)			
	# Reps	Folicur	Stratego/ Folicur	Stratego/ Proline
Melbourne 1	4	61.0 (4.10)	67.4 (4.53)	
Melbourne 2	3	90.3 (6.07)	92.0 (6.19)	
Bryanston	2	104.4 (7.02)	104.9 (7.05)	
Parkhill	5	95.0 (6.39)	99.1 (6.66)	109.6 (7.37)
Arva	2	83.6 (5.62)	86.8 (5.84)	90.3 (6.07)
Average - 5 trials	86.9 (5.84)	90.0 (6.05)		
Average - 2 trials		90.9 (6.11)	96.7 (6.50)	

Middlesex Soil & Crop Improvement Association

Tramp loss

Wheat is worth a LOT! Tramp loss will cost you double what it used to. Use the absolute widest boom and most narrow tires on the sprayer that you can. Otherwise, you are simply throwing money away!

Plots!

So all this is lots of fun. It is the first time in memory that I have been able to say GO FULL OUT! Next year is unlikely to be quite this good. We need more data to help make the decisions regarding what will pay as economics return to more normal levels. Leave two strips untreated. Weigh them off, and send me the data at harvest. That way, I can write another article next spring, and make you even more money!

Increasing Manure Value With Calibration

by Christine Brown, Nutrient Management Field Crops, OMAFRA, Woodstock

Knowing the nutrient content of manure isn't enough. It is important to know how to get the intended rate on the field with the equipment at hand and to ensure that manure is uniformly applied. Advances in technology such as guidance systems, GPS and flow meters can improve uniformity. However, just as most people wouldn't take a sprayer to the field to apply herbicides without calibrating, neither should manure application equipment be used without fine-tuning.

Solid Manure

Solid manure is often applied at higher rates than producers expect. Uniform application is difficult with solid application equipment due to variation in manure moisture content and composition. Dry pack manure is often "clumpy", while dry broiler litter is light and moves easily with the wind. With traditional box spreaders, driving wheel to wheel gives best uniformity. The following methods should be used to determine application rates and uniformity.

Solid Manure Method 1-Calibrating Application Using Scale (portable or elevator)

Application rate = [lbs (or kg) Loaded spreader weight – lbs (or kg) Empty spreader weight] ÷ acres (or ha) covered per load

Solid Manure Method 2 -Calibrating Application Using Plastic Sheet

Using a 48 inch (122 cm) x 40 inch (88 cm) sheet (plastic feedbag)		Example: Extrapolating area of plastic sheet to acre equivalents (1 ac = 0.405 ha)
lbs (kg) manure/sheet	Application Rate tons/ac (tonnes/ha)	
1 (0.45)	1.6 (3.6)	40" x 48" = 3.3' x 4' = 13.33 sq ft
2 (0.9)	3.3 (7.5)	
3 (1.4)	4.9 (11.1)	13.33 sq ft / 43,560 sq ft per acre = .0003061 acres
4 (1.8)	6.5 (14.7)	
5 (2.3)	8.2 (18.6)	2 lbs / .0003061 = 6,536 lbs
7 (3.2)	11.4 (25.9)	
10 (4.5)	16.3 (37.0)	6,536 lbs / 2000 lbs/ton = 3.27 tons/acre
15 (6.8)	24.5 (55.6)	
20 (9.1)	32.7 (74.1)	

Liquid Manure

It easy to calculate how much liquid manure was applied to a field by knowing the tank volume and dividing the number of loads by the acreage covered by those loads. Uniformity of application is a bigger issue with liquid manure. Type of tanker, tanker setup and speed all influence application rate. Something as simple as hitting a tree limb with a manure tanker splash plate can change the spread pattern and uniformity. Spread pattern uniformity is most easily seen when spreading part of a load on a small snow-covered area or cement pad. Calibrating uniformity at the time of application can be done with relative ease by placing straight-walled jars or cans across the spread width of the tanker, and calculating the rate using the following methods.

Liquid Manure Method 1 - Calibrating Application by Jar Weight

Using a 3 1/4" (7.9 cm) diameter jar (with lid) (ie lab sample jar)		Example: Extrapolating area of jar to acre equivalents 1 Imp gal/ac = 11.23 litres/ha
Manure Wt = Total weight - jar weight lbs (kg)	Application Rate (Imp gal/acre: (litres/a)	
0.025 (0.055)	2,050 (23,023	3 1/4"= 3.125 inch diameter ÷ 2 = 1.56" radius
0.033 (0.073)	2,700 (30,323)	
0.04 (0.098)	3,275 (36,781)	1.56 inches ÷ 12 in./ft = 0.13 ft
0.05 (0.10)	4,100 (46,046)	
0.066 (0.15)	5,450 (61,207)	area of circle = πr^2
0.075 (0.17)	6,150 (69,069)	3.1417 x .13 x .13 = .053 ft^2
0.10 (0.22)	8,200 (92,092)	.053 ÷ 43560 ft^2/ac = .000001219 acre
0.125 (0.28)	10,250 (115,115)	
0.15 (0.33)	12,300 (138,138)	One gallon weighs about 10 lbs
0.20 (0.44)	16,400 (184,183)	If filled jar weight – weight of jar = .05 lb
0.25 (0.55)	20,500 (230,229)	.05 lb ÷ 10 lb/gal = .005 gal
0.30 (0.66)	24,600 (276,275)	.005 gal ÷ 0.000001219 acre = 4,100 gal./ac.

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Price Ratios: What Are They, and Why Do We Care?

by Keith Reid, Soil Fertility Specialist, OMAFRA, Stratford

A number of fertilizer recommendations are adjusted according to the "Price Ratio". However, many growers don't really understand what is meant by the term, or why it is important. The calculation of the price ratio involves dividing the price of nitrogen (N) fertilizer by the value of the grain. Since we generally buy nitrogen fertilizer by the tonne and sell grains by the bushel, there is some additional math to get them into the same units (cents per pound of N divided by cents per pound of grain). The easiest way to understand price ratios is to think of them as the amount of yield you need to buy a pound of nitrogen fertilizer.

The reason this relationship is important is that crop response to nitrogen generally follows the "Law of Diminishing Returns". The first pound of added nitrogen produces the largest yield increase, and each additional pound of N generates a slightly smaller yield increase up to the point where a maximum yield is reached. After this point, adding more N has either no impact on yield or causes yield to decline. At some point below the maximum yield, the value of yield increase from the last pound of N that was applied is exactly equal to the cost of that N. This point is called the Maximum Economic Rate of N (MERN). Applying higher rates of N will generate more yield, but the value of that yield will be less than the cost of the fertilizer, so the net return to added fertilizer will be negative.

The fertilizer rate that corresponds to the MERN will depend on how many pounds of grain it takes to pay for a pound of fertilizer - in other words, the Price Ratio. At higher price ratios, you need more yield to pay for each pound of N, so the MERN will be less. This was the case in 2006, when N fertilizer prices were high but the price of corn was very low. In 2008, the prices of both corn and fertilizer have gone up, so the price ratio is much closer to normal. The practical challenge in calculating the price ratio is the uncertainty about the selling price of grain that should go into the equation. This will involve a combination of guesswork based on market trends, and fixed values based on crops that have been pre-sold.

Increasing Manure Value With Calibration

Continued from page 22

Liquid Manure Method 2 - Calibration Using A Straight-Walled Pail

Depth of Manure In Pail		Application Rate (Imperial gallons/acre)	Application Rate (litres/ha)
Inches	(mm)		
1/10	(2.5)	2,265	25,440
1/8	(3.2)	2,825	31,730
1/4	(6.4)	5,650	63,450
1/3	(8.5)	7,550	84,790
3/8	(9.5)	8,500	95,460
1/2	(12.7)	11,325	127,200
5/8	(15.9)	14,150	158,910
3/4	(19.1)	17,000	190,960
1 inch	(25.4)	22,650	254,440

1 Imp gallon = 4.545 litres, 1 US gallon = 3.785 litres, 1 Imp gallon = 1.20 US gallon

The owner's manual of many solid manure spreaders has often referred to spreader capacity in bushel weights. Table 1 below shows the approximate bushel weight comparison of different manure types. There is however a large difference between semisolid cattle manure and dry poultry litter. Liquid manure is assumed to weigh close to 10 lbs/gal. To measure the actual density of manure being applied, follow the formula given for measuring manure density.

Table 1 - **Approximate Densities of Different Types of Manure**

Manure Type	lbs per Cubic Foot	lbs per Bushel	Kg per m^3
Liquid	62.4	80	1000
Simi-solid	60	76	961
Thick solid	50	64	801
Light solid	35	45	560
Dry poultry	25	31	400

1 bushel = 1.25 ft^3, 1 lb/ft^3 = 35.31 kg/m^3

Measuring Density Using Weight and Volume

Example: Using a 1 kg coffee tin.

Container is .52 ft diameter (.26 ft radius); height is .53 ft

Volume = πr^2 x height = 3.1416 x $.26^2$ x .53 = .1126 ft^3

Container filled with compost weighs 3.31 lbs

If: $\frac{3.31 \text{ lbs}}{.1126 \text{ ft}^3} = \frac{x}{1 \text{ ft}^3}$ then x = 29.4 lbs per ft^3

Fowl Meadow Grass (Poa Palustris) Control in an Established Alfalfa and Timothy Crop

by Mike Cowbrough, OMAFRA, Guelph and Dr. Fran ois Tardif and Peter Smith, Department of Plant Agriculture – University of Guelph

Other names: Fowl bluegrass, June grass

The Weed: Perennial, with a membranous ligule and rough textured, folded leaves. Mature plants are yellowish in colour. The stems are round and purplish at the base.

The Impact: Fowl meadow grass grows incredibly fast and has usually headed by the third to fourth week in May. As the species gets older it turns a yellowish colour and the stems become very coarse and wirey, this usually occurs before the alfalfa and timothy is ready for its first cut. This weed affects forage value as palatability can be decreased and often clients purchasing feed for the horse market do not like the appearance of this grass.

Control Options (Preliminary Research): A field trial was conducted in the spring of 2007 to evaluate efficacy of Fowl meadow grass, tolerance of alfalfa and timothy with 15 herbicide treatments. While there were many products that controlled Fowl meadow grass only 1 treatment, Achieve + Turbocharge (Figure 2), provided both adequate crop safety and weed efficacy (Table 1).

Table 1 - **Percent visual control of Fowl meadow grass and percent visual injury of alfalfa and timothy at 3 weeks after application of 3 herbicide treatments.**

Treatment	Rate/acre	Fowl meadow grass control (%)	Alfalfa Injury (%)	Timothy Injury (%)
Achieve + Turbocharge	200 ml/ac + 0.5% v/v	76	0	0
Venture	240 ml/ac	99	0	64
Poast Ultra + Merge	133 ml/ac + 0.5% v/v	97	0	93

Source: Swanton and Tardif, 2007 Weed Research Report – Trial #07POAPA31JN

Registration Status: Achieve is not registered for use on alfalfa or timothy for forage production. Crop residue data is required before a registration can be pursued however collection of residue data is very expensive and unlikely to be initiated by the manufacturer based on a limited number of acres being affected with this grassy weed. Growers who would find value in controlling Fowl meadow grass in forage crops should send letters of support for this project to the Ontario Forage Council c/o Agricultural Services Centre, Box 463, 206 Toronto Street South, Markdale, Ontario NOC 1HO.

Limitations: This is a preliminary study and more trials are needed to gain confidence that these results can be duplicated under various environmental conditions.

Figure 1. Fowl meadow grass infestation in a alfalfa/timothy stand

Figure 2. Fowl meadow grass control with Achieve + Turbocharge. Note the presence of timothy in the treated area

Figure 3. Fowl meadow grass control with Poast Ultra. Note the absence of any timothy in the treated area.



BULLETIN
GRANDES CULTURES

MAAAROO – des spécialistes en grandes cultures – votre source d'information

Les engrais de démarrage avec le canola, est-ce vraiment trop?

Brian Hall, spécialiste du canola et du haricot de grande culture, MAAARO, Stratford

L'application de phosphore (P) dans la raie de semis est l'une des méthodes les plus efficaces d'épandage de cet élément, et elle est souvent plus productive que l'épandage à la volée. Les engrais de démarrage donnent de bons résultats avec les céréales et le maïs, ils facilitent l'établissement des peuplements et stimulent les rendements. Lors d'essais effectués par l'Association pour l'amélioration des sols et des récoltes de l'Ontario (SCIA), l'engrais de démarrage PMA (phosphate de monoammonium) a permis une amélioration du rendement qui a atteint huit boisseaux par acre dans le cas du blé d'automne.

Le canola répond moins bien

Par ailleurs le canola répond moins bien aux engrais appliqués avec les semis. Pendant ses 30 premiers jours de vie, le blé consomme 15 livres de phosphore par acre. Le maïs en consomme 4 livres par acre pendant les 25 premiers jours, et le canola 3 livres par acre pendant les 35 premiers jours (stade à 5 feuilles). La teneur en phosphore des semences de canola suffit à assurer la croissance du jeune plant pendant sept jours environ. Puis le plant a besoin d'un apport externe de phosphore en provenance du sol ou d'un engrais. Il est reconnu que le canola extrait plus efficacement les éléments nutritifs du sol que de nombreuses autres plantes cultivées. Non seulement il produit des poils racinaires plus longs, mais il émet des acides organiques qui facilitent l'absorption des éléments nutritifs.

Plus grande sensibilité à la brûlure

Le canola est également beaucoup plus sensible que le maïs et les autres céréales aux engrais placés avec les semences. Chez les monocotylédones que sont le maïs, le blé et les céréales de printemps, une tige et une racine apparaissent à chaque extrémité de la semence, qui reste essentiellement intacte; l'enveloppe de la graine protège ainsi la plante pendant qu'elle émerge. Pour leur part, le canola et le soya sont des dicotylédones; lorsque le plant de canola émerge, les deux moitiés de la graine se séparent. L'engrais peut alors brûler la partie centrale tendre qui n'est plus protégée par l'enveloppe.

Recherche

Une récente étude de l'Université de la Saskatchewan a confirmé la plus grande sensibilité du canola aux engrais de démarrage (figure 1). À des doses allant jusqu'à 20 kg/ha de phosphore appliqué sous forme de PMA (11-52-0), on n'a relevé aucune différence significative, mais à 30 kg/ha, l'émergence du canola était réduite à 83 %.

Figure 1. **Effet du phosphore appliqué avec les semences (PMA) sur l'émergence du canola.**

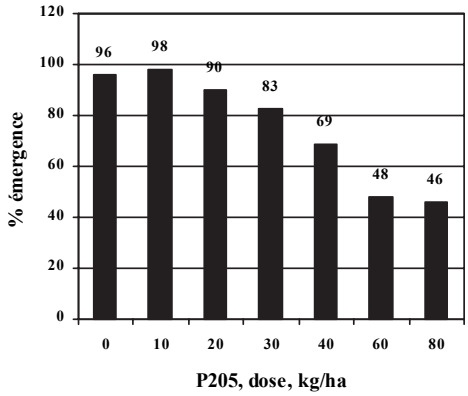
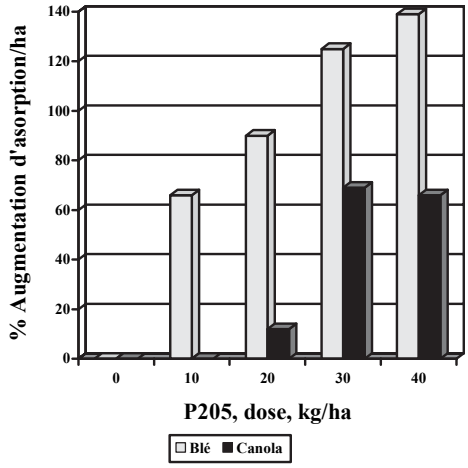


Figure 2. **Effet du phosphore appliqué avec les semences sur l'absorption par les plants, canola et blé de printemps.**



Où en serez-vous dans cinq ans?

Ian McDonald, coordinateur de la recherche appliquée, MAAARO, Guelph

Depuis un an et demi, les prix des céréales de base ont atteint des valeurs telles que beaucoup de producteurs entrevoient des profits. Ce mouvement résulte de la croissance impressionnante de l'industrie des biocarburants aux États-Unis, qui a elle-même été stimulée par la décision de l'administration Bush de réduire la dépendance du pays à l'égard des sources d'énergie étrangères. L'infrastructure de transformation de l'éthanol et du biodiésel a connu une expansion rapide. Les États-Unis prévoient d'étendre la surface de production de maïs de dix millions d'acres en 2007. Les consommateurs traditionnels de céréales, dont les éleveurs de bétail et l'industrie alimentaire, font face à une concurrence accrue pour leurs approvisionnements.

Les engrais de démarrage avec le canola, est-ce vraiment trop?

Adaptation de Crop Tolerance & Response to Seed-row Fertilizer, Université de la Saskatchewan, 2005.

L'absorption de phosphore pendant les quatre premières semaines de croissance s'est accrue en réponse à l'application de P avec les semences, comme on l'avait prévu, de même que la croissance globale (figure 2). Chez le blé

de printemps, l'absorption par les plants a beaucoup mieux répondu à l'application de phosphore avec les semences que dans le cas du canola. Certains éléments permettent de penser que sur les sols pauvres en phosphore, l'épandage de phosphore de démarrage stimule le début de la croissance et le rendement du canola.

Recommandations du MAAARO

Pour le canola de printemps, la quantité maximale de phosphore recommandée par le MAAARO est de 20 kg/ha (18 lb/ac); elle doit être mise en place avec les semences sous forme de superphosphate ou de phosphate de monoammonium (PMA). On ne devrait pas appliquer d'azote avec les semences, sauf sous forme de PMA ou de potasse. Le tableau 1 montre une comparaison de la dose maximale sûre de certains types d'engrais placés avec les semences de canola et de céréales de printemps. L'engrais placé avec les semences a moins de chances de produire des lésions sur celles-ci les années où le sol est humide.

	Canola de printemps	Avoine ou orge de printemps ou blé de printemps[1]	
	Tous les types de sols	Sols sableux ou de loam sableux	Loams, sols de limon ou de loam argileux
	Dose maximale sûre d'engrais, kg/ha		
PMA (11-52-0)	40	350	450
19-19-19	0	80	80
8-32-16	0	229	291
6-24-24	0	183	233

[1] Pour plus de renseignements sur les doses maximales sûres d'éléments nutritifs pour les céréales de printemps et d'autres cultures, voir le guide agronomique du MAAARO, publication 811F, et le Manuel sur la fertilité du sol sur le Web, http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/french/crops/pub811/2fertm at.htm - table230.

Où en serez-vous dans cinq ans?

De belles opportunités, mais l'avenir reste incertain

Lors de la récente conférence de London sur le maïs, le soya et le blé, Cal Whewell de FC Stone, Ohio, a parlé de la « solidité » des prix des produits de base. Lorsque les prix sont élevés, il y a de nombreuses occasions de faire « de bonnes affaires ». Mais le conférencier s'est montré prudent en ce qui concerne l'effet de la croissance de l'éthanol sur les prix des denrées agricoles. Il existe actuellement de belles opportunités, mais l'avenir reste incertain. La production d'éthanol à partir de céréales, c'est bien, mais ce n'est qu'une composante d'un secteur bioénergétique en pleine expansion. Elle répond aussi à des motivations politiques, ce qui implique certains risques. Le message de C. Whewell se résume comme suit : profitez des opportunités actuelles offertes par le marché pour payer vos dettes, modernisez prudemment votre infrastructure et prévoyez des réserves pour des temps plus durs.

C. Whewell a également parlé des autres technologies qui pourraient être plus efficaces que la production d'éthanol à partir des céréales. Si les prix de l'énergie restent élevés, il y aura d'autres développements touchant le rendement énergétique par acre et l'efficacité énergétique des technologies des utilisateurs finaux (carburants pour les transports, chauffage domiciliaire et production électrique), et cela pourrait se répercuter sur la variable « demande » de l'équation. C. Whewell a aussi parlé des développements impressionnants de la « réduction de l'empreinte » des appareils électroniques (téléphones cellulaires et iPOD), qu'il a comparés à la stagnation de l'efficacité de la consommation de carburant des moteurs à combustion interne. Il a donné l'exemple d'un Model T 1907 de Ford et de sa nouvelle Vibe 2007 de Pontiac, qui ont la même consommation, et il s'est étonné du peu de progrès accomplis au cours des cent dernières années à ce chapitre. Si les nouvelles technologies engendrent un accroissement significatif de l'efficacité énergétique, elles auront peut-être un effet important sur les prixdes céréales à long terme.

Investir dans les nouvelles technologies

À l'aube de l'ère des nouvelles technologies, l'agriculture ontarienne est-elle prête à investir dans ce domaine? Le secteur agricole fera partie intégrante de la nouvelle bioéconomie; c'est lui qui produira les matières premières de l'alimentation, des matières fibreuses, des carburants, des produits chimiques et de divers matériaux. La société considérera l'agriculture et la foresterie comme des sources d'énergie propre et comme des instruments de réduction des émissions des gaz à effet de serre et des effets sur l'environnement. Dans la nouvelle bioéconomie, le rôle de l'agriculture pourrait être très différent.

Pour investir dans ce potentiel, le secteur peut s'intéresser à des productions différentes, y compris pour la génération de biomasse, par exemple le panic raide, l'alpiste roseau et les espèces ligneuses à croissance rapide. On pourrait également envisager des technologies non biologiques comme les parcs éoliens et solaires. Une technologie qui retient beaucoup l'attention en Europe est la génération d'électricité par digestion anaérobie du fumier, des cultures énergétiques et des déchets organiques. Les installations connexes sont situées sur les exploitations agricoles et leur sous-produit est un digestat riche en éléments nutritifs, un engrais qui permet de « fermer la boucle » pour la prochaine récolte de matières premières.

OFA and the Internet in rural communities.

The OFA has always supported telecommunications having addressed the CRTC on numerous occasions in order to improve and maintain the communication network in rural areas.

At the recent OFA convention in November 2007 the OFA invited Barrett Xplornet company to address the convention delegates. There are other providers such as Hughesnet who also rely on wireless technology where the proximity of towers is sufficiently close, or satellite technology in more isolated areas.

Not relying on wireline technology such as phone lines, they can be installed everywhere in Canada. It's the ideal high-speed option for individuals and businesses that are un-serviced by other high-speed Internet providers or underserved by dial-up. These services offer home, business and enterprise service packages that are very affordable. Whatever your speed needs, whatever your budget there are now service packages that are right for you. Depending on which technology is available in your area, one can be provided with a solution that is significantly faster than dial-up. A fixed wireless solution can provide you with speeds up to 5.0 Mbps which is 125x faster than dial-up. Satellite solutions can provide you with speeds up 2.0 Mbps which is 50x faster than dial-up.

Technology has changed in just a very few years to the great benefit of the rural community.

If your business generates minimum annual sales of $35,000 and you can not get high-speed internet access from land based providers, you could be eligible for financial support to install a 2-way satellite internet receiver. The "Satellite Internet For Remote Areas Program" (SIRA) could provide 75% of costs (up to $1000) for this link. For more information, contact the following:

Northwestern Ontario Innovation Center:
(Heather MacDonald-Craig) at 807-768-6682

North Bay and Parry Sound Districts:
"Blue Sky Networks" (Susan Church) at 705-476-0874 x#211)

Muskoka district:
"Muskoka Community Networks" (Louise Hutchison) at 705-646-9044

All other Districts:
"Neonet" (Sharon Jones) at 705-360-1353 x#3)

The OFA plan to restructure their organization.

OFA delegates from their recent convention will be meeting again at a special board meeting in March. On the agenda is the resolution to ratify the new Bylaws of the OFA which would setup a board of 18 members and a policy advisory group of approximately 120 members. Northern Ontario would be represented by a member on the board and also a member from each district on the policy advisory group. This would insure contact down to the grass routes of the organization to assist policy building and direction of the highest order.

Delegates will also be asked to choose their preferred method of how the board member is to be elected. This is especially challenging in northern Ontario with our vast geographical distances.

OFA Commentary #0708

By Don McCabe, Vice-President, Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Since its introduction in 1993, the Environmental Farm Plan program has worked with 30,000 Ontario farmers, all anxious to improve the environment on their farms.

Through an ongoing lobbying process, funding for the program has been maintained from the federal government. Ontario contributes to the program's success with technical support. Participating farmers pay a share of the costs for many categories of projects. Interest in the program continues high. Recent statistics tell us the total number of participants is 11,384 – 6,257 of them new, and 5,127 returning workshop participants, since the inception of the new cost-share program in 2005.

The Canada-Ontario Farm Stewardship Program has had 11,185 projects approved, accounting for a total of 52.5 million dollars in Federal funding allocated and 39.2 million dollars in Federal funding paid – that's 94 per cent of the available budget. With this level of uptake, it has to be obvious to our governments that Ontario farmers take their responsibility for protecting the environment very serious.

Unfortunately, even with this level of commitment from farmers, there is no guarantee the funding partnership with the Federal Government will always be there. The current agreement expires at the end of March, 2008, when the government's fiscal year ends.

Representatives from the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition have been negotiating with government representatives for a new agreement. Late last year we were told the government would be offering an extension agreement that would kick in April 1, 2008, Growing Forward, theoretically providing for a seamless transition from the current program year to the next.

As of today we have heard very little news from either level of government and we are being left completely in the dark. This situation presents problems for farmers wanting to begin new projects under the program – there could be several months after the end of March before funding and new projects could start in the new program period.

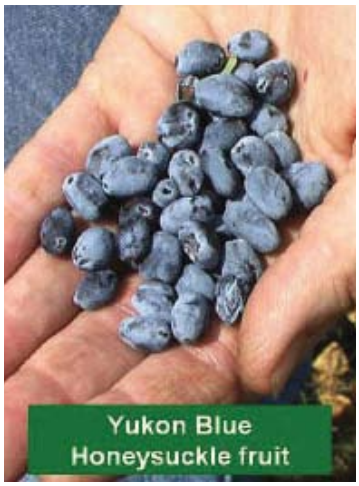
The current program was delayed in starting by two years and we can't afford to lose our current momentum.

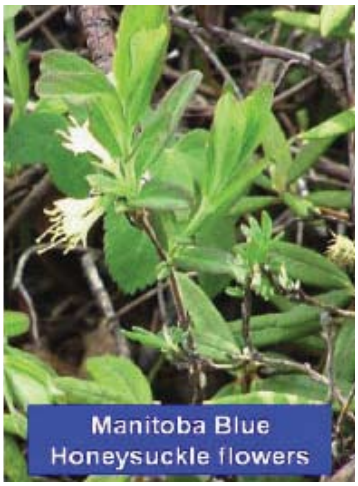
The Ontario Federation of Agriculture and its partners at OFEC – Ontario Farm Animal Council, AGCare, and the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario – know that farmers are concerned with protecting the environment and we will continue the negotiations with the expectations that funding details will be arranged and farmers will have public support for the projects they get approved - if some level of the government would talk to us!

OFA and its OFEC partners will continue their efforts to ensure funding is available, and workable details remain part of ongoing EFP projects. It is essential the governments keep up their end of the bargain.

Searching For The Elusive "BLUE HONEYSUCKLE"

by Graham Gambles


Yukon Blue Honeysuckle fruit


Manitoba Blue Honeysuckle flowers

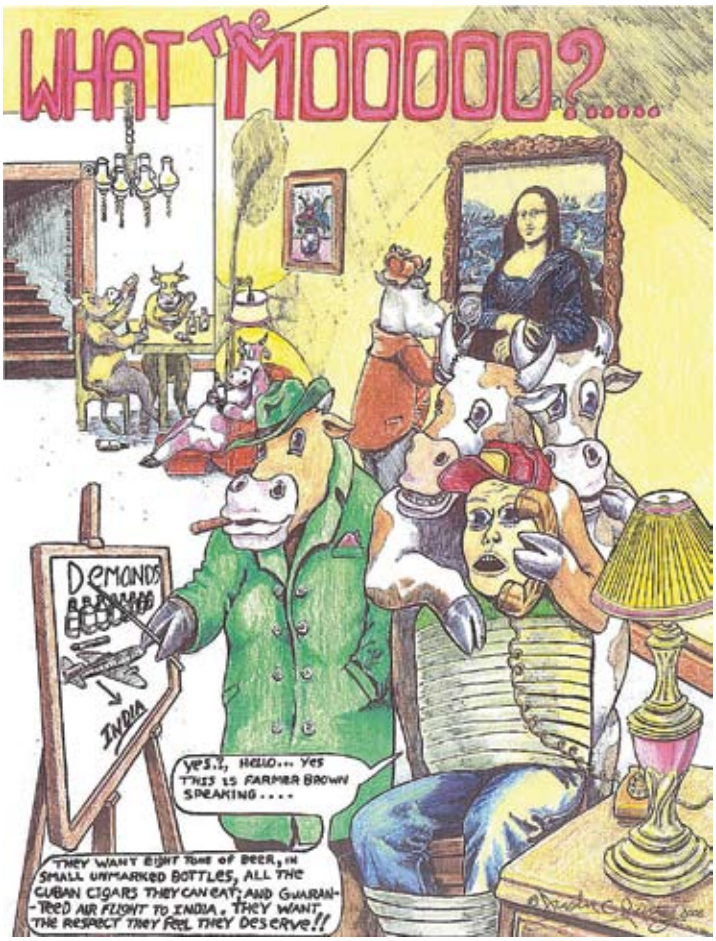
Dr. Bob Bors, a plant breeder at the University of Saskatchewan, is actively breeding "Blue Honeysuckles" as a new fruit crop in Canada. Currently, he is searching across the breadth of Canada to collect native wild specimens, wherever they may be! They will be crossed with plants from Russia and Japan, and could eventually become a horticultural crop for northern Ontario.

The plant is a circumpolar boreal forest species that is known to flower early in the wild - often in mid May. The fruit itself, looking much like an elongated blueberry, is ripe in mid June to mid July. It is known to exist in northern Ontario, but little is known about regional timing of flowers and fruit.

The plant survives close to the ground in sparse patches. In the west, it is often found on damp ground along wetlands, in open areas near deciduous (aspen) woodlands, and along roads or other disturbances. Soil is often highly organic or calcareous.

Contact naturalists and horticulturists in your area and give Bob a little support from the North! We could benefit from his work. If you think that you have found this plant, mark the site clearly and take GPS readings if that is possible. Contact Bob by internet at bob.bors@usask.ca

More information on the Blue Honeysuckle can be accessed at: www.usask.ca/agriculture/plantsci/dom_fruit/sabbatical.pdf



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