
Ontario Goat



2010 Annual Report



President's Message

What a year the goat industry has had in 2010. We have got people talking and there is definitely a "buzz" to be heard around all things goats.

Perhaps what is most exciting to me is that the buzz is coming from all directions of the sector.

Goat producers are talking about the future opportunities, expansion and profits. Consumers are flocking to the stores and seeking out our products. The service sector is also talking goats: equipment manufacturers, feed suppliers, veterinary and research as well as financial lending institutions. Government and industry partners are also talking about goats. Indeed it is exciting!

I should probably touch wood when I say goats are the next "in" thing for agriculture. Perhaps I might even suggest they are cool? Trends come and go, industries are up and down. With a strong foundation, we are all building on a long-standing industry with a solid market base. Ontario Goat will continue to work to keep the momentum going. The goat industry is here to stay in Ontario agriculture and it is a force to be reckoned with!

This past year has had so many highlights and achievements. However, setting the course for the upcoming year, we need to keep in mind the hand up we've been given with our initial seed funding. Our focus now needs to concentrate on putting in place the organizational infrastructure to continue the work we have begun.

To be clear, this means progressing with an application to the Farm Products Marketing Commission to affirm our

mandate of working on behalf of the Ontario goat industry and to put in place the financial infrastructure to fund this work on behalf of the entire industry. As producers, there is significant value in pooling our resources. We all are already seeing dividends being paid to the industry in leveraged funding for projects. Every dollar and every membership counts to strengthen the unified voice Ontario Goat has provided for the industry. Your support is crucial to our collective success.

I encourage everyone involved in the Ontario Goat sector to keep this "buzz" going well into 2011 and beyond. I want to thank this past year's Board of Directors who volunteered their time to attend meetings and all the work they did on our behalf. I also want to thank the staff for their passion and dedication towards achieving our goals. We have such a diverse membership and there are many needs but when we all work together amazing things can be accomplished.

Congratulations on a great 2010 and here is to an even better 2011 for Ontario Goat!

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History, Milestones and Partnerships

History

Founded in 1951, the original name was "The Ontario Dairy Goat Society." In 1986, the name was changed to the "Ontario Goat Breeders Association" to better reflect the ever-changing Ontario goat and the varied products that this versatile animal provides. In 1989, the Ontario Goat Breeders Association was incorporated under the Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations Act for the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

Milestones

- ◆ Production of promotional package for goat milk which includes Goat Milk Facts and The Goat Milk Industry of Ontario and an 11" x 17" full colour poster
- ◆ Development of a 1-day course Marketing Strategies for goat producers
- ◆ Two goat production manuals: *Let's Make a Decision*, for producers new to the industry and *How the Industry Grows* at a more advanced level
- ◆ Available for teachers, a resource entitled *The Goodness of Ontario Goats* which meets Ontario's Educational Curriculum
- ◆ Prepared 8.5" x 11" poster *A Lean Alternative*, which provides nutritional facts about Chevon and a visual display of the meat cuts
- ◆ Active promotion of milk, meat and fibre at the fairs and at schools, giving hands-on exposure to Ontario's goat industry

Partnerships

The Ontario Goat is proud of its accomplishments on behalf of the goat industry, that have been possible through partnerships with:

- Ontario Farm Animal Council
- Ontario Livestock and Poultry Council
- Ontario Agricultural Commodity Council
- Agricultural Adaptation Council
- Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario
- Ontario Federation of Agriculture
- Ontario Agri-Food Education
- Ontario Independent Meat Processors
- Canadian National Goat Federation
- Canadian Livestock Genetics Association

Ontario Goat's Objectives

The objectives of Ontario Goat is to:

- ◆ Provide and circulate sound information about goats
- ◆ Improve and develop goat breeds
- ◆ Encourage and promote the expansion of all areas of the Ontario goat industry
- ◆ Assist in the development of meat, mohair and dairy product markets in Ontario



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Ontario Livestock Alliance Staff Members



Jennifer Haley, Executive Director

In her role as Executive Director, Jennifer is responsible for the overall management of Ontario Veal, Ontario Goat and Ontario Rabbit, their goals and objectives through activities such as board policy, financial management, consumer marketing and industry communications. Jennifer has been with the OVA since 1998 and holds an Honours Bachelor of Arts Degree and a Master of Business Administration both from the University of Guelph. She is a Certified Association Executive (CAE) and holds the designation of Professional Agrologist (PAG).



Kendra Keels, Industry Development Manager

Kendra joined the OVA in November of 2006 and in her role as the Industry Development Manager she is responsible for initiating and implementing new projects such as bob calf health and quality initiatives. Kendra is also involved in a number of industry and member education programs and passionately advocates on behalf of the veal, goat and rabbit sectors. Having a wide variety of experience gained during her 16 years within the veal industry, it accompanies her Farm Business Management Diploma from Sir Sandford Fleming College.



Sarah Van Engelen: Communications Coordinator

Sarah Van Engelen joins the team as the Communications Coordinator. Originally raised on a family farm in Lambton County, Sarah has resided in Guelph for almost seven years and has worked in communications for various agricultural organizations. She received a Bachelors of Science in Agriculture and completed a Diploma in Agricultural Communications from the University of Guelph. In her spare time Sarah enjoys reading, cooking, traveling and visiting with family and friends.



Vanessa Sheppard: Marketing & Communications Coordinator

Vanessa Sheppard comes to us as our Marketing and Communications Coordinator. She was first introduced to the agricultural industry as a project manager for Ontario Agri-Food Education Inc. (OAFE). Previously Vanessa worked in Halton at a small advertising agency as an account manager and at Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital in Community Relations. A resident of the Halton region, Vanessa enjoys outdoor activities with her family, drawing and bakes a mean batch of Toblerone Shortbread cookies.



Jennifer O'Rourke: Project Coordinator

Jennifer O'Rourke joined our team in early November as Projects Coordinator for the Biosecurity, Traceability and On-Farm Food Safety Projects. She comes to us with a Bachelor of Science in Animal Biology from the University of Guelph and five years of practical experience in a dairy research unit. A new resident of Oxford County, Jennifer also enjoys fishing, snow-shoeing and raising her own calves.



Shelly Irwin: Member Relations Coordinator

Shelly Irwin joined our team in November as Member Relations Coordinator. She joins us with many years of office experience and is enjoying being back in the workforce after staying home to raise her three children. Shelly and her family live on a farm in Cambridge where they raise beef cattle, turkeys and cash crop. She enjoys helping plant crops, cooking for the farm crew and in her spare time sings and plays guitar and piano in a band.



Kevin Weaver: GoGen Project Coordinator

Kevin Weaver joined the Ontario Livestock Alliance team as the GoGen Program Coordinator. He is responsible for the overall management and implementation of the GoGen program and will be assisting the participating pilot herds to reach their breeding and management goals. He also works to develop standards for registration, milk recording, type classification, genetic evaluation and AI use in the goat sector. Kevin owns and operates Weaver Farms in Belmont Ontario; a family owned and operated dairy goat business, specializing in producing high quality milk and breeding stock from elite Alpine genetics.

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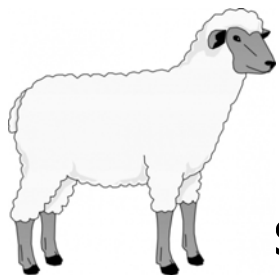
2010: A Year in Review

Below is just a snapshot of some of the issues we are working on for the benefit of the entire Ontario goat sector:

- Ontario Goat (OG) became a member of the Canadian Livestock Genetics Association (CLGA). Some of the synergies of working together are collaborating with industry partners to promote opportunities for the goat sector both domestically and internationally; communicating the goat industry's priorities to the CLGA and ensure strategic alignment of resources to effectively address these shared priorities; and identify priority areas for goat genetic export development.
- OG submitted a letter of input to the City of Hamilton asking leniency with respect to the farm land size limit for existing goat and other small livestock producers. The City of Hamilton proposed changes to the Animal Control By-law, one of which would have seen an increase in the farm land size limit to 5 hectares, at which many existing small livestock producers would have been negatively impacted as their operations would no longer have been considered agricultural land and therefore the number of animals being kept on the property would have also been limited. The City of Hamilton responded indicating that it needed to review rural and urban land uses and will now review feedback prior to making amendments to the proposed by-law.
- OG announced at the 2010 International Goat Symposium that they secured funding of the next three years to develop and implement the GoGen program and hired Kevin Weaver as project coordinator. The Goat Genetics (GoGen) program is an integrated project that incorpo-

rates the use of registration, milk recording, classification, genetic evaluation, assessment of artificial insemination use, young sire testing and development of on-farm health protocols. These programs exist individually, however, GoGen is bringing them together to create one integrated packaged program. GoGen will initially include approximately 2,000 goats on 15 pilot farms that will be required to register, milk record and type classify. It is initially targeted to the dairy goat industry, but will look into feasibility of implementing genetic improvement programs for the meat and fibre sectors.

- The OG sponsors an Award of Excellence in Agri-Food Education through Ontario Agri-Food Education was presented to Mona May Thompson of the Moore Ag Society at the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies Annual Meeting.
- OG, in collaboration with veal, beef and sheep, received \$189,060 from the Agricultural Adaption Council and are working with eBiz Professionals to develop the Livestock Biosecurity & Emergency Preparedness Gap Analysis Project Update
- The goat, veal, beef, sheep and rabbit sectors successfully obtained funding for Phase II of the Biosecurity and Emergency Preparedness Program. The project capitalizes on the work that was underway in the sectors to determine and document gaps in biosecurity and emergency preparedness. This phase incorporated two key aspects of preparation for implementation of biosecurity programs: determination of the cost-of-production impact of disease and knowledge transfer and delivery.



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- OG sought out members to participate in farm tours during the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair.



Sundanese Delegation Touring Ontario Goat Farms in November 2010. From left to right: Mr. Omer M. Almakki, Terry McNeely, Fred Ekema, Tobin Schlegel, Mr. Asim Mukhtar and Dr. Babiker Abdel Atti Elsharif.

- OG, on behalf of the Ontario Livestock and Poultry Council, distributed surveys about on-farm biosecurity practices that have been implemented by goat producers across the province. The results of the survey will assist in benchmarking the level of biosecurity practices in place on Ontario farms and assess what resources Ontario livestock

farmers require in order to heighten their level of protection. By having this information, the hope is to encourage and facilitate support to address any gaps. It is hoped that by completing this survey and reviewing some of the suggested biosecurity practices listed, some producers may decide to implement additional practices or protocols.

- OG was the lead in organizing the 2010 International Goat Symposium. The event consisted of farm tours, education sessions, goat confirmation competitions, a trade show, a demonstration stage, a veterinarian education program, a 4-H silent auction and a banquet dinner. The 2010 IGS attracted over 300 attendees and some of world's foremost experts on goat production.



- OG was a Platinum Sponsor of the Canadian Buck Classic, where a variety of breeds competed in conformation competitions and the event offered free classification to all exhibitors.

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- A new Centre for Excellence for Goat Research and Innovation has been incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation. OG is a founding partner of the centre, along with the Greater Peterborough Innovation Cluster, the Ontario Dairy Goat Co-operative, Trent University and the University of Guelph. The centre will foster new opportunities for research, growth and development in the goat sector.

- OG together with the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair (RAWF) announced the creation of the Ontario Goat Futurity. The 2-year-old dairy goat futurity class was implemented at the 2010 RAWF with the first futurity show being held at the 2012 Royal Dairy Goat Show. This new class aims to challenge, select and nominate dairy goat does that will develop into the best 2-year-olds.



Centre of Excellence for Goat Research and Innovation opening celebration. L-R: Lisa Thompson, Ontario Dairy Goat Co-operative; John Knight, Trent University; Chantelle Held, Greater Peterborough and Area Economic Development Corporation ; Lloyd Wicks, Ontario Goat; and Dr. Paula Menzies, University of Guelph.

- OG facilitated several industry meetings to better understand what the path forward would be for the goat sector. As part of this process, the Ontario Goat Milk Producers Association members voted in favour of dissolving their organization, as more can be done together for the goat sector by aligning resources and consolidating with members under the new OG.

- OG prepared for its new communications strategies with Ontario Veal and Ontario Rabbit. The three organizations accessed a significant amount of funding to help establish important infrastructure for the goat and rabbit sector and at the same time service the veal sector. We are now almost halfway through our four year project

- Development for a new joint newsletter began, which will have specific sections for veal, goat and rabbit, but also common sections as well. This new quarterly publication will begin circulation in February 2011

- Plans for the joint AGM event began, where each organization will still have their individual AGM, but they will have the opportunity to share a joint trade show, location, banquet luncheon and some guest speakers.

- A new monthly Electronic Newsletter was developed and started distribution; specific to veal, goat or rabbit with updates and information pieces for our members.

- OG started emailing weekly market report information in the Fall 2010. The market report is designed to help producers have the most up to date information regarding what is happening each week in the goat market.

- The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) and OG partnered to host the Goat Lenders Conference, held in Guelph in October 2010. Ap-

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proximately 40 different banking institutions and industry partners participated.

- OG has asked Minister Mitchell to dedicate full-time resources to the goat industry by creating a specific full-time Goat Specialist position. Currently, there are OMA-FRA staff who have responsibilities to the goat section in conjunction with other duties and other sectors, however, there is no one staff member specifically responsible for goats.
- OG has provided funding to Dr. Paula Menzies and Dr. Jocelyn Jansen for the development of a course aimed at improving the quality of goat milk produced in Ontario, which will be developed by the University of Guelph and OMAFRA. The course material is currently being compiled and a pilot course is planned for 2011.
- OG had a booth in the Sheep & Goat Pavilion at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show where recipes cards, knitting cards and membership forms were distributed.
- OG has been asking producers and dairy processing facilities to raise funds to develop a Goat Cheese marketing campaign. OMAFRA made some funding available for commodity organizations wishing to put together consumer marketing projects aimed at promoting Ontario

food. The Ontario Market Investment Fund requires organizations to provide 50 per cent of the project costs up to a maximum of \$100,000 in funding. Minister Mitchell pledged \$100,000 towards the project which OG must match in order to receive the funding.

- Introduced a quarterly Photography Contest for OG members, prompting them to submit their farm-related photos to OG to develop a beneficial photo database to be used in upcoming newsletters and other promotional material.
- OG works very closely with a number of industry partners and organizations in order to fulfill the mandate of the association. OG has membership with the following organizations:
 - Ontario Farm Animal Council
 - Ontario Livestock and Poultry Council
 - Ontario Agricultural Commodity Council
 - Agricultural Adaptation Council
 - Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario
 - Ontario Federation of Agriculture
 - Ontario Agri-Food Education
 - Ontario Independent Meat Processors
 - Canadian National Goat Federation
 - Canadian Livestock Genetics Association



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GoGen Review 2010

Submitted by: Kevin Weaver, GoGen Project Coordinator



- ◆ GoGen is an integrated program that incorporates the use of registration, milk recording, classification, genetic evaluation, assessment of artificial insemination use, young sire testing and development of on-farm health protocols. All of these programs exist individually; however, GoGen is bringing them all together to create one integrated packaged program.
- ◆ Funding for this project, totalling just over \$700,000, has been provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) through the Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program (CAAP). CAAP is a five-year, \$163 million national initiative that aims to help the Canadian agricultural sector adapt and remain competitive. In Ontario, this program is being delivered by the Agriculture Adaptation Council (AAC).
- ◆ GoGen will initially include approximately 2,000 goats on 15 pilot farms that will be required to register, milk record and type classify. It is initially targeted to the dairy goat industry but will look into the feasibility of implement genetic improvement programs for the meat and fibre sectors. The GoGen pilot is currently open to all licensed milk producers in the province of Ontario.
- ◆ GoGen Advisory Committee comprised of ten individuals from the Ontario agricultural sector formed. This committee, in addition to providing industry knowledge and advice to the program, would help prioritize the wants and needs of the program, help with setting industry standards for the Ontario dairy goat industry and help steer what information/data is required to be collected in order to provide meaningful results for all our industry partners. Initially the Advisory Committee would help with the selection of the pilot herds and investigate the needs of the program over the first 6-12 months. The committee would most likely meet twice a year with telephone conferences in between to help guide the program.
- ◆ Three Producer Information sessions were held across the province in December 2010. The producer info sessions were to explain what the GoGen program is and how to apply to be considered one of the fifteen pilot farms
- ◆ Applications forms mailed out to all Ontario licensed milk producer in December 2011 with an entry deadline of January 4th 2011.
- ◆ A selection panel formed from the advisory committee to select the pilot herds. All names, contact information or any information that would relate an application to a specific herd was removed. All applications were reviewed solely on content. The selection committee had a set of criteria established from the advisory committee to base the selection on.
- ◆ Part of GoGen is to help built/update the infrastructure of the services offered to producers. Ontario Goat is pleased to announce that as a result of the GoGen program CanWest DHI is currently updated their systems to be able to accept goats 100%. This means that when a herd enrolls into milk recording using CanWest DHI they will be able to receive the same services offered to the dairy cattle industry. As a result of the updates that CanWest DHI is undertaking Valacta (milk recording service in

Quebec and the Maritimes) has seen the benefit and they too have started to update their systems for goats. This means that milk recording services offered to dairy goat producers is now the same across the country and is comparable to the services offered to the dairy cattle sector. This has been a huge step forward for the dairy goat industry and is a direct result of the GoGen program.

- ◆ GoGen is established to help producers manage their operations with the breed evaluations services of registration, milk recording the type classification. If a herd is interested in applying any or the entire GoGen program on their operations they are more than welcome to do so. Ontario Goat staff is there to help producers implement tools to help them become more profitable.

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Submitted by: Rick Norkooli, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Manager Beef Cattle, Sheep, Goats, Alternative Livestock and Aquaculture

Goat Lenders' Conference – a first for Ontario

The first ever Goat Lenders Conference was organized in cooperation with Ontario Goat, and held in October 2010.

Twenty-seven lenders from Ontario agriculture lending institutions attended to learn first-hand from producers, processors and goat industry partners. Each producer provided detailed cost of production figures for the lenders to help them assess a client's ability to make an operation successful. Attendees were provided a CD of the day's proceedings.

Ag lenders found the conference informative. The following comment from one attendee summarizes well the participants' evaluation of the day. "I will be following up my attendance at the conference with an industry paper to be made available to all our lenders. This should help position (our institution) as a lender of choice to the goat industry."

Goat State of Industry Report

OMAFRA has been compiling a Goat State of Industry Report for many years. This report is updated annually, and provides a summarized synopsis of key industry statistics and industry trends, for both the meat and dairy goat sectors of the industry.

The 2010 annual report was made available in time for the Canada Outdoor Farm Show, was included as part of the resource package for those attending the Goat Lenders' Conference, and made available at the International Goat Symposium.

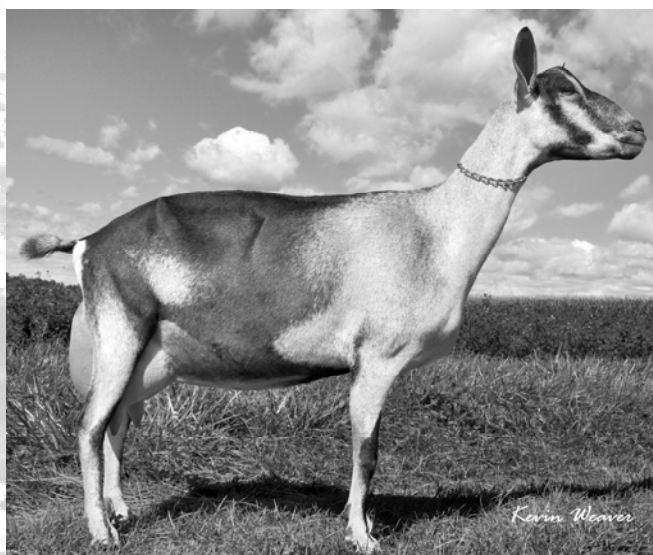
Goat Exhibit at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show

OMAFRA Agriculture Development Branch combined a number of their exhibits to one larger tent to provide "one stop shopping" for livestock producers at the 2010 show. The Sheep and Goat Specialist (Acting) was on hand throughout the entire event showcasing "typical feedstuffs" used by Ontario goat producers, as well as feed bunker systems and predation fencing options.

International Goat Symposium

After four years of co-leading the planning and organizing of the International Goat Symposium, OMAFRA staff moved into a supportive role to Ontario Goat which took the leadership of the symposium in 2010. OMAFRA staff will continue to work with Ontario Goat on future symposium programs.

For more information, Anita O'Brien, Sheep and Goat Specialist (613) 258-8299



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Ontario Independent Meat Processors and Homegrown Ontario™ Program Highlights

Submitted by: David St. Louis, Ontario Independent Meat Processors, Assistant Director

The Ontario Independent Meat Processors (OIMP) is committed to upholding the interests of Ontario's meat and poultry industry by building and maintaining strategic relationships across the value chain. Through our membership with the Alliance of Ontario Food Processors (AOFPP), we champion Ontario's food and beverage industry and strive for the recognition we deserve as an important contributor to the economy.

Working on behalf of our members, we have been able to positively influence government policy by providing a unified, informed voice. Our Technical Committee, which, along with our participation on OMAFRA's Policy Review Committee, has enabled OIMP to provide industry input into the regulatory policy-making process and address the issue of delivering clear, consistent inspection across the province.

We remain committed to strengthening Ontario's meat and poultry industry and embracing a robust food safety culture by providing training, education and assistance with regulatory compliance. These valuable resources are supplemented by technical support and extension services for processors needing help with technical or operational issues.

Through our engagement with producers, processors, distributors, retailers and consumers, we are working hard to increase the demand for Ontario products and develop marketing opportunities for the entire meat and poultry case.

We were successful in maintaining consumer outreach for Homegrown Ontario throughout 2010. OIMP distributed quarterly e-newsletters to over 11,000 consumers and trade-related subscribers. Ontario supporters utilized the Homegrown Ontario website to view recipes and search for local businesses carrying the brand. The website received increased visitors; in 2010 we had a total of 22,069 visitors and 19,404 unique visitors – an increase of over 60% from 2009. Homegrown Ontario on-pack stickers remained popular, with over 1 million dispensed last year. Bumper magnets, continue to be a sought after item, and our new *Ultimate Appetizer recipe booklet* was well-received by consumers. Politicians, including MPP Marie Van Bommell, funding partner AAC, foodservice establishments and numerous fall fairs received complimentary POS to promote Homegrown Ontario products. Homegrown Ontario received a Premiers Regional Innovation Award in 2010 for our work in promoting Ontario meat and poultry products.

OIMP also raised consumer awareness through our presence at the Queen's Park Farmers Market and speaking with consumers at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, where we emphasized the importance of supporting Ontario's meat and poultry processors, explained how to locate local products and distributed more than 5,000 recipe booklets featuring Ontario meat and poultry.

We continued to promote OntarioMeatProducts.ca to consumers as the primary resource to locate Ontario meat and poultry products. Website statistics indicate the ability to search for specialty or specific meat products continued to be a popular feature.

We have seen positive results with provincially inspected plants regaining access to major retailers and others securing contracts within the provincial procurement system. Work has begun on a two-year pilot project that will include development of the Ontario Heritage Meats™ brand – a line of quality, innovative processed meat products generated from the entries in the 2011 Ontario's Finest Meat Competition. The project will create market opportunities for processed Ontario meat and poultry products and include point-of-sale materials, in-store demos, and promotion in retailer flyers and on retailer websites.

OIMP continues to promote the creation of a collective meat and poultry marketing strategy, and we look forward to continuing our efforts and relationships with Ontario's veal, goat and rabbit producers.



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Municipal Emergency Management Session

The Ontario Livestock and Poultry Council (OLPC) hosted a session on October 18, 2010 for municipal emergency management contacts, councilors and public health officials. We restricted our invitation to Waterloo Region, Wellington County, Halton, Peel, Perth, Oxford, Huron, Grey, Bruce and Middlesex Counties. The objectives of this session was to:

- ◆ Encourage municipalities and public health offices to consider how agriculture should be incorporated into their emergency response plans.
- ◆ Raise awareness with municipal and public health leaders of initiatives undertaken by livestock and poultry groups regarding emergency preparedness.
- ◆ Provide an opportunity for municipal, public health and agricultural representatives to network.

We had 40 individuals attend the event. The feedback from attendees was very positive but did illustrate that there was a wide variance within the group regarding the degree of preparedness for dealing with a livestock and poultry disease or emergency situation. A second session is planned for April 12, 2011 in Belleville, Ontario.

On-Farm Carcass Disposal in EFP Workbook

The OLPC Biosecurity Committee has a representative participating in writing revisions to the Environmental Farm Plan workbook. The Committee had recommended that a section dealing with the mass disposal of animals on-farm be included in the next edition of the workbook. The new section will assist farmers in assessing whether they have a suitable land base (soil type, proximity to water, etc.) to be able to dispose of carcasses on site. If not, then developing a plan for the removal and disposal of high numbers of mortalities would become part of their contingency plan.

OMAFRA Animal Health Forum

OMAFRA's annual Animal Health Forum was held on November 24, 2010 at the Delta Hotel, Guelph, Ontario. As in 2009, the event was a meeting of government, academic and industry organizations working in animal health and welfare. The agenda included updates on research projects and other initiatives. OLPC was invited to give a presentation on recently completed and current initiatives.

Hazard Reporting Regulation

OLPC is continuing to provide input to OMAFRA regarding the content of the proposed Hazard Reporting Regulation under

the Animal Health Act, 2009.

OMAFRA provides regular updates on the progress of developing Regulations and Responses under the Animal Health Act at each membership meeting.

Feather Board Command Centre Disease Simulation

OLPC participated in the FBCC disease simulation held on June 15 to 17, 2010. We tested the effectiveness of our communications network in disseminating disease alerts.

CFIA Disease Questionnaire

OLPC is working with CFIA to improve their disease response questionnaire. It was identified that many sections could be completed by producers in advance as long as it was kept up to date. This would minimize the time involved in completing paperwork at the time of an outbreak. We are also looking at ways the CFIA and OMAFRA disease response questionnaires could be linked.

OLPC Business Plan

At the June 2010 OLPC members' meeting, the Executive Committee was asked to prepare a Business Plan to reflect the ongoing mandate and role of OLPC as well as future financial requirements. A draft Business Plan covering 2010 to 2015 was provided to members at the August meeting and was approved at the February 2011 meeting. Six strategic directions on which OLPC will focus activities are outlined within the Plan.

Engaging Small Commodity Groups in Biosecurity Discussions

OLPC would like to encourage more livestock and poultry groups to become involved in biosecurity discussions in order to raise awareness and also to get their input. In the coming year, we will offer the small commodity groups the opportunity to participate in our information sharing and communications network at no charge; e.g. add to the electronic distribution list. We will also be encouraging sectors that are not currently represented in the membership to consider joining OLPC.

There is also a need to engage non-commercial farmers who do not belong to any producer association and who may have a low awareness of biosecurity issues and potential risks; e.g. backyard flocks, small scale or hobby livestock producers, etc. Members recognize that a disease outbreak in one of these operations can have a devastating impact on surrounding commercial operations and potentially to human health.

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Ontario Farm Animal Council Year in Review 2010

Submitted by: Kelly Daynard, Ontario Farm Animal Council, Program Manager

Since its creation, the Ontario Farm Animal Council (OFAC) has continually worked with its members and other farm animal councils across Canada to promote responsible farm animal care practices on livestock farms and to find new and innovative ways of showing consumers how farm animals are raised.

Here are some highlights from 2010:

Advancing responsible farm animal care:

- In 2010, OFAC updated the “*Should this animal be loaded?*” **decision charts** for cattle, sheep and goats and the chart for pigs. A total of 47,000 copies of these two resources have printed for Ontario farmers, transporters, sales barns and processing plant staff and have been modified for use in other provinces.
- OFAC also worked with OMAFRA staff to update and distribute the “*Caring for Compromised Cattle*” and “*Caring for Compromised Pigs*” booklets. 20,000 copies of these booklets will be distributed farmers and at sales barns.
- OFAC’s Livestock Transportation Specialist, Dave O’Rourke has spent a significant amount of time at cattle and hog processing plants in 2010 making recommendations on how to improve the **unloading** and **handling** of livestock at these facilities.
- In 2010, OFAC received 11 **Helpline calls** from across the province as well as numerous other calls from farmers and others looking for advice or assistance. The Helpline provides a confidential way for people to report situations of farm animals that they feel require better care or for farmers themselves to call if they need some help.
- Focusing on farm youth continues to be a strong priority. Staff gave presentations to agricultural students at Kemptville and Ridgeway colleges as well as to Ambassadors at the Canadian National Exhibition and competitors at the Royal Winter Fair. OFAC also partnered with 4-H Ontario to offer an Ag-mazing race competition for 44 4-H members.

Education and Events:

- In 2010, OFAC and AGCare led farm tours for 125 students from five Ontario **culinary colleges**. Students from Fanshawe College in London, Sir Sandford Fleming College in Peterborough, Humber and George Brown Colleges in Toronto and Algonquin College in Ottawa visited a variety of farms including beef, dairy goat, veal, sheep, apple, bees, carrots, broiler chickens and cranberries. Foodland Ontario sponsored the lunches for each tour.
- The interactive exhibit, **FarmzOnWheelz**, spent 73 days on the road at 13 events, reaching an estimated 2,142,543 visitors. Designed and built by the Ontario Science Centre, FarmzOnWheelz demonstrates the impact that science and technology have in modern agriculture.



- It is estimated that **57,500 Ontario students** visited at least one of OFAC’s displays at various locations in 2010. OFAC’s creativity contest received 961 entries from kindergarten to grade eight students (up from only 40 in the contest’s first year – 2006). The contest encourages students to document their visit to a farm, farm exhibit or fall fair by drawing a photo and telling a story about their experience. A total of 5,234 Ontario schools also received a mailing from OFAC containing several of its new farm resources including the Real Dirt on Farming, a virtual farm tour CD and the accompanying teachers’ guides for both.

Public Outreach:

- A new charitable foundation that will support food and farming outreach programs was launched by OFAC and AGCare. The **Farm Care Foundation** will focus its activities on public trust and confidence in food and farming. The new foundation is an independent, registered charity that will focus on building relationships with donors and developing an effective fundraising program to support OFAC and AGCare initiatives. Funding programs will include regional and national agri-food awareness efforts, as well as more specific work on environmental and farm animal care issues.
- With support from commodity groups and agri businesses across Canada, the popular “*Real Dirt on Farming*” **booklet** was updated and reprinted in the fall of 2010. More than 85,000 copies have already been distributed across Canada – including as far north as the Yukon. Thanks to Farm Credit Canada for sponsoring a new secondary school teachers’ guide that was written by Ontario Agri Food Education to accompany the booklet. That resource is being distributed to high schools across Canada.
- A total of 7,000 copies of the **2010 Faces of Farming calendar**, have been printed and mailed to politicians (federal, provincial and municipal), media, grocery stores and butcher shops. New this year, TSC stores have agreed to carry the calendar on a trial basis in 39 Ontario stores.
- OFAC continues to partner with its sister groups across Canada on a blog entitled “*Let’s talk farm animals.*” The site aims to set the record straight on animal welfare issues by providing the public with access to accurate information from farmers, researchers and the media. Watch for an increased amount of blogging in 2011.

- OFAC staff participated in **113 media interviews** for radio and television stations, newspapers, magazines and blogs on such topics as the OSPCA, animal transportation, barn fires, sow housing, cull cows, the Faces of Farming calendar, animal activists and more.
- The 2010 **Toronto media tour** resulted in a record number of 36 attendees participating in a day-long tour to an egg laying farm and a strawberry farm. Attendees including representatives from Toronto Sun, Toronto Star, Food and Drink, Kraft Canada, Foodland Ontario and more.
- OFAC continues to look for new ways of reaching the public and now has 800 followers on **Twitter** (@onfarmanimal) as well as about 200 followers on **Facebook**.
- OFAC continues to work on behalf of Ontario commodity groups to the www.farmingsources.com website which serves as a **media database** on agricultural issues. It is searchable by or-

ganization and by topic and also features an ongoing index of current Ontario agriculture news stories from AGCare and OFAC's members. A total of 180 press releases were posted to the site in 2010.

Four OFAC staff also conducted **65 speaking engagements** and training workshops to an estimated 6,000 farmers, commodity staff, agri business employees, service club members and politicians.

Providing expertise and leadership on animal agriculture issues:


- In 2010, OFAC's Livestock Transportation Specialist, Dave O'Rourke taught 13 **Certified Livestock Transport (CLT)** courses to 128 participants. The course provides a common sense, fact-based approach to give professional livestock transport drivers the information and tools they need to safely and humanely transport livestock in Canada.
- Approximately 80 firefighters attended one of three **First Responder courses** put on by OFAC. Another 70 CFIA inspectors took OFAC-led workshops on truck configurations and density.
- OFAC and AGCare offered six advanced **Speak Up team** training sessions for Ontario farmers in 2010. OFAC staff also ran similar training sessions for farmers in Prince Edward Island and British Columbia as the Speak Up team concept continues to generate national interest.
- OFAC prepared and presented a workshop for the **Municipal Law Enforcement Association of Ontario** on Livestock Emergencies and Transportation. OFAC staff has also made several presentations to local fire departments. OFAC is also reviewing the three Ontario livestock truck accidents in the fall of 2010 and will be preparing reports that include such topics as lessons learned in the accidents and areas of response that need improvement.
- OFAC staff assisted with a farm animal training session for **OSPCA inspectors** held in Guelph and sponsored the biosecurity materials and supplies for the session.

About OFAC

The Ontario Farm Animal Council is a non-profit educational coalition. At the time of its formation in 1988, it was the first of its kind in North America but now has sister groups across Canada (including a new one formed in British Columbia in 2009) and the United States.




In 2011, OFAC will go through some structural changes as it works towards an official amalgamation with its sister group, AGCare. The goal of the amalgamation is to provide a stronger united voice for crop and animal sectors. The two organizations have shared an office in Guelph's AgriCentre for the last five years and already share several staff and projects.

All OFAC resources are available on its website at www.ofac.org or by contact the office.



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