



**PROGRESS REPORT**

**September 2015**

**18 MONTH OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES, ISSUES AND PROJECTS**

## **Background Information**

In 2009, the Ontario Goat Breeders Association (OGBA) joined the Ontario Livestock Alliance- a partnership with the Ontario Veal Association (now known as Veal Farmers of Ontario) and Ontario Rabbit- and was successful in obtaining funding to develop the organizational capacity of OGBA in order to strategically address the needs of the Ontario goat sector. This seed funding was contingent on an organizational self-sustainability model that would see producers invest in their own organization similar to all other recognized commodity organizations.

Prior to 2009, the goat industry had struggled to organize itself with failed attempts by the defunct Ontario Goat Milk Producers Association to obtain marketing board regulations. While the industry was growing, producers continued to be segregated, and at times at odds with each other, based on who they brokered their milk with or the type of goats that they raised (meat, milk, breeder, etc.). As a result, from time to time the goat milk brokers engaged in various industry development projects and advocacy work on their own due to the lack of a viable representative producer organization.

One of the first items of business for the OGBA Board of Directors was to hold an industry wide meeting with representatives from all facets of the Ontario goat industry including brokers, government, veterinarians, processors, industry partners (eg. Feed and equipment suppliers) and goat producers. It was unanimously agreed at this meeting that the Ontario goat industry needed a “united voice” with one organization representing the needs of the goat industry. It was also agreed at this meeting that OGBA would be known as Ontario Goat (OG) moving forward to better communicate the organizations direction.

Based on the direction from the goat industry meeting and goat producers themselves, in July 2012, a “Producer Expression of Opinion” vote was held by the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission on Ontario Goat’s proposal seeking marketing board status; unfortunately the vote failed to gain the required votes based on production volumes. However, while there was not consensus on the funding model, there was general agreement that the growing goat industry needed to have a representative organization to address important industry issues.

In 2013, OG engaged John Core (former Chair of Dairy Farmers of Ontario) to facilitate meetings with industry stakeholders to determine issues and priorities for the Ontario goat sector. John Core’s work led to several meetings with delegates from Ontario Goat and the two goat milk brokers- Hewitt’s Dairy Ltd. and the Ontario Dairy Goat Cooperative (ODGC).

Much of the focus of these meetings, facilitated by John Core, centered on the shared belief that the Ontario goat industry needed an organization like Ontario Goat to address a number of priorities and issues that would benefit the industry as a whole. With a united producer voice through the non-profit producer association of Ontario Goat, the for-profit brokers would then be able to focus on the business of purchasing, transporting and selling of goat milk thereby avoiding duplication and bringing balance to the goat industry.

In December 2013, Ontario Goat, Hewitt's Dairy Ltd. and the ODGC signed a two-year joint agreement that saw the implementation of a half cent/litre of goat milk check-off collection that is remitted by both brokers on a monthly basis calculated by total volume of milk brokered the previous month. There are independent milk producers who also remit check-off based on the total volume of milk they have produced/sold. As well, there are meat goat producers who also voluntarily remit check-off to support the work of OG.

The guiding principles of this two-year agreement were:

- It was an opportunity to prove how the industry could work together
- That it was important to have a strong, united goat voice to government and industry
- The goat industry could achieve just as much or more outside of a regulated marketing board through a voluntary check-off
- All parties would agree to their respective roles and responsibilities to avoid duplication and confusion in the industry
- If the objectives of the key priorities were met, that it would be incumbent upon all involved to renew the agreement for another term to demonstrate leadership for the industry

As directed by the joint OG, ODGC and Hewitt's Dairy Ltd funding agreement, there are three key priorities that OG has been mandated with:

1. Producer & Industry Communications
2. Consumer Marketing & Promotions
3. Dairy Goat Cost of Production Study

From these three key priorities, the OG Board of Directors have developed the following strategic philosophy to help guide the work of the organization:

#### Mission

Ontario Goat, as a united producer organization proudly representing Ontario's dairy, meat and fibre sectors, is dedicated to enhancing the goat industry through education, collaboration, innovation and strategic alliances.

#### Vision

To represent Ontario's goat producers, with a recognized organization focused on sustainable growth, industry development and profitability, in order for all sectors of the Ontario goat industry to reach their full potential.

#### **Next Steps**

As outlined in the signed agreement, OG has compiled the following report as a summary of the various initiatives, projects and activities undertaken and completed by OG for the benefit of the entire goat industry over the past eighteen months of this two year agreement.

The OG Board of Directors believes that it has not only fulfilled its given mandate of the three priorities, but has exceeded all expectations by addressing additional emerging issues for the benefit of the Ontario goat industry, leveraging funding for important projects and advocating

for the needs of all goat producers in Ontario. For these reasons, and in the spirit of continued collaboration and continuing to do what is right for the Ontario goat industry via the original intent of the agreement, the OG Board of Directors respectfully requests that Hewitt's Dairy Ltd./Gay Lea Foods and the Ontario Dairy Goat Cooperative renew the signed agreement and continue to collect and remit the check-off on goat milk on behalf of dairy goat producers as outlined in the original agreement for another two-year term starting January 1, 2016 and ending December 31, 2017.

## **18 MONTH OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES, ISSUES AND PROJECTS**

### **PRIORITY AREA #1: PRODUCER AND INDUSTRY COMMUNICATIONS**

***Objective: Advocate for the Ontario goat industry and promote a positive image of the Ontario goat industry***

- Provided over 15,000 copies of educational resources (recipe cards, kid's activity booklet, etc.) to local county fairs, associations, schools and service groups as requested
- Attended the 2015 Ontario Agricultural Associations and Societies (OAAS) Ag awareness trade show and met with approximately 200 representatives of fair boards to discuss educational material requirements
- Fulfilling speaking requests as they arise on various topics relating the goat industry"
  - University of Guelph Sheep and Goat Club
  - University of Guelph Animal Biology career night
  - University of Guelph Ridgetown Campus
  - Hamilton Branch of Professional Agrologists
  - Industry partner meetings (eg. Dortman's workshops)
  - Grey Bruce Goat Day
  - OMAFRA "Goat 101" education seminar for OMAFRA staff
- Supported requests for resources and information from various county level "Agriculture in the Classroom" programs and secured animals/speakers where possible
- At the request of organizers, OG assumed responsibility for the Goat Education Center at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair
  - Provided ongoing commentary for the daily goat milking demonstration to approximately 322,000 visitors at the 2014 Royal Agricultural Winter Fair.
  - Handed out approximately 2,500 goat activity books, 20,000 meat and cheese recipe cards and over 1,000 Goat Facts sheets
- Liaising with CFIA and OMAFRA on all issues relating to scrapie including current infections, testing and future discussions about disease management
- Lobbying CFIA for increased compensation for ordered destroyed animals for goat producers; lobbying for increased resources to develop live animal testing for goats
- Lobbying OMAFRA to include goats as an eligible commodity in the Risk Management Program

- Collaborating with other livestock groups to raise the level of awareness of livestock needs (and specific to goat) heading into the 2015 Federal election to ensure our voice is heard
- Participated in consultation meetings with Minister Leal regarding the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Ministers meeting
- Participated in the Annual Premier's Summit on Agri-Food at Queen's Park
- Participated in the Agricultural Management Institute Think Tank
- Attended quarterly Ontario Agricultural Commodity Council meetings with all other non-supply managed commodities to discuss issues in the industry
- Attended bi-monthly meetings of the Ontario Livestock and Poultry Council
- Met with various Members of Provincial Parliament and Federal and Provincial government staff to raise the profile of the Ontario goat industry
- Chair of the Board of Directors for the Center of Excellence for Goat Research and Innovation through a partnership with the University of Guelph and Trent University, overseeing several research projects totally approximately \$400,000 as directed by the research committee.
- Participated in the annual Queen's Park Farmers Market sampling goat cheese to government representatives and their staff at the invitation of the Minister
- Wrote various letters to government officials on goat issues
- Submitted a year-in-review for OG to the Perth County Federation of Agriculture
- Participated in Canada's Outdoor Farm Show as an exhibitor and connected with new and existing members, discussed industry issues, distributed production resources and more
- Participated at the Canadian Dairy XPO as an exhibitor and connected with both new and existing members, discussed industry issues and distributed educational resources
- Participated in the 4-H Sheep and Goat Sen\$e Working Committee to develop programs and curriculum for new producers aged 18 to 25
- Developed the "Goat Advocate of the Year Award" to promote the innovative operations and inspiring producers in the Ontario goat industry

***Objective: Develop resources to help goat producers with production challenges and opportunities***

- Development of the comprehensive Best Management Program (BMP) manual for commercial meat and dairy goat producers through the work of an industry wide committee to ensure consensus
  - Funding for the project was secured by OG from the CAAP program
- Distribution of over 500 Goat BMP manuals to producers and industry partners
- Organized goat producer workshops in Stratford and Peterborough in collaboration with EastGen focusing on increased milk production; launch and distribute BMP manual
- Support industry events and initiatives such as Grey Bruce Goat Day and the Royal Goat Show
- Respond to requests for information with phone calls and emails from producers and industry partners regarding production challenges, expansion plans, animal health issues, nutrition, etc.
- Collaborated with the Livestock Research Innovation Corp to develop and finalize goat research priorities for the industry
- Collaborated with Société des éleveurs de chèvres laitières de race du Québec (SECLRQ) on a joint project "Goat Herd Improvement on Productivity and Health using Genomics" to genotype a total of 1,000 Ontario goats. Participants received a full genomic genetic evaluations of sampled animals

- Leveraged \$65,000 in project funding to develop a goat reproductive management resource program for producers including the “Goat Reproduction Manual” to assist producers with their understanding goat reproduction including out of season breeding and artificial insemination
  - 500 copies of manual distributed to goat producers and industry partners
  - Four producer workshops were held
- Conducted on farm trials assessing various artificial insemination and non-surgical embryo transfer protocols to address reproductive technologies benefitting productivity
- Provided training for veterinarian on innovative non-surgical embryo transfer (ET) techniques through a pilot project. First time ever that a live goat was born via ET
- Leveraged \$111,098 in funding from the Agricultural Biosecurity Program and an additional \$25,000 in NSERC scholarship funding for University of Guelph student to look at the prevalence of Caprine Arthritis and Encephalitis (CAE) in Ontario goat herds
  - Coordinated samples from 884 goats and 47 herds that were analyzed by the University of Guelph to determine prevalence level of the disease in the Ontario goat herd
- Conducted a CAE producer survey indicating a wide range of on-farm priorities and goals with respect to challenges presented by CAE and other production limiting diseases
- Leveraged \$245,000 in funding from OMAFRA’s Traceability Foundation Initiative for the Meat Goat Management and Traceability Pilot Project
  - Collaborated with Beef Improvement Ontario (BIO) to develop bioTrack for goats- a web based herd management program and conducted two tag trials with producers to test retention and readability so that the industry had viable animal identification options
- Collaborated with Gosia Zobel and the University of Guelph on a survey of producers looking at management practices on farm, initially focusing on the dry doe but expanding to all kidding and milking protocols. Research showed that producers do not have a consistent approach
- Leveraged \$45,000 from the Ontario Farm Innovation Program to develop a number of producer educational resources including a hypothermia and hypoglycemia in kids reference poster (over 500 distributed to goat producers) and resources
- Developed a colostrum management booklet and resources for goat producers (500 distributed)
- Developed feed comparison resources for producers to evaluate various feeding options on their farm
- Developed buck kid management resources and booklet
- Together with Veal Farmers of Ontario, leveraged \$90,000 in Growing Forward (GF2) funding to develop and distribute educational resources to help producers address on-farm animal welfare including the development of body condition scoring resources, animal handling videos, assessing animal welfare practices on farm, disease detection, on farm euthanasia fact sheets and information
- Completion of the GoGen Genetic Improvement pilot project that assessed management tools such as milk recording, classification, registration, breeding strategies, disease management and testing and genetic evaluations in order to improve overall doe and herd productivity. Project leveraged \$700,000 in funding to support the pilot producers
- Organized and hosted farm tours
- Provided feedback and input into the development of the University of Guelph’s Goat Milking Best Practices educational resources
- Collaborated with Dr. Osborne and Hilda Oudshorn on a producer survey identifying nutritional and management practices in the goat dairy industry
- Collaborated with the national development communication committee for the National Farm-Level Biosecurity Standard for the Goat Industry. OG distributed biosecurity resources for CFIA

**Objective: Ensure timely communications on issues with goat producers**

- Prepared and distributed timely, current and factual information regarding the discovery of scrapie in Ontario goat herds while respecting confidentiality and government communication protocols
- Developed and distributed a scrapie “Frequently Asked Questions” factsheet in collaboration with CFIA and OMAFRA
- Published quarterly issues of the “Alliance” magazine for all members and industry partners with educational resources, production management topics, farm profiles and more
- Distributed the quarterly OG “Members Update” reporting on activities specific to three priorities of agreement as well as emerging issues
- Developed a number of communication tools including news releases, factsheets, member mailings and emails aimed at providing important information to members and industry partners
- Provided articles in the “Alliance” as a result of all projects undertaken to share the outcomes and next steps
- Hosted 2014 and 2015 OG Annual General Meeting and Producer Education Day for all members and industry partners
- Developed and distributed the weekly “E-Update” for all members and industry partners sharing industry events, deadlines for programs and other industry information
- Respond to requests for resources and information
- Attend the Outdoor Farm Show to connect and communicate with producers
- Ensure regular and timely Board of Director meetings are held to address the needs of the industry and develop direction and policy where needed while maintaining communications with industry partners and government on emerging issues
- Coordinated, developed and launched new organizational website with new resources and information for industry to have quick access [www.ontariogoat.ca](http://www.ontariogoat.ca)
- Developed new resources for producers considering getting into goat production
- Developed and launched new goat producer educational resource “Goat Gazette” focusing on management issues on-farm
- Developed and distributed a 5 year calendar of various ethnic holidays so that producers could plan their production to maximize on peak demand cycles

## **PRIORITY AREA #2: CONSUMER MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS**

### ***Objective: To better understand consumer perceptions and usage of goat products***

- Leveraged \$50,000 in funding from the Center of Excellence and \$36,000 in GF2 funding to conduct a benchmark “usage and attitude survey” of Ontario consumers for goat milk and goat milk products
- Conducted benchmarking market research (quantitative and qualitative) in order to develop key strategic directions for future promotional programs.
  - Included meetings with brokers, processors, retailers and producers to gather feedback and insight.
  - Results of the research indicate large opportunity to leverage health/nutrition benefits for consumers; retail availability continues to be a barrier
- Leveraged \$25,000 in funding from the Greenbelt Foundation to conduct an analysis of opportunities in the foodservice sector and health care sectors for goat milk and milk products
- Partnered with Ontario Sheep and Ontario Veal to evaluate the opportunities in the various ethnic markets for goat meat. Project leveraged \$95,000 from GF2 with Ontario Sheep as the lead applicant. Research indicates huge opportunity to promote quality, fresh and local and that the industry is not currently meeting demand
- Partnered with the University of Guelph Human Nutrition program to conduct a literature review of the human health benefits of goat milk
- Developed a “Goat Milk Nutrition” factsheet and a “Goat Meat Nutrition” factsheet for consumers

### ***Objective: Collaborate with industry partners to promote goat cheese***

- Partnered with Dairy Farmers of Ontario on a feasibility study looking at the creation of a branding program for Ontario made cow and goat cheeses
- Secured \$250,000 in funding from OMAFRA’s Rural Economic Development program for a joint OG and DFO project to develop a consumer branding program for cheese with the support and participation of a number of cheese processors
- Maintain and improve [www.ontariogoatcheese.ca](http://www.ontariogoatcheese.ca)
- Maintain and improve social media presence with Facebook, Twitter posts with goat cheese recipes and meal ideas
- Participate in the Ontario Pavilion at the Delicious Food Show- October 2014 by sampling goat cheese to over 5,000 consumers

### ***Objective: To promote a positive image for the Ontario goat industry***

- Participated at the 2014 RAWF Goat Education Center and conduct milking demonstrations
- Proactively respond to media, industry partners and consumer requests for information
- Participate in the Foodland Ontario advisory committee and attend meetings
- Support local fairs and events with resources where possible
- Supported the Ontario Home Economist Association annual conference with recipe books, nutritional information
- Collaborated with Farm and Food Care to include a dairy goat farm tour of approximately 60 food writers, bloggers and media representatives



### **PRIORITY AREA #3: COST OF PRODUCTION**

***Objective: To collect data via third party as part of the COP pilot project***

- Secured \$75,000 in funding to develop pilot project of dairy goat cost of production model with input from a cross section of the dairy goat industry including OMAFRA, Hewitt's, ODGC, producers and industry partners
- Collaborate with Dairy Farmers of Ontario to develop goat model; data collection protocols
- Secured 14 pilot farm producers; 7 Hewitt's and 7 ODGC producers with a wide range of production systems
- Provided independent third party company to collect all on-farm data from pilot producers

***Objective: To secure funding for data collection to establish trends***

- Secured \$270,550 in GF2 funding for another 3 years of data collection for 20 farms and for the completion of a COP tool, user guide and industry benchmarking.
- Data collection has begun for 2015 COP farm participants

## OTHER PRIORITY AREAS BEING ADDRESSED BY ONTARIO GOAT:

The issues below were not originally part of the “three priority” agreement between ODGC-Hewitt’s-OG, however, the OG Board of Directors feels that they cannot be ignored. To continue pursuing these issues on behalf of the industry, an amendment to the three priorities will need to be considered.

- Traceability
  - o Working with CFIA on the process for developing regulations that will impact goat farmers
  - o Working with OMAFRA to develop lobby position for CFIA and CNGF
  - o Conducting official tag trial for CFIA (only one done in Canada); working with tag suppliers and producers
  - o Participation on national committees for traceability including IGAC and NIDMAC; discussing next steps of tag retention issues
  - o Successfully completed goat tag trial of 1,000 tags for retention and readability
  - o OG submitted its tag trial results to CFIA for their review and approval. Approval granted by CFIA and NIDMAC for tags
  - o OG established a Traceability Committee to look at how traceability can be implemented on-farm in Ontario in order that goat producers are in compliance with the new regulations coming into effect early 2016
  
- Animal Welfare
  - o Partnering with Farm and Food Care to develop on-farm resources and educational programs for goat farmers to address animal handling, euthanasia, etc
  - o Developing training programs for on-farm assessors for the Help Line and collaborations with other industry partners
  - o Collaborating with Farm and Food Care with their IMPACT funding program to establish goat specific education resources to help farmers with animal welfare issues on farm
  - o Responding to requests for information on slaughter without stunning issue in the small ruminant sector
  - o Entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Ontario Society for the Prevention and Cruelty to Animals to address on-farm calls involving goat farms in order to ensure education prevails over enforcement. To date assisted with five farm calls
  - o Collaborating with OMAFRA industry communications dealing with cull does at sales barns
  - o Member of OMAFRA’s Animal Welfare Task Team
  - o Member of Farm and Food Care Animal Care Committee- currently serving as chair
  - o Lobbied National Farm Animal Care Council for an updated Goat Code of Practice
  
- Production Limiting Diseases/CAE Eradication
  - o Collaborating with University of Guelph and OMAFRA to develop a recognized and consistent CAE eradication protocol and certification program
  - o Assessing opportunities for other programs to address impact of production limiting diseases in goat operations
  
- Scrapie
  - o Providing support where needed and requested (producer, veterinarians, government)
  - o Animal identification and record keeping continues to be an issue
  - o Collaborating with Scrapie Canada on eradication challenges; international trade obligations

- Lobbying for enhanced testing protocols looking at scrapie resistant animals
- Submitted funding proposal to assess scrapie susceptibility in Ontario goat herds
- Extra Label Drug Use- Minor Use Minor Species (MUMS)
  - Working with the Canadian Animal Health Institute (CAHI) to accelerate the development and availability of new MUMS products for the Canadian market
  - Ultimate outcome of assisting MUMS species groups in growing and sustaining markets for their products while ensuring food and animal safety to meet domestic and international trade standards
  - Increased pressure to address anti-microbial resistance in livestock animals
- Policy and Issues Management
  - Ongoing monitoring of international trade issues, including CETA and TPP, to determine their impact on the Ontario goat industry
  - Collaborated with the Ag. Credit Corporation & AAFC to develop an Advanced Payment Program for meat goats
  - Currently working with ACC to include dairy goats as an eligible commodity
  - Working with OSMA to access genetic funding through the Toronto Stockyards Land Development Board
  - Supporting the work of the Ontario Animal Health Network through collaboration and information sharing to monitor diseases and issues that are happening in the goat industry.

## **Return on Investment**

**\$\$ Total Check-off Funds collected (January 2014 to July 2015) = \$230,154.83**

**\$\$ Total Funding Leveraged by Ontario Goat (January 2014 to July 2015) = \$1,415,648.00**

**FOR EVERY \$1.00 INVESTED BY GOAT PRODUCERS**

**ONTARIO GOAT HAS ACCESSED \$6.15 IN ADDITIONAL FUNDING**

**6:1 return on your investment that directly impacts the viability and sustainability of your industry!**