



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **SCRAPIE RESEARCH, UDDER HEALTH AND BUCK KIDS FOCUS OF OG AGM**

*Annual general meeting focuses on the future for the Ontario goat industry*

Guelph, ON, January 27, 2016 – The Ontario goat industry is growing by leaps and bounds and the future growth opportunities look promising. With a strategic and a focused approach to research, industry development and education programs, Ontario Goat (OG)'s President Anton Slingerland believes a solid foundation is being built that will serve the industry as a whole and help producers maximize their farm's potential.

OG aims to address the growing needs of the industry with a packed agenda at its upcoming Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Producer Education Day being held on Wednesday February 24<sup>th</sup> at Goff Hall in Woodstock. Slingerland suggests that "it is important for producers to not only take an interest in the business of their representative organization, but also hear from some fantastic speakers that can really help improve production and efficiencies on the farm."

"As the goat industry in Ontario continues to grow and evolve, OG remains focused on key projects and initiatives that will benefit our growing sector" stated Slingerland. "The AGM is a great opportunity for producers to learn more about these important initiatives as well as network with fellow producers and industry partners" said Slingerland.

One of the keynote speakers, Dr. Bradley White with Trent University, will be discussing the exciting results of his newly completed research on genetic resistance and susceptibility to scrapie disease from infected and unaffected goats involved in two scrapie disease outbreaks in Ontario. As a first step towards eliminating scrapie susceptibility in the provincial goat herd, OG recently received funding to test goat breeds and herds for genotypes that may confer resistance and susceptibility to scrapie disease. Dr. White will also discuss how the research will look at the prevalence of the scrapie susceptible and resistant genotypes in Ontario goat herds which will be a major step towards the creation of a strategy for developing a scrapie-resistant status in Ontario.

Other topics being addressed as part of the producer education program include the launch of a new on-farm resource- *A Guide to Udder Health for Dairy Goats*- that has been developed by Dr. Paula Menzies from the University of Guelph. Dr. Menzies will discuss best practices on maintaining the health of the udder with a focus on mastitis.

Raising buck kids can be a challenge but Jillian Craig, Sheep & Goat Specialist with OMAFRA, will present an overview on the economics of raising buck kids with a focus on management practices such as colostrum and feeding in order to maximize the market returns.

The event, which runs from 10:00am to 3:00pm, also features a trade show and buffet luncheon. Registration is free to OG members; non-members and industry partners are \$45. Pre-registration is required. "I look forward to this important meeting as we come together as a strong, vibrant and united industry focused on our common goals as producers" added Slingerland.

For more information or to register, please contact the OG office at 519-824-2942, toll free at 1-866-311-6422 or by email at [info@livestockalliance.ca](mailto:info@livestockalliance.ca).

About Ontario Goat

Ontario Goat (OG) is dedicated to enhancing the goat industry through education, collaboration, innovation and strategic alliances. OG continues to focus on sustainable growth, industry development and profitability in order for all sectors of the Ontario goat industry to reach their full potential. [www.ontariogoat.ca](http://www.ontariogoat.ca)

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