



2006 OSCIA RESOLUTIONS

Resolution #1 - Manitoulin – Crop Damage by Migrating Birds

WHEREAS Sand Hill Cranes and Canadian Geese spend some or all of their summer on Manitoulin Island, and they incur considerable damage on grain crops, and

WHEREAS there is no hunting allowed of Sand Hill Cranes and the hunting season for Canadian Geese opens on September 1.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Canadian Wildlife Service establish a hunting season on Sand Hill Cranes and that goose hunting season should start on August 1 for Manitoulin District.

SENT TO CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE

COPY TO ONTARIO MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES

COPY TO ONTARIO MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

**REPLY BY ELEANOR ZURBRIGG, ACTING DIRECTOR
CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE - ONTARIO DIVISION**

Thank you for your letter dated 4 April 2006 in which you brought to my attention a resolution of the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association regarding crop damage by migratory birds on Manitoulin Island. The Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) is aware that migratory birds may occasionally cause damage to agricultural crops. Under authority of the Migratory Birds Convention Act, 1994 (MBCA) and Migratory Birds Regulations (MBR), CWS may issue permits to farmers to protect crops by either scaring, or in extreme circumstances, killing migratory birds that are causing damage. A permit may be obtained by calling the CWS permits officer for Ontario at (905) 336-4464.

Concerning the specific recommendations in the OSCIA resolution, the MBCA -- which is based on an international treaty -- does not allow CWS to authorize an open hunting season on protected migratory bird species such as Canada geese and Sandhill cranes between March 10 and September 1. For Canada geese, there is an open season on Manitoulin Island from early September to December 20. Furthermore, the daily bag during the first eleven days of the open season is higher than later in the season with the specific intention of increasing the harvest of locally breeding Canada geese. These are the geese that may cause damage to crops during the summer months. The Canadian Wildlife Service is not in a position to consider opening a hunting season for Sandhill cranes in Ontario. We do not currently have an accurate estimate of the size of the Ontario population, however we do know that it is relatively small. Despite the fact that many birds may concentrate in certain areas during migration, and may cause localized damage to crops, the Ontario population of Sandhill cranes is not considered to be sufficiently large to have a sustainable, harvestable surplus.

If you have any further questions regarding hunting or crop damage by migratory birds in the Manitoulin Island area, please contact Jack Hughes 613-952-2405.

Resolution #2 - Manitoulin – Livestock Protection Act

WHEREAS there is considerable crop damage caused by wildlife, and

WHEREAS crop damage is not considered for compensation in the Livestock, Poultry and Honey Bee Protection Act R.S.O. 1990.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Livestock Protection Act be enlarged to encompass "Agricultural Livelihood protection" to protect against crop damage from deer, geese, and Sand Hill Cranes, turkeys and other wildlife.

**SENT TO ONTARIO MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS
COPY TO ONTARIO MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES
COPY TO CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE**

**REPLY BY LEONA DOMBROWSKY, MINISTER
ONTARIO MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**

Thank you for your letter of April 4, 2006, with regard to resolutions brought forward by your member counties. I appreciate learning of your members' concerns, and welcome this opportunity to address the two resolutions specifically addressed to my attention.

Resolution #2 addresses crop damage caused by deer, geese, sandhill cranes, turkeys and other wildlife. I know that wildlife can be a serious concern to affected producers. It is important to recognize, however, that the issues surrounding wildlife are complex and involve livestock producers, the hunting community, environmentalists, and all levels of government.

My Cabinet colleague the Honourable David Ramsay, Minister of Natural Resources, has the mandate for wildlife management. The Ministry of Natural Resources, in consultation with various ministries and other stakeholders, is in the process of developing a strategy to minimize human-wildlife conflicts. The issue of crop damage is being considered in this review.

As you know, the Livestock, Poultry and Honey Bee Protection Act provides compensation to owners of eligible livestock killed or injured by wolves, coyotes or dogs. No changes to this act are under consideration at this time.

Thank you, once again, for the opportunity to comment on these resolutions.

Resolution #3 - Prescott – Farm Grown Seeds

WHEREAS the Federal Government is considering to change the Canadian Seeds Act, which would eliminate the right to reuse home grown seeds, and

WHEREAS there is less competition in the seed industry as ever before due to more small seed companies being taken over by a few large multinational corporations giving them ever-increasing pricing powers for their products, and

WHEREAS the Canadian Seed Growers' Association has proposed an income tax break scheme to the federal government to help farmers offset the additional seed costs from using all certified seed and knowing that these proposals do not stand up very long, and

WHEREAS Canadian farmers should be left to decide on their own what kind of seed they should use, especially when using certified seed does not guarantee higher returns of the resulting crop under certain management practices, and the end user does not require production from certified seed.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association work for their farming members and help them maintain the right to use home grown seed on their operations.

SENT TO ONTARIO SEED GROWERS' ASSOCIATION

Resolution #4 - Northumberland – Dog Strangling Vine

- WHEREAS** Dog Strangling Vine, (*Vincetoxicum nigrum* (L.) Moench, is an exotic weed and is thus the responsibility of the Federal and Provincial Governments, and
- WHEREAS** Dog Strangling Vine, a member of the milkweed family, is spread both by windblown seed and underground rhizomes, and is thus very invasive, and
- WHEREAS** Dog Strangling Vine is regarded as poisonous in early books on poisonous plants, and
- WHEREAS** Dog Strangling Vine is not controlled by labelled rates of registered herbicides, and
- WHEREAS** Dog Strangling Vine is controlled on agricultural land only by tillage and by good cultural practices of removing it from fencerows and roadsides, and
- WHEREAS** Northumberland County has the highest percentage of no-till seeded acres in the province of Ontario and is thus not able to control Dog Strangling Vine by tillage practices.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs instruct its extension specialists to investigate the areas of infestation in the province, and the methods by which farmers are dealing with the problem, and

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs finance a research program to determine the best practices to control this weed on agricultural land that is under no-till practices, and

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs finance a program for the removal of fencerows in order to inhibit the spread of this weed in areas of infestation.

**SENT TO BILL INGRATTA, ONTARIO MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS
COPY TO AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD CANADA
COPY TO CROP LIFE CANADA**

**REPLY BY WES McLEOD, SPECIAL ASSISTANT
OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD**

On behalf of the Honourable Chuck Strahl, I wish to thank you for your letter regarding the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association's resolutions about a long-term risk management program and the dog-strangling vine. The Minister appreciates being made aware of your association's views on these matters and has asked me to provide you with the following information. I apologize for the delay in this response.

Regarding Resolution four and the threat of the dog-strangling vine, I note that your resolution is properly directed to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. I would, however, like to take this opportunity to comment briefly on this issue. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency are taking action on invasive alien species (IAS) through the Invasive Alien Species Strategy for Canada, which was developed under Environment Canada's leadership. This strategy focuses on enhancing national leadership and coordination and proposes implementation through science and technology, legislation and regulations, education and outreach, and international co-operation. It also emphasizes applying risk analysis to better deal with IAS before they become a

threat to our natural resources. For further information on the strategy, please visit the following website: www.cbin.ec.gc.ca/primers/ias_documents.dfm?lang=e.

AAFC also plays a crucial role in preventing, controlling, and mitigating IAS through long-term research and by maintaining major reference and research collections, databases, and specialized libraries. The Department has 15 research centres in Canada that conduct research on the biology of plant and animal pests and ways to identify and control them.

Public and private partner involvement is essential to successfully manage IAS in Canada. To that end, Environment Canada has created the Invasive Alien Species Partnership Program to engage Canadians in actions to prevent, detect, and manage IAS. More information on this program is available at the above-mentioned website. I have also taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of your letter to the office of the Honourable Rona Ambrose, Minister of the Environment, for her consideration.

I trust this information will be of assistance to you and the Association. Again, thank you for writing to the Minister on these matters.

Resolution #5 - Dundas – Risk Management

WHEREAS Ontario Grain and Oilseed farmers and farm organizations are working with provincial and federal governments to establish a new safety net program that works with existing safety net programs, and

WHEREAS this new program will give Ontario Grain and Oilseed farmers a program that gives support that more closely matches grain and oilseed farmers in the USA and Quebec.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association support the proposed Risk Management Program as developed by the grain and oilseed sector for the Ontario farmers.

SENT TO PETER TUINEMA, CHAIR OF THE ONTARIO GRAIN AND OILSEED COMMITTEE

Resolution #6 - Prince Edward – Risk Management Program

WHEREAS Ontario Grain and Oilseed producers have endured two years (2004 and 2005) of very poor commodity prices that do not even return their costs of production, and

WHEREAS the termination of the market revenue insurance program has left no replacement for a long-term safety net program, and

WHEREAS farmers are only a few months from returning to the land for spring planting.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association strongly encourage the Federal and Provincial Governments to give high priority to accept and implement in time for spring 2006 planting a long-term risk management program as suggested by the Grain and Oilseed commodity organizations.

**SENT TO AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD CANADA
SENT TO ONTARIO MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS
COPY TO ONTARIO GRAIN AND OILSEED COMMITTEE**

REPLY BY WES McLEOD, SPECIAL ASSISTANT

OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

On behalf of the Honourable Chuck Strahl, I wish to thank you for your letter regarding the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association's resolutions about a long-term risk management program and the dog-strangling vine. The Minister appreciates being made aware of your association's views on these matters and has asked me to provide you with the following information. I apologize for the delay in this response.

With respect to Resolution six and the need for a long-term risk management program, the Minister is aware of the Risk Management Program proposal put forward by Ontario's agriculture industry. To better meet the needs of our producers, the Government of Canada is committed to working with the provinces, territories and industry to transform current business risk management programs, including enhancing the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) program, to make it simpler, more responsive and bankable for our producers. This includes the possibility of replacing CAIS with separate disaster and stabilization programs. Industry stakeholders will be a key player in this process and, as such, Minister Strahl welcomes their views regarding existing and potential programs.

As well, during the last election campaign, this government promised to make an additional \$500 million available annually for agriculture. In Budget 2006, we delivered on this commitment, and the Minister is extremely pleased that we were able to secure an additional \$1 billion for agriculture this fiscal year. This brings the total additional commitment to agriculture for this fiscal year up to \$1.5 billion, triple the annual amount we committed to during the election campaign. This funding will help farmers meet their immediate, short-term financial needs and lay the foundation for future prosperity in the agriculture sector.

The new funding will be put to use to aid the agriculture sector in four key areas, including addressing weaknesses in CAIS, innovative support for farm family incomes, new programming to deal with natural disasters, and investments in biomass science and biofuels.

To deliver immediately on the first of these budget commitments, the Minister has announced \$1 billion for three initiatives.

On May 18, 2006, he announced a one-time federal government injection of \$900 million to adjust the inventory valuation calculation under CAIS retroactively for 2003, 2004, and 2005. If producers are entitled to more money after the recalculation, they will receive additional payments. In addition, the federal government will work with provinces and territories to change the inventory valuation method for 2006, and it will be considered as a potential element in future programs.

Also on May 18, Minister Strahl announced \$50 million for this fiscal year to expand the eligibility criteria for negative margin coverage under CAIS for the 2005 and 2006 program years. This change will allow negative margin payments to producers with negative reference margins, as long as they have three positive margins in the previous five years. This change will be cost-shared with provinces and territories and will result in more farmers with negative margins due to back-to-back disasters being eligible for CAIS payments.

Subsequently, on May 23, the Minister announced a further \$50 million for this fiscal year for the Cover Crop Protection Program (CCPP), which will assist farmers faced with excess moisture and flooding damage in the spring of 2005 or 2006. The CCPP provides a \$15 per acre payment to help producers restore and protect their fields, complementing the ongoing assistance available from the unseeded acreage or excess moisture benefits under Production Insurance. All farm operations across Canada affected by 2005 or 2006 spring flooding are eligible to apply.

I am also pleased to report that this government was successful in speeding up payments under the \$755-million federal Grains and Oilseeds Payment Program (GOPP). The Department began mailing out initial GOPP cheques in February 2006; eligible grains and oilseeds producers have received virtually all of their GOPP payments this spring. Final cheques for the balance will be sent out in the fall.

I trust this information will be of assistance to you and the Association. Again, thank you for writing to the Minister on these matters.

**REPLY BY LEONA DOMBROWSKY, MINISTER
ONTARIO MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**

Thank you for your letter of April 4, 2006, with regard to resolutions brought forward by your member counties. I appreciate learning of your members' concerns, and welcome this opportunity to address the two resolutions specifically addressed to my attention.

In Resolution #6, I note your support for full funding of the risk management program proposed by the Ontario Grain and Oilseed Safety Net Committee. Our government has spent more than \$800 million over the last three years on farm income stabilization and support programs. This includes \$125 million in immediate financial assistance to help grain and oilseed farmers, horticulture farmers and the livestock industry. In addition, our government has increased the budget of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs over each of the last two years.

Of the \$125 million in financial assistance that I recently announced, \$80 million was targeted to address the need in Ontario's grain and oilseed sector. When combined with the federal government's Grain and Oilseed Payment Program, this brings the total support from both levels of government to about \$200 million.

The agricultural industry has stressed the need for both the federal and provincial governments to address the current challenges facing our farmers. Our government remains committed to a multi-year, flexible partnership with the federal government that will stabilize and strengthen the province's agricultural industry in the years leading up to the next federal-provincial-territorial agricultural policy agreement in 2008. As we stated in the 2006 Ontario Budget, Ontario is willing to move forward with this strategy now, but we require the federal government's participation as a full partner to support our agricultural industry.

I have contacted and personally met with the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, to make him aware of the challenges facing Ontario farmers and the most effective means of restoring stability and profitability to the farms of Ontario and Canada. At our meetings on February 14 and April 10, 2006, and at the meeting of federal, provincial and territorial ministers of agriculture on March 20, 2006, I outlined the Ontario government's proposal for stable, multi-year funding.

Thank you, once again, for the opportunity to comment on these resolutions.

Resolution #7 - Thunder Bay – Agricultural Research Funding

- WHEREAS** legislation affecting Ontario agricultural producers is not always entirely based on scientific research, and
- WHEREAS** agriculture is the backbone of the Ontario rural economy, and
- WHEREAS** agricultural research is sometimes outdated due to changes in climatic conditions, technology advancements, new and improved varieties, and management practices, and
- WHEREAS** long-term publicly-funded ongoing agricultural research should be conducted at research facilities across the province of Ontario, as well as at the University of Guelph and its affiliates, and

WHEREAS such agricultural research should be followed up with on-farm research across the province of Ontario to confirm the findings, and

WHEREAS it is a proven fact that dollars invested in agricultural research are returned many times over, both directly and indirectly to the rural economy, and

WHEREAS Premier Dalton McGuinty has stated that he and his government is committed to research which will bring new ideas to life and that bright new minds will develop a culture of innovation.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs increase agricultural research budget for Ontario, as well as agricultural research funding for both on-station and on-farm research by at least 10% per annum every year for five to ten years.

**SENT TO DALTON MCGUINTY, PREMIER OF ONTARIO
COPY TO ONTARIO MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS
COPY TO DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS
COPY TO AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF ONTARIO**

REPLY BY DALTON MCGUINTY, PREMIER OF ONTARIO

Thank you for your letter on behalf of the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association regarding its resolution on agricultural research funding. I appreciate your keeping me informed of your association's activities.

I note that you have sent a copy of your association's resolution to my colleague the Honourable Leona Dombrowsky, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. I trust that the minister will also take your views into consideration.

Thank you again for the information.

***REPLY BY B.A. (BRUCE) ARCHIBALD, DEPUTY MINISTER
ONTARIO MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS***

Thank you for your letter of April 4, 2006, informing me of a resolution passed by the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association. I would like to take this opportunity to address your concerns about agricultural research funding.

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) currently spends over \$40 million annually on agri-food related research through the OMAFRA - University of Guelph Agreement and through competitive research programs offered by the ministry. This funding includes investment in research personnel, research stations and project operating costs, and covers on-station and on-farm projects as well as laboratory-based research. In addition, \$3 million was set aside under the 2005 Ontario Budget for the establishment of a new Chair in Agricultural Research at the University of Guelph - the Premier's Research Chair for BioMaterials and Transportation. This position will focus on new opportunities for Ontario's crops in the transportation manufacturing sector.

I would also draw your attention to two recent initiatives with relevance for provincial investment in agriculture research.

As you may be aware, the ownership of 14 research stations located across the province has been transferred from the provincial government to the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario, effective April 1, 2006. We believe this change will enable the research stations to attract and benefit from private sector investment.

In addition, the Ontario Research Fund, which is administered by Premier Dalton McGuinty's Ministry of Research and Innovation, has made agriculture a priority area. This represents a new opportunity for increased provincial spending on agricultural research.

Although they are not reflected in our ministry's budget, these two initiatives represent valuable opportunities for the agriculture and agri-food sectors to capture more dollars for research. I invite your association to work with us to strengthen Ontario's agricultural sector by encouraging agri-food research and innovation.

For more information on OMAFRA's research programs, please visit our website at www.omafra.gov.on.ca or contact Mr. Phil Malcolmson, Research and Corporate Services Division, by telephone at (519) 826-4167, or by email at phil.malcolmson@omafra.gov.on.ca

Thank you, once again, for sharing your resolution with me.

Resolution #8 - Prince Edward – Ontario Corn Trials

- WHEREAS** Ontario corn producers are taking a very close look at their input costs, and
- WHEREAS** corn drying at today's high energy costs have increased expenses significantly, and
- WHEREAS** the Ontario corn trials report moisture levels on each individual variety although not in any specific order, and
- WHEREAS** the varieties within each table are not arranged in any particular order/

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association recommend the Ontario Corn Committee list varieties within each table of the report in the order of their moisture levels so quick drydown varieties are noticed easily.

DEFEATED AT ANNUAL MEETING

Resolution #9 - Prince Edward – AGRICORP Forage Insurance Program

- WHEREAS** the Ontario Forage Insurance Program proved to be a poorly redesigned program, and
- WHEREAS** those in the program experiencing the driest spring and summer ever in 2005 did not qualify for a payout.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association encourage AGRICORP to redesign the program for those who may wish to buy into it again, and to increase the number of weather stations, and to locate the stations to better reflect local conditions, and to have AGRICORP consult with local Soil and Crop Improvement Associations as to the appropriate locations.

**SENT TO AGRICORP
COPY TO ONTARIO MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**

REPLY BY RANDY JACKIW, CEO, AGRICORP

Thank you for bringing forward OSCIA county resolutions tabled at your annual meeting that involve Agricorp's business risk management programs. I appreciate the opportunity to respond to resolutions 9 and 14.

Regarding Resolution #9, we are committed to monitoring and improving the forage rainfall plan to make it more relevant to the needs of Ontario forage producers. To date, Agricorp has fulfilled two of the three points addressed in the resolution. Specifically, we have:

- Reduced the daily rainfall cap to 50 mm from 70 mm to better reflect the benefit of daily rainfall.
- Relocated weather stations to better reflect local conditions. Twenty stations in 2006 were relocated to make better use of the stations and to provide better coverage for our customers.

Although we did not increase the number of weather stations this year, we will re-evaluate this option annually. In 2006, 171 new forage customers enrolled in the forage plan. I believe this reflects support for the changes we have made to the plan.

Resolution #10 - Lambton – OSCIA Local/Regional Grant Guidelines

WHEREAS Regional Partner Grant application and Major Grant application guidelines have increased the time and expertise needed to fill out forms, and

WHEREAS grassroots Soil and Crop Improvement Association projects are important for sustainable soil and crop participation.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that requirements and documentation necessary to meet grant guidelines be less onerous so as not to discourage good projects from being undertaken by county and regional associations.

REPLY BY KEITH BLACK, PRESIDENT, OSCIA

Thank you for providing input through the resolution process at OSCIA's Annual Meeting.

The OSCIA Executive is very concerned about the impact of 'requirements and documentation' being onerous to the local/regional associations. About 2004, the Grant Guidelines were standardized so that all would have a common look. The funds for many of these grants are generously provided by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

As such, there are required protocols that we must follow. Particularly, Regional Partner Grant (and to some extent Major Grant) projects are required to provide credible data by the end of the project. This requires an accepted scientific protocol for on-farm applied research and demonstration. This is required as a condition of OSCIA acquiring and utilizing public funds. We encourage OMAFRA field staff to become fully engaged in assisting local/regional associations with the design and workload. We appreciate their assistance to make these projects possible.

I trust there is now a better understanding of the structure that is required as a condition of OSCIA's funding.

Resolution #11 - York – Ethanol Legislation

WHEREAS the Government of Ontario is mandating the use of ethanol in gasoline, and

WHEREAS our ethanol production plants cannot be competitive with foreign plants because of the price of corn.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association encourage

the Government of Ontario to include a "made in Ontario" clause in the ethanol legislation, and

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Government of Ontario mandate that ethanol industries must use "grown in Ontario" corn in ethanol production.

**SENT TO ONTARIO MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT
COPY TO ONTARIO MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**

REPLY BY LAUREL C. BROTEN, MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Thank you for your letter of April 4, 2006 and for the enclosed resolutions with regard to ethanol legislation and farm representation on government boards.

As Minister of the Environment, I appreciate the association's interest in these matters. As you know, on October 7, 2005, the Ontario Government passed Ontario Regulation 535/05 - Ethanol in Gasoline. The regulation calls for an annual average of five percent ethanol in gasoline, beginning in January 2007.

The Ministry of the Environment (MOE) is the environmental champion for ethanol. Regulating the use of ethanol in gasoline will lead to cleaner air in Ontario and play a key role in reducing greenhouse gases. Ontario's 2007 target for ethanol will reduce annual greenhouse-gas emissions by about 800,000 tonnes, equivalent to removing 200,000 cars from the road.

It will take approximately 850 million litres of ethanol to meet the requirements of Ontario's ethanol in gasoline regulation. Many different sources of ethanol will be needed to meet the requirements.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs is the lead ministry on ethanol production issues, and administers the five-year, \$520-million Ontario Ethanol Growth Fund, to support the development of Ontario's domestic ethanol industry.

I trust this information is helpful. Thank you, again, for bringing these matters to my attention.

Resolution #12 - Glengarry – Farm Representation on Government Boards

WHEREAS the provincial and federal governments are working on legislation(s) that will be detrimental to the agricultural community, and

WHEREAS Ontario Soil and Crop is the issuing party for any funding program (e.g. Environmental Farm Plan), and

WHEREAS it has been proven in the past that non-farm representatives are sitting on these boards and making legislation that is not compatible with agriculture.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association work with the respective ministries to ensure that an equal share of farm* representation is present on these boards. A minimum of 50% of a board/advisory committee should be consistent of farmers* (*active farmers in the province or country not active representatives of the farming community).

**SENT TO ONTARIO MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT
COPY TO ONTARIO MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS
COPY TO ONTARIO FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE**

REPLY BY LAUREL C. BROTEN, MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Thank you for your letter of April 4, 2006 and for the enclosed resolutions with regard to ethanol legislation and farm representation on government boards.

I appreciate the association's concerns that government boards contain adequate representation from the farm community. The government has a responsibility to ensure that all agencies and boards are made up of members who are qualified to do the job and must also ensure that these persons are representative of all segments of Ontario society. Please be assured that I value input from the agricultural community and will keep your resolution in mind during any related deliberations in the future.

I would also note that all environmentally significant amendments to legislation are required to be posted on the Environmental Registry for stakeholder feedback and comment. All stakeholders, including farmers, are encouraged to identify their concerns through this registry.

Another forum in which stakeholders are consulted on environmentally significant legislation affecting the agricultural community is the Provincial Nutrient Management Advisory Committee (PNMAC). This committee was established in July 2003 to advise the government on nutrient management issues prior to the development of additional Nutrient Management Act, 2002 (NMA) regulations, including amendments to NMA O. Reg. 267/03. There are 24 committee members, drawn from farm organizations and various commodity groups and includes active farmers.

I trust this information is helpful. Thank you, again, for bringing these matters to my attention.

Resolution #13 – Niagara South – Pesticide Containers

WHEREAS safety in the workplace is a priority, and

WHEREAS pesticide containers can be difficult to open, and

WHEREAS using another implement to open containers increases the risk to the user.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association enter into discussions with the chemical companies, urging them to adopt a more user-friendly design (for example, pull-tab containers or lids with built-in openers).

**SENT TO CROP LIFE CANADA
COPY TO AGCARE**

Resolution #14 – Grenville – CAIS and Additional Income Support Programs

WHEREAS Ontario farmers continue to experience serious declines in commodity prices and revenues for crops during the past year, and

WHEREAS the Canada-Ontario Agricultural Income Stabilization program is too complex for most producers and their professional advisors to explain, and ineffective in meeting the financial shortfalls experienced by producers.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario CAIS program be modified to improve comprehension and accessibility, and additional farm support programs be implemented with higher levels of public support directed to Ontario producers.

**SENT TO ADM, POLICY AND FARM FINANCE DIVISION, ONTARIO MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE,
FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS
COPY TO AGRICORP
COPY TO ONTARIO FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE**

REPLY BY RANDY JACKIW, CEO, AGRICORP

Thank you for bringing forward OSCIA county resolutions tabled at your annual meeting that involve Agricorp's business risk management programs. I appreciate the opportunity to respond to resolutions 9 and 14.

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and the federal government are reviewing the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) program. Agricorp is committed to transparency in operating and delivering our programs. Any government policy amendments or directives will be delivered through the programs as administered by Agricorp.

We continue to focus on enhancing customer service and integrity of the delivery of the CAIS program. As a result, we have improved turnaround time for processing claims and are offering online reporting for 2005 using the myCAIS website to allow producers to receive their claim payments quickly. Producers can also access their CAIS information and reports conveniently using myCAIS.

Resolution #15 – Grenville - Crop Damage by Wildlife

WHEREAS the damage to field crops, livestock, and property caused by growing populations of wildlife such as wild turkeys, Canada Geese, bear and deer results in significant economic losses.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association negotiate with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources for an effective compensation program for livestock, property, and crop yield losses attributable to wildlife, and that wildlife control and removal permits be issued upon request by farmers on a year-round basis.

**SENT TO ONTARIO MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES
COPY TO ONTARIO MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS**

**REPLY BY HON. DAVID RAMSAY, MINISTER
MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

Thank you for your letter regarding a resolution passed by the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) regarding livestock, property and crop losses caused by wildlife.

The factors contributing to an increase in problem wildlife are complex, and the solutions lie within the mandates of all levels of government, including federal and municipal agencies. Public stakeholders and agricultural-based organizations also have a role in finding effective and lasting solutions for preventing and managing human-wildlife conflicts in Ontario.

In 2004, a government-appointed Agricultural Advisory Task Team (AATT) made a number of recommendations for addressing wildlife predation and crop damage. In response to the AATT recommendations, the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) has been leading an inter-ministerial steering committee (including the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care) and public stakeholders in the drafting of two strategies for addressing human-wildlife conflicts in Ontario: the Strategy to Prevent and Manage Human-Wildlife Conflicts in Ontario and the Strategy to Prevent and Manage Human-Deer Conflicts in Southern Ontario.

The two strategies, although still in draft form, identify the need for government and key stakeholders to explore opportunities to better address potentially significant economic impacts, including crop damage and livestock predation, resulting from wildlife. Representatives from the OSCIA, along with over 20 other public stakeholder organizations representing agricultural communities, hunters, animal welfare groups, environmentalists and conservationists, were present at several stakeholder workshops in the fall of 2005. We hope to use the Environmental Registry to consult more broadly on the two draft strategies in the near future.

Under the Livestock, Poultry and Honey Bee Protection Act, the Ontario government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), compensates producers for livestock or poultry that are killed or injured by wolves or coyotes and for damage to honey bee colonies or hive equipment caused by bears. In addition, OMAFRA provides compensation through the Bear Damage to Livestock program for livestock killed or injured by bears.

Monetary compensation programs will not resolve or mitigate crop damage and livestock predation by wildlife. I believe that, collectively, we must take action to protect public interests related to human-wildlife conflicts. The proposed strategies provide guidance for implementing prevention, education and awareness programs that will help minimize adverse economic impacts, improve human health and safety and maintain biodiversity.

MNR staff are working to educate landowners about provincial legislation which allows them to protect their property. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act permits a property owner to capture, kill or harass specific wildlife to protect their property, provided there is reasonable grounds to believe that the wildlife has damaged or is about to damage the property. Species such as white-tailed deer may not be killed in protection of property without authorization from MNR. Deer Removal Authorizations are available on a year-round basis, provided the applicant can meet certain conditions. Please note that some species of wildlife in Ontario are regulated by the federal government. For example, one must obtain authorization from the Canadian Wildlife Service to harass or protect property from Canada Geese, which are regulated under the Migratory Birds Convention Act.

It will be important for provincial ministries to continue to work together with other levels of government and a broad range of stakeholders to balance interests and demonstrate commitment to finding solutions to serious human-wildlife conflicts.

Again, thank you for writing. I look forward to working with the OSCIA to find lasting solutions to human-wildlife conflicts in our communities.

Resolution #16 – Grenville - Ontario Labour and WSIB Regulations

WHEREAS the regulations and interpretations of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board appear to designate farm custom work operators as farm employees when performing custom work for farmers, and

WHEREAS excessive regulations applied by the Ontario Ministry of Labour are very onerous for self-employed farm operators with only limited, part-time employees.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association negotiate with the Ontario Ministry of Labour and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board to amend their regulations and interpretations to adopt a policy of designating farm customer operators as self-employed contractors (similar to contractors in the construction trades), and that these agencies promote safe workplace practices by offering educational seminars rather than enforcement of excessive regulations.

**SENT TO WORKPLACE SAFETY AND INSURANCE BOARD
COPY TO FARM SAFETY ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO**

**REPLY BY JOHN SLINGER, CHIEF CORPORATE SERVICES OFFICER
WORKPLACE SAFETY & INSURANCE BOARD**

Your letter of April 4, 2006 addressed to Jill Hutcheon, President and Interim Chair of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), has been referred to me for a response.

The Workplace Safety and Insurance Act distinguishes between a “worker” who is automatically covered for WSIB benefits and an “independent operator” who is not. Given that independent operators are not automatically entitled to benefits, the WSIB is required to make status determinations, in all industries on a case-by-case basis. The WSIB applies what is referred to as the “organization test” in making these determinations. Key elements of the organizational test are represented in a questionnaire that must be completed by the employer and the individual. For your information, I have attached a copy of the relevant questionnaire.

For a better understanding of the purpose and application of the questionnaire used to determine a person’s status for WSIB purposes, I encourage you to contact Mr. Graham Smith, Manager, Benefits and Revenue Policy Branch. He will be happy to assist in this regard. He can be reached directly at (416) 344-4144.

Thank you for raising this issue with us.

Please note: the attachment referred to in Mr. Slinger’s letter can be accessed on the WSIB website at www.wsib.on.ca; the questionnaire is form #1158A (08/02).

