

September 2008

# NORTHWEST LINK

Thunder Bay \* Rainy River \* Kenora Districts

## *Northwestern Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Associations*

### McGuinty Government Supports Industry, Community Marketing

Ontario is kicking its Pick Ontario Freshness strategy into high gear by partnering with agri-food industry groups and local food networks.

The province is making a total of \$12 million available over four years through the Ontario Market Investment Fund to help these groups promote consumer awareness of Ontario-produced foods and to encourage Ontarians to buy locally. Applications are now available on the ministry's web site at:

[www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/food/export/index.html](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/food/export/index.html)

The program will help develop opportunities through trade events, marketing campaigns and industry research initiatives that foster partnerships and collaboration to promote Ontario foods. It is part of the McGuinty government's investment of \$56 million over four years in buy local initiatives.

#### Who may apply?

Eligible applicants include, but are not limited to: Strategic alliances between individuals, businesses, producers, processors, community organizations, including not-for-profits, and/or municipalities Agriculture and food industry associations in Ontario, including food retail and food service industry Groups comprised of two or more partner organizations or businesses, including at least one food producer or processor.

Individuals or individual businesses are not eligible to apply as sole applicants.

#### Eligible Projects

The Ontario Market Investment Fund will support innovative market research, communications and/or marketing projects that encourage Ontarians to buy

locally-produced foods. Examples of eligible projects include:

Market research - projects that will improve the understanding of, and access to, market opportunities for local Ontario foods such as emerging opportunities in developing ethnic markets or consumer demand for region-specific food products.

Development of market opportunities - creating local food networks linking farmers, food processors, retailers, institutional food service companies, restaurants, culinary tourism events and consumers that will encourage Ontarians to buy locally.

Communication initiatives - projects that build capacity and develop skills within local food networks, commodity organizations and other stakeholder groups for the promotion of Ontario foods through marketing campaigns.

Consumer or trade events - building business relationships that work to develop new markets for Ontario foods via industry or consumer focused promotional activities.

#### Funding

Projects are cost-shared with the provincial government investing up to 50 per cent of the project's eligible cost. Grants of up to \$100,000 per approved project are available.

Applicants must complete one project before applying for additional project grants. Projects may span more than one year. Eligible expenditures include, but are not limited to: Market research designed to increase understanding of consumer and trade channel demands and sector capabilities Advertising and promotional materials Obtaining expert services to help develop local food networks Project management costs related to the delivery of the project.

More detailed information on the application process and application forms can be found at

[www.ontario.ca/omif](http://www.ontario.ca/omif)



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This newsletter is published monthly except for the month of December. Articles should be submitted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to the publishing month. Material in this newsletter is based upon factual information believed to be accurate. Action taken as a result of this information is solely the responsibility of the user. We reserve the right to edit articles.

**Agricultural Business Management  
Specialist Update**

Julie Poirier Mensinga, Agricultural Business Management Specialist, is currently on a one-year leave of absence. The process to backfill this position is underway. It is expected that the position will be filled on a contract basis in September.

Congratulations to Julie Poirier Mensinga and Randy Mensinga who are the proud parents of a daughter, Isabelle Anne.

**Electricity Retrofit Incentive  
Program - Extended through  
2008**

Retrofitting an existing facility with newer equipment is natural business practice. Technological improvements often make the newer equipment more efficient and effective than the ones you are replacing. For electricity driven equipment this is almost certainly the case.

The Electricity Retrofit Incentive Program appreciates that when your business is making choices between different equipment options the desired choice is for the most efficient solution, but for financing reason or timing reasons other choices may be made. The Program would like to influence the decision in favour of the most electricity efficient ones.

ERIP focuses on the areas of lighting, motors, heating ventilation and air conditioning and overall electricity

systems. These areas cover the majority of and most important electricity upgrades businesses engage in. Everyone can help reduce energy consumption in Ontario. Through this program, your business can contribute to a cleaner environment and benefit from incentives and lowered operating costs.

**What Projects Qualify?**

Incentives will be available for pre-approved projects that result in measurable reductions in electrical peak demand.

These projects may be completed using energy efficient technologies prescribed by the program or may be based on innovative custom initiatives.

Project applications must be submitted for approval before December 31, 2008 and completed and functional before December 1, 2009.

Complete program details are available at this web site:

<http://business.everykilowattcounts.com/feature/ERIP/index.php>

Applications can be downloaded from this site:

<http://business.everykilowattcounts.com/feature/ERIP/forms.php>

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## Agriculture Career Focus Program

The Agriculture Career Focus Program offers employers an opportunity to receive a wage subsidy to hire skilled youth on a 4-10 month placement. The program is open to all businesses that are part of the economic sector represented by the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council. Eligible interns must be post-secondary graduates in agriculture.

Under the program, the Council will provide a 33 per cent wage contribution to a maximum of \$12,000 per intern for Canadian farm businesses hiring graduates for a minimum of four months or until March 31, 2009. The program is available to Canadian businesses across the country conducting work in the primary agriculture sector, including businesses that directly provide service to the on-farm sector.

The program is sponsored by CAHRC and Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) to provide employment opportunities for Canadian youth that foster long-term employability in the agriculture industry. Running from May 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009, the program is designed to benefit both employers and new graduates. For the employer, it provides a resource base of educated, potential employees and the assistance of wage contributions. For graduates, it may provide the first critical job opportunity in their field.

Additional information and applications can be found at the following link:  
<http://www.cahrc-ccrha.ca/CareerFocus.html>



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Willem Vellinga  
Alta Dairy Representative

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## Factsheets

The following OMAFRA products have been delivered to Resolve Warehouse and should now be available from ServiceOntario Publications at [www.publications.serviceontario.ca](http://www.publications.serviceontario.ca)

**2008 SUPPLEMENT, Turfgrass Management Recommendations, Publication 384S**; the order number for this free, 20-page supplement is 0384SE.

**08-013: Livestock Access to Watercourses**, Agdex 400/751; new, free, colour factsheet.

**08-017: Lawn Maintenance**, Agdex 273;

**08-033: Options for Farmers Dealing with Financial Difficulties**, Agdex 817;

**08-035: Farm Fencing Systems**, Agdex 400/724;

**08-043: Farm Succession – Do's and Don'ts**, Agdex 812.

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## Alternative tillage systems to save time and fuel\*

*Dr. Tarlok Singh Sahota CCA*

Primary purpose of tillage is to control weeds and to obtain good tilth for seeding crops. It ensures good seed to soil contact required for seed germination and crop emergence. However, tillage (particularly in wet soils) can lead to soil compaction, and development of hard pan restricting root growth and nutrient availability. Zero tillage or conservative tillage on the other hand may keep the soils wet and cold for a longer period than the tilled soils, more so in early springs. This can delay land preparation and seeding operations in spring, and can impact crop yields in areas with short growing season, such as the Northwestern Ontario. Besides, left over residues in conservation tillage systems can attract slugs and other harmful insects such as cut worms and army worms that lay eggs on crop residues. Surface residues though good for soil protection and conservation of soil moisture can harbour crop diseases (for example Take All of wheat on corn residues). Alternate tillage systems such as disking/or sub soiling in the fall and disking/cultivation in the spring or no tillage in the fall and disking and cultivation in the spring could probably overcome negative effects of conventional tillage/or conservative tillage, and help spread operations to overcome time constraints especially

under adverse weather conditions such as excessive soil wetness.

Conventional tillage in Ontario/Canada usually meant (mould board) ploughing in the fall, and spring disking and cultivation in the spring before seeding. Alternate tillage systems, could meet the primary purpose of tillage (weed control and good tilth). Apart from short growing season, escalating fuel prices also warranted evaluation of more efficient (alternative) tillage systems. Two sets of experiments, one after spring oats and another after clover, were conducted at Thunder Bay Agricultural Research Station (2004-2007) on barley-soybean-barley crop rotation, with 11 different tillage systems, involving conventional, zero, and alternative tillage systems. The results revealed that:

- Tillage effects on barley were not influenced by previous crops (oats and clover).
- Barley grain yield in the first year was over one tonne per hectare higher after clover than after oats. This is attributed to 20% higher tillering in barley after clover than after oats.
- Next year, soybean yield was 25% higher after oats-barley than after clover-barley. This was a direct reflection of the increased number of pods per plant after oats-barley than after clover-barley.
- By the third year, favourable effect of previous legume on barley yield, as compared to a cereal crop, came down to only ~5%.
- No fall tillage, two disking and cultivation in spring or one disking in fall, another disking and cultivation in spring before seeding gave as much barley and soybean grain yields as the conventional tillage (fall ploughing, spring disking and cultivation). The practices resulted in ~40% saving in time and fuel as compared to the conventional tillage.
- Conventional tillage appeared to produce higher barley and soybean grain yield than zero tillage. This was probably because we didn't have a zero till drill for seeding.
- Fall chisel ploughing, spring disking and harrowing were as good as conventional tillage in terms of barley grain yield. The practice seemed to be less efficient than conventional tillage in soybean. Chisel ploughing saved 27% fuel as compared to conventional tillage.

- At the end of three years crop cycle (barley-soybean-barley), organic matter and available phosphorus, potassium, and copper were significantly higher with tillage systems involving disking and cultivation than that with conventional tillage. However, available manganese seemed to be higher with the conventional tillage than that with the alternate tillage systems.
- Chisel ploughing didn't improve available soil phosphorus as compared to conventional tillage.
- Soil organic matter was highest (6.7%) with zero tillage and lowest (4.6%) with conventional tillage; organic matter with alternate tillage systems was in between (5.6-6.3%) the two extremes. Nutrient availability, mainly phosphorus and potassium, was more with alternate tillage systems including disking in fall or spring than that with zero/or conventional tillage.

**In view of the foregoing findings, it may be advisable that our growers abandon time and fuel consuming practices such as fall ploughing/conventional tillage and opt for alternate tillage systems involving fall or spring disking!**

Growers may even consider getting a portion of their farm land ready in the fall itself as a risk management strategy for timely seeding in the cold and wet springs; as was the case this year. Last fall, we roto tilled our plots in long term experiments that were direct seeded with barley this spring on May 1. At that time, Thunder Bay growers weren't even able to enter their fields with tractors.

It may also be kept in mind that tillage at a constant soil depth year after year can create a hard pan at that particular depth. It may therefore be desirable to resort to sub-soiling or (mould board or chisel) ploughing once in every 3-4 years to break the hard pans (if you follow the alternate tillage systems advocated in this note). This type of tillage is known as 'Strategic Tillage'.

\*Based on the paper presented at Plants & Soils '08 Montreal, July 13-16, 2008.

*Readers may like to visit our website ([www.tbars.net](http://www.tbars.net)) that was updated recently!*

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## Weather at TBARS during July - August 2008

*By Harjit Dhillon*

In July 2008 the average maximum temperature was 22.3 °C which remains about 2°C degree below the normal temperature of Thunder Bay and the average minimum temperature was recorded 10.7 °C and remained almost equal to normal minimum temperature. Total rainfall was 41.4 mm remained much below the average rainfall of 89 mm. The Corn Heat Units (CHU) was 595 and the Growing Degree Days (GDD) was 388.

In August 2008 (Up to the 17<sup>th</sup>), the average maximum temperature was 24.4°C and the average minimum sits at 8.5°C. Total rainfall remained 23.4 mm, CHU was 317 and the GDD was 211 so far.

All seems to be below normal.

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## Thunder Bay Soil and Crop Fall Crop Tour

September 9, 2008

10 a.m. start at Breukelman's Potato Farm

Additional stops at Peter Aalbers, John Hanna and  
Jim and Wilma Mol.

Lunch courtesy Thunder Bay Soil and Crop at  
John Hanna Farm

## Thunder Bay Country Market

**What?** 40 vendors of local produce and crafts  
**When & where:** every Saturday morning, 8 a.m. to  
1 p.m., at the Dove Building, CLE grounds  
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## Upcoming Dates

Cattle Sale  
September 6, 2008  
9:00 a.m.  
Stratton Sales Barn  
Call Clayton Teeple 807-487-1465

RRCA Director's Meeting  
September 17, 2008  
7:30 p.m.  
Stratton

Fall Harvest Dinner  
Featuring the Grand Champion 4-H Steer raised by  
Kerry Hyatt  
September 27, 2008  
Contact Jeannette Cawston for more info -- 807-482-  
3983

Cattle Sale  
October 4, 2008  
9:00 a.m.  
Stratton Sales Barn  
Contact Clayton Teeple 807-487-1465

4-H Leader's Meeting  
October 8, 2008  
7:30 p.m.  
Barwick Hall

Semen Order  
October 10, 2008  
Call Kim Jo 807-482-2863

RRCA Director's Meeting  
October 15, 2008  
7:30 p.m.  
Stratton

Cattle Sale  
October 25, 2008  
9:00 a.m.  
Stratton Sales Barn  
Contact Clayton Teeple 807-487-1465

Hereford / Hereford Influence Sale  
November 1, 2008  
Sale Time 1:00 p.m.  
Contact Aaron Kuorkoski 807-483-5428

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## Slate River Plowing Match

The match will be held on Sept. 6th, 2008 at the match site on Highway 130 by the Agriplex. The plowing begins at 9 a.m. The celebrity plowing will begin at 1p.m. There will be entertainment throughout the day. Vintage tractors will be on display. The Slate River Women's Institute will host a turkey dinner beginning at 4:30 at the Rosslyn Community Centre. It is always a fun day!



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## Moving?

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## AALP International Study Tour – Part 1 - A Look at Leadership

*Peggy Brekveld*

As Bill Groenheide and I returned home from our trip through Holland, Germany and Poland, one question we thought about was, “Where does all this travel fit into developing better leaders in Ontario?” Traveling with about thirty farmers and ag-industry colleagues is fun and all, but what did we learn or gain that will translate into us becoming better leaders? In this 2-part series, we’ll talk about examples of leadership in action in Europe (Part 1), and how an EU “transition” member is struggling to prepare for full European and global marketing (Part 2 – Agriculture and Poland). Of the three countries we visited, Holland and Germany are obvious leaders in the ag sector. Both countries model forward thinking and cooperation, and utilize resources to the optimum.

Dutch agriculture eagerly anticipates the future. Holland has embraced milk robot technology, even designing a stand alone model that operates in a pasture. But whether at dairy farms, the Port of Rotterdam, or greenhouse research facilities, everyone is thinking ten years ahead and going for it! Goals are set, and visions of the future are often reassessed and updated. There isn’t much land available in this tiny country, but every inch is used wisely.

One Dutch research facility was running a greenhouse trial using fish living under hothouse tomatoes, which utilizes the greenhouse heat for the fish habitat and the fish waste for fertilizing the tomatoes. What was most fascinating about this building structure was that several big name competitors came together and designed and built it. It is unusual to see this kind of cooperation between rivals. Often, the competitive spirit gets in the way of solutions for everyone. While the Dutch struggle with issues of space, there is no shortage of land in Germany. Golden grain surrounded us as we drove the autobahn. While some grain is used to feed livestock and people, much of it feeds the power grid. Many farmers in Germany own and operate bio-gas digesters, producing energy from grains, silage, manure and such. (It should be noted that the subsidies they receive for producing green energy are huge!) This effort to use green energy was also observed in a solar house that rotated itself to face the sun. Another community was heating about 50 houses from the waste heat of one farm’s digester, another example of cooperation and innovation.

We also visited a cooperative market, a huge upscale grocery store. The owners, all farmers, wanted sell local farm produce directly to the public. Meat purchased by this operation promised to pay the supplier within 10 days of purchase, at 20% more than the weekly published national price average. Germans we met analyzed a situation, got together and made a solution of their own design. They did not wait for government to find a solution to pricing issues. They built their own.

Visionary thinking, self initiative, and teamwork make Holland and Germany agricultural leaders in the European Union.

*Peggy Brekveld and Bill Groenheide are members of Class 12 of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP)*

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## TBFA Launches new Website

Check out Thunder Bay Federation of Agriculture’s new website at [www.tbfarminfo.org](http://www.tbfarminfo.org)

### Recipe Contest

Do you have a favourite recipe that uses local produce? A variation of a tried and true main course or savory dessert? Send it to us at [linda@tbfarminfo.org](mailto:linda@tbfarminfo.org) before September 20th 2008, and you could win a gift basket! The winning entry will also be available on this website with our next update. Check it out October 1st!

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Local information depends on organizations providing information to the editor for publication. If you send it we can publish.

## USEFUL CONTACT INFO

### CROP RESEARCH STATIONS

Emo Agricultural Research Station:  
807-482-2354 (telephone & fax)  
Email: [kbliss@uoguelph.ca](mailto:kbliss@uoguelph.ca)

Thunder Bay Agricultural Research Association  
Research and Business Manager  
Dr. Tarlok Singh Sahota, CCA  
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## Recent Winnipeg Cattle Prices

Volume of cattle sold has been quite low for the past month but prices have been increasing, especially on the lighter weights. Here are the price ranges for steers for the past month at Winnipeg Livestock Sales to August 22.

Over 1000 lbs.	\$	75.00 -	84.00
900 - 1000 lbs.	\$	85.00 -	100.00
800 - 900 lbs.	\$	85.00 -	103.50
700 - 800 lbs.	\$	90.00 -	115.00
600 - 700 lbs.	\$	95.00 -	117.00
500 - 600 lbs.	\$	100.00 -	125.00
400 - 500 lbs.	\$	100.00 -	124.00
under 400 lbs.	\$	NA	

Slaughter cow and bull prices have risen compared to last month. Here are the price ranges for cows and bulls to August 22.

Choice Strs. & Hfrs.	\$	85.00 -	91.00
Select Strs. & Hfrs.	\$	NA	
Cows Dry Fed	\$	49.00 -	64.00
Good Fleshed	\$	45.00 -	55.00
Lean	\$	25.00 -	45.00

Good Bulls                   \$ 59.00 - 75.00

## New Version of NMAN2 Now Available

This fully bilingual electronic Nutrient Management Planning Tool contains enhancements including updated interface modes, expanded grazing functionality and a new transfer linking tool. To download NMAN 2.0.2, follow the link below and follow the instructions. The file you will download is an upgrade program, and will undertake all of the necessary changes to update your older NMAN 2 program.

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/nm/nman/software.htm>

This upgrade (NMAN 2.0.2) only works for users already running NMAN 2.0.1. If you are currently using a version of NMAN June 14, 2004 R4 or older, we strongly suggest you attend a Nutrient Management training course to get the latest version of the software. To find out more about our training course visit our [Nutrient Management Education, Training and Certification website](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/nm/cert.html) at: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/nm/cert.html> or call 1-866-242-4460

If you prefer to pick up a copy, CDs will be available at your local OMAFRA office by June 1, 2008. As of December 1, 2008 the OMAFRA Approvals, Certification and Licensing Unit will only accept Nutrient Management Strategies and/or Plans prepared using NMAN 2.0.1 or newer.

### Advantage Good Agricultural Practices

#### Enhancing food safety at the farm

The Food Safety Programs Branch with OMAFRA has created a new resource for Ontario's conventional and organic farmers looking to adopt food safety at the farm. The *Advantage Good Agricultural Practices* manual guides farmers through:

- ◇ Identifying potential food safety risks on their farm
- ◇ Developing food safety practices to manage risks
- ◇ Steps to preparing for an audit

The *Advantage Good Agricultural Practices* manual benefits farmers that want to follow one program and keep one set of records for their whole operation. The manual contains record templates, advice and examples for developing food safety practices and links to web-based resources.

For more information on *Advantage Good Agricultural Practices* or to order a copy, call the Agricultural Information Contact Centre at 1-877-424-1300 or visit our web site at [www.ontario.ca/good-ag-practices](http://www.ontario.ca/good-ag-practices).



RAINY RIVER FUTURE  
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A Community Futures Development Corporation



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### Ministry Of Revenue - RST Guide for Farmers – New Version

The Ministry of Revenue has updated their RST Guide for Farmers. The guide explains how Retail Sales Tax (RST) applies to items purchased by farmers. This replaces the previous version dated February 2006. Visit <http://www.rev.gov.on.ca/english/guides/rst/807.html> for more details.

### Public Asked to Report Dead Wild Birds

Once again this year, Ontario is taking part in a national project involving dead wild birds. This project will help Ontario address the risk of avian influenza. To be successful, we need you to report any dead wild birds that you may see.

#### **Here's what we need you to do:**

If you notice dead wild birds – particularly waterfowl such as ducks, geese and swans or significant numbers of dead birds in one location – please contact the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre (CCWHC) at 1-866-673-4781. If the bird is a crow, raven or blue jay, please contact your local public health unit first. They may or may not require the bird for the purposes of West Nile virus surveillance.

Do not handle any dead wild birds with your bare hands.

#### **Here's why we need your help:**

Canada is monitoring the many strains of avian influenza that are naturally present in wild bird populations. One way this is tracked is through the collection and testing of dead birds. This method is

only successful if there is a significant level of public participation and awareness.

To date, no influenza viruses of public health concern have been detected in Ontario in wild or domestic birds. However, it is important to continue testing wild birds to help better understand avian influenza viruses. Information gained through the national wild bird survey is helping Canadian animal health experts better understand the influenza viruses present in resident and migratory bird populations. In certain situations, testing of wild birds can provide an early warning system for viruses of concern to domestic poultry health.

For more information on avian influenza, visit [www.ontario.ca/birdflu](http://www.ontario.ca/birdflu).

## Wood Ash Available

Thunder Bay Farmers are invited to apply for wood ash to be used as a soil amendment. There is a large stock of ash available. If we don't use it, we'll lose it. Please call Linda Turk 577-4787 or email [lindat@tbaytel.net](mailto:lindat@tbaytel.net) for an application or renewal



Select Sires Canada Inc.  
P.O. Box 489, Kemptville, ON K0G 1J0  
Tel: 613-258-3800 Fax: 613-258-7257  
[www.selectsirescanada.com](http://www.selectsirescanada.com)

**Ben Bilker**  
*Area Sales Representative*

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## EARS August Report

August 18, 2008

Hello! It feels like summer has arrived! We hit 30 degrees for the first time this summer! No complaints – only hope we can keep it for a couple of months.

I am just getting back to work from my week off for the Emo Fair – so it has been a busy morning catching up and doing some crop checks. What a beautiful weekend we had – it has been a long time since we managed such beautiful weather for the entire weekend.

It looks like we will be bringing in some barley and likely are oats this week for sure. You may hear me screaming – the barley is very short and it will be difficult to harvest. We will do it first and get it out of the way. The yields will be terrible, but we will finish the trial off as planned. I am predicting decent wheat and oat yields though.

We finished the 2<sup>nd</sup> cut of our Alfalfa on August 7<sup>th</sup>. We were trying to finish up before the critical cutting date. The critical fall harvest period for alfalfa is a six week rest period preceding the average date of killing frost. Not harvesting during the period allows alfalfa plants to re-grow, build up sufficient root reserves, and reduce the risk of winterkill. Yield sacrificed by not harvesting during the critical harvest period is usually regained in first-cut yields the following spring. The critical fall harvest for us in the North should begin around August 10<sup>th</sup>. I realize with our late year we are having, this may be difficult. We will likely do some further 2<sup>nd</sup> crop of some of our grass plots near mid- September.

The soybeans are looking amazing, but I still am a bit concerned that they are going to have enough time to fill their pods. They are very tall and look very healthy at this point.

Our Sunflower blocks have been very busy with pictures and cuttings. Many of them were spread around the Emo Fair this weekend. The birds are

now moving in as well so they will soon lack their attractiveness.

The Green Manure Trial has really been growing. I am just amazed. And if I plough near mid-September, we should have a nice amount of material to plough in. Stop in and check it out if you have time.

Some of our newly established forages are looking very impressive as well. The Switch Grass is really enjoying this heat.

To date we have had: 365 mm of rain or 14.6 in. As for our CHU's, at the end of July we had 1310, which is much lower than most years. We never even hit 30 in July – the closest date was July 1 at 28.5.

The students will be leaving soon – so we need to really give'er these next couple of weeks. Stop in and see some of the crops – before they are gone!

Kim Jo – EARS  
kbliss@uoguelph.ca

## Murillo Pumpkinfest

September 27

\$1000 First Prize for the heaviest pumpkin!  
Prizes for the ugliest, best dressed, kids categories  
and more!

**contact:** Ben Johnson [bjohnson@tbaytel.net](mailto:bjohnson@tbaytel.net)

### EXPRESSION OF OPINION VOTE TO BE HELD FOR CORN, SOYBEAN AND WHEAT PRODUCERS

**GUELPH** - The Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission will conduct an expression of opinion vote between September 9, 2008 and September 30, 2008 on a proposal to create a single marketing board to replace the organizations that represent Ontario's corn, soybean and wheat producers. The vote is being held at the request of the Ontario Corn

Producers' Association (OCPA), the Ontario Soybean Growers (OSG) and the Ontario Wheat Producers' Marketing Board (OWPMB).

Producers registered with these organizations will receive an information summary and ballot in the mail. The question on the ballot is:

"Are you in favour of a single marketing board for corn, soybeans and wheat described as "Grain Farmers of Ontario" in the enclosed information summary?"

Eligible voters include:

- Producers who have paid license fees to the OCPA, and/or OSG and/or the OWPMB in at least one of the last two fiscal years of the organizations
- Beginning producers who will be paying or have paid license fees in 2008-2009
- Sole proprietors, farm corporations, and each partner in a partnership.

Uniquely identified ballots with pre-printed tonnages of corn, soybeans and wheat on which license fees were paid will be mailed by the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission beginning in early September 2008 to all known eligible producers. Anyone who is eligible to vote but has not received an information summary and ballot by September 10, 2008 should contact the AgLine Communications/TI Ltd. at 1-866-764-2006.

All returned ballots must be post-marked no later than September 30, 2008.

"We encourage all eligible corn, soybean and wheat producers to make their opinions known by participating in this Expression of Opinion Vote," said Dave Hope, Chair of the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission.

Regional information meetings will be held in seven locations in Southern Ontario between September 11 and September 24, 2008. More information is available at [Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission](#).