



OSCIA News...

November 2007

A NEWSLETTER TO UPDATE OSCIA MEMBERS,
PRESIDENTS, SECRETARIES, TREASURERS, DIRECTORS,
AND OMAF CROP TECHNOLOGY CONTACTS —

Table of Contents

- Message from the President
- OSCIA Promotional Material
- Johnston Named Ontario Forage Master
- Young Forage Masters
- OSCIA Membership Display
- Coming to an Ag Conference Near You!
- Tax Exemptions Announced
- Upcoming Fall Meetings
- OSCIA Awards
- OSCIA Grant Applications Deadlines
- Provincial Update
- Planning Effective Meetings

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OSCIA 2008 ANNUAL MEETING

Date: February 5 & 6, 2008

Place: Sheraton Fallsview
Niagara Falls

Message from the President

Autumn has arrived, and with the pleasant field conditions, harvest is nearing completion on many farms. I have heard of some really good yields of soybeans, but generally crop results were disappointing. Corn has fared better through this dry summer but again we will probably not see the average yield as high as previous years.



Frank Hoftyzer

November 7 was the day that the Ontario Forage Masters Competition was held at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. Congratulations go to Doug Johnston of Perth County who will now go on to the American Forage and Grasslands Conference in January to give his presentation there. The Ontario Forage Masters is a very successful program, and I would encourage you to participate in your county next year.

From the provincial office report, there are more than 11,000 producers who have participated in the EFP since April 2005. If you have been approved for a cost share project and have not yet claimed, I remind you of the November 30, 2007 deadline to do so.

The provincial Directors are meeting November 14th. Time is often short when we meet twice per year at the summer director's meeting and around the annual meeting. Therefore, this meeting will allow more time for discussion regarding OSCIA membership, strategic planning and director boundary realignment.

As we enter the meeting season, please take time to attend and be involved in your local Soil and Crop annual meeting. We are a well-respected organization in Ontario, and that takes hard work and dedication from its members.

May the Christmas season give you time to reflect and to enjoy your family.

Best wishes, everyone. ♦

OSCIA Promotional Material

Reminder! Please submit your orders early!

Promotional material is available on a cost-recovery basis from the provincial office. Double-sided fleece vests with the OSCIA logo embroidered, and embroidered OSCIA ball caps are now available for your local association to use at upcoming winter meetings as gifts for a special member or speaker, or as fundraising items at upcoming local annual meetings.

Please contact Deanna Deaville or Evelyn Howse at the provincial office to place an order. ♦

Johnston Named Ontario Forage Master

Doug Johnston, a dairy farmer from Listowel, has been named Ontario Forage Master for 2007.

Doug was one of the contestants who competed in the 20th Annual Ontario Forage Masters Competition at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, where he and the others had the opportunity to present innovative ideas and forage management techniques to peers and visitors. Pickseed Canada, Agri-Food Laboratories, and the OSCIA sponsored the competition.

The sponsors wish to thank all the contestants who gave excellent presentations on 'The Value of Forages'.

"For more than 20 years the Ontario Forage Masters competition has been helping to promote and share ideas on producing excellent forages. PICKSEED is proud to be a partner in this initiative," said Paul Wight, Ontario and Atlantic Sales Manager for Pickseed Canada. "It was also an excellent day to learn more about tips on growing top quality forages from each of the competitors competing from across Ontario," said Frank Hofzyer, President of OSCIA.

Following the announcement, Doug, who represented Perth County, expressed his thanks. "I'm honoured to have been chosen to represent the Ontario forage industry and I look forward to learning more about the industry in the upcoming year."

Doug now qualifies to compete in the 2008 American Forage and Grassland Council's Forage Spokesperson Contest to be held January 26-31 in Louisville, Kentucky.

Maplevue Farm, owned and operated by Doug and his brother, Dave, is a corporation that strives for very high conformation cows. With 1,000 acres of land under production, growing of forages is an integral part of their operation. "A high level of production is reached by planning ahead -- from crop rotation to selection of seed, equipment, and method of harvest," Doug stated.

Forages are considered a versatile, nutritional, economical and environmentally friendly crop. Doug stated that, "In our view, alfalfa is the queen of the

forages, and provides the base of our TMR." Forages account for the greatest number of crop acres grown in the province and contribute millions of dollars to Ontario's agri-food economy.



Shown above following the presentation are from left to right: Paul Wight (Pickseed Canada), Laura and Doug Johnston (2007 Ontario Forage Master), Frank Hofzyer (President, OSCIA), and Ron Piett (Agri-Food Laboratories).

The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair participated in sponsoring the final competition with their generous donation of the use of a presentation room and complimentary tickets to the Fair and to the Royal Horse Show. ♦



Young Forage Masters

Local SCIA groups may wish to include a segment in an upcoming meeting or event whereby youth can learn about growing forages.

The Ontario Forage Masters program has included 4-H members (who are part of a family that is a Soil and Crop member) for a number of years.

Paul Wight, representing Pickseed, a major sponsor of the program, has offered to attend meetings where he can provide tips to upcoming young forage growers. As a judge of the competition, he has identified several areas where he feels that he can offer tips and tricks for improving their field.

If your local association would like to include such an item on the agenda, please contact Paul Wight at 519-717-2226. ♦

**OSCIA WEBSITE
VISIT US AT
www.ontariosoilcrop.org**

OSCIA Membership Display

OSCIA has revamped and revitalized the OSCIA membership display which is available to local associations for meetings and events.

Please contact Evelyn Howse at the Provincial Office (1-800-265-9751) if you wish to borrow the display. ♦

Coming to an Ag Conference Near You!

- Ian McDonald, Applied Research Coordinator, OMAFRA, Guelph

Organizers of the 3 premier Ontario Ag Conferences have been hard at work developing exceptional programs for these events. Whether you're a producer or from industry, government or academia, you can build yourself an excellent program for a day of learning and enlightenment.

Watch for the programs in your mail or farm news. A small investment in time and dollars can show big benefits to your bottom line. Educational events should be part of your management plan. Get new ideas and discuss topics of interest with neighbours and experts. Local, national and international speakers share their knowledge and expertise with you. The format is concurrent sessions which allow you to customize the day to fit your interests. Included are presentations, workshops and often tours. Come and get tuned into the latest information on production, business, marketing and many other subjects.

Come out and join your neighbours at one of these premier events.

South West Agricultural Conference

January 3rd and 4th, 2008

Ridgetown Campus, U of G, Ridgetown

www.southwestagconference.ca

FarmSmart Agricultural Conference

January 19th, 2008

Rozanski Hall, University of Guelph, Guelph

www.uoguelph.ca/farmsmart

Eastern Ontario Crops Conference

February 21st, 2008

Kemptville College, U of G, Kemptville

<http://www.omafr.gov.on.ca/english/crops/conferences/index.html#field>

Further information on these events including registration information can be obtained by contracting the OMAFRA Agricultural Information Contact Centre, 1-877-424-1300 or at <http://www.omafr.gov.on.ca/english/crops/conferences/index.html> under "Field Crops". ♦

Tax Exemptions Announced

The Ministry of Revenue provided a recent update regarding an amendment to the Retail Sales Tax Act that may affect our members. The definition of farming will include certain post-harvest activities, such as the cleaning, sorting, grading, packing, packaging, and storing of crops.

The notice provides an overview of the expanded RST exemptions now available to farmers, and is available on their website at

www.rev.gov.on.ca/english/notices/rst/59.html.

If you have questions, please contact the Ministry of Revenue at 1-888-285-7815 ext. 6313. ♦

Upcoming Fall Meetings

Local and regional Soil and Crop Improvement Associations are encouraged to invite a member of the OSCIA Executive to speak at upcoming annual meetings.

With the proposed realignment of provincial Director boundaries, members would be able to talk directly with an Executive member about the changes that may be taking place in the near future.

Executive names and phone numbers can be found on the OSCIA website www.ontariosoilcrop.org, or by contacting the Guelph office. ♦

OSCIA Awards

Soil and Water Conservation Farm Award:

The purpose of this award is to recognize, reward, and acknowledge farmers who practice excellent soil and water management on their farms, as well as provide high profile to the basic principles of conservation. This is a resin all-weather sign measuring 16" x 19".



Recognition Certificate: This certificate is designed to recognize individuals in your community who have contributed to the organization. When requesting the certificate, please indicate the recipient's name and date of presentation. This is a paper certificate, suitable for framing, measuring 8½" x 11".

These awards are ideal for presentation at annual meetings. Both are available by calling Evelyn Howse at the provincial office (1-800-265-9751). Please allow 2 weeks for preparation and shipping time. ♦

Association Grant Application Deadlines

The deadline for local and regional associations to submit their claims for association grants is November 30, 2007.

Local and regional associations are encouraged to submit applications (claims) for projects that are complete. ♦

Provincial Update

Please remember that local and regional associations are welcome to invite Deanna Deaville to be on the agenda of your annual meetings.

Deanna will provide your members with a complete update on current and planned activities across the province. Contact Deanna at 800-265-9751 or via e-mail at Deanna.Deaville@ontariosoilcrop.org. ♦

Planning Effective Meetings

Do you remember that excellent meeting you attended last year? Denise Edwards, an Agricultural Organization Specialist with OMAFRA has written a FactSheet on Successful Meetings. "Meetings can influence the enthusiasm and attitude of the group. However, excellent meetings do not happen automatically."

Below are some tips for your local OSCIA to keep in your planning pocket for this year's successful meeting season.

Before the meeting

1. Define the purpose of the meeting - a clear purpose is required for every meeting.
2. Plan the agenda as an outline of the topics to be discussed at the meeting. The chair should consult the secretary, treasurer and committee chairs when planning the agenda and organizing the materials and resources. Ensure that critical items are discussed first, with the appropriate time allowed.
3. Send out the agenda and background information prior to the meeting. This will remind people of the meeting, ensure important issues are not overlooked and help members focus on the issues and be prepared to discuss them.
4. Ensure all reports and information are available. Confirm that the required person or a suitable alternate is available to attend the meeting and make a report.

At the meeting

Start and end the meeting on time. Name tags help with interaction and remembering names.

1. Encourage input from all participants - try to draw quiet people into the discussion.
2. Keep the discussion focused on the topic by avoiding comments irrelevant to the agenda.

3. When the debate has run its course, summarize and ask for a vote or expression of consensus.
4. Record the actions required, who is responsible, and timelines.
5. Confirm the date, time and location of the next meeting.

Evaluating The Meeting

After the meeting, review what went well, where improvements could be made and any problems to be addressed before the next meeting. If you have people being groomed for the chairperson position, such as vice chairs, this is a good time to get them involved. It is important that results and strategies for improvement be summarized and communicated to the participants.

TIP: Schedules are busy and fill up quickly, so keep your members aware of meeting dates, twilight/bus tours, and deadlines for grant applications, etc. with an **Annual Planning Calendar**. This doubles as a good orientation tool for new members!

For more information – please access the OMAFRA Fact Sheet: Successful Meetings, Written By: Denise Edwards- Agriculture Organization Specialist/OMAFRA, <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca> ♦

Ontario Young Farmers Forum (OYFF)

presented by OFA

November 18 & 19, 2007

Double Tree International Plaza Hotel, Toronto
in conjunction with the OFA Convention
"Creating an opportunity where young farmers can learn, network & lead."

Open to all people ages 18-40.

Learn about relevant issues affecting young people in agriculture like innovation, energy, management and change.

Registration information:

www.oyff.ca

**For more information, contact:
Ontario Federation of Agriculture
519-482-9642**

ATTENTION SEED GROWERS

Annual Meeting - Tuesday, December 11
Four Points Sheraton Hotel
London

Watch for notices arriving soon!