



OSCIA News...

June 2005

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

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OSCIA ANNUAL MEETING

FEBRUARY 8 & 9, 2006
SHERATON FALLSVIEW HOTEL
NIAGARA FALLS

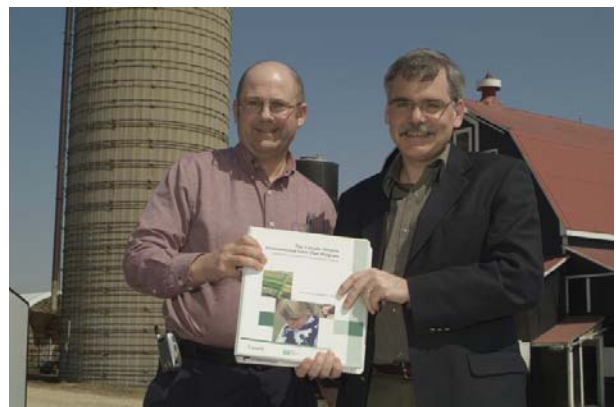
Message from the President

Once again the weather has presented a challenge to farmers, the early part of April being hot and extremely dry, the latter part being cold and extremely wet. In Ottawa, the rainfall for the month of April was the highest amount ever recorded and it all came in the last two weeks of the month! I have heard that a substantial part of the corn planted in early April needed to be reseeded. Now, in June, it has warmed up to normal temperatures, with spotty rainfalls, and thus some areas are becoming quite dry.



Kevin Ferguson

The most exciting news since the last newsletter is the signing of the Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan. This announcement was made at the Dietrich farm, south of Mildmay on April 16, 2005. This was a very fitting location since Jayne Dietrich is one of our EFP Workshop Leaders. Since April 16th, our office staff has been working hard to prepare for the expected influx of EFP grant applications.



Kevin Ferguson and the Honourable Andy Mitchell, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, at the announcement of the \$57M Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan. The event was held on a farm in Huron County on April 16.

There has been a good uptake in grants this year, i.e., major grants, project grants and regional partner grants. I believe that these grants provide opportunities not only to present and demonstrate new technology but also

good farm management practices. I am expecting some excellent grant reports at our February 2006 annual meeting. It takes considerable effort on the part of the cooperating farmer and any OMAF staff who may be involved in doing these projects. Be assured that your invested time is greatly valued and appreciated. The contribution of each participating individual can lead to one of the most successful years for OSCIA. Let this be our goal!

In closing, I wish everyone a successful summer season. ♦

Environmental Farm Plan Facts

Here is some essential information about the EFP Workshops and the cost-share program opportunities that you will want to know about. More information is available from local OSCIA Program Representatives, OSCIA Guelph office, or the web site www.ontariosoilcrop.org

Financial cost-share assistance for eligible projects is contributed by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, through the Environmental Programs of the Agricultural Policy Framework:

- Canada-Ontario Farm Stewardship Program (COFSP)
- Greencover Canada (GC) Program
- Canada-Ontario Water Supply Expansion Program (COWSEP).

I have already completed an Environmental Farm Plan (EFP), am I eligible for this new cost share funding?

- If you participated in an EFP workshop between 1993 and April 2004, and had your EFP action plan peer reviewed and deemed appropriate, cost share funding may be available for eligible projects developed after April 1, 2004 for COFSP and GC.
- Check your action plan to see if any projects match up with those listed on the “Beneficial Management Practices” list. If you didn’t have an EFP deemed appropriate prior to April, 2004, the retroactivity does not apply. The only other exception is existing large livestock producers who are participating in the Nutrient Management Financial Assistance Program; retroactivity on eligible projects will extend to May 16, 2004.
- **This opportunity is only available until March 31, 2006** - all project proposal applications received after March 31, 2006 will require the new, Third Edition EFP action plan deemed appropriate through peer review.
- The new, Third Edition EFP has been updated to enhance the program and reflect new legislation since the previous editions – we highly recommend

participating in a new EFP workshop, even if you have already completed an EFP.

What projects are eligible for this funding?

- Refer to the brochure entitled “Beneficial Management Practices” list for eligible projects.

How much can I receive?

- Registered farm businesses are eligible for up to \$45,000 in funding for projects identified in their EFP action plan that are on the “Beneficial Management Practices” list at the cost share levels and funding caps indicated. There are three different and integrated federal cost-share programs that may be accessed by eligible producers. They are the Canada-Ontario Farm Stewardship Program (COFSP), Greencover Canada (GC), and the Canada-Ontario Water Supply Expansion Program (COWSEP). Eligible projects may be federally funded at up to 30%, 33%, or 50%, depending on the program and category.

Beneficial Management Practices
Environmental Cost-Share Opportunities for Ontario Farmers
 Available through
 the Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan

Eligible farmers may choose to participate in one or all of the federally funded environmental cost-share programs*. This brochure outlines the general categories of eligible projects, the cost share available, and the funding caps in each category. Information on program eligibility and the application process is also included.

- Canada-Ontario Farm Stewardship Program (COFSP)
- Greencover Canada (GC)
- Canada-Ontario Water Supply Expansion Program (COWSEP)

Delivered by
 Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA)
 April 2005 - March 31, 2008

Canada Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition Ontario

Can I stack the federal funding with other sources of funding?

- Funding can be stacked; however, total federal and provincial funding cannot exceed the caps established by government partners for the eligible project costs.
- Municipalities, conservation authorities, other stewardship organizations, or private conservation

funding can be accessed in addition to federal and provincial funding up to 100%, depending on their own requirements.

How will in-kind work be considered?

- The producer's own labour and that contributed by dependents of the producer, and the use of essential equipment owned and contributed by the producer will be considered as part of your contribution to each project and eligible for cost-share – detailed guidelines will be available from the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) soon. Time invested in planning, supervision and management are not eligible costs.

Are EFPs still confidential?

- Yes – all EFP information is and remains confidential.

How long will this program last?

- The funding will be available until March 31, 2008 or when the funds are completely allocated, whichever occurs first.

How do I apply?

- Contact the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) at 1-800-265-9751, oscia@ontariosoilcrop.org, or www.ontariosoilcrop.org to find out when a workshop will be available in your area. Project Proposal Application Forms are available through a number of sources including: OSCIA Program Representatives, OSCIA Guelph office, OFA Member Service Representatives, and other supporting organizations. ♦

Ontario Forage Masters Program

The Ontario Forage Masters Program for 2005 is in full swing.

Our sponsors – Pickseed Canada, International Stock Food, and Agri-Food Laboratories – are offering a variety of valuable prizes to the top three finishers in each county/district.

NK Seeds is participating this year by making a financial contribution to the program.

A total of 20 county/districts have entered, with a total of 162 participants.



Again this year, a segment of the program involves the participation of 4-H members who are part of a family or farm who have a membership in OSCIA.

For a listing of prizes and guideline details, please visit the OSCIA web site at:
www.ontariosoilcrop.org/OFM_2005.htm. ♦

ICAT Update

- Julia Williams, Provincial ICAT Coordinator

With another planting season now behind us, it is time to take advantage of the learning opportunities ICAT provides throughout the growing season. This year is proving to be very interesting from both a weather and agronomy standpoint.

Most of the corn crop, including the ICAT plots, was planted in good time; however, cool temperatures and dry soils have delayed emergence. Take some time to identify why certain fields have reacted this way. Is it weather, soil temperature, moisture, planting depth, topography, crop residue, or perhaps planter setup? It certainly will be interesting to see how the yields compare in the fall.

How did this spring's weather affect your crop's germination and emergence? Visit your ICAT plot and others in your area to see the visible differences between hybrids. Take note of how each hybrid has reacted to the season so far and following harvest you can compare the best looking hybrids in the spring with those that yield the highest come harvest.

I have always stressed the importance of ICAT as an educational tool and I hope each county will take advantage of this opportunity through frequent plot visits and organized plot tours. Please keep in mind there is a grant available to help offset the cost of plot tours.

I want to take this opportunity to again thank the seed companies for their continued support of ICAT. Each year these companies supply us with enough seed for each of the 120 plots across the province – a very significant contribution.

I would also like to thank all the coordinators and cooperators for their continued hard work and commitment to the program. We all realize the impact of proper hybrid selection on our bottom line. ♦

"With reference to individual or national welfare, agriculture is of primary importance."

- George Washington

Grants Approved for 2005

A large number of grants totaling over \$110,000 have been approved to both local and regional Soil and Crop Improvement Associations this spring.

Following is a complete listing of ongoing projects across Ontario for which reports will be available to all Soil and Crop members at completion:

Major Grants

- Evaluation of New EZ Steer Technology in Field Crops (Carleton)
- Micro-Nutrient Enhancement of Liquid Starter Fertilizers (Elgin)
- Nitrogen Management for Corn on Fine Textured Soils (Halton)
- White Mold Control in Edible Beans (Huron)
- Wildlife Crop Damage Study (Lanark)
- Getting More out of Manure Nitrogen: Direct Injection vs. Broadcast & Incorporation (Middlesex)
- Muskoka Limestone Trial
- Soybean Rust and Soybean Aphid Control (Perth)
- Evaluate "to the Max" RST Tillage & Residue Management in Conventional & Reduced Tillage Cropping Systems (Renfrew)
- Reduced Tillage Trials (Stormont)
- Impact of Poncho Seed Treatment on Performance of Corn Under Various Types of Stress (Wellington)
- OSCIA/OMAF Demo at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show

Partner Grants

- Glyphosate Additives on Soybeans (St. Clair)
- Red Clover Establishment Investigation (Thames Valley)
- Fostering the Advancement of No-Till Soybeans (Heartland)
- Reducing Soybean Seed Costs through Lower Seeding Rates & Precision Seeding (Heartland)
- Nutrient Value of Canola Straw (Georgian Central)
- GDD Modelling of Winter/Spring Canola (Georgian Central)
- Evaluation Strip Tillage Systems for Corn Production in Heavy Clay Soils & Impacts on Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Golden Horseshoe)
- Evaluation of Hybrid Differences of Corn Grain Ethanol Yield (Golden Horseshoe)
- Evaluation of Pasture Rejuvenation Methods (East Central)
- Nitrogen Rates on Hard Red Winter Wheat (Quinte)
- Corn Seed Treatment Trials to Control Seed & Seedling Insect Pests (Eastern Valley)
- Corn, CanaMaize and High Moisture sorghum Forage Demonstration (Ottawa Rideau)
- 2005-2006 Canola Opportunities in North Eastern Ontario (North Eastern Ontario) ♦

Membership Survey Results

The purpose of this survey was to learn from the membership what they value in their membership with OSCIA and the OSCIA newsletter. There were 80 total responses to the survey. The information rated most valuable is **1.** SCIA local news, **2.** OMAF Crop Talk, **3.** SCIA regional news, **4.** OSCIA provincial news, **5.** OSCIA list server. 87.5% of the 80 respondents do not receive the newsletter by e-mail. 73% of the respondents indicated they prefer a hard copy in the mail.

Changes that would make the newsletter more valuable to the members (ranked): **1.** More local and regional news. (e.g. timely delivery with meeting dates, demo day trials, other regions trial results, and more regular articles that are shorter and to the point.), **2.** No changes required, **3.** More articles that are not of accepted norms.

Newsletter article information that members value (ranked): **1.** Articles of trial results (e.g. plot data results, soil fertility, comparison of no till drills, educational articles, research, leading edge technology people have tried, new trends in cropping, local weather reports (rainfall and CHU), crop talk articles more related to local issues, variety of activities in other sectors of agriculture, new crops, products and tests, farmer examples, pricing scenarios, farm marketing/economics.), **2.** Farm family highlights, **3.** Opinion papers, **4.** Insert a government funding programs section featuring the program and how farmers can access it and a buy/sell trade column.

What members do not like in the newsletter articles (ranked): **1.** Too lengthy, need to be more to the point, **2.** More regular and better timing, **3.** More articles on soil science and soil nutrients.

The **activities that attract the members** to the organization are **1.** Local on-farm trials, **2.** Newsletter, **3.** Demonstration Days. 85% of the respondents have participated in Demonstration Days/Bus Tours/Twilight Tours, 89% in EFP, Local Competitions, Forage Masters, and 64% in local on-farm trials. The lack of time for extra off farm activities prevents members from participating in more activities. 71 % of the 80 respondents said they receive on-farm trial results from local /regional association. The **method they prefer to receive them** is **1.** Newsletter, **2.** Plot tours, **3.** Annual Meetings. 87% of 80 respondents thought it was a good idea to publish SCIA highlights in a farm publication.

75% of the respondents value local crop production and soil management trial result information. 15% enjoy the social aspect of meeting with farmers; 7% value the effort of the group to be good stewards of our soil, water, & crops. Changes that would make OSCIA **more valuable** to members are **1.** Local support to help organize and direct functions/activities for on-farm trails. **2.** Meetings in the evenings, not only M-F during the day, **3.** More information of farm marketing, **4.** OSCIA should not deliver government regulatory programs.