

Heartland Regional Soil & Crop Improvement Association

Serving Members of Soil and Crop Improvement Associations in the Counties of Huron, Perth, Waterloo and Wellington

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OSCIA

Mission Statement

To facilitate responsible, economic management of soil, water, air and crops through development and communication of innovative farming practices.

For more information visit www.ontariosoilcrop.org



Life After Cows

Martin Family, Winterbourne



Dennis and Helen Martin experienced a full and meaningful life as dairy farmers. But their decision to sell the cows led to a transition involving countless decisions and a challenge to find a new significance to their farming enterprise.

Huron County Soil & Crop Improvement Association

Perth County Soil and Crop Improvement Association

Waterloo County Soil and Crop Improvement Association

Wellington County Soil and Crop Improvement Association

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The Heartland News is distributed four times a year to members of the Soil and Crop Improvement Associations of Huron, Perth, Waterloo and Wellington. If you are interested in receiving this newsletter or if you need to change an address please contact the editor Jacquie Bishop. Comments, ideas, sponsorships and articles are welcome.

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A Wealth of Forage Knowledge

The web site www.goforages.ca just got a whole lot better! The 2011 Forage Variety Brochure is available there but so too is a link where you can evaluate two alfalfa varieties head to head using all the available public data from Ontario and the Great Lakes states through a link to the University of Wisconsin site. These tests are deemed to represent our area. In addition you have access to previous Forage Variety Brochures and the Variety Trial data that is used to produce them. This data is available since 1955!

www.ontariosoilcrop.org

It is well worth a visit to OSCIA web site. By visiting the web site you get an overview of just all the projects and activities that OSCIA is involved in. Crop Advances is the summary yearly and historically of the research and demonstration projects completed in the different areas. It not only gives the results of the tests but also highlights what is of interest in these areas. You can search the results to get to just the information that you want. The site also provides a news feed that highlights news stories of interest to agriculture, links to other related organizations and details about our programs – Environmental Farm Plan and Grow Your Farm Profits. Further cropping information is available at the sites www.gocorn.net, www.gocereals.ca, www.gosoy.ca and www.goforages.ca.

Time to say good bye. This is my last issue for the Heartland Region as a new regional communication coordinator will soon be hired. I have enjoyed all the quality people that I have met and worked with over the last 3 years including Heartland executive, local association directors, secretaries and members, OSCIA staff, OMAFRA staff and fellow RCC's. What a great group to be apart of! I wish the Heartland Soil and Crop Improvement Association much success as it finds ways to stay on the cutting edge of our constant changing industry.

Jacquie Bishop



Winterose Farm

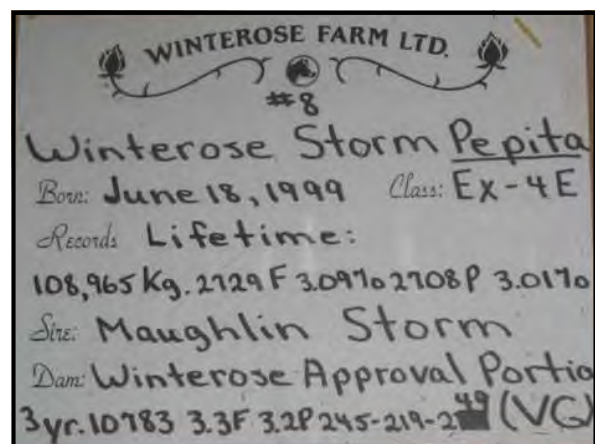
The Story

The Waterloo farm on which Dennis and Helen Martin now call home, just east of Winterbourne, was originally purchased by Dennis's parents, Abner and Mildred in 1944. Abner established a dairy herd of Jersey's cows in the early days, but before long the herd was switched to Holsteins. The Holsteins performed well for the Martin family, earning them the Holstein industry's prestigious Master Breeder Shield. Abner and Mildred sold the cows in 1968 and after the dispersal, Dennis and his brothers, Keith and Quinten rebuilt and expanded the dairy herd and diversified the farming operation adding a beef feedlot, cash crop enterprise and later a seed business, Cribit Seeds to the family's operation.

But even in the early years, busy with the expanding farming operation, the Martin family still made time for other activities. One of these was as leader of the Conservation 4-H Club. It was here that Dennis was to meet his future bride, Helen who also was a leader of the Conservation Club. Helen herself came from a well-respected dairy operation in the Cambridge (Galt) area, so milking cows was not something new to her. It seemed that from the start the young couple had the same aspirations in life and it showed in all that they did together. Dennis and Helen purchased the dairy farm and the dairy herd in March 1989 and began their own operation, Winterose Farm.

Through the years they increased the size of their purebred, registered herd, eventually milking 50 to 55 cows. They also bred good-typed cows, including nine Excellent and over 100 Very Good cows, a homebred Reserve All-Canadian and an Honourable Mention All-Canadian cow to their credit. But production and quality were a focus as well for the couple, consistently named as recipients of the Gold Seal Milk Quality Awards.

Cattle this good don't come by chance it takes a lot of time and commitment by the farmers who care for them, and this was no different for Dennis and Helen. The dairy herd is what paid the bills, and this is where the Martin's concentrated their efforts. It is not unusual when talking to a dairy farmer to hear them talk of the passion they have for their animals and in a sense they become part of your family. This was no different for the Martins; in fact, Helen makes no bones about it, she really LOVED her cows.



For 57 years the Martin's had excellent farm help in Alf Dahlke, a Polish war veteran who immigrated to Canada shortly after World War II and began working for Dennis's father in the 1947. He continued working for the family only retiring at the age of 91. Alf recently passed away but is fondly re-

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membered for his many decades of dedicated service to the Martin families.

After 40 years of milking cows, the Martin's decided in April 2010, it was time to give up dairying and slow down a bit. Even though Dennis and Helen have two children, Kyle (23) and Katrina (20), dairying wasn't in the younger Martin's future plans. Kyle works for an accounting firm in nearby Elora, hoping to become a Chartered Accountant himself while Katrina is pursuing an International Studies degree at the nearby University of Guelph.

Once the family made the decision to disperse the herd, they enlisted the expertise of Brubacher Sales Arena and Walkerbrae Farms from Guelph. The Martins were extremely happy with the professional job that Walkers did for them on the day of the dispersal. The Martins really appreciated all the support they received from their family and neighbours on the day of the sale.

With the dispersal sale of the dairy herd, the family's cropping program changed dramatically on the farm. There was no longer the need for all the legume forages and corn silage that had been previously produced to feed the animals. Now the Martin's had to learn how to become cash croppers. They are now growing seed grade and food grade wheat, barley, oats, soybeans and some grain corn. Dennis doesn't think he will change too much from his practice of utilizing the custom operators for now, but he may take care of more of the spring tillage than he has in the past.

Even in the cropping program a family teamwork effort is called into service. Among the list of custom operators Dennis enlists are his own brothers, Keith and Quentin, as well as Keith's sons, Craig and Jason who operate Cribit Seeds who have recently added a food grade plant that operates under the name of

Wintermar Grains. Dennis advocated the benefits of using his nephew Craig's expertise in the use of different seed varieties. Craig also takes care of the scouting and monitoring of all Dennis and Helen's crops to have proper weed control. Soil compaction is a major concern for Dennis on their Woolwich/Maryhill loam soil. Soil compaction should be greatly reduced since they don't have to spread manure in the spring when there sometimes a lack of ideal conditions. He jokes that manure would be great if it could be applied by helicopter. A downside, he admits, of having no manure is that his fertilizer bill will be larger. In an attempt to mitigate the impact of not having this manure, cover crops are being planted into any of the crop rotations that will support this practice. Dennis noted that care needs to be taken when growing seed crops, as extra green matter is unacceptable as at harvest time it may discolour the seed.

Something that is quite apparent when looking around the farm is the extensive use of tree wind breaks that Dennis started planting back in 1980's. Because of the time restraints that the milking herd demanded back then, the planting of the trees was done in bits and pieces. In hindsight, Dennis said it would have been more advantageous to have planted all of their tree breaks at the same time, but knowing the extra care that the young trees would need in their early years and the watering and grass trimming, Dennis only planted trees in group sizes that he had the time to manage. The Martins plan on continuing to plant windbreaks where possible, and in conjunction with their township to also plant new trees along the road boundaries of their farm. Working in partnership with Grand River Conservation Authority, the Martins are going to reforest part of one of their woodlots. He is looking forward to

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more time to manage woodlots which have been neglected in the past.

Another crop that the Martin's plan to harvest is the sunlight by means of their recently installed 10kw solar tracker under the micro fit pro-



gram. While there have been some glitches along the way, they feel that solar will definitely be a part of the energy picture.



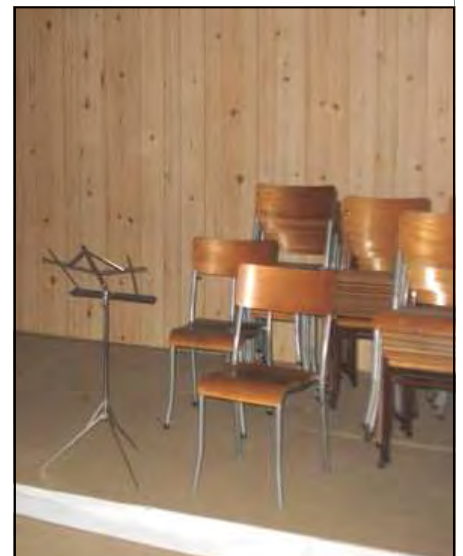
Without the dairy cows most of the remaining hay ground will now be converted into seed grain production, leaving only an eight acre field for hay production, and another five acre field to be used as pasture for Helen's flock of sheep. After working with the dairy herd for so many years, the Martins found it hard not to have some animals to care for so the sheep seemed an attractive alternative. And while the sheep are considered to be Helen's pets, Dennis is considering trying his hand at raising some Belted Galloway cattle, a breed that intrigued him. Dennis laughingly made the remark, that maybe it is the colouring of the black and white Galloway's, which makes them more acceptable to an ex-Holstein guy but with these animals, you don't have to rise out of bed at 5 am to milk them.

The Martin's have always given freely of their time, volunteering for various organizations over the years. Now that the dairy herd is gone, there are more hours available to pursue other things that the Martins hold dear to their hearts. For Dennis, that includes the House of Friendship in Kitchener where he is a director, volunteering with the food hamper program. Dennis is very enthusiastic when he speaks of the goodwill that this organization does for the needy people in the area.

Dennis is also a member of the Township of Woolwich Enhancement Committee (TWEEC), an environmental group set up to among other things to greatly increase the number of trees being planted in the township each year. For Helen, 4-H, is something that she still feels strongly about, serving as chairman of Waterloo 4-H Leaders Association and as secretary-treasurer of the Waterloo Holstein Club.

The Martins like to hold meetings, whether it is a 4H club meeting, a church social, a family gathering, a square dance or a talent night. To accommodate these different groups and their activities, the Martin's converted the interior of the old bank barn, turning the old threshing floor into a dance floor with its own raised stage. This arrangement was particularly useful just this past fall, when Dennis and Helen celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary.

What could have more meaning than to celebrate the occasion in the very building where so many of those



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years were spent together caring for the *milk-
ing herd?*

Dennis and Helen, with all their many years of dairy farming experience have thus far enjoyed their farm lifestyle transition and are excited about their life without dairy cows and all the opportunities new and old that they will now have time to embrace.

Special thanks to the Martin Family for being our featured producer for the March issue. Waterloo Soil and Crop Improvement Association nominated this farm family.



Charlie Dunsmore

**Heartland's Provincial
Director 2008-2010**

Many thanks to Charlie Dunsmore, Heartland Soil and Crop Improvement's Provincial Director 2008-2010.

Charlie is a very capable person who accepted the opportunity to represent the region in the role of provincial director.

Charlie attended executive, regional and committee meetings on the region's behalf.

Dreamland Farm Supply has grown under the leadership of Charlie and he has chose to devote his time to growing his business. We wish this entrepreneur well as his business branches into new markets.

**Thanks Charlie for your dedication to
Heartland.**

**Growing Your Farm Profits Workshop Leads to
Business Success**

*Are your business goals the same as your personal goals?
Do you find it hard to balance farm life with family life? Do
you know where you want to be in five years?*

At a workshop, farmers complete a self-assessment of their own operations by answering questions in eight key management areas. They use the knowledge they have gained

from the discussion of the case study and the results from the self- assessment to set goals and prioritize them. They also write an Action Plan that lays out the steps to ensure goals are met.

*For further information please contact the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association at 1-800-265-9751 or
Mike.Terpstra@ontariosoilcrop.org*



Farmers now have a powerful new tool to help save money on their pest control regardless of what crop they grow.

A Guelph based company has recently launched Savvy Farmer, a web-based information warehouse containing just about everything you need to know about pest control. Company co-founder and former president of Syngenta Warren Libby explains that Savvy Farmer was developed to help farmers deal with the often complicated area of pest control and to help growers save money without sacrificing control.

“The pesticide industry is undergoing a transformation right now” explains Libby. “The industry has matured, we have many effective treatments for virtually every pest in every crop, and new legislation has opened the market to lower cost generics. This is good news for farmers since it means more choices, more competition, and lower costs”. According to Libby, the prices of many popular products are down for 2011 and farmers who investigate their options should be able to reduce their total pest control bill in 2011, and for several years in the future.

Libby sees four ways farmers can use Savvy Farmer to help reduce their pest control costs:

1. **Choose the most cost-effective treatment for each field situation.** For most situations there are many possible treatments. Using Savvy Farmer, farmers can quickly find every registered treatment to control the exact range of pests in each field, and each treatment is priced. “There tends to be a wide range in costs between treatments. Farmers should discuss their treatment options with their dealer or CCA, since in many cases a lower cost treatment could be a good alternative” explains Libby.
2. **Choose the proper rate.** To find the exact product rate to apply can mean sifting through over a hundred pages of product labels, and

even more for tank mixes. Too often farmers choose the high rate or round-off the rate. Savvy Farmer displays the exact rate range down to two decimal places for each product in a treatment and even calculates how much of each product to add to the sprayer tank.

3. **Find a lower cost generic or private label alternative.** Recent changes in government legislation have resulted in a proliferation of generic and private label brands. Most of these cost less than their brand-name cousins. Savvy Farmer allows growers to easily search and compare over 250 generic brands.
4. **Maximize grower rebates.** To defend against lower cost generics, many manufacturers offer rebates. Like them or hate them, rebates can be sizeable, sometimes amounting to as much as a 20% refund. Savvy Farmer allows farmers to easily search for all available rebates for any product.

While saving money is an important part of Savvy Farmer, Libby stresses that the agronomic information it contains is equally valuable. All product labels, MSDS sheets, safety information, and company contacts are easily accessible. Growers will particularly like the 1,000 pest identification photos valuable when trying to identify weeds, insects or diseases. Savvy Farmer also allows growers to keep pest control records for each field. However the most important feature of Savvy Farmer is its up-to-date library of every registered treatment for every crop grown in Canada. According to Libby, the software contains almost 4 million treatments covering over 1,000 weeds, insects or diseases that attack over 750 crops.

Savvy Farmer is a web-based program available by subscription. “By using the web, we are able to update the information every single day and users never need to install a CD or DVD”. To learn more about Savvy Farmer or to give it a free try visit www.savvyfarmer.com. The OSCIA has also negotiated a 30% discount for its members. .



Since its inception in 1998 the leading-edge topics and dynamic speakers assembled by FarmSmart organizers have continued to draw a larger audience with each successive event and this year's conference did not disappoint. Over 900 farmers, agribusiness representatives, faculty and students gathered at the University of Guelph's Rozanski Hall on Saturday, January 22, 2011 for the largest FarmSmart Conference to date.

"What is really exciting about this event and what makes it relevant is that it is organized by farmers, for farmers. We have a tremendous amount of industry support to deliver the program, but at the end of the day, this is their conference," says Julia Whalen, conference chairman. "We continue to be energized each year by the enthusiasm and uptake for the programs from the farm community. Our number of attendees continues to increase each year which is a solid indicator of the type of enthusiasm and confidence that farmers also have in the program," report the organizing committee.

Throughout the daylong event conference delegates were able to custom design their agenda from the over 50 sessions that run throughout the course of the day. Chris St. Clair of The Weather Network, chosen by Canadians as "Canada's Most Dependable Weatherman", was the keynote speaker.

International speakers are always popular with attendees and this year's line-up included Douglas B. Beegle, a distinguished Professor of Agronomy & Soil Fertility Specialist at Penn State University; Dr. Emerson Nafziger, Professor of Crop Sciences and Extension Agronomist, University of Illinois; Thomas R. Overton, Associate Professor, Department of Animal Science, Cornell University; Arland Suderman, a market analyst and feature writer with FarmFutures, Illinois and Dr. Larry Corah, of Kansas, vice president, Certified Angus Beef (CAB).

"As someone who has spent nearly 30 years producing and providing extension information in the major agriculture state of Illinois, I was impressed to see such a large and enthusiastic crowd on campus on a dreary Saturday to participate in a learning event. While we all use modern means of communication to provide agricultural information today, there is no substitute for the sort of interactions possible in such a setting," says Nafziger. The FarmSmart philosophy has always been to develop a program that would appeal to the whole family and the youth program continues to be popular with attendees.

Organizers are always looking to present new and innovative programs for their participants and a new addition to the program line-up for 2011 was the partnership with Beef Symposium, which offered concurrent beef-specific sessions. Organizers were pleased with the new relationship and the opportunities it presented. "The partnership with FarmSmart drew a good crowd of young enthusiastic producers who were keen to learn from the exceptional line-up of speakers," Says Brian Pogue, the beef cattle program lead with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) and one of the Beef Symposium organizers.

The conference is a joint project of the Golden Horseshoe and Heartland Regional Soil and Crop Improvement Associations, in partnership with the Ontario Agricultural College (OAC), OMAFRA and various agri-business partners, including Platinum sponsors Bayer Crop Science Canada, DeKalb Seeds, EthoSolar Inc., Farm Credit Canada, Grain Farmers of Ontario, Pioneer Hi-Bred Limited Canada, Syngenta Crop Protection Canada and Syngenta Seeds Canada Inc.

Canada's Weather - The Climate That Shapes A Nation

The French have their wine. Italians have romance. Canadians? We have weather.

And we also have Chris St. Clair, a familiar face on The Weather Network and keynote speaker at the 2011 FarmSmart Conference in January; a man so passionate about the weather that he's even written a book about it.

Why do we love weather? As far as he can figure, it's "because we can't do anything about it." St. Clair is fascinated by the diversity and adversity of Canada's climate. Surrounded by water on three sides, he says that our country has weather patterns unlike any other.

It's our weather events that shape us as a nation, said St. Clair, like the F4 tornado that hit Edmonton in 1987 with its 418 km per hour winds. Only two percent of tornados get that strong. Then there were the hailstones that formed when water circulated up and down in the clouds, building in size until they were too heavy to stay up there anymore, that pummeled Calgary in 2010.

It's also the flooding of Winnipeg's Red River as it flows south to north, warm to cold, through an old sea plain. "You can lose a planting season, just like that," St. Clair said as he flicked his fingers. And of course there are droughts --the 1930's, 60's, 80's and now-- where ironically drowning has caused 80 percent of the human deaths attributable to the weather as people tried to cool off.

Here in Southern Ontario, bounded by the Great Lakes that hold 20 percent of the world's fresh water, we experience what St. Clair called "incredible microclimates". We have arctic fronts from the north and tropical plumes from the south, but it's the power of water that drives our climate.

For example, those familiar snow squalls happen when winds travel over long distances of water where there's a seven-degree or more difference between the

water and air temperature. As soon as the winds interact with land, they lift and boom! Snow.

And it's true, said St. Clair, we are a snowy country: 36 percent of our precipitation falls as snow compared to the world average of five percent.

Medicine Hat is the driest place in Canada with 271 days every year having no precipitation at all. Yellow Grass, Saskatchewan has the honour of being Canada's hot spot, recording 45-degree temperatures that buckled rail lines in 1937. Carmen, Manitoba recorded the highest humidex value in July '07 when it felt like 53 degrees.

Speaking of wind chill and humidex values, they are Canadian inventions. Humidex readings are important when there's so much moisture in the air that our perspiration doesn't evaporate and becomes an insulator, while wind chill readings factor in the removal of our boundary layer of insulation by the wind. The lowest wind chill reading in Canada was recorded in Pelly Bay, NWT, at minus 91 degrees.

And what is the coldest national capital in the world? It's Ottawa. As St. Clair told the audience, "That says it all."

by Karen Dallimore.



Chris St. Clair
The Weather Network

“Dough Making”

By: Anne Howden Thompson

When it comes to outstanding winter wheat yields, Ontario takes the lead boasting the highest winter wheat yields in North America. (The only exception the mountains of Nevada where 10,000 acres of wheat seed is under irrigation and they can average 120 bushels per acre.)

“We are the best. So if anybody should grow winter wheat it should be us,” says provincial cereals specialist Peter Johnson of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA).

But according to the man who is passionate about wheat, more can be done. “We need to add some rocket fuel to the wheat crop,” says Johnson.

“We are looking to break yield barriers...and move the bar forward,” says Johnson, so to do that the industry took a new approach, undertaking a first-of-its-kind field-scale approach to research.

Johnson says small plot research allows for investigation of many more variables than field scale but for the three-year SMART (Strategic Management Adding Revenue Today) project they employed both plot size and field size scale plots planted by the grower with his own equipment to better represent what really happens.

“That is one of the strengths of SMART—both small and field scale were employed to complement each other,” Says Johnson. To ensure consistency and valid research data, project researchers picked the flattest piece of ground on the farm.

In this new model varieties were planted side by side with the spray treatments running across in the opposite direction across the varieties. In this configuration Johnson says they were able to get up to 600 plots per location and about 78 different treatments. “Unbelievable,” he says. While only soft red winter wheat was

used for the three-year research trial, Johnson calls that a “conscious choice” because he did not believe that the project would work. He was looking for “proof of concept” by using it on the wheat varieties that have the most yield potential.



Peter Johnson, OMAFRA

Johnson credits the concept for the project model to an English consultant, Jim Orson--the same consultant to make the recommendations to the New Zealand farmers who holds the world's record for wheat at 248 bushels per acre!

During his discussions with the consultant Johnson said he told them about the work he and his team have done on wheat fungicide and nitrogen over the years. But the consultant picked up on an important point, noting that Johnson hadn't talked about the interrelationship between nitrogen and fungicides. “So this whole concept isn't about one variable, it is about the interaction of the two,” he says.

“Three years later I can't believe the yield results we are getting,” says Johnson, (*see Figures 1, 2 and 3*) admitting they will now try the same model with hard red winter wheat.

He also thinks farmers should try it themselves. “I have enough faith in this data that you should try it. I think you owe it to yourself to try some strips with this new concept,” says Johnson.

Johnson says that each a T3 fungicide and nitrogen application will boost yields—“but you aren't going to set the world on fire. If you do both of them that is where we really seem to get into something that makes a difference in your bottom line,” says Johnson.

Figure 1.

2008-2010 Averages	90N	120N	150N
	Yield (Bu/acre)		
UTC	93.0	96.7	99.4
T3 Fungicide	99.9	105.1	108.6
T1 + T2	99.7	106.2	111.1

SMART plot trials across all varieties

Figure 2.

2009 - 25R45	90N	120N	150N
	Yield (Bu/acre)		
UTC	86.3	101.0	105.5
T3 Fungicide	99.4	105.8	114.8
T1 + T2	95.7	111.3	123.4

SMART plot trials across all varieties

Figure 3.

2009 - Emmit	90N	120N	150N
	Yield (Bu/acre)		
UTC	99.0	98.2	106.41
T3 Fungicide	106.2	106.9	109.8
T1 + T2	106.6	107.3	113.4

SMART plot trials across all varieties

Question: Can I grow wheat after corn?

“There is always the temptation to grow wheat after corn”, but Johnson cautions against it because of the risk of Fusarium. Showing a slide from a 2010 trial, Johnson said Fusarium accounted for about a 33 per cent yield decrease and that tillage impact was almost zero. “Once you have a problem, you have a problem,” he said.

Question: Is corn silage a better choice than grain corn?

Johnson: “You will have a little bit less of a problem...but as far as Fusarium goes, wheat after corn silage is not much better than wheat after grain corn.”

Question: Is Fusarium limited to spring and winter wheat crops?

Johnson: “Barley gets Fusarium worse...it doesn’t spread in the head quite as much, but in terms of susceptibility, it is more so than wheat. Two-row barleys are much less susceptible to Fusarium than six-row barleys.”

Question: What if I’m not already applying the minimum 90 lbs. of nitrogen used in the study?

Johnson: “Whatever your base rate is, add the 30 lbs.”

What’s Driving the Markets?



Arlan Suderman, Farm Futures, Illinois

One day corn’s down ten cents, but with a bit of rhetoric out of Chicago about supply and demand and it’s up ten cents the next day. It’s frustrating. The fundamentals are the same, so what’s really driving the commodity markets from day to day?

Arlan Suderman is a commodity market analyst for Farm Futures, a U.S. farm business management magazine. As far as he’s concerned, he told a record audience at the 2011 FarmSmart Conference in Guelph there may just be two shoeboxes of comments beside each trading desk. “One has comments to use when the market’s up; one has comments to use when the market’s down.”

What really drives the money in and out of agricultural commodity markets? Supply and demand should drive prices. If that basic economic theory applied, the charts would show that in the curves.

Suderman explained the markets did work before 1978, but then the government stepped in and the market didn’t work for the next ten years. In 1989 the U.S. farm program changed and the market started to work again, with even better success after 1995 when farmers had more flexibility to plant in response to the market, which led to tighter stocks.

But from 2002 to 2009 “something went haywire.” Price was still a function of supply and demand, but now it’s more modified by the flow of money.

By 2008 investors had \$55.7 billion in corn, soybeans and wheat but they started to liquidate when the floodwaters started to rise in June. They pulled \$40 billion out in five months time when the financial collapse happened on Wall Street. Investors were

scared. "It was panic. Put the money under the mattress time," said Suderman.

The market has slowly been building back up and right now there is \$60 billion in net fund ownership in corn, soybeans and wheat, but what we're seeing now could be either a correction or a major trend change.

What is ahead for 2011? If the rains come by March 1st in the southern US Suderman predicts we can produce a large enough crop of corn and soybeans to maintain stocks. If the rains don't come until late April, stock projections will be lower, but it's not panic time.

There's no reason for the wheat market demand to go higher unless end users start to react to events such as political unrest in Tunisia. Global demand for corn, based in meat production and with slight growth due to the ethanol industry, will continue to grow as the middle class in Asia continues to emerge. Soybean demand could exceed what the USDA is estimating if Argentina's production runs short due to drought.

Worldwide demand has been distorted by reserves. Prices are all good so planting decisions will be agronomically based, not price based. Global demand and production need to get in sync again, but Suderman said the bottom line is that we should have a growth in demand as long as China's GDP remains above eight percent.

by Karen Dallimore

Dates are set!

WED. JULY 13 - Ontario Forage Expo at the Elora Research Station

THURS. JULY 14 - FarmSmart Expo at the Elora Research Station

FRI. JULY 15 - FarmSmart Expo 4H/Youth Day at the Elora Research Station

2012

SAT. JAN. 21 - FarmSmart Conference at Rozanski Hall, University of Guelph. Registration begins at 8:30 pm. First session starts at 9 am. Sponsorship opportunities available.

Thank You!

With over 900 participants the 13th anniversary edition of the FarmSmart Conference was our largest and most successful event to date. Thank you to the many agribusiness and community sponsors who came together to help us deliver another exceptional program.

The strong support from both participants and the sponsoring partners sends a strong signal that the program is well received and respected in the agriculture industry, but it would not be possible without the generous support of our agri-business community. Please show your support and appreciation by supporting their businesses.

With our grateful thanks.

~ **The FarmSmart Conference 2011 organizing committee**

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- C & M Seeds
- Clark Agri Service Inc.
- Elmira Farm Service (2000) Ltd.
- RBC Royal Bank
- Scotiabank
- Scotland Agromart Ltd.
- SeCan
- Solartech Canada Inc.
- Stoltz Sales & Service
- Stratford Agri Analysis
- Valent Canada Inc.
- Wessuc Inc.

AGRICULTURE MEDIA SPONSOR

- Ontario Farmer Publications

TRADE SHOW

- AgriCorp • Agri-Food Laboratories • Allied Associates LLP
- Alpine Plant Foods Corporation • Certified Crop Advisor Program • CIBC
- Clark Agri Service Inc. • Credit Valley Conservation Authority • CropQuest Inc.
- Elmira Farm Service (2000) Ltd. • Grand River Conservation Authority • Haltech AgGPS
- J & S Ag Supplies • Alan Kelley Grain Bins • Mycogen Seeds
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs • Ontario Solar Provider
- Pride Seeds • Stratford Agri Analysis • Region of Peel
- The St. George Company Limited • Saturn Power Inc. • Solartech Canada Inc.
- Weather Innovations Incorporated

BEEF SYMPOSIUM TRADE SHOW EXHIBITORS

- Bio Agri Mix LP • Genex Cooperative Inc. • Local Food Plus • Merial Canada Inc.
- Merit-Trax Technologies • Ontario Cattlemen's Association



Brought to you by the Golden Horseshoe and Heartland Regional Soil and Crop Improvement Associations in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and the Ontario Agricultural College.

Heartland Welcomes New Provincial Director!

Stuart Wright

Heartland has a new provincial director and Stuart Wright is up to the challenge that comes with the position. Stuart joined the Wellington Soil and Crop Improvement Association in 2000 after being persuaded by John Beer another member to enter into the Forage Masters Competition. The Wright brothers were successful in that year's competition and went on to represent Wellington County at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. Stuart witnessed the good things that the Soil and Crop Improvement Association was doing and decided to become a director of the association. Two years later Stuart became president of Wellington County Soil and Crop Association and later assuming the role as chairman of the Heartland Region in 2005 and 2006. At the 2011 Annual General Meeting of Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) just recently held in Niagara Falls Stuart was ratified as the provincial director for the Heartland Region.

With the support of his family he is eager to take on this new chapter. Stuart currently farms with his brothers, Lloyd and Mark near Kenilworth. After spending a year at Wilfred Laurier University in 1976 he realized that he wasn't really cut out to be a teacher and decided instead to return to his family and continue working on the multi-family operation

In 1989, with their father ready to step back from the day-to-day operations, the Wright brothers pooled their resources and incorporated the family farm into Wriighthaven Farms Ltd. The company now owns the dairy operation of approximately 60 milking cows and their replacements, the quota, equipment and one parcel of land. Together the Wright brothers farm 1500 acres of which 750 acres are owned and another 750 which are rented.

Stuart's brother, Lloyd, is the corporation's general manager and the person who pulls the different branches of the operation together. One of his many



duties includes managing the breeding stock of the their farming operation as they have ventured into selling breeding stock and have select bulls on test at Semex.

A third brother, Mark, is the herdsman of the dairy operation where his duties include the feeding of the dairy herd and taking care of the breeding program. Stuart credits Mark with achieving their high BCA of 230-240- 240.

Stuart is in charge of the cropping side of the operation, planting corn, wheat and beans along with their required forages. Some canola and spring grains are also included in the rotations.

The families all work together to get the work done whether it is doing the daily chores in the barn or doing what is needed in the field.

Stuart is married to Carolyn, a registered nurse at Grand River Hospital in Kitchener. Together, they have four children, Tim and Andrew, Genna and Chevonne.

Heartland Region and the provincial board welcome Stuart Wright to his new position.

“Association”

By Joan McKinlay, 1st Vice President

“Association”, it is an unusual word isn’t it. The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association is not a board, agency or council it is an “association” which we proclaim in our name. When I think of other associations they seem to all have the common basis that the power and strength lies with the membership. It rests with each member. This is illustrated by the fact that the membership ultimately votes to set direction at the Annual Meeting and are represented in all decisions by their elected county representatives and Provincial Directors. Nothing happens without the approval of the majority.

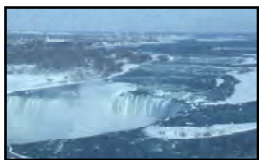
When we join our local county association, we voluntarily pay our fees for the right to “associate” with other members within the county. It is this committed group that takes on projects to test new products or ideas, who organize the local information meetings and who provide forums for people to get together to discuss ideas that they have heard about. In this information age it is surprising that we still need “information meetings” but really it is not. We need them even more now because we have so much information hitting us over the internet, through the media and from sales people that we need a forum where we can come together to ask and discuss questions in a group that we respect. This is one of the few opportunities for two way dialogue. It isn’t until you “get it” that it all starts to make sense. People will join when they see value for their membership. Programs need to attract their attention and answer their questions to keep them coming back. If you give good answers, you’ll be asked the questions.

By virtue of being a member of the county organization you are also a member of the regional association. While these are large areas of geography and diversified in interests, our similarities are always more than our differences. When I used to work in the Grey, Bruce and Dufferin areas I wished that I could introduce people from the different counties to each other as they were working on similar ideas and problems. Today we are often more similar to those in other areas than we are to our immediate neighbours. By sharing ideas within the region through events,

newsletters and tours we can access so much more information than one county can provide. The welcome is always out for people to attend events across the region. By the counties and regions associating together to form the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association we now have an organization that is large enough to represent the interests of all members across the province, secure the respect and support of other organizations, businesses and governments and to be identified for our valuable input into the decisions of others. While a motivated group of directors with similar interests helps to propel a successful county association, it is the strength through diversity and finding the issues that affect us all that will strengthen us as a provincial association. Each has a valuable role to play that only it can do.

OSCIA has a very proven track record. Our capable staff are second to none for efficient program delivery, knowledge and organization. Our voice is respected on the committees that we sit on as an independent voice of the farm community. We are asked for our advice and expertise by many organizations and they value the chance to associate with us as we impart credibility and dependability to them. It was through the foresight of past directors working in conjunction with governments and other organizations that we were able to tackle the environmental issues of the farm community and provide farmers with a recognized proactive means of addressing them. Currently we are working on similar projects for farm business and human resource management as well as testing the role of biomass in the Ontario agricultural community. Our role has always been to evaluate and educate.

The media initially credited the social networks for the changes in Egypt and across that region but by the second week it was strongly pointed out that the social networks provided the framework but it was only through the conviction of individuals that the events happened. It is up to each of us as individual members to shape OSCIA and our county organizations. So come “associate” with us and be a part of making history rather than just reading about it.



Heartland Provincial Director

By: Stuart Wright

There was a great roar and hum rising up from the City of Niagara Falls this past Feb 7-9. Most of it no doubt was the millions of gallons of water hurtling over the precipice of the falls then churning towards Lake Ontario. Some of it though was the sound of the wheels turning in the Oakes Ballroom at the Sheraton Fallsview Hotel scene of the Annual General Meeting of the OSCIA. A couple of hundred delegates, industry personnel, interested parties OSCIA staff and directors gathered to hear reports about various trials conducted by the partnership of the locals and regions with the fine OMAFRA staff. Also, important OSCIA business was conducted and there were many fascinating speakers to enlighten the delegates.

Since, it was my first AGM as a Provincial director, I'd like to take you behind the scenes and give you a feel for some of the things the directors are concerned with. Directors met on Feb 7th to review procedures for the AGM, discussed the Executive Road Show, which requires executive members to travel to various regions to promote OSCIA and participated in a meeting on governance. Special guest was Neil Petreny the head of the Dairy Herd Improvement Association who shared their approach to the form and structure of their group. A supper meeting with the RCCs was held. RCC's are important people in OSCIA and it's important to appreciate their work. With Jacquie Bishop stepping down and a new person coming on in Heartland Region, it is important to welcome this person and support them as needed. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank Jacquie for all her time with us. She is a quality person and does important work in agriculture and her community by teaching Grower Pesticides Courses and acting as the Returning Officer for Huron/Bruce. We're sorry her busy life has taken her away from us but understand and respect the reasons. Best of luck Jacquie.

A director's meeting was held the next morning with a review of the audited financial statement.

The AGM started at 1 pm and continued until 9 pm. A highlight of the day was an address by Carol Mitchell, Minister of Agriculture.

The new executive includes past President Barry Hill from Golden Horseshoe. He is a true leader who can gently direct the discussion and encourage everyone to speak. His experience will be valuable to the new executive. President Max Kaiser from Quinte Region (Napanee) is a bright and articulate person who has the ability to efficiently and respectfully navigate through a tough agenda. First Vice Joan Mc Kinlay from Georgian Central has had the respect of the agricultural community for a long time from her working with OMAFRA. Barring unforeseen circumstances she will become the first women president in OSCIA history. Second Vice Henry Denotter from St. Clair Region did a great job of chairing the A.G.M on the second day. His wisdom and experience are valuable assets. The newest member of the executive is Allan Mol from North Western Region (Thunder Bay). Sometimes owing to the geographical and heat unit differences in the north, there is a feeling of frustration that information isn't always relevant to them. With Allan on board as 3rd Vice he will be able to bring a northern voice to the executive.

The membership fee will increase to \$7.50 this coming year. The majority of people feel that they receive value for their investment. There are very few who wouldn't be proud of the agronomic information provided to farmers by Southwest Ag Conference, Farmsmart and Farmsmart Expo where OSCIA partners with others to bring added value.

In closing;

Andy Graham amused us while giving a short history of the falls. Marilyn Monroe made her first film in Niagara Falls where two natural wonders came together. And while very few people will ever honeymoon at the Perth Demo Day or hope to be married at Farmsmart by Peter Johnson maybe there's an argument to be made that we too are, in our own humble way. A natural wonder.



McKinlays win Pasture Award

By: *Scott Woodhouse*

Ravenna farmers James and Joan McKinlay and Silver Springs Farms have won the 2011 Pasture Award. The prestigious award was presented Wednesday, February 23 at the Ontario Cattlemen's Association (OCA) Annual General Meeting.

For their environmental and pasture improvements and management, McKinlay will receive a cash award of \$750 and a bag of forage seed, courtesy of award sponsor Mapleseed, plus a complimentary stay for one night at the OCA Annual Meeting.

James and Joan McKinlay, operate Silver Springs Farms with approximately 400 acres of pasture and 500 acres of cash crop including winter wheat, soybeans, canola, barley and corn.

James is quick to point out that, in their operation, a good crop rotation is extremely important and forages play a vital role in that rotation. James grazes

about 150 cow-calf pairs, plus an additional 80 heifers are bred for herd replacement and breeding stock sales. The cows are pastured in groups and are rotationally grazed on several different farm locations. James is a strong believer in a good rotational grazing system.

"Keep it simple and achievable. By doing so, you will accomplish successful results," he said. "Fresh clean water is also of utmost importance, so fenced corridors have been constructed to protect the water source and provide restricted access to quality water close to each paddock."

"We recognize the responsibilities we have as food producers and ambassadors for agriculture, especially the importance of demonstrating good land stewardship to our urban neighbours who form an integral part of our local community."



A visionary, innovator and entrepreneur will be inducted into the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame

John Benham

John Benham—OSCIA Environmental Farm Plan Representative for Wellington County will be inducted into the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame at Country Heritage Park in Milton on June 12.

Benham's nomination was sponsored by the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association where he is a Director and Past President of the OSCIA, as well as one of the founders of both the Ontario Forage Council and the Canadian Forage Council,

John Benham has been acknowledged as an excellent farmer, an agriculturalist, an environmentalist and an economist who was always one step ahead of the Industry.

He graduated from the Ontario Agricultural College in 1951 and became a dairy farmer who made his mark breeding top quality cows, whose health and production status were enhanced by a J.C. Benham-devised ration containing alfalfa with maximized protein, ADF and NDF content.

Benham was an early adapter of new crop production practices such as pure seeding of alfalfa as a high protein source for cattle, ensiling whole cob high moisture corn and designing his own mineral supplement. He then helped to educate others across Ontario by regularly hosting Crop Science and Animal Science students from OAC, 4-H clubs, judging competitions, and OVC researchers looking into the links between nutrition and herd health issues at his farm.

He went on to become a member of the Field Crops Committee of the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, where he helped to reorganize the structure of the forage and hay classes, with entries placed on the basis of chemical analysis for protein and fiber content.

A new horse hay class was also introduced to take into consideration the nutritional needs of horses for breeding and performance.



All of this went a long way to educating Ontario farmers about the value of new crop production practices and the importance of livestock nutrition.

However, his innovation did not stop there. On his own farm, he was an early adopter of soil erosion control techniques, of the utilization of manure as a substitute for commercial fertilizer, and of sound woodlot management techniques. In fact, he presented information at major conferences on the environmental and economic benefits of woodlot management.

In recognition of this service to agriculture, in 1974 Benham was awarded the OAC Centennial Medal as one of 100 of Ontario's most important contributors to agriculture.

Off-farm, Benham worked with a variety of organizations to enhance good agricultural practices and practical training opportunities for producers. He was one of the first fieldmen for the Ontario Land Stewardship Program, which was a forerunner of the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association's Environmental Farm Plan. Much of the growing success of the EFP has been due to John's enthusiasm and hard work as an administrator, organizer and teacher.

As the weed inspector for Wellington County, operating under the Weed Control Act, Benham has done much to train weed inspectors from other jurisdictions. He is also a founder and Board member of the Ontario Invasive Plant Council which works to prevent the spread of new and damaging weed species such as the Giant Hog Weed. John is also the Wellington County Tree Commissioner.

Congratulations from Heartland Soil and Crop Improvement Association

Wellington County Soil and Crop Improvement Association Annual Meeting

A great line up of speakers informed the members of Wellington County Soil and Crop Association at their Annual Meeting on December 3, 2010.

Peter Johnston, OMAFRA concluded that 100 bushels of wheat to the acre is not enough anymore. He suggested that it is tough to compete with 200 bu/ac corn at today's commodity prices but need to look at good rotational cropping practices.

Don Hilborn, OMAFRA gave an update on the solar industry and hosted a panel discussion of three farmers who have experienced the solar movement.

Wellington County Forage Masters Competition

- 1st place Brad Martin, Drayton
 2nd place Ashley Harrop, Fergus
 3rd place Jeff Krul, Arthur

The Economy and Agriculture



Plus



equals



Ontario farmers were given a gift this year from Mother Nature. The growing season included a dry and early spring, some timely rains and heat. Results included higher yields of which compounded with rising commodity prices, a gift was received.

At the Wellington County Soil and Crop Improvement Annual Meeting, David Rose delved into the question what to do with this gift. He felt that it is a great time to deal with debt to position your self better with your banker, input supplier, equipment dealer and land owner. He cautioned the membership that a business can humble you pretty quick if don't make wise decisions. When making these decisions he stressed that conversation needs to happen with your business partners and your spouse to ensure that everyone is onside. He encouraged everyone to do the math and take into account all variables including a rise in interest rates which can greatly affect your debt servicing ability. He

also cautioned producers that they need to keep an eye on oil prices as this will directly affect inputs such as fertilizer, spraying and fuel costs. China and other BRIC countries are having a huge impression on the consumption of oil which will affect us.

Dave encouraged farmers to have accurate budgets in place. Look at less tillage, vertical tillage systems and more precision farming, such as GPS technology as it can pay at the scales. Farmers need to recognize the value of manure but also the costs associated with it. The application of bio solids and the planting of cover crops need to be investigated per farm basis.

Mr. Rose strongly recommended that farmers do the math; observe before they react as it is a very interesting time. "The decisions that are made need to make sense to your business and your family and use the services of professional advisors, accountants, lawyers, bankers and successful farmers.....not what you learned at the coffee shop."

David S. Rose—P. Ag, CIBC Ag Dept works with farm and agribusiness clients. Formally, a farm management specialist with OMAFRA.

Perth County Soil and Crop Improvement Association Annual Meeting

“China” What We Need to Know

Richard and Jean Smelski travelled to China in 2010 and Richard shared some revolutionary findings with the members at the Perth County Soil and Crop Improvement Association Annual Meeting.

Opportunities for Canadian Agriculture

- ◆ Globally 430 million middle class people in 2000 will rise to 1.15 billion by 2030 with two thirds of these people living in India and China
- ◆ There are as many millionaires in China as people in Canada
- ◆ There are 5 times as many engineers in China and India that in the US. They can only have one child so everything is sacrificed to educate that child
- ◆ An increase of 10,000 cars per day are using their roads
- ◆ 22 million people live in Beijing
- ◆ Fastest trains in the world that travel 500 km/hr are found in China
- ◆ China uses 50% of the world’s concrete today
- ◆ Moved a mountain to make more room to build homes in Hong Kong
- ◆ China’s working population will peak in 2015
- ◆ India’s working population peaks in 2035
- ◆ Chinese farmers do not pay taxes, government

- ◆ owned agricultural banks support farmers to give them every opportunity to be successful as they wish their population to be fed.
- ◆ House 50% of the pig population in the world with very modern processing facilities
- ◆ 300,000 dairy cows in 1992 increased to 4 million cows today



**Richard Smelski,
Shakespeare, ON**

Richard’s message encouraged the membership to think globally and embrace the opportunities to provide products in this very demanding value added market. He stressed that it is important to know your consumer. The Chinese are very culturally oriented people and Canadians need to look for opportunities to supply what is being demanded. Canadians have the knowledge, technology and land base to provide for market. We just need to take it that one step further as the Chinese people are very focused and make things happen.

“Who thought that you could even move a mountain.”

“What a change from 2009. Not a lot of snow cover, warm temperatures early, and crops planted early allowing quick emergence and growth. The year continued to be relatively warm with a lot of sunshine. Fall harvest was earlier and conducted in mainly dry ground. The result of that was an incredible amount of farmers reporting above normal yields and corn that was the driest in years.” **President William Miller**

Forage Masters Competition 2010

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1st Place | Paul Gras, Stratford |
| 2nd Place | Doug Johnston, Listowel |
| 3rd Place | Ralph DeWitt, Stratford |



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