



# OSCIA News...

March 2009

A NEWSLETTER TO UPDATE OSCIA MEMBERS,  
PRESIDENTS, SECRETARIES, TREASURERS, DIRECTORS,  
AND OMAFRA AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT CONTACTS —

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## **OSCIA 2010 ANNUAL MEETING**

**Date:** February 2 & 3, 2010  
**Place:** Sheraton Fallsview  
Niagara Falls

## Message from the President

As parts of Ontario saw the snow recede in the last couple of weeks, combines could be seen pulling out of implement sheds and continuing in what was considered (depending on where you live) a successful 2008 crop year.

For those of you who do not know me, my wife Norma and I operate a beef cow-calf through to



*Murray Cochrane*

finish and cash crop farm in the district of Algoma. In the summer of 2008 we had the opportunity to host the provincial Directors summer meeting. We were able to showcase an area of Ontario not often travelled.

OSCIA's Annual Meeting in Niagara Falls, held February 3 & 4, was well attended. There were excellent presentations on last year's Major and Partner Grant projects. The level of professionalism is a credit to the enthusiasm of the local and regional associations and the cooperation of OMAFRA's Agriculture Development staff.

The meeting started off with the always-popular crop report from the previous year and new and emerging trends for the upcoming year. This year, Ian McDonald and Keith Reid from Agriculture Development Branch of OMAFRA supplied us with entertaining and informative details. The theme of this year's meeting was "Farming on the New Plateau". Guest Speakers spoke on the opportunities of biomass for fuel, farmers working together for value added and researchers working with farmers.

We also congratulate Justin Dorland, Northumberland County, as the winner of the 2008 Provincial Forage Masters competition. We wish him well as he advances to the American Forage and Grassland Conference in Michigan.

I would like to concur with Dr. Rob Gordon, Dean of OAC, on his desire to get more research from OAC to the farm. This will only enhance the strategic partnership between OAC and U of G research, Agriculture and Agri-

Food Canada, OMAFRA, and members of OSCIA. Research and demonstration projects benefit not only OSCIA members, but the farming community in general through communication, that being in the form of our regional newsletters, Crop Advances and agriculture's newspapers. To stay competitive in today's global market, money has to be spent on research, development and implementation. OSCIA is poised to assist in outreach.

We are anticipating a busy year within OSCIA with the signing of the new three-year OSCIA/OMAFRA agreement; we are now entering a new round of regional research Partner and Communication Grants as well as Major, Project and Education Grants.

The greatest tool our organization has is our ability to communicate. The transfer of information through our regional newsletters and Crop Advances, regional/county information sessions and conferences like FarmSmart and SWAC are fundamental.

We are looking forward to the anticipated Growing Forward set of provincial/federal programs, that being the continuation of EFP and the new Growing Your Farm Profits (GYFP) program. Planning for success has many components, but most important is knowing where you are now, where you want to go, and the path you have to take to get there.

I am looking forward to working closely with our new slate of Directors, OSCIA staff, AAFC, OMAFRA and of course, members of OSCIA.

As we look forward to spring, I would like to wish everyone a safe and profitable growing season for 2009. ♦

### **Membership Renewal Strategies**

Following are the results of the survey sent to local associations to collect ideas on how they renew and expand their membership. Hopefully some of these ideas will assist local associations across the province as they hold membership drives.

- Collect memberships at annual meetings, tours, and events.
- Send invoices to members
- Directors and secretaries phone members to renew
- Mail membership renewal to members (could be included with annual meeting notices)
- Include renewal form with the newsletter
- Sign new members in order to participate in the Ontario Forage Masters Program
- Hold an event (e.g. bus tour) where participants pay an entry fee that includes a membership fee
- Sell memberships at agricultural conferences throughout the province

- Directors invite neighbours to join and sell them memberships
- Agri-business have membership book (green booklet) available on counter for anyone interested to join
- Send an invitation-to-join letter to prospective new members
- Hold door prizes at events where those with current memberships are eligible
- Offer a free meal at the annual meeting with a new membership
- Must be a member to participate in the Seed Show and Fair
- Entry fee for conferences includes membership fee
- Offer multiple-year memberships. ♦

### **Promote Your Local SCIA**

OSCIA has four stand-up displays that highlight the grassroot involvement, membership, and activities of local Soil and Crop Improvement Associations.

These displays work well as a group, and can also be very effective when displayed individually.

This item can be provided to local and regional SCIAs by contacting the provincial office. ♦

Visit the OSCIA website  
[www.ontariosoilcrop.org](http://www.ontariosoilcrop.org)

### **2009 Ontario Forage Masters Program**

Plans for the 2009 Ontario Forage Masters Program are well under way, with guidelines distributed to local associations recently.

The sponsors - Pickseed Canada, Agri-Food Laboratories - are again offering valuable prizes to the top winners from each local association.

For a listing of prizes, a copy of the guidelines, and how to enter, you are encouraged to contact your local Soil and Crop Improvement Association.

The guidelines are also posted on the OSCIA website.

The deadline for local associations to submit entries to the provincial office is April 17, so don't delay. Contact your local association secretary today. ♦



## OSCIA Annual Meeting

*A number of excellent speakers were featured at the 2009 Annual Meeting, whose presentations will be summarized in each issue of OSCIA News in 2009 by members of the OSCIA Regional Communication Coordinator team. Following is the first article.*

### **“ANTARCTIC MISSION”**

*- Jacquie Bishop, RCC, Heartland Region*

Jean Lemire, marine biologist and film maker, shared his Antarctica Mission through a dramatic recounting. The guests, Directors and delegates gained an insight into what the expedition was truly like. By sharing excerpts of his film, many pictures and his commentary, a snapshot developed of what the crew of the Sedna experienced for 430 days.

Lemire's dry sense of humour along with his French accent kept the audience captive with his staged account of the mission. The expedition was to study climate change and how it is affecting marine life at the South Pole. Lemire and twelve other crew travelled to the last unspoiled continent on the planet where there were millions of birds, whales and seals. Through the 430 days, the crew's adventures were shared with others who also became excited about the mission; by the end of their adventure, there were 900,000 people following the expedition via their website. This excitement has translated to others wishing to hear of their experiences.



*Max Kaiser (left), 2nd Vice President of OSCIA, thanks Jean Lemire for sharing his experiences with delegates and guests.*

Throughout this extreme adventure, the crew members felt at times like they were living in Shangri-La. Along route to the South Pole, they visited Argentina which made them feel like they were living a dream as the dolphins were frolicking alongside the boat. The Falkland Islands had beautiful sandy beaches with thousands of animals swimming in the water. The King penguins were appreciated for their uniqueness as stately beings. All crew members enjoyed being a part of nature and being one with the animals.

There were many challenges that had to be overcome during the expedition. The crew's sense of humour and positive attitude had to be paramount as many decisions needed to be made to have a successful mission. During the expedition, ice did not form in April, May, June or July as it had in the past, which made it very difficult for the crew members to do their research. More importantly, the challenge of being locked on the boat day in and day out with only four hours of daylight certainly played on the crew. Mr. Lemire joked that the psychologist was the most important person on the boat as one can imagine spending this long on a 51-foot vessel in the middle of winter with no opportunity to get off the boat. The members of the crew were able to shower once every ten days and wash their clothes once a month. Humour was paramount when dealing with these conditions.

In May, the crew experienced terrific windstorms and had to relocate their vessel. Exciting and scary times kept the adrenaline pumping. Finally, when the ice arrived in August, they were able to escape from the boat to work on some of their research. With spring coming earlier, fall being longer, there is a shorter time for winter conditions which leaves a shorter time for the ice to form. The sea level is rising due to the glaciers melting as the oceans become warmer and warmer. The average temperature has increased 2.5 degrees in the last 50 years. The quantity of water melting from ice melts have doubled in the last 13 years. This results in many rippling problems that we as humans are causing.

At the end of the expedition, the crew was completely recharged and had reconnected with nature. A piece of each of them seemed to stay in Antarctica; the peace they found there refused to die. Jean Lemire felt that this part of the world was simply beautiful and should be publicized for its serene character.

Jean Lemire's take home message to the guests of OSCIA and its members was simple. While he believes that the problem of climate change is global, the solutions must be local. Through concrete actions in our communities and on our farms, he felt that each of us has a part to play in the successful answer to the great challenge of global warming. ♦

## **Nutrient Management Outreach Grant**

OMAFRA has allocated funding to support new communication activities of regional SCIA's that promote the adoption of NM BMPs to the non-regulated (Nutrient Management Act) farm population.

Up to \$4,000 per project is available on a first-come, first-served basis to support these activities.

All regional SCIA's are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity.

Complete details are included in the 2009 Grant Guidelines booklet, and are also available, along with application forms, on the OSCIA website [www.ontariosoilcrop.org](http://www.ontariosoilcrop.org).

Get your members involved! ♦

## **Promoting Your Association's Events**

OMAFRA Factsheets provide a wealth of information for non-profit organizations. One of those publications is "Promoting Your Organization's Activities".

When your local SCIA is planning an event, the first thing to do is select a group of members to be the Organizing Committee. Part of their role will be to promote the event.

According to OMAFRA's Factsheet on this aspect of the activity, promotion has two segments - communication and.... communication. Prepare a checklist with activity, date to be completed, and assign a person to be responsible for that item.

A promotion plan considers the audience you wish to reach, and the information centres and media outlets in your area. Identify the local newspapers and radio or TV stations in your area, and find out who the contact persons are. Many of these will publicize your event at no charge. Also consider advertising via local businesses and store-fronts.

The promotion committee should ensure that everyone is well versed in all the activities in order to be an effective promoter. The full document "Promoting Your Organization's Activities" can be found on the OMAFRA website. ♦

## **Farm Safety - Personal Protective Equipment**

"PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) only works if you use it!" is the theme of this year's Canadian Agricultural Safety campaign with a focus on the use, fit and access of PPE in agriculture. The year-long campaign will be launched with Canadian Agricultural Safety Week

(CASW), from March 11 to 17, 2009. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) and Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) deliver CASW in partnership with Farm Credit Canada (FCC) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC).

PPE is equipment, such as respirators, gloves, aprons, and fall protection worn by a worker to minimize exposure to specific occupational hazards. Using PPE is only one element in a complete safety program that would use a variety of strategies to maintain a safe and healthy occupational environment.

*The information printed above is taken from the Canadian Agriculture Safety Association website. For more information on how to work safely on your farm, go to their site at [www.casa-acsa.ca](http://www.casa-acsa.ca). ♦*

## **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

The Soil Conservation Council of Canada (SCCC), the face and voice of soil conservation in Canada, will be evaluating a new computer-based tool designed to help agricultural producers identify opportunities to calculate and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions on their operations.

Holos, a greenhouse gas calculator designed by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), analyzes a range of on-farm conservation management scenarios and determines potential reductions in GHG emissions. It is being evaluated by SCCC's Taking Charge Teams across Canada, who will test the program by plugging in real data provided by farmers. They will then report their findings to AAFC, who will modify the program into a final version for field use.

Holos covers various conservation practices such as reduced or zero tillage, rotations with perennial forages, tree planting, riparian buffers and nitrogen management, says SCCC executive director Glen Shaw. "At a time when the agricultural industry is under pressure to reduce its carbon-based emissions, this tool offers producers the opportunity to identify and set specific reduction goals," he says.

In Ontario, the Taking Charge Team led by OSCIA Director Alan Kruszel, has been doing some extension activities to raise awareness of the Holos Project. In partnership with other team members from Innovative Farmers Association of Ontario and OMAFRA, they will be setting up a series of Holos testing workshops throughout the month of March to give producers a chance to try out the software, and try a few mitigation practices to see what impact those practices may have on their operation's emissions.

If you are interested in participating in one of these free workshops, please contact your local RCC for dates and locations. (Your RCC contact information can be found within the regional portion of the newsletter or on the OSCIA website at [www.ontariosoilcrop.org](http://www.ontariosoilcrop.org).) ♦