



Media Release

Changes announced to environmental cost-share funding program for farm businesses

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For immediate release

Guelph, Ontario – Adjustments have been made to cost-share funding available under year three of the Canada-Ontario Farm Stewardship Program (COFSP) that will alter project eligibility in some categories. The changes are intended to broaden the availability of funds and come as a result of a review of the funding program completed earlier this year following a high demand for cost-share funds under COFSP year two.

“We are supportive of changes that will help more farm businesses access cost-share funding under this program,” says Barry Hill, a farmer and President of the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA). “The willingness of farmers to utilize this program has been demonstrated over and over again.”

For the 2011 cropping year, projects in Best Management Practice (BMP) category 14 – Improved Cropping Systems – will be capped at a funding level of \$5,000 per farm business to focus on first-time adopters of new technologies. BMP category 26 – Energy Conservation Measures for Agricultural Purposes – has been expanded to support implementation of selected projects involving renewable energy production that are intended for on-farm use only.

Funding for BMP category 27 – Renewable Energy Production for Agricultural Purposes – has been discontinued as support in this area is now available through the Ontario Power Authority’s (OPA) microFIT program. Funding previously allocated to this category will be re-distributed across the remaining BMP categories for other priority projects that may not otherwise be completed if cost-share was not provided.

As well, farm businesses with livestock or poultry as their primary commodity must have a Premises Identification (PID) Number from OnTrace for the parcel of land where the project is proposed.

“We have long been advocating for continued support of on-farm environmental activities,” says Bette Jean Crews, President of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA). “Farmers are responsible environmental stewards and their interest and commitment will benefit all Ontarians. We are pleased with the changes and look forward to continued government investment in on-farm environmental programs.”

Project applications for the 2011 cropping year will be available as of November 15, 2010 from OSCIA, which delivers COFSP under an agreement with the OFA on behalf of the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition. For more specific details, contact local OSCIA Program Representatives or visit www.ontariosoilcrop.org. COFSP is funded through Growing Forward, supported by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) under the Best Practices suite.

OSCIA is a not-for-profit farm organization dedicated to working with farmers to facilitate responsible economic management of soil, water, air and crops through development and communication of innovative farming practices.

For more information:

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