

ST. CLAIR REGION SOIL & CROP NEWS

Southwestern Ontario

NOVEMBER 2011

Serving Kent, Essex and Lambton County Soil & Crop Members since 1939



ST. CLAIR REGION SOIL & CROP NEWS



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St Clair Region—A Note from the Chair

Well crop fans, it is the bottom of the 11th month and we are into over time. Usually, most of us are finished and cleaned up by now but as you know, each year is different and what was good last year is not going to work this year. That's the nature of this business!

It was good to see that different plots still got put in. This data is proving we can still grow corn planted after June 1st.

Essex County has been blessed with lots of rain this past year and it certainly is trying the farmers' patience. Wheat ground is not getting taken care of - in fact, just getting straw baled was a chore. Now, combining is a challenge. It's amazing how it is even possible to figure out how deep your previous tillage depth was. Just look at how deep your tracks are from the combine. No-till fields seem to hold up better (yet another good point for no-till).

The market is supporting us so let's "git-r-done" and enjoy the upcoming winter season and devise our new plans for 2012.

We'll see you at the annual meetings and work safely!

Seasons Greetings,
Henry Denotter

Henry Denotter, St Clair District Chair & OSCIA Second Vice



COMING EVENTS:

December 1 - ESCIA ANNUAL MEETING, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., St. John's Hall, Woodslee, ON. Admission \$15.00 Pay your 2012 Membership of \$25.00 at the door! Contact Michael Dick at 519-776-5209, ext. 369

December 6 - FCC FORUM "Think Inspiration", 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. London Convention Centre, 300 York Street, London, ON. Guest Speakers: Jamie Clarke, Dr. John Fast, Michael "Pinball" Clemons. Complimentary. For more information, go to http://www.fcc-fac.ca/en/LearningCentre/events/forums_e.asp

January 4 & 5, 2012 - Southwest Ag Conference, University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus. For more information and to register online, go to <http://www.southwestagconference.ca/>

January 13, 2012 - LSCIA ANNUAL MEETING, 9:00 a.m. Brooke-Alvinston Community Centre, Alvinston, ON

February 7 & 8, 2012 - OSCIA ANNUAL MEETING, Best Western Lamplighter Inn & Conference Centre, 591 Wellington Road South, London, ON. For more information, go to <http://www.ontariosoilcrop.org>

****OFAC's 2012 FACES OF FARMING calendars are now available at OFAC <http://www.ofac.org/> or at TSC Stores for \$10.00 each****

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

I hope harvest is going well for everyone! It was a late one this year thanks again to the wet weather. We hope that in the rush to get things done you have worked safely.

Our theme for this newsletter is based around grain storing and drying safety - a fitting topic for this time of year.

We are finishing up the year with our 'Questions for the Presidents' segment. As was done in our last edition, we have asked each of our local Presidents some different questions about their personal farming situation. We hope this allows you to get to know your local representatives a bit better. The latest questions were as follows:

1. Do you have grain storage and drying on your farm?
2. Do you have an emergency farm safety plan? Is it posted

or generally understood?

3. Can you list 3 safety precautions that you take on your farm?
4. Are you aware of the Lambton 4H Club's Grain Extrication Tool (GET)? Does your local fire department have one? If not, would this be a good local soil and crop project?

Continue reading to see how your local presidents responded to these questions.

"November comes and November goes,
With the last red berries and the first white snows.
With night coming early and dawn coming late
And ice in the bucket and frost by the gate.
The fires burn and the kettles sing
And earth sinks to rest, until next spring."
- Elizabeth Coatsworth



Happy Autumn, Krista Gladstone

Essex Soil & Crop Improvement Association

(Answers to above...)

- 1) Yes, I have had on-farm grain storage and drying for the past 4 years. It is a batch drying system used mainly for corn and sometimes wheat.
- 2) We do not have an emergency farm safety plan posted but it is generally understood. Workers are advised to stop what they're doing and ask if they encounter any problems. It's a good idea to have a plan in place, especially at this time of year when checking moisture levels in bins at all hours (usually by yourself). This is why it's important to carry a cell phone with you at all times!
- 3) 3 Safety Precautions we use on the farm are:

- i) Carry fire extinguishers on the combine
- ii) Post warning stickers around electrical hazards
- iii) Stay up-to-date on pesticide safety courses and farm safety practices through meetings/journals/etc.
- 4) I have not heard about the GET device but it sounds like a good project that should be implemented at local fire departments. It might be a good idea to have this tool and other innovative farm safety ideas presented at local soil and crop meetings to provide education and help people plan for potential farm hazards.

**Brian Hyland, President ESCIA
and Environmental Farm Plan Co-ordinator
For Essex County**



KENT RAINFALL SUMMARY 2011

Township	NAME	RR	ADDRESS	TOTAL	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT
Howard	Brown, Dick	1	Morpeth	743	89	187	54	80	89	133	112
Harwich	Cuthbertson, Morris	3	Chatham	1088	104	211	92	166	116	215	185
Chatham	Demers, Gerald	7	Dresden	674	60	190	61	84	78	108	93
Tilbury East	Farquharson, Robert	1	Tilbury	819	109	188	46	101	97	160	119
Harwich	Fraser, Barry	2	Chatham	843	138	195	74	111	76	121	128
Orford	Heyboer, Marinus	2	Highgate	692	113	162	82	69	86	95	85
Harwich	Johnston, Watson	2	Kent Bridge	773	58	206	81	106	92	119	111
Dover	Johnstone, Bruce	8	Chatham	597	113	184	40	61	83	116	
Raleigh	Mifflin, Clark	3	Merlin	869	137	211	38	121	110	130	122
Orford	Morden, Gerald	1	Muirkirk	560		175	72	69	109	136	
Raleigh	Nauta, Marg & Randy	2	Merlin	902	159	171	62	143	111	148	108
Romney	Taves, Ernie	1	Wheatley	784		210	61	125	90	158	140
Chatham	Weaver, Charles	7	Chatham, Ont	840	152	222	35	84	78	134	135
	Total Average			783	112	193	61	101	93	136	122

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Kent Soil & Crop Improvement Association

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1) I do have a new grain storage and drying setup on my farm. This will be my first fall harvest with this equipment. Prior to this year, I relied mostly on our local elevator to handle my drying and storage needs.



2) We do not have a safety plan. We should develop a plan because accidents occur very quickly and most often without warning. When handling the grain, we always try to have 2 people working together in case of emergency.

3) Safety precautions we take on our farm include:
- Ensuring that all of the equipment is in its top operating condition

- Equipment is handled with care. Most accidents occur when individuals are rushing and are tired.
- Allowing only experienced operators to run the equipment

4) I have heard of Lambton's GET device to help remove trapped individuals from grain bins. This is a very innovative tool. I have not had the privilege to see the device in action however, I would strongly suggest that every rural fire department have this device on hand for emergency extractions. It seems that more and more grain storage facilities are being built throughout the countryside by farmers. This would suggest that the risk of someone getting into trouble is also increasing.

Dave Emery, President KSCIA

Lambton Soil & Crop Improvement Association

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1) I have grain storage on farm. All bins have aeration floors but I have no drying facilities.



2) No, there is no emergency farm safety plan either posted or understood.

3) After my barn fire last year, I updated the electrical services in both of my remaining barns. All PTO guards are operational and checked every time a piece of equipment is attached to the tractor. My father escaped serious injury

several years ago when his pant leg was snagged by the PTO shaft on the custom operators' forage wagon he was unloading. The shaft had a guard on it but it was not working properly. Since I work with livestock (beef cattle), I am currently building new facilities for handling them safely.

4) I have heard of the Grain Extrication Tool. I am not aware that our local fire departments have one. This would certainly be beneficial for Lambton Soil and Crop to consider.

Fraser Hodgson, President LSCIA



AGGRESSIVE BIRD DAMAGE TO CORN - Birds can damage emerging corn seedlings in the spring. However, the more serious bird damage occurs to the grain in August & September. Birds tear open the corn husk and eat the kernels off the cob, causing direct yield loss. The damage to the corn ear usually results in mould growth. Noisemakers such as propane cannons, exploding shotgun shells and recordings of birds in distress can often be successful deterrents. Fields generally at a higher risk are most often adjacent to lakes, rivers and marshes.
(Photo Courtesy of Dave Emery)



AN INNOVATIVE FARM SAFETY IDEA - Here's a cheap and easy way to draw attention to potential safety hazards! It's a magnetic strobe safety light that is battery operated and can be mounted on any metal surface. This one costs about \$20.00 and can be used in so many situations.
(Photo Courtesy of H. Denotter)

4-H'ers Make Grain Bin Rescues Easier

Up until a couple of years ago, there was no tool to assist in the rescue of grain entrapment victims. However, members of the Lambton Farm Safety 4-H Club in Ontario innovated a Grain Extrication Tool (GET) and provided it to numerous local fire departments and grain facilities.

The GET is an easy-to-use structure made up of four pieces of bent aluminum sheets that are clamped together to form an octagonal shaped tube. The structure is hammered down into the grain to shield the victim, allowing grain against the body to be removed which then makes rescue possible. Getting trapped in grain is potentially fatal. Flowing grain can behave like quicksand and as a person becomes buried in the grain, it presses against the diaphragm constricting breathing. Without this tool, rescue workers had to find objects around the farm to stabilize the grain or cut holes in the bin.

Lambton Farm Safety 4-H Club members spent four meetings researching grain safety and developing a prototype of the GET. They then found a shop which would donate space and tools for the club to use for production. Each GET takes one day to build and is sold for \$1,000 which is just enough to cover the cost of materials.

The 4-H club was recognized in 2009 for its innovative idea by receiving a Regional Award under the Premier's Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence program. These Lambton youths are to be commended for showing how a simple device can be a lifesaver!



Lambton 4-H Farm Safety Club members: Casey McGee (pictured inside the GET); Other members from left to right include Mark Langstaff, Grant Langstaff, Deidra McGee, Michael McGee, and Jonathan McGee

(Photo Courtesy of AgCanada.com)



Photo Credit: Buhler Industries Inc.

“As whatever grain left in the bin decomposes, the oxygen concentration may drop or the bin atmosphere may become toxic with gases produced by decomposition,” he says. “Whenever you go into a bin you should be wearing approved respiratory protection against the environment in the bin, whether it is just dust or toxic gases.” Blahey adds that as bins are being filled, a bin level gauge is one safety measure that can prevent problems. Otherwise, someone has to climb the bin. “It’s easy to become distracted on a ladder and before you know it, you’ve fallen,” he says. “A fall arrest device and lanyard should be worn at all times when climbing up the side of a bin.”

STAY SAFE AROUND GRAIN BINS

By [Jennifer Barber](#), Farm Forum - September 2011

Grain handling is as much a part of harvest as swathing and combining, and can be just as dangerous. While there are lots of hazards around grain bins, making sure you know the risks associated with handling grain will help you stay safe.

“The prep work involved in loading grain can be as dangerous as when the bins are full,” says Glen Blahey, agricultural safety and health specialist with the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA). “But as with all aspects of grain handling, it is only dangerous if you aren’t prepared.” Blahey says that the first thing growers need to do before going into an empty bin is to open the roof hatch and bottom door. Any vents or fans should be operating at this time to circulate fresh air within the bins.

A careful assessment of the work yard is always prudent when working with augers or other automated machinery around grain bins. Blahey says that all farm workers need to know where all the safety equipment is, how things are shut off and the exact farm coordinates in order to direct emergency workers to the site should an incident occur.

“In case of emergency there needs to be a plan — who to call and how to call them,” he says. That includes having a means of communication, be it cell phone, a two-way radio, or an extra person on hand who can leave the scene and go for help.” CASA has recently launched an online program to help growers prepare for any potential safety issues — visit www.planfarmsafety.ca. The template form allows you to come up with a plan tailored to your farm and staff. It addresses not only grain bin safety, but all aspects of on-farm safety.

WILD APRICOT PROGRAM FOR MEMBER SERVICES

Wild Apricot is online membership software designed for associations like Ontario Soil and Crop. OSCIA has been testing out the Wild Apricot system in certain counties over the past few months.

The program offers online membership services, renewals and event registrations all in one simple location. Automated renewals and online payments are available options as well. County/regional/corporate sponsorship levels can all be set within the program to suit individual, local and regional needs. Event registrations online (i.e. annual meetings, tours, events such as Farm Smart, etc.) are a big attraction of the program which has the built-in ability to limit registrations to members only or to a specific number of people, and offers differing fees based on membership status. This system would be an excellent method to distribute discount coupons to members such as Outdoor Farm Show brunch tickets.

There is a 'members-only' section where newsletters and other items could be posted and be available strictly to paid up OSCIA members.

Registration payments for events as well as membership renewals can be accepted online through

a Pay Pal account which would be administered via head office. Payments would then be transferred to the appropriate county/region as necessary.

Security settings can be set up to suit OSCIA's needs appropriately. Member users would have very limited access, county secretaries would have more access in order to maintain membership administration responsibilities and some office staff would have full administrative access.

Another benefit to the program is that bulk emails are easy to send from inside the membership lists in the program. It is very easy to filter out a specific region, county or other type of list and send a bulk email out quickly and easily. This would be good for sharing time-sensitive information or for sending out discount coupons, local or regional event info, newsletter mail outs, etc. It could also become the easiest way for counties to administer their membership lists.

OSCIA continues to investigate this system with hopes of sharing it with its members at future meetings . Stay tuned for more information!



PLAN AHEAD FOR THE 19TH ANNUAL SOUTHWEST AG CONFERENCE!

Coming January 4th & 5th, 2012

Pre-register online to be eligible to win an automotive GPS Unit. Register by

December 2nd to get discounted OSCIA member rates and be eligible for Early Bird Prizes! Visit www.southwestagconference.ca

DON'T MISS THESE INTERESTING SESSIONS:

- Fertilizer Hot Buttons with Horst Bohner, Peter Johnson and Greg Stewart of OMAFRA
- Peak Planter Performance by Chad Galles from Pioneer, Minnesota
- The Invaluable Earthworm by Odette Ménard, MAPAQ, Quebec
- The U.S. Soybean Yield Package by David Holshouser, Virginia Tech (Tidewater Agricultural Research & Extension Centre)
- Corn Belt Savvy by Darel Walker an Agronomist from Indiana

This Year's Feature Speakers are Dr. Patrick Moore "The Sensible Environmentalist" on January 4th and Michele Payn-Knoper "Celebrating Agriculture" on January 5th.

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