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Welcome to “ON Organic”

Hugh Martin, Organic Crop Production Program Lead, OMAFRA

Welcome to the February 2010 issue of ON Organic. This issue includes many events that would be of interest to organic food producers. I have also included a number of publications that are new this winter that you may wish to read before the busy season gets going. Winter is a busy time for producers as they analyze last year's business, order supplies for this year, and go to meetings or catch up on reading to improve their operation for the coming year.

Thanks to Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario (EFAO) and Organic Council of Ontario (OCO) for forwarding this on to their email lists, and I encourage you to share it with other colleagues who may find it useful. As always we welcome your comments.

Subscription to this newsletter is easy and no cost. For details go to the webpage:
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/subscribe/index.html#organic>

The newsletter is also posted on the OMAFRA website at:
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/organic/news/news-organic.html>

The French version of these newsletters is available at:
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/french/crops/organic/news/news-organic.html>

The OMAFRA Organic pages are linked from:
<http://www.ontario.ca/organic> and <http://www.ontario.ca/biologique>

The ON Organic Team

Hugh Martin – editor, OMAFRA, Organic Crop Production Program Lead
Jack Kyle – OMAFRA, Grazier Specialist
Dorene Collins – OMAFRA, Customer Service and Marketing Program Lead
Hugh Berges – OMAFRA, Manager Horticultural Technology
Katie Meagher—OMAFRA, Marketing Specialist
Mario Mongeon – OMAFRA, Livestock Specialist
Linda Cooper – OMAFRA, Client Service Representative

New Minister for OMAFRA

[Carol Mitchell](#) became the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs in January. She was elected to the Ontario legislature in 2003 as the MPP for Huron-Bruce, and re-elected in 2007. She has previously served as Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture and Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal.

For more details go to <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/about.html>.

Growing Forward News

The New Year has been a busy time for Growing Forward programs! The recent launch of the Farm Biosecurity Program (FBP) on January 28, 2010 tops the list of exciting activities. For the most current news on the Best Practice Suite of Programs under Growing Forward, keep reading!

Business Development for Farm Businesses:

The Business Development for Farm Businesses program incorporates self-assessment and action plan development with a range of cost-share advisory services and skills development opportunities to help producers reach their farm business goals. The place to start is the Growing Your Farm Profits Workshop. To find out more about the Business Development for Farm Businesses program, please visit: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/growingforward/busdev.htm>

Environment and Climate Change Program Update:

All cost-share funds for program year two (2010-11) of the Canada-Ontario Farm Stewardship Program (COFSP), the cost-share component of the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP), have now been fully committed. As a result, the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) is no longer accepting 2010 Project Proposal Application forms.

COFSP Project Proposal Applications for 2010 which have already been submitted are currently being reviewed and notification of the status of each application will be sent out by the OSCIA to the participating farm business by late March 2010.

The next round of cost-share funding for year three (2011-2012) of the COFSP will be available on September 15, 2010. Applicants are encouraged to review the COFSP's Project Eligibility Policy and Procedures document before submitting their completed 2011 Project Proposal Application form to the OSCIA.

Before producers can access cost-share funding under COFSP, they must participate in an EFP workshop and

have a peer-reviewed Third Edition EFP Action Plan. For more information on the Environment and Climate Change Initiative and EFP workshops, please visit: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/growingforward/environment.htm>

Food Safety and Traceability Program Update:

Applications for the Food Safety and Traceability Initiative (FSTI) will be accepted after 9:00 a.m. on March 1, 2010. Applications received prior to this date and time will not be processed and will be returned to the applicant. Early submission is strongly encouraged as applications will be received and assessed on a first-come, first-served basis until all available funds are exhausted.

What's New for 2010

- Increased cost-share funding maximum of \$25,000, with a cap of \$15,000 for either food safety or traceability expenditures to encourage the adoption of both food safety and traceability projects
- Increased participant numbers through a change in cost-share ratio to 50 percent

[Premise Identification](#) is a program eligibility requirement that strengthens Ontario's agriculture and food processing sectors by supporting a strong agri-food traceability system. To learn about Premises Identification, a new Ministry program requirement, please visit: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/food/foodsafety/traceability/premisesid.htm>

How Does FSTI Work?

FSTI provides 50 per cent reimbursement of eligible expenses up to a maximum of \$25,000 to:

- implement written food safety programs
- implement a working traceability system
- assist in the purchase and installation of equipment that improves food safety or traceability
- train staff to increase the adoption of food safety and traceability

For complete details on the FSTI and to find out about when the FSTI Information Sessions are happening in your area, please visit: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/food/foodsafety/grants/fsti.htm>

Farm Biosecurity Program - New Program!

The Farm Biosecurity Program (FBP) supports the implementation and adoption of national standards for biosecurity. Biosecurity refers to measures that reduce the risks of hazards such as diseases and pests from entering the farm or spreading to other farms. The FBP is designed to build producer awareness of health risks and ways that Ontario's farmers can implement and/or improve upon existing biosecurity measures.

Currently only the poultry industry has a national standard - the National Avian On-Farm Biosecurity Standard. This Standard is a comprehensive tool designed to identify a range of measures intended to prevent disease causing agents from entering, spreading within a farm or escaping from a premises housing poultry.

Through educational workshops and a self-assessment exercise, poultry producers will be able to identify their current level of biosecurity and develop plans to adopt new and/or additional measures to heighten their existing level of biosecurity.

The Farm Biosecurity Program offers cost-share opportunities to assist farmers in the implementation of biosecurity projects identified in their action plans. All cost-share funds are available on a first come, first served basis up to the available annual funds for each year of the program. FBP provides 50 per cent reimbursement of eligible expenses up to a maximum of \$10,000 for expenditures or activities that may include:

- Equipment, software or infrastructure that directly improves biosecurity and relates to the national standards.
- Structural modifications to accommodate the installation of equipment or infrastructure associated with biosecurity measures.
- Veterinarian fees directly related to the development of a biosecurity plan.
- Consultant costs directly related to the development of standard operating procedures or programs with biosecurity outcomes, or the development of a biosecurity training program.
- Applicant's in-kind labour and/or equipment costs directly related to implementing the approved biosecurity project(s) under the program

Before producers can access cost-share funding under the FBP, they must complete an OMAFRA Biosecurity Workshop.

To learn more about the program visit: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/growingforward/fbprog2.htm>

To learn more about and register for regional Poultry Farm Biosecurity workshops, visit: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/growingforward/fbprog3.htm>

If you have any questions on Growing Forward, please call 1-888-479-3931 or e-mail growingforward@ontario.ca.

Growing Forward is a commitment by Canada's [federal](#), provincial and territorial governments to support the development of a profitable, innovative agri-food sector that is adept at managing risk and responsive to market demands.

Notes for Organic Apple Producers

by Leslie Huffman, Apple Specialist, OMAFRA

Pruning Strategy: Many growers have started on the annual task of tree pruning. Annual pruning is critical to maintain healthy productive buds in your trees, and can have major impact on your yields, fruit quality, ease of pest management and labour efficiency in your orchard.

Understanding why we prune is an important first step. Here are my "Thoughts on Pruning" online at www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/orchnews/2009/on-0209a2.htm

But in today's economic environment, it is important to do this task as efficiently as possible. Here are my "Thoughts on Pruning Efficiency":

www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/updates/soundadvice/jan10r3.htm

www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/updates/soundadvice/jan10r3-w.mp3

Orchard renewal: Now is a good time to evaluate your orchards and remove blocks that are not productive (perhaps too old, pest issues, poorly adapted cultivars, site problems). Through the Orchard and Vineyard Transition program, financial assistance of \$1,618.74 per acre is available to cover removal and disposal costs. This may be a good opportunity to remove disease susceptible cultivars and replace with disease resistant ones like Crimson Crisp (Coop 39). An additional \$2 million from the Province has recently been added to this program to help grape, apple, and tender fruit producers. Applications are being processed through Agricorp on a first come, first served basis. Final application deadline is **March 31, 2010** and removals must be completed by November 30, 2010.

More information: www.agricorp.com/en-ca/programs/ovtp/

Disease Resistant Apples:

Development of disease resistant apples has been ongoing for decades and progress has been made in improving fruit quality and growing characteristics. More than 25 commercial cultivars are described in our factsheet, "Disease-Resistant Apple Cultivars", online at www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/98-013.htm

A new fresh-market apple cultivar called 'CrimsonCrisp™' has caught the attention Dr. John Cline, University of Guelph at Simcoe. In 1999, they planted trees of 'Co-op 39' from the PRI breeding program (Purdue-Rutgers-Illinois). It matures about 5 days after Empire, with a rosy, red blush, and crisp, white-yellow flesh that is sweet and juicy. Read more in

“CrimsonCrisp™ - A New Disease Resistant Apple Recommended for Trial Planting”, now online at www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/orchnews/2008/on-0408a3.htm

Most of these cultivars are resistant to apple scab, but depending on your climate, be sure to learn about powdery mildew, rust and fire blight susceptibility.


Organic Standards Available Free Online

The CFIA and the Canada Organic Office are pleased to announce that the CGSB Organic Standards are now available on the CGSB website free of charge.

http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/cgsb/on_the_net/organic/index-e.html

A new version of the standards was published in early January 2010 which includes many revisions from the 2008 version. This new version will be in effect for certifications in 2009.

Be sure to review both documents:

 **General Principles and Management Standards CAN/CGSB-32.310-2006 Amended October 2008 incorporating 1 Dec , 2009 amendment**

 **Permitted Substances Lists CAN/CGSB-32.311-2006 Amended October 2008 and December 2009**

New OMAFRA Factsheets on Organic

By Hugh Martin, Organic Crop Production Program Lead, OMAFRA

We have developed 5 new OMAFRA factsheets on organic. Now available on the web:

- [Introduction to Organic Farming](#) (Order No. 09-077) [PDF](#) (218KB)
 - o <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/09-077.pdf>
- [Starting an Organic Farm](#), (Order No. 09-073) [PDF](#) (167KB)
 - o <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/09-073.pdf>
- [Transition to Organic Crop Production](#) (Order no. 10-001) [PDF](#) (322 KB)
 - o <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/10-001.pdf>

These can be ordered from our website in hardcopy or read on the web. The PDF version can be downloaded and usually makes for a better printed copy.

Soon to be available

- Organic Beef Production
- Organic Dairy Production

New Organic Fruit and Vegetable Guides

The New York Integrated Pest Management Program has developed an excellent series of organic production guides. Each one is available on the web and contains about 30-50+ pages. This includes issues related to soil management, varieties, planting, fertility, insects, diseases, weeds as well as a detailed list of links for further information. Pest management is dealt with in significant detail. This includes pest description, cultural, biological and biopesticide methods.

As usual when reviewing information from other regions assess each recommendation for local applicability. For example, a number of pest products listed in the U.S. have not been tested here and are not registered for use in Canada, therefore they cannot be sold or used here. Similarly there may be differences in recommendations for fertilizers products as appropriate to Canadian and Ontario regulations. Climate and local pest conditions may also be different. Before using any product you should also check with your organic certification body to make sure it is approved for use in Canadian organic.

These guides can be found at http://nysipm.cornell.edu/organic_guide/

Fruits

- [Organic Apples, 1.3Mb pdf file](#)
- [Organic Blueberries, 1.3MB pdf file](#)
- [Organic Grapes, 1MB pdf file](#)
- [Organic Strawberries, 964k pdf file](#)

Vegetables

- [Organic Beans, 1.2Mb pdf file](#)
- [Organic Carrots, 1.3Mb pdf file](#)
- [Organic Cole Crops, 1.3MB pdf file](#)
- [Organic Cucumbers and Squash, 1.4Mb pdf file](#)
- [Organic Lettuce, 1.5MB pdf file](#)
- [Organic Peas, 775k pdf file](#)
- [Organic Spinach, 1.2MB pdf file](#)

USDA Organic Statistics

The 2008 Organic Production Survey (OPS) is a follow-on survey to the 2007 Census of Agriculture. It is the first organic production and practices survey conducted on the national level by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

The organic industry has experienced measurable growth over the last few years. This survey responded to the intense need for detailed industry data. The 2007 Census of Agriculture reported more than 20,000 farms engaged in organic production and over \$1.7 billion in sales in the U.S. The 2008 Organic Production Survey collected additional information on organic farming for the 2008 calendar year.

Acreage, yields and production levels are available for each commodity by state as well as numerous demographic details. See the full report at http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Publications/2007/Online_Highlights/Organics/

In the report “Exempt” farms are those producing less than \$5000 per year (therefore exempt from national organic certification) account for 27% of all organic farms but only 0.2% of sales.

We do not have the same level of detail in our Census reports but using the USDA Census, Canada Census (all census farms), and the OACC Ontario survey from last year we can for example compare the following:

Gross Sales per Farm

Data source	% farms < \$50,000	% farms \$50-250,000	% farms > \$250,000
USDA Organic Farms	59%	26%	15%
ON Organic Survey	61%	24%	15%
2006 Census (All ON)	57%	25%	18%

COG Practical Skills Handbook

Record-Keeping for Organic Farmers: How to Get and Stay Certified. COG Practical Skills Handbook, Jan 2010.

More consumers want to know how their food was grown and processed and organic standards require evidence in the form of records that producers are following the organic standards. This new book will help you understand the legal

language of the organic standards and regulations, and take you step by step through the process of setting up a field to table audit trail making both your customers and your inspector happy! This book is a must read even if you're not certified organic. All farmers will benefit from an efficient and well organized record keeping system.

This publication is part of a series of “Practical Skills” publications by Canadian Organic Growers. They are short plain language publications on a variety of topics at a reasonable cost.

Current topics:

- Record-Keeping for Organic Farmers: How to Get and Stay Certified
- Crop Planning for the Organic Vegetable Grower
- Living with Worms in Organic Sheep Production
- Growing Potatoes Organically – from Market Garden to Field Crop

Coming soon:

- Growing Strawberries Organically (Feb 2010)
- Scaling Up Organically (Feb 2010)

For more details go to <http://www.cog.ca/our-services/publications/practical-skills-handbooks/>

OMAFRA Articles

Review of June-bearing Strawberry Varieties

Pam Fisher - Berry Crop Specialist/OMAFRA

Ontario strawberries are grown in several different climatic zones and in a diverse range of soil types and conditions. They are sold in a variety of markets and where consumers have different preferences. Unfortunately there are few if any varieties which meet the needs of all conditions or markets.

Standard varieties in Ontario for local shipping, and on farm market sales, are Annapolis (early season) and Jewel (mid-late season). For pick-your-own and on-farm sales Cavendish (early-midseason) and Mira (mid-late season) are reliable. Honeoye (early season) and Kent (mid season) are grown for these markets also. These varieties grow well in most locations, although Honeoye and Kent are susceptible to black root rot and fruit colour tends to be too dark in southern Ontario.

Many other varieties have value but should be limited in extent of planting. In Ontario, these varieties include (from early to late) Mohawk, Wendy, Brunswick, Glooscap, Cabot, Sapphire, and Governor Simcoe. Some may have done well in trial plantings and warrant further commercial experience. Others may be adapted to a specific region or be useful only for selected markets. Some work well on a small scale and fit

certain gaps in production. For example, Mohawk is valued for its great taste and earliness, although yields are too low for extensive production. Governor Simcoe is a high yielding orange-red firm variety on the sandy soils of south-central Ontario, but not as popular in eastern or northern Ontario.

There are many new varieties available, and although they always sound exciting at first, growers should test them on a small scale for several years. Varieties recommended for trial in Ontario include V151, L'Amour, L'Authentique Orleans, R14, St. Pierre, Serenity, Valley Sunset. Information on how these varieties respond to diseases is especially important because some varieties will require more fungicides and different management practices to prevent pest damage. Article continues to give detail 8 different varieties.

For full article go to OMAFRA Ontario Berry Grower newsletter <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/allontario/ao0110a5.htm>

Earthworms are Good - Right?

By Anne Verhallen - Soil Management Specialist, OMAFRA

A new earthworm book by Dr. Cindy Hale of the University of Minnesota questions our assumptions about earthworms and the good they do. Ontario farmers and gardeners recognize earthworms, particularly the dew worm as a sign of healthy, active soil.

However, our earthworms are not native to Ontario; the last glacier wiped them out. The forested area of the Great Lakes developed without earthworms. Our current population of earthworms was brought here by pioneers and immigration, mostly from Europe. Earthworms do help to decompose organic matter, cycle nutrients, stabilize aggregates and particularly in the case of dew worms, improve air and water drainage. These are all important for farm fields. However in the forested areas, their ability to feed on leaf litter and other organic residues on the soil surface is destructive. Recreational fishing gets much of the blame. Leftover bait earthworms are dumped on the side of streams and rivers, allowing the earthworms access to the forested areas and the large amounts of leaf litter on the forest floor.

Cindy Hales' book, Earthworms of the Great Lakes, looks at earthworms in the ecosystem and features beautiful colour pictures to help key out which earthworm you are looking at. The book is an interesting discussion and a good reference on earthworm life cycle, feeding activity and species.

For more information on invasive earthworms check out Cindy's website: <http://greatlakeswormwatch.org/> or if you are interested in getting a copy of the book <http://greatlakeswormwatch.org/educator/book.html>

Some Earthworm Facts:

- Canadian bait worm exports to the US are valued at approximately \$110 million per year
- There are no native earthworms in Ontario, the glaciers wiped out all the native earthworms about 10,000 years ago.
- Earthworms can move and colonize a field at the rate of just over 1.5 metres (5 feet) a year.
- Earthworms were named the most successful species in the history of the world, based upon geographic spread, impact on ecology and diversity
- Once hatched earthworms take 50 to 75 weeks to reach maturity
- Earthworms breathe through their skin.

Article from OMAFRA HortMatters newsletter <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/hortmatt/2010/01hrt10a1.htm>

Cover Crops to Reduce Nematodes

By Anne Verhallen - Soil Management Specialist, OMAFRA

Search the web for information on reducing nematodes with cover crops and you will find a wealth of information from many parts of the world. The problem; different soils, different growing conditions, different crops and of course different nematodes.

Over the years, OMAFRA staff has organized a number of on-farm trials to look at using various cover crops to reduce nematode numbers in a variety of production systems under Ontario conditions. In recent years there has been growing interest in the use of "hot" mustard cover crops, as a result of the work done by OMAFRA's Michael Celetti and Mathieu Ngouajio from Michigan State University.

This past year there were a few growers that tried the mustard Cutlass and used the management system that Mathieu has researched. Research plots and farm fields do differ. Here are some of the learned points from 2009.

1. **Get the seed in early and get the correct seed.**
Research work in Ontario has been done with Cutlass and it is available from the west. Check the OMAFRA Cover Crop Seed supplier list at <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/resource/covercrp.htm>
2. Mustard is a cool season crop and will bolt under warm temperatures, **plant early.**
3. Mustard like many brassicae is a heavy nitrogen feeder, it will produce more biomass to be incorporated with **adequate nitrogen levels.**

4. Be prepared to mow. Chopping and mangling is really what you are after to release the fumigant like chemicals held within the plant tissues. **Good chopping is critical for incorporation.**
5. **Incorporate the chopped plant material as soon as possible** after mowing, i.e. within an hour or two at most.
6. Manage the mustard cover crop to get the most biomass growth possible at mowing. Many of these cover crops will support nematodes when the cover crop is growing. It is the chopping and incorporation that releases the biofumigation action.
7. The soil after cover crop chopping and incorporation may need rolling or a light packing to seal the surface and help to hold the biofumigation action. If you can smell rotting cabbage
8. **Soil sample for nematodes** before the cover crop and several weeks after incorporation, at appropriate nematode sampling times - you need to measure to manage!

Article from OMAFRA HortMatters newsletter <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/hortmatt/2010/01hrt10a2.htm>

Growing Cover Crops for Nitrogen

By Anne Verhallen - Soil Management Specialist, OMAFRA

Higher nitrogen prices in recent years have prompted a renewed interest in growing cover crops for nitrogen. While grasses do a good job of scavenging available soil nitrogen, generally, for nitrogen production a legume is necessary. Legumes like alfalfa, clover and peas have a symbiotic relationship with a bacteria called Rhizobia. The legume roots provide shelter, water and most nutrients to the bacteria while in turn the Rhizobia converts nitrogen from the air into plant available nitrogen.

Red clover has been a popular legume for many years. It has a good fit underseeded into wheat or other cereal grains. When the clover stand is vigorous it can supply more than 75 lbs/A of nitrogen to the following corn crop. Alfalfa is another legume used traditionally for hay and some pastures. Generally seed costs make it too expensive as an annual plowdown legume for nitrogen production.

There are a number of other legumes available or being looked at. For more details on each crop and photos see the full article from OMAFRA HortMatters newsletter at: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/hortmatt/2010/01hrt10a3.htm>

Institute of Food Processing Technology taking shape

Conestoga College's new Institute of Food Processing Technology is on track to admit its first students in September 2011, with construction now under way on a 60,000-square-foot facility in Cambridge.

The institute - a partnership between the college and the Alliance of Ontario Food Processors (AOFP) - will provide a direct educational path to careers in food and beverage processing and help alleviate a shortage of skilled professionals in the sector.

The institute will provide state-of-the-art processing equipment, food labs and world-class instructors. It will also be home to the AOFP.

Completion of the facility is targeted for spring 2011. More information is available on the [AOFP](http://www.aofp.ca) website.

Pre-market label approval program continues

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) pre-market label approval program will continue for domestic and imported meat, and processed fruit and vegetable products.

The [CFIA](http://www.cfia.gc.ca) plans to improve the program, working with the food industry to simplify requirements, "while ensuring industry continues to meet nutrition labelling, allergen labelling and [core labelling regulations](http://www.cfia.gc.ca/corelabelling)."

Canadian Revenue Agency to improve SR&ED program communication

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) has announced changes to its administration of the [Scientific Research and Experimental Development Tax Incentive Program](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/scrt/eng/eng001.html) - the single largest source of federal government support for industrial R&D.

The program provides cash refunds and/or tax credits for expenditures on eligible R&D work done in Canada. A new claim review manual, effective April 1, calls for CRA officials to better explain the program requirements, process and decisions to claimants and their representatives. It also instructs CRA officials to inform companies if a review reveals work that appears to be eligible for the credit but has not been claimed, allowing companies to resubmit their claim if within the reporting deadline.

In July, the CRA will also begin to report quarterly, through its website, on the time it takes to review an SR&ED claim from start to finish.

Funding Opportunities

Canada Summer Jobs 2010

You have until Feb. 26 to apply for funding from Canada Summer Jobs 2010. The program allows you to save up to 50 per cent of labour costs while providing students ages 15 to 30 with valuable work experience.

For more information, check the [Canada Summer Jobs website](#), call the Youth Info Line at 1-800-935-5555, or visit a Service Canada Centre.

Rural Summer Jobs Service

Ontario's Rural Summer Jobs Service provides a \$2-per-hour hiring incentive to employers who hire a student, age 15 to 30, between April 1 and Sept. 30. The student must be returning to school in the fall.

To learn more about eligibility requirements and obtain an application form, visit Employment Ontario [online](#) or call 1-800-387-5656.

Employers offering jobs in a rural community can contact [OMAFRA](#). Applications will be accepted Feb. 24 to April 16. Employers offering a job in northern Ontario can contact the [Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines](#).

Growing Forward for safer farms, safer food

The federal-provincial Growing Forward initiative has launched two new programs to increase farm biosecurity and enhance food safety and traceability.

Under the Food Safety and Traceability Education Program, agri-food organizations can apply for cost-shared funding to develop and deliver educational and outreach programs to promote best practices to Ontario producers and processors. Application details are available on the [Agriculture Adaptation Council website](#). The proposal deadline is April 12.

Individual poultry producers can apply for funding through the Farm Biosecurity Program to implement or improve biosecurity measures based on the [National Avian On-Farm Biosecurity Standard](#). See [OMAFRA's website](#) for more information.

If you have further questions, please call 1-888-479-3931 or e-mail growingforward@ontario.ca.

Food Safety and Traceability Initiative returns

OMAFRA's Growing Forward Food Safety and Traceability Initiative has been renewed! Get ready to apply - **beginning March 1** - for funding to adopt or enhance your facility's food safety and traceability practices.

Eligibility requirements for this program have changed - see the application forms and guidebooks [online](#) for details, including the new [Premises ID](#) requirement. The funding maximum is now \$25,000 (with a cap of \$15,000 for either food safety or traceability expenditures) and the cost-share ratio is 50 per cent. Funding is limited and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis for this highly popular program, so don't delay!

Ontario Market Investment Fund's next round begins April 1

The Ontario Market Investment Fund is fully subscribed for this fiscal year, which ends March 31. OMAFRA is continuing to accept applications for projects and will assess them on a first-come, first-served basis. If your application is currently with us for review, you will be contacted directly regarding its status.

Call 1-888-588-4111 or email omif.omafra@ontario.ca for more information.

Consultation

Asparaginase in processed foods?

A reminder that Feb. 21 is the deadline for [comments](#) on a proposal to allow the use of the enzyme asparaginase in processed foods, such as bread, crackers, cookies, potato chips and french fries. Asparaginase has been shown to reduce the formation of acrylamide (a cooking byproduct) in processed foods.

Visit [Health Canada's website](#) for more information.

Training

Feb. 18 - Creating a Food Safety Culture (Advantage workshop), Guelph

If you are a food processing industry executive or manager, here's an opportunity to gain tools and ideas for a more engaged staff and an enhanced food safety culture. The workshop is part of OMAFRA's Advantage Series of Food Safety Programs. Click [here](#) to register (by Feb. 12) or call 1-866-641-3663 and ask for Marcus Horowitz or email: marcus.horowitz@ontario.ca.

Feb. 18 - Food Safety: New Employee Orientation Workshop, Guelph

This one-day workshop from the Guelph Food Technology Centre covers critical aspects of food safety and hygiene practices for safe food handling and risk reduction. Designed for new employees or as refresher course, it will help ensure the safety of your products and the confidence of your customers. Visit [GFTC's website](#) for more information or to register. See more [GFTC courses and training](#) opportunities.

Feb. 19 - Zero Waste 101: Achieving Zero Waste to Landfill

This workshop from Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters shows you how to efficiently and effectively achieve zero waste status. [Learn more and register](#). Check out other [CME training opportunities and events](#).

Ongoing - Webinar: Health Claims in Canada - An update on Function Claims and Probiotic Claims for Food

Get the latest guidance on making function claims and probiotic claims for food during this [webinar](#), presented by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Health Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency. (Available for replay until Jan. 20, 2011)

Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium (EMC)

EMC has a huge lineup of exciting events for 2010. The Ontario Ministry of Economic Development and Trade and EMC have joined forces to offer all Ontario manufacturers 50 per cent off the cost of Lean training at more than 50 hands-on sessions across the province. Visit www.emccanada.org/calendar for details on these and other events.

Events

Feb 24-25, 2010 Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention

Brock University, St. Catharines

Full Details at <http://www.ofvc.ca/>

February 24th sessions: Vegetables, Berries, Farming in the Future, Direct Farm Sales, Tender Fruit, Farmer's Markets, Uncorked Winery, Grapes, Apple Scab Workshop.

February 25th sessions: Organic Vegetables, High Tunnels, Nematodes, Apples, Efficiency, On-Farm Food Safety, Farmer's Markets and Grapes.

Plus Largest fruit and vegetable trade show in Canada on both days.

March 4 - Safe Food Canada 2010: Establishing Food Safety and Traceability, Brampton

Learn how top companies - including Loblaw Companies Limited - keep their food safety programs effective and up-to-date. You'll gain a better understanding of the Global Food Safety Initiative and 2010 regulatory updates. This event, from Guelph Food Technology Centre and [Food in Canada](#) magazine, will also address farm-to-fork traceability and offer tips for improving recall performance.

Click [here](#) for more information or to register.

March 18-19, 6th Annual Conference on Organic Dairying

Université de Guelph – Campus d'Alfred
This organic dairy conference has been a great success over the years and several sessions this year concentrate on pasture management. Sessions in both English and French. For more details go to <http://www.alfredc.uoguelph.ca/recherche/index-en.php?id=83>

March 8-12 - Growing the Margins/Canadian Farm and Food Biogas Conferences & Exhibition, London

There will be lots of energy-smart ideas at the 4th Annual Growing the Margins: [Green Energy and Economy for the Farm and Food Sectors Conference and Exhibition](#) and the [2nd Annual Canadian Farm and Food Biogas Conference and Exhibition](#).

More information is available at www.gtmconference.ca/site/index.php/growing-the-margins.

March 25 - Business Summit: Workplace Safety and Insurance, Mississauga

Learn about the latest developments in workplace insurance, health and safety at this event from the Employers' Advocacy Council and Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters.

Click [here](#) for more details. See the [CME calendar](#) for other upcoming events.

May 10-12 - EMC National Manufacturing Conference & Exhibition, Hamilton

Advantage through Excellence: Building the Case for Manufacturing in Canada is a fantastic opportunity to learn and share ideas and best practices with other manufacturing decision makers. Choose sessions across six conference themes: Lean manufacturing, leadership & human capital, health & safety, food & beverage manufacturing, sustainable manufacturing, and operational excellence. **Early bird rates apply until Feb. 28.** [Find out more and register](#).

June 1-2 - PROFIT New-to-Exporting Seminar, GTA/ Buffalo

Learn about the basic requirements for exporting food and beverages to the United States in this hands-on orientation seminar from Ontario Food Exports. Topics include: export financing, product labeling, U.S. tax laws, U.S. food brokerage, U.S. food distribution, U.S. Food and Drug Administration regulations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and U.S. customs brokerage.

For more information, call Jennifer Hannam of Ontario Food Exports at (519) 826-3767 or email jennifer.hannam@ontario.ca.

Local Food Events Connecting Farmers and Buyers

Eastern Ontario

Monday, March 1, 2010 1:00pm - 4:00pm

Fairmont Château Laurier, Drawing Room 1 Rideau Street, Ottawa

Savour Ottawa Meet & Greet

Farmers, chefs & buyers meet to build business relationships for 2010. Free admission. Producers & microprocessors, RSVP to heather@justfood.ca or 613-236-9300 ext. 305 to confirm a table. Buyers do NOT need to RSVP.

www.SavourOttawa.ca click on "events" for information about this event.

THANK YOU to the Fairmont Château Laurier for hosting this event!

Huron-Perth and area

March 23, 9:00am-12:30pm
Brodhagen Hall, Brodhagen

Local Food Show and Share and Website Launch :

This will be the second annual networking event and all groups that have connections to local food are invited to present. Last year's event was well attended and many opportunities for cooperation and collaboration were identified. The new Huron Perth Farm to Table website will also be launched. <http://www.huronperthfarmtotable.ca/>

To Register contact the Huron Business Development Corporation office at 519-527-0305.

Southwest Ontario

March 29, 2010, 9:00 a.m. – 12 noon
London Hunt and Country Club, London, Ontario

Local Food Connection: Farmer/Food Buyer Networking Event

A Local Food Connection: Farmer/ Food Buyer Networking Event comes to the London Hunt and County Club on March 29, to provide opportunities for farmers and food buyers to meet one-on-one and to explore opportunities to do business together.

Who should attend? Farmers who are interested in finding out more about selling into local food marketing opportunities, and chefs, caterers, food retailers, food processors, distributors, or food-service and institutional food providers looking to offer more local food. This is a must attend event. Farmers and food buyers will have the opportunity to meet in one-on-one sessions to develop business connections. A Local Food Buffet will be featured throughout the event.

Pre-registration is required. There is no charge to farmers who are exhibitors. The registration fee is \$20.00 for all others.

For complete details and to register, visit the London Economic Development Corporation website at www.lecd.com/newsevents/events/. You can also contact Karen Eatwell, National Farmers Union office at 519-232-9638, 1-888-832-9638, kareneatwell@execulink.com

This event is presented by our partners Savour Ontario, Farm Credit Canada, and our contributing partners, Libro Financial Group and Local Food Plus.

COG Events Calendar

February 20, 2010 - Your Food, Your Choice: Grounds for Change conference.

Presented by Canadian Organic Growers in association with The Big Carrot

9:00 am - 5:00 pm, **Organic lunch included!**

University of Toronto Conference Centre, 89 Chestnut St., Toronto

Info and registration: www.cogtoronto.org or 416-466-4420

February 27, 2010 - Eco-Farm Day - Ramada Inn, Cornwall

This is an excellent conference with 300-400 people attending. Wayne Roberts author and food activist with Toronto Food Policy council is the guest speaker. There are 12 workshops plus a Trade show.

For details and registration go to <http://www.cog.ca/ottawa/ecofarmday/>

February 27, 2010 - Intro to Transition

Location: Mitchell Town Hall Auditorium, Mitchell

Date: Saturday, Feb 27, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm.

This workshop is for new and experienced farmers who are interested in learning more about certification and transition. Break-out sessions for produce, livestock and crops. Cost: \$50 (\$45 for COG members) includes copy of a COG transition book and lunch.

Register at www.cog.ca/workshops or by calling 1-888-375-7383.

March 4 - CSA Mini School

Location: Delta Conference Centre, 105 King Street East, Kitchener

Date: Thursday, March 4, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

A one day workshop for farmers considering the Community Shared Agriculture (CSA) model. Three CSA farmers of different sizes and types will share their experiences on all aspects of organizing a CSA including overview of different approaches, member recruitment and retention, crop planning, and financial planning and management.

Cost: \$95 and includes lunch and a copy of the *Community Shared Agriculture Primer*.

To register go to <http://www.ohcc-ccso.ca/en/bringfood-home-conference-registration>.

March 13 - Workshop on Record Keeping for Organic Farming

For organic, transitional, and conventional farmers interested in organics

Time: March 13, 9:00 am -5:00 pm

Location: Greely Community Centre, Greely ON

Cost: \$50 (\$45 for COG members). Including lunch, a copy of *Record Keeping for Organic Growers: How to Get and Stay Certified* (published by COG) and other handouts.

Instructor: Maureen Bostock, organic inspector, sitting on the Permitted Substance List Working Group of the Canadian Organic Standards, and organic farmer.

For more COG events go to http://www.cog.ca/news_events/events-calendar/

EFAO Events

Go to <http://www.efao.ca/pages/events.html>

OCO Events

March 25, 2010 - Organic Council of Ontario Annual General Meeting

Loyola House, Ignacious College, Guelph

For details call Jodi 519-827-1221 or info@organiccouncil.ca

For more OCO events go to <http://www.organiccouncil.ca/content.sz?cid=34>

OACC Events

Go to http://www.oacc.info/Events/events_main.asp

Links to Organic Agriculture Information

Organic Council of Ontario (OCO)

<http://www.organiccouncil.ca>

Canadian Organic Growers (COG)

<http://www.cog.ca>

OMAFRA Organic Agriculture

<http://www.ontario.ca/organic>

Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario (EFAO)

<http://www.efao.ca>

Organic Agricultural Centre of Canada (OACC)

<http://www.oacc.info>

Agricultural Information Contact Centre: 1-877-424-1300

E-mail: ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca

Northern Ontario Regional Office: 1-800-461-6132

www.ontario.ca/omafra