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Welcome to “ON Organic”

Hugh Martin, Organic Crop Production Program Lead, OMAFRA

As we move into a new season it is good to look around at the various issues in our sector. Grain prices and GMO alfalfa have become topics so I have included some information on these topics. Agricorp is introducing a new Production Insurance program for corn in 2011 so we have some information that program. We have also included some info on various courses and conferences that are happening.

Thanks to the contributing authors and to OCO and EFAO and others who pass it on to other colleagues in the organic sector. We always appreciate your comments on how to improve the newsletter. This month we invite you to fill out the survey to give us feedback on this newsletter. Thanks to those who have already replied. Click here to start <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/onorganic> the SurveyMonkey evaluation.

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/organic.html>

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

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Tom Hamilton, Beef Program Lead—Production Systems, OMAFRA

Water is life: it is the most essential nutrient for livestock, yet something that we may take for granted in Ontario, a region rich in water resources. Beef cattle use a lot of the resource. They aren't very efficient at recycling water (compared with animals like sheep), so they need to drink a lot every day. Lactating beef cows require about 115 litres (25 gallons) per day during summer, while stocker cattle need about 70 litres (15 gallons) each day.¹ It's important to realize that cattle performance on pasture can be limited by lack of easy access to clean, abundant water, just like in a feedlot. In many pasture situations, providing cattle with adequate access to water can be challenging. Dugouts offer an alternative. They are man-made ponds which offer a way of creating a water source on pastures which are a long ways from a well or natural water source.

Do You Need a Dugout?

Beef cattle like to drink 3 to 5 times a day. Many pasture cattle have to trek long distances to get to water, cutting down on grazing time, and requiring extra energy expenditure. Distance to water can also limit the amount of pasture area that the cattle will effectively graze. Recommendations for maximum distances to water on pasture vary, depending on the intensity of the grazing system.

With high intensity systems, cattle grazing distribution may be negatively affected if cattle have to walk more than 250 metres (820 ft) to the water source. Along with decreased forage utilization, the cattle will spend more time in the area adjacent to the water source, and manure nutrients will be concentrated there, rather than being evenly distributed across the pasture.²

For more extensive situations, the distance to a water source can significantly restrict the amount of area which will be grazed. In arid rangelands, cattle will seldom graze farther than 1100 m (3600 ft) from a water source, and when portable water sources are relocated, they will move their grazing radius to remain within this proximity.³

Dugout Design

Dugouts are constructed ponds, and in Ontario they usually trap and contain ground water. (Surface runoff may also help fill dugouts, but this is not a good thing unless the runoff is free of contaminants.) While dugouts can be a good option when other water sources are too far away, they should be treated with the same care as rivers, streams and natural ponds ... we have to ensure both the water

source and the cattle are managed in a sustainable way. Locate the dugout as centrally as possible in the grazed area, giving preference to areas which stay greenest throughout the summer. If you're not sure where the dugout should go, dig some test holes to evaluate a few potential sites. The sizing of a dugout is dependant on the amount of water it is expected to supply and the hydraulic characteristics of the soil where it is located. For a given water volume, it is better to construct a deeper dugout with a smaller surface area, rather than a shallow dugout with a larger surface area. A smaller surface area will result in less loss due to evaporation and require less fencing to protect it from the cattle. Depth will be limited by the size and type of machinery used, depth to ground water, and depth to bedrock. In medium to heavy textured soils the end slopes should be 4:1 (4 units horizontal to 1 unit vertical) with side slopes of 1.5:1. In lighter textured soils, make flatter side slopes with a ratio of 2:1.⁴

Managing Your Dugout

It is critical to prevent cattle access to the water. Cattle traffic along the banks will erode soil into the water, causing silting of the water and filling in the dugout. Cattle manure in the water delivers pathogens and nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorous, contaminating the water source. These pathogens can amplify and spread disease within your herd. Excess nutrients will increase the growth of algae and set up conditions for the appearance of toxic blue-green algae. On top of all of these factors, cattle prefer to drink clean water, so providing an "out of the dugout" watering system will maximize water intake and thus cattle performance.⁴

Fence cattle out of the dugout, with a minimum grassed buffer strip of 30 m (100 ft) between the edge of the water and the fencing. The type of watering system needed will depend on the number of cattle. The key concept is having a pump which draws clean water from the pond and sends it either directly to a water trough or to a storage tank. The pump can be solar electric, gasoline powered, or even cattle powered (nose pumps). Locate the intake about a foot below the surface, attached to a float. The pump can feed an elevated storage tank which in turn feeds a stock trough via gravity and a standard float valve.

If algae growth becomes a problem, you can install an aerator (solar or wind powered) which will keep water circulating and prevent the conditions that cause "blooms" of algae. In extreme circumstances, chemicals may be needed to control algae.

Will Your Cows Dig Dugouts? (cont'd)

Tom Hamilton, Beef Program Lead—Production Systems, OMAFRA

Regulatory Note: In Ontario, no permit is required to take water for livestock production.⁵

References:

¹National Research Council. Nutrient Requirements of Beef Cattle. 7th Rev. Ed. Update 2000. http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=9791 Retrieved Feb 2011

² Gerrish, J.R., P.R Peterson, and F.A Martz. Proximity of Water Affects Grazing Distribution and Soil Nutrient Cycling. International Grasslands Symposium 2007. Retrieved Feb 2011.

³Walter D. Willms, Orin R. Kenzie, Tim A. McAllister, Doug Colwell, Doug Veira, John F. Wilmshurst, Toby Entz, and Merle E. Olson Effects of water quality on cattle performance. Journal of Range Management. Sept 2002. Retrieved Feb 2011

⁴AAFC Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration Thinking About Constructing a Dugout? http://www.rural-gc.agr.ca/pfra/water/dugoutc_e.htm Retrieved Feb 2011.

⁵ Ontario Ministry of the Environment. Green Facts: Permit to Take Water http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/resources/STD01_078770.html Retrieved Feb 2011.

Organic Grain Production – Should I Expand or Get Out?

By Hugh Martin, OMAFRA Organic Crop Production Program Lead

At the recent Guelph Organic Conference I attended two workshops on organic grain marketing. Ontario grows about 50,000 acres of certified organic grains. Some of this is for livestock feed and some is for flour, soy milk, tofu, cereals, etc. Organic grain prices have fallen from levels of 2-3 years ago and bins are full of organic grains waiting for better prices. The consensus at these meetings was that organic prices will increase over the next year but not right away.

From 2000 to 2006 prices were relatively stable and priced well above conventional grain prices. In 2007 and early 2008 organic grain prices increased dramatically and this made it very expensive for organic livestock producers and organic food processors. In late 2008 the recession hit and the growth of organic markets slowed significantly. Some major organic food processors stop using organic ingredients and this further reduced the market demand. Organic grain prices now are comparable to those of 2000-2006 even though they are much below 2007-8 when prices peaked.

Conventional grains were priced lower in 2000-2006, they spiked in 2007-8 and then dramatically dropped in late 2008 due to market factors. In late 2010 prices for non-organic grains have rapidly increased again to near all-time market highs. This further makes organic grains look bad as net returns per acre for growing organic grains is similar or in some cases less than growing non-organic grains.

In 2011 some growers in the USA and Canada are considering getting out of organic. Short term this makes sense economically, but I hope growers stay in organic for the following reasons:

- There are many good non-economic reasons to be into organic – environment, personal satisfaction, less reliance on input suppliers, lower input costs, etc;
- You invested a lot into your organic certification, if you get out it is a lot of work to come back;
- Prices are predicted to recover and in some areas we are beginning to see this;
- If some farmers are exiting organic that will reduce grain supplies next year and increase prices;
- Lower prices are making organic livestock production more enticing will increase feed requirements.

There is also an argument for increasing organic grain production. If you start transitioning acres into organic in 2011, your first organic harvest will be likely in 2013 or 2014 and by then prices will likely be much better than they are now based on historical and expected organic growth trends. Organic is expected to continue to grow at 10-15% per year. The higher non-organic prices in 2011 make it more to profitable to grow grains during the transition period. This reduces the economic risk during the transition period.

I hope organic continues to grow in 2011 as we continue to adjust to changes in the sector from the past 2 years. I see a bright future for organic foods and see current issues as just potholes in the road of life.

New Organic Options for Production Insurance

By Agricorp

It's that time of year again and Production Insurance (PI) deadlines for spring-seeded crops are fast approaching. Agricorp offers PI coverage for both organic and conventional crops. Here are some PI options for your organic crops:

- New for 2011, Agricorp is offering a specialized plan for organic corn. This new plan will be similar to the general corn plan, but with a claim price that better reflects the organic market.
- Specialized organic plans are also available for organic soybeans, organic fresh market carrots, organic fresh market cabbage, organic winter wheat and organic winter spelt. Proof of certification is required to receive a claim payment at the organic claim price.
- The forage rainfall plan works equally well for both organic and conventional producers. New for 2011, a new coverage option is being piloted for hay that covers excess rainfall during your intended harvest period.
- As always, other crops or crops in transition can be insured under the general production insurance plans.

The deadline to apply for organic corn, organic soybeans and coverage, without winterkill, for organic winter wheat and organic winter spelt, and the forage rainfall plan is **May 1, 2011**.

For more information on these plans please refer to the attached 'Guide to Production Insurance for Organics' For information on spring-seeded grains and oilseeds crops refer to the attached information sheet for rates and plan details. Visit agricorp.com for all other program related information or contact us at 1-888-247-4999.

Agricorp's Grain Financial Protection Program (GFPP) offers financial protection for: Grain corn, soybean, canola and wheat producers who sell their crops to licensed grain dealers and owners of grains and oilseeds who store their commodity in licensed elevators. For more details on GFPP refer to the 'Guide to the Grains Act' found on agricorp.com.

Link: <http://www.agricorp.com/SiteCollectionDocuments/GFPP-GuideToGrainsAct-en.pdf>

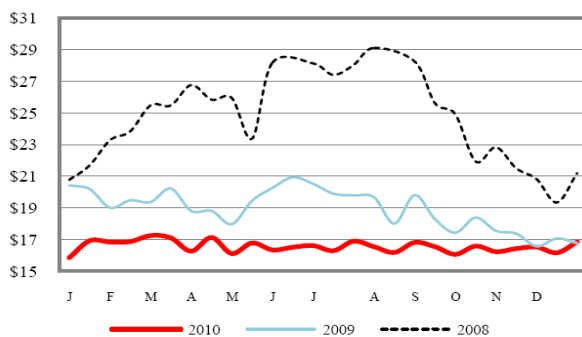
Organic Grain Prices

By Hugh Martin, OMAFRA Organic Crop Production Program Lead

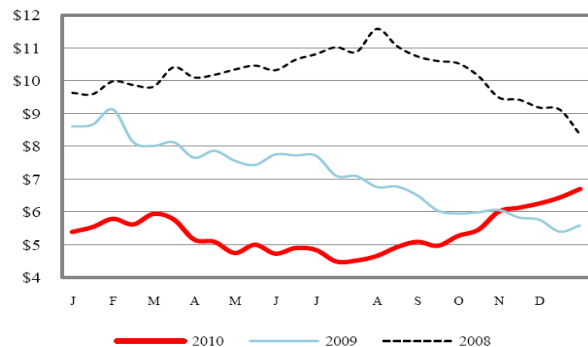
At one of the Organic Grain workshops in at the Guelph Organic Conference Tom Manley shared his history of organic grain prices over the past decade.

His data from 2001 to 2006 showed current prices to be similar to those currently in the market. Below are the USDA data for organic corn and soybean prices for the past 3 years.

National Organic Feed Soybean Prices (\$/bu)



National Organic Feed Corn Prices (\$/bu)



By Hugh Martin, OMAFRA Organic Crop Production Program Lead

In January 2011, the USDA deregulated the planting of genetically modified alfalfa. The current trait of interest is for tolerance to glyphosate also known as Roundup Ready (RR). It is expected that Roundup Ready alfalfa will be planted in the USA in 2011. In Canada this trait was approved for use in 2005 but has not yet been commercialized for use on farms. Currently there are no registered varieties of alfalfa and glyphosate is not registered for this use on alfalfa in Canada. In time however it will likely be planted here. To understand the potential risks we need to understand how alfalfa is currently grown and how GMO alfalfa may potentially spread.

In the Ontario situation most alfalfa fields are planted with 10-30% perennial grasses. Grasses are planted to improve feed value, harvestability, and palatability for the livestock. RR alfalfa would only be appropriate for use in pure alfalfa fields which has not been the general preference of producers in Ontario. Spraying a typical hay field with glyphosate would kill all perennial grasses. The use of a herbicide like Roundup is useful to reduce weeds but current practices of using underseeding with grains for establishment and short rotations of less than 3-4 years for the hay crop reduces the need for this type of herbicide.

A primary concern of GMO alfalfa is for pollen drift and the pollination of non-GMO alfalfa plants. RR alfalfa will likely see its greatest utility in intensively managed alfalfa fields that are harvested in a 3-5 cuts/yr system before the crop flowers. This early cutting would eliminate pollen spread. For seed to be produced the hay would have to remain standing for another 4-6 weeks after flowering. This could happen if the pollen spreads to feral alfalfa plants that are growing outside the field boundaries. Feral alfalfa should be eliminated near seed fields where this is a risk. Care also needs to be taken at seeding to avoid seed spills of GMO seed and allowing seed to be spread into non-harvested areas.

Another trait of alfalfa plants is that they are autotoxic – if an alfalfa plant produces seed and that seeds falls to the ground it will not be able to produce a healthy plant within about 15 cm of an existing mature alfalfa plant. Adjacent grass plants in the stand also outcompete these new alfalfa seedlings. This reduces the chance of pollen from another field creating GMO plants within a non-GMO field.

Most of our alfalfa seed is produced in western Canada or USA. The main concern will be to ensure the purity of the non-GMO seed. Isolation distance guidelines for alfalfa seed production will need to take this into account as will other seed handling practices. Most alfalfa pollination is by leaf cutter bees that do not travel as far as honey bees.

In the future we will likely see more types of GMO alfalfa that will increase yields or improve the digestibility and other feed traits of alfalfa and these may see greater usefulness in Ontario.

Organic prohibits GMO and organic farmers must manage their farms to reduce the chances of GMO in their organic products. Like pesticides, GMO's are part of the farm environment, and we must learn how to manage any potential issues arising from their use.

Another article discussing this issue is **Understanding Roundup Ready Alfalfa** by Dr. Dan Undersander, Univ of Wisconsin http://hayandforage.com/Understanding_Roundup_Ready_Alalfa_revised.pdf

Links to other articles on biotech alfalfa and coexistence of GE are available at: <http://www.alfalfa.org/CSCoexistenceDocs.html>.

About Ontario Organic Awards: Celebrate a Caring, Credible and Committed Sector

The Organic Council of Ontario (OCO) is proud to have presented the First Annual Ontario Organic Awards to celebrate the caring, credible and committed people and businesses within the organic sector.

OCO honoured outstanding achievement across the full organic value-chain, including awards categories for sector pioneers and volunteers. Organic Council of Ontario's first annual event celebrated the contributions of 20 individuals and businesses. Some of the highlights include:

Outstanding grain/ livestock producer, awarded to Martin Driesse of Norwich. Martin was acknowledged for inspiring others to transform their farms, and sharing his knowledge even when there is no advantage to himself.

Outstanding Direct Farm Marketing/ CSA awarded to Mapleton's Organics - Starting with one idea and one product, they have worked hard to build an on-farm processing plant as well as an on-farm store. They are also paving the way for the next generation to play a greater role in the business, incorporating new ideas and programs to make theirs one of Ontario's signature destination farms.

Complete Listing of Winners

- Dairy - Birchwind Farms
- Horticultural producer - Greenfield's Organic Farm
- Livestock/ grain producer - Martin Driesse
- Processor- Fieldgate Organics
- Direct Farm marketing/ CSA - Mapleton's
- Direct to Consumer (non farm) - Front Door Organics
- Retail - Healthy Butcher
- Food Service - the Food School
- Innovation - Saugeen Country Dairy
- Volunteer Award - Gerald Pochman, Colleen Ross, Ann Slater
- Education Award - Everdale Learning Centre, Anne Clark, Nicky French
- Lifetime Achievement Award - Eric Eberhardt (post-humous), Alvin Filsinger (post-humous), Larry Lenhardt, Jennifer Grant, Tom Manley

Guelph Organic Conference

The 30th Annual Guelph Organic conference was held a couple weeks ago and was once again a big success with over 2,000 people participating. We now start planning for the next conference to be held in January 2012. If you have ideas on speaker topics for the next conference or suggestions on how we can improve the

conference to meet your needs, let me know and I will pass comments on to the organizing committee which will meet in early April to plan the next big event. (hugh.martin@ontario.ca)

A new action plan for Canada's food processing industry

There's a new plan to grow the Canadian food processing industry in 2011. The plan targets four key areas:

- economics
- market access
- innovation
- regulatory environment.

Actions for 2011 include research studies, policy and program reviews, and the development of new initiatives to improve the competitiveness of the sector. Most of these actions are expected to be completed over the next 12 months.

For example, an early pilot program at Stong's Market in Vancouver is promoting Canadian products throughout the

store. Canadian foods are identified through banners, signs, on-shelf displays, in-store and online retail flyers. The initiative's goal is to help consumers identify Canadian food products and encourage them to buy and eat Canadian. "We commend the government for taking leadership to ensure a future for one of the country's most important sectors, and for having the vision to engage food industry sector representatives in developing the plan," says Derek Nighbor, senior vice president, Public and Regulatory Affairs, Food & Consumer Products of Canada (FCPC). FCPC is the country's largest national food industry association.

The Government of Canada and the industry jointly developed the new action plan through roundtables held in 2009 and 2010. These sessions identified the challenges facing the sector, as well as solutions to enable it to grow and strengthen its competitive capacity.

Funding and Related Opportunities

Tap into funding for summer students

It might be cold outside, but summer is coming – and so is the opportunity to apply for funding from Canada Summer Jobs 2010. You can help students between the ages of 15 and 30 gain valuable work experience while saving up to 50 per cent of labour costs. To qualify, you must be a private sector employer with 50 or fewer employees. Not-for-profit

organizations and public-sector employers are also eligible. **Learn more:** call the Youth Info Line toll-free at 1-800-935-5555, or visit a Service Canada Centre. More information is posted on the Service Canada's [Canada Summer Jobs website](#).

The application period for Canada Summer Jobs 2011 will be from February 1 to February 28, 2011.

February 17, 2011 6th Annual I.E. Canada Food Forum

Canadian Association of Importers and Exporters (I.E. Canada)

Stay up-to-date on emerging food safety and other industry initiatives. At the Food Forum, you will hear from a range of high profile speakers, including senior staff from:

- The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)
- The U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Health Canada

You will learn about:

- New food safety compliance requirements for Canadian companies exporting food to the U.S.
- What the pending U.S. Food Safety Modernization Act means to Canadian exporters.
- CFIA mandatory requirements for the licensing of food imports.

New Health Canada rules for allergen labelling, sodium reduction targets for processed foods, mandatory *Listeria* product and environmental testing for ready to eat foods and the modernization of Canada's food and nutrition labelling regime.

It's also a great opportunity to network with:

- other domestic food manufacturers
- food importers and exporters
- service providers federal and provincial government officials.

When: February 17, 2011

Where: Delta Toronto Airport West

To learn more and register, contact Jesse Arsenault at jesse@iecanada.com or 416-595-5333 ext. 37.

February 19, 2011, COG Toronto Conference

Place: U of Toronto Conference Centre, 89 Chestnut St Toronto, ON

Time: 9 am to 5 pm

Theme: Your Food Your Choice, the Promise of Organic

Panels include: Moms Against GMOs, Natural vs Organic, Whistleblowers, EnviroPig, Is Walmart Compatible with Organic?, Hidden GMOs, Make Heritage Seeds Work for You, The Wonder Years: Bread and Beer, The Future of Agriculture, Organic Beauty Products, and more.

For full details go to http://cogtoronto.org/COG_Toronto/Conference_February_2011.html

February 22, 2011—OMAFRA Food Safety Trainings

As food processors, you want to ensure your product is safe. You take pride in what you produce. You do everything you can to create safe food for your customers. And your customers expect it.

OMAFRA's new food safety training topics will help provide practical suggestions on how you can improve food safety at your facility.

Upcoming Workshops – Guelph

Sanitation/Receiving and Shipping - February 22, 2011 \$45 plus HST

Learn more at www.ontario.ca/foodsafety or call 1-877-424-1300 for more information.

February 24, 2011 Safe Food Canada 2011

Mark this premiere networking and informational event on your calendar now. The agenda for this full-day program is jam packed with the latest food safety information. In addition to a compelling line-up of speakers and topics, there will be an exciting panel discussion featuring Canadian business leaders in food safety management.

When: February 24, 2011

Where: Pearson Convention Centre, Brampton

Cost: \$225 GFTC members; \$275 non-members

[Learn more and register now http://www.gftc.ca/courses-and-training/course-details.aspx?course=TRS042](http://www.gftc.ca/courses-and-training/course-details.aspx?course=TRS042)

February 25-26, 2011 Eco Farm Day

Theme: "For the Sake of Food Safety and Security"

Eco Farm Day - Eastern Ontario's premier farm conference. Over 350 people come back every year for the social event, the networking, the positive atmosphere, and the great food! Eco Farm Day is hosted by [Canadian Organic Growers - Ottawa Chapter](http://www.canadianorganicgrowers.com).

Friday evening, February 25th, 2011— organic gala dinner with Margaret Webb; Cocktails at 6PM. \$50 per person, in advance only.

Saturday, February 26th, 2011 — full conference with Dr. Shiv Chopra at 9 am and 12 workshops. \$50 per person in advance or \$60 at the door.

Register online at www.ecofarmday.ca.

Location: The Ramada Inn, 805 Brookdale Ave., Cornwall, ON.

February 23-24, Ontario Fruit & Vegetable Convention 2011

We are looking forward to seeing you at the 2011 Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Convention conference on February 23 and 24, at Brock University, St Catharines, ON. This conference gathers the best speakers from Canada, and the United States to provide information on the latest innovations and advances in the fruit and vegetable industry. Guest speakers include farmers, researchers and government specialists providing technical and applied information that important for producing high quality fruit and vegetables in Ontario.

Returning sessions this year include grape, tender fruit, berry, apple, winery, vegetable, direct farm sales and farmers markets. Some of the presentations and speakers at these sessions include:

- Vegetable Nematodes and Soil Quality, Dr. George Bird, Michigan State University, MI
- Challenges & Opportunities for Managing Cucurbit Diseases, Dr. Meg McGrath, Cornell University, NY
- Pesticides, Sustainability, and Consumer Perception, Dr. Steve Savage Cirrus Partners, Evergreen, CO
- Development & Management of Fungicide Resistance in NY Vineyards, Dr. Wayne Wilcox, Cornell, NY
- Soft pruning techniques, Riccardo Turata, Consultant, Italy
- New Cherry Developments in Michigan, Dr. Nikki Rothwell, MSU
- Vision Robotics for Orchards and Vineyards, Tony Koselka, Vision Robotics, California
- Orchard management, Dr. Ron Perry, MSU
- 36 Yrs of Observations of Bulb Nematode on Garlic, Dr. Fred Crowe, Fred Crowe Consulting, Washington
- Based on feedback from previous years comments we have also added a variety of new sessions including: Sprayer Technology, Compost, Alternative crops, Growing Fruit Organically, Money Making tips and Water: out of your watershed & out of your reach.
- Pest control with reduced pesticide and carrier rates in nurseries, Dr. Heping Zhu, Wooster, Ohio,
- USDA ATRU
- Utilization of compost in fruit and vegetable production.
- Sustainable Hops Production in the Great Lakes Region, Dr. J Robert Serrine – MSU
- Economics of organic agriculture- Gregory peck, Cornell university, NY and
- Growing Forward and Growing Your Farm Profits

The Farmers and friends evening event promises to provide an abundance of tantalizing wines and savoury food for tasting. The trade show is almost sold out and has companies coming from as far away as Italy and California to show their products.

Registration forms and an updated program are available in the Fruit and Vegetable Magazine, at local OMAFRA Resource Centres, or online at www.ofvc.ca.

Program for Organic Fruit Production (February 24th)

2:00 p.m. Ontario Consumers' Motivations for Buying Local and Organic Produce
- *Dr. Ben Campbell, Vineland Research & Innovation Center*

2:30 p.m. Economics of Organic Agriculture
- *Dr. Gregory Peck, Cornell University, NY*

3:00 p.m. Orchard Floor Management Options for Organic Fruit
- *Dr. Ron Perry, Michigan State University*

3:30 p.m. Grower Panel - the Challenges of Growing Organic

For full program and to register go to www.ofvc.ca
Located at Brock University, St. Catharines, ON

February 28–March 2, 2011 Rural Green Energy and Biogas Conferences

Innovation is the theme at two high-profile events coming soon to London, Ontario:

[5th Annual Growing the Margins: Rural Green Energy Conference & Exhibition](#) and the [3rd Annual Canadian Farm and Food Biogas Conference and Exhibition](#)

When: February 28 – March 2, 2011

Where: London Convention Centre

Please note: in addition to lower registration costs, Farm Stakeholders can save an extra 50% on registration and travel costs!

For agricultural producers, the *Growing Your Farm Profits* (GYFP) program will rebate 50% of registration costs and 50% of travel costs for this conference. To be eligible, you must FIRST attend the [GYFP workshops](#) and develop an action plan.

March 4-5, 2011 Meat and Food Processing Expo

If your business is meat and food processing, don't miss this one-of-a kind show. This 2-day event showcases innovations, connections and solutions to industry processors and suppliers. You'll have an opportunity to network, create successful business relationships and find solutions to challenges facing your company.

When: March 4-5, 2011

Where: International Centre, Hall 6, Toronto

[Learn more and register now http://www.foodindustryexpo.ca/Default.aspx](http://www.foodindustryexpo.ca/Default.aspx)

March 9-10, 2011 North American Summit on Food Safety

This is one of Canada's most prestigious food safety events, offering you:

- critical information and insight into food safety issues from industry leaders, innovators and specialists
- solutions to address your most pressing food safety concerns. These include recall prevention, pathogen reduction, traceability, allergen control, international trends and food technology.

When: March 9-10, 2011

Where: The Double Tree Toronto Airport

Cost: Regular \$1,495 (plus HST)

[Learn more and register now http://foodsafetycanada.com/](http://foodsafetycanada.com/)

NEW! OMAFRA Workshops for On-Farm Food Safety

Food safety is no small task

Find out how On-Farm Food Safety can positively impact your bottom line. Take advantage of OMAFRA's workshops and get results. This one-day workshop will focus on five essential topics.

Increase your knowledge on

- Getting Started in Food Safety
- Hygiene and Sanitation
- Pre and Post Harvest Water Use
- Manure, Compost and Compost Teas
- Food Safety on Multi-Commodity Farms

2011 Dates and Locations

March 10, Markdale

March 16, Elora

March 24, Bloomfield (Prince Edward County)

Producers: \$45 plus HST Non-Producers: \$65 plus HST
Workshop prices include: Refreshments, lunch, Advantage Program Manual (value \$25), Advantage iGAP CD, hand wash training easel and numerous factsheets.

To register, please call 1 877 424-1300

www.ontario.ca/foodsafety

Information session: tax credit for Scientific Research and Experimental Development (SR&ED)

Is your organization taking advantage of a major tax break to support your research and development (R&D) efforts? The SR&ED program is a federal tax incentive program. It encourages Canadian businesses of all sizes to conduct R&D in Canada. It offers cash **refunds and/or tax credits** for your expenditures on eligible R&D work done in Canada.

Ready to learn more? Plan to attend a free public information session. The following chart shows the fall 2010 schedule.

City	Date
London	April 12
Ottawa	March 21
Toronto	February 17
	March 16
	March 24
	April 12
Waterloo	March 15

Financial issues seminars (English)

City	Date
Mississauga	February 23

[Learn more now and enrol http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/smnr-eng.html](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/smnr-eng.html)

June 1–2, 2011 PROFIT

Ontario Food Export's highly regarded, New-to-Exporting Seminar - PROFIT, scheduled for June 1 – 2, 2011, is returning to Toronto and Buffalo, New York. Whether you are new to exporting, or have colleagues who need export training, this program is an outstanding opportunity. This two-day seminar is critical in assisting you to build your organization's export strength. Featuring industry speakers and key contacts that know the export process, PROFIT will prepare you and your company for what is needed to succeed in the U.S. market.

For over 20 years, PROFIT has been an important step in the export success of hundreds of Ontario manufacturers. Some graduates have returned several times to update their skills and contacts.

This affordable course, specific to the needs of the food industry, is ideal for:

- New Marketing staff
- Inside & Outside Sales
- Shipping & Logistics staff
- Marketing/Sales Support staff
- Skills upgrade and development

[Anyone interested in exporting to the USA!](#)

The cost to participate is only \$350 + tax per person, which includes the two-day seminar, bus transportation to Buffalo, one night hotel accommodation in Buffalo and all meals.

For more information, please contact Dean Post at 519-826-4477 or dean.post@ontario.ca.

These courses are all available from non-profit education institutions.

March 3, 2011 [New: Food Handler Training program](#)

This new program fulfills current regulatory requirements for staff training – for both workers and supervisors. It provides options for learning in multiple languages through self-study and interactive workshops. The program focuses on five key areas: Food Safety Responsibilities; Food Safety Hazards; Controlling Hazards; Food Safety Management Systems; and Management's Responsibilities for Food Safety (supervisors only).

Cost for workers: Member: \$395; Regular: \$565

Cost for supervisors: Member: \$621.50; Regular \$791

Location	Workers	Supervisors
Mississauga	March 3, 2011 8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.	March 3, 2011 8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. March 4, 2011 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Sponsored By Ontario Independent Meat Processors. [Learn more now and apply](http://www.oimp.ca/safety/handler-training/workshop.aspx)

Training

Fundamentals of Wheat Flour Properties: A Workshop

This workshop is designed to address principles behind flour attributes as an ingredient in the baking industry.

When: February 22 – 25, 2011

Where: University of Guelph – Food Science Department

What you will learn: Learn the How's and Why's of using flour in baked product systems and how to transfer this knowledge to commercial manufacturing environments. Through a combination of lectures and hands-on laboratory activities, you will explore topics ranging from wheat grain morphology, flour extraction and classification, measuring flour quality and assessing flour interactions with modifiers.

[Learn more now and apply](http://www.uoguelph.ca/foodscience/content/fundamentals-wheat-flour-properties) <http://www.uoguelph.ca/foodscience/content/fundamentals-wheat-flour-properties>

March 4 - 5, 2011 Meat and Food Processing Expo

If your business is meat and food processing, don't miss this one-of-a kind show. This 2-day event showcases innovations, connections and solutions to industry processors and suppliers. You'll have an opportunity to network, create successful business relationships and find solutions to challenges facing your company.

Where: International Centre, Hall 6, Toronto

Learn more and register now at <http://www.foodindustryexpo.ca/Default.aspx>

Information session: tax credit for Scientific Research and Experimental Development (SR&ED)

Is your organization taking advantage of a major tax break to support your research and development (R&D) efforts? The SR&ED program is a federal tax incentive program. It encourages Canadian businesses of all sizes to conduct R&D in Canada. It offers cash **refunds and/or tax credits** for your expenditures on eligible R&D work done in Canada.

Ready to learn more? Plan to attend a free public information session. The following chart shows the fall 2010 schedule.

General information sessions (English)

City	Date
Ottawa	March 21
Toronto	February 17
Waterloo	March 15

[Learn more now and enrol](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/smnr-eng.html)
<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/txcrdt/sred-rsde/smnr-eng.html>

March 29, 2011 Southwest Ontario Local Food Connection: Farmer / Food Buyer Networking Event

Western Fair Farmers' & Artisans' Market
Confederation Building, 900 King Street, London
12:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Join Southwest Ontario Local Food Connection as we present the 3rd annual Farmer/Food Buyer Networking Event. This event provides the opportunity for cooks and chefs, food retailers, food service, institutional food providers, food processors and food distributors to meet and develop business relationships with local farmers and producers.

Please Note: Space is limited, therefore, availability will be on a first come first served basis. Registration deadline: Tuesday, March 22nd, 2011
To Register Contact: Karen Eatwell – National Farmers Union Email: kareneatwell@execulink.com
Tel: 519-232-9638 or 1-800-832-9638
www.southwestontariolocalfoodconnection.ca/farmer_buyer_networking.html

March 29, 2011 "TASTE IT" Gala

Western Fair Farmers' & Artisans' Market
Confederation Building, 900 King Street, London
5:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Come out and enjoy this wonderful culinary event showcasing farmers and chefs to stimulate your tastebuds. "A celebration of Local Food not to be missed!" Cost: \$20 per person includes 5 complimentary tasting tickets. Further information:

[www.southwestontariolocalfoodconnection.ca, info@localfoodconnection.ca](http://www.southwestontariolocalfoodconnection.ca/info@localfoodconnection.ca), 519-438-5942.

Taxation

Canada Revenue Agency – Recently added forms and publications

- [RC4408 Farming Income and the AgriStability and AgriInvest Programs Harmonized Guide - Joint Forms and Guide](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tg/rc4408/) at <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tg/rc4408/>
- [RC4060 Farming Income and the AgriStability and AgriInvest Programs Guide](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tg/rc4060/) at <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tg/rc4060/>

Ontario Ministry of Revenue

- [Personal Income Tax - Tax Rates and Credits](#)
- [Canada Revenue Agency Harmonized Sales Tax \(HST\) - Videocasts](#) webpage.

The CRA created these videocasts to help GST/HST registrants transition to the harmonized sales tax (HST). The videocast entitled Transition to Harmonized Sales Tax - Information for Businesses is approximately one hour long and provides an overview of how the HST works, the transitional rules, how to collect and report the HST, electronic filing, point-of-sale rebates, and key dates in the transition.

Providing Tax Relief for Farmers - Tax Classification for Farm Bunkhouses

Ontario is changing the farm bunkhouses property tax classification from residential to farm beginning January 1, 2011. Farmers with residences that house temporary workers will pay the farm property tax rate, which is 75 per cent lower than the residential rate. [more>>](#)

Tax Information Forums

A one-stop information forum for small to medium-sized businesses.

A Tax Information Forum (TIF) is a FREE one-day event that provides you with an opportunity to access valuable information on key tax and business programs administered in Ontario.

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 of Ontario (EFO)

<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