



## IN THIS ISSUE...

- Foodland Ontario — The Brand Name in Fresh Ontario Foods
- OMAFRA Continues to Support Organic
- Advantage Good Agricultural Practices
- Tips for Managing Weeds in Summer
- Leverage Your Organic Advantage!
- Recent articles from OMAFRA newsletters
- Organic Producer Survey
- Other Links
- Links to Organic Agriculture

## Welcome to “ON Organic”

*Hugh Martin, Organic Crop Production Program Lead, OMAFRA*

I want to thank EFAO, COG and OCO for helping us to circulate the newsletter through their email groups. I encourage you to forward it on to colleagues who may find it useful. I welcome your comments on the newsletter.

I encourage you to subscribe to the newsletter so that you receive it directly as some of these groups will not forward it in the future, relying on your subscription to get it to you. Subscription is easy and free.

To subscribe to this newsletter, go to the webpage:

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/subscribe/index.html#organic>

The newsletter is also now 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.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/organic/organic.html>

## 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

Helen Prinold – OMAFRA, Client Account Officer (your link to the organic food industry)

Hugh Berges – OMAFRA, Manager Horticultural Technology

Linda Cooper – OMAFRA, Client Service Representative

## Foodland Ontario — The Brand Name in Fresh Ontario Foods

At Foodland Ontario we are continuing to support and promote fresh fruits and vegetables. The Foodland Ontario logo is recognized by 94 per cent of principal grocery shoppers in Ontario! To consumers, the Foodland Ontario brand represents fresh, local food and is a call to action. People who are familiar with the logo and Foodland Ontario advertising are **significantly** more likely to purchase fresh Ontario food. Foodland Ontario is clearly the brand name in fresh local produce for 9 out of 10 principal grocery shoppers!



How can you get involved? Use the Foodland Ontario logo! Your fresh Ontario food product can carry the Foodland Ontario logo at no charge - let's make it easy for Ontario consumers to find fresh local foods!

### Foodland Ontario Brand Awareness

#### 94% Symbol Recognition

The Foodland Ontario symbol is recognized by 94% of Ontario principal grocery shoppers. This result is up notably from the 86% level reported in 2005.

#### 88% Symbol Association with Fresh Produce

Of those who recognize the Foodland Ontario symbol, 88% associate the logo with fresh produce. This high brand association has held firm from 2004 and 2005, and suggests that Foodland Ontario's coordinated branding/advertising strategies and compelling in-store promotions have combined to sustain this strong result.

#### 86% Unaided Symbol Recognition

Without benefit of visual prompting, 86% of Ontario principal grocery shoppers with symbol awareness recall seeing the Foodland Ontario symbol on point of sale signs,

posters and other signage in the produce section of grocery stores. Foodland Ontario merchandising representatives visit over 1,100 stores 11 months of the year.

#### 87% Shoppers Prefer Ontario Produce

This number is comprised of those who will *definitely purchase* Ontario produce along with those who will *probably purchase* Ontario produce in the future.

#### Foodland Ontario Symbol & Advertising Awareness propels Ontario Produce Purchase

Those who are aware of the Foodland Ontario advertising are significantly more likely to purchase fresh Ontario produce than those are unaware of the advertising by a ratio of almost 3 to 2.

#### Pick Ontario Freshness

The Pick Ontario Freshness marketing strategy is an umbrella campaign that drives consumer demand and interest in ALL Ontario food promotions. It encourages consumers to be aware of the breadth, depth and variety of the fresh food Ontario has to offer, and purchase those foods in grocery stores, farmers' markets and restaurants across the province.

We are working with our Ontario food partners to move towards the promotion of other fresh Ontario food categories. These categories include; meats, deli, bakery, dairy and specialty foods. Moving forward requires collaboration between all parts of the Ontario foods value chain, including; producers, processors and retailers. As we continue to "forge ahead" Foodland Ontario's merchandising team will be able to expand their efforts in concert with industry to address other merchandising opportunities in grocery stores and farmer's markets!

If you would like to use the Foodland Ontario logo on your products, please contact [shana.barker@ontario.ca](mailto:shana.barker@ontario.ca) or 1-888-466-2372 (ext: 63947) for more information.

## OMAFRA Continues to Support Organic

Minister Dombrowsky attended the annual general meeting of the Organic Council of Ontario in March 2008 to announce \$200,000 in funding from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs. This funding is to determine how to help people – like traditional producers and processors – convert to organics. This project will identify new market opportunities and develop education and training

materials to help new farmers to enter the industry. The funding will also provide resources for market research and benchmarking of the Ontario organic sector. OMAFRA also supported the council with a grant of \$200,000 in March of 2007. Other support for organic includes several research projects funded through the OMAFRA New Directions program.

## **NEW RESOURCE: Advantage Good Agricultural Practices — enhancing food safety on the farm**

Ontario's conventional and organic producers who want to adopt food safety practices on their farms can now refer to a new resource developed by the OMAFRA Food Safety Programs Branch. The *Advantage Good Agricultural Practices* manual guides farmers through:

- Recognizing and assessing potential food safety risks on the farm
- Developing food safety practices to manage and reduce risks
- Record keeping tips

The *Advantage Good Agricultural Practices* manual benefits both single and multiple commodity farmers that want to follow one program and keep one set of records for their whole operation. The manual contains record templates, advice and examples for developing food safety practices and links to web-based resources.

For more information on *Advantage Good Agricultural Practices* or to order a copy, call the Agricultural Information Contact Centre at 1-877-424-1300 or visit our web site at [www.ontario.ca/good-ag-practices](http://www.ontario.ca/good-ag-practices).

## **Tips for Managing Weeds in the Summer Time** **Hugh Martin, Organic Crops Production Program Lead, OMAFRA**

1. Control them early – The greatest yield reduction to the crop occurs when weeds that emerge with the crop are allowed to escape. For most spring planted crops the critical time to manage weeds is during June and early July.
2. Know which weeds cause the most problems (crop competition, harvest interference or quality, weed seed potential) and put extra efforts on them.
3. Understand the biology of the weed especially if they are annual or perennial to know how best to work with them.
4. Don't let weeds go to seed in the field or in the field boundary areas, especially weeds that will blow seeds into the field to cause problems for next year.
5. Manage your crop to be as healthy and vigorous as possible to help it compete with the weeds.

## **Leverage Your Organic Advantage**

**Jamey Coughlin, Business Development Specialist, Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture**

Leverage Your Organic Advantage will help to answer the following questions:

- What does it take to go from a great idea to a sustainable business?
- Where are the opportunities?
- Do I really want to farm as a business?
- Why am I making this choice?
- Can I really have both values and viability?
- What are my organic advantages?

The intended audience

- Those dreaming about starting a sustainable farm or food business
- Existing operations looking for new ideas, inspiration and tactics

### **Overview:**

The choices made in the start-up phase can position an enterprise for long-term profitability and sustainability, control over its destiny and the opportunity for exceptional results. It is a universal truth for all businesses, but especially critical for people exploring ventures in the sustainable farming and food sector. There are many challenges to achieving profitability; global competition, centralized distribution, and price-conscious consumers detached from food sources and seasonality. These external factors, combined with the high costs of entry, long days and multiple skill requirements (production, finance and marketing) can conspire to derail even the most energetic, optimistic, idealistic and well funded start-up.

Full article is at: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri/bde/news/pdfs/Leverage%20summary.pdf>

Presented at the 2008 Guelph Organic Conference, January 2008

## Recent Articles from Other OMAFRA Newsletters

### Money for On-farm Environmental Improvements

By Donna Speranzini, Nutrient Management Program Lead, Horticulture, OMAFRA

The environmental efforts of horticultural producers continue to be recognized and encouraged. The Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan Program has extended funding of environmental projects for 2008. This funding bridges the gap between the Agriculture Policy Framework and the not yet announced Growing Forward federal initiative.

The maximum contribution per legal farm entity for Canada-Ontario Farm Stewardship Program (COFSP) and Greencover Canada (GC) combined is \$50,000 (the maximum contribution from Greencover Canada alone is \$20,000). An additional \$15,000 is available from the Canada-Ontario Water Supply Expansion Program (COWSEP). This is an increase over the previous program.

Producers who participated in a COFSP, GC or COWSEP between April, 2005 and March 31, 2008 will carry forward into 2008 any federal costshare received for projects claimed during that period.

Ontario producers with an Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Third Edition deemed appropriate through peer review are eligible to apply for costshare incentives through the Canada-Ontario Farm Stewardship Program, Greencover Canada, and the Canada-Ontario Water Supply Expansion Program to implement actions identified in their farm plans.

Funding is provided for anywhere from 30-50% of the project, depending on the particular details of the project. You have the opportunity to credit your time and machinery use as in-kind support for the project. Participants are also encouraged to take advantage of other sources of funding, for example your local conservation authority.

Although there is lots of money available, it is available on a first come first serve basis. So, if any of the projects identified above are on your to do list, the time is now for producers to take advantage of this program.

There are a lot of opportunities for organic producers to benefit from these programs. For more details contact the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association for more details Tel: 800-265-9751

Web: <http://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/cms/en/Programs/ProgramsAboutEFP.aspx?menuid=61>

### Vine Crop Pollination Pointers

By Elaine Roddy, Vegetable Crops Specialist, OMAFRA

As cucumbers, melons, pumpkins and squash come into flower it is a good time to walk through the field to make sure everything is going smoothly. Here are some quick facts about vine crop pollination.

From OMAFRA Vegetable ViewPoint newsletter. Full article is at: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/vegnews/2008/vg0608a2.htm>

### Cover Crops: Thinking Outside the Box (drill box that is)

By Anne Verhallen, Soil Management Specialist, OMAFRA

One of the biggest challenges of getting more cover crops planted is the planting; just getting the time, labour or equipment to get the seed to the field. Broadcasting is of course faster than drilling in seed and often works as well but what if you didn't have to even head to the field to plant the cover crop? What would that be worth to you?

From OMAFRA HortMatters. Full article is at: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/hortmatt/2008/06hrt08a2.htm>

### Effects of Cool Temperatures on Tomato Plants

By Janice LeBoeuf, Vegetable Crop Specialist, OMAFRA

Often, our early-planted tomatoes have to endure some cool weather. Here's a bit of a review of the effects of low temperatures on tomato transplants.

Tomatoes stop growing, and are susceptible to chilling injury, at temperatures between 0 and 10°C (32-50°F). Chilling injury can show up after short periods of the lower temperatures or long periods of the higher temperatures and can cause:

- stunted growth
- wilting, surface pitting or necrosis of foliage
- increased susceptibility to disease

Low soil temperatures also stunt plant growth and prevent root development.

From OMAFRA HortMatters. Full article is at: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/hortmatt/2004/08hrt04a1.htm>

## Recent Articles from Other OMAFRA Newsletters (cont'd)

### Millipedes Attacking Sweet Potatoes and Carrots in Ontario

By Jennifer Allen, Vegetable Crops Specialist, OMAFRA;  
Melanie Filotas, Specialty Crops IPM Specialist, OMAFRA

Millipedes are considered beneficial in vegetable production due to their habit of feeding on decaying plant material, which helps to incorporate organic matter into the soil. However, under certain conditions millipede populations can build to high levels and may damage roots and seedlings of a variety of crops. In recent years, millipedes have become an increasing problem in a number of Ontario crops, including no/low-till field corn and ginseng.

Over the last few years, we have seen crop damage and correspondingly found large numbers of millipedes in root vegetables. At the time, we did not have sufficient information to know whether millipedes were emerging as a new pest of root vegetables in Ontario, or whether they were simply secondary feeders entering these crops after being damaged by other pests. In the summer of 2007 a collaboration between University of Guelph researchers and OMAFRA staff was initiated to address the role of millipedes as a potential pest of Ontario root crops.

From OMAFRA Vegetable ViewPoint. Full article is at:  
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/vegnews/2008/vg0408a6.htm>

### Labelling Requirements for Meat Products

By Hélène Gadoury, Senior Communications Adviser, OMAFRA  
Labeling is an important means of communicating product information between you and your customers. All meat products sold to the public, including at the farmgate, farmers' markets or any other retail outlets, require proper labeling.

To help ensure a safe meat supply for consumers, all meat offered for sale in Ontario must be inspected and animals must be slaughtered at licensed abattoirs. Meat products produced in provincially-licensed plants are labelled in accordance with several regulations:

From OMAFRA Virtual Beef newsletter. Full article is at:  
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/livestock/beef/news/vbn0508a3.htm>

### The ABCs of Copper Bactericides

By Janice Leboeuf, Vegetable Crop Specialist, OMAFRA

**Activity** – How does copper work against pathogens?

**Bacteria** – At what stage can we have an effect?

**Copper formulations** – Are some better than others?

Here are a few points to help you design the best copper bactericide program for your operation.

From OMAFRA Vegetable Crop Update. Full article is at:  
<http://apps.omafra.gov.on.ca/scripts/english/crops/agriphone/article.asp?ID=1545#ABC>

## Organic Producer Survey

Hugh Martin, Organic Crops Production Program Lead, OMAFRA

In mid-April, many of you received an “Organic Needs Assessment Survey” by postal mail (about 6 pages) that asked you to answer various questions about your organic farming priorities for research and education needs. About 20% of the 800+ who received the survey have filled it out and mailed it back to OACC. Responses to the survey have likewise been good across the country. Thank you for your

responses. They are now being tabulated and analysed. I expect your answers and thoughtful comments will be most useful. If you have not mailed it in please do so as soon as possible to OACC. If you did not receive a survey, but would like to contribute your thoughts, please send me an email ([hugh.martin@ontario.ca](mailto:hugh.martin@ontario.ca)) and I will send a copy to you to fill out and forward to OACC.

## Other Links

### Local Food is Easy to Find

Here is a local website that allows consumers to find locally grown food and drink. The consumer enters their postal code or zip code and the closest food and drink producers will appear on a map. You can search with different ranges to find the closest producers. If you are a producer, farm market, baker, butcher, winery - are you on the map? <http://www.foodkm.com> or <http://www.foodmiles.us>

### OFC Website is Now Online

The Organic Federation of Canada brings together all the key players in Canada's Organic industry to ensure excellent standards and regulations that stimulate the growth of Canada's Organic sector. The website is at <http://www.organicfederation.ca> or <http://www.federationbiologique.ca>

### Resource Guide for Organic Insect and Disease Control

This is a good source of organic pest management information. NOTE: Not all products recommended are registered for use in Canada. <http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/pp/resourceguide/>

### Organic Farming and Climate Change (FiBL 2008) (PDF, 1.3 MB)

Study focusing on organic agriculture and mitigation and adaptation to predictable and unpredictable impacts of climate change - looks at the general contribution of agriculture to climate change; discusses the considerable potential of organic agriculture for reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, and its contribution to sequestration of CO<sub>2</sub> in the soil; outlines weaknesses of organic agriculture in the context of climate change; discusses the inclusion of organic agriculture in voluntary CO<sub>2</sub> emissions markets; includes bibliography, and a list of useful links (pp. 24-27). [http://www.intracen.org/Organics/documents/Organic\\_Farming\\_and\\_Climate\\_Change.pdf](http://www.intracen.org/Organics/documents/Organic_Farming_and_Climate_Change.pdf)

## Links to Organic Agriculture Information

### Organic Council of Ontario (OCO)

<http://www.organiccouncil.ca>

### Canadian Organic Growers (COG)

<http://www.cog.ca>

### 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](mailto:ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca)**

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

**[www.ontario.ca/omafra](http://www.ontario.ca/omafra)**