

# ONTARIO WILDLIFE DAMAGE COMPENSATION PROGRAM

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# Overview of OWDCP

- ✓ The objective of the OWDCP is to provide producers financial compensation for the loss of eligible livestock and poultry (or bee hives) caused by an eligible predator.
- ✓ Under the new program guidelines, municipal “evaluators” now act as municipal “investigators” to help determine if the kill or injury was the result of an eligible predator
- ✓ For successful claims OMAFRA calculates the Fair Market Value of the livestock/poultry.

# Eligible Livestock

- |           |        |         |
|-----------|--------|---------|
| ✓ Alpaca  | Fisher | Ostrich |
| ✓ Raccoon | Deer   | Lynx    |
| ✓ Rabbit  | Donkey | Llama   |
| ✓ Rhea    | Elk    | Marten  |
| ✓ Sheep   | Emu    | Mink    |
| ✓ Swine   | Fox    | Mule    |
| ✓ Bison   | Goat   |         |
| ✓ Cattle  | Horse  |         |

# Eligible Poultry

- ✓ Bobwhite, northern Turkey
- ✓ Chicken Wild Turkey
- ✓ Duck Ptarmigan, willow
- ✓ Goose Ptarmigan, rock
- ✓ Grouse, ruffed Partridge, gray (Hungarian)
- ✓ Grouse, spruce Grouse, sharp-tailed

# Eligible Predators

- ✓ Bear
- ✓ Bobcat
- ✓ Cougar
- ✓ Coyote
- ✓ Crow
- ✓ Eagle
- ✓ Elk
- ✓ Fisher
- ✓ Fox
- ✓ Hawk
- ✓ Lynx
- Mink
- Raccoon
- Raven
- Turkey Vulture
- Weasel
- Wolf

# New Program Guidelines

- ✓ Introduced Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 2017.
- ✓ Created numerous problems, most notably is the overly strict burden of proof producers must meet to have their claim approved.
- ✓ Over the past year, OFA has directly heard directly from hundreds of members and investigators on the need to change the program guidelines.
- ✓ Working with our commodity partners OFA has been engaging the government in a consultation process to address the changes that need to be made to restore producer confidence in the program and to achieve the stated objective of the OWDCP.

# SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

# Pillars of proof

- ✓ Implement the following solutions to address claims where predation is suspected but application does not provide sufficient evidence:
- ✓ Expand the acceptable evidence required to approve a claim beyond the current 3 pillars of evidence.
- ✓ Extension services through a predation expert be provided by OMAFRA in cases that are uncertain or require additional information to approve a claim.
- ✓ Shortening the amount of time, the investigator must respond from 72 hours to 36 hours



# Appeals Process

- ✓ Current Process is appeal decided by OMAFRA staff

## **Our Recommendation:**

- ✓ Appeals be decided by an independent panel represented by a producer, an investigator or predation expert, and OMAFRA staff.

# Fair Market Value

- ✓ OMAFRA assigns fair market value (FMV) for livestock/poultry injured/killed by eligible wildlife.
- ✓ FMV is the average value an owner might receive for an animal with specific characteristics, such as age and weight.

## Our Recommendations:

- ✓ Use same formula for cattle (1.5X FMV) to determine pregnancy premiums for sheep.
- ✓ Sex-specific market prices be used to determine the FMV of all classes of cattle killed by predators.
- ✓ Increase the valuation of newborn calves from 70% of the value of a 500-599lb weaned calf to 85% of the value, with values increasing 5% per month up to 100% value, as the current valuation standard provides.
- ✓ Allow producers to bring forward additional evidence when appealing FMV

# FBR eligibility Issues

## Current Treatment:

- ✓ producer has not paid FBRN invoice by March 1st.
- ✓ March 2<sup>nd</sup> producer has livestock kill by predator
- ✓ Claim will be denied

## Our Recommendations:

- ✓ Program guidelines be amended to ensure that farmers who pay their FBRN invoice for the year by September 1st remain eligible for claims, and that this be made retroactive to assist farmers already caught by this technicality.

# Reasonable Care Plans & Preventative Measures

## Current Treatment

- ✓ After 5 claims, a “reasonable care plan” must be submitted to communicate prevention measures employed by producer.
- ✓ No funding available to help producers implement preventative measures.

## Our Recommendations

- ✓ The number of claims before a reasonable care plan is required should consider herd size and number of predators in the area.
- ✓ Funding be made available, possibly through a companion program, for producers who wish to implement measures to prevent wildlife damage from occurring.