

OFAtoday

2019 Edition

Annual Update from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture



Grassroots activities drive
a stronger, competitive
agri-food sector



Annual Publication
ofa.on.ca



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OFA

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EDITOR

Tyler Brooks

OFA Today is published for the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), the largest general farm organization in Ontario, representing 38,000 farms, farm businesses and farm family members and supporters. As a dynamic, farmer-led organization based in Guelph, OFA works to represent and champion the interests of Ontario farmers through government relations, farm policy recommendations, lobby efforts, research, community representation, media relations and more. OFA is the leading advocate for Ontario's farmers and is Ontario's voice of the farmer.

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Tyler Brooks, Ontario
Federation of Agriculture,
Director of Digital
Communications

Editor's note

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is thrilled to share our 2019 issue of *OFA Today*. Our annual publication offers a great opportunity to reflect on another busy and productive year for the organization. Inside this year's issue we share highlights from OFA projects, initiatives and activities, OFA member contest winners, key priorities impacting Ontario farm families, and bid farewell to retiring OFA staff and board members.

OFA Today is a valuable resource for communicating with our members on key issues and activities affecting their farm businesses, and an opportunity to share our accomplishments, showcase our success stories and promote the work we do on behalf of our members. This annual publication also offers the chance to reach out, connect and encourage our members to get involved and bring your voice to the table.

Within these pages we feature a recap of OFA's advocacy and government relations activities, 2018 membership survey, Member Service Representative (MSR) profiles, agricultural policy work and updates on our Benefit Program that delivers enhanced value and savings to all OFA members.

We highlight winning entries from the Proud to Farm photo contest, Honda draw winners, student bursary award recipients, member outreach campaigns and the best captions from OFA's social media Caption This! contest.

We hope you take the time to browse through these pages and catch up on the latest OFA activities and initiatives. Thank you for your ongoing support. We look forward to a new year of growth and opportunities for Ontario's largest industry – agriculture and food.

Sincerely,



Tyler Brooks
Editor



Keith Currie, Ontario
Federation of Agriculture,
President

President's message

Life moves fast. And putting together our annual *OFA Today* magazine provided the perfect opportunity to review and reflect on the activities OFA has been leading throughout the last year.

In 2018, we had provincial and municipal elections, and that gave OFA a great forum to highlight the opportunities our industry needs to stay competitive and continue to be one of the biggest contributors to the Ontario economy. We started the year with our Producing Prosperity in Ontario campaign – to frame our messages around the provincial election. It was a bold move for our organization as it took us beyond the farm gate to look at agriculture's ability to address urban concerns. The campaign was a great success and it continues to resonate with the first term of the new PC government.

We continue to host events at Queen's Park throughout the year to advocate for key issues and policies, and reinforce the need for distributing economic development across the province to keep our sector driving the provincial economy.

As the calendar turns to 2019, our work continues at the municipal and provincial levels to ensure regulations are viewed and vetted from our industry's perspective, and to ensure we have sound investments that create economic opportunities for OFA members and their farm businesses, and our rural communities.

I am honoured to be in my third term as OFA president, leading our 38,000 member strong organization for another year. We have made some great strides in 2018, with greater collaboration throughout the agri-food sector that is helping to move our industry forward. We are in a solid position to continue our work with all levels of government to create good policy that makes sense for our sector and supports a stronger, more vibrant agricultural community.

As a farmer-led, grassroots organization, OFA values the relationships we have with members, our county federations and our industry partners. I am proud of our organization and look ahead to a productive and prosperous year for Ontario's agri-food sector.

Thank you,



Keith Currie
OFA President

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Turning up the volume on mental health in agriculture

When Andria Jones-Bitton released her groundbreaking study on mental health in Canadian agriculture in 2015, it sparked a lot of conversations about the state of mental wellness and the taboo surrounding the entire subject. The 2015/2016 survey of more than 1,100 farmers across the country was led by Jones-Bitton, an epidemiologist at the University of Guelph's Ontario Veterinary College. And the results were shocking – 35% of producers met the criteria for depression, 45% were classified as having high stress and 58% met the criteria for anxiety.

While some in the industry were surprised at the findings, it opened the door for others to begin sharing their stories to stem the tide of those suffering in silence. And that was an interesting response from an industry where talking about mental health was never overtly encouraged.

I believe that it's essential for Canada to develop a national strategy for farmer mental health that allows for provinces and territories to better support their farmers.

Andria Jones-Bitton, Ontario Veterinary College

"The support from the agricultural community has been overwhelming," says Jones-Bitton. And she knows her research is making a difference. "Many organizations have added mental health to their agendas or have started to create programming to assist farmers – and that shows, at least informally, that the increased presence on mental wellness is having an impact."

Do More Agriculture Foundation

There's one new organization where the conversation about mental health in agriculture is definitely making an impact. Around the same time that Jones-Bitton's work was coming out, two Saskatchewan farmers were starting conversations in social media about the stress of farming and the impact on mental health – from their own experiences and those around them. The response spurred Lesley Kelly and Kim Keller – along with two others from outside the industry – to start a foundation to champion the mental wellbeing of Canadian producers. The Do More Agriculture Foundation officially launched in January 2018 with a mandate to create awareness, build community and support ongoing research.

"Our culture in agriculture is built on strength and perseverance," says Kelly, an active social media advocate including her High Heels & Canola Fields blog. "We're



Andria Jones-Bitton, epidemiologist at the University of Guelph's Ontario Veterinary College conducted groundbreaking research on the mental health of Canadian farmers.

trying to create a network and build a community where people feel safe and supported, and can find the resources they need if they require support or they are a support person. We know that we can all make a positive impact on the industry by talking more, asking more and listening more."

We can all make a positive impact on mental health in our industry by talking more, asking more and listening more.

Lesley Kelly, co-founder, Do More Agriculture Foundation

Kelly acknowledges that while there are a lot of mental health resources available, there are very few farmer-specific resources that address this population that requires a unique approach. "One of our first goals as a foundation was to begin to provide mental health first aid training to 10 to 12 communities across Canada – and we had more than 100 communities apply."

She also cites the importance of ongoing research from Jones-Bitton and her colleagues. "We knew there were barriers to addressing mental health in agriculture, but we didn't know the extent until we saw Andria's study."



Lesley Kelly, co-founder of Do More Agriculture Foundation.

When 40% of farmers feel uneasy raising their hand to seek help because of what people may think, Kelly knows there is much more work to be done. “We are looking at how to work together across the industry so it’s not just one organization trying to do it all.”

What comes next?

Jones-Bitton has more research in the works and she also believes it’s essential that Canada develop a national strategy for farmer mental health. “A national strategy would avoid duplication of efforts and make more efficient use of funding and resources,” says Jones-Bitton. “I’m encouraging people that support this type of initiative to share the message within their agricultural organizations and government representatives.”

On the study front, Jones-Bitton and her team have a few projects underway including in-depth interviews with a wide swath of the agriculture industry to look at the perceived impacts of mental health. “We’re talking to farmers, veterinarians, agricultural government and agriculture industry representatives to explore the lived experience of mental health in agriculture,” says Jones-Bitton.

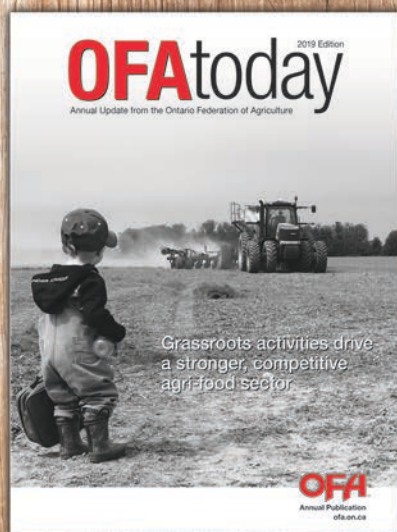
The research team has also developed a new mental health literacy training program, specifically for Canadian agriculture called “In The Know.” Working with industry

stakeholders, the program teaches farmers and those working with farmers about common mental health conditions, signs and symptoms to watch for, how to start a conversation and how to help someone get support. “We are currently testing the program and if all goes well, we’ll release it in early summer 2019. We’re also creating an online version that people can do at their own pace,” says Jones-Bitton.

Kelly and Jones-Bitton are both feeling positive about the strides that are being made when it comes to opening up about mental health in the agriculture industry. “We’ve come a long way in the short time, and I commend the agricultural community on this,” says Jones-Bitton. “It’s really important that we continue to conduct research to ensure we are creating resources and training programs that are based on evidence gathered through research.”

For Kelly, she’s seeing more rallying and championing of the conversations happening around the state of mental health. “We are definitely moving the dial for farmers, getting mental health on the agenda at farm events, more conversations online, and feedback from farmers and our Do More Ag partners.”

If you or someone you know is struggling, a list of online resources is available at www.domore.ag. OFA is a partner in the Do More Agriculture Foundation. **OFA**



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Getting agri-food on the government agenda

An election year provides a great focal point for OFA's government relations activities – and 2018 gave us two opportunities to talk about the agri-food sector with provincial and municipal candidates. Every interaction with politicians and policymakers gives OFA another forum to position the economic powerhouse that is our agri-food industry. Here's what was on our political calendar throughout 2018 – the activities and messages that anchored our government relations work on behalf of every OFA member.

Queen's Park Event

OFA held a media conference at Queen's Park to introduce our Producing Prosperity in Ontario campaign – and reinforce the investments needed for our agri-food sector and rural communities. We held the event in partnership with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Eastern and Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus.



Provincial Election Kit

To help every county get the agri-food sector and rural community issues on the minds of provincial election candidates, OFA produced an election kit filled with messaging and materials around our Producing Prosperity in Ontario campaign. The kit included a short video on the opportunities in our sector and rural communities, postcards, background information and a special website just for election messaging – producingprosperity.ca. We also created a pledge form to encourage candidates to show their support for distributing economic development around the province.

2018

January

February

March

April

May

June

July

August

MPP Newsletter

Our quarterly update to all MPPs. This issue focused on the Producing Prosperity in Ontario election messages and summarized recent government submissions OFA made on behalf of its members.



Caucus Breakfast

OFA hosted three breakfasts at Queen's Park to serve up Ontario agriculture to members of the Liberal, NDP and PC caucus. We used the events to talk about the benefits of distributing economic opportunities around the province as part of our Producing Prosperity in Ontario campaign.

Post Election

OFA reached out to key elected officials after the June provincial election to follow up on our election messages of distributing economic development around the province.

After the PC government ministers were named, OFA sent letters to key government ministries outlining priorities for the agri-food sector and rural communities.

We Are Ontario

To introduce the majority of new politicians in Queen's Park to our sector, we created a new brochure – We Are Ontario – as an overview of the agri-food sector. This piece was sent to all MPPs with their fall issue of OFA's quarterly MPP newsletter.

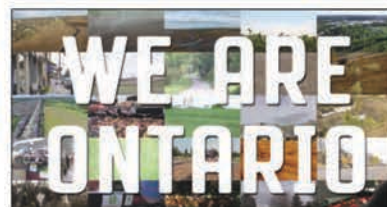


How to Lobby Workshop

At the 2018 OFA annual meeting, we presented a workshop on how to lobby municipal politicians. With simple tips, the presentation provided important dos and don'ts when advocating for agriculture in your local municipality. See article on page 15 for more workshop highlights.

We Are Ontario Video

OFA created a short video, based on our We Are Ontario brochure, that provides an overview of our agri-food sector primarily for politicians and those not familiar with the diversity and depth of our industry. The video is available for use at OFA meetings, presentations and events. View it at [YouTube.com/OntarioFarms](https://www.youtube.com/OntarioFarms).



September

October

November

December

Municipal Election

OFA created a how-to guide for members to use when meeting with candidates in the municipal election, including messaging about key agricultural issues that are managed at the local level.

Queen's Park Event

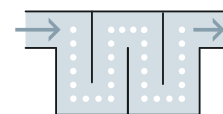
OFA hosted a media event with Food and Beverage Ontario and Spirits Canada to mark Ontario Agriculture Week and celebrate the diversity of our industry. We met with several government ministers and held an evening reception for all MPPs.



MPP Newsletter

Our fall issue featured highlights from our new We Are Ontario brochure, and itemized key issues that are important to the agri-food sector and rural communities.





Would you install **WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS** on your farm if they were available?

YES 68%

NO 32%

OFA ONLINE POLL SURVEY AUG. 2018

New sites test technologies to reduce phosphorus losses to Lake Erie

There's no straight line or simple solution to effectively reduce the levels of phosphorus lost to Lake Erie – it takes a collaborative approach. OFA continues to work closely with the Thames River Phosphorus Reduction Collaborative (PRC) to examine and document the efficacy of a number of phosphorus absorption products that can be used in field tile systems, municipal drains and at pumping stations.



The Thames River Phosphorus Reduction Collaborative includes a diverse group of stakeholders that represent agricultural organizations, municipalities, conservation authorities, First Nations, 4R Nutrient Stewardship, the drainage sector and environmental non-governmental organizations.

During 2018, OFA secured federal funding to help establish Ontario test sites that will use phosphorus reducing technology in drainage systems at locations in Chatham-Kent, Oxford and Middlesex. One test site is currently operating with plans for eight more to become operational during 2019.

OFA plays a key role in phosphorus coalition activities with OFA Vice President Mark Reusser co-chairing the Thames River PRC steering committee, together with Randy Hope, former Mayor of Chatham-Kent. OFA also provides additional funding and administration support for the coalition and helps identify test sites and recruit farmer participation through its local federation network.

Results from the phosphorus absorption test sites will be applicable throughout Ontario. And the activities of the Thames River PRC complement the 4R Nutrient Stewardship program, as well as the promotion of cover crops and greenhouse gas emission reduction to collectively reduce phosphorus losses from agriculture into Lake Erie.

For more information on Thames River projects, visit thamesriverprc.com. **OFA**



Thames River Phosphorus Reduction Collaborative committee members.



Working to reduce phosphorus entering waterways, the Thames River Phosphorus Reduction Collaborative operates on-farm test sites to evaluate new technology and drainage systems.



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Reducing the damage around wildlife compensation



OFA has been advocating for changes to the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program and saw progress in 2018 with the removal of the March 1 participation deadline.

The Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program is designed to provide producers with fair market value when livestock, poultry or bee hives are lost to predators. One of the key parts of the program is the “eligibility” fine print for both the prey and predator. In 2017, new guidelines were announced for the program that impacted hundreds of OFA members and investigators.

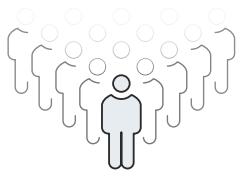
In response to member concerns, OFA began advocating for the following changes to the program:

- Broaden the acceptable evidence required to support and approve a damage claim
- Shift the appeal process to an independent panel instead of OMAFRA staff
- Remove the arbitrary March 1 deadline (based on FBR) to participate in the program
- Support preventative measures to restrict wildlife damage, with accompanying funding

Preliminary changes to the program were announced in September 2018 that removed the March 1 deadline for participation. This change is a good start and means producers can no longer be arbitrarily denied a claim on this technicality. The provincial government also announced that a consultation would take place by the end of 2018*, in anticipation of further program changes in 2019.

Since the program was updated in 2017, OFA has been working with commodity partners to engage with government on the changes that are needed to wildlife damage compensation that will restore producer confidence in the program, and ensure the program is delivering on its intended objectives. This work will continue until the program is updated to adequately and fairly compensate Ontario farmers for predator losses. **OFA**

**Editor's note: At the time of publication, the 2018 consultation results had not been shared publicly.*



Do you see potential for
LONG-TERM GROWTH
in rural Ontario?

YES 77%

NO 23%

OFA ONLINE POLL SURVEY MAY 2018

The big three infrastructure investments rural Ontario needs

Every community depends on a set of services to operate in a productive and efficient way. The depth of this infrastructure impacts how well a community functions and how well its citizens are supported in their day to day living. It's no surprise that the lion's share of provincial infrastructure funding supports urban Ontario, even though rural Ontarians require a similar set of services, as well as some additional infrastructure that's unique to rural living.

OFA has been advocating for a change in how infrastructure investments are distributed around Ontario – providing farms and rural communities with appropriate levels of support and services. The concept of distributed economic development is the cornerstone of our Producing Prosperity in Ontario campaign that drove our provincial election messaging in 2018 and continues to be the focus for our work with government.

If natural gas was available across the province, it would save an estimated \$1 billion every year in energy costs for Ontario farmers, business owners and rural residents.

There are three core areas of rural infrastructure that need the backing and support of the provincial government.

1. Natural gas

Expanding access to natural gas is the single most important investment that the provincial government can make to support thriving farms and rural businesses. OFA is encouraged by the government's plans to introduce a new *Access to Natural Gas Act* that would encourage partnerships between private gas distributors and communities to develop projects that expand access to natural gas.



An investment of \$75 million every year for 20 years would expand natural gas access across rural Ontario.

2. Broadband internet

You don't have to look very hard in any urban Ontario centre to find access to the internet. Rural Ontario is an entirely different situation – and yet, being connected is a fundamental necessity for running any business, no matter where you are located. Like the vast majority of citizens, farmers rely on the internet. They go online to make business decisions, operate on-farm technology, look for marketing options for farm products, access continuing education, gather farm management information and communicate with the community. But, access to high speed internet in rural and remote areas of Ontario is still a modern-day struggle.

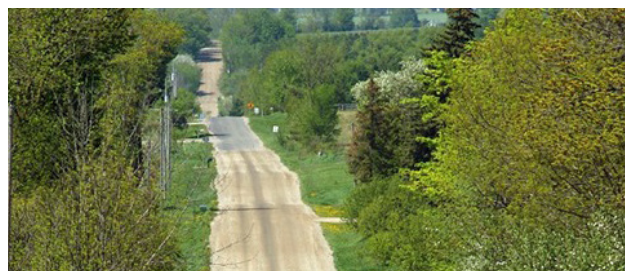
Rural Ontarians must not be disadvantaged for choosing to live and work in rural areas. We require and expect the same access, level and range of services as our urban neighbours.



Rural Ontario access to high speed internet is still a modern-day struggle.

3. Rural roads and bridges

Rural municipalities are responsible for a disproportionate amount of infrastructure, compared to the population and tax base of the rural communities they serve. The upkeep of rural roads and bridges fall into this category, and OFA is pushing the provincial government to increase the funding for these services. **OFA**



Ontario faces an estimated \$60 billion funding gap for municipal infrastructure over the next 10 years.



Have labour regulations
RESTRICTED GROWTH
for your farm business?

YES 50%

NO 50%

OFA ONLINE POLL SURVEY NOV. 2018

Legislative changes for Ontario workplaces

It's no secret that Bill 148 was not widely welcomed by the agricultural community when it was introduced by the provincial Liberal government in late 2017. There are many components to the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017* that emerged from Bill 148 that caused problems for small and medium sized employers. The main impact on Ontario farm employers, and small businesses across rural Ontario, was the unprecedented and rapid rise in the cost of labour through the minimum wage.

OFA wants workers to have rewarding workplaces where they are treated fairly. But the timelines and pace of labour reform must respect the ability of businesses to comply while still providing jobs.

OFA has always maintained that the changes imposed on the agriculture sector with Bill 148 were too much, too fast for businesses to absorb. With a rise in minimum wage to \$14 in 2018 and a planned rise to \$15 in 2019, Bill 148 also introduced a number of new expectations on employers around sick days, vacation time, personal emergency leave and payment for shift cancellation.

OFA made many presentations and submissions to the previous Liberal government outlining how Bill 148 would hurt the competitiveness of our sector and jeopardize Ontario's food security.

We met with Laurie Scott, the new PC Minister of Labour to provide an update on how Bill 148 is affecting agricultural production in Ontario, and it seems our message has been heard. We also expressed our support for the government's plans to repeal and revise the *Fair Workplaces, Better Jobs Act, 2017* to reflect the realities of farming and operating a small business, with realistic timelines for implementing any new labour regulations.

Since then, the new PC government in Ontario has announced they will keep the minimum wage at \$14 until 2020. The government also introduced and passed Bill 47, *Making Ontario Open for Business Act, 2018*. This new proposed legislation will reverse or postpone much of Bill 148.

We'll be following this file closely and keep all members up-to-date with information at ofa.on.ca. **OFA**

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Do you get involved in
MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS
in your community?

YES 58%

NO 42%

OFA ONLINE POLL SURVEY OCT. 2018

Tips for lobbying politicians in your area

It's not a dirty word. Lobbying is the art of using persuasive communications to provide decisions makers with a different perspective or point of view. Sometimes we call it advocacy or public affairs or government relations, and it's at the heart of the OFA's work with all levels of government.

Lobbying is your democratic right.

Gerry Macartney

When it comes to the local level, advocating with municipal politicians is something that many OFA members have an opportunity to do at community and industry events and during election campaigns.

Gerry Macartney knows all about influencing municipal politicians. He's the CEO of the London Chamber of Commerce and presented a workshop at the 2018 OFA annual meeting on how to deal effectively with municipal government.

"It's important to note that most politicians go into politics motivated by a genuine sense of public service. They don't intentionally put themselves out there to be knocked down," says Macartney. "Politics move so fast with 24/7 media that politicians are making decisions with limited information and don't have the time and resources for details."

So why do we lobby? For Macartney, the answer is simple – governments represent a threat or an opportunity to us. Lobbying continues to have an impact on public policy, and politicians want to know what their constituents think before they vote or enact legislation.

Here are Macartney's top to do and not to do lists. Think about these as you plan your next breakfast meeting or community event with municipal government in your area.

TO DO list

- Be early and be first
- Get a firm date, time and place for a meeting
- Confirm who will be attending
- Huddle up with your group before the meeting to practice
- Keep your agenda to a maximum of 2-3 issues and keep your comments brief
- Focus on the impact on OFA members
- Try to get a commitment but always leave the door open

"Remember that it's an entire council you have to persuade. You need to be relentless as it could take three or four years to move the needle on an issue," says Macartney.



London Chamber of Commerce CEO, Gerry Macartney presenting tips for lobbying at OFA's 2018 AGM.

DO NOT DO list

- Don't lecture or deliver a speech
- Don't take no for an answer
- Don't show up with more people than confirmed
- Don't argue or escalate an issue
- Don't stray from your key points
- Don't try to be an expert if you aren't
- Don't indulge in adult beverages **OFA**



Do you agree with the elimination of Ontario's **CAP & TRADE PROGRAM?**

YES 76%

NO 24%

OFA ONLINE POLL SURVEY JULY 2018

What comes after Cap and Trade?

OFA welcomed the Ontario PC government's introduction of Bill 4, *Cap and Trade Cancellation Act, 2018* at the end of last year, repealing the Cap and Trade program the former Liberal government had introduced in 2017. Overall, OFA is pleased that Bill 4 is now legislation, and we look forward to working with the provincial government to address the potential impacts of climate change and collaborate on how our sector can help reach provincial emissions reduction targets.

The previous Cap and Trade program was a complex, market-driven approach to price greenhouse gas emissions, where levies were collected by fuel distributors and then used to purchase emission allowances from the government at quarterly auctions. The funds raised by government through the auctions were, by law, to be used to fund programs and initiatives that reduced greenhouse gases.

OFA believes farmers should be recognized for their ongoing efforts to manage and enhance the environmental and ecological benefits in agriculture.

The *Cap and Trade Cancellation Act, 2018* outlines how the provincial government will wind down the Cap and Trade program – including who will be compensated for previous allowance purchases, how the government will set targets for greenhouse gas reductions, and how the remaining proceeds from cap and trade auctions will be spent. In this new legislation, OFA would still like to see funding available to implement the provincial soil strategy.

Here are highlights of OFA's submissions to the government in advance of Bill 4 being passed.

- The agri-food sector is dependent on stable and predictable weather, and the increased variability in temperature created by climate change pose a significant risk to farming in Ontario.
- OFA would like to see policies, programs and research – developed collaboratively with government and citizens – to enable farmers to adapt to the effects of climate change.
- OFA supports the cancellation of the Cap and Trade program, but we are concerned about the loss of funding granted through the former Climate Change Action Plan including \$30 million to fund Ontario's Agricultural Soil Health and Conservation Strategy.
- OFA requests funding from the former Greenhouse Gas Reduction Account be redirected to implement the provincial soil strategy.

- Farmers are effective managers of carbon and nitrogen cycles, and are in a unique position to be part of the solution to climate change, and provide additional greenhouse gas mitigation opportunities.
- OFA recommends that government create opportunities for meaningful consultations with industry and stakeholders – including agriculture – that best know how to lessen the impact of climate change.
- Ontario's agriculture sector must have a significant voice on any climate change advisory panel, including the development of a climate change plan.
- OFA believes farmers should be recognized for their ongoing efforts to manage and enhance the environmental and ecological benefits in agriculture that improve air and water purification, regulate temperature, create biodiversity and habitats, manage flood and erosion control and sequester carbon.

At this time, it's our understanding that the Government of Ontario will not be imposing a carbon tax. As a result, it's likely that the Federal Carbon Pricing Backstop plan (carbon tax) will be applied to Ontario emitters with rebates delivered directly to Ontario residents. The federal carbon tax will not be applied to diesel and gasoline used in agricultural production, and natural gas used in the greenhouse sector will be rebated at 80%. OFA and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) are lobbying the Canadian government for an exemption of all fuels used in agricultural production.

OFA promotes the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in agriculture that include soil and crop management, precision agriculture and continued research to develop new practices and technology.

Our work continues on research and initiatives that help Ontario farmers adapt to the impacts of climate change. We believe an effective approach for reducing greenhouse gas in the agricultural sector is to promote practices that help farmers adopt beneficial management practices to increase crop resilience to extreme weather variations, use more precision agriculture technologies that tailor inputs more closely to the needs of plants and animals, and to incentivize farm activities that increase carbon reductions and biological carbon sinks. **OFA**



Are you concerned about the new Health Canada **LIVESTOCK PRESCRIPTION REQUIREMENTS?**

YES 82%

NO 18%

OFA ONLINE POLL SURVEY APR. 2018



An update on medically important antimicrobials

An effective resistance management plan takes a full group effort. And if you raise livestock, you know that the increasing resistance to antimicrobials could pose a significant and serious threat to human and animal health. With an estimated 82% of all antimicrobials used in Canada related to the agriculture industry, the responsible use of antimicrobials on the farm remains the best way to ensure antibiotics and other medications continue to be a valuable tool in the future to treat and prevent disease.

In a move to help combat antimicrobial resistance, Health Canada has given medically-important antimicrobials (MIAs) prescription status, meaning they must be sold and distributed like other prescription drugs. MIAs are antimicrobial drugs that are important for use in humans to treat or prevent disease or infection. To align with these federal changes, the provincial government made changes to the *Livestock Medicines Act* in 2018, to prohibit the sale of MIAs over the counter through livestock medicine outlets, and available only with a valid prescription.

OFA provided input on these proposed changes, recommending livestock medicine outlets be permitted to

sell MIAs when presented with a veterinary prescription. We believed this adjustment would have eliminated any challenges with producers having timely access to medications. However, our request was not reflected in the final legislative changes. As of December 1, 2018, all livestock producers must obtain MIAs from a licensed veterinarian who they have a previous existing relationship with.

Another change to antimicrobial use in livestock, to help reduce the risk of antimicrobial resistance, is the removal of all growth promotion claims from MIAs as of December 2018. That means livestock producers can no longer use MIAs therapeutically to increase growth or feed efficiency in their animals.

These changes to the use and availability of MIAs make it more important than ever for livestock producers to establish and maintain a relationship with their veterinarian. Working together on management practices, herd health plans and alternative treatment options will help reduce the risk of antimicrobial resistance. **OFA**

New tax class recognizes on-farm value-added operations

When the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) provides farm property tax assessments every four years, it classifies properties based on the current use of the land and buildings as farm, residential, commercial or industrial.

In May 2018, the Ministry of Finance approved changes that allow upper and single tier* municipalities to create a new property tax class for on-farm, value-added activities starting in the 2019 tax year. Before this announcement, any on-farm facility that processed and/or retailed farm commodities was taxed at full commercial or industrial rates.

The new value-added property class provides a more sustainable property tax rate for farmers who diversify

their operations with small-scale processing or retail activities as a way to extend their farm business. The changes to the *Assessment Act* have created this new subclass for these value-added activities under the existing industrial and commercial property tax classes.

Here's how it works

In municipalities that adopt the new optional property class, the first \$50,000 in assessed value of on-farm, value-added facilities will be taxed at 25% of the local commercial or industrial tax rate. On-farm facilities assessed at more than \$1 million are not eligible for this new value-added property tax. **OFA**

Sample table: property taxes paid under new property class vs current treatment

Value-Added Use	Taxable Assessment	Tax Class (old)	Tax Owed (old)	Tax Owed (New)	Difference
Land	\$3,000	Industrial	\$102	\$26	\$76
Building	\$60,000	Industrial	\$2,045	\$843	\$1,202
Total	\$63,000	-	\$2,147	\$869	\$1,278

*All farms in Ontario are located in upper and single tier municipalities.

Q&A with OFA President Keith Currie

As Keith Currie starts his third term as OFA president, we checked in with him on some of the issues and opportunities in the agricultural industry that impact OFA's 38,000 members.

What are the biggest changes you've seen within OFA in the past year?

Keith: Launching our Producing Prosperity in Ontario campaign ahead of the 2018 provincial election was a new direction for OFA. We positioned our industry as key to the provincial economy, and even suggested ways rural Ontario could address concerns facing urban Ontario. That was a brand new direction for the organization, and we used it to influence party platforms and secure commitments with politicians that work for rural Ontario and our farm businesses. And I'm encouraged that we're continuing to push that message and theme this year.

What are the grassroots concerns you're hearing about from members?

Keith: We are continuing to deal with predation, property taxes and business risk management programming. The 2018 fall harvest brought challenges to many with weather and the troubling DON levels in the corn crop. The high cost of doing business is an ongoing concern – from fees to slow approvals and burdensome regulations. We are encouraged that provincial and federal governments are seriously talking about red tape reduction to create a more competitive business climate.

What and where are the exciting opportunities for agriculture?

Keith: Growth is a big opportunity. Our Producing Prosperity in Ontario campaign carries tremendous potential to really boost economic development opportunities in rural Ontario, the entire agri-food value chain and Ontario's sagging manufacturing sector. And when we think about big data and precision technology, we have tools and opportunities that we hadn't even imagined a decade ago.

What keeps you up at night?

Keith: You learn quickly that making things personal and taking issues home with you only hurts you and your family. My hectic schedule means getting sleep whenever I can. When we lose opportunities for this great industry, it doesn't keep me awake at night but I do think about it a lot.



What makes you most proud about our industry?

Keith: Ontario agriculture is big and it's diverse. It's not easy to pull the collective industry closer together, but it's something I work towards in my role as OFA president. Our ties with organizations inside and outside of agriculture are increasingly stronger, and that bodes well for our industry going forward. Our Producing Prosperity campaign is one example of how we went beyond the farm gate to look at possibilities for farming and food in Ontario with solid messaging to promote sound public policy.

What are the key member issues OFA is focusing on this year?

Keith: We'll be continuing the Producing Prosperity messaging – it's a long-term, overarching theme for OFA to push for real investments that will help our sector continue to grow the economy. The new provincial government has put an immediate emphasis on reducing red tape, so we'll be working with them on less burdensome ways to operate our farm businesses. We'll also continue working on maintaining and building relationships with government that help facilitate the conversations and advocacy on specific farm issues.

What do you hear from young farmers about their outlook on agriculture?

Keith: How to get more young farmers involved in the business and in agricultural organizations like OFA is a recurring theme in the industry. It's not a new discussion – I remember it from 30 years ago when I began my farming career. But I do think we are making progress.

It is daunting to get started in farming, but I believe our youth are excited about what lies ahead of our industry... and they should be. It's really encouraging to see the new ideas and creativity coming from young people entering the market with new products, new marketing plans and new ways to address consumer demands.

Where does OFA need to be in 5-10 years to continue to represent and reflect the interests of Ontario farmers and the agri-food sector?

Keith: I am proud of our board and our ability to grasp and run with the concept of Producing Prosperity to demonstrate that today's agriculture needs to be integrated up and down the value chain, and across the public domain. I want OFA to continue to lead in that direction. We need to continue to focus on that kind of future and what the industry can and will evolve into with stronger investments in economic development across rural Ontario. Today isn't the world of my parent's agriculture, it's mine. And tomorrow will be our children's world of agriculture. I am very excited for them and for what lies ahead. **OFA**

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Local OFA members build ag awareness in 2018

Advocacy was on the agenda for many OFA members and local federations in 2018. And with both provincial and municipal elections last year, everyone had plenty of opportunities to speak up for Ontario's agri-food industry and the importance of farming in their communities.


OFA's Proud to Lead "Involve" Fund enabled many county and regional federations to develop supporting materials for advocating and raising awareness of agriculture in their local areas. The program funded a total of 18 projects last year that helped county and regional



members increase visibility in their communities, encourage involvement and recruit new volunteers and develop advocacy support materials. Sponsored by Farm Credit Canada, the Proud to Lead "Involve" Fund sponsors

new events to engage OFA members, and promotes increasing the visibility of local federations. The program also supports local events to encourage the involvement and mentorship of young and beginning, or previously uninvolved members. Applications for 2019 programs will be available at ofa.on.ca. **OFA**

Here's a sample of 2018 projects from across the province.





What is the DFA?

The Dundas Federation of Agriculture is part of the largest farming organization in Ontario. We work to further the interests of farmers and farming families within the community, and support and promote the importance of agriculture in conjunction with local county groups.

Why agriculture?

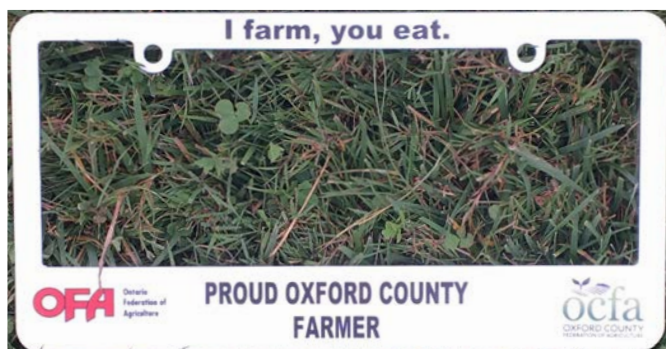
Historically, agriculture has been an essential part of the community. Not only is agriculture the leading industry amongst SD&G, but it is an integral part of the lifestyle for many of our families and neighbours, and has been for many generations.

DFA  dundasagriculture.com  facebook.com/DundasFederationofAgriculture/

Dundas and Prince Edward County Federations created brochures to share when promoting their organizations and agriculture.



Lennox & Addington Federation members sport branded hats, designed to promote their organization in the community.



Oxford County Federation of Agriculture extended their visibility to the roadways by developing branded licence plate covers.

#MeetYourMSR

Strategically located across rural Ontario are OFA's power team of 21 knowledgeable, in-your-neighbourhood Member Service Representatives (MSRs). Late last year, we launched a new social media campaign to help OFA members get to know a little bit more about the stories, the work and the passion behind OFA MSRs. Here are the first five [#MeetyourMSR](#) features we hope you've seen around the digital world. Watch for the new ones every month.

ontariofarms
#MeetyourMSR Margaret Vincent [@vincent9margaret](#), OFA's Member Service Representative for Huron & Perth. Margaret grew up on a dairy farm in Huron County, where she currently lives & farms with her family growing and producing corn, soybeans, wheat, sheep & beef cattle. Margaret is the President of the Huron Plowmen's Association, former Huron County Queen of the Furrow and has been involved with the local elementary school fair for 7 years. Her most memorable MSR moment was assisting with the Huron County Food Court at IPM 2017. She is a Ridgeway Campus Alumni and enjoys playing hockey & slo-pitch [#MSRMunday](#) [#teamOFA](#) [#ontag](#) [#huroncounty](#) [#perthcounty](#) 📍

ontariofarms
#MeetyourMSR Mark Torrey [@farmertorrey](#), OFA's Member Service Representative for Peterborough County, Durham Region & Kawartha Lakes/Haliburton. Mark is a former director of the Kawartha Lakes/Haliburton Federation of Agriculture and farms on his family homestead, which dates back to the 1860's. He is a Certified Crop Advisor with experience in the international Seed Trade industry and Ontario Ag retail. He also volunteers with the Community Futures Development Corporation, Victoria County Community Pasture, minor hockey & baseball. Mark is married with two young boys and his favourite project to-date has been practicing & promoting Ontario's soil health strategy [#MSRMunday](#) [#teamOFA](#) [#ontag](#) [#peterborough](#) [#durham](#) [#kawarthalakes](#) [#haliburton](#) 📍

ontariofarms
#MeetyourMSR Joanne Fuller [@jofuller765](#), OFA's Member Service Representative for Lambton & Middlesex. Joanne lives in eastern Middlesex County, where she is actively engaged within the community as a volunteer & 4-H leader. Her country roots, community connections & municipal background bring a helpful perspective to her role with OFA. She's passionate about Ontario's agri-food sector and enjoys educating people about the industry. She collaborates with municipalities and public agencies to advocate for ag and promote local jobs through agri-tours and youth forums. Joanne takes pride in assisting OFA members with on-farm issues & connecting them to helpful resources [#MSRMunday](#) [#teamOFA](#) [#lambtoncounty](#) [#middlesexcounty](#) [#ontag](#) [#ageducation](#) 📍

ontariofarms
#MeetyourMSR Heather Derks, OFA's Member Service Representative for the counties of Elgin & Oxford. Heather grew up on a farm outside of Glanworth, ON where they produced corn, wheat and soybeans. She now lives in Sparta with her family, where she also manages a non-profit called Earthmama Farms and runs the Hope Starts Junior Gardeners program – aimed at teaching kids how to grow food and build healthy soil. All the food produced through this program is donated to local community meal providers. The highlight of her work with OFA thus far has been working together with local advocates in her community to stop the removal of the Glanworth Bridge and Colonel Talbot Overpass – a vital piece of infrastructure on one of the most important roadways for farmers in the area. Heather is a UWO alumni and when she's not working, she enjoys growing food, canning and soap-making [#MSRMunday](#) [#teamOFA](#) [#elgin](#) [#oxford](#) [#ontag](#) 📍

ontariofarms
#MeetyourMSR Resi Walt [@resilauren](#), OFA's Member Service Representative (MSR) for Hastings, Lennox & Addington, Northumberland & Prince Edward. Resi grew up in Prince Edward on her family's dairy farm. She volunteers as a 4-H leader at her local dairy club and is passionate about agricultural advocacy & awareness. Her favourite and most notable project to-date has been her involvement in FARM 911: The Emily Project. Outside of work, Resi enjoys baseball, being on the lake and cross-stitching in the winter [#MSRMunday](#) [#ontag](#) 📍

OFA staff address farm tax issues

When OFA surveyed members in 2018, farm property taxes came out as the number one research and lobby issue that members thought the organization should address. These results were no surprise. OFA staff regularly field calls and questions about farm tax rates, how they are determined, and the process required to address concerns with local municipalities or the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC).

Sonia Dignard, OFA Member Service Representative (MSR) for Glengarry, Prescott, Russell and Stormont Counties says the unexpected reclassification of farmland is an increasing issue. She's been working diligently on behalf of local members to help them navigate the sometimes difficult process of appealing tax reclassifications and working with local municipalities to address rising farmland tax rates. "Members are seeing their farmland unexpectedly reclassified to residential, resulting in higher taxes," says Dignard. "This comes as a surprise to most, who only become aware of the change when they receive their tax bills or MPAC assessment."

Dignard has seen situations in her area where rented farmland is reclassified to residential. "Woodlots and sugar bushes are also being reclassified as residential, and this is becoming an increasing issue for farmers in our area."

Last year she assisted OFA members through the process of appealing and changing their incorrect classification. "A few farmers renting out their farmland realized they were reclassified to residential after reviewing their assessment. As a result, they were strapped with soaring tax costs even though the land was still being farmed," says Dignard.



**Sonia Dignard,
OFA Member Service
Representative.**

After a call with OFA policy researcher, Ben LeFort – who has been meeting with municipalities across the province to address rising farm class tax rates – Dignard was able to direct the members to the Farm Property Class Tax Rate Program to assist the members in converting their rented farmland back to the Farm Property Class Tax Rate. "Sometimes members have to appeal directly to MPAC or address the concern with their municipality," explains Dignard. "We are happy to point members in the right direction or assist them with the necessary steps."

OFA continues to monitor member concerns with the Farm Property Class Tax Rate Program and unnecessary farmland reclassifications. In fall 2018, OFA submitted a detailed request to Minister Hardeman outlining proposed changes that would improve the program eligibility for new farmers and streamline the program overall. **OFA**



Questions about the Farm Property Class Tax Rate Program, your eligibility or have reclassification concerns? Here's a list of resources.

- Farm Property Class Tax Rate Program (OMAFRA) – 1-877-424-1300
- OFA fact sheet – Property Class Tax Rate Program Process – ofa.on.ca
- Municipal Property Assessment Corporation – mpac.ca
- Contact your local municipality or your local MSR (see page 24 for full listing)

Local career day builds student interest in ag careers

Ontario's agri-food sector generates a staggering 830,000 jobs with new research, technology and machinery regularly bringing new job opportunities to the sector. But members of Bruce and Grey County Federations are worried the stigma of ag-related jobs isn't attracting the next generation of Ontario's workforce.

The two local federations saw the need to promote agricultural jobs to local high school students when very few students were continuing education in agriculture. "The local federations were offering bursaries to students pursuing a post-secondary education in agriculture, but it was sometimes a struggle to find recipients because the school guidance departments weren't encouraging jobs in agriculture," says Joanne Hughes, OFA Member Service Representative for Bruce and Grey. "That's why they started the local career day – to show students the variety of jobs in agriculture and food. Agricultural jobs are more than milking cows and driving tractors, so we really focused on jobs they wouldn't typically think they could find in ag."

Hughes works alongside Jackie Pennings, secretary and treasurer for Bruce and Grey Federations, local federation members and volunteers from the local soil and crop improvement association to host Chesley Career Day. The event has been held in conjunction with Midwestern Agri Fair, a local farm show where volunteers have created an education portion to the event just for high school students. The first career day kicked off in 2016, bringing high school students from Bruce and Grey counties to meet with agricultural companies and employers first-hand to explore future job opportunities.



**Joanne Hughes,
OFA Member Service
Representative.**

"The response from companies already participating in the tradeshow was fantastic," says Pennings. "Many bring in representatives to talk specifically about job and education opportunities." The event has attracted more than 550 students from nine local high schools over the past two years. The career event starts with speakers to get students thinking about different types of jobs the agri-food sector can offer, followed by the opportunity to interact with trade show exhibitors to learn from potential employers about job requirements. "It's exciting to see the change in students over the day, many tell us they've changed their minds about careers after participating in the event and want to pursue a career in agriculture," reports Hughes.

Plans are already underway for a 2019 event that promises to attract even more students. Hughes notes an increase in agri-staffing, trades and post-secondary school exhibitors attending the event each year. "Everyone is getting on board, promoting careers in agriculture and showing our next generation the potential agri-food can offer," she says. **OFA**



High school students in Bruce and Grey Counties learn about career opportunities in the agri-food sector first-hand at Chesley Career Day.



OFA Member Service Representatives

Farmers working for farmers

Access to OFA's Member Service Representatives (MSRs) is one of the most unique aspects of membership. OFA is the only general farm organization offering 21 trained field staff in 15 geographical zones across the province. OFA's team of 21 MSRs represent on-the-ground advocates for members, their families and Ontario's agriculture industry. Every OFA member has access to the MSR team, ready to take your call to help with issues affecting your farm or region and represent a valuable benefit of OFA membership.

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Zone 4 – Heather Derks

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Zone 5 – Henry Swierenga

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Niagara North, Niagara South

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Zone 6 – Joanne Fuller

Lambton, Middlesex

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Board retirements – thank you Peter and Mark

Two long-serving directors retired from the OFA board in 2018 and we thank them for their tremendous contributions to our organization and to agriculture.



Peter Lambrick

For the past decade, Peter played an important role with his innate ability to be the conscience of the OFA board. Throughout his work at OFA, Peter has served as president of the Halton Region Federation and the Halton representative to the OFA board before joining the OFA board as director-at-large in 2008.

On the OFA board, Peter was on the audit, governance and finance committees. Peter was also OFA's first member of AGCare (now part of Farm and Food Care Ontario), and Halton's first chair of the Land Stewardship Committee (precursor of the Environmental Farm Plan). An active member of his local community, Peter farms 800 acres of beans, wheat and corn with his wife Liz in Campbellville. Thank you Peter for your commitment to OFA.



Mark Wales

Mark has been a fixture around the OFA board table since 1994 representing the counties of Elgin and Oxford, and bringing a wealth of knowledge on many OFA files. He served three terms as OFA president from 2011-2014, was vice president from 2008-2011 and an executive member in 2007.

On the OFA board, Mark served as chair of the farm finance, trade and taxation committee. Mark has been involved in his local Elgin County Federation for decades, serving as director-at-large. He's also the agricultural representative on the Lake Erie Region Source Water Protection Committee and the only farmer on the Lake Simcoe Co-ordinating Committee. Mark continues farming, growing vegetables, grains and beef. Thank you Mark for all your contributions to agriculture and OFA. **OFA**

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2018 OFA education bursary winners

Three Ontario university students were each awarded OFA bursaries to support their continuing agricultural education. Lauren Benoit of Kirkton, Tamara Hamilton of Russell, and Megan Wright of Midhurst were chosen from 37 entries, and each received \$2,000. This marks the third year that OFA has awarded the bursary to OFA family members, supported by funds raised through a silent auction at OFA's annual meeting.



OFA bursary winners at the 2018 AGM. From left to right: OFA president Keith Currie, Megan Wright, director Brent Royce, Lauren Benoit, Tamara Hamilton and director Rejean Pommainville.

Lauren Benoit, Kirkton – University of Guelph

Lauren is a junior partner in her family's grain farm where she's responsible for crop marketing strategies. She's completing her MSc in plant agriculture focusing on the control of multiple-resistant common waterhemp in corn. Lauren is a member of the Grain Farmers of Ontario research and innovation subcommittee. When she finishes her graduate work, Lauren plans to continue working on the family farm, integrating precision agriculture to reduce the farm's environmental footprint. She's also planning an off-farm career that combines her interests in agronomy, policy, research and business. And she's giving back to 4-H and helping mentor students at the Ontario Agricultural College (OAC).

Tamara Hamilton, Russell – University of Guelph

Tamara is a fourth-year student in the Bachelor of Bio Resource Management-Environmental Science program. She's active on the family dairy farm, developing nutrition and breeding programs. Tamara is involved in many livestock clubs and organizations where she's met industry

leaders and innovators. She has spent several summers working with feed and seed dealerships in eastern Ontario, and has also worked on a dairy farm in Switzerland. After graduation she hopes to continue to travel and work abroad on dairy farms, bringing back new knowledge to her home farm.

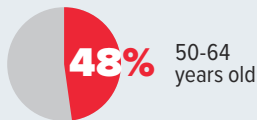
Megan Wright, Midhurst – University of Guelph

Megan is in her fourth year of the Bachelor of Commerce, Food and Agriculture Business program. She's from a dairy farm in Midhurst and has been an active member in 4-H. Throughout university, Megan has been involved in OAC class executive, the OAC Leadership Conference and was selected for the student chapter of the Canadian Agri-Marketing Association and part of a team that earned second place in an international marketing competition. Megan is looking forward to a career in agricultural marketing and communication where she can share her knowledge of agriculture with Canadian consumers. **OFA**

Survey results show strong member satisfaction

Member input continues to guide OFA activities. The results of the 2018 member survey provide direction for the OFA board, inform our lobby efforts, and help with resourcing and decisions on new benefit partners. Here are a few highlights of the 2018 member survey.

2,099 TOTAL PARTICIPANTS



TOP 3 ISSUES MEMBERS WANT OFA TO LOBBY ON



ENERGY



RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE



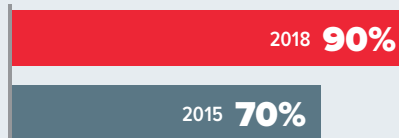
REGULATIONS

#1 TOPIC For research & lobbying is: **farm property taxes**

PRIMARY CONCERNS (≥ 50% RESPONSE)

- ! Lobbying government for RMP support
- ! Regulations that impose costs to my business
- ! Increasing tax rates
- ! Access to health services
- ! Cost of electricity and fuel
- ! Municipal zoning and farmland preservation

MEMBERS USING ONE OR MORE OFA BENEFIT



OVERALL MEMBER SATISFACTION



Board of Directors 2018/2019



Back row (left to right): Louis Roesch, Pat Jilesen, Mark Kunkel, Debra Pretty-Straathof, Bruce Buttar, Larry Davis, Crispin Colvin, Melissa Schneider, Brent Royce, Don McCabe, Rejean Pommerville
Front row: Steve Brackenridge, Mark Reusser, Keith Currie, Peggy Brekveld, Drew Spoelstra, Jackie Kelly-Pemberton
Absent: Hugh Simpson



2018 3rd Annual Great ON Yield Tour

FINAL TOUR EVENTS

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Marking milestones with retiring Member Service Representatives

In 2018, two OFA Member Service Representatives (MSRs) retired after years of dedicated work in their communities. We extend a special thank you for their dedication and our best wishes for whatever comes next for them.



Janet Licskai (far right) poses outside OFA's Federation House at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show with fellow OFA representatives and farm show staff.

**29
YEARS**

Janet Licskai started her OFA career in October 1989 serving members for the region of Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk. She enjoyed being part of the dynamic OFA team, working with county federations on key issues and projects that impact farm businesses. "It was a real honour for me to work with such a dedicated and passionate group of staff and county federation directors who wanted to make a difference," says Janet. Thank you Janet for your 29 years of passion and commitment to Ontario farm families.



Retiring MSR Gayle Bogart (seated second from left) with fellow OFA MSRs.

**22
YEARS**

Gayle Bogart began her MSR career in June 1996 serving OFA members in the counties of Essex-Kent. She cherishes the great memories she's made over the past 22 years, meeting and working with so many knowledgeable farmers and OFA staff. "My highlight working as an MSR has been the many people that I have come to know and work with across Ontario, from farmers to OFA staff," says Gayle. Thank you Gayle for your dedication and steadfast service to local communities and Ontario farmers. **OFA**



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Proud to Farm photo contest winners

To celebrate the pride we all share in our farms, our families and our communities, OFA launched its new Proud to Farm photo contest in 2018. Thank you to the OFA members across the province who submitted entries. We're proud to present the winning entries in three categories – Proud to Farm, Farm Animals and Ontario Farm Scenes, plus the Farmers' Choice Award as chosen by members.

PROUD TO FARM



1st

**Morgan Murphy, Lambton
plus
Farmers' Choice Award**

2nd

Gerda VandenHoven, Perth



3rd

**Madeleine Beaudry,
West Nipissing-Sudbury**



FARM ANIMALS

1st

Kendal Doerksen, Norfolk



2nd

Josianne Grenier, Cochrane



3rd

Josiah Mullet Koop, Niagara North



ONTARIO FARM SCENES

1st

Kendal Doerksen, Norfolk



2nd

Amanda Brown, Brant



3rd

Rebecca Haan, Hastings





Have you talked about
SUCCESSION PLANNING
with your family?

YES 65%

NO 35%

OFA ONLINE POLL SURVEY MAR. 2018

Benefit partners team up to talk farm transition planning



Pierre Robitaille of Scotiabank addresses workshop attendees, discussing successful farm transition case studies.

Many farm families are thinking, talking or currently in the process of farm transition planning. While the 2016 Statistics Canada report showed that only 8.5% of Ontario farms reported having a plan in place, OFA knows farm succession is a popular topic among members and their families. That's why OFA drew on the expertise of three of our benefit partners to deliver workshops across Ontario – to help members start the conversation with their families.

The Co-operators, Farm Life and Scotiabank offered OFA members free, half-day workshops across the province in late 2018 to help members kickstart a successful transition plan. Each presenter used real succession stories to illustrate their approach to working through a farm family transition.

Four hands-on, small group workshops attracted more than 150 OFA members who participated in break out session activities and group discussions. Participants also learned about available resources, tips to start a conversation about farm transition and who to call for assistance.

The workshops were an overwhelming success for members and partnering companies. The Co-operators, Farm Life and Scotiabank are all part of OFA's Benefit Program that provides exclusive programs and services for members. See page 37 for more information on OFA's benefit partners. **OFA**

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Honda winners

OFA's newest benefit partner made a big splash when it joined the Benefit Program in 2018. Honda Canada Inc. is the latest to join the growing list of companies and organizations that provide exclusive discounts and programs to OFA members. And to kick off the new partnership, OFA launched a Honda giveaway contest to award Honda prizes to OFA members.

The Honda contest launched in July 2018 when the equipment manufacturer officially joined OFA's Benefit Program. The months-long contest was open to OFA farm business and individual farm members, and winners were announced at the 2018 annual meeting.

Tudor Nicolae of York takes home first prize
– a Honda ATV

Ron Parry of Oxford won second prize
– a Honda generator

Yves Massie of Glengarry won third prize
– a Honda powerhead accessory with a brush cutter attachment

Honda offers OFA members access to preferred rates on Honda ATVs, Side-by-Sides and Power Equipment products by presenting their OFA member card at their local Honda dealership. **OFA**



Honda draw display at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show.



OFA and The Co-operators member ID campaign

OFA members are eligible for a wide range of exclusive savings and coverage on insurance products through The Co-operators. But some members who are already insured by The Co-operators may not be receiving all the benefits they are eligible for simply because their local advisor doesn't know they are an OFA member.

OFA has created an online request form for OFA members to ensure they are receiving eligible savings on farm and home coverage, farm and home member benefits, assistance for estate trustees and travel insurance benefits at 10% less than the regular rate.

If you want to be sure you are receiving all the benefits you are eligible for from The Co-operators, complete the online form (ofa.on.ca/benefits) to give The Co-operators permission to contact you directly about your insurance package. For more information visit ofa.on.ca. **OFA**

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ELIGIBLE FOR
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HOME

LIFE

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Farm Management



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- 10% reduction in their succession planning fees
- Access to a workshop held annually on continuity, transition and farm finances
- Complimentary annual check-in for the first two years after a succession plan is completed

705-775-800
info@farmlifefinancial.ca
www.farmlifefinancial.ca



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riskmanagement.farms.com

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ofa.on.ca/travel

Farm supply, hardware, clothing



10% discount for OFA members at any Mark's store with "Pay As You Go" account card.

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tscstores.com

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- Exclusive savings on the purchase of select new 2019 Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram and Fiat fleet vehicles
- Discounts only available for fleet purchases under the OFA Chrysler Fleet Discount Program

ofa.on.ca/benefit

GENERAL MOTORS FLEET



- Save thousands of dollars on purchases of select new 2019 Chevrolet, Buick and GMC models

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- Bring your OFA member card to your local Scotiabank branch or Commercial Client Relationship Manager to access these services

ofa.on.ca/benefit

Farm publications



Complimentary annual subscription to Ontario agriculture's business magazine

1-800-668-3276
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Caption This! contest

We think a picture is worth, well, a lighthearted caption. That's why OFA recently launched a fun social media contest where we post a new picture each month on our Twitter and Instagram accounts, and ask you to submit your best caption to capture the essence of the image. Monthly caption winners receive a \$25 gift card to Mark's or TSC Stores. Here are some of our recent winners.

Sharpen your pen and your wit, and watch for new pictures posted each month
 🐦 @OntarioFarms and 📷 ontariofarms





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