



## OFA Annual General Meeting

### Draft 2019 Resolutions

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#### 1. **Algoma Biomass**

**WHEREAS** most Ontario farms have surplus biomass; and

**WHEREAS** biomass is a carbon-neutral energy source; and

**WHEREAS** much of this biomass is not utilized,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture encourage the Ontario government to fund development and adoption of new technology to use surplus biomass from Ontario farms as an alternative energy source to replace fossil fuels.

#### 2. **Arnprior Staffing of Retiring OMAFRA Extension Personnel**

**WHEREAS** OMAFRA extension personnel are valuable resources of information, with an independent opinion, to Ontario farmers; and

**WHEREAS** retiring personnel shouldn't be considered budget cutting opportunities,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby OMAFRA to hire replacements for retiring OMAFRA extension personnel, especially in Eastern Ontario.

#### 3. **Arnprior Farmer Mental Health**

**WHEREAS** the Ontario Farm Community needs accessible mental health resources; and

**WHEREAS** the Farmer Wellness Program, piloted in Lennox & Addington (L&A) fills a need,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture support the expansion of the L&A Farmer Wellness Program province wide.

#### 4. **Arnprior Compensation for livestock losses due to predators**

**WHEREAS** predators continue to be a serious challenge to Ontario farmers; and

**WHEREAS** the current Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation program needs further revisions and additional financing,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby OMAFRA for improvements to the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation program.

**5. Elgin  
Land Registry System**

**WHEREAS** the Elgin Federation would like to express further support for the 2014 Lanark Federation of Agriculture resolution that “The Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby the Ontario Government to change the Land Registry system under the Planning Act so that the practice of automatic merging be discontinued”; and

**WHEREAS** under the Land Registry System, the land titles of abutting properties registered under the same person or business name get merged into one title and the merging of properties does not serve any need of government nor does it add value or change the use of the property; and

**WHEREAS** the Government practice of merging titles is a regulatory burden that costs the farmers/owners of the land a financial hardship when they have to pay to *re-sever* the merged properties; and

**WHEREAS** the requirement of notification to the landowner with a window of time in which to act would help circumvent these unwanted mergers; and

**WHEREAS** there is a private member’s bill (Bill 88, Planning Amendment Act, 2019) that could address the concerns in the Lanark resolution related to merged titles,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture continue to lobby the Ontario Government to change the Land Registry System under the Planning Act so that the practice of automatic merging be discontinued, and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the OFA provide a letter of support for Bill 88, Planning Amendment Act, 2019 with the additional recommendation that if abutting properties will be merged, then a requirement to notify the landowner should be mandatory, and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the OFA issue a yearly “buyer beware” reminder to the OFA membership containing the appropriate information members need to know to prevent these mergers.

**Background Information:**

The Elgin Federation would like to submit this 2014 Lanark resolution for background information on our Elgin 2019 AGM resolution submission.

**14-11-09 - Merger Land Titles**

**Date Submitted:** 11/3/2-14  
**Origin:** AGM **Source:** Lanark  
**Board Decision:** CARRIED

**WHEREAS** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture is working with the Ontario Government to *define* regulatory burdens that cause financial hardship to the farm community; and

**WHEREAS** the OFA continues to lobby for the elimination of legislation/regulation that cause problems for the OFA membership; and

**WHEREAS** under the Land Registry System, the land titles of abutting properties registered under the same person or business name get merged into one title and *this* does not serve any need of government nor does it add value or change the use of the property; and

**WHEREAS** Government practice, (merging titles) costs the farmers/owners of the land a financial hardship when they have to pay to *re-sever* the merged properties; and

**WHEREAS** this practice of merging titles of adjacent properties does not happen in other jurisdictions (i.e. lot development or lot ownership in town),

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby the Ontario Government to change the Land Registry System under the Planning Act so that the practice of automatic merging be discontinued and those mergers are only considered upon application by the affected parties.

## **6. Essex**

### **Communication with Agricorp**

**WHEREAS** the DON (deoxynivalenol) issue last fall and the delayed planting season this spring caused a lot of confusion about production insurance coverage for both the farmers and for Agricorp employees; and

**WHEREAS** Agricorp have made and are still making policy changes to adapt to these unforeseen circumstances; and

**WHEREAS** communication, and also the lack of accurate communication from Agricorp, left farmers confused about where they stood for production insurance coverage (planting dates, re-seeding, USAB),

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture increase their effort to communicate with Agricorp to get accurate information about in season changes to production insurance coverage, and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the OFA ask that the Grain Farmers of Ontario become farmers' main source of communication for production insurance changes related to insuring corn, soybeans, wheat, oats and/or barley, and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture requests that the Grain Farmers of Ontario make sure their membership fully understands what the changes to production insurance are and the reason for changes to policy coverage being made during a production season.

**7. Essex**  
**AGRICORP Policy Changes**

**WHEREAS** farmers in this province expect a full package of production insurance coverage with pre-determined components (i.e. coverage levels, reseeding benefits, unseeded acreage benefits, premium levels and insurance seeding dates) when they agree to and pay their premiums in the spring; and

**WHEREAS** farmers utilizes these elements to make management and financial decisions when circumstances beyond their control happen during the planting and growing season (i.e. DON (deoxynivalenol), excessive rain, drought etc.); and

**WHEREAS** Agricorp has announced changes to the production insurance contract during the growing season without consulting the farm organizations and farming community first and these changes do not always benefit the producer; and

**WHEREAS** any production insurance policy changes should be discussed, debated and implemented prior to the farmers agreeing to and paying premiums in the spring,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture recommend to Agricorp that it consult with Grain Farmers of Ontario before implementing any in-season policy changes to agreed upon production insurance contracts related to insuring corn, soybeans, wheat, oats and/or barley, for which premiums were paid, and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture recommend to Grain Farmers of Ontario that any negative changes to production insurance contracts related to insuring corn, soybeans, wheat, oats and/or barley be strictly debated and refused by Grain Farmers of Ontario if the changes do not benefit the production insurance participants.

**8. Glengarry**  
**Woodlots**

**WHEREAS** the Province has mandated that every municipality establish a tree canopy policy in order to maintain tree cover in the Province; and

**WHEREAS** the Province has the authority to set the farm property tax rates; and

**WHEREAS** farm property taxes have increased over the years due to higher property tax assessments; and

**WHEREAS** under Section 3(19) of the Assessment Act, one acre of every 10 acres of farmed property may be entitled to receive a Farm Forestry Exemption (FFE) and a FFE is warranted if the property is assessed as a farm and the property has some forested or woodland portion that is not subject to either the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP) or the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program (CLTIP),

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby the Province to enhance the Farm Forestry Exemption provisions in the Assessment Act to increase the portion

of woodlands exempt from property tax assessment as a way to incentivize property owners to keep woodlots on their property.

**9. Grey  
Member Engagement**

**WHEREAS** the newly passed OFA bylaw respective of replacing zone Directors was expedient in the recent Zone 2 (Bruce and Grey County) impending vacancy; and

**WHEREAS** the greater concern is that there appears to be a waning interest from OFA membership in involvement with the organization and for volunteering to run for Provincial or County Board positions; and

**WHEREAS** there is no currently articulated strategy at the OFA for Provincial or County Board Director recruitment, succession or member engagement,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture strike a committee to investigate and deliver a strategy on membership engagement and volunteerism for Provincial and County Board positions.

**10. Haldimand  
Transportation of Agricultural Commodities and Reduced Load Periods (half load seasons)**

**WHEREAS** Reduced Load Periods, also known as half load seasons, is designed to protect integrity of county roads in the spring as frost comes out of the ground; and

**WHEREAS** Reduced Load Periods make it inefficient to truck most agricultural commodities; and

**WHEREAS**, agriculture and agri-food manufacturing contribute \$15.3 billion to Ontario GDP and it is essential that commodities like feed and livestock are able to be transported in an efficient manner; and

**WHEREAS**, Reduced Load Periods require twice as many trips and excessive fuel use, contributing to excess carbon emissions; and

**WHEREAS**, the rule does not apply to the transport of all agriculture commodities (e.g. milk trucks),

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby municipalities and the provincial government, including the Ministry of Transportation, to exempt feed and livestock trucks from Reduced Load Periods on roads.

**11. Halton  
Natural Heritage**

**WHEREAS** each Region and County has a varied interpretation of the Natural Heritage requirements outlined in land use policies; and

**WHEREAS** each municipal government has the ability to both negatively impact agriculture by the interpretation of the Natural Heritage System (NHS) policies and by identifying the extent of the key features; and

**WHEREAS** various Ontario plans and statements have varying policies required under Natural Heritage (Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) / Growth Plan / Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) / Oak Ridges Moraine); and

**WHEREAS** Natural Heritage policies can have a significant and long-term negative impact on agricultural lands across Ontario; and

**WHEREAS** the OFA is better equipped with the staff and resources necessary to research, document and lobby the government than the local Federations of Agriculture in terms of Natural Heritage interpretation and Provincial policy,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture develop a “best practices” Natural Heritage System interpretation for municipal Official Plans that Region or County Federations of Agriculture can consider when their respective municipal Official Plans are under development, and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the OFA take the proactive approach and lobby the Ontario Government to change Natural Heritage policies where the effects create unacceptable constraints on agriculture.

**12. Kawartha Lakes  
Rural Real Estate Transactions**

**WHEREAS** in rural Ontario when real estate properties change ownership it is common practice to have lawyers perform title searches of these premises and when clear title has been declared all that is being declared is that there is not a financial obligation (i.e., mortgage registered) against property, but other important encumbrances attached to these holdings may exist, such as Award drains, Municipal drains, Hydro easements, Line Fences Act implications, and probably more,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby the Provincial government, the appropriate legal society, and realtor regulators to ensure that when real estate transactions occur new registrants are made aware of all encumbrances, including award drains, municipal drains, hydro easements, Line Fences Act implications and regulations.

**13. Lambton  
OFA Board Members External Political Involvement**

**WHEREAS** the OFA is a lobby group for agriculture; and

**WHEREAS** OFA needs to work with all political parties; and

**WHEREAS** an OFA Board member sitting on a local party constituency association presents the risk of a conflict of interest; and

**WHEREAS** all Parties need to see the OFA as neutral,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture amend its Bylaws to prohibit OFA Board Directors from active participation in local political party constituency associations or lobby groups other than the Ontario Federation of Agriculture.

**14. Lambton  
Unseeded Acres**

**WHEREAS** farmers carry production Insurance coverage to help manage through bad weather years; and

**WHEREAS** in Sharecrop agreements, the farmer has no control on whether the landlord carries production insurance or not; and

**WHEREAS** even with unseeded acres there are costs incurred possibly due to fertilizer, tillage, seed purchases, or capital costs that may have already happened; and

**WHEREAS** there are costs incurred with controlling weeds with tillage or chemicals on such acres,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture work with Agricornp so that a portion of the unseeded acre benefit under a production insurance contract is paid to the Farmer/Sharecropper in a sharecrop agreement.

**15. Lambton  
Cannabis**

**WHEREAS** Health Canada controls the regulations for cannabis growing operations; and

**WHEREAS** light, odour and noise can be a nuisance from these cannabis growing operations; and

**WHEREAS** municipalities should be allowed to require a safe distance between residences and these cannabis growing operations,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby OMAFRA to develop a cannabis-specific minimum distance separation formulae for sites growing cannabis.

**16. Lennox and Addington  
Safety in the Workplace**

**WHEREAS** it is getting more difficult for the agricultural sector to find experienced employees; and

**WHEREAS** government and workplace regulations are creeping further into the agricultural sector; and

**WHEREAS** the safety and well-being of farmers and their employees is of the utmost importance to all,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture produce, or partner with another organization to produce, farm safety and training videos to aide members in the practice of due diligence, and to help foster safe and efficient workplaces for the industry.

**17. Oxford  
Possible Half Load**

**WHEREAS** the current seasonal load restrictions impede Agricultural Business deliveries in Rural Ontario; and

**WHEREAS** the language in section 122 of the Highway Traffic Act is significantly outdated and the requirement of livestock bedding needs to be included in the Exceptions noted in Section 122, Subsection 4; and

**WHEREAS** fresh, clean livestock bedding is important for herd health, animal care and wellbeing,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby the provincial government to amend the Highway Traffic Act to increase the weight limits in section 122 and include livestock bedding in section 122, subsection 4 – Exceptions.

**18. Rainy River  
Assistance Programs**

**WHEREAS** Rainy River District has experienced extreme weather throughout the season; and

**WHEREAS** the Northwest of the Rainy River and Kenora Districts now face a severe situation,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture advocate for assistance programs to offset costs related to feed and straw shortages affecting farmers in the Northwest of the Rainy River and Kenora Districts.

## Background:

From a later spring to near drought and finally excessive moisture for the past 2 months. The District received moisture in the amounts that were equal to that of the entire growing season; near 20 " (May 1 – October 31) from August 17<sup>th</sup> to October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Harvest conditions were beyond difficult. Grain farming or livestock it made no matter. At what should be the rewarding part of a season things became impossible. We have now moved to what seems to be an early winter with frozen ground already. This issue will continue to show its nasty effects well into 2020 with extreme soil & field conditions. The near drought situation has feed supplies very tight. The extreme moisture has kept harvest equipment and cattle out of fields. Feeding has started early. In due time, this area should have additional resources made available with appropriate town hall meetings, i.e. Mental Health Seminars, Dealing with Feed Shortages, Agricorp Programs, etc.

### 19. Rainy River Provincial Abattoirs

**WHEREAS** the Rainy River District Regional Abattoir continues to struggle to keep their doors open, with the biggest expense being municipal taxes; and

**WHEREAS** the financial strain of the current tax structure is risking the existence of the Rainy River District Regional Abattoir,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture continue to lobby the Ministry of Finance and MPAC to change the property assessment classification of provincial abattoirs in Ontario to a new classification for abattoirs to facilitate the application of a lower property tax rate.

### 20. Rainy River Abattoir Audits

**WHEREAS** OMAFRA continues to audit abattoirs across the province and often the outcome of these audits is a very overzealous approach and with limited common sense in several areas; and

**WHEREAS** the audit process hinders the preservation of our small abattoirs in Ontario,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby OMAFRA to take a more practical approach to auditing abattoirs and use clear and concise language in audit reports, and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby OMAFRA to make financial assistance available to abattoirs to offset the cost of most of the action items identified in an OMAFRA audit of the abattoir.

**21. Renfrew / Beef Farmers of Ontario  
Retirement Staff at OMAFRA**

**WHEREAS** there has been a loss of OMAFRA Staff at the Kemptville office and across Northern Ontario that leads to understaffed offices and gaps in services to producers; and

**WHEREAS** these regions are sometimes at a great distance from other farming areas with OMAFRA staff; and

**WHEREAS** these regions have their own unique challenges, opportunities and climate from other regions; and

**WHEREAS** there has been a hiring freeze on the numerous vacant OMAFRA staff positions in Kemptville and Northern Ontario,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture advocate for filling gaps in OMAFRA staffing and lobby the Ontario Government to hire and retain a full complement of OMAFRA staff in Kemptville and across Northern Ontario.

**22. Renfrew  
Benefit Card and Member Benefit Program**

**WHEREAS** OFA has a member benefit program; and

**WHEREAS** many of the participating businesses require that you present their corporation discount card; such as Marks “Pay as You Go” discount card and the TSC Discount card; and

**WHEREAS** OFA already provides each member their own OFA membership card,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture ask all of its Member Benefit partners to allow OFA to design a new OFA membership card containing the trademarks of all the participants in the member benefit program, and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the OFA ask its Member Benefit partners who currently require OFA members to present a separate discount card to accept the OFA membership card instead of a separate discount card.

