

Strategic and Operations Plan – 2019/20

Ontario Federation of Agriculture

The Strategic Process:

The Strategic Objectives, Key Results and the preparation of Operations Plan reflect the intentions and actions of the OFA to accomplish its Mission. Management develops annual operating plans, including timelines to achieve or work toward achievement of the Key Results, based on balancing competing needs and resources available.

The budget to execute these plans is approved annually and monitored regularly by the Board of Directors.

The entire document (the Board's Strategic Objectives and Key Results along with Management's plans and measurements) becomes the OFA's Strategic Plan.

Annually, in advance of the development of the budget and the annual Operating Plan, the OFA board will review the Strategic Plan and determine what measure of success has been achieved. The Board will refresh the Strategic Plan's Objectives and Key Results, periodically, as needed.

OFA has established a vision for agriculture that guides its work on behalf of our farmers and society, in general. It is as follows:

OFA's Vision for Ontario Agriculture:

- Farming is a science - sustainably producing food fuel and fibre
- Consumers trust the food system, which offers nutritious food across the province and around the world
- Farm viability of supported by a supportive legislative and regulatory framework
- Farmers are proud advocates and leaders in adaptation and innovation.

Mission Statement:

Farms and food forever.

The OFA's Operations Plan's goals are provided below to address each of the Strategic Plan's Key Results. Much effort will be devoted to nurturing existing relationships with government and specific Ministries, with allied organizations including commodities and municipal entities and with other like-minded non-governmental organizations.

The theme and focus of the Operations Plan will continue to be Producing Prosperity with a focus on rural economic development. The acknowledgment that farming and food represent Ontario's biggest industry with the best likelihood of driving the Ontario economy has resonated

with government, members and allies. OFA is well-positioned as a significant spokesperson not only for farming but also for rural Ontario.

In collaboration with CFA and our fellow members OFA will take the PPIO message into the upcoming federal election to secure federal economic development policies in support of the PPIO ambitions.

Detail on communication activities and budget are attached as an appendix to the Operations Plan and are related to the Strategic Objectives.

Within this context, OFA will continue to work in members' best interests on the multitude of issues affecting our farm business members and their families.

Strategic objective # 1:

OFA will coordinate industry efforts to build a sustainable farming sector that earns public trust.

Key Results:

1.1 OFA will develop position statements in collaboration with members, commodity, and allied organization partners on key farm issues with specific public policy action.

- Using PAC and member surveys and the PAC process, OFA will solicit and process input to formulate position statements and recommendations on key issues affecting farming in Ontario. Members will be informed and encouraged to actively participate in advocacy efforts through meetings, election activities and write-in and phone campaigns.
- OFA will strengthen working relationships across member commodity organizations to delve into significant and impactful issues affecting farming. Work will include collaborative efforts to secure a new Animal Protection Act and with the ECO-Ag initiative to safely position farming around the P issues while collectively expanding work on the environmental agenda
- Maintain engagement with other allies including municipal government, and not-for-profits to continue focus on the PPIO campaign. Near term focus will be on federal investment as part of the election campaign.
- Position statements will be accessible on website for easy staff and member access and regularly communicated to members, government and industry organizations to demonstrate transparency
- Identification of developing issues will be key to get ahead of the game. IMIS (membership database) will be used to identify and track member issues, complaints and concerns.

1.2 OFA will persistently advocate to achieve public policy outcomes that are beneficial to Ontario farmers.

- Concerted and consistent communication and government relations plans will continue to identify the PPIO messages including direct involvement in the federal election with CFA and unilaterally.
- Collaboration across allied organizations (livestock, ECO-Ag) will focus on specific farm-related animal care and environmental issues.

- Advocacy training within OFA and including PAC and county federations will be delivered. Speak-Up training for PAC and county reps will continue along with specific governance and communications subject matter. The Board of Directors Learning Program will continue to be pursued.
 - More active inclusion of grassroots learning and advocacy will be facilitated via training and webinar contact to motivate advocacy activity on select issues.
 - County Federation representatives will be exposed to BMPs for working with municipal councils and connected to share experiences and successes.
- 1.3 OFA will collaborate with partners to provide the public with clear and positive information about modern farming practices and improve food literacy.
- OFA will collaborate on any social license / public trust efforts across the Ontario agricultural community and engage in bringing key messages to non-agricultural organizations and events. Social media, radio and print will be explored as opportunities to bring farm messages to the public.
 - Public relations work by our County Federations will be shared across networks.
 - The PPIO includes a very positive public relations message. Tactics will be employed to bring that positive message to a greater audience throughout the election period and beyond..

Strategic objective # 2:

OFA will promote membership and engagement by providing unparalleled service, benefits and opportunities for involvement.

Key Results:

- 2.1 Specific on-farm issues will be addressed directly through a team of knowledgeable staff.
- Member Service Representatives (MSRs) and Member Relations Representatives (MRRs) will be recruited (as needed) for skills in member service and agricultural knowledge. Regular interaction between MSR teams and Research/MRR staff will be facilitated. Position statements will be circulated and readily available, including key messages.
 - OFA will use all available communications channels to share relevant and timely information to membership to update on OFA's position and activities conducted on behalf of members
 - A Hot Topics report is periodically generated by IMIS to discuss and respond across MSR and MR teams with involvement of Research.
- 2.2 OFA will solicit member input to compile a valuable suite of benefits that enable real savings on farm and farm family expenses.
- Survey and evidence from farm shows, etc. is used to determine preferred and valued member benefits. A communication/Marketing Plan is developed for each benefit partner and implemented to deliver program information to members.
 - 2020 is the next scheduled year for OFA's benchmarking member survey – an important two-way communications activity and an opportunity to solicit input on issues and activities that are emerging or changing the dynamics of the Ontario agri-food sector
 - Additional effort will be devoted to relationship management across the farm sector with the potential to extend OFA farm benefits to other organizations and to employer-members.

- OFA will undertake to better advise members on the availability and capacity of MSRs. A “new member contact process” provides direct interaction between new members and MSRs to introduce OFA and the services offered (including access to MSRs).

2.3 Members will be involved in advocacy and leadership development opportunities.

- Enhanced communications will inform members and present opportunities for member involvement at the municipal, provincial and federal policy levels (ActNow).
- Increased virtual work with PAC (webinars) will facilitate information sharing and timely input on position development matters.
- Counties will be encouraged to meet regionally for training and open discussion meetings on potential collaboration on local/regional issues.
- The Proud to Lead program will continue to deliver workshops and training of specific interest to members across Ontario.
- Will better engage future farmers and new members by adapting county governance and recruitment.
- Training and templates available to improve skills in chairing meetings, developing agendas, financial controls and advocacy.

Strategic objective # 3:

OFA will be an efficient, professional organization providing a voice and achieving positive results for farmers.

Key Results:

3.1 Visionary leaders, who are strong advocates, will govern OFA as a results-oriented association, accountable to members.

- Individual and collective goals are developed and monitored for success across Board and staff. Staff goal setting process linked to Operations Plan, with periodic review. Board goal setting process is in progress.
- Further training will be pursued to reinforce advocacy and communications strengths of Board members.
- Increased level of reporting on work plan activities and outcomes will ensure organization acts cohesively.

3.2 Motivated, professional staff will choose OFA as a high-performance and respectful workplace.

- Personal and position goals, to deliver the Strategic Plan will be developed in collaboration with Managers, monitored for performance and adapted as needed.
- Staff training and development is encouraged as part of goals. Increased focus on mental health training for internal support and for addressing needs of members
- OFA will capitalize on a team working environment with effective communication between all departments and individuals. Weekly staff conference to update on priorities and events. Regular interaction between teams (MSRs, Research). Annual staff meeting held in the spring (planning) and prior to the OFA AGM.
- Exit interviews will be conducted with those leaving to gauge OFA's effectiveness as an employer

3.3 OFA will align its financial and human resources in a fiscally responsible manner to provide excellent value for members.

- Member retention and recruitment campaigns will continue – information webinars, training and surveys keep OFA top-of-mind.
- The Business Development Plan will seek to improve non-dues revenue from benefit partnerships and sponsorships. New partners identified and added. Non-dues revenue remains stable.
- Development and construction of new office location will be completed in early summer of 2020. Tenants are being solicited to fill space by opening.
- OFA will develop and implement a new and efficient Farm Business Registration process in response to the requirement to take over all FBR costs.
- Undertake a process to create a clear “Value proposition” that concisely explains the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ of OFA’s purpose to the members and other stakeholders