



OSCIA News...

September 2008

A NEWSLETTER TO UPDATE OSCIA MEMBERS,
PRESIDENTS, SECRETARIES, TREASURERS, DIRECTORS,
AND OMAFRA AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT CONTACTS —

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OSCIA 2009 ANNUAL MEETING

Date: February 3 & 4, 2009

Place: Sheraton Fallsview
Niagara Falls

Message from the President

As the end of the summer approaches, there are a number of interesting updates from OSCIA. The summer meeting and associated events were held recently in Sault Ste. Marie and Thessalon, hosted by 1st Vice President Murray Cochrane and his wife Norma. The tours were very enjoyable and the excellent weather was a welcome change.



Pat Lee

The spouses were informed about wind turbines and visited the Canadian Bushplane Museum while the Directors held their meeting. Tuesday saw all of us visiting a large maple syrup operation and the St. Mary's Paper Mill. It was a very well-organized event, and we commend our hosts on their fine efforts.

OSCIA experienced changes in its constitution at its 2008 Annual Meeting. Most regions and many counties have updated their constitutions to match the provincial constitution. Overall, there are now 11 regions in the province, and election of provincial directors takes place within those regions.

Over the summer, most areas in the province have seen more than adequate rainfall, and crop growth in general is excellent. Harvesting quality forage continues to be a challenge. Forage competitions have been very successful this year with participation from twenty-five local associations and 232 participants. We look forward to the final competition at the Royal Winter Fair in November, sponsored by Pickseed Canada, Agri-Food Laboratories, and the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. This continues to be a very popular program with the members.

The interest in the Nutrient Management BMP Demonstration grants co-ordinated by OSCIA and funded by OMAFRA has been very strong. Five projects have been approved for full funding at \$20,000 each and we will be asking for proposals in October for another five projects.

In July the Executive and a few staff members met with the Regional Communication Coordinators (RCCs), regional reps, and OMAFRA reps from Eastern and North Eastern Ontario. This meeting was held in Kingston where we discussed the roles and responsibilities of the RCCs, OMAFRA and OSCIA and how they interrelate. Everyone went away with a sense of satisfaction in knowing that a good working relationship exists between those groups and the local Soil and Crop Improvement Associations. We hope to enhance this working relationship by having each region develop a Communication Plan Framework. A similar meeting has been organized for regions from the southern and northwest parts of the province. We will meet with them in September in Ingersoll.

An annual September event, Canada's Outdoor Farm Show, is quickly approaching. Once again OSCIA will be partnering with Canada's Outdoor Farm Show, OMAFRA, and Bayer CropScience to provide brunch and informative presentations on agricultural management practices and new crop protection technology. Topics will include information on innovative strategies, a NEW one-pass, broad-spectrum herbicide for corn, and more new products from our sponsor. While you are there, it will be a good opportunity to view the OSCIA/OMAFRA plots and displays.

We are looking forward to seeing YOU at the Show. ♦

OSCIA Summer Directors' Meeting

The OSCIA Summer Directors' Meeting was hosted by 1st Vice President Murray Cochrane and his wife Norma on August 17-19. Murray and Norma organized three days' events for the OSCIA Directors and their families in Algoma Country.



The event began on Sunday with a social time and barbecued meal at "Scattered Acres", the Cochrane farm near Thessalon, pictured above.

Monday's main event was the meeting of the Board of Directors, where the Board attended to business of the Association and planned for the future.

Provincial Directors are closely involved with the changes within the regions resulting from the amended OSCIA Constitution. They will be providing full support and feedback to the membership through fall meetings and messages in the regional newsletters.

An important part of the meeting was the election held for the President-Elect for the provincial association for 2009. Murray Cochrane was acclaimed for the position.



A tour of the Algoma district was enjoyed by all Directors, Past Presidents and their families. One stop included a visit to the large dairy farm of Vic and Tammy Fremlin (pictured above).

Along with a tour of the buildings, a visit was made to a corn trial site. An overview of their business was provided, along with a few tips in raising the profile of a business.

Hosting the summer meeting is a huge undertaking, one that requires a lot of attention to detail. The Cochranes are to be congratulated for the excellent job they did in organizing the three-day event. Those not familiar with the northern parts of Ontario were treated to a taste of what this beautiful area has to offer. ♦

Ontario Red Clover Research

The use of red clover as an under-seed in wheat has declined in recent years, even though numerous research studies have demonstrated significant Nitrogen availability and agronomic benefits to following crops in the rotation, and environmental and soil quality benefits.

The Agricultural Adaptation Council - Ontario Research Development Fund from OMAFRA is supporting OSCIA in funding red clover research. The research is focused on the benefits of growing red clover, the screening and development of new varieties, tillage practices, and the development of management options relating to red

clover establishment. The project will be conducted by Dr. Bill Deen, University of Guelph, and located at the Elora Research Farm. This information would be communicated to Ontario farmers to help them to increase the yield and value of their red clover crops.

Red clover stands appear to be sensitive to winter wheat nitrogen rates. Profit in winter wheat exhibits a plateau response from nitrogen. Estimates of winter wheat Most Economical Return for Nitrogen (MERN) values could be evaluated with consideration to red clover benefits in subsequent crops.

Management options for dealing with non-uniform stands of red clover will be explored, particularly given the potential environmental consequences associated with uniform nitrogen applications to non-uniform red clover stands. This project will also help provide Ontario farmers with new varieties of red clover that will survive frosts and drought periods.

It is becoming increasingly difficult for Ontario farmers to compete with the increasing cost of inputs, such as fertilizers and fuel, required to produce their crops. With increasing prices of fuel, many Ontario farmers are switching from conventional tillage to a form of no-till. This project will also help provide Ontario farmers with comparisons of different methods of tillage (conventional till, no-till, no-till with coulters and no-till residue removed) that will help determine the degree of tillage required to overcome no-till effects on red clover stands. ♦

2008 Ontario Forage Masters Program

232 OSCIA members entered the 2008 Ontario Forage Masters Program, representing 25 local S&C Improvement Associations.



A number of 4-H members (28) are included in the participant numbers.

The entrants in each county are vying for valuable prizes provided by Pickseed Canada and Agri-Food Laboratories.

Recently, OSCIA announced that the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair has joined the program by sponsoring a final competition to select the **2008 Ontario Forage Master**.

The first-place winners in each county are eligible to submit an entry to the provincial office by October 1st to be reviewed by a judging panel. Up to six will be selected to participate in the final competition at the Royal on November 12.

The person selected as the **2008 Ontario Forage Master** will represent Ontario at the Forage Spokesperson Competition held as part of the American

Forage and Grasslands Council conference in June 2009 in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Full details of the competition have been mailed to each local association, and can be found on the OSCIA website. ♦

2009 OSCIA Memberships

A notice will soon be sent to all local Soil and Crop Improvement Association secretaries regarding memberships for 2009.

Membership in your local association includes many benefits, including reduced admission to many agricultural events, bus tours, field trials, and being included on the mailing list for newsletters.

Your membership renewal for the coming year may be due anytime during the fall months, and your local association has a method in which to collect your fees.

Per the OSCIA Constitution, membership fees from the local associations is due into the provincial office no later than February 15, and many of them depend on timely payment from their membership in order to meet this deadline.

In order to keep your membership current, please ensure that you have provided your fee to the local association secretary. ♦

Nutrient Management Grants

Two new grants were featured in the June issue of OSCIA News.

OSCIA Regional Nutrient Management Outreach Grant

OMAFRA has allocated funding to support new communication activities of regional Soil and Crop Improvement Associations that promote the adoption of Nutrient Management BMPs to the non – regulated (Nutrient Management Act) farm population.

- Up to \$4,000 per project is available on a first-come first-served basis to support regional activities directly related to increasing awareness and adoption of nutrient management regionally.

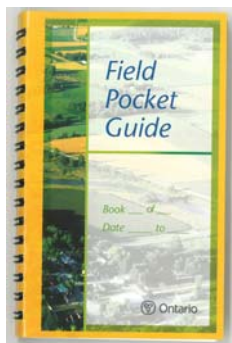
Nutrient Management BMP Demonstration Grant Letter of Intent Deadline – 4:30 pm October 13, 2008

OMAFRA has allocated funding to organizations supporting demonstration projects and new communication activities targeting any producers not regulated by the Nutrient Management Act. Up to \$20,000 of grant funds are available for innovative demonstration and validation field projects related directly to improving the management of nutrients on agriculture lands within Ontario.

- This grant is available to any agricultural organization, Conservation Authority, college or university.
- OSCIA has issued a Request for Proposal to solicit project proposals for funding consideration under the Nutrient Management BMP Demonstration Grant Program.
- The eligibility criteria and templates required for application are available at www.ontariosoilcrop.org. ♦

We Need Your Feedback

OMAFRA's *Field Pocket Guide* was introduced as a practical way to record crop production activities to assist farmers in achieving economically feasible and environmentally responsible management of soils, water, air, crops and livestock. It contains a variety of record keeping pages and some handy conversions and calculations.



The *Field Pocket Guide* is currently distributed, free of charge, to producers who visit OSCIA displays at regional agriculture conferences, as well as at EFP workshops across the province.

Since 2004, over 25,000 copies have been distributed, and we are out of stock! We need your comments to tell us what you like, dislike and would like to see improved in the book. Please go to our online survey <http://www.surveymonkey.com/fieldpocketguide> and tell us what you think. The survey is brief and will require only a few minutes to complete. If you provide your contact information, your name will be entered into a draw for a \$50 Canadian Tire gift card (draw to take place on October 15, 2008). Survey closes October 10, 2008.

Thank you for your time and for your feedback. ♦

Reminder! Place Your Orders Early!

Promotional material is available on a cost-recovery basis from the provincial office.

Among other items, a supply of double-sided fleece vests with OSCIA logo embroidered, and embroidered OSCIA hats is available for local or regional associations to use at upcoming winter meetings as gifts for a special member or speaker, or as fundraising items at upcoming annual meetings.

Association secretaries may contact the provincial office for more information, or to place an order. ♦

OSCIA Grant Deadlines

The deadline for local and regional associations to submit their claims for association grants is November 30, 2008.

Although the deadline is a few weeks away, local and regional associations are encouraged to submit applications (claims) for projects that are complete. ♦

OSCIA Awards

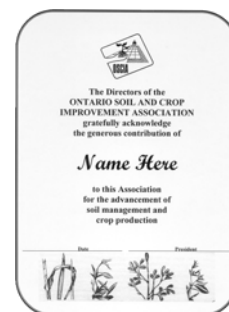
Soil and Water Conservation Farm Award:

The purpose of this award is to recognize, reward, and acknowledge farmers who practice excellent soil and water management on their farms, as well as provide high profile to the basic principles of conservation. This is a resin all-weather sign measuring 16" x 19".



Recognition Certificate:

This certificate is designed to recognize individuals in your community who have contributed to the organization. When requesting the certificate, please indicate the recipient's name and date of presentation. This is a paper certificate, suitable for framing, measuring 8½" x 11".



These awards are ideal for presentation at annual meetings. Both are available by calling Evelyn Howse at the provincial office (1-800-265-9751). Please allow 2 weeks for preparation and shipping time. ♦

Climate Change Policy - E-Survey

Jeffrey Biggs, a doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto, is researching "How Canadian Climate Change Policy Affects Ontario Farmers". If you are interested in participating in an e-survey, contact Jeffrey directly at Jeffrey.biggs@utoronto.ca.

OSCIA is very interested in this topic. ♦

Visit the OSCIA website
www.ontariosoilcrop.org