



OSCIA PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTER

September 2018 Edition

OSCIA Summer Meeting – Georgian Central Region



As I write this, we are experiencing the first under 20-degree day in a long time; maybe since May. We seem to be pulling out of the drought, although some areas just barely and others are experiencing too much rain.

Despite the heat and dry weather, crops are not too bad in a lot of the province other than the hay and

massive weed growth in the IP soy at our place.

As you read this, the second intake for The Partnership (CAP) program has come to a close. Please call your regional program lead, workshop leaders, or the Guelph office to get the dates of upcoming intake periods. Contact information, including phone numbers can be found on the OSCIA website at <https://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/contact-us/>

As always, make sure your EFP and Grow Your Farm Profits workshops are up to date.

At the end of June, after a 31-year career at OSCIA, Harold Rudy has retired. He will be greatly missed by all, but staff will carry on. Harold is likely one of the most connected individuals in Ontario Agriculture. In part to mark his tenure at OSCIA, Harold has written a book on the 31 years that he worked here – The Soil Fixers. There was a soft launch of his book at the Summer Meeting with a full launch sometime in the future. I haven't had the opportunity to read the book yet but am looking forward to doing so. Keep in mind this will be a terrific speaker gift at annual meetings this winter.

This year's summer meeting was held in Walkerton, Bruce County of the Georgian Central Region. This is really one of the most attractive components of being a director: being able to experience a different part of this fantastic province, on an annual basis. We want to thank our hosts,

Les and Mary Nichols, for showcasing their beautiful county.

Hoping everyone has a safe and bin-busting harvest!

Until next time.

Peter McLaren, OSCIA President

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER, ISSUED
ALONGSIDE 11 REGIONAL NEWSLETTERS AND
OMAFRA CROP TALK, TO UPDATE SOIL AND
CROP MEMBERS

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OSCIA Summer Meeting – Georgian Central Region



The OSCIA Summer Meeting is an annual event hosted by the 1st Vice President. This year, that was Les Nichols representing the Georgian Central Regional Soil and Crop Improvement

Association in Bruce County. This is a great way for the 1st Vice to showcase their local community including farms, food, and friends. A tremendous amount of work goes into the event by the host's family, the local associations, and a few key Guelph office staff. The Summer Meeting is an opportunity for the Board and some staff to meet face to face and draws in many past presidents, spouses and dignitaries. It's a time to tend to association business, and to reminisce and catch up with friends. This year, the event started in Formosa Lions Park near Walkerton.

After a reception at the farm, the group went on a tour of Albadon Farms where they were also entertained by Team Farmall, a group who performs square dancing with tractors. Dinner and entertainment followed back at the Lions Park pavilion.

While the Board and staff met for the formal business meeting on Monday, the other guests enjoyed the sights and sounds of the Region. The tour led to the Bruce Power Plant, Treasure Chest Museum, Chatsworth Fish Culture Station, and Tony Lang's Classic Car Collection. Tuesday, traditionally, is the day the entire group tours together. This allows the Board, staff and other guests to enjoy a few additional sites and one another's company. This tour began with a visit to a large beef feed-lot, a dairy goat operation, lavender farm, winery, and a tour of past president Jim Fischer's maple sugar bush.



Photo: Becky Smith, NWMO

All the tours were informative, interesting and provided a wonderful opportunity to mingle with members and staff. Next year's summer meeting will be held in the Heartland Region, hosted by Stuart and Caroline Wright.

Written by Nicole Hottot, Executive Assistant

Supporting Mental Health Services for Ontario Agriculture

The Niagara North SCIA brought forward a resolution at the Annual Conference in February that called upon OSCIA to join the fight against mental illness in the agriculture industry and support efforts to increase mental health literacy and training. The resolution was overwhelmingly supported by the delegates.

The actions by Niagara North SCIA were spurred through a presentation provided by Professor Andria Jones-Bitton at their annual meeting in December 2017. Dr. Jones-Bitton is from the Department of Population Medicine at University of Guelph. She and her colleagues conducted a nationwide online stress and resilience survey with agricultural producers from September 2015 to January 2017.

The outcome clearly identified a need. As a result, she has built a team of producers, industry representatives, veterinarians, and mental health professionals to create, deliver, and evaluate a mental health literacy training program for farmers. This program would train people to recognize and respond to mental distress and reduce stigma around mental health issues in Ontario's agricultural sector.

After investigating what training and referral services were currently available through the general farm organizations, OMAFRA, the University of Guelph and others, OSCIA compiled a brief listing which is posted on our website at:

<https://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/association/association-membership/resources/>

At the summer meeting in August, the Provincial Board committed \$500 to support the continuing work of Dr. Jones-Bitton. Members who may be considering a personal donation to support mental health awareness and research in the agriculture community may consider:

- sending a cheque payable to the University of Guelph with a cover letter indicating that it is a gift towards supporting Andria Jones-Bitton's farmer mental health research. Tax receipts can be issued for donors; or
- Investigate donor opportunities with the national Do More Agriculture Foundation on their website: <https://www.domore.ag/about-us/>

Written by Andrew Graham, Executive Director

Tier One Grants

With contributions from OMAFRA and OSCIA, Tier One Grants are available and applications are being accepted from local and regional associations. To apply for a Tier One Grant just fill out the application and sent to Nicole Hottot or Amber Van De Peer at the Guelph office (nhottot@ontariosoilcrop.org or avandeppeer@ontariosoilcrop.org). The guidelines, application, and claim form can be found on OSCIA's website at:

<https://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/association/association-membership/grants/>

Eligibility requirements are included in the guidelines. Projects typically include in-field trials, demonstrations of equipment or management techniques, and educational activities including bus tours, twilight tours, crop tours, guest speakers, and public outreach.

Membership engagement activities are also eligible and usually are linked with educational activities.

If you have an idea but aren't sure if it's eligible please ask your local or regional representatives or contact Nicole Hottot or Amber Van De Peer. Each local and regional SCIA is eligible for up to \$1500. Local and regional SCIA's are welcome to commit their grants towards one larger project and make a joint application.

Welcoming OSCIA's New Program Director



OSCIA is pleased to welcome Angela Straathof as the new Program Director.

Straathof received a PhD in soil chemistry and biology from the Department of Soil Quality at Wageningen in the Netherlands – ranked as the number one

agricultural research university in the world. More locally to Ontario, her background includes being raised on a dairy farm in Eastern Ontario before studying Land Resource Management at the University of Guelph. She looks forward to bringing her research, management, and leadership skills to Ontario and transitioning into a role that enables her to bring positive energy to working with farmers, government, and the agricultural industry.

Peter McLaren, President of OSCIA is thrilled that Straathof is joining the organization. "Angela's experience at world-class agricultural research facilities, background in Ontario agriculture, and consistency in

project delivery to the highest possible standards will add even more depth to OSCIA's ability to deliver programs. Her knowledge in soil health will be greeted enthusiastically by our membership."

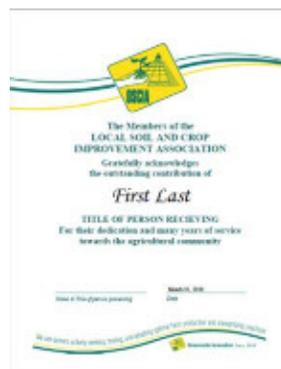
Straathof is expected to begin her role at OSCIA in the latter half of October. "It has always been my passion to communicate amongst farmers, researchers, and policy makers in such a way that all parties feel understood, informed, and valued. I have long-admired the progressive and influential work of the OSCIA and can't wait to get started in this exciting new role."

Written by Andrew Graham, Executive Director

Preparing for AGM Season

The time of year when local SCIA's are holding Annual General Meetings is coming up! Spice it up this year by offering a selection from OSCIA's options of apparel!

The hottest items are OSCIA soft shell jackets, t-shirts, and hoodies. Get extra embroidery starting at only \$8! Other items to consider for your AGMs are gate signs, decals, brochures, membership cards, soil depth indicators, and more.



Don't forget to request a recognition certificate for any outstanding members or volunteers! Always appreciated and always free.

Email Nicole Hottot or Amber Van De Peer for a nicely framed copy that will be mailed to you to present to the recipient.

Having a guest speaker at your AGM? Apply for a Tier One Grant to cover the cost of their fees! Each local and regional SCIA is eligible for up to \$1500.

Remember to select the delegates of your choosing who will attend the 2019 OSCIA Annual Conference. This year, the conference is moving and will be held at the Four Point Sheraton in Downtown Kingston. At the Annual Conference you can expect to hear from other farmers, keynote speakers, and grant recipients.

Written by OSCIA Office Staff

Do You Know a Soil Champion?

The Soil Champion is an annual award that recognizes strong advocates of sustainable soil management. Individuals from one of two general groups can be nominated:

- 1) Those engaged in practical agriculture in developing, using and promoting management that contributes to the sustainable productivity of the soil; or,
- 2) Research or extension professionals whose work demonstrates a commitment to advancing soil health and productive sustainability.

One Soil Champion winner will be declared for 2019 by the selection committee and announced at the OSCIA Annual Conference in February. An individual may nominate him/herself or be nominated by a third party. If you are nominating someone else, please ensure he/she is informed of your intentions and is a willing participant.

Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

SOIL CHAMPION

Awarded annually to recognize
outstanding contributions to soil management that directly
 influences **soil health**
 and **crop production**
sustainability in Ontario

*Nominate your friend,
 mentor, or yourself by:*
NOVEMBER 1, 2018

Associations can ask their RCC for help



Grassroots Innovation Since 1939



Operation Pollinator

Operation Pollinator, already successfully enhancing pollinator habitat in Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan, expanded into Ontario in 2018. The program provides farmers with a pollinator seed mix as well as \$100 per acre for up to 2 acres of pollinator habitat created.



The program was well received and the target of 33 sites enrolled was achieved by June. The program saw a great mix of participants from across the province. Site verification of the plantings was completed in the summer for the majority of projects. This is the first year the program was delivered in Ontario, and it is fully subscribed at this time. Stay tuned for updates on Operation Pollinator!



Operation Pollinator, a Syngenta program focused on pollinator health, expanded its footprint in Ontario in 2018 through a partnership with the Soil Conservation Council of Canada (SCCC) and the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association.

Written by Maria Ramirez Giraldo, Programs Analyst