



OSCIA PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTER

November 2019 Edition

Message from the President – Les Nichols



OSCIA President Les Nichols (centre) receives the Agriculture Education Award at COFS from Glenna Banda, Executive Director, AgScape and the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs the Honorable Ernie Hardeman.

The 2019 crop year has certainly been one of challenges; primarily weather related. As I write this in late October; in the Georgian Central area, most soybeans are harvested with overall average yields but tremendous range of yields from field to field and within fields. Certainly, any soil health or crop management issues were magnified by the weather stress.

I would like to congratulate the various regional and county Soil & Crop associations across the province on the many crop tours and crop related events they have hosted this season. Also, a big congratulations to Dundas as well as Elgin County Soil & Crop associations for hosting two extremely successful “Compaction Days”. These were very well attended and certainly excellent examples of “farmers actively seeking, testing and adopting optimal production and stewardship practices”. A tremendous amount of time and effort went into organizing and hosting these events. Very well done!

OSCIA was honoured to receive the 1st AgScape Agriculture Education Award at Canada’s Outdoor Farm Show (COFS) in early September 2019. This award is to recognize OSCIA’s demonstrated leadership and positive contribution to support Agricultural Education in Ontario. Our entire membership plays a big part in delivering this leadership role in agricultural education, so congratulations OSCIA!

Also, OSCIA is pleased to be administering the new “Don Hill Legacy Award” this year. Don Hill was a lifelong member of Grey County Soil & Crop and a past president of OSCIA. The family has played a vital role in developing and funding this annual award in memory of Don. The purpose of the award is to recognize an individual farm business in Ontario who successfully applied on-farm innovation and ingenuity to effectively address an identified risk associated

with soil, water, air or biodiversity on their farm. Please see the details on the OSCIA website—submission deadline is December 1st.

As harvest drags on I would ask that you all work safely; and be sure to take a little time for family and friends. I look forward to seeing many of you at upcoming Soil & Crop events, as well as the OSCIA annual conference in early February 2020 which is being held at the Best Western Lamplighter Inn & Conference Centre, London, ON.

An impressive lineup of speakers for the annual conference is being finalized and there is something for everyone planning to attend. That includes sharing details on the new format and name of the province-wide newsletter with the first issue expected next June. The Provincial Board recognizes that moving away from a long history of eleven different regional newsletters will be a big change for some, but it’s a necessary move that will open new opportunities for members and keep the Association on a great path for the future.

Wishing you all a safe and bountiful harvest.

Les Nichols, OSCIA 2019 President

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

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Getting a move on safely transporting machinery

“The day comes—and it comes often—when we have to pull more equipment than the vehicle was designed for,” reflects Dean Anderson, agriculture sector veteran and Strategic Advisor at Workplace Safety & Prevention Services (WSPS). “It’s crucial that we choose the right equipment for the job.”

Unlike licensed vehicles, farm vehicles including tractors are exempt from many regulations under the *Highway Traffic Act* (HTA). This extends to trailers and wagons towed by these vehicles. However, farmers must work within the regulations of the HTA.

“If you’re towing, make sure you use equipment that is rated properly,” says Anderson. “The vehicle Gross Vehicle Weight Rating has to match the gross weight of the vehicle, plus trailer. Towing one grain wagon may be fine. Pulling two with your tractor may be hazardous.”

Given how farmers work extra hard to maximize yields and get product to market as efficiently as possible, it’s important to not push the limits of equipment at the expense of safety.

It’s not always about size

While a yard of dirt and a yard of mulch may look the same to the untrained eye, that earth will be substantially heavier and impact stopping to a far greater degree.

Braking is a factor that must be foremost in mind when on the road towing loads. If there are no brakes on the trailer, it is important to be sure the vehicle doing the towing has braking that is up to the job at hand.

“Tie down straps need to be rated for the weight being secured,” says Anderson. “The weight limit rating is clearly marked on the webbing of the strap itself. In the event of an incident, if a load falls off a wagon, as an example, the police will be investigating the weight limits indicated on the straps.”

This also goes for spot checks that police will do from time to time. Having exemptions from some restrictions in the HTA does not mean safety issues can be ignored. There are serious ramifications if harm is caused due to ignoring clearly defined safety limits.

This article was prepared by Workplace Safety & Prevention Services (WSPS). Together with its legacy Farm Safety Association, WSPS has been helping Ontario farmers improve health and safety prevention practices for almost half a century.

For assistance, visit <https://www.wspss.ca/Farm-Safety-Training/Farm-Safety.aspx> or contact customercare@wspss.ca.

OSCIA Annual Conference Update



Annual Conference

February 4-5, 2020

Best Western Lamplighter Inn & Conference Centre, London, ON

It’s that time of year again folks! Local and Regional secretaries recently received a two-page memo outlining deadlines for preparation of the 2020 Annual Conference. Some of these items include:

1. Register your Delegates for the Annual Conference.
Deadline of January 10, 2020
2. Submit your local/regional SCIA Resolutions
Deadline of January 20, 2020
3. Required reporting for 2020

Q & A

Frequently Asked Question on Insurance Coverage

Question:

What does the Director & Officer (D&O) insurance cover and who does it protect?

Answer:

The D&O protects the directors and officers against allegations of negligent acts, covering claims resulting from managerial decisions that have adverse financial consequences. It also covers wrongful acts that may arise from the employment process and workplace conduct. D&O protects an individual who was, is or becomes a duly elected or appointed member of the provincial/local/regional Board, manager, Executive Officer, employee, volunteer, or member of a duly constituted committee of OSCIA.



Crop Advances – On-going Research Resources

Looking for applied research reports? Go straight to Crop Advances on the OSCIA website. Crop Advances is compiled annually by OMAFRA field crop specialists in partnership with OSCIA, industry and academics to inform readers of new technologies, results of field trials and research. It's only available on our website and it's the best place to find information on field crop agriculture.

The reports are categorized into one of six research categories (canola, cereal, corn, forage, soybeans, and soil) and are presented in pdf format. All reports are conveniently organized by year, some going back to 2003. There is also a section on general research and events that gives readers an overview of accomplishments achieved at FarmSmart, SWAC and similar activities.

Find Crop Advances under “Research and Resources” at: <https://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/research-resources/crop-advances/>

Providing sustainability through research – a GFO perspective

It has long been said that the key to productivity is through research and related initiatives. Josh Cowan, Grain Farmers of Ontario's (GFO) Manager of research and innovation will be the first to attest to this statement. Josh's presentation, at the 2019 OSCIA annual conference in Kingston, provided much insight into the importance of research and how the results of this research ultimately affect us all. With 28,000 farmer-members growing six million acres of barley, corn, oat, soybean and wheat, the vision of the Grain Farmers of Ontario is to drive the Ontario grain industry to become a global leader; they are well on our way to achieving this primary goal.

Josh stressed that the GFO has several sub-goals that are part of its mandate. These include maintaining the public trust for farmer –members, ensuring that regulations in place create a positive business environment, protecting (as well as increasing) markets, and enhancing profitability through research. Research priorities change, from year to year, and are decided on as a result of GFO delegate surveys, CCAs, provincial crop specialists and industry consultations. 2019 targeted priorities include integrated weed, disease and insect management, corn ear mould and DON as well as soil health.

Research investments in 2018-2019 totaled approximately 1.8 million dollars encompassing 56 projects. For every \$1 invested by GFO \$2.90 was leveraged by industry and government. During this period priority areas included crop quality and utilization, agronomy and production, weed, disease and insect pests and breeding and genetics.

Josh stressed the importance of both individual crops and multi-year cropping systems and that progress is incremental, depending on the crop. An astounding \$200 million in lost revenue was seen as the result of DON, in 2018 – a huge cause of concern within the province.

It is important to note that research locations are spread across the province and a project-based lab is located in Quebec. Research conducted is divided into basic research (how things work) and applied research (the benefits of what we are evaluating). Both areas are integral in establishing solid production practices with a note that most efforts are placed in long-term trials that provide sustainable results. Josh stressed that variety performance trials are important in research done by GFO with results that may be found on a central database - gfo.ca/research/projects.

In 2018 GFO held their inaugural “Go with the grain” researcher tour which was a resounding success. The aim of the tour was to help researchers understand successes and challenges, from a farmer perspective. 35 individuals from the University of Guelph participated and gained knowledge that went well beyond the research lab. They gained an understanding of how each farming operation is unique, helping everyone to move forward in their understanding of challenges at the grassroots level.

Many partnerships have been fostered along the way, which help to support ongoing research initiatives. Some of these partnerships include the Canadian Field Crop Research Alliance, Canadian Wheat Research Coalition, Barley Council of Canada and the Organic Federation of Canada. What is the future of research? The sky is the limit. With the advancement of technological transfer, we are able to access data from several sources, allowing those involved to develop unique approaches to managing and transferring the information...a win-win for everyone!

The next time you hear someone discussing research results take a few moments to ponder how these results can ultimately change our lives. As we move forward with innovative practices, we are also showcasing how our industry is creating a more sustainable future for us all. Josh Cowan may be reached at joshcowan@gfo.ca

Written by Tracy Myers, Eastern Valley Regional Communication Coordinator (RCC)



DON HILL LEGACY AWARD

Nomination forms available on the OSCIA website – click on “Association/Don Hill Legacy Award”

New Communication Direction for OSCIA



Written by Phil Oegema, Thames Valley Provincial Director

There are many benefits to membership with Ontario Soil and Crop. In addition to discounted rates for various services, agricultural conferences and farm shows across the province, members are provided

a platform to participate in applied research trials, access new and innovative technology, and share their ideas with other progressive farmers in their area.

For years the regional newsletters have proven to be a highly desired benefit of membership and a great resource for members to stay connected and informed. To ensure we continue to meet the needs of membership and more broadly showcase the many grassroots activities of the organization, we will be moving to a single comprehensive online newsletter, that will be sent quarterly to members across the province. Work is currently underway, with plans for full implementation by the Spring of 2020.

FAQ's:

Why are we doing this? At our 2019 Annual Conference in Kingston the board of directors created a sub-committee to review our efforts in communication and the role of the RCC with an eye towards ensuring that Soil and Crop is still delivering the quality product that our membership expects. Through that review it became clear that with limited funding available, supporting eleven unique regional newsletters with four issues annually, often published in hard copy and distributed through the mail, is becoming increasingly hard to justify. The main recommendation from the sub-committee was that we move to a single online version of the newsletter for all SCIA members. The Board of Directors agreed with this assessment and the Executive subsequently tasked the sub-committee with building this new comprehensive online newsletter. By producing a single OSCIA newsletter, we will be able to optimize the limited funds available for newsletter production and allow some of the precious Regional Communication Grant funding to be re-directed to other knowledge transfer activities in the Region (i.e. applied research trials, demonstration days, workshops and more!).

What are the benefits? The most exciting benefit to the new format will be that while in addition to the local content you have come to expect, you will now have easy access to the news, reports, and project descriptions from across Ontario. Hearing about what other regions are doing to face their challenges will prove to be a valuable tool no matter what your geographic location. As an example: Huron County's controlled drainage project has relevancy from the far south to the far north. The same is true for Elgin and Dundas County's compaction demos. A common platform for Soil

and Crop members to share their work with each other makes us all better farmers.

What will happen to Regional newsletter sponsorships?

We recognize the importance of the relationships that regions have fostered with local industry sponsors. As we work to develop the format of the new online newsletter, we will make every effort to provide the right platform to maintain those regional sponsorship dollars, and perhaps even provide new opportunities for engagement with local and regional partners.

How will the newsletter be developed? Once the format for the new newsletter has been established, RCCs will continue to provide local content. A rotating team of two RCCs along with two individuals from the Guelph office will work together to put the newsletter together and release it on time.

How will this affect my membership fee? Membership fees are determined at the local level and should not be affected by this change. Members will continue to receive a quarterly newsletter and have access to all membership benefits.

A great way to start the soil health conversation

Are you interested in learning more about the health of your soil? Do you farm in the Lake Erie or Lake St. Clair watershed? Consider participating in the Farmland Health Check-Up for a chance to work one-on-one with a Certified Crop Advisor or a Professional Agrologist, free of charge.

The Check-Up process will focus on the health of your soil, identify challenges specific to your farm, and plan Best Management Practices (BMPs) to address those challenges. Funding for the implementation of select BMPs is available through the LEADS program (Lake Erie Agriculture Demonstrating Sustainability). More information is available on the OSCIA website (www.ontariosoilcrop.org).



LEADS is a component of the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a five-year federal-provincial-territorial initiative to strengthen the agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector, and increase its competitiveness, prosperity and sustainability.

Written by Karen Jacobs, Programs Coordinator

