

OMAFRA Livestock Exhibits Amalgamate Under One Central Tent

Whether looking for beef, sheep, goat or poultry information this year, there will be a brand new one-stop shopping location for Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) livestock resources at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show (COFS).

By wandering through Farm Credit Canada's Livestock Central at the north end of 8th Lane, Show attendees will discover an amalgamated OMAFRA exhibit full of livestock information and educational demos. Another new aspect of the OMAFRA exhibit will be access to 'Growing Forward' resources – a farm business development program based on improving management capabilities, building new skills and understanding non-capital funding initiatives. During the three days of the Show, the OMAFRA exhibit will hopefully draw all types of livestock producers to this centralized location.

"OMAFRA's new livestock location should really suit our attendees," says Katelyn McEachren, COFS Livestock Co-ordinator. "Many visitors maintain a farm business at home that revolves around more than one type of commodity farming. This one-stop livestock exhibit lets OMAFRA staff centralize their presence and efforts at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show – making it both efficient and effective for visitors who need to consolidate within the time they have to spend at the Show."

Included in this year's OMAFRA livestock exhibit will be an on-site Cost-Of-Production (COP) calculator allowing farmers to discover their desired returns matched with their input cost levels. The biosecurity component includes a full-scale Danish Entry system, personal protection equipment and biosecurity kits for non-regulated poultry farmers or bird fanciers. 'Growing Forward' Business Development for Farm Businesses will be another component of OMAFRA's exhibit.

'Growing Forward' combines self-assessment and action plan development with a range of cost-share advisory services and skills development opportunities to help farmers reach their business goals. All cost-share funds are on a first-come, first-serve basis up to the available annual funding for each year of the program. Applicants must meet the program eligibility criteria and adhere to all program terms and conditions, as well as project claim submission deadlines to qualify for cost-share.

OMAFRA staff has all of Canada's Outdoor Farm Show covered – literally! In addition to the Livestock Central display, there will be a dairy exhibit in the Cover-All Dairy Innovation Centre; the traditional main tent at Middle Machinery Mall; a sprayer demo; 'Celebrating Healthy Living' Expo presented by Foodland Ontario on North Mall; and an interactive Green Energy exhibit in the Canadian Energy Expo Pavilion.

Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA), in conjunction with OMAFRA, will host a working wetland filtration system on wheels that demonstrates waste water purification systems. This demo will show how milkhouse wash water, compost run-off, winery waste water and greenhouse re-circulating fluids can be cleaned for reuse. The technology – which will actually be operating at the Show using waste water from the dairy barn – removes mineral and organic material contaminants for reuse in farm ponds or as irrigation water on crops and in greenhouses.

Looking for information and resources? OMAFRA will have you covered while at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show, held September 15, 16 and 17, 2009 at Canada's Outdoor Park in Woodstock, ON.

