



**OUR
INAUGURAL
YEAR**

Innovation • Leadership • Teamwork



Animal Care • Quality • Accountability

2015 Annual Report

VFO's First Board of Directors

Veal Farmers of Ontario's (VFO) Board of Directors is comprised of eight veal producers from across Ontario. For VFO's inaugural year, Directors were appointed by the Farm Products Marketing Commission. Going forward, Directors will be elected at the Annual General Meeting by voting members. This year, Directors will select term lengths between one and three years so Director turnover will be staggered. Eventually, all Directors will be elected to a rotating three-year term.

VFO Directors work together on a variety of industry projects and issues to ensure that the best interests of Ontario's veal industry are represented. The main duty of a Director is to help set policy and direction for the VFO. Directors are responsible for attending Board meetings and participating in teleconference meetings. On average, each VFO Director spends approximately ten days each year attending Board meetings, committee meetings and other industry activities.



Back: Tom Oudshoorn, Randy Drenth, Tom Kroesbergen, Brian Keunen. Front: Chris Vervoort, Pascal Bouilly, Joyce Feenstra, Judy Dirksen. Insert: Jim Millson. Jim replaced Randy, who moved out of province, as a Director in September.

Brian Keunen, <i>Chair</i>	Grain-Fed	Palmerston
Chris Vervoort, <i>Vice Chair</i>	Grain-Fed	Arthur
Judy Dirksen	Grain-Fed	Harriston
Pascal Bouilly	Milk-Fed	Cambridge
Joyce Feenstra	Grain-Fed	Belwood
Tom Oudshoorn	Grain-Fed	Auburn
Tom Kroesbergen	Grain-Fed	Ailsa Craig
Randy Drenth	Grain-Fed	Clifford
Jim Millson	Grain-Fed	Enniskillen

Livestock Alliance Staff

The partners of the Ontario Livestock Alliance – Veal Farmers of Ontario, and Ontario Goat – have come together to share not only office resources but human resources as well. By pooling resources and project funds, the partnership has been able to attract key staff members who provide skills and expertise in specific areas in order to benefit both organizations. Our staff is our most valued resource and their passion and dedication to the two sectors is appreciated.



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Chair's Message– Brian Keunen

VFO's Inaugural Year!

A lot can change in a year! That is certainly the case for Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO). I am proud to present our Inaugural Annual Report representing an overview of the

activities and issues that have been addressed on behalf of Ontario's veal industry.

This past year has been very busy for the VFO Board of Directors and staff! VFO came into force on April 1st, 2015 and with that, came a number of new responsibilities and directions for the organization. The VFO's first Board of Directors was appointed to serve for a one year term and we welcomed a number of new faces around the board table. At the same time, the legacy organization of the Ontario Veal Association (OVA) and its business affairs were wound up and funds were transferred to the VFO. As approved by the OVA membership, the organization was also formally dissolved.

The VFO became Ontario's newest marketing board and with that came the responsibility of the collection of license fees. Our focus this past year has been on the awareness and education of VFO's license fees and the responsibility of remitting the license fees. The VFO appreciates the support of our industry partners in helping to make this a smooth transition.

The Veal Industry Advisory Committee (VIAC) was formed with representatives from a number of industry groups including Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Ontario Livestock Dealers Association, Ontario Auction Markets Association, Beef Farmers of Ontario and the Ontario Independent Meat Processors. The VIAC is chaired by Commission member Valerie Hobbs and we appreciate the support of the Commission in bringing this important group together.

The VFO Board of Directors and staff worked diligently on the development of VFO's first Strategic Plan. The plan outlines a number of key priorities and brings direction to our work as a board by focusing us on our vision and our organization's purpose. The Board also laid the groundwork for the next year's focus of the review of our regulations in order to make recommendations to the Commission for enhancements and improvements with the goal of clarity to all those involved in the veal cattle sector.

We continue to partner with our Quebec colleagues in the Canadian Veal Association (CVA) in order to address a number of industry issues. The CVA is undertaking a review of the Veal Code of Practice and while it is a very intensive process, it is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate to our customers the commitment veal producers have to veal production in Canada. The CVA is also working on the issue of extra-label drugs and the drug approval process.

As the founding member of the Livestock Alliance, we continue to see the benefit of industry collaboration and cooperation. With our partners, we are able to pool our resources in order to deliver superior member service with a dedicated group of specialized professionals.

As an industry we will continue to face challenges but how we respond to the challenges will define who we are. While we may not be a large sector like some of the other livestock groups, the veal sector continues to meet a consumer demand for a superior product unlike any other. We know that change is constant and the next few years will certainly bring change to our industry but I am confident that together the Ontario veal industry will be able to harness the opportunities that will come before us.

I would like to thank the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission for their support over the past number of years, and specifically this past year, that has helped VFO achieve its organizational goals. I would also like to thank the inaugural VFO Board of Directors for their contributions this past year in making our first year so successful. Thanks as well, to our dedicated and passionate staff for all their efforts. Together, we are all looking forward to what 2016 and beyond will bring!



*Proudly serving Ontario's
grain-fed and milk-fed veal farmers*

Structure & Organization

The Ontario veal industry has realized a long sought after goal with the creation of the Veal Farmers of Ontario as Ontario's newest marketing board. The regulations under the Farm Products Marketing Act creating the Board came into force on April 1, 2015. VFO now has the regulatory power to collect its own licence fees set at \$4.00 per head, the same amount that was collected by the Beef Farmers of Ontario. Veal producers will now be exempt from the beef check-off system so there will not be a double collection of fees. VFO continues to work closely with veal producers, dairy producers, sales barns, dealers and processors to ensure compliance of the new regulations. With VFO now operational, the Ontario Veal Association (OVA) has dissolved.

Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) is a producer-run organization that represents the interests of Ontario's grain-fed and milk-fed veal producers. VFO is committed to promoting and enhancing Ontario's veal industry through innovation, marketing, advocacy, and education.

VFO works closely with our other industry partners including government, and others within the red meat and livestock sectors. VFO endeavors to make the industry better on behalf of producers, packers, processors, feed companies, pharmaceutical companies, retailers, and other service and equipment suppliers.

The business of VFO is handled by a Board of Directors consisting of eight veal producers. VFO employs staff members who are responsible for implementing initiatives and conducting the organization's day-to-day business.

Our History: the OVA

In 1990, the Ontario Veal Association (OVA) became an incorporated organization under the *Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations Act* thereby replacing the previous organizations whose interests were specific to the grain-fed and milk-fed sectors of the veal industry.

In the past, the OVA was the acting Ontario Cattlemen's Association's (now known as Beef Farmers of Ontario or BFO) Veal Committee. However, when the 2003 BFO organizational review was completed the Veal Committee was eliminated. This allowed the OVA to investigate creating its own organization with regulatory powers under the *Farm Products Marketing Act*.

In March 2013, the OVA had a "Producer Expression of Opinion" vote by the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission to determine if the organization would be formally established under the *Farm Products Marketing Act*. Overwhelmingly, the results indicated supporting the creation of a veal marketing board. The OVA worked closely with the Commission and BFO to develop a plan to remove veal from the existing legislation and ensure a seamless transition for both organizations.

Today's VFO owes a great debt to the Past Presidents of the OVA— people whose leadership and vision have helped create the independent organization we have today.

Jim Walton	1990-92, 94
Mike Chambers	1993
Jim Hambleton	1995-96
Ian Foster	1997-2000, 04
Chris Palmer	2001-03
Judy Dirksen	2005-14

VFO Strategic Philosophy

Mission:

Veal Farmers of Ontario provides leadership to promote industry growth and viability through collaboration, innovation, marketing and education.

Vision:

A proactive and vibrant Ontario veal industry.

Values:

- *Animal Care*
- *Quality*
- *Innovation*
- *Leadership*
- *Teamwork*
- *Accountability*

Focus Areas:

- *Production and Standards*
- *Advocacy and Industry Relations*
- *Marketing and Promotion*
- *Operations*
- *Member Relations*

2015: Year in Review

The new Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) Board of Directors focused on developing a new strategic vision. Below are some of the year's highlights and triumphs.

OPERATIONS

- The Ontario veal industry has realized a long sought after goal with the creation of the Veal Farmers of Ontario as Ontario's newest marketing board. The regulations under the Farm Products Marketing Act creating the Board came into force on April 1, 2015. VFO now has the regulatory power to collect its own licence fees set at \$4.00 per head, the same amount that was collected by the Beef Farmers of Ontario.
- VFO continued its partnership in the Ontario Livestock Alliance (OLA) with Ontario Goat. The two partners share office space, administrative and human resources to better serve our members.
- VFO Board of Directors and staff continued to implement good governance and best management practices.

MEMBER RELATIONS

- VFO, together with the Canadian Veal Association (CVA) and the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) are updating the Veal Code of Practice. The existing code was completed in 1998. Revisions will reflect current production practices. The Code of Practice is used federally and provincially as the industry accepted "standard of care" for livestock and it is from these standards that issues or enforcement may be addressed on-farm.
- VFO works in conjunction with industry partners to address calf health. Calf Care e-news is delivered to members and industry partners and promotes improved young calf health that will benefit veal operations. VFO also maintains calfcare.ca.



- VFO partnered with Ontario Goat (OG) for an on-farm animal welfare initiative is developing animal handling videos, assessments of animal welfare practices on farm, disease detection, and on-farm euthanasia fact sheets.

PRODUCTION AND STANDARDS

- Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and usage continues to be a hot topic for veal producers. Changes are coming by December 2016 to how and when antibiotics are used in livestock production. VFO continues to work with government on this issue to minimize the impact on veal production.
- The upcoming cattle traceability regulations have been of key importance to VFO. VFO is determining how they will impact Ontario veal producers and what will be required for on-farm implementation. VFO continues to work with the National Cattle Implementation Plan Committee on this initiative.
- VFO and Farms.com, with Growing Forward 2 funding, have developed a Veal Market Report app for Apple and Android devices. A mobile-friendly weekly market report is available across all platforms. The app's reports are based on live-sale auction market data electronically submitted to BFO and direct sales reported by packers to VFO. Having timely access to market information helps producers make business management decisions.

WEEKLY ELECTRONIC VEAL SALES	WEEKLY ELECTRONIC VEAL SALES COMMENTS
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Ontario Direct to Packery	
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- VFO is conducting a Carcass Benchmarking Study as a follow-up to the Veal Quality Audit commissioned in 2002, which investigated the causes of decreased veal slaughter and demand in Ontario. Provincial and federal packer and retailer interviews have been conducted to learn more about their opinions and perceived problems with veal. Through this project, veal producers will be provided with benchmark percentages for condemned carcasses and an evaluation of carcass yield that will enable them to develop and adopt innovative technologies to respond to changing demands of the marketplace and make more informed business decisions to improve profitability.
- VFO collaborates with the Livestock Research and Industry Council to develop outcome-based research priorities for the veal sector that will be included in an overall livestock submission to OMAFRA with the goal of strategically positioning livestock research for future market needs and prioritizing funding.

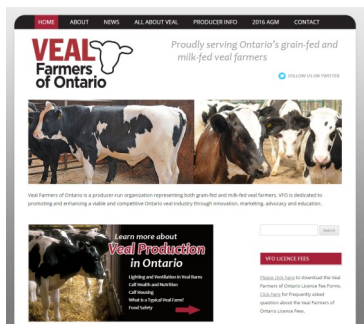
- VFO, along with its partner in the OLA, continues to produce Alliance magazine, which combines the communication efforts of the two organizations and provides producers with educational articles on the veal sector.



- As part of the weekly Alliance e-update, VFO distributes information via email to all producers and industry partners.



- VFO rebranded its website www.ontarioveal.on.ca with the new name and logo. The website is updated with new information and resources as they are released.



- VFO was at the Canadian Dairy XPO and Southwest Dairy Symposium connecting with new and existing members, discussing industry issues and distributing resources.
- VFO exhibited at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show in Woodstock. This was an opportunity to meet with VFO members and Minister Leal to discuss the various issues related to the veal industry and production practices.



- VFO developed a number of communication tools including news releases, fact sheets, member mailings and emails aimed at providing important information to members and industry partners. Over 10,000 resources were distributed at fairs across Ontario.

- Staff responded to several requests via email and telephone from industry partners and government for information about the veal sector.

MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS

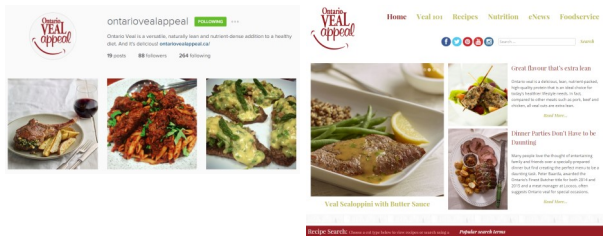
- VFO was a sponsor once again at the popular Breakfast on the Farm event hosted by Farm and Food Care Ontario. This year the event was held September 20th at Hylander Farms in Tecumseh, ON. Over 2000 people attended, picked up resources, and learned how we raise veal here in Ontario. Below is Matt Hyland telling visitors about caring for veal calves and host Brian Hyland and his family.



- VFO hosted the Veal Education Centre at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto. The booth was busy again this year answering questions about veal production and the health benefits of eating veal. Veal recipes, Real Deal About Veal information sheets, activity books, "cootie catchers" and trading cards were handed out.



- Consumer marketing through the Ontario Veal Appeal campaign has continued to receive some great exposure in various consumer outlets. The campaign includes targeted advertising, recipe cards, use of social media, public and communication initiatives.
- VFO continues to administer its consumer focused Ontario Veal appeal website and social media pages. The website was give a fresh look and an Instagram account was added to the program this year.



- VFO attended a number of consumer shows to promote veal recipes and cooking with veal.



- Eight new recipes were developed and will be released over the coming months.



- Vealing Delicious*, our consumer recipe e-blast is distributed monthly and has a received a new clean look to match the website.



- Visit ontariovealappeal.ca for more information about our consumer programs.

ADVOCACY & INDUSTRY RELATIONS

- Together with our Quebec counterparts, VFO continues to work as a founding member of the Canadian Veal Association (CVA) in order to raise the level of awareness of veal issues at the Federal level.
- Collaborating with other livestock organizations, VFO continues to address animal welfare concerns and represent the farmer's concerns with the Ontario Society for the Prevention and Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA). VFO has signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to further enhance this relationship.
- One of the most extensive lobby efforts of VFO's overall government relations strategy continues to be work done on the Risk Management Program (RMP). Along with our Ontario Agricultural Sustainability Coalition (OASC)

partners, VFO continues to collaborate with the Ontario government for improvements to the RMP and to try to find ways to ensure that the existing program and funds continue to serve our farmers. OASC hosted several farm tours this summer with various Members of Provincial Parliament. OASC wants to show that farmers value RMP and is calling on the government to begin increasing its maximum potential contribution in the RMP from \$100 million to \$175 million over three years with the first \$25 million coming in the 2016 Budget.



- VFO continues to work with Farm and Food Care Ontario and OMAFRA to advance education in responsible farm animal care and handling.
- Representatives from VFO attended the Annual Premier's Summit of Agri-Food at Queen's Park at the end of November. It provided the opportunity to meet with a number of key people within the Minister's office as well as various government staff to talk about the Ontario veal industry and the opportunities for growth.

VFO attended a number of industry functions representing the Ontario veal industry. As well, VFO attended a number of key government meetings with MPPs and MPs to ensure that the veal voice was heard.



Ontario Ag Minister Jeff Leal and Chair Brian Keunen

- We served veal meatballs to MPPs and government staffers at the Queen's Park Market during Local Food Week in June.



- VFO works closely with a number of industry partners and organizations in order to fulfill the mandate of the association, including:
 - ✓ Agricultural Adaptation Council
 - ✓ Canadian Veal Association
 - ✓ Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario
 - ✓ Farm & Food Care Ontario
 - ✓ Ontario Agricultural Commodity Council
 - ✓ Ontario Agricultural Sustainability Coalition
 - ✓ Ontario Agri-Food Education
 - ✓ Ontario Federation of Agriculture
 - ✓ Ontario Goat
 - ✓ Ontario Independent Meat Processors
 - ✓ Ontario Livestock and Poultry Council
 - ✓ Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
 - ✓ President's Council



Farm & Food Care Ontario

Submitted by: Kelly Daynard, Farm and Food Care Ontario, Communications Manager



As a gold member of Farm & Food Care, Veal Farmers of Ontario plays an integral role in the organization's success. Several initiatives by Farm & Food Care over the last year will be of interest to veal farmers in Ontario.

Farm & Food Care staff work under the direction of its **Animal Care Advisory Council** which provides a forum for input, ideas, dialogue and proactive discussions of on-farm animal care issues. The council, with representation from Farm & Food Care's platinum, gold and silver members, held three meetings in 2015. Topics discussed at meetings included IMPACT, slaughter without stunning and interactive e-learning resources.

The **Helpline** is a confidential "farmer helping farmer" approach of advice and referral on animal care. The Helpline service is provided by the Farm & Food Care to assist people in providing good care for their farm animals. It provides a confidential way for people to report situations of farm animals that they feel require better care or for farmers themselves to call if they need some help. The Helpline service responded to four calls in 2015 related to beef cattle. The service operates with the assistance of commodity organizations which provides representatives and species-specific advice at calls.

Newly updated **emergency fact sheets** for first responders are now available with information relating to barn fires, livestock on the loose and accidents involving livestock. These fact sheets compliment Farm & Food Care's four part emergency video series as a set of resources for fire fighters and police officer who respond to emergency situations involving farm animals. The fact sheets are available in digital format at www.FarmFoodCare.org.

Three issues of Farm & Food Care's **Farm Animal Care Newsletter** were developed and distributed to FFC members in 2015. This newsletter focuses on FFC's work specifically on animal care with current issues and relevant information on farm animal care for Ontario farmers.

The **IMPACT** (Innovative Management and Practical Animal Care Training) program has had a successful first year with many initiatives under way. IMPACT staff has participated in 104 presentations, industry meetings and tradeshow since the beginning of the project in 2014. A launch conference was held in February 2015 for 90 farmers and industry partners.

IMPACT developed a series of virtual **husbandry procedure videos** for pigs, dairy cattle, beef cattle, sheep and goats. These videos cover the hows and whys of each process as well as a step-by-step process on how to do each procedure.

Procedures include disbudding and dehorning procedure videos for calves; dehorning, castration and injection procedures for goats and "Work smarter, not harder" veal and goat handling videos.

Resources developed through IMPACT will also be available on a **smart phone app** in 2016. The free downloadable IMPACT animal care app will be available for Apple and Android users to access animal care information and resources on the go and in the barn – where you need it the most.

Other IMPACT resources developed include:

- ♦ **Ruminant ballistics poster** outlining proper usage, safety and confirmation of death for cattle, sheep and goats;
- ♦ **Euthanasia video** on the emotional aspect of euthanasia from the human perspective, discussing how and why timely euthanasia is important and why we find it difficult to do. Topics covered on this DVD are designed to give staff and farmers struggling with euthanizing animals the confidence to know they are doing the right thing.

In the priority area of consumer outreach, Farm & Food Care hosted a successful Breakfast on the Farm event at a Hylander Farms, a beef and veal farm in Essex County. The event, coordinated with help from the Essex Federation of Agriculture, attracted more than 2,000 people. Guests received a free all-Ontario breakfast and farm tour and had a chance to have their farming questions answered by experts in the industry.

Farm & Food Care coordinated **Local Food Week** and **Ontario Agriculture Week** promotions in partnership with Foodland Ontario. FFC had a presence at five Local Food Week and seven Ontario Agriculture Week events as well as hosting social media contests for both.

One million copies of **The Real Dirt on Farming** booklet have now been distributed across Canada. The milestone was reached just 15 months after the booklet's publication. The 52 -page booklet is written to answer Canadians' questions about food and farming, tackling topics like pesticides, antibiotics, hormones and GMOs head on. Farm & Food Care also coordinates Speakers' Bureau training sessions for farmers and agribusiness staff across Ontario. The training sessions are designed to encourage those involved in agriculture to tell their stories – what they do and why they do it – to non-farming audiences. Visit www.readirtonfarming.ca/speakers for a current list of workshop dates.

To learn more about Farm & Food Care's initiatives, visit www.farmfoodcare.org, email info@farmfoodcare.org or call 519- 837-1326.

Ontario Independent Meat Processors

Submitted by: Laurie Nicol, Executive Director



The Ontario Independent Meat Processors (OIMP) is a not-for-profit association representing Ontario abattoirs, processing plants, butcher shops, suppliers and commodity partners. OIMP believes a strong agricultural sector is dependent upon a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship between producers and processors. We are very fortunate to have the support from the Veal Farmers of Ontario, and wish to congratulate the organization on their accomplishment in becoming Ontario's newest marketing board, providing a more collective and stronger voice for Ontario's veal industry.

OIMP, as a single and unified voice for meat and poultry processors since 1980, provides industry leadership on matters that directly affect our members from government advocacy, to research, to promotion of Ontario meat and poultry. In 2015, we set a record high number of members at 335, with 75% of our processor and retail members selling direct to the consumer.

OIMP plays an important role in keeping government informed on industry challenges which include regularly bi-monthly meetings with senior management from OMAFRA's Meat Inspection program and our participation at the Open for Business table, chaired by the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Last year our lobbying efforts focused primarily on the continuation of inspection for provincial abattoirs in the event of a labour disruption due to OPSEU negotiations. OIMP also represents the processors at the Veal Industry Advisory Committee.

Last year OIMP staff visited over 600 meat plants across the province which helps us in providing a informed voice to positively influence government policy. We provided assistance to plant operators addressing 384 operational and regulatory challenges including issues around animal welfare.

Keeping members informed is vital. Word on the BLOCK, our bi-weekly eBulletin and our Technical eBulletin provide timely information. BLOCKtalk, our quarterly magazine, featured Ontario Veal in the fall issue which was delivered to over 1,700 individuals. Our website www.oimp.ca was updated and remains a valuable resource.



Ontario's consumer market has a growing proclivity for purchasing local, and corner butchers, who know their farmers, are seen as more likely to sell local meat and poultry than chain or big box stores. Using all consumer touch points, OIMP promotes the 'Find a Butcher' searchable database on www.ontariomeatandpoultry.ca as a means to

drive traffic to members, and as a result 22,003 unique visitors came to the site in 2015 (up 6% over 2014).

Our fall consumer eNews, featuring veal, was delivered to 7816 consumers with an open rate of 28%. OIMP ran four promotional Facebook campaigns over the year - one ten week campaign directing consumers to OIMP members, and three benefiting Ontario Food Banks with over \$4,155 in meat donated. These activities resulted in 2,003 new Facebook fans (total 11,579) and added 281 new Twitter followers (total 1,404). The 'Appeal of Ontario Veal' board on Pinterest had 50 pins and 231 followers.

Beauty shots of meat recipes help sway purchasing behavior for those cuts/types of protein. On the website 18% of recipes are veal (27 recipes in total), and Slow Cooker Veal Stew has the fifth highest page view.

Last year 12 new recipes



with a bacon theme were developed and photographed, three featuring Ontario Veal; Veal and Bacon Meat Pie, Veal and Bacon Sloppy Joes,

Veal Scaloppini with Bacon & Sage.

OIMP continues to promote Ontario Meat and Poultry to consumers as the official sponsor of the Flavours section at the One of a Kind Christmas Show & Sale with an estimated attendance of over 140,000 people where we promoted our online locator, distributed 'Find a Butcher' postcards and distributed Ontario Veal recipes.

Ontario's Finest BUTCHER

We had 11 butchers competing in the Ontario's Finest Butcher competition, up 22% from last year. Ontario Veal was featured as one of the three 'black box' proteins in the final round.

The final round was videotaped and can be viewed on our YouTube channel.

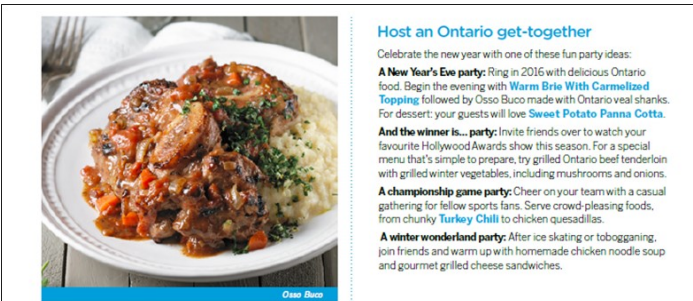


Foodland Ontario - Promoting Ontario Veal

Submitted by Sandra Jones, Client Services Officer, Foodland Ontario

Public Relations:

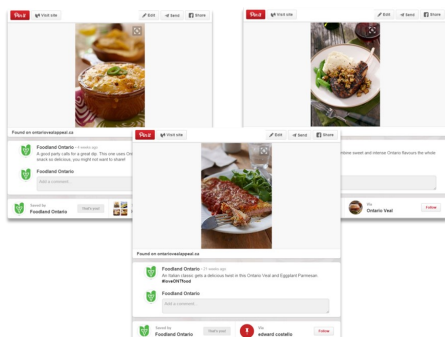
Foodland Ontario's Fresh Perspectives newsletter featured Ontario veal in our May|June and July|August issues – recipe ideas and recipes. This newsletter is sent to approximately 600 food and lifestyle media outlets across Ontario. Veal was promoted on Rogers "Daytime" Kitchener (Osso Bucco) on November 18, 2015. This recipe is also featured in our January|February issue of Fresh Perspectives.



Social Media:

Following consumer trends and gaining a stronger online presence Foodland Ontario has increased its social media outlets to now include Pinterest and Instagram.

Pinterest: 3 pins about veal



Twitter: Tweets from Foodland Ontario that highlighted veal resulted in 4 retweets and 2 likes. A total of 2,401 impressions and 9 total engagements helped create an average engagement rate of .37% per post!



Upcoming social media posts: Foodland Ontario will promote veal recipes on both Twitter and Pinterest during the month of February in 2016!

Radio Tags:

Ontario veal was promoted September 28th – October 4th and will be promoted February and March 2016 in 60 English and 8 French markets. An example is given below:

"This report is brought to you by Foodland Ontario. Fresh Ontario veal is available in stores, farmers' markets and on-farm markets. After all... Good things grow in Ontario. Paid for by the government of Ontario."

Recipe Brochures:

Ontario Veal is our featured recipe on the front cover of the Ontario Independent Meat Processors Spring/Summer brochure for 2016!



Video: In Foodland Ontario's Always Available series, Foodland Ontario created and will feature "Ontario Veal Schnitzel" video on our social feeds in 2016. Social post will call out a Veal Farmers of Ontario's schnitzel recipe.



For more information on the Foodland Ontario program, contact Client Services Officer, Sandra Jones at sandra.jones@ontario.ca or toll free at 1-888-466-2372 ext. 5198263947

Ontario Livestock and Poultry Council

Highlights of OLPC's 2014-2015 Activities

Submitted by: Susan Fitzgerald



OLPC membership includes livestock and poultry groups (including Veal Farmers of Ontario), agri-business, veterinary associations, Animal Health Lab, University of Guelph, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The OLPC is industry funded and facilitates biosecurity and emergency management preparedness relating to foreign animal disease (FAD) and other transmissible livestock and poultry diseases.

Recognizing Signs of Mental Health Issues in Agriculture

The recognition and importance of supporting people experiencing mental health distress is now a well-recognized deficiency in emergency management planning and response. This is particularly evident within the agricultural industry where large scale emergencies involving animals can result in feelings of isolation, failure and helplessness. Traditionally, farmers do not have a strong history of turning to mental health professionals for support. They prefer to turn to family, friends and veterinarians. This underlines the importance of offering mental health awareness training to those in the agricultural community who are most often turned to for help.

The Ontario Livestock and Poultry Council partnered with the Canadian Mental Health Association to offer an introductory psychological first aid training course to those on the front lines of agricultural response, namely veterinarians and agricultural association staff. A pilot workshop was offered on June 1 and 2, 2015. Dr. Andria Jones-Bitton, at the Ontario Veterinary College, University of Guelph is expanding upon this work with a project that will create a mental health literacy program and an emergency mental health response.

Biosecurity Protocols for Movement Permits

One of the lessons learned from the 2014 Avian Influenza outbreak was that it would be extremely beneficial for the agriculture service and supply sector to have heightened biosecurity protocols prepared in the event of a disease outbreak. This was underscored with April 2015 Ontario AI outbreak as those companies with pre-existing protocols were better prepared to apply for movement permits. To receive movement permits, companies must have biocontainment protocols in place to prevent the spread of disease.

OLPC prepared a draft document listing critical control points for companies to consider when developing their company

specific biocontainment protocols. The intent is for companies to use it as a guidance document when writing their own SOPs.

Biosecurity Protocols for Farm Visitors from Other Countries

People can spread pests and disease on footwear, hands, hair and clothing and some viruses can live in nasal passages. The concern is even greater with foreign visitors as they could introduce a new strain of pest or disease from their country or a known foreign animal disease not present in Canada but endemic in their country, e.g. Foot and Mouth Disease. Suggested protocols for tour organizers were sent by OLPC to breed associations, genetics companies, agricultural tour operators, and foreign embassies located in Ontario. A newsletter article targeting farm hosts was also distributed to producer organizations for inclusion in their newsletters and magazine.

On-Farm Biosecurity Resources

OLPC continues to offer free biosecurity resources for producers. Copies of these items can be viewed on or downloaded from our website www.ontlpc.ca and hard copies may be ordered from the OLPC office.

- Generic on-farm biosecurity guides – one for livestock and one for crops
- Biosecurity video
- Posters explaining biosecurity to employees and visitors
- Biosecurity signs
- Visitor log books

Antibiotic Use in Food-Producing Animals

At the October OLPC meeting, Jan Robinson, College of Veterinarians of Ontario, provided an update on the study of current practices and perceptions of Ontario veterinarians regarding antibiotic use. During the preceding few months, the advisory group, on which OLPC is represented, progressed through several stages of the project to gain an understanding of the current antimicrobial prescribing practices of food animal veterinarians in Ontario and develop a set of recommendations which will set the stage for antimicrobial stewardship. Five focus areas were identified: Legislation and Regulation, Research and Surveillance, Education and Liaison, Quality Assurance, and Stewardship. The next step includes a GF2 funding application for Phase II which involves determining consensus on the top five priorities, developing a work plan, and collaborating with producers.

Highlights of OLPC's 2015 Activities

Continued...

Raccoon Rabies Re-emerging in Ontario

OMAFRA looks after animal rabies exposures and quarantines. It is important to report livestock interactions with raccoons.

Need for Increased Documentation for Antimicrobial Use and Health Surveillance

Dr. Bruce McNab was a guest presenter at the December OLPC meeting. Bruce highlighted two key upcoming challenges: meeting the January 2017 federal requirements for enhanced veterinary oversight of the use of antimicrobials in feed and water along with greater documentation of both the use of antimicrobials and animal disease surveillance. These requirements are part of Health Canada's initiative to align with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Veterinary Feed Directive which comes into effect as of January 1, 2017. It was discussed that it is essential, long-term, that industry is combined under one tracking and reporting system. OLPC members were urged to take these concerns back to their respective commodities and ensure there is awareness of the requirements coming as of January 1, 2017.

OLPC Membership and Board

There are currently 24 regular members, four associate members and six ex-officio members including livestock and poultry groups, farm service, feed, processing and veterinary organizations. The OLPC Board consists of seven directors representing six sector groups and a Chair elected by the membership. The Vice-Chair is elected by the Board.

Chair: Gordon Coukell, Alcoma Farms

Term Expires 2016

Susan Collier, Vice Chair, Ontario Chicken Processors

Jennifer MacTavish, Ontario Sheep

Marilyn White, Canadian Poultry Magazine

Term Expires 2017

Steve Wolfram, Ontario Swine Practitioners Association

Mike DeGroot, Ontario Pork

Albert Visser, Egg Farmers of Ontario



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