



June 2018 Edition

# OSCIA PROVINCIAL NEWSLETTER

## Message from the President – Peter McLaren



Greetings to one and all. After our over-extended winter, it is good to feel a bit of heat again. Forget about spring—we're going right into summer.

Thinking back to the annual conference, we recall a resolution that asked to move the June and September newsletters to a more convenient time. A question comes to

mind: When would be a more convenient time when people are not as busy?

Another question that comes to mind connects to another resolution from the conference, that being the desire for OSCIA to support the mental health literacy and training campaign at University of Guelph. After going through two of the most stressful seasons in recent memory, many could have been pushed beyond what they could endure. Maybe it could be something as simple as taking 15-minutes a day to read part of the newsletter to clear the mind and think of something else for a while. Of course, the best stress relief for parents and grandparents is to play with the kids.

The news was shared recently by the Guelph office that funding from the Ministry was secured to support grants for the local and regional associations for another 3 years (2018-2021). Many thanks to Hugh Berges and Aileen MacNeil of OMAFRA as well as our own Andy Graham for getting the job done. The Ministry funding is combined with the Association's and is critical for the support the Regional Communication grant, Tier One and Tier Two grants.

The updated application forms for Regional Communication grants and Tier One grants are available on our website. There have been some changes from earlier versions that will help gather information to justify the request for government funding in the future.

I hope everyone had a safe and successful planting season. As of this writing, I still have soybeans to plant. Here at our farm in Lanark we seem to be almost as wet as last year, where most farms around us are quite dry.

OSCIA strongly promotes soil health and improving the balance between productivity, profitability, and environmental sustainability. I'm sure our forefathers saw things the same way, going right back to the first generation that settled farms across the province. The part they played

was integral towards the formation of the Canada we know today. Innovative solutions are constantly being developed across the country, moving us forward into the future of farming.

Some members will now likely be into first cut hay. We urge forage producers to take another look at the OSCIA Forage Masters Competition. The online self-assessment is easily found on our website. It's great to have sponsors lined up again and we are really looking forward to seeing the interest grow across the regions. The deadline to submit your completed assessment is July 15<sup>th</sup>.

Signing off for now and looking forward to the summer meeting. No stress here!

*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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### **Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association**

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**Website:** [www.ontariosoilcrop.org](http://www.ontariosoilcrop.org)



## Welcoming New Directors & RCC

In 2018 OSCIA welcomed two new Directors, Eleanor Renaud (Ottawa Rideau) and Phil Oegema (Thames Valley), and a Regional Communications Coordinator, Jonathan Hollway (North West).



**Eleanor Renaud** is a mother of three beautiful girls and a 5<sup>th</sup>-generation farmer. She owns a 1,000-acre farm in Leeds County where she runs a cash crop and cow/calf operation. In addition to her new position with Ottawa Rideau SCIA, she is also on the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority source water protection committee.

Eleanor has also been a board member of both the OFA and the Leeds Federation of Agriculture, serving in a number of positions, including County President and also served on the boards of the Rural Ontario Municipal Association and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. Eleanor served as a councilor for Elizabethtown-Kitley Township for 20 years. Eleanor was also a program representative for Environmental Farm Plan.



**Phil Oegema** farms with his father near St. Thomas Ontario. He spent his younger years on the family's turkey and cash crop farm and pursued other interests after high school and obtained a degree in Music and later a Master of Business Administration. Phil worked in the electric and natural gas industry for several years before returning home to rejoin his father on the farm. Recently they decided to convert their farm to organic and will soon have all their acres certified as organic. They grow corn, soybeans, wheat, spelt, and dry edible beans. Phil has served as President for both Elgin as and Thames Valley Soil and Crop Improvement Associations.



**Jonathan Hollway** moved to Northern Ontario from New Brunswick in 2011 to study Natural Science and Outdoor Recreation at Lakehead University. As a student, he had the opportunity to work at a local grass-fed beef and lamb farm; this was his first experience working on a farm and with animals. In 2015, he was sponsored by his employer and began to study at the master's level, focusing on testing new drone technology for bobolink nest detection.

In the fall of 2017, Jonathan, and his partner Alyssa, bought a farm in Murillo. They run a farrow-to-finish pastured pork operation and a small scale grass-fed beef herd, with the aim to sell products locally in Thunder Bay and North Western Ontario.

With thirty piglets born in the past two weeks and an issue of the Northwest Link coming out soon, things are busy for Jonathan. He is excited to learn from the RCC role and become more involved in the local agricultural community.

## Calling All Forage Producers!

The Forage Master Competition is available again this year. Growers are encouraged to take the opportunity to see how your management practices measure up to industry best practices in growing, harvesting, storage and feeding of forage.

Once you've completed the on-line assessment, send it along with a recent soil analysis and feed analysis. If you don't have lab reports for the current crop, send one in from last year. The competition scores overall forage management on the farm, not a specific field.

A limited number of hardcopies of the Self-Assessment are available, thanks to SGS Agrifood Laboratories who covered the original print costs. If you prefer completing the exercise on paper, contact Nicole in the Guelph office and request a copy.



Get the Self-Assessment Package on the OSCIA website:

From the home page, click the "Association" dropdown and select "Ontario Forage Masters"

The deadline for submission is July 15, 2018. Your answers are confidentially tallied in the Guelph office to generate an overall score that will be shared with you. Gift certificates for seed purchases generously provided by General Seed Company will be awarded to the first, second and third-place scores in each OSCIA Region.

The top finisher in each region will be invited to participate in the speaking contest sponsored by Pro Rich Seeds at the OSCIA Annual Conference in Kingston next February, where delegates will cast their votes to determine the 2018 Provincial Forage Master Champion.

*Written by Andrew Graham, Executive Director*



AGRIFOOD LABORATORIES



## The Farmland Health Check-up is Back!

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](http://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, Program Coordinator*

**Do you know a Soil Champion?**

**Award presented annually by OSCIA to recognize excellence in sustainable soil management**

**Nomination Forms for 2019 Award on the OSCIA website: Click on "Association" then "Soil Champion Award"**

## Tier Two Projects for 2018-2021

OSCIA is pleased to announce the approved Tier Two Projects that will take place over the next three years. In no particular order, the following regions/counties/districts will be participating in applied research projects:

1. Bruce – Compaction Recovery with Cover Crops
2. East Central/Peterborough – Regenerative Agriculture: Microbes and Insect Interactions in Action
3. Heartland – Maximizing cereal rye cover crop management for multiple benefits
4. Nippissing West/East Sudbury – AgTiv Mycorrhizal Inoculant Trial on Potato and Cereal Crops
5. Northumberland – Making Relay Cropping Pay
6. St. Clair – Soil Health as it Relates to Yield
7. Thames Valley – Roots Not Iron: Phase 2

We wish all participants the best of luck in their research and data collection over the next three years. Be sure to watch out for updates throughout the year.

*Written by Nicole Hottot, Executive Assistant*

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## Ontario Soil Network

Across Ontario, farmers are tweaking equipment and farming practices to both conserve and improve soil. We are challenging conventional agricultural knowledge with diverse cover-crop mixes, no-till / strip-till and amendments.

It's not easy. But, we believe that we learn better together, by sharing our successes and failures, to improve soil in Ontario, and improve our entire industry.

In 2017, the Ontario Soil Network began as a pilot project for 30 soil-loving farmers in Southwestern Ontario to learn about leadership and public speaking. We started with a 2-day workshop, followed by a 10-month leadership challenge. Together, we did 80 speaking engagements and 40 on-farm events to 6000 other farmers and 2000 industry reps. We had 75 small group chats with 600 people and had one-on-one conversations about soil health practices with 600 farmers and 70 industry reps. We put thousands of hours into research and outreach and raised tremendous support from industry partners for the #LetsTalkSoil campaign.

And we're not done! We're looking for support to move to Central and Eastern Ontario this winter, but in the meantime, we can help facilitate shop talks or speak at farm events about building soil health. Connect with our group of passionate farmers through [www.ontariosoil.net](http://www.ontariosoil.net) or contact me at 519 820 2358 or [admin@ontariosoil.net](mailto:admin@ontariosoil.net).

*Written by Mel Luymes, Ontario Soil Network*

*Note from OSCIA: Speakers from the Ontario Soil Network can help your local association promote the themes from the Ontario Cover Crop Strategy. Speakers are an eligible expense under the Tier One grant. Don't miss out on this opportunity to get a great speaker to your next meeting.*

## New OSCIA Promotional Items

To keep the momentum going and grow the brand, OSCIA is excited to announce two new promotional items: The first item is an 18" x 24" OSCIA plot sign. The sign proudly displays OSCIA's brand and allows individuals the ability to customize the sign based on the trial. Plot signs are available at a reduced rate of \$5.00 per sign for a limited time. The plot signs are a wonderful way to remind producers of OSCIA and our commitment to the grassroots.



In addition to the plot signs, OSCIA is now offering a new line of high-quality apparel items. The collection features our OSCIA logo on the front and select items have **Seek Test Adopt** embroidered on the back. Apparel pricing ranges from \$11.75 to \$81.00, and items can be purchased on a cost-recovery basis.

*Written by Brittany Roka, Association Development Advisor*

Seek-Test-Adopt

### Promotional Items

Promotional items are available to Local and Regional Associations, and OSCIA members.

<p><b>OSCIA Soft Shell Jacket</b></p> <p><b>Colour:</b> Black <b>Size:</b> XS - 3XL <b>Price:</b> \$57.50 ea</p> 	<p><b>OSCIA Polo Shirt</b></p> <p><b>Colour:</b> Green <b>Size:</b> XS - 3XL <b>Price:</b> \$31.25 ea</p> 
<p><b>OSCIA Rain Jacket</b></p> <p><b>Colour:</b> Green <b>Size:</b> XS - 3XL <b>Price:</b> \$81.00 ea</p> 	<p><b>OSCIA T-shirt</b></p> <p><b>Colour:</b> Black <b>Size:</b> XS - 3XL <b>Price:</b> \$11.75 ea</p> 
<p><b>OSCIA Sweater</b></p> <p><b>Colour:</b> Black <b>Gender:</b> Unisex <b>Size:</b> XS - 3XL <b>Price:</b> \$38.75 ea</p> 	<p><b>OSCIA Long Sleeve Shirt</b></p> <p><b>Colour:</b> Black <b>Size:</b> XS - 3XL <b>Price:</b> \$55.37 ea</p> 
<p><b>OSCIA V-Neck Sweater</b></p> <p><b>Colour:</b> Black <b>Gender:</b> Ladies <b>Size:</b> S - 2XL <b>Price:</b> \$57.50 ea</p> 	<p><b>OSCIA V-Neck Sweater</b></p> <p><b>Colour:</b> Black <b>Gender:</b> Men <b>Size:</b> S - 4XL <b>Price:</b> \$57.50 ea</p> 
<p><b>OSCIA Seed Depth Indicator</b></p> <p><b>Material:</b> Metal <b>Size:</b> 6 5/8" <b>Price:</b> \$3.50 ea <small>max of 12/order</small></p> 	<p><b>OSCIA Plot Sign</b></p> <p><b>Material:</b> Coroplast <b>Size:</b> 18" x 24" <b>Price:</b> \$5.00 ea <small>H wire frame not included</small></p> 
<p><b>OSCIA Window Decal</b></p> <p><b>Material:</b> Clear cling vinyl <b>Size:</b> 3.5" x 5" <b>Price:</b> \$1.75 ea <small>Min of 10/order</small></p> 	<p><b>OSCIA Gate Sign</b></p> <p><b>Material:</b> Aluminum <b>Size:</b> 5" x 17.5" <b>Price:</b> \$15.00 ea</p> 

Price includes taxes and shipping!



All promotional items are available to order by contacting  
OSCIA Provincial Office at: 1-800-265-9751 or [nhottot@ontariosoilcrop.org](mailto:nhottot@ontariosoilcrop.org)