

OASC LEADERS WELCOME THE REMOVAL OF MANDATORY AGRISTABILITY PARTICIPATION FROM ENROLLMENT CRITERIA FOR PROVINCIAL RMP PROGRAM

YEAR LONG REVIEW CONFIRMS RMP'S VALUE AND LEADS TO CALLS FOR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO FIX BROKEN AGRISTABILITY PROGRAM

In the spring of 2011, farmer leaders across commodity groups came together with the provincial government to design a made-in-Ontario solution to help bring predictability, stability and bankability to their business operations. Established with much fanfare, a new provincial cost-shared Risk Management Program (RMP) was created to help stabilize the industry as many costs and prices are global in nature and far beyond the farmer's control.

In the fall of 2013, Premier Wynne tasked the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food and senior ministry staff to

work collaboratively with Ontario Agricultural Sustainability Coalition (OASC) leaders to review the RMP program and ensure the existing program and its funds were best serving farmers.

After a year of working with senior Ministry officials, our detailed analysis, measured against clear criteria have led OASC to conclude that the current RMP program is far superior to any of the other alternatives with respect to assisting job creation, bankability and predictability.

Through that review, it also became clear the mandatory requirement that all RMP participants also enroll in the federal AgriStability program was doing more harm than good given cuts to the AgriStability program and other challenges with the way AgriStability is currently operating.

The provincial government and farmers have worked well together in the creation of RMP and must continue to do so in order to convince the federal government to fix their broken safety net programs and work together in the interest of all of Canada's rural and urban economies.

"Ontario is a national leader in providing risk management support to farmers. We worked directly with farm

leaders across commodity groups to develop Ontario's own Risk Management Program (RMP). Farm leaders, together with government, have determined that RMP is far superior to any other program in terms of assisting job creation, bankability and predictability for the agri-food sector. We need federal business risk management programs that, like RMP, work for Ontario's farmers. Unfortunately, program cuts and design flaws have resulted in an eroded federal AgriStability program that is no longer meeting producer needs. I support OASC's request to remove the AgriStability requirement for participation in the provincial RMP. This will allow Ontario farmers to have greater flexibility to choose the portfolio of tools that best meets their needs," says Hon. Jeff Leal, MPP, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

OASC would like to thank the Premier for establishing the informal joint RMP working group, as well as Minister Jeff Leal, Deputy Dr. Deb Stark and a long list of Ministry officials who treated us as trusted partners. We believe all ministries would be wise to examine the approach utilized by OMAFRA for use as a model for future government / stakeholder collaboration.

"Going to the Farm Side": The tale of a city girl gone country The Farm Hunt part 6

By correspondent Angelique Fawns

Success! After years of hunting, much heartbreak in failed real estate attempts, the most stressful closing of a farm sale ever and a challenge-riddled voyage to our new home, we were finally land owners!

It's a stunning piece of property. Visualize fifty gorgeous acres with a tree-lined lane up the middle leading to a pine forest. A footpath leads through the trees down the perfect toboggan hill to a wide swath of bubbling river flowing over rocks and creating the suggestion of a waterfall. Amazing!

The fields were wide, flat and thick with uncut grass. Though it was November, there was no snow yet (unlike this lovely November). Unfortunately one thing was definitely lacking from the property. Fencing! This was a problem. We were moving in three horses in less than two weeks and there wasn't a paddock or fence line in sight. Luckily for us, the ground wasn't frozen yet, so a marathon began!

Luke Fawns and his father Bob Fawns rented a post-hole pounder and purchased some cedar poles. In a day they managed to pound in and mount over 100 poles and created a three acre paddock. This was the labour intensive part, and then came the tedious part; hammering in yellow insulators (three per pole) and stringing the white electrical cord. But we did it! In three days we had a three acre paddock.

The next problem was that there was a nice big drive shed behind the house, but no barn with stalls or really anyplace to feed and play with our livestock.

See "The Farm Hunt part 6", page 11

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Douro	Day 1 - November 20	Day 2 - November 27
Sharon	Day 1 - November 28	Day 2 - December 5
Caledon	Day 1 - December 2	Day 2 - December 9
Bloomfield	Day 1 - January 7	Day 2 - January 14
Whitby	Day 1 - January 14	Day 2 - January 21
Sunderland	Day 1 - February 19	Day 2 - February 26
Lindsay	Day 1 - March 17	Day 2 - March 24
Napanee	Day 1 - March 18	Day 2 - March 25

EFP Workshop Schedule

Nobleton	Day 1 - October 1	Day 2 - October 8
Douro	Day 1 - October 7	Day 2 - October 14
Demorestville	Day 1 - October 28	Day 2 - November 4
Roblin	Day 1 - November 12	Day 2 - November 19
Sharon	Day 1 - November 18	Day 2 - November 25
Tweed	Day 1 - November 26	Day 2 - December 3
Whitby	Day 1 - January 9	Day 2 - January 16
Roblin	Day 1 - January 15	Day 2 - January 22
Lindsay	Day 1 - January 20	Day 2 - January 27
Brighton	Day 1 - January 22	Day 2 - January 29
Sunderland	Day 1 - February 5	Day 2 - February 12
Milton	Day 1 - February 19	Day 2 - February 26
Markham	Day 1 - February 23	Day 2 - March 2
Belleville	Day 1 - March 4	Day 2 - March 11
Caledon	Day 1 - March 19	Day 2 - March 26

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THE FARM HUNT PART 6

from page 7

(Unlike today's crazy tally of animals, we started with one big dog and three horses.)

Now is a good time for a bit of history... when I met my husband he soon convinced me to move my two horses (our third horse was his fault) to his family's farm in Mount Albert. Bob Fawns breeds and raises thoroughbred race horses, and he had a decent two stall barn and a big paddock with good shelters. However there was no tack room. His racehorses were sent out for training and racing so he didn't really require a place for saddles, lotions, medicines, brushes, blankets, treats, etc.

Unlike myself. I had three saddles, six blankets, buckets of brushes, dozens of horse beauty products, and more miscellaneous horse paraphernalia than any one person should ever need. Especially for one mare and her foal.

Being the father of ingenuity (as well as of Luke) Bob plopped an old chicken coop on his bobcat and deposited it right beside the barn for me. It was all mine! All I had to do was clear it out first. Wow. There must have been thousands of rusty nails, hundreds of weird metal pieces, many partial bits of moldy leather, lead shanks and halter parts. There was a dumpster on site. All of it went in the dumpster.

When I was done, I was covered in rust, dust and probably ancient chicken dung, but I had my own tack room! Plus I felt mighty proud of myself for the tidying and ordering I had done for my father-in-law.

The next day I came back to the farm and found xcuing" everything I had thrown out. I was taken to task with Bob Fawns proclaiming, "Angelique! How could you throw all this useful stuff out! These are my treasures."

Then he hopped down from the dumpster and picked up a warped mold covered halter. It was quite misshapen and I am not sure exactly what sort of horse it would fit.

"Look! I made a brand new halter out of all the halter pieces!" he said righteously.

"Oh dear" is what I thought at the time. But little did I know that Bob Fawns' talent for hoarding treasures was going to come in very useful on our new property!

Bob has built several barns for his racehorses on his different properties, so in a weekend he managed to build me three horse stalls for three dollars in our drive shed.

Yes, three dollars.

These are the most hilarious stalls, but they are very well constructed and have held up over the past five years we have lived here!

They are made from miscellaneous bits and parts he managed find in the garbage or that he had stored from past farms. I have three different looking stall doors that he found abandoned on a farm he rented for a while. The rusty partitions of a large dog kennel stall divide my stalls. Someone's iron front gate forms the front of my stalls. And he had the wood stored already from previous building jobs. He even had the door sliding hardware saved from his past horse barns

He spent the 3 dollars in nails.

I stand corrected! Bob Fawns does have treasures and they sure are worth keeping!

With many, many thanks to my family and my hard working husband, we managed to take some fields with an empty drive shed and create a horse farm with stalls and a big paddock!



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Greg, Craig, and Bryan wish all our friends and clients a happy and safe Holiday Season, and a prosperous New Year.

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