

## Fire prevention program expands: Farm & Food Care partner to develop in-barn heat-sensing equipment

(Guelph) February 8, 2017 – Farm & Food Care Ontario is partnering with Ontario’s farm mutual insurance companies, and Harvest Robotics – a Hamilton-area engineering company – to create a heat-sensor that can be installed in barns to help prevent fires.

“The heat sensing system is capable of identifying temperatures above preset limits, ideally identifying potential fire-sources before they start,” says Brent Royce, animal care consultant with Farm & Food Care Ontario. “The idea is to produce something that’s both practical and cost effective for farmers.”

The heat sensing system is designed to make regular scans of specific areas within the barn, and compile data to map temperature. That mapping can then be used to identify temperature irregularities, and notify farmers of changing conditions. A total of \$145,000 has been committed to the project, with \$35,000 coming from the Ontario’s farm mutual insurers and \$108,000 from *Growing Forward 2 (GF2)*, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative. The Agricultural Adaptation Council assists in the delivery of *GF2* in Ontario.

John Taylor of the Ontario Mutual Insurance Association – the organization representing farm mutual insurance companies from across Ontario – says his organization’s members saw the project as a unique opportunity to “partner with like-minded groups who have a deep concern on the safety of animals and the well-being of farm families.”

“We hope that research projects that utilize technology for fire prevention will result in reducing the toll that barn fires take each year,” he says.

A prototype of the sensor will be field tested this summer. The end goal of the project is to produce a relatively inexpensive, easy to use and commercially viable sensor that can be made available to producers. The project is slated to wrap up in October.

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