



Environmental News

This newsletter highlights what Farm & Food Care is working on related to farming and the environment. Your comments and suggestions are welcomed.

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Ontario neonicotinoid regulations take effect

June 9, 2015 marked the day O. Reg. 63/09 took effect in Ontario, limiting the use of neonicotinoid seed treatments for Ontario's soy and corn growers. For the 2016 planting season, Ontario corn and soy farmers will be able to purchase treated seed for up to 50 percent of their land. To plant beyond the 50 percent threshold, farmers will need to have a pest assessment carried out and enroll in a course about integrated pest management (IPM). Beyond 2016, farmers must take the IPM course and prove they have a pest infestation to be eligible to use neonicotinoid-treated corn and soy seed. The assessments for Ontario fields will be completed by independent professional pest advisors, according to the regulation documents. Other stipulations include: treated seed vendors must obtain licenses to sell the seed, sellers must communicate that seed is treated with neonicotinoid and seed dealers are required to report neonicotinoid-treated seed sales to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change. More information can be found at: <http://bit.ly/1dG3Yc4>

Dribble bar manure applicator touring Ontario

Farm & Food Care's environment team is managing the demonstration of new manure application equipment as it literally spreads across Ontario. The European-inspired dribble bar manure application technology can apply manure as quickly as broadcast, and as accurately as injection, but with very little odour and it does not impair plant quality. Furthermore, being dribbled onto the soil lowers the risk of manure draining directly into the tiles. Dates and locations where the technology will be demonstrated are listed below:



- July 14 -15, North American Manure Expo, Chambersburg, Pennsylvania
- July 21, Eastern Ontario Crop Diagnostic Day, Winchester ON
- Last week of July to mid-August, Maryland Farms, Lindsay ON
- August 16, OSCIA Summer Meeting, Embro ON
- August 25, Maitland Valley Conservation Authority Meeting, Parrish & Heimbecker Grain Elevator, Amberley ON
- September 9, Clinton ON
- September 15 -17, Canada's Outdoor Farm Show, Woodstock ON

Upcoming Events & Meetings

- ⇒ Environment Advisory Council Meeting
September 10, 2015
- ⇒ Breakfast on the Farm
September 20, 2015, Essex, ON
- ⇒ Farm & Food Care Foundation Harvest Gala
October 29, 2015, Kitchener, ON
- ⇒ Farm & Food Care water use meeting
November, 2015

CleanFARMS empty seed bag collection campaign

CleanFARMS will collect, transport and ensure collected bags are safely converted to energy at facilities that have extensive emission controls and meet all necessary provincial and federal approvals. Farmers can contribute to a clean and healthy environment by ensuring that empty seed and pesticide bags end up in the right place.

Collection sites and details about how to participate are available at: www.cleanfarms.ca

Two Weather Monitoring Programs to be involved with in Ontario: CoCoRaHS and AIR

The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network (CoCoRaHS) is a network of volunteers who report daily precipitation data from rain gauges across Canada to the CoCoRaHS Canada website for anyone to view. CoCoRaHS volunteers collect information of rain and snow and some volunteers report extreme weather events: <http://www.cocorahs.org/Canada.aspx>.

Data provided is used to build a live map every day of precipitation across North America. Information is also used by individual farmers as a recording system and by flood forecasters and provincial agencies to monitor the impacts of too little or too much precipitation. The data recording system is convenient for all those who currently record, or wish to record, their rain gauge measurements. The service allows volunteers to generate custom charts and maps, keep better records and share their data with researchers. For more information email: Canada@cocorahs.org or contact Angie Knowles, National Canada Volunteer Coordinator at 1-855-999-8858.

Another network that is growing is the Agroclimate Impact Reporter (AIR) developed by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC). AIR is an online application designed for the collection and reporting of weather and climate impacts to farm operations across Canada. AIR produces electronic maps from the input of volunteer reporters. The information from these maps enables farmers and AAFC scientists to better understand the local and regional effects of agroclimate conditions and identify emerging risks to the broader agricultural sector. AAFC is currently looking for individuals who are interested in the program to fill out a quick survey based on the impacts weather and climate are having on agriculture in their area. The surveys are used to inform various levels of government about the effects of different climates to agricultural operations across the country. The link for the June survey is here: <http://air.agr.gc.ca/air/public/submit.html?lang=en> Click on *submit survey*, choose a *reporting location* and fill out the questionnaire.

At the end of the survey, there will be an option to "Subscribe Now". By clicking on subscribe now, volunteers will be added to the monthly list to communicate agroclimate impacts to AAFC. For the 2015 growing season, the names of new AIR reporters will be placed in a draw to win a CoCoRaHS rain gauge, valued at \$30. For more information please contact AAFC's National Agroclimate Information Service at nais-snia@agr.gc.ca, or visit AAFC's Drought Watch website at www.agr.gc.ca/drought.

Environmental Farm Plan grows to meet new challenges as Sustainable Farm Plan

It's time to celebrate 25 years of achievement since the formation of the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition which heralded the beginnings of initiatives like the highly successful Environmental Farm Plan program and the development of best management practices. It's also time to renew farmers' commitment to move forward, encompassing broader goals for sustainable development.

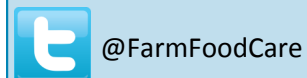
Environmental Farm Plans will be transformed into Sustainable Farm Plans to include the other two pillars of sustainable development - economic and social sustainability. This includes the need for a continuous supply of affordable, safe and nutritious food especially for those of modest incomes in Canada and globally – and respect for the well being of both consumers and food producers. The plan is being presented to Ontario commodity and farm organizations and will be linked to the Farm & Food Care website when it is available for distribution.

Issues on the horizon: Great Lakes phosphorous reduction targets

The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) is a joint task force of Canadian and American federal, provincial and municipal/county representatives working to improve water quality in the Great Lakes with a focus of reducing nutrient loading into Lake Erie. The GLWQA Annex 4 focuses on nutrient reduction and provides information to the Great Lakes Commission (GLC). A June 16 release from the GLC has set an aspirational target of 40 percent reduction of total phosphorous from 2008 levels (~11,000 metric tons TP) by 2025 for Lake Erie. Ontario agriculture's share of the 40 percent reduction to Lake Erie has yet to be determined. Farm & Food Care will monitor the issue and provide updates as more information is released.

For information about the report and phosphorous reduction objectives for Lake Erie: <http://glc.org/announce/2015-interim-lake-erie-nutrient-reduction-plan/>

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