

Practical farm animal care training in Ontario
Farm & Food Care unveils IMPACT program

(Guelph) – March 9, 2015 Farm & Food Care Ontario unveiled its new IMPACT (Innovative Management and Practical Animal Care Training) animal care training program at a conference recently in Cambridge. Attending the event were 80 industry leaders from across Ontario's livestock sectors.

Funding for this two-year initiative has been provided by Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

Since the program was announced in April of 2014, the IMPACT team has been involved in an intensive consultation process, working with the Ontario livestock and poultry sector to determine what the priority areas are related to farm animal care and training needs in this province. IMPACT staff surveyed and met with many farmers, as well as commodity group representatives, feed salespeople, veterinarians, hoof trimmers, catchers, processors and other service industry representatives throughout the consultation process.

Since then, the team has been working with various suppliers and experts to create a suite of multi-media, innovative training resources aimed to be helpful for training anyone that works with farm animals.

The IMPACT conference served as a platform to showcase the resources that have been created to date, as well as outline plans for moving into the next phase of delivering training. The conference also served as a call to action. Participants were asked to help promote IMPACT and its resources, and some will help deliver training in the future.

Speakers at the conference focused on providing an overview of the IMPACT program itself and provided attendees with insights on how to deliver training. Dr. Sarah Probst-Millar DVM of AgCreate from Illinois specializes in on-farm training and spoke on reaching adult learners, and Kim DeKlein (OMAFRA) gave pointers on running successful training workshops.

One of the mandates of IMPACT is to promote and encourage the adoption of the Livestock Codes of Practice. Jackie Wepruk of the National Farm Animal Care Council gave a talk on the Codes, their purpose and why they are important for Canada's agri-food sector. Dr David Fraser of University of British Columbia concluded the program with a thought-provoking presentation entitled "Could Animal Production Become a Profession?"

Attendees left the meeting with a better understanding of the program and its objectives, as well as a commitment to help champion or deliver IMPACT training on their farms or within their companies. IMPACT will be rolling its training and resources across Ontario in the spring of 2015. For more details, watch the IMPACT website at www.FarmImpact.ca

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Farm & Food Care Ontario is a coalition of farmers, agriculture and food partners proactively working together to ensure public trust and confidence in food and farming. Farm & Food Care provides a coordinated approach and credible information on food and farming in Ontario. For more information visit www.farmfoodcare.org

For further information:

Dr. Laura Beveridge, IMPACT Program Manager; Telephone: 519-837-1326, extension 240;

Email: laura@farmfoodcare.org