

Resources for Managing Farming Pressures

A farm business can experience financial and emotional pressures when market prices decline, a market ceases to exist, a disease reduces production, unexpected cost increases, or business arrangements fall apart. Dealing with these pressures is a challenge! The following resources are available to assist people to assess a farm business, examine alternatives, deal with issues, and make decisions.

Growing Forward

Growing Forward, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative, supports the development and implementation of best practices in four key areas: Environment and Climate Change; Food Safety and Traceability; Business Development; and Biosecurity. Participants are encouraged to develop strategies across all areas to meet their business goals through a variety of information sessions and workshops as well as one-on-one training and technical assistance.

Business Development for Farm Businesses

Growing Forward Business Development for Farm Businesses incorporates self-assessment and action plan development with a range of cost-share advisory services and skills development opportunities to help reach your farm business goals.

Business Development for Farm Businesses offers:

- **Growing Your Farm Profits Workshops**
 - Learn how to do a self-assessment on your farm business. There is no cost to attend this workshop.
- **Action Plan Review and Sign-off**
 - Having your action plan reviewed and signed off is the next step towards accessing cost-share opportunities.
- **Farm Financial Assessment**
 - Cost-share funding is available to access a professional Farm Financial Advisor. The program covers up to \$2400 of eligible costs to hire an Advisor. The participant pays \$100.
 - If you are experiencing severe financial difficulties, you may be able to access the Farm Financial Assessment without completing the Growing Your Farm Profits Workshop.
- **Agriculture Skills Development**
 - Identifying a specific need for farm-related training and skills development in your action plan enables you to access cost-share funding up to 50 per cent to a maximum of \$3000
- **Advanced Business Planning**
 - Eligible farm businesses will receive cost-share funding to work with an Advanced Planning Consultant for up to 50 per cent to a maximum of \$8000.
- **Business Plan Implementation**

- To help you implement elements of your Advanced Business Plan, eligible farm businesses can receive cost-share funding for up to 50 per cent to a maximum of \$3000 for one-time non-capital costs.

For more information:

To learn more about other Growing Forward Programs like environment and climate change, food safety and traceability, and biosecurity, please contact the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs by:

- Phone: 1-888-479-3931
- Website: www.ontario.ca/growingforward
- Email: growingforward@ontario.ca

Animal Care Helpline

The Helpline is a confidential "farmer helping farmer" approach of advice and referral on animal care. The Helpline service is provided by the Ontario Farm Animal Council to assist people in providing good care for their farm animals. Helpline calls are accepted at the OFAC office at (519) 837-1326, during regular office hours, typically Monday to Friday between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

The Farm Line Support Service – Need Someone to Talk to?

Tel: 1-888-451-2903 (Monday to Friday – 8:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.) Website: www.thefarmline.ca

The Farm Line is a confidential telephone emotional support and referral service provided to farmers and farm families in Ontario. Trained telephone peer support staff talk to the caller, identify local resources and help determine steps to address the caller's needs. A wide range of topics can be discussed, including financial difficulties, stress, grief, family problems, serious accidents and traumatic events.

Farm Debt Mediation Service

Tel: 1-866-452-5556; Website: http://www.agr.gc.ca/index_e.php?s1=prog

The Farm Debt Mediation Service provides insolvent farmers and their creditors with mediation services, pursuant to the federal Farm Debt Mediation Act and Regulations, to help them arrive at a mutually satisfactory arrangement. The service is a private, confidential and economical alternative to the often costly, public and drawn-out process of resolving insolvency disputes in the courts.

Advance Payments (APP) & Commodity Loan (CLP) Programs

Tel: 1-888-278-8807; Website: www.accfarmersfinancial.ca Both programs are a source of financing administered by the ACC Farmers' Financial (ACC). The APP is available for eligible crops and livestock and the CLP is available for eligible crops only.

OMAFRA Factsheets and Computer Tools

Tel: 1-877-424-1300;

Website: www.ontario.ca/omafra

Some of the OMAFRA factsheets available that provide information for farm families managing financial pressures are listed below.

- Programs and Services for Ontario Farmers

- Diagnosing and Managing Cash Flow Problems
- Options for Farmers Dealing with Financial Difficulties
- Taxation on the Sale of Farm Business Assets
- Identifying and Managing Stress: A Business Owner's Guide
- A Guide to Agricultural Security Agreements
- Resolving Conflict

These are available by contacting the Agricultural Information Contact Centre (1-877-424-1300), on the OMAFRA website (see above), or at a local OMAFRA Resource Centre (Stratford : 519-271-0280). As well, the AICC is available to answer questions, provide information, and put you in touch with one of the ministry's provincial specialists or your local OMAFRA Resource Centre.

The OMAFRA Resource Centres can also provide contacts for local resources. There are several computer programs available on the OMAFRA website to assist producers with planning and decision making.

- Loan Calculator - Includes: Payment Schedule, Loan Comparisons, Loan Prepayment Schedule, Refinancing
- Schedule plus other Schedules.
- Ontario Farm Management Analysis Project (OFMAP) Swine Farrow to Finish – Input farm financial and production
- information to generate accrual income statement, balance sheet, financial ratios, and costs of production
- for the swine and crop enterprises.
- The Farm Financial Analysis and Planning Workbook - Produce a complete set of financial statements including
- a cashflow, debt servicing worksheet, and current and projected income statements.
- Crop and Livestock Budgets – The enterprise budgets assess the potential economic impact of production
- and marketing decisions and risk management factors and strategies.
- Swine Budget – Monthly budgets are available online or in the Pork News & Views in the Better Pork magazine.

The challenge and opportunity is to use the available resources and information best suited for the planning and management of your farm business goals. Recognize the current situation, develop solutions, seek assistance, and keep the communications open with everyone involved.