

Board Highlights: December 9, 2022

Ontario Pork's Reception at Queen's Park

On November 15, 2022, Ontario Pork hosted its MPP Reception at Queens Park in Toronto, Ontario. This year's reception was attended by almost 180 guests, including 9 ministers, 57 MPPs, their staff members, Ontario Pork Board members and John Homan, a pork producer from Niagara.

John de Bruyn, Chair of Ontario Pork spoke about the importance of the pork industry for the provincial economy and focused on four key government relations areas: processing capacity, emergency preparedness, labour and risk management. Honourable Lisa Thompson, Ontario's Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, John Vanthof, MPP for Timiskaming-Cochrane and ag critic for the NDP party, and Mike Schreiner, MPP for Guelph also delivered remarks. Ontario Pork's representatives held meetings with government officials and MPPs. The dialogue included key topics that currently impact the pork sector.

Resolutions Committee

In preparation for the resolutions session at the Ontario Pork AGM, the Resolutions committee reviewed and approved the resolutions process document which outlines resolutions submission steps, procedures and timelines. The resolutions process document will be presented to presidents and secretaries of local pork producers' associations at the meeting on December 14, 2022.

Zone/Producer Information Meetings

Ontario Pork will be holding zone/producer information meetings in five locations across the province in late January-early February 2023. The intent of the meetings is to update membership on the proposed changes to regulation 403/10, provide an opportunity for networking, facilitate an open forum for discussions and communicate information important for the pork industry. The meetings would also provide an opportunity and a venue for associations to hold their annual meetings, if they so choose. More information will be circulated early in the next year.

Hog Processing

The Board of Directors received a report from staff on meetings with processing partners held throughout 2022. At the Policy Day in 2021, Ontario Pork's delegates identified the shortfall in the processing capacity as one of the weakest links in the provincial pork industry. In early 2022, Ontario Pork started conversations with processors to understand their long-term plans and options to assist them in overcoming challenges to grow their business. Through these discussions, the labour shortage was identified as the most common challenge that processors experience. During meetings with processing partners, the Ontario Pork team was discussing a potential interest in investing in processing Ontario as well as building relationships with processing partners. These relationships can provide more processing options for Ontario pork producers and ultimately, help strengthen the provincial pork industry.

Federal Funding for ASF Industry Preparedness

Staff provided an update to the Board on ASF preparedness initiatives that may be eligible for the federal funding announced by the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food in August 2022. The African Swine Fever Industry Preparedness (ASFIP) Program Parameters were released by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) in November. An Ontario Pork working group consisting of Board members, the Swine Health Ontario Chair and staff met to review the proposed ASF funding initiatives and survey responses as well as determine priority ranking. Staff will continue developing project proposals for submission to AAFC.