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### Chair's Notes -



**"With out a struggle, there can be no progress." Frederick Douglass**

The theme of our 2008 AGM was Hard Work and Renewal, certainly two things our industry needs right now. Challenging times sometimes lead to the greatest innovation and forward thinking and now more than ever it is important to make the most of any advantages that present themselves to the Ontario industry. It is timely that two of the key OPIC initiatives currently underway - the OSHAB PRRS Project and the Human Resources project support areas where our industry can capitalize on our strengths to improve our competitiveness in the world market.

During the current difficult period we are experiencing in the industry, OPIC has also focused on providing industry support through our December issues meeting – *The Financial Crunch* and our Making *Tough Decisions in Tough Times* Conference held February 13th in London, support of the Big Bug Day series of information meetings and will continue to look for ways to support the industry.

OPIC continues to be a Canadian and North American industry model volunteer group that has representation from all aspects of our dynamic swine industry and will continue to evolve with help from our members. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the dedicated OPIC volunteers for their work. Without them, we certainly wouldn't have the opportunity to provide directed projects to support to the pork industry of Ontario.

**"Challenges are what make life interesting; overcoming them is what makes life meaningful." Joshua J. Marine**

### 2008 AGM

The OPIC/OSHAB AGM was held April 15<sup>th</sup> at the Arden Park Hotel, providing a review of project accomplishments from 2007. The Careers video "The Ontario Pork Industry Wants You" was launched with kind word from our project sponsors. An OSHAB update was provided by Dr. Cathy Templeton, vice-chair of the OSHAB Board. The presentation outlined accomplishments over the past year as well as future plans for the PRRS Project.

The keynote speaker was Dr. John Fast, founder of The Centre for Family Business at the University of Waterloo. He provided a motivational speech on Authentic Communication: Practicing Habits of the Heart and his contact information can be found on his website at [www.johnfast.com/](http://www.johnfast.com/).

### Coming Events



**OPIC Golf Day**  
**Friday, June 13th**  
**St. Marys' Golf Club**

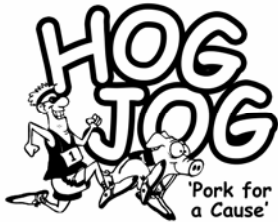


**Wednesday, June 18th**  
**Stratford Rotary Complex**  
The cause is the Alzheimer Society



**June 18th & 19th**  
**35th Ontario Pork Congress**  
**Stratford Rotary Complex**

See [www.opic.on.ca](http://www.opic.on.ca) for details



## Hog Jogging on to our next challenge

Giving back to the community, celebrating our people, celebrating our product, increasing awareness of a worthwhile cause, and sharing together in a fun activity are the objectives of the Hog Jog.

The 2007 Hog Jog for Heart and Stroke has culminated with the recent presentation of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) at the Monkton Arena. These AEDs provide emergency response that saves lives and the funds raised for the Heart and Stroke Foundation's AED program by Hog Jog 2007 purchased 4 units that will be placed at the Stratford Perth YM-YWCA, the Stratford Agriplex, the Stratford Festival Theatre and the Avon Theatre. This is part of a larger initiative which will see a total of 25 units placed throughout Perth County. The following excerpt from The Circular – The Stratford Shakespeare Festival newsletter expresses their thanks and explains the value of the AED's.



### OPIC donates life-saving defibrillators to Festival and Avon Theatres

*In 2006 local entrepreneur Doug Maus suffered a massive heart attack while playing hockey in a London public arena. The arena was equipped with an automated external defibrillator (AED), and Mr. Maus's hockey buddies used it while performing CPR and waiting for an ambulance to arrive. Sadly, even the defibrillator could not save Mr. Maus, but his story brought the issue of public access to these life-saving devices to the attention of his friends and family, many of whom were involved with the Ontario Pork Industry Council (OPIC). In response, OPIC decided to direct funds raised through its annual charity run, the "Hog Jog," to the Heart & Stroke Foundation's AED program. And, because they wanted to make their donation local, they chose to provide AEDs for the Festival's two largest theatres. The AED is a machine that can monitor heart rhythms, decide if a heart has stopped beating effectively, and deliver an electric shock if needed. In most cases, this shock will restart the heart. AEDs were designed specifically to be used by non-medical personnel, although Health & Safety Manager Janet Sellery says AED training will now be included in their regular first aid training. Each AED unit costs about \$3,000, and Janet is thrilled with the donation from OPIC. The Festival City Rotary Club has also donated several units to the City, one of which will be in the Kiwanis Centre, and to which Tom Patterson staff and patrons will have access. Janet points out that AEDs are easy to use, the Ontario government has passed legislation protecting*

*users from liability claims, and the units offer anyone an increased opportunity to get to the hospital in shape for life-saving treatment.*

OPIC would like to extend a thank you to all the participants and volunteers who helped make Hog Jog 2007 such a successful event with special thanks to the sponsors of Hog Jog 2007: Ontario Pork Congress, Ontario Pork, PIC, Phibro Animal Health, Kaslo Bay artificial breeders and Farms.com.

This year's Hog Jog scheduled for June 18<sup>th</sup> supports the Alzheimer Society of Perth County with Jeff Timmermans acting as the Honourary Chair. To get involved, volunteer, or sponsor a runner, visit [www.opic.on.ca](http://www.opic.on.ca).

### OSHAB Corner



The OPIC Swine Health Advisory Board (OSHAB) is mandated to take a leadership role for major swine health issues in Ontario. It is working to understand how PRRS is moving and changing among herds in Ontario in order to develop effective control and elimination strategies. Current initiatives include:

- Advancement and utilization of PRRS Risk Assessment Tool
- Development of a Centralized PRRS Sequence Database for Ontario through a joint project with the University of Guelph, Animal Health Laboratory (AHL), funded through a research agreement with Ontario Pork Producers' Marketing Board
- Work with sectors to disperse information on PRRS Position Statements
- Development of a PRRSV intervention strategies tool kit with cost/benefit analysis
- Annual Big Bug Day in collaboration with OASV
- Sector education and training sessions
- On-going communications including:
  - Ontario Hog Farmer Articles
  - Better Farming Case Studies
  - OPIC Website
- Find more information at [www.opic.on.ca/oshab.htm](http://www.opic.on.ca/oshab.htm).

### Careers

#### Initial Feedback from HR Training Pilot Indicates Success

Attracting and maintaining labour in the pork sector has long been a challenge, and as the labour shortage within Canada limits the staff available even further, finding people to work in the pork sector will continue to get more difficult. As with all primary production, the roots of pork production stem from family run independent operations, where the ability to make sound business decisions and to excel at animal husbandry were the most important skills; now however, with the increasing scale of many businesses and the decrease in family size, the need for non-family labour has been steadily increasing. This has created a need

within the pork sector for people who not only know the animals and know the business, but can also manage people. This is an area where the pork industry does require some increased capacity. Good people managers help to attract and retain good employees and keep the work place pleasant.

In an effort to help the pork industry with the challenge of attracting and keeping employees, OPIC initiated a pilot delivery of some HR capacity building training as part of a greater HR Needs Assessment and career promotion campaign project made possible by funding from Employment Ontario through the Labour Market Partnership Program.

During the month of March, thirteen producers and barn managers took part in this training pilot. The training, which was developed and delivered by AgCareers.com, focused on HR issues which will be helpful at the farm management level. Areas of discussion for the three sessions included, Recruitment and Retention Strategies for the 21st Century, Hiring 'A' Players and Keeping them Motivated and Effective Leadership and Management.

Initial feedback from the participants indicates that the training was both needed and successful. Further feedback will be provided by the participants over the next few months which will allow for analysis of how the training has resulted in change and more specifically, improvement, to the participants businesses.

A follow-up letter received from one of the participants stated, "I have already used some of the information to improve communication between my employees and myself and have developed a larger group with which I can network. I hope that you will consider offering courses such as these in the future."

Let's hope that these sessions were just the beginning!

### Resource Summary

Excerpt from OMAFRA Agricultural Business Update Issue #45, April 30, 2008

#### **Cull Breeding Swine Program – Applications Now Available**

Details and program applications for the Cull Breeding Swine Program are available on the Canadian Pork Council website at [http://www.cpc-ccp.com/industry/CSBP\\_e.cfm](http://www.cpc-ccp.com/industry/CSBP_e.cfm)

Producers can also contact their provincial pork producer association for copies of the application. Producers can also call 1-877-655-2567 if they have questions about the application process.

#### **2008 Advance Payments Program for Livestock (Regular)**

Cattle, hog, lamb and market sheep producers can now benefit from the Advance Payments Program which features up to \$100,000 in interest-free loans. Producers may also qualify for an additional \$300,000 at prime - 1/4% under the same program. To access fact sheets explaining how the program works go to: [http://www.accfarmersfinancial.ca/advance\\_payments\\_program\\_livestock.html](http://www.accfarmersfinancial.ca/advance_payments_program_livestock.html)

#### **2008 Advance Payments Program for Livestock (Emergency)**

This Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada program was announced in March 2008 due to the severe economic hardship in the cattle and hog sectors. To access fact sheets explaining how the emergency advance payment program works for cattle and swine producers go to: [http://www.accfarmersfinancial.ca/advance\\_payments\\_program\\_livestock\\_emergency.html](http://www.accfarmersfinancial.ca/advance_payments_program_livestock_emergency.html)

#### **2008 Advance Payments Program for Crop Inputs**

Producers can access up to \$400,000 of input financing with the first \$100,000 interest-free and next \$300,000 at prime - 1/4%. Up to 18 months of financing available if used with Advance Payments Program for Crops in Storage. Amount of financing is related to Production Insurance or Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS)/AgriStability Program coverage

For more information visit: [http://www.accfarmersfinancial.ca/advance\\_payments\\_program\\_crops\\_input.html](http://www.accfarmersfinancial.ca/advance_payments_program_crops_input.html)

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#### **University of Minnesota Pork Producer Resources for Difficult Financial Times Guide**

The web-based guide, "Pork Producer Resources for Difficult Financial Times", can be accessed from the University of Minnesota Swine Extension website at [www.extension.umn.edu/swine](http://www.extension.umn.edu/swine). This guide provides information on dealing with high feed costs and below cost hog prices.

## Thanks to our 2008 OPIC Sponsors

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Maximum Swine Marketing Ltd.

Ontario Pork Board

Ontario Pork Congress

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PIC Canada Ltd.

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