



# Native Agri Update

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[www.indianag.on.ca](http://www.indianag.on.ca)

## FNHMS FARM TOUR

Last month participants from the First Nations Horticulture and Maple Syrup program (FNHMS) and guests took a day to tour a wide range of farms around St Marys.



Ray Sheldon discusses blue - berries & trickle irrigation

as, several farmer's markets.

The day was hosted by Peggy and Ray Sheldon of Sheldons Berries. The Sheldons grow berries and vegetables, marketing them at their farm, as well



Highbush blueberries with bird netting suspended above

bushes have fruit, netting is pulled down over the row to protect the crop. In recognition of their innovation, the Sheldon's were awarded the Premier's Award for Agri-food Innovation.

From the Sheldon's, the tour moved on to visit a neighbouring dairy farm. The farm has over 300 pure bred Holstein milk cows and crops just over a thousand acres of land. With a large herd,



Rotary parlour for milking

cow care is an important part of managing the farm. Milking three times a day and wanting to keep in close contact with the cattle, the farm uses a rotary parlour for milking.

Next on the day's tour was Best Farms. The second generation farm grows broccoli,



A greenhouse of cabbage transplants - enough for one day's transplanting

li, cabbage and beans and markets their produce wholesale through the Ontario Food Terminal in Toronto. Although the farm was in the middle of trans-



James Whetung (r.) checks out the transplanter

planting, the group was given a tour of the greenhouses, packing and storage facilities, and the field equipment. In the spring the farm relies on family to get the crop in.. Come harvest, everything is picked and packed by hand and off-shore labour is required to get the crop to market.

The group also visited McCully's Hill Farm market. The farm has a year round farm market selling their own, as well as, other locally produced produce, meats and value added products.



McCully's Sugarshack

With a sugarbush, the farm also attracts crowds for maple sugaring, pancakes and horse drawn sleigh or wagon rides, depending on the weather. A petting zoo is also a big hit with farm visitors.

A big thanks goes out to Peggy and Ray.

## IAPO Survey

As part of IAPO's Impact Assessment project, in the coming weeks we will be reaching out and conducting a survey. If you're contacted, please take time to participate in the survey. Your opinion matters!

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## Contributors

### Doug Macpherson—DM

External Programs Coordinator

[iaipo-doug@on.aibn.com](mailto:iaipo-doug@on.aibn.com)

### Grant Edwards—GE

Business Advisor

[grant@indianag.on.ca](mailto:grant@indianag.on.ca)

### Jamie Hall—JH

General Manager

[jamie@indianag.on.ca](mailto:jamie@indianag.on.ca)

### Mark Leahy—ML

Business Advisor

[mark@indianag.on.ca](mailto:mark@indianag.on.ca)

IAPO

Box 100

Stirling, ON K0K 3E0

1-800-363-0329

[info@indianag.on.ca](mailto:info@indianag.on.ca)



# Agribusiness

## BORROWING FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Source: Adapted from BDC April newsletter

Getting a business loan can be the fuel your farm needs to reach the next level of success. But you have to prepare yourself and your business to get the money and make sure the loan is right for you. Many entrepreneurs make these common mistakes that jeopardize their business future.

### Failing to keep your financial house in order

It's all too common for busy entrepreneurs to let record-keeping and other financial chores slide-with potentially disastrous consequences. It's essential to keep good financial records, including year-end financial statements. Messy financial records can leave you in the dark about how your business is performing until it's too late to take corrective action. It can also make it difficult to approach a lender for a business loan because not only do you lack documentation, but you've also shown a lack of managerial insight.

Be diligent about keeping financial records and spend the money to hire a bookkeeper or accountant if needed.

### Borrowing too late or too little

You may be tempted to finance your expansion projects from your cash flow. But paying for investments with your own money can put undue financial pressure on your growing business. You may find yourself needing to borrow money quickly and doing it from a position of weakness. Many lenders would view this negatively as it indicates poor planning.

Similarly, under estimating how much a project will cost you can leave your business facing a serious cash crunch when unexpected expenses crop up.

Prepare cash flow projections for the coming year that take into account month-to-month inflows and outflows, plus extraordinary items such as planned investments. With this, you'll know how much you need and when you'll need it. Then, visit your banker and discuss your plans and financing needs so you can line up the funding before you need it.

### Focusing too much on the interest rate

The interest rate on your business loan is important, but it's far from the whole story. Other factors can be just as important. What percentage of the cost of your assets is your lender willing to finance and what loan term is the lender willing to offer? What is the lender's flexibility on repayments? For example, can you pay on a seasonal basis or pay only interest for certain periods?

Shop around among financial institutions for the most attractive package, keeping in mind the importance of the terms other than the interest rate.

### Paying your loan back too fast

Many business owners want to pay back their loans as quickly as possible in an effort to become debt free. Again, it's important to reduce debt, but doing so too quickly can cost

your business. That's because you may leave yourself short of cash. Or the extra money you're devoting to debt reduction might be better spent on profitable growth projects.

Compare your projected return on an investment to how much interest you're saving by paying down your loan faster than required. If you expect to earn more investing the money in your business, consider slowing down your repayment pace.

### Depending on just one lender

Some lenders are specialists in certain types of loans. There are lending specialists that provide operating credit and others that offer loans for larger capital purchases on the farm. Know the strengths and weaknesses of each credit provider as it applies to your agricultural business. Very few agricultural businesses have only one source of credit.

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## Career Opportunity - Business Advisor

To help ensure IAPO's continued growth and success, IAPO is seeking qualified applicants for the position of Business Advisor, Eastern & North Eastern Ontario.

**The Position** - The Business Advisor is responsible for developing and maintaining effective business relationships with First Nations communities, businesses and entrepreneurs. A key aspect of these relationships is the delivery and management of IAPO's business financing and related services.

On a regular basis, the Business Advisor works with First Nations businesses and entrepreneurs at their place of business. Working collaboratively with clients, the Business Advisor provides financing packages tailored to their needs, as well as, other business support including business and farm management recommendations.

The ideal candidate will possess the following qualifications

- Proven knowledge of First Nations culture and business environment
- Post Secondary education in Business or Agriculture
- Knowledge of Ontario agriculture and farming
- Thorough understanding of business management
- Business advisory/ lending experience
- Strong relationship management skills & experience dealing with people
- Effective communication skills
- Proven analytical skills

Consideration will be given to those candidates who do not possess all of the qualifications listed.

Salary is commensurate with experience and qualifications. The position is full time, featuring a range of benefits. The position is based out of IAPO's Stirling office with frequent travel throughout Eastern and North Eastern Ontario. A full job description is available upon request.

Interested parties should forward their resume no later than July 1, 2016 to: Jamie Hall, General Manager, P.O. Box 100 Stirling, Ontario K0K 3E0 [jamie@indianag.on.ca](mailto:jamie@indianag.on.ca)

# Market Information

## BEEF MARKET WATCH

Prices are courtesy of the Beef Farmers of Ontario Weekly Market Information Report for the week ending June 2 2016



Changes here reflect the difference in prices from the week of March 31, 2016 to the week of June 2, 2016. Weekly reports provide average prices for the week but do not include Friday sale results.

Prices are mixed with finished prices down and the remainder generally showing strength.

Rail grade steers are down \$17 and fed steers and heifers are off \$3 to \$5. Keep in mind the March 31 results were for a 3 day week distorting prices somewhat because of the East-weekend.

Cows and bulls are up slightly.

Stocker steers and heifers are generally stronger.

### Cow/calf Pairs

Here is a look at cow/calf pairs at a Kawartha Lakes Community Sale Barn Sale. In June most cows and heifers have calved.

Cow/Calf Pairs	Exotic and Exotic X	British and British X
Top Quality	\$2200 - 2900	\$2000 - 2400
Average Quality	\$1700 - 21000	\$1500 - 1800

Category	Price Range \$	Ave Price	Top Price	Change
Rail Steers	263-265			-17
Fed steers	148-165	157	184	-5
Fed heifers	146-168	159	193	-3
Cows	75-105	89	139	+2
Bulls	109-139	123	199	+1
Stocker steers				
700 - 799	186-227	208	239	+17
600 - 699	168-242	213	263	-5
500 - 599	190-261	230	283	+11
Stocker heifers				
700 - 799	165-202	184	208	+10
600 - 699	168-213	192	230	+6
500 - 599	175-228	205	248	+8

All prices are on a hundred pound basis (cwt)

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## CROP MARKET

Excerpts from Monthly Market Trends May June by Phillip Shaw GFO www.gfo.ca

**CORN** The elephant in the room is a perceived shift in corn acres to soybeans because of the large rise in soybeans prices since planting commenced. As it is now, 93.6 million acres of corn will produce the largest corn crop ever. With soybean prices taking off since USDA estimated that figure March 31, the shift might be on, making the June 30 report a seminal mark for corn prices.

As of May 14 corn planting is experiencing some wet conditions in the United States slowing planting. The US corn complex is also benefiting from lower Brazilian supplies and a less than stellar Safrinha crop. This is all happening in a market environment where 2.15 billion bushels of new crop ending stocks don't lie. It's still bearish, but maybe not as bearish as market watchers once feared before the May USDA report. Seasonally, the corn futures prices tend to trend

sideways thru mid June.

**SOYBEANS** The USDA has never had a stellar record when it comes to measuring soybean stocks, with predictive ending stocks constantly changed through the years. When USDA came out with 305 million bushels projected soybeans ending stocks it was a shock to the market and soybeans responded aggressively. It is likely there will be more changes in this number. Seasonally, soybeans futures tend to trade sideways thru mid June.

**WHEAT** Wheat futures have retreated

ed since April and have been reticent to join the run up in prices led by soybeans. Wheat's bearish fundamentals are just too onerous. Weather going forward will certainly impact crop development especially in the SRW areas south of Ontario. Winning the quality war in this production area is always important for Ontario wheat farmers. Ontario's wheat continues its excellent development with herbicide and fungicide applications taking place. Weather will dominate crop quality going into harvest. Growers will also have to keep

## Coming Events

July 8&9

**Beef Youth Development Program**

Lindsay, Ontario

Contact Mark Leahy for information - mark@indianag.on.ca

July 14

**Farm Smart Expo**

University of Guelph, Elora Research Station.



# Livestock Information

## A LOOK AT EXPANSION OF THE CANADIAN BEEF HERD

Expansion of the beef herd in Canada is measured by the rate that cows are culled and the number of heifers kept back for breeding.

The record high cattle prices experienced in 2015 usually encourage beef farmers to cull fewer cows and keep more heifers back. However fluctuating prices at the end of 2015 and a levelling out in early 2016 at a lower range appears to have deflated enthusiasm for herd expansion. The following diagram shows the cull cow rates since 1980 with an average rate of about 11%. This means a cowherd with 28 cows will have culled 3 cows on average each year. According to Statistics Canada, the Canadian cow cull rate in 2015 was 10.6 or just under the average. This is a slight change and not in itself an indication of herd expansion. It does appear that cow numbers have stabilized. 2015 is the first year without a decline in numbers since 2006. Diagram shows about a 4% culling rate in 2004 resulting from borders closed to export of Canadian cows due to the BSE outbreak in 2003.

### ▶ CANADIAN BEEF COW CULLING RATE

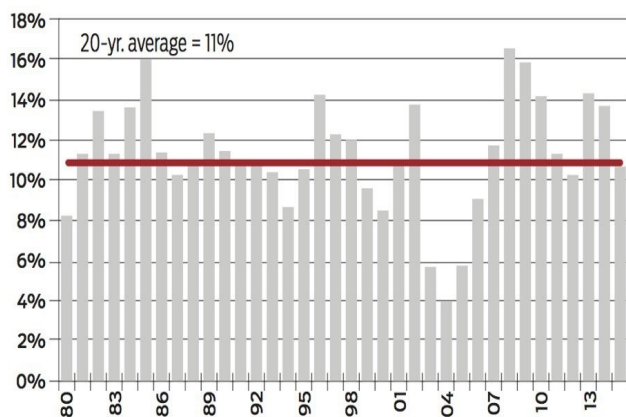


Chart courtesy of Canfax

On the kept back heifer side, numbers are up 4% at 547,300 head as indicated in the following diagram. This means 4% fewer heifers went into feedlots in 2015. This seems significant until we include cows numbering about 3.83 million for a total increase of breeding females at .4% in 2015. Certainly a sign numbers have stabilized. It is anticipated there will be a further modest increase in breeding female numbers in 2016.

In 2015 Canadian beef farmers received higher prices than U.S. farmers due to the reduced value of the Canadian dollar. The dollar has strengthened from \$.69 in January to about \$.77 currently. As well beef production in Canada was up during the 2016 January to March period largely due to steer car-

casses being heavier by 60 pounds compared to the same time in 2015. Beef carcass weights have been falling rapidly and are down about 70 pounds since early January.

### ▶ CANADIAN BEEF HEIFERS (BREEDING) JANUARY 1

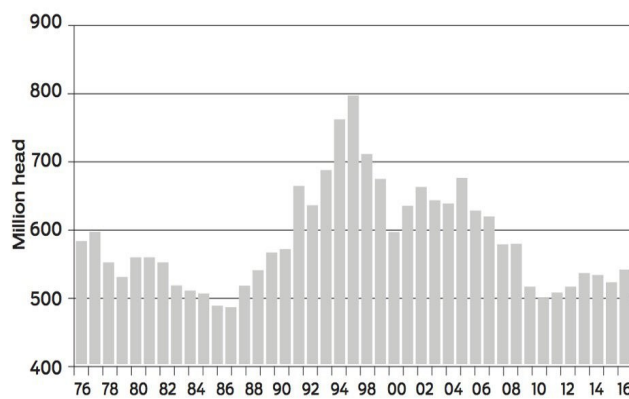


Chart courtesy of Canfax

Consumer demand for beef is strong. During the expansion phase female numbers are not expected to reach historical highs.

## ELECTRIC FENCING FOR GOATS

Goats are difficult animals to fence. They like to climb, jump and work their way through small openings. Electric fencing is one option if properly managed. Goats will challenge an electric fence more often than most farm animals.



Five to 6 strands of high tensile wire, 12.5 gauge and at least 36 inches high is recommended. The fence must be installed correctly. This means posts are properly anchored, wire is strung tight, energizer is powerful enough for conditions and is properly grounded. A plug in energizer has more power and is more reliable compared to a solar unit.

Animals must be trained to the fence. One idea is to put electric wires across the corner of a small well secured barnyard. Encourage the goats to test it by placing grain along the fence line or attach cans to the wires to attract curious animals. Goats in particular need more than one zap to get the message. When it appears all animals are respecting the fence turn them out into the grazing area. Hang pieces of tape etc. on the wire to catch their eye.

Check the fence voltage daily. By checking the fence regularly for a current of at least 4,500 volts, most problems will be found and fixed before a goat discovers the weakness and escapes.

Regardless of the effort to control goats it seems there is at least one that will escape often taking others with it. A ride to the sale barn may be a simple answer.

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# Crop Information

## WEED MANAGEMENT FOR ORGANIC FARMS

(Source: *Creating a Weed Management Plan for Your Organic Farm*, Penn State Extension <http://extension.psu.edu>)

This is step 5 of 6 in the series “Creating a Weed Management Plan for Your Organic Farm”.

Successful weed management can make or break a new organic farm. These steps will help you get the upper hand on weeds.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Weed seeds may hitch a ride to your farm in cover crop or forage seed, straw, hay, compost, or manure. Knowing the source of your inputs and discussing weed seed contamination with the farmer or company you get them from is a good practice. One way to reduce introducing foreign weed seed is to clean your seed (especially cover crop seed) and use farm-generated inputs such as mulch, compost, and manure. Mowing adjacent areas and field edges is also a good practice to prevent weed seeds from blowing into your fields.



### Prevent Weed Reproduction

Weeds are notorious for producing enormous amounts of seeds. For example, one common purslane plant can produce two million seeds. One way to keep weeds from going to seed is cleaning up the field (mowing or tilling) quickly after the crop is harvested. Delaying cleanup by a month can increase seed production by one hundred fold. Cutting off or hand-pulling a few weeds that are about to go to seed before the crop is harvested can also help control the weed seed bank.

### Match Soil Fertility with Crop Demand

Weeds can be better at taking up nutrients than crops. More nutrients equal bigger weeds. For example, in a study at the Marten Farm in New York, pigweed grew about twice as fast when compost was applied and supplied nutrients at double the recommended rate. Ideally, highly available soluble fertilizers should be avoided when possible. Instead, compost and cover crops should be used to provide nutrients that are released slowly over time. This is because nitrogen in organic matter needs to be mineralized, a process that is dependent on soil microorganisms. Soil organic matter acts as a resource sponge and can mediate competition between crop and weed plants. If you do have to apply highly available nutrients like blood meal or composted chicken manure, try to apply them close to the crop so that the crop—not the weeds—receives

the nutrients, and work them into the soil. Make sure they are not applied too close or the crop might be injured.

### Let the Crop Suppress the Weeds

Vigorous crops can often suppress weeds, especially once they have formed a canopy that shades the soil surface. Using transplants creates a size hierarchy between the crop and emerging weeds that gives crops a major advantage. Another important way to get a weed-suppressing canopy quickly is to pay attention to planting depth and uniform spacing. Planter skips and uneven seeding depth can result in gaps in the crop canopy where weeds will establish. Try to keep your planter in good repair and well adjusted so you get uniform, quick emergence. With hand-push seeders this can be especially difficult. An even soil surface with few clods will also help increase uniform stands.

Next issue of the Newsletter catch the final “Step 6” Create a Weed Control Calendar and Get Your Timing Right.

## STAND LOSS ASSESSEMENTS FOR NEONIC REGULATIONS

Source : *fieldcropnews.com* By Tracey Baute , May 17, 2016

Once corn and soybeans emerge, keep an eye out for crop injury. If you experience stand loss from wireworms, grubs, seedcorn maggot, bean leaf beetle (in soybeans only) or corn rootworm (in corn only), then you can choose to have an Inspection of Crop Pest Assessment done this spring. If the stand loss thresholds are reached (see below), then a Pest Assessment Report can be submitted for the purchase of Class 12 pesticides for the next growing season for that entire farm property under one roll number.

A few important criteria:

1. The Inspection of Crop Pest Assessment can only be done in an area on the farm property that was planted with corn or soybean seed that is not a Class 12 pesticide (corn or soybean seed treated with a neonicotinoid)
2. A professional pest advisor (PPA) must be the person to conduct this assessment as this method requires specialized knowledge of pests and crop damage.
3. The assessment must be done in a 100 acre or less area of the farm property.

The definition of stand loss that applies to this Inspection of Crop includes:

- either through failure of plants to emerge or
- lack of plant vigour, resulting in stunted, damaged or dead plants

The professional pest advisor will assess 5 “good stand” locations within the 100 acres or less plot and compare them to 5 “poor stand” areas within the same 100 acre or less plot. If the stand loss threshold is reached, the PPA will fill out and sign the pest assessment report.

### Stand loss thresholds

- The stand loss threshold for a corn crop is 15 percent.
- The stand loss threshold for a soybean crop is 30 percent.

For more info contact Grant Ewards, [grant@indianag.on.ca](mailto:grant@indianag.on.ca)

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# Other News

## HOW TO RENOVATE AND MAINTAIN STRAWBERRY BEDS

source: *GrowOrganic.com* February 08, 2012

Once you have a strawberry bed going, you need to renovate and renew it every year, to maintain healthy yields.

June-bearer and Everbearer beds should be renewed. Day Neutral strawberries should simply be replaced after three years.

### Cut and Thin Plants Right After Harvest .

All varieties of strawberry plants should be cut back to a height of 2 inches. *How you cut depends on the planting method you're using.*

Pull any weeds before you start renovation.

### Matted Row Method

June-bearers are often planted with this method, and the runners spread all over the bed. If planted on the ground, it's easy to cut the plants back with a lawn mower set high enough to leave 2" of stems above the crowns. Matted rows in a raised bed should be cut back by hand.



Popular row widths on the ground, for easy picking, are 18" - 24", with 24" paths between the rows. By the time of harvest the rows will have runners making them wider than

24". Narrow the row to a pickable size again by hoeing the runners from the edges, reducing the row to about 12" across. Or if the "mother" plants in the center of the row are declining in vigor, hoe out the center of the row and leave two rows of "daughter" plants on the edges, as the basis for two new rows.

After you hoe, pull out the least healthy plants, leaving 5 or 6 robust plants for each square foot.

### Hill Method

Hilling is popular for Everbearer strawberries. You will not have as many runners to deal with here. Use garden scissors or shears to cut the plants back to 2" above the crowns.

*\*Whichever cutting method you use, rake away the cut leaves and compost them, if your plants are disease-free.*

**Fertilizer** Choose your fertilizer according to your soil test results, apply, brush off any on the leaves, and water in well.

**Cultivate** If you've been using organic matter for mulch, turn it in to the soil (if you can do so without damaging shallow

roots) or add it to your compost pile. Add 1/2" of compost around the crowns to encourage new roots.

Keep the bed weeded and then mulch it before the first frost.

**Rotate** Follow good organic gardening practices and rotate your crops regularly. Strawberries are particularly susceptible to the soil disease verticillium wilt. To avoid this disease:

- 1) Rotate the strawberries to a new location every 3 years
- 2) Do not plant strawberries in a bed where you recently grew solanaceous plants (tomatoes, eggplants, potatoes, peppers).

GE

## KEEP YOUR KIDS SAFE

Source: *Keeping kids safe on the farm: A guide for farm families*

Let's keep our kids safe this summer. The farm can be a dangerous for kids especially with machinery on the move every day. Please review the following checklist and avoid an injury to your precious little ones.

Check the work area for children before starting any equipment. Do not operate equipment until kids are securely away.

- Never allow kids to climb and play on or near farm equipment, even if it's not in use. Teach kids early on that vehicles and machinery are NOT play toys.
- Always lock vehicles and machinery when you're finished using them. Remove the keys and keep them out of reach of kids. Never let kids play in areas where farm equipment or machinery are being used or stored.



- Equipment that may fall should always be left in the down position.
- Kids should never be passengers or extra riders on ride-on mowers, tractors, ATVs, work wagons, truck beds or any other type of farm equipment.
- Kids younger than 16 should NEVER operate ATVs, 4-wheelers, dirt bikes, mopeds, riding lawn mowers or tractors. Taking a ride on tractors, combines or ATVs seems exciting to many young kids, but it is just not safe. Sometimes grandparents will say, "Well, my kids always rode with me and nothing bad ever happened to them." But year after year, we see life changing injuries to kids from farm vehicles, and no parent ever thinks it will be their child.



- Some parents think if their child can reach the pedals and the wheel, they are ready to operate equipment. This is not the case. Some kids will be physically capable before having the mental capacity to handle it. If kids cannot understand risks and consequences, they can't make safe decisions or react when something unexpected happens.

- Once a child is 16 years old, he or she might be ready to start training to operate vehicles. Only after the teen is thoroughly trained and demonstrates good judgment should he or she be permitted to drive farm vehicles or operate equipment.
- Older teens should always wear helmets and protective gear when using ATVs, 4-wheelers, mopeds, and dirt bikes.

Have a safe summer.

DM