



Ontario Tender Fruit Producers' Marketing Board

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Items in this newsletter:

1. Food Safety and Traceability Initiative – Niagara Workshop
2. Federal Government Proposes Improvement to Loans Act
3. AgriStability Deadlines
4. AgriInvest Update

Food Safety and Traceability Initiative (FSTI) Workshop Added for Niagara

Growers wishing to participate in the FSTI program must attend a workshop and receive a certificate attesting to the fact that they did participate. Once you have received a certificate, you are eligible to apply for funding support (75% of eligible costs up to \$20,000) for food safety implementation and upgrades at the farm level.

OMAFRA has added an additional FSTI workshop to be held in Niagara on Wednesday, June 10th, 2009 at the Beacon Harbourside from 9:00 a.m. until noon. If the number of participants exceeds the capacity for the morning session, then an afternoon session can be accommodated. To register, call 1-888-479-3931.

Federal Government Proposes Improvements to Loans Act

On May 4th, 2009, Minister Ritz introduced new legislation to guarantee an estimated \$1 billion in loans over the next five years to Canadian farm families and cooperatives, most of which will go to farmers and cooperatives who were previously ineligible. The proposed amendments would ensure that:

- Farmers would be eligible for new loan guarantee limits of up to \$500,000, which doubles the current limit of \$250,000.
- New farmers would be eligible for loans under the *Canadian Agricultural Loans Act (CALA)*. Currently they are not eligible under the current *Farm Improvement and Marketing Cooperative Loans Act (FIMCLA)*.
- Agricultural cooperatives with a majority farmer membership (50% + 1 farmer members) would be eligible for loans of up to \$3 million for processing, marketing or distribution of farm products. Loans are currently limited to cooperatives owned 100% by farm members.
- Loans of up to \$500,000 would be available to help inter-generational farmers taking over their family farm. These loans are currently not available under FIMCLA.
- The name of FIMCLA would be changed to CALA to reflect the new focus.

To ensure the new program remains responsive to producers' needs, a full review of the program will be done in five years. The FIMCLA program remains in place while the amended Act goes through Parliament.

Upcoming AgriStability Deadlines

The AgriStability fee is based on 85% of fee reference margin and a 20% late penalty will continue to apply.

For 2008:

- The deadline for paying the 2008 fee with penalty has passed (December 31st, 2008)
- 2008 AgriStability forms deadline is **JUNE 30, 2009**
- 2008 T1163 (individuals) deadline is **JUNE 15, 2009**
- 2008 Statement A (corporations) deadline is **JUNE 30, 2009**

For 2009:

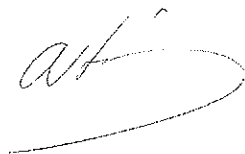
- Agricorp has mailed 2009 Fee Invoices in the spring of 2009
- **The 2009 fee (without penalty) was due on APRIL 30TH, 2009 (now past)**

AgriInvest Update

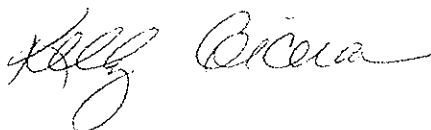
On February 6th, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada issued a press release regarding the transition to AgriInvest. The measures include:

- The deposit requirement for 2007 AgriInvest will be waived.
- The deadline to apply for 2007 AgriInvest was December 31, 2008.
- For the 2008 program year, producers who make a deposit to their AgriInvest account will receive matching government contribution cost shared 60/40 federal-provincial – maximum of \$22,500 based on a cap of \$1.5 million in Allowable Net Sales (ANS).
- The deadline to apply for 2008 AgriInvest without penalty is **SEPTEMBER 30, 2009** and with penalty is **DECEMBER 31, 2009**.
- In March, individual producers should have received information by direct mail on the 2007 government contribution to their AgriInvest account and the options open to them – make a withdrawal or leave the funds on deposit.
- AAFC will process 2007 AgriInvest deposits for Ontario corporate farms shortly.
- There are no triggers for AgriInvest for 2007 or 2008 – producers may request the funds for margin declines or investments to mitigate risk.

Yours truly,



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New Project Coordinator