



**CERTIFIED
CROP ADVISER**

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CCA CHATTER

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2024 CCA Conference and Annual Meeting: Are you Registered?

Mark your calendars for January 9 and 10, 2024! Those are the dates for our 2024 conference at the Best Western Lamplighter Inn, in London, Ontario for our 21st CCA Conference and Annual Meeting. The tentative agenda is posted on the website.


Note the changes to the CCA Conference:

January 9th (evening only, 7:00pm - 11:00pm)

- Casual reception and networking

January 10th (full day)

- Speaker sessions (8:00am - 4:00pm)
- Annual General Meeting
- Banquet dinner (6:30pm - 11:00pm)
- Keynote speaker
- Awards Ceremony
 - Award of Excellence Presentation
 - Innovation Award Presentation
- Sponsorship booths in Atrium

Conference registration is \$225 + HST, and you can register at <https://ccaontario.com/cca-conference/> 

Within the scope of this award, innovation is defined as a novel advancement or practice that has had significant adoption or impact within the Ontario crop production industry.

Nominations will consist of:

- a letter outlining their contribution to innovation or research;
- the nominee's project description demonstrating the current innovation or research initiative; and,
- the names and phone numbers of three references (such as grower customers, peers, etc.) who have agreed to recommend the nominee for this award. The CCA Innovation Award Committee will contact these individuals for a verbal reference.

The key aspect to emphasize is why this nominee's work or research is truly innovative. The winner of the Innovation Award will receive \$1,000, along with a commemorative plaque to recognize their achievements.

If you wish to nominate an individual or look over the application process, check the awards tab on the CCA website <https://ccaontario.com/awards/> or contact the CCA office. **Nomination packages are due October 31, 2023.**

This award is sponsored by Honeyland Ag Services. 



Newly Launched! Submit your Nominations for the CCA Innovation Award!

This year, at the CCA Banquet and Awards Ceremony, a new award will be presented alongside the CCA Award of Excellence. Stemming from years of hard work by the CCA Research and Innovation Committee, they have officially launched the Innovation Award!


The CCA Innovation Award is designed to recognize an individual, group or organization who has demonstrated significant innovation or research within the crop advising field. A nomination can be initiated by a customer, employer, peer, or other associate.

Welcome Recently Certified CCAs

We are pleased to announce in the past six months there were nine newly certified Ontario CCAs. Congratulations to:

Lindsay Clarke
Claire Coenen
Scott Colville
Robert Hutton
Joshua Lombard

Murranda McCallum
Andrew Priest
Jordan Robinson
Benjamin Van Lagen

If you know these newly certified CCAs, make sure to extend your congratulations to them on this achievement. 

New Leadership Scholarship Funds for CCAs

The Leadership Scholarship Funds are a recent initiative of the Ontario CCA Board. These funds are designed to assist CCAs in seeking continuing education in leadership development skills. If you are attending a leadership training workshop or course this year and would like to apply for reimbursement up to \$500, check the awards tab on the website <https://ccaontario.com/awards/> or contact the CCA office. To be eligible for these funds, a CCA must submit a short essay of 1,000 words outlining the following:

- How the funds are intended to be used;
- Outline the value of course/training or educational program and how it relates to the CCA program;
- How the continuing education will enhance their leadership abilities.

Up to three successful candidates will be awarded these funds each year. Applications can be mailed to sarah.tfio@bellnet.ca. 🌱

2023 Award of Excellence – Nominations Due October 31st!

It is that time of year again when we recognize the experience and accomplishments of our fellow CCAs by honoring a colleague with the CCA Award of Excellence.

The CCA Award of Excellence is designed to recognize a crop adviser who delivers exceptional customer service, is highly innovative, has shown that they are a leader in their field, and has contributed substantially to the exchange of ideas and the transfer of agronomic knowledge within the agriculture industry. Anybody can make a nomination for a CCA to receive this award.

The winner of the CCA Award of Excellence will receive \$1000 and an additional \$1000 will be donated on their behalf to an agricultural charity of their choice, along with a commemorative plaque.

Nomination forms are available at <https://ccaontario.com/awards/> and are due **October 31, 2023**. 🌱

Seeking Nominations for the CCA Board of Directors

As of December 31, 2023, there will be four seats on the Ontario CCA Board of Directors up for election. These seats are designated for an Ontario CCA duly elected by the CCA membership in Ontario. Each term is three-years and directors are eligible to stand for re-election for a second term if they wish. There are two full-day Board meetings each year

(spring and fall) and directors are expected to serve on one of the standing committees.

If you are interested in standing for election or wish to nominate a CCA colleague, please contact Susan Fitzgerald susan.tfio@bell.net by November 15th. The on-line voting will commence in early December. 🌱

Looking to get a few more CEUs? Attend Soil & Water Day in November!

In partnership with Mosaic, the Ontario CCA Association will be hosting the 7th Soil & Water Information Day on Wednesday, November 15, 2023. The event will take place at the **GrandWay Event Center in Elora**.



We are very excited this year to be at the GrandWay, as they can offer livestreaming of the event. If you are unable to attend in-person, you can register to watch virtually via Zoom.

There are 5.0 CEU credits for attending or watching this event. This is a great way to make sure you meet your SW CEU credits if your cycle ends this year. Registration to attend in-person is \$100 + HST, and access to the livestream is \$70 + HST.

Registration and the agenda are on the CCA website at: <https://ccaontario.com/product/soil-water-day-2/>. We look forward to seeing you there! 🌱

Ontario Renewal Fee Increase

To continue offering our CCAs service, recognition, and educational opportunities, the Ontario CCA board has increased fees for members this year to keep up with rising costs.

As you may see on the renewal notices which have recently been mailed to members, our fee has risen from \$70 to \$80.

The Ontario CCA office collects all renewal fees from Ontario CCAs but must remit a portion of those fees to the International CCA office.

For 2024 renewal = \$80 for Ontario and \$85 for International = \$165 CAN plus HST.

For each CCA specialty, the annual fee will not be changing (\$50.00 CAN plus HST).

You need to pay your 2024 renewal by January 31, 2025, otherwise, a late fee of \$25 will apply and your account will have to be reinstated.

Renewals have been sent to the mailing address you have on your CCA profile. If your mailing address has changed, contact us to make sure it gets updated. We don't want you to miss your renewal notice! 🌱

In Memory – Pat Feryn

Patrick Feryn of Stratford, Ontario died peacefully surrounded by his loved ones on Sunday, April 23rd at the age of 66. A kind and compassionate individual, Pat lived fiercely, never taking a moment for granted. Pat enjoyed a productive 35-year career farming and supporting his clients as a consulting agronomist. He graduated from the University of Guelph (BSc.) and it didn't take him long to get his CCA designation. He was active as a volunteer on many professional committees, including chair of the Soil and Water Sub Committee of the Soil and Water Management Research Corporation for several years, and a member of the Source Water Protection Committee since its inception in 2006 as the Agricultural Representative. Pat lived spectacularly and will be missed terribly by all who knew him. 🌱

Increasing Emphasis on CCA Ethics at International Level

After successfully completing your CCA exams, you were asked to submit your work and education credentials as well as sign a Code of Ethics. Do you remember what was contained in that Code? If not, you can access a copy on the CCA Ontario website at <https://ccaontario.com/become-a-certified-crop-advisor/> under point five of the steps to becoming a CCA.

At a recent meeting of the International CCA Board, we heard

that the International Program will be placing an increasing emphasis on CCA ethics. The complaint investigation procedure is being reviewed by their lawyer and there will be changes coming.

The International Board discussed implementing a requirement that CCAs need to achieve at least one credit in ethics each cycle. Alternatively, it could be a CEU which counts toward PD but not a requirement. It was also suggested having CCAs resign the Code of Ethics each time they renew their membership. However, before implementing an additional requirement for an ethics CEU, the International Board decided to begin with increasing education and awareness around ethics. The ICCA staff will be creating educational resources and training on ethics for CCAs.

Ethical behavior, simply put, is doing the right thing. Deliberate deception, failure to honour commitments, and illegal activities are fairly obvious examples of unethical business practices. But unethical behavior can involve much broader areas as well, such as deliberate violations of company policies, or using hard-sell sales practices that may be legal, strictly speaking, but that are not in the best interest of your customer. Consider the message in the following article. 🌱

Following Labels with New Technology

Applying crop inputs, such as pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, and other agricultural chemicals, according to the labels and restrictions provided by manufacturers

Continued on page 4.



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**How do I
improve my
soil health?**



and regulatory agencies is crucial for several important reasons. The foundation of these reasons is the safety of our food system including our consumers and our producers.

Considering new technologies to apply these products, we would like to emphasize that these products are to be applied as specified by their label. Violation of these labels is a violation of the Code of Ethics that each Certified Crop Advisor has signed, as well as potentially putting the operating practices of our industry in jeopardy. These labels have been developed to maximize safety for humans and the environment, effective pest and disease management, and legal compliance with the Pest Management Regulatory Agency. The proper following of these labels and application methods will minimize crop damage and maximize our ability to maintain public perception and trust.

In conclusion, applying crop inputs according to the labels and restrictions is essential for ensuring the safety of humans, the environment, and crops, as well as for legal compliance, effective pest management, and long-term sustainability in agriculture. It is a fundamental practice that supports both the success of individual farmers and the overall integrity of the agricultural industry. Failure to follow the labels, especially when thinking about new application technologies, is a direct violation of the Code of Ethics that you signed as a CCA. It is imperative that we all work together to act in accordance with these regulated labels to continue to protect our industry. 🌱

CCA Exam Information... and Changes!

All CCA exams are now moving back to windowed testing periods. CCA exams are given during four designated testing windows during the year. Exams must be pre-registered for prior to taking them. The next four testing windows for CCA exams are:

- November 1 – November 13, 2023
- January 24 – February 5, 2024
- March 27 – April 8, 2024
- July 24 – August 5, 2024

You may register for the November 2023 testing window from **September 27 - October 23, 2023.**

Starting during the March-April window, the ICCA will be trialling offering examinees the opportunity to take their exams in sections. This means examinees will be able to choose whether they want to write their exam as usual – all four sections at one time – or one section at a time. The registration fee will be the same for either option, with sections being charged one quarter of the registration fee each time. However, it will be more expensive as there will be a full proctoring fee charged for each section.

Any questions regarding the changes to the exam format can be directed to the CCA office, 519-787-4322.

The cost to write the International exam is \$180 US + \$55 proctor fee = \$235 US.

The cost for the Ontario exam is \$100 US + \$45 proctor fee = \$145.

Specialty exams (4R NMS and RMS) are \$95.00 USD + \$55 proctor fee = \$150.00 USD

To register for the exam, visit the ICCA website at: <https://www.certifiedcropadviser.org/exams/registration> 🌱

Purchase Study Material for the CCA Exams

If you know of an individual writing the Ontario CCA exams, the CCA office has pre-recorded exam workshops. Recordings are \$75 + HST and can be purchased on the CCA website at <https://ccaontario.com/product/cca-pre-exam-workshop/> or you can call the CCA office for additional information. Recordings are not meant to be shared amongst others, as they are strictly for the use of the individual purchasing them. 🌱

CCA Board Mentorship Program – Now Accepting Applications

The CCA Mentorship Committee is now accepting new applications into the Board Mentorship Program. The application deadline is February 28, 2024.

The Mentorship Program encourages newer CCAs to consider taking on a leadership role in the Association, to support CCA members in understanding the organization, and to share in the skills and knowledge of experienced Board members.

To apply, you must be a CCA in good standing with preference given to CCAs who have been certified within the last five years. If you are interested in applying, you will be asked to complete a short application along with a telephone interview.

Each year, two CCAs will be selected to participate in the Program and they are expected to attend the CCA Board meetings along with any other important related meetings; participate actively in Board and Committee work; and identify a CCA program-related project to work on and complete during the term of your mentorship.

If interested, please contact the CCA office for an application or visit the communications tab on the Ontario CCA website for further details <https://ccaontario.com/communications/mentorship-program/> 🌱

CEU Centre

Please note, if your CEU cycle ends on **December 31, 2023**, you need **40 CEUs** with a minimum of five CEUs in each of the four agronomic categories.

If you have the 4R NMS designation, you are required to have 7.5 CEUs in both the NM and SW categories. If you have the Resistant Management Specialty, you need 10 CEUs in IPM. With some cycles coming to an end December 31st, it is important to make sure you have the required number of CEUs.

If you do not meet the criteria, it will result in you being dropped from the program. A hardship appeal is the only option to get back in and will involve you having to convince the Ontario CCA Executive and Standards and Ethics Committee that there were extenuating circumstances preventing you from meeting this requirement.

If you are successful with your appeal, any CEUs that were lacking must be made up **in addition** to the required 40 during the next two-year cycle.


Need a few CEUs before December 31st?

Try the Online Subscription! The subscription costs \$100.00 USD and gets you unlimited access to numerous educational webinars and most courses for one year. <https://www.certifiedcropadviser.org/education/classroom/subscribe>

Check the Ontario CEU event calendar:
<http://ccaontario.com/events>

Check out the American Society of Agronomy upcoming webinars: <https://www.agronomy.org/education/online-courses>

As well, the Soil Science Society of America has webinars for CCAs: <https://www.soils.org/education/online-courses>

There is a long list of on-line CEUs as well at <https://web.sciencesocieties.org/Learning-Center/Courses#category4> 

Transitioning out of the CCA Program

Voluntarily Withdrawing: If you no longer wish to maintain your CCA designation you have the option to voluntarily withdraw from the program. This means you leave the program in good standing, as opposed to being dropped. Those who voluntarily withdraw will also have the option to be reinstated without having to retest as long as they make up any required CEUs (within the next two-year cycle) and renewal fees. This only applies if requesting reinstatement within two years of withdrawal.

CCA-Retired Status (CCA-RET): Looking at retirement? A CCA may apply for "retired" status if they have been a CCA for at least 10 years and is no longer practicing agronomy. The current annual fee is \$25.00 + HST.

"CCA Retired" is exempt from CEU requirements but you receive all normal correspondence from International and local programs including Crops and Soils Magazine. You can also still attend any events that the CCA Ontario office puts on.

If you decide to become an active CCA again, you have two years to do so without taking the International and local board exams again.

If you are interested in voluntarily withdrawing or getting your CCA-RET please contact the CCA office. 

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Published by:

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Jonathan Zettler CPA, CMA, CCA-ON 4R-NMS

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Industry Updates

Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

Submitted by Andy Van Niekerk

OSCIA recently announced that they have hired a new Executive Director, Ashley Honsberger.

The Agricultural Stewardship Initiative (ASI) is being launched under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Program (S-CAP). Applications will be accepted September 15, 2023, and closes September 28, 2023, at 5 p.m. Details can be found at <https://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/agricultural-stewardship-initiative/>. Projects that support soil health and water quality and some components that are Lake Erie based.


OSCIA is also discussing revamping the Environmental Farm Plan. 

Grain Farmers of Ontario

Submitted by Marty Vermey

Crop Committee Website – work is underway with full engagement of the specific crop committees of the OCCC (cereal), OCC (corn), OSACC (soybean/canola) and OPCC (pulse crop) to create a website that is designed to be a central hub for Ontario field crops. Each committee will have ownership and responsibility for their own specific micro site with their specific needs. The website will use newer website design to improve farmer experience and ensure current accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) is followed. The new website will be coming online in 2024.

Great Lakes YEN – Another great year with the YEN project. There were over 180 participants this year across the Great Lakes region, with 106 entrants from Ontario. Yields have been exceptional with several locations over 170 bushels per acre. Data is still being compiled as harvest has been delayed this season with the wetter than usual harvest in the northeastern part of the region. Reports are expected in later October and a wrap up meeting will be held on January 11 in Ontario and another meeting in Michigan during the week of January 22. Applications for the 2024 season will begin by December and run till the end of January.

Cover Crop Working group – There has been lots of work by the member organizations of the Cover Crop Working Group. The report on the last four years of accomplishments can be found at the following link. https://gfo.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Ontario-Cover-Crop-Strategy-Action-Plan-2019-2023_0921.pdf. 

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Submitted by Pam Joosse


The Living Lab – Ontario project was announced July 20, 2023. Led by OSCIA, this living lab project represents an investment of up to \$9.2 million over five years from the federal government under the Agricultural Climate Solutions (ACS) – Living Labs program.

Living Lab – Ontario is a five-year project that brings together organizations, producers, scientists, and other experts to co-develop, test, and evaluate BMPs that address climate change challenges in livestock and cropping systems. There is a great diversity of organizations involved in Living Lab – Ontario and they are currently recruiting farmer cooperators who would be interested in being part of the project. The goal is to involve a diversity of operations, farming systems, regions, and commodity types across Ontario agriculture. BMPs identified as project priorities include technologies and practices to increase efficiency and minimize nitrogen losses, managing manure storages to reduce GHG emissions, grazing cover crops, grazing practices to increase carbon sequestration, profit mapping to improve land use decisions, and increasing carbon sequestration and environmental benefits in field boundaries and nonproductive lands. The project is still subject to negotiation of a contribution agreement.

Several of the clusters under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership have been announced. As a reminder, please note that specific project titles and lead researcher information for each is typically shared at: Research projects - agriculture.canada.ca

Dr. Xueming Yang will retire from the Harrow Research and Development Centre in October of 2023, where he was part of the soil team, researching soil carbon and cover crops.

Dr. Lining Tian will retire from London Research and Development Centre in November 2023, where he worked on plant biotechnology projects.

Please note that a term position for a Soil Carbon Specialist to plan, develop and conduct research on soil carbon dynamics in agricultural systems was posted ([Soil Carbon Specialist psc.gc.ca](http://SoilCarbonSpecialist.psc.gc.ca)). 

Conservation Ontario Industry Update


Submitted by Michael Dick

Greenbelt Foundation - Soil Health Benchmarking Program - This new four-year program will focus on the Greenbelt and associated counties and regions. The program is being implemented in collaboration with the Soil Health Institute, Soils at Guelph, Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association and Certified Crop Advisors. Conservation Ontario has been invited to participate on an advisory committee.

Investment in Improved Soil Health - Through this investment, OMAFRA will update the province's soil maps and information as part of its Soil Resource Inventory (SRI) work. It will also build the Ontario Agricultural Soil Information System (OASIS). This data and information system will house, manage, and analyze soil data critical to support farming operations. Conservation Authorities and Conservation Ontario along with partner municipalities have been actively involved and managing the LiDAR acquisitions/projects that will support updated soil mapping. The investments to support this are coming from a range of sources including the federal Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program, in addition to the province and municipalities.

Watershed Report Card - On March 22, World Water Day

Continued on page 8.



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2023, Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities unveiled their Watershed Report Cards, updated from the previous reporting in 2018. The report cards are a summary of the health of our rivers, lakes, and streams. Conservation Ontario produced a State of Ontario's Watersheds Story Map to support Conservation Authority Watershed Report Cards. The Story Map provides a provincial overview of the 2023 Watershed Report Card results. <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/14a8022345b145e3965b30e96197b134>

Cover Crop Strategy - Conservation Ontario is participating in the cover crop working group. There is going to be a cover crop strategy update to be posted soon that will include some stats on Conservation Authority cover crop initiatives.

Additional notes: Many Conservation Authorities offer cover crop incentive funding programs to some degree, in at least a portion of their region. Check this link to find the Conservation Authority contact in your area.

<https://conservationontario.ca/conservation-authorities/find-a-conservation-authority>. 🌱

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Submitted by Christine Brown

New Staff: Danny Jefferies

(danny.jefferies@ontario.ca, (519) 359-6707) is the new OMAFRA Soil Management Specialist for Horticulture, based out of Ridgetown. He took over for Anne Verhallen when she retired in May. He is a University of Guelph grad with a Masters in Environmental Science specializing in soil science. He has worked at Huron Tractor, and more recently Deveron.

Ontario Ag Conference: Planning for the Ontario Ag Conference "From Good to Great" is underway with combination in-person and virtual options. The virtual conference will begin January 3 with up to 15 on-demand sessions.

- January 4-5 will have an in-person event at Ridgetown with 28 options in 4 concurrent sessions, some of which will be recorded and posted for virtual visits later.
- January 16 Eastern Ontario in-person event (Kemptville).
- January 19 Midwestern Ontario in-person event (planned for livestreaming) with focus on soil.
- Tech-Talk Tuesdays are also being planned again.

Soil Health Assessment and Plan (SHAP) update:

Samples for the SHAP pilot project were taken and submitted last summer (a significant number by CCAs), were analyzed and results sent back this past winter. At the side is a sample of the



report, which also included interpretation of the various analytical indicators. The indicator tests selected were based on input from researchers for value for cost and from the Ontario labs to determine cost effectiveness. This information as well as sampling procedures and practices to help improve soil health are included in the SHAP Guidebook at www.fieldcropnews.com.

Next steps for SHAP include working on a marketing plan and fine-tuning information (i.e., sampling procedures, scoring of analytical indicators) as the database is populated with more Ontario samples. The SHAP app is on Survey 123 but will be integrated into AgriSuite over the next few years as the AgriSuite software incorporates the GIS component for mapping.

Cost Share Programs Sustainable CAP – Some of the projects include:

Agricultural Stewardship Initiative (ASI) – Up to \$ 5 million is being invested (this fiscal year) to provide cost-share funding for eligible farmers to modify and adapt their equipment and to support planning to improve soil health and water quality. The intake opened September 15 and closed September 28 with a claim deadline of February 15, 2024. OSCIA is administering this program.

Biosecurity Enhancement Initiative – up to \$7.5 million administered by OMAFRA – applications accepted starting September 19 and accepted on an on-going basis, but subject to funding availability. Projects will help eligible producers, processors, and other industry partners to enhance animal health and welfare, plant health and food safety.

Promoting Agriculture and Food Careers Initiative – up to \$1.7 million over three years is being invested to provide funding support for agricultural societies to promote agri-food careers. The application process began August 24, 2023 and will end March 31, 2026.

Honey Bee Health Initiative – up to \$1.375 million is being invested to provide cost-share funding to support beekeepers in maintaining healthy honeybee colonies as well as grow their number of colonies to increase the sustainability of the beekeeping industry in Ontario. Administered by OSCIA, intake of applications opened September 15, 2023, and will close when funding has been allocated. The claim deadline is March 31, 2024.

RALP – Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program - \$56.7 million over five years for farm projects to eligible farmers to complete projects such as reduced tillage, water retention ponds and other projects that reduce GHG emissions and carbon sequestration. The program will be administered through OSCIA, and details will be announced later this fall. 🌱

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