



**CERTIFIED
CROP ADVISER**

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CCA CHATTER

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2025 Ontario CCA Award of Excellence Winner

The CCA Award of Excellence was given out during the CCA Conference and Annual Meeting on January 13, 2026. The Award is co-sponsored by CropLife Canada and Syngenta.



This year, there were four nominees:

Brett Evans
Steve McQueen
Walt Quilty
Joanna Wallace

The recipient of the award for 2025 was Brett Evans.

Brett has proudly been a CCA since 2016. He spent a great deal of his childhood at his grandparent's dairy farm, which planted the seed for his future career in agriculture. Brett is described not only as a CCA full of honesty and integrity, but as a friend to his clients as well.

He studied Earth Science at Brock University while he worked part time and seasonally at Clark Agri Service. A valuable piece of advice from Brett's dad pushed him to



Brett receiving the Award of Excellence from Marijke Vanderlaan, Syngenta.

succeed, "See the work and do the work before you are told and you will always be successful." He moved up from working in the yard to Operations Manager over his 15 years there. In 2014 he was offered a position at Scotland Agromart, where he worked until recently when he moved to a new venture called T-lane Custom Spraying.

Brett's highest priority is being a valued partner to his growers, which was truly felt when his references were spoken to for this award. Brett believes that sharing agronomic information and experience has global value. Some of his clients worry that Brett works too much and always puts his clients' needs first. Brett was nominated by two people separately, which may be a first for this award.

Congratulations, Brett! 🌱

Innovation Award

The CCA Innovation Award was announced by the Research and Innovation Committee in 2023. The award was designed to recognize an individual, group or organization who has demonstrated significant innovation or research within the crop advising field. The award is sponsored by Honeyland Ag Services



This year, there were four nominees:

Jason Deveau
OCC DON Subcommittee
Dan Oliver
Great Lakes YEN

The recipient of the award for 2025 was the Great Lakes YEN project.

Continued on page 2.

The Great Lakes Yield Enhancement Network (YEN) is a farmer-centered initiative that has transformed how farmers across Ontario and the Great Lakes region evaluate crop performance. Developed in 2021 through a unique cross-border partnership—including Grain Farmers of Ontario, Michigan State University, Michigan Wheat Program, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness, and the University of Guelph.



As one of the first programs in North America to apply a structured, physiology-based benchmarking approach at scale, the Great Lakes YEN helps farmers understand their yield potential and the factors that can help them bridge the gap between potential and actual yield. The program's collaborative, farmer-led learning model is innovative, with an emphasis on peer-to-peer learning. Its impact is clear: more precise management decisions, greater agronomic confidence, and a growing community of farmers, agronomists, researchers and extension specialists dedicated to unlocking higher yields through evidence-based practices. 🌱

Joanna Follings and Marty Vermeij (right) receiving the award from Chris Roelands (left), Honeyland Ag Services

CCA Emerging Leader

The Emerging Leader was created by the CCA-ON Marketing Committee, with the intent to showcase and share the talents and dedication of CCAs who have only recently obtained their CCA designation and show great promise for the future.

This year, there were five nominees:

Liam Bracken
Olivia Noorenberghe
Henry Prinzen
Ben Schapelhouman
Tuesday Schroeder

This year, Henry Prinzen was selected as the Emerging Leader.

As a standout representative for Maizex Seeds, Henry is an industry leader known for his deep market expertise and practical, "boots-on-the-ground" agronomy. His colleagues and local dealers rely on his ability to solve complex puzzles and drive customer ROI.

A prolific communicator, Henry frequently shares research on RealAgriculture and has spent four seasons evolving the Farms.com Great Ontario Yield Tour into a premier educational event.

He has pioneered the use of kernel number and mass designations to help growers master hybrid management timing.

Beyond his technical skill, Henry is a highly positive CCA who embodies professional integrity. By providing honest, realistic insights without disparaging competitors, he serves as a living reflection of the CCA Code of Ethics.



Congratulations, Henry! 🌱

2026 CCA Conference and Annual Meeting

There were over 215 attendees at the 23rd CCA Conference and Annual Meeting, which took place at the Best Western Lamplighter Inn in London on January 13th and 14th.

Our ongoing appreciation goes out to our sponsors. This event would have not been a success without you!

The 2026 CCA conference sponsors were as follows:

Gold Sponsors - \$2,500 Contribution

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- Nufarm
- SGS Canada
- SWAT Maps
- Taurus Ag
- TerraLynx
- 2026 11th Annual Great ON Yield Tour

Bronze Sponsors - \$750 Contribution

- C&M Seeds
- MNP
- SeCan
- Stratford Agri Analysis
- Sylvite
- Yara 🌱

Ontario CCA Board Mentees

For his 2025 mentee project, Owen Ricker developed and delivered a 50-minute presentation titled “Best Practices and Ethics of On-farm Research.” As of 2026, CCAs are required to earn one Ethics CEU per cycle. Owen’s presentation was the first CEU in this category approved by the Ontario Board. With limited material in this category, this was a timely and valuable contribution to the Ontario CCA program.

Owen is currently working at Floradale Feed Mill while continuing to help with field work on his home farm.

As Owen’s term concludes, we are excited to welcome Lorraine Vandermyden as our newest CCA board mentee. She attended her first board meeting in March and is collaborating with the mentorship committee to design her 2026 project.

Lorraine is the Research & Demonstration Coordinator for the Ontario Soil Network, where she leads peer-to-peer initiatives focused on soil health and nitrogen management. She officially earned her CCA designation in December 2025.

Welcome, Lorraine!

For CCAs that want to learn more about the mentorship program, scan the QR code or contact the CCA office. 🌱



Self-reporting CEUs

If you attended an activity that did not apply for CEUs, then you can self-report this activity to receive credit. Eligible activities are short courses, workshops, clinics, conferences, symposia, field days, college courses, or meetings that relate to any of the four CEU categories. Up to 20 self-reported CEUs will count towards your 40-credit requirement.

When reporting, you will need the meeting title, location, speaker information (if applicable), sponsoring organization, date, description, and what CEU category the activity fulfills. It is recommended to attach any agendas or certificates to the form as well.

Reporting is completed on the ICCA website. Visit the page by scanning the QR code below and scrolling to “Self Report CEUs to Your Account”. You must be logged in to submit a report. 🌱



2027 CCA Conference

– Save the Date

Mark your calendars for January 12 and 13, 2027! We are returning to the Best Western Lamplighter Inn, in London for our 24th CCA Conference and Annual Meeting. Tuesday, January 12 will be a full day program followed by a half-day on Wednesday, January 13.

Information on the agenda and registration will be sent out to all CCAs throughout the summer by email. 🌱

20 Years Certified in Ontario

The following CCAs received their 20-year certificate this year. Congratulations on this milestone!

Darryl Acres	Derek Freitag
Steven Bent	Ryan Hoegy
Shannon Bieman	Chad Homick
Ryan Brophy	Russel Hurst
Achille Correggia	Cain Templeman
Randy Cronmiller	Sharon Vogels
Stefan Dewaele	Garth Wilson 🌱
Jennifer Doelman	

2025 CCA Soil & Water Day

In partnership with Mosaic, the Ontario CCA Association will be hosting the 10th Soil & Water Information Day on Tuesday, November 17, 2026. The event will take place at the **GrandWay Event Centre in Elora.**

Similar to previous years, there will be an in-person or virtual option for attendees. We will offer a live connection so if you are unable to attend in-person, you can join via Zoom to obtain the SW CEUs.


Once the agenda has been set, an email will be sent to all CCAs along with registration information. 🌱



Newly Certified CCAs!

We are pleased to announce that since the last newsletter, seven individuals have gained their CCA designation. Make sure if you see these individuals, you pass along your congratulations.

Cade Robinet
Cory Weber
Karen Reymer
Alicia Wank

Lorraine Vandermyden
Robert Matson
Aneal Ramsewak
Nicholas Zivcic 

Leaders in Continuing Education

The following CCAs are the top CEU earners in Ontario, showing a strong dedication to continuous learning.


CEU Honor Roll for 2024-2025 Cycle

Aaron Breimer
William Clifton
Brian Colville
Dale Cowan
Leanne Freitag
Alain Gratton
Steven Hughes
Janice Janiec
Danny Jefferies
Randy Miles

Shelley Nyentap
Rahul Patel
Andrew Pattemore
Lorraine Regnier
Tarlok Sahota
Kelsey Shalla-Hill
Sharon Vogels
Joshua Weber
Nicole Weber
Todd Woodhouse

CEU Honor Roll for 2025-2026 Cycle

Andrew Barrie
Chris Brown
Deb Campbell
Connor Charlton
Matthew Coffey
Christopher Haines
John Hussack
Kim Lawlor
Derrick Leclair
Christopher Meier

Rob Miller
Grant Piggott
Walter Quilty
Dave Racz
Margaret Ribey
Geoff Smith
Paul Sullivan
Jason Van Maanen
Emily VanderSpek
Curtis Vanrooy 

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CCA Exams

International, local board, and specialty exams are offered quarterly. You can take the International and Ontario exams in one window, or you can split them between different windows. There are two remaining registration windows in 2026.

Exam Registration Dates

July 1 - July 27, 2026
October 7 - October 26, 2026

Available Exam Dates

Exams will be conducted during this time frame.
August 5 - 19, 2026
November 4 - 18, 2026

NOTE: Exam registration is only available during the dates listed above, and only for the next available exam date. For example, if you want to take your exam in the November 4 - 18, 2026 exam period, you will register in the October 7 - October 26, 2026 period.

Section Testing

Exams are also available to be taken by section. The International and Ontario exams are organized into sections, Crop Management, Nutrient Management, Soil and Water Management and Pest Management. Section testing allows candidates to take each of the four sections separately, rather than all at once. They can choose to complete the sections in any order and at their own pace within a five-year timeframe. However, this is more expensive as a proctor fee is paid for each exam sitting.

For additional details and to register for the exams, scan the QR code




The cost to write the international exam is \$215 US + \$60 proctor fee = \$275 US. The cost for the Ontario exam is \$100 US + \$50 proctor fee = \$150

Specialty exams (4R NMS, RMS, and PAS) are \$120 USD + \$50 proctor fee = \$170.00 USD

Candidate Status

For those who have successfully passed the Ontario and International CCA exams but are still building the required advising experience, the CCA-Candidate Status is an excellent way to maintain momentum. Once this experience is earned, candidates can resubmit their credential package with references, and have their designation upgraded to full CCA status.

Earning candidate status demonstrates that applicants have already conquered the most challenging hurdle, the exams, and are fully committed to earning their certification.

If you know any young professionals that are interested in their CCA designation, let them know about Candidate status. To learn more, those interested are welcome to contact the Ontario CCA office. 

New in 2026! CCA Scholarship Fund

The CCA Scholarship Fund is a new initiative by the Ontario CCA Board to remove the financial barriers for potential CCAs when studying for the Ontario CCA Exam. Successful applicants will receive a copy of the Ontario Study Guide, access to the Pre-Exam Workshop and CCA practice questions.

Those who have employers willing to cover the costs of these materials are not eligible.

For full eligibility criteria, scan the QR code to visit the CCA website, or email Daina at office.tfio@bellnet.ca. 🌱



NEW in 2026! Precision Ag Specialty

As of this year, the Precision Agriculture Specialty (PASp) is now open to Ontario CCAs. This specialty certification has been developed to meet the growing demand for qualified advisers with focused knowledge and skills in precision ag.

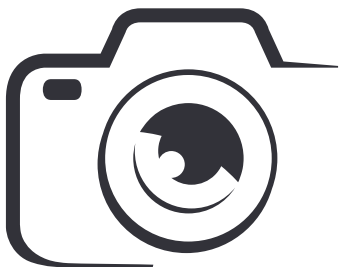
The exam and study materials are available through the ICCA website. Registration and exam dates are the same as other CCA exams.

Once the PASp exam is passed, a Precision Agriculture CEU category requirement of 5.0 credits will be added to your CEU requirements. 🌱

Field Photos Wanted!

The Ontario CCA office is building a collection of high-resolution photos that represent agriculture across the province to be used in study material, CCA Chatter, social media, and marketing material. We're looking for action shots of planting, scouting, and equipment, as well as landscape and crop pictures.

Please send photos to erin.tfio@bellnet.ca 🌱



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Published by:

Patrick J. Lynch CCA-ON

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

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Research Priorities Survey

The research priorities survey is conducted by the Research and Innovation Committee to gain insight into the needs of Ontario CCAs. Open throughout December and January, we received responses from 17% of CCAs across the province.

Looking ahead over the next five to 10 years, respondents identified three primary production issues that pose the most significant challenges to the industry:

1. Increased regulations on crop inputs.
2. Financial feasibility of production agriculture.
3. Grower adoption of new practices and recommendations.

In addition to general concerns, respondents were asked about challenges for major crops:

Soybeans: Controlling herbicide-resistant weeds is a pressing concern for 80% of respondents, followed by the emergence of new weed species (56%).

Dry & Edible Beans: New weed species and disease are the primary concerns. About 50% of respondents identified herbicide-resistant weeds as a significant upcoming challenge.

Corn: Disease management is the top priority, selected by 74% of respondents. This was followed by the cost of nutrient replacement (67%) and agronomic nutrient efficiencies (59%).

Wheat: Respondents prioritized the same issues as corn but in reverse order; however, no single category for wheat exceeded a 50% response rate.

Forages: The most anticipated challenges include crop establishment issues related to weather, nutrient replacement costs, and shifting climate patterns.

Canola & Horticulture: While these were new categories this year, the most common response for both was “do not advise.” Among those who work in these areas, the top concerns were climate patterns, disease, and insect pressure.

As a follow up question to the priorities for soil health improvement for Ontario, CCAs indicated the areas where additional training or research is required to effectively advise. The top responses were quantifying soil health parameters, soil amendments, and cover crops.

The survey also gauged the involvement CCAs have with the main OFCAF Best Management Practices (BMPs). As expected, a majority of CCAs already recommend or implement cover crops and nitrogen management. However, over 50% of respondents noted that rotational grazing does not apply to their clients.

To better support clients implementing these BMPs, CCAs identified the following areas of interest for further research or training:

Cover Crops: Economic benefits, termination timing/strategies, and species selection.

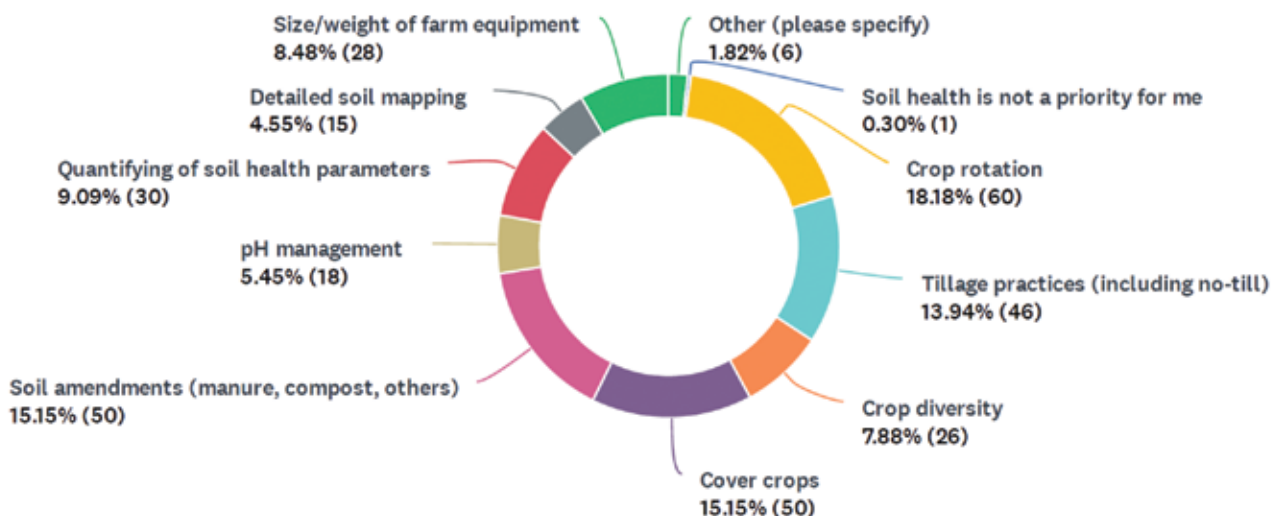
Nitrogen Management: Nitrogen use efficiency (NUE), in-season rate adjustments, and loss prevention.

The insights gathered from this survey will directly guide our future webinars and event programming to ensure we provide the most relevant information to CCAs.

Regularly monitoring industry concerns allows the Research and Innovation Committee to provide informed recommendations on external agronomic committees. This ensures that CCA priorities remain at the forefront as the industry shifts toward data-driven farming.

Thank you to everyone who participated! 🌱

What should be the top three priorities for soil health improvement for Ontario agriculture?



Ontario Soils GeoHub: Helping Farmers Harness Soil Data

Submitted by Communications Branch, OMAFA

Farmers and agronomists across Ontario now have access to the Ontario Soils GeoHub - a new, free online platform developed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA) to make better use of soil data.


The easy-to-use site brings together soil data from provincial and federal sources to help discover, visualize, and download relevant soil information products - no sign-up or login required.

This initiative is part of a three-year \$9.5 million investment launched in 2023 to support the adoption of advanced technologies that enhance soil health, increase productivity, and boost profitability.

The virtual hub includes a wide range of soil data including historical soil survey reports and maps, a recently released topsoil report with an interactive dashboard, and a "Mapping Ontario's Soils" page that outlines the past, present, and future of Ontario soils data. There is also a Soils Spatial Search which lets you select your location on a map and view detailed soil information for your area. This includes data on slope, soil texture, CLI rating, stoniness, drainage type, soil hydrologic group, and drainage design code. These soil datasets can be used to improve farm productivity and inform land management practices to promote on-farm soil health. For example, soil texture maps can help identify areas at risk of soil compaction.

The newest additions to the Soils GeoHub are pilot digital soil maps. Digital soil mapping (DSM) is a new approach to soil mapping that maps soil variability more accurately and with higher precision. It uses georeferenced soil samples (soil samples with a GPS location) and environmental data to generate maps of specific soil properties (e.g., pH, soil texture) at a high spatial resolution. Digital soil maps describe soil variability at a high resolution and can predict soil change in three dimensions, allowing farmers and advisors to view important soil properties such as pH levels, total organic carbon content, cation exchange capacity, and soil texture at different depths. Initial digital soil maps have been developed for the Ottawa region using a pilot dataset to gather user feedback.

The long-term objective is to expand this effort to create comprehensive digital soil maps covering all of Ontario's agricultural lands. On the online dashboard, you can find links to download the technical geospatial Ottawa soil maps directly, you can view them online and print PDFs of the digital soil maps for your area of interest.

The Ontario Soils GeoHub will continue to be updated with more soil data as it becomes available. OMAFA invites you to explore the site, see what's available, and share your thoughts through the feedback form online. Your input helps shape this resource to better serve Ontario's farmers. 



CANZA Program Input Opportunities "Refreshing" for CCA

Submitted by James Wood, CANZA
Communications Specialist

Jonathan Zettler, CCA-ON 4R-NMS likes being asked for his input.

Zettler is part of a group of Certified Crop Advisors (CCA) helping improve the Million Acre Challenge Program, put together by the Canadian Alliance for Net-Zero Agri-Food, known to many as CANZA.

The program offers farmers cost-sharing and agronomic support through CCAs to adopt practical, proven practices that improve soil health, protect water quality, and reduce emissions.

Farmers who participate may also be able to explore future opportunities to market the environmental outcomes they generate, such as lower greenhouse gas emissions, improved water quality, and increased biodiversity.



Front row (Sustainable Food Lab): Elizabeth Reaves, Daniella Malin, Insha Momin / Back row (CCA representatives): Anne Verhallen, Deb Campbell, Jonathan Zettler

In February, Zettler took part in a program design workshop hosted by CANZA and the Sustainable Food Lab. The session gathered input from CCAs to help ensure the program works well for both farmers and advisors. Although the program has not yet gone through a full growing season, Zettler said he likes what he has seen so far.

"The process seems fairly easy, as an agronomist or an advisor, to help farmers access funding to make improvements on their farm," said Zettler.

He also appreciated the chance to have program design input at an early stage. "It was a bit refreshing to have a very open conversation on program design, and I'm looking forward to seeing the outcome," said Zettler.

"Typically, I would say that programs are built around a mandate, and the CCA or the agronomist doesn't typically have a seat at that table. I respect that, but that does mean sometimes when people (who are) in the field see things that could be addressed but are not able to (address them)".

According to Zettler, a quality program meets the needs of farmers, funders and CCAs, with all three meeting their goals. "If we can meet those three things, then to me that is a successful program," said Zettler.

Continued on page 8.

He is optimistic about the future of the program, and the CCA input opportunities. "I'm looking forward to seeing where the rest of this process takes us for this cropping year, and for the rest of the program design process."



More information on the Million Acre Challenge Program can be found at canza.ca or by scanning the QR code. 🌱

Canadian IPM Toolbox

The Canadian IPM Toolbox is a collaborative initiative, supported by provincial and national grower organizations, agronomists, scientists, as well as federal and provincial experts. Together, with the help of CropLife Canada, they are shaping a unified approach to IPM that respects farm diversity and long-term resilience.

Whether you manage greenhouse vegetables in Ontario, wheat fields in Alberta, or orchards in British Columbia, this platform connects you with the tools and resources that best fit your operation. Explore the Canadian IPM Toolbox to build a science-based pest management plan. Visit CanadianToolbox.ca or scan the QR code. 🌱



Nutrient Requirements of Field Crops

Submitted by Dr. Tarlok Singh Sahota, CCA

Even if we seed crops at the optimum times and use the best varieties for the area, maximum economic yields can't be obtained without adequate nutrient supply and management. Mineral nutrients are normally listed in the order of N, P, K, S...; however, I would recommend writing it in the order of S, N, P, K, ... because without meeting S requirements of crops proper response to N and other nutrients cannot be obtained.

Canola is one of the crops that requires ample supply of N and S. LUARS has been recommending 36 kg S (through 150 kg ammonium sulphate/ha that also supplies ~30 kg N/ha) and 180 kg N/ha to canola. Deducting 30 kg N/ha from ammonium sulphate, two thirds of (the remaining) N should come from urea (100 kg N/ha) and one third from ESN (50 kg N/ha). However, we have recorded response to N in canola at rates higher than 180 kg N/ha (240 or 270 kg N/ha) in the past. For example, last year maximum canola yield was obtained with seeding on May 12 and application of 270 kg N/ha (through ammonium sulphate, urea and ESN). For canola seeded on May 19, 180 kg N/ha was enough. Canola growers may try rates higher than 180 kg N/ha for earliest

seeded canola in small acreage (20-30 acres) and if it works better, they can adopt this practice.

Corn too requires N application at high rates (150-200 kg N/ha). Ammonium sulphate at 100 kg/ha should be applied to corn to supply 24 kg S/ha that would also supply ~20 kg N/ha. Rest of the N should come from urea and ESN in 2:1 ratio on N basis. By this application, corn canopy will retain its green colour from bottom to top till harvesting.

N supply to spring cereals could come from 50 kg ammonium sulphate/ha (= ~10 kg N/ha and 12 kg S/ha), 50 kg N/ha from urea and 20 kg N/ha from ESN. For winter cereals, apart from 50 kg ammonium sulphate/ha, 70 kg N/ha should be supplied through urea and 40 kg N/ha by ESN.

Soybean could get 100 kg ammonium sulphate/ha to supply 24 kg S/ha (and ~30 kg N/ha). In addition, urea at 15 kg N/ha should be applied to soybeans to meet its N requirements (45 kg N/ha).

For grasses, 140 kg N/ha is optimum; ~20 kg N/ha should come from 100 kg ammonium sulphate/ha to supply 24 kg S/ha, 80 kg N/ha from urea and 40 kg N/ha from ESN.

Alfalfa should get 150 kg ammonium sulphate to supply 36 kg S/ha (and ~30 kg N/ha). In addition, urea at 15 kg N/ha should be applied to alfalfa to meet its N requirements (45 kg N/ha).



P and K to all crops should be applied on soil test basis. Minimum of 20 ppm P and 120 ppm K is required in the soils. If these nutrients in soils are a bit higher than the minimum requirements, some P and K (at 20 kg P₂O₅ and 20 kg K₂O/ha) should be applied to all crops to maintain soil status of these nutrients. In case these nutrients are very high or are in excess in the soil, then their application could be omitted. Farmers may try banding P at seeding (up to 20-26 kg P₂O₅/ha) for its easy availability to field crops.

Micronutrients too should be applied based on the soil test. Often zinc application to corn and boron application to alfalfa and canola would be required. Please don't hesitate to contact me (tssahota@lakeheadu.ca), if need be.

This project is funded under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial-territorial-initiative. 🌱

Avian Influenza in Ontario

Submitted by Susan Fitzgerald

With the spring planting season soon to be underway, it is extremely important for everyone involved in Ontario agriculture to minimize the risk of introducing fecal material from wild birds into poultry and livestock operations. While the concern has previously been poultry farms, we now know cattle are also susceptible after 1,088 U.S. dairy herds across 19 states tested positive for the virus (none in Canada). However, the virus is not fatal for cattle and does not result in the same type of disease response from CFIA.

The Avian Influenza (AI) virus can survive for extended periods of time in the environment, particularly in cooler weather. It is important to realize that fertilizer, tilling and planting equipment will cover fields that may have been contaminated by wild birds. Water, wet soil and feces can become contaminated with AI and linger after the migrating flock has moved on. Soil and wild bird feces can stick to tires and undercarriages of vehicles, including field equipment and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), and be easily spread to other locations.

Follow these guidelines to help mitigate the risk of spreading the virus:

- Wash vehicles between farms that have livestock or poultry, paying close attention to the vehicle tires and wheel wells.
- For footwear, remove obvious mud and organic matter first and then scrub boots especially the bottom tread with a brush and hose. Ensure adequate contact time and concentrations for commercial disinfectants – be sure to read and follow the label!
- Clean all equipment used on farm that could become contaminated.
- Field equipment including ATVs should be kept away from poultry and livestock barns and from driveways servicing poultry and livestock premises. Avoid contaminating ground areas near barns housing animals.
- Avoid driving near barns that contain animals, if possible. If not, drive slowly to minimize dust.

These two are standing between you and better spraying decisions.



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- Avoid parking by exhaust fans and air inlets unless required as part of loading or unloading.
- If there is a visitor logbook at the farm, sign it. If there is no logbook, keep your own records identifying where you have been and when.
- Leave a note in a mailbox or parcel drop box to let the farm owner or manager know you were there.
- Prior to getting into your vehicle after a farm call, check to ensure your footwear is clean of organic material. 🌱



Crops, Cattle, and Collaboration: Why Rotational Grazing Matters for CCAs

Why Rotational Grazing?

The current policy framework, which goes until 2028, emphasizes climate-positive best management practices (BMPs), soil health, and carbon storage. To help achieve Canada's greenhouse gas reduction targets, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Agricultural Climate Solutions (ACS) program aims to help develop and implement sustainable agricultural technologies and practices. The On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF) is one stream of this program that promotes the adoption of climate positive BMPs, with an emphasis on cover cropping, nitrogen management and rotational grazing. Through the collaboration between OSCIA and the Ontario CCA Association, training opportunities in each BMP have been made available to Ontario CCAs.

The recent CCA Research Priorities survey has supported that CCAs are regularly advising in both cover crops and nitrogen management, with 62% and 67% of CCAs already recommending these BMPs, respectively. However, for a question related to rotational grazing, over 51% of respondents stated that the BMP does not apply to them. Given this gap, many CCAs may be questioning the relevance of training in this area.

Under the *Canadian Net-Zero Accountability Act*, Canada must reach net-zero emissions by 2050 (ECCC, 2022). Cattle are the largest source of GHG emissions in Canadian agriculture, not only from methane and manure, but also from feed production and transport emissions (Qualman, 2022). However, these emission levels do not account for carbon sequestration from grazing practices (Mehre et al., 2024).

Multi-paddock grazing (AMP), an intensive type of rotational grazing, significantly increases soil organic carbon sequestration compared to continuous grazing (CG) (Mehre et al., 2024). When accounting for carbon sequestration in GHG emissions from beef production, the estimated emissions for AMP grazing can be reduced by up to 65%, and CG up to 42% (Mehre et al., 2024). Implementation of rotational grazing BMPs is a step towards Canada's net-zero goal.

The Collaborative Approach

While CCAs are highly respected advisors to their clients, the increased emphasis on rotational grazing has highlighted a technical gap in developing these specialized plans. Creating a successful grazing strategy often requires a multi-disciplinary approach which includes both crop knowledge and livestock expertise.

For those that attended the CCA conference and heard the presentation from Deb Campbell and Simon Gladwell, the emphasis on collaboration was clear. Instead of meeting with farmers individually, all consultants and advisors that are contributing to that farm should be working together. For mixed

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crop and livestock operations, this means that the crop advisor is working in partnership with an animal nutritionist.

In February, the Ontario CCA Association hosted two webinars related to rotational grazing. The first was an introduction to rotational grazing and pasture crop production with OMAFA Forage and Grazing Specialist Christine O'Reilly. The second focused on the connection between forage quality and animal health, with ruminant nutritionist Kristen Ritson-Bennet. These webinars echoed the sentiment that the agronomist, the nutritionist, and the producer all bring different expertise and perspectives to the table.

O'Reilly stated that when it comes to grazing, you cannot separate crop and livestock production. Feed is the most expensive part of livestock production, and a well-managed pasture is the cheapest source of feed. While agronomists focus on maximizing yield, crop rotations, pest pressures, and soil tests, nutritionists focus on reproduction rates, milk yield, and health markers.

Ritson-Bennet described how nutrient imbalances can impact animal health. For example, excess potassium can impact magnesium absorption, excess phosphorus interferes with calcium, and sulphur toxicity can induce abnormal neurological symptoms. Agronomists aren't expected to be nutritionists, but by working together, you can find common goals. Collaboration can inform forage seed selection, manage mineral levels, and achieve optimal protein balance while reducing risks like nitrates or ergot.


A New Opportunity for CCAs

To receive OFCAF funding for cover cropping and nitrogen management, applicants must have a letter of support from a

CCA or P.Ag. Rotational grazing is different; there is currently no designated professional to sign off on plans.

In partnership with OSCIA, OMAFA, and the Ontario Forage Council, Ontario CCA has been working on a micro-credential badge available to CCAs and P.Ags for completing training on rotational grazing.

This badge signifies that an advisor has gone beyond typical training to gain the specific expertise required for rotational grazing plans. By understanding the critical link between forage quality and animal health, advisors build a stronger professional toolkit to bring to the table when working alongside producers and nutritionists.

The official release of details and requirements for the badge is expected to be announced by June 2026. Some previously recorded webinars will be included in the training, and CCAs are welcome to watch them in advance to get a head start on training. The requirements will include a combination of virtual and in-person training. If you are interested in hearing more about this initiative, or accessing recorded webinars please contact Erin at the CCA office, erin.tfio@bellnet.ca 

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Mehre, J., Schneider, K., Jayasundara, S., Gillespie, A., & Wagner-Riddle, C. (2024). Adaptive multi-paddock grazing increases soil carbon stocks and decreases the carbon footprint of beef production in Ontario, Canada. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 371, 123011.

Qualman, D. (2022). National Farmers Union. *Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Canada: A New, Comprehensive Assessment*

Funded under Agricultural Climate Solutions (ACS) – On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF) by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada

Industry Updates

Conservation Ontario

Submitted by Tatianna Lozier

Authorities: On March 10, 2026, the Province announced that Ontario's 36 existing conservation authorities would be consolidated into nine larger regional Conservation Authorities, legislation is expected to follow, with consolidation targeted for early 2027. Conservation Authority programs and services currently underway will continue as normal.

Stewardship Project Funding: Conservation Ontario is delivering the Marginal Lands Initiative, a program funded by a \$12 million investment over four years from the governments of Canada and Ontario through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP).

Lake Erie Conservation Authorities are entering year three delivering cost-share projects that support phosphorus reduction projects. There is funding available for cover crops, reduced tillage, subsurface phosphorus applications, soil sampling, crop nutrient planning, and other BMPs. Program information can be found on the joint website: phosphorusstewardship.ca

Conservation Authorities continue to deliver municipally funded Clean Water Programs that support a variety of stewardship projects in Elgin, Oxford, Brant, Wellington, Waterloo, Haldimand, Grey, Dufferin, City of Ottawa, Peel, York, Durham and Dufferin Region.

Conservation Award: Derrick Leclair (CCA) was awarded the Conservation Award at the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority AGM on February 22nd. Derrick has been a driving force behind the success of the Sydenham Phosphorus Reduction Initiative in the southern portion of the St. Clair Region watershed. Derrick has singlehandedly brought in 63% of the 4R Nutrient Management Services landowners and 56% of the Alternative Phosphorus Application Practices landowners this year. Across both categories, Derrick has impacted nearly 2,500 acres, distributing nearly \$50K of funding to farmers.

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness

Submitted by Christine Brown

- Two new staff are coming on board, including an edible bean/canola specialist and a soil management specialist for field crops.
- The Ontario Ag conferences all took place over the winter. The recordings were available until March 31st.
- Manure Monday webinars were added to online content for SWAC.
- The Crop Team has put together a Q&A booklet on common questions, with detailed answers and resources for more information.

- Manure Monday webinars were held during the winter. There were 460 registrations, 100-170 people online with participation from Canada, USA, and Europe. The recordings are available online.
- Breakfast meetings started on April 7th in Ridgetown. CEUs for these events were offered.
- The Ridgetown breakfast meeting will be both in-person and virtual. Northern Ontario will only be online. The rest will only be in person.
- This is the final year for SHAP field projects, looking at soil tests. Looking at going to Ontario soil management committee with results and proposing soil health tests that can be done by a lab with a specific procedure. Some results should be included in AgriSuite.
- A Committee with GFO and other organizations is looking at national standards for regenerative agriculture. They will be making sure cost-share programs and marketing efforts are following the same standards with consideration for regional differences. There should be a draft in place by the fall looking for comments in the winter.

Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

Submitted by Brady Jones and Abigail Wiesner

The Farmland Health Check-up has officially expanded province wide. Since the expansion, 14 new advisors have completed certification. Distribution of registered Advisors is progressing with a number of individuals becoming certified from eastern Ontario. OSCIA encourages interested Advisors in central and northern Ontario to seek certification as farmers interested in the FHCU need delivery agents in these areas. Since expansion, over three dozen assessments have been completed with 18 of these being completed in areas not previously covered by the program. Advisors have reached out to let OSCIA know that the current promotion via email and social media has sparked interest in completing the assessment amongst farmers.

OSCIA will be providing cost-share and research support to selected producers across Ontario to assess the agronomic and environmental impact of biochar as a soil amendment and biological inoculants for nitrogen fixation. The program will run from 2026 through to 2028 and aims to expand Ontario's research and development in the space of innovative practices.

Programs update:

- The most recent intake occurred February 24, 2025. Interest was extremely high; the intake reached full capacity within hours after opening, the same day.
- All submitted applications are now in the review process.
 - Applicants will be contacted directly if additional information is needed.
 - Once reviews are complete, decision letters will be emailed directly to applicants.

- Included in the current OFCAF application review process, the designation of Certified Crop Advisor signatories noted on Letters of Support or related plans are being confirmed with the Ontario Certified Crop Advisors Association. Similarly Professional Agrologists (P.Ag.) are being confirmed with the Ontario Institute of Agrologists.

The OFCAF intake might have closed, but there's still opportunity to engage with producers on best management practices (BMPs) this growing season! OSCIA is developing a series of farmer and advisor case studies that will be shared in ag publications, digital ads and on social media. Please reach out to Abbie Wiesner (awiesner@ontariosoilcrop.org) if you'd like to share your journey advising on or implementing cover cropping, nutrient management or rotational grazing BMP's.

Grain Farmers of Ontario

Submitted by Marty Vermey

- GFO March Classic was held March 24, 2026 at the Niagara Falls Convention Centre.

2025 Research Highlights

- Research Investments and Co-Funding
 - \$1.85 million invested in research
 - 46 active research projects
 - In 2025, GFO emphasized three specific topic areas:
 - Improving 4R nutrient stewardship practices
 - Advancing integrated weed, disease and insect pest management
 - Optimizing crop residue management
- Breeding and Genetics
 - GFO is working nationally and provincially to better understand gaps in breeding capacity and to advocate for stable public investment, especially where the private sector isn't as active.
 - GFO conducted a landscape scan, summarizing crop outlooks and mapping both public and private breeding capacity to understand where efforts in germplasm and variety development are being placed and how GFO can best support breeding efforts for farmers.
- Farmer-Researcher Connect (FRC)
 - New GFO initiative launched in 2025, aimed at connecting researchers and farmers interested in on-farm research.
 - FRC offers a network of farmers available to researchers who are interested in exploring farmer participation in research projects. Currently, GFO is focusing FRC on supporting projects funded by GFO.
 - More details about FRC can be found at www.gfo.ca/research
- Researcher mentorship program
 - New initiative being piloted that aims to better acquaint researchers with grain farming and the grains sector in Ontario. Program partners new researchers with experienced farmers.
 - The 2025 mentorship researcher was Dr. Adrian Correndo (U of G).

- There are two new researcher/farmer pairings in 2026.

- University of Guelph Professorships
 - Ontario Bean Growers Professorship in Weed Science (Ridgetown)
 - Dr. Isabelle Aicklen was hired in 2025, filling a research gap left when Peter Sikkema retired, and ensures weed science capacity exists to support Ontario's grain farmers.

Agronomy Highlights

- Great Lakes YEN 2025
 - 103 registered participants in Ontario in 2025
 - 182.7 bu/ac was the 2025 highest yield, achieved by Nick Suwyn from Wayland, MI
 - 2nd highest yield was 170.1 bu/ac Wayne Metzger, Proton Station, ON
- Great Lakes YEN 2026
 - Wheat program continues in 2026 with 85 registered participants
- Crop Progress Report
 - Wondering what's happening in the province of Ontario as far as crop planting and harvest progress? GFO will be reporting weekly crop progress updates by district with a summary of a weighted provincial average: <https://gfo.ca/field-progress/>
 - Crops reported on: Corn, soybeans, winter wheat and spring cereals

Continued on page 14.

**Grow With Us:
Join the Canadian Society of Agronomy**

Membership is open to:

- anyone with an interest in agronomy

Benefits of membership:

- Networking
- Newsletters
- Job advertisements
- Free access to Canadian Journal of Plant Science
- Discounted conference registration fees
- Gain CEU credits

Registration is now open for the CSA/CSSS Conference June 21-25, 2026 University of Guelph

2025-26 Member Registration opens on October 1.
Visit agronomycanada.com to join!

**Canadian Society of Agronomy
La Société Canadienne d'Agromonie**

- Cover Crop Survey
 - Five years after the previous survey, GFO is following up to survey what changes have occurred in Ontario: <https://gfo.ca/cover-crop-survey/>
 - This year, a separate survey for crop advisors is available in addition to the Farmer survey.
 - Survey is supported by the Ontario Cover Crop Working Group, research conducted by Dr. Yvonne Lawley and Callum Morrison.
- Ontario Corn Agronomy Network (OCAN)
 - Pilot project for 2026
 - Small group of Ontario corn farmers sharing their cropping practices with other farmers to create a network of corn learning

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Submitted by Eric Page

As part of the Government of Canada's Comprehensive Expenditure Review and Budget 2025, Agriculture and Agri Food Canada (AAFC) is adjusting its programs and operations to ensure long term financial sustainability while maintaining a strong focus on applied research that supports the agriculture and agri food sector. These changes include streamlining internal services, reducing overhead, and concentrating science investments in areas with the greatest benefit to producers and industry.

As part of this realignment, the number of AAFC research and development centres will be reduced from 20 to 17, including the closure of the Guelph (ON), Québec City (QC), and Lacombe (AB) centres, along with several smaller satellite research farms. AAFC will also be winding down the Agriculture Climate Solutions Living Labs program, although all existing Living Lab agreements will continue through their scheduled end dates. Importantly, statutory programs, provincial transfers, and initiatives under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership are not affected. AAFC remains Canada's largest agricultural research organization and will continue to work closely with producers, industry, provinces, and academia to deliver relevant, high impact research in support of productivity, sustainability, and innovation. 🌱



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Don't Miss CCA Updates!

Don't miss out on updates from the CCA office! Make sure your contact information is up to date.

Update your contact information by logging in to certifiedcropadvisor.org and clicking on "My Account". The e-mail address you use to login is the one that the ICCA adds to the ON-CCA listserv, "Circles".

Not receiving CCA e-mails? Make sure to check your spam folder, as listserv e-mails are sometimes flagged. If you can't find them there, contact Daina at the CCA office office.tfio@bellnet.ca. 🌱

Keep the Conversation Going – Ontario CCA WhatsApp Group

We are excited to launch the Ontario CCA WhatsApp Group, a new initiative led by CCA Marketing Committee Chair, Meagan Ioi. This group provides a dedicated space for CCAs to connect, share real-time field observations, and troubleshoot agronomic challenges. To join the conversation, scan the QR code. 🌱



DID YOU KNOW?

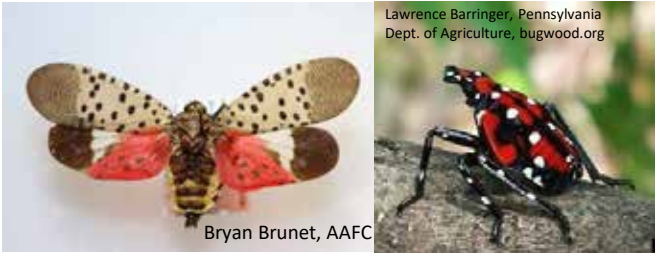
When rain hits the ground, it ejects tiny aerosols containing geosmin, a metabolic byproduct of *actinomyces* bacteria. This produces the distinct earthy scent called petrichor. Humans are incredibly sensitive to this compound and can detect it at concentrations as low as five parts per trillion!



Priority Pest Insects to Report ONTARIO and QUEBEC



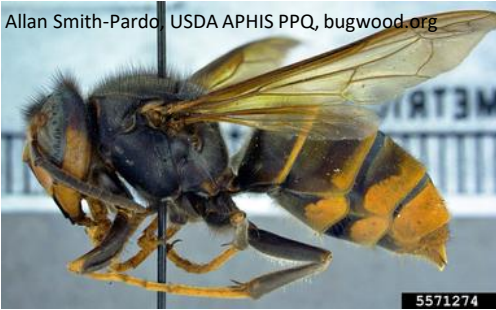
Use the QR CODE to report all observations, including species **regulated by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)**.



Spotted lanternfly, *Lycorma delicatula*
Hosts: Tree of heaven, grapevine, various (fruit) trees and shrubs
Not present in Canada **CFIA REGULATED**



Yellow-spotted stink bug, *Erthesina fullo*
Hosts: Fruits, vegetables, and ornamental plants
Not present in Canada



Yellow-legged hornet, *Vespa velutina*
Threat to honeybee hives
Not present in Canada



Asian long-horned beetle, *Anoplophora glabripennis*
Hosts: Deciduous trees
Not present in Canada **CFIA REGULATED**



Allium leafminer, *Phytomyza gymnostoma*
Hosts: Garlic, onion, leek, chives
Not present in Canada **CFIA REGULATED**



European cherry fruit fly, *Rhagoletis cerasi*
Hosts: Cherry varieties and wild honeysuckle
Limited distribution in ON and southern QC
CFIA REGULATED



V1 2025



Priority Pest Insects to Report ONTARIO and QUEBEC



Use the QR CODE to report all observations, including species **regulated by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA).**

Szabolcs Sáfián, University of West Hungary, Bugwood.org



Box tree moth, *Cydalima perspectalis*
Hosts: Boxwood shrubs (*Buxus* spp.)
Present in ON; limited distribution in QC
CFIA REGULATED



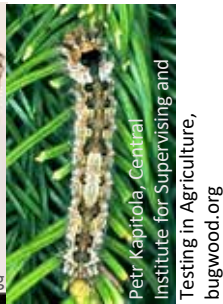
David Mohn, Critters Page, bugwood.org



Rosy tussock moth, *Lymantria mathura*
Hosts: Oak, beech, fruit trees
Not present in Canada
CFIA REGULATED



Pest and Diseases Image Library, Bugwood.org



Petr Kapitola, Central Institute for Supervising and Testing in Agriculture, bugwood.org

Nun moth, *Lymantria monacha*
Hosts: Mainly coniferous trees
Not present in Canada **CFIA REGULATED**



Metin GULESCI, Leaf Tobacco, bugwood.org



Tomato leafminer, *Tuta (Phthorimaea) absoluta*
Hosts: Tomato, other Solanaceae
Not present in Canada **CFIA REGULATED**

Gyorgy Csoka, Hungary Forest Research Institute, bugwood.org



Oak Tortrix, *Tortrix viridana*
Hosts: Hardwood trees and shrubs
Not present in Canada

Victoria Derry, Natural Resources Canada



Bruce Watt, University of Maine, Bugwood.org



Hemlock woolly adelgid, *Adelges tsugae*
Hosts: Hemlock (*Tsuga* spp.)
Limited distribution in ON; not present in QC
CFIA REGULATED



V1 2025