



Grape Growers of ONTARIO

Special Edition Newsletter - Volume 2 - February 2010

...Dedicated to the Success of Ontario's Grape Growers

Important Program Updates

Food Safety and Traceability Initiative - Retroactivity

We have been advised that growers can apply for funding for costs incurred retroactive to April 1, 2009. This is good news as many growers who applied in 2009 were not accepted as the program ran out of funding. Many of these growers went ahead with their projects assuming that they would qualify. Remember your application still has to be approved regardless. More information on page 2.

Orchard & Vineyard Transition Program

OMAFRA has advised that the federal-provincial Orchard and Vineyard Transition Program (OVTP) is receiving an additional \$2 million from the Province to help apple, tender fruit and grape growers remove unwanted trees and vines. They note that applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis, so growers are encouraged to apply early. Growers have until March 31, 2010 to apply. Growers who are accepted must complete their tree/vine removals and contact Agricorp by November 30, 2010. More information on pages 3 and 4.

Agri-Flexibility Program

The Board of Directors has not received a reply from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) regarding the application to the Agri-Flexibility Program. Despite our numerous attempts and expressions of concern regarding timing and the need for growers to start their projects in order to have them completed in time for the 2010 season, AAFC has still not made a decision. Again, the good news is that they have not rejected our proposal. We will continue to do all we can to successfully resolve this issue.

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GGO Services

- Grape Research, Pricing & Promotion
- Grape Inspection
- Government & Industry Relations
- Government Lobbying
- Government Policies & Regulations
- Farm Labour Legislation & Program
- Chemical Registration
- Nutrient Management
- Crop Insurance Requirements
- KCMS Code-A-Phone
- Business Risk Management (CAIS & SDRM)
- Weather INnovations Incorporated (WIN)

Food Safety and Traceability Initiative

The government (Ontario and Canada) has now announced phase two of this initiative which is set to start on March 1, 2010. Set out below is a quick summary of the 2010 program.

What's New for 2010?

- First, what's not new - Eligible costs which were included in the 2009 program will again be eligible in 2010.
- Increased cost-share funding maximum of \$25,000, with a cap of \$15,000 for either food safety or traceability expenditures to encourage the adoption of both food safety and traceability projects.
- The cost share level has been reduced to 50% (from 75%) to provide for increased participation (remember the program ran out of funds very quickly in 2009).
- Premises identification is a program eligibility requirement. (This is a free process and the ID number can be obtained through OnTrace at 1-888-388-7223 or www.ontraceagrifood.com/idForm.php)

Workshops

Workshop **attendance is also an eligibility requirement** for Option 1 projects. If you attended a workshop in 2009 and received a certificate, you **do not** need to attend again. The certificate is good for the life of the program (2009 - 2012). Workshops will be held across the province.

February 9, Mississauga
February 10, Vineland
February 16, Renfrew
February 17, Kempville

February 19, Guelph - with WebEx
February 22, Mount Forest
February 23, Lindsay
February 24, Belleville

For more information and/or to pre-register call toll free 1-888-479-3931

Applications will be accepted after 9:00 a.m., March 1, 2010

If you are planning on applying, do so a.s.a.p. and submit your application as set out above. Remember, the program ran out of funding very early in 2009. Don't miss out.

- Applications and guidelines are available on line at www.ontario.ca/foodsafety
- Applications may be submitted:
 - ✓ Online at www.ontario.ca/foodsafety
 - ✓ By email to FST.omafra@ontario.ca
 - ✓ By fax at (519)825-3398
 - ✓ In hard copy (by mail or hand delivered) to:

Food Safety and Traceability Initiative
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs
1 Stone Road West, 4th Floor
Guelph, Ontario N1G 4Y2

Please find program guidelines enclosed for the Food Safety and Traceability Initiative.

News Release

February 3, 2010

Increasing Support For Fruit Growers

McGuinty Government Helping Remove Unproductive Vines And Trees

More fruit growers will receive assistance to remove unproductive or uneconomic vines and trees from their farms.

The federal-provincial Orchard and Vineyard Transition Program (OVTP) is receiving an additional \$2 million from the Province to help grape, apple, and tender fruit producers adapt to industry pressures and changing markets. Eligible participants receive \$1,618.74 per acre toward their orchard and/or vineyard stock removal and disposal costs.

Applications are being processed on a first come, first served basis. The final application deadline is now **March 31, 2010** and growers must complete removals by November 30, 2010.

QUOTES

"We recognize that grape, apple and tender fruit growers had a particularly challenging year, and that it is important to help as many of them as possible to maintain competitiveness in the industry."

— Carol Mitchell, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

"Our government knows that fruit growers are a key part of Ontario's economy, especially as we begin to see signs of economic recovery in Canada. We're pleased to see that this program continues to help growers adapt to new market realities and seize opportunities that will boost their business for the future."

— Gerry Ritz, Federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food

QUICK FACTS

- The federal government has already contributed \$22.3 million to the OVTP including about \$1 million to develop regional industry strategic plans.
- The Ontario government is also supporting fruit growers in several other ways, including \$25 million for the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre.
- OVTP applications totaling approximately \$18.7 million have been received so far.

The news release can be viewed at:

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/infores/releases/2010/020310.htm>

Orchard and Vineyard Transition Program (OVTP)

The Canada-Ontario Orchards and Vineyards Transition Program is a joint federal and provincial program to help grape, apple, and tender fruit producers adapt to industry pressures and changing markets. Under the program, eligible participants will receive \$1,618.74 per eligible acre towards their orchard and/or vineyard stock removal and disposal costs, up to a maximum of \$800,000 over the lifetime of the program.

To apply, you may submit an application form any time and no later than March 31, 2010. To be eligible for funding, you must complete your removal by the date shown on your Notice of Acceptance. If your application is accepted after November 30, 2009, you must complete your removal and contact Agricorp by November 30, 2010.

Qualifying Crops

The following crops are eligible under the program: apples (all), grapes (all), nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, apricots, and cherries (sour and sweet).

To qualify under the program applicants must:

- Be producers or landlords with a farmed area of at least 1.236 acres of qualifying crops.
- Operate a commercial enterprise located in Ontario.
- Grow eligible crops for harvest in the current growing season; or
- Have harvested eligible crops in the growing season prior to the plant removal (except in cases where producers experienced documented crop failures beyond their control).
- Commit to keep the land in agriculture or available for agriculture for a period of five years.

Past Removals

Orchard and/or vineyard stock removed on or after October 25, 2007 may be eligible for payments if all other program requirements are met. Agricorp will require proof of the date that removal work was started, and proof of the area of the plant removal project. Such proof could include custom work receipts, Production Insurance records, photographs, and other documentary or physical evidence. Agricorp will determine acceptable forms of proof.

Application Process

Interested producers must complete and submit an application form to Agricorp. Agricorp will determine if the application meets program criteria. A site visit by an Agricorp representative and GPS mapping of the qualifying sites may be required. Agricorp will notify producers in writing of the status of their application.

Applicants should not proceed with vine or tree cutting until they receive written notice of acceptance from Agricorp. The written notice of acceptance will indicate the deadline to complete the accepted plant removal project. To maintain eligibility, a producer or landlord must finish their plant removal project by the deadline on their notice of acceptance. If the removal project is not finished by the date stipulated, a new application form will be required to participate in the program.

Priority List

Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis subject to the annual availability of funds. If the available funding for a given year is reached, Agricorp will place qualifying applicants on a priority list for the next program year.

Payments

Payments will only be issued upon the completion and inspection of an accepted plant removal project to the satisfaction of Agricorp. Agricorp may recover debts to the governments of Canada or Ontario from payments to be made under the OVTP.

For full program details and to apply please visit: <http://www.agricorp.com/en-ca/programs/ovtp/>