



# Native Agri Update

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

*IAPO's 30th Anniversary  
1984 - 2014*

2014 marks IAPO's 30<sup>th</sup> year! For those around since inception, the time has passed quickly with numerous successes advancing First Nations farming and agricultural economic development.

Since inception, IAPO's goal has been to support agricultural economic development by providing agricultural financing, business advisory and extension services, as well as access to governmental agricultural programs.

#### Mission Statement

*"To cultivate sustainable economic growth of Ontario First Nations people for seven generations through implementation of agricultural related programs."*

IAPO's start can be tracked back to the efforts of a few dedicated individuals from the London District. Working since 1976 as the London District Agricultural Committee, the group was looking to create an agriculture development program emulating the success of the Western Canadian Indian Program. From this modest start, interest and participation grew to include others from across Ontario and in 1981, the Ontario Indian Agricultural Committee was created comprised of members from six districts: Bruce, London, Brantford, Peterborough, Sudbury and Fort Frances. By the end of 1981, a proposal was submitted to Indian Affairs supporting the creation of the Ontario Indian Agriculture Program. After many months of work, in 1984 the Indian Agricultural Program of Ontario was created. Funding eventually followed and by 1986, IAPO provided its first farm loan.

While there have been many successes since 1984, there have also been numerous challenges for both IAPO and the First Na-

tions farming sector. The contributions of the Board of Directors, both current and past, have been instrumental in guiding IAPO through the challenges and onward to success. The Directors, elected from districts across the province, bring local perspectives and expertise guiding IAPO and shaping programs and services. Under the direction of the Board, IAPO has had the benefit of a tireless, extremely dedicated staff working to deliver programs and supporting First Nations farmers. While the contributions of the Board and staff have been invaluable, nothing would have been possible without the support of our members, First Nations farmers.

#### Thank You to Our Members

Agriculture and farming is a challenging business environment. First Nations farmers, with a blend of perseverance, a work ethic like no other, business insight and a love of the land overcome the challenges. Their success and contributions extends beyond the farm, supporting their local communities, First Nations agriculture and IAPO. For their hard work and contributions, we are sincerely thankful.

Much has been accomplished in the first thirty years, but there is still an opportunity to do much more. Just as in 1984, many communities have significant agricultural resources that are idle or under utilized. As well, barriers to mainstream financing still exist and the need for business advisory and agricultural extension services grows, as does food insecurity. Lastly, there is a real need to create meaningful economic opportunities, particularly for youth in rural Ontario. I'm sure the next thirty years is going to be as challenging and rewarding as the first.

*JH*

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# Agribusiness

## ABOUT YOUR FARM PLAN

*Adapted from: Pride Seeds, Ken Currah, CCA-ON*

To manage a farm well requires careful planning. You should plan both the physical development of the farm property, as well as the development of the farm business. A farm plan is your guide to success. Some of the things, which may need to be planned for, include:

- Upgrading facilities (eg. Introducing new technology, replacing or improving worn out or damaged facilities or equipment)
- Expansion or downsizing of operations
- Changing direction (eg. Moving from one type of livestock to another, changing the crop rotation or diversification)
- Major maintenance (of property, buildings or equipment)
- Contingencies in case of anything going wrong (eg. economic downturn, drought, illness).

Many producers will have their production plans for 2014 well underway. Seed orders are usually placed well before year-end and by now commitments to renew lease agreements are in place. Year-end inventories have been taken and documented. Your plan helps determine the amount of cash required to put the plan in place so financial reviews will need to happen soon. The farm plan is an important document that needs to reflect past successes and failures and yet build upon new opportunities. Therefore, what are some of the basics to consider as you develop the 2014 farm plan?

**Never Waiver in your Belief that your 2013 Farm Plan was the Best Plan for your Operation.** Use your experiences from 2013 and previous years to develop your 2014 plan. However, you have to stop short of managing with hindsight. Leave the tail chasing to the dogs. If 2013 was a financial disaster then major changes may be unavoidable. Increasing farm size is not a guarantee to financial success or a way to repay carried over debt. Remember that often no two years are alike so a wholesale farm makeover because of one poor year is often not advisable. On the other hand, if the past year was a continuation of a negative trend then that has to be addressed. Remember the 2013 farm plan was the best you could put together at that time.

**Plan for Averages** - You cannot predict the weather, disease, or the cost of repairs. Chances are that an over optimistic farm plan will not be achieved. Plan for average yields, average number of calves weaned per cow, and average prices. Therefore, plan for an average start date to spring planting, and average rainfall and corn heat unit accumulation. Once spring arrives, it is time to manage according to the weather. An early start to planting creates an opportunity to be an aggressive manager and pursue more yield potential (using

longer-day hybrids, more aggressive fertilization, and by switching a few acres from one crop to another). Likewise, if the season is delayed, changes to the plan may have to be made to manage cropping risk, particularly when it comes to maturity selection of your corn hybrid choices. A short hay crop may leave the operation short of feed causing adjustments to the livestock inventory through aggressive culling of cows or sales of calves as opposed to yearlings. The farm plan should be viable if the average is achieved.

**Don't Chase the Markets** - The temptation is to develop the 2014 farm plan according to today's crop prices or base the livestock strategy on last year's calf prices. Remember, today's price only means something if you sell into it. Experience shows that farmers gain more long-term success by sticking to proper crop rotation and using a sound risk management plan, than by swinging acres in accordance with today's prices. If you're chasing, that means you are behind. The farm plan needs to be based as much as possible on what lies ahead. Keep yourself informed about the market environment into which your farm products will be sold. Farm plans are successful when accompanied by a sound marketing plan.

**Production is the Top Profitability Driver** - Yes, production is the key. Production must not be jeopardized by increasing the number of acres farmed, the number of cows in the barn or the number of trees tapped. Production is often sacrificed by an impatient entrepreneur who succumbs to rapid growth in search of a perceived golden reward. Every change to the farm plan should be judged on its perceived effect on production. For example, reduced yields rarely result in increased profitability. Paring back crop management by shaving input costs (fertilizer, fungicide, etc.) jeopardizes whole-farm yield potential.

**Details, Details, Details** - Success of the farm plan may rest in the detail. Sound planners do not forget the details. Successful farmers keep yearly records of all facets of their business. They have soil test records or herd production records. Their weather records will show when it rained and the date of first frost. Details about the farm's past performance, allow for accurate farm plan development for the future. How thorough were your records for 2013? It is important to have the right variety growing in the right field. The herd sire must be properly matched to the cows in the herd barn. Every detail you have at your fingertips to help develop the farm plan for 2014 will serve to make that plan achievable. By using your records and your information, the farm plan becomes your plan.

**Stick to the Plan** - The 2014 farm plan is now complete. There may be small changes as you proceed through 2014, concentrate on timely plan delivery, keep accurate records for another year and you will ultimately be the judge of the success of your 2014 farm plan. Good luck and good planning!

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# Market



## BEEF MARKET

Prices are courtesy of the Beef Farmers of Ontario Weekly Market Information Report for the week ending Jan. 9, 2014.

All prices are up with rail grade prices continuing to set records!

Rail grade prices have reached \$229/cwt. This is \$19.75 stronger than the same time last year.

Fed steers and heifers are up \$17 and \$5 respectively.

Cull cows have reached an average of \$77.42 just shy of the record of \$77.96 set in 2012. This is \$15/cwt above last year. There were 1,536 fewer cows sold this week compared to 2013. Cull bulls are following the trend with an increase of \$12.

Stocker steers are up \$5 to \$7 depending on weight category, heifers \$1 to \$7.

Some of the price increase is due to reduced numbers of cattle reaching market because of winter weather. Prices however pose a dilemma for the cow-calf producer in particular. Does one take advantage of strong prices and send all heifers to market or retain some for herd replacement and/or herd expansion?

This is a good time to pregnancy check cows and send open ones to market. For example, a 1,350 lb. cow will realize on average \$1,039 before trucking and sale barn costs. This helps cover the lost income from sale of a potential replace-

Category	Price Range \$	Ave Price	Top Price	Change last month
Rail Steers	218-229			+12
Fed steers	128-144	137	159	+17
Fed heifers	123-137	131	147	+5
Cows	63-90	77	118	+15
Bulls	82-103	91	119	+12
Stocker steers				
700 – 799	127-166	155	179	+5
600 – 699	144-178	165	192	+7
500 – 599	143-189	172	210	+9
Stocker heifers				
700 – 799	126-142	138	163	+1
600 – 699	126-148	140	193	+4
500 – 599	133-159	149	177	+7

All prices are on a hundred pound basis (cwt)

ment heifer. To take advantage of current and projected strong prices keep all cows carrying a calf. Maybe sell that wild one!

We are just barely starting the expansion phase, which should run for about five years. Keep back heifers for expansion if you are in it for the long term.

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## CROP MARKET

Excerpts taken from Jan. 15th, 2014 Grain Market Commentary by Todd Austin, GFO

### CORN:

The January 10 USDA report recalculated the US corn yield to be 158.8 bushels per acre, down from December's report of 160.4 bushels per acre. The trade had been anticipating a higher average yield as evident from falling futures. Ending stocks were recalculated to be 1.63 billion bushels, which is still a very comfortable carryout.

New crop expectations are lower corn acreage than in 2013, as the market waits for new crop acreage estimates over the next couple of months.

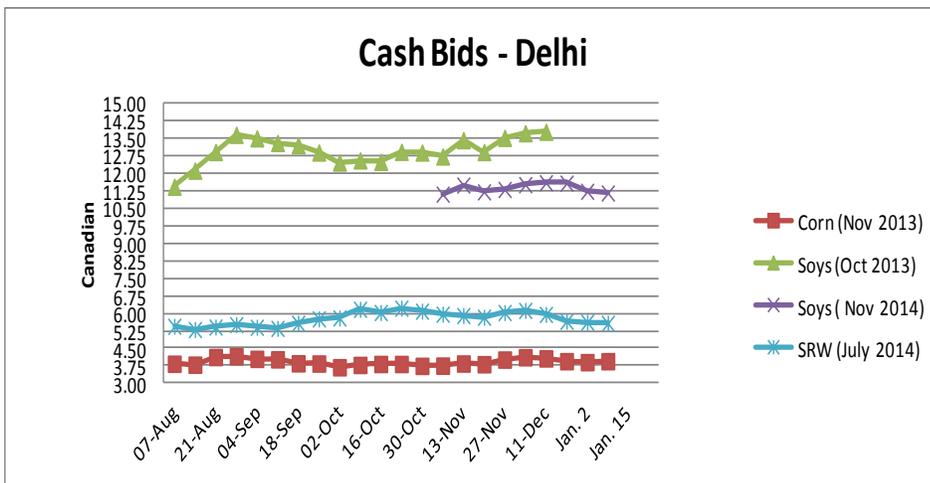
### SOYBEANS:

The USDA continues to show tight carryout soybean stocks in the US. Mar-

kets continue to indicate an immediate need for soybeans, as seen in the inverse spreads between nearby futures months and further out futures months. This has kept the soybean futures stronger relative to falling corn values.

### WHEAT:

The US wheat supply remains comfortable again this year. However, carry out has been slowly decreasing year after year, as acreage shifts from wheat to either corn or soybeans.



# Livestock Information

## BALE GRAZING BENEFITS

A number of our cowherds are wintered on some type of bale grazing system.

With bale grazing, ideally bales are placed in a pasture field in random rows late in the year, after the ground is frozen. The field is often fenced with electric wire. A cross wire is moved regularly allowing the cows access to a few bales at a time. The herd might be allowed 10-12 bales for five days. The wire is moved, allowing five more days of feeding. In other versions of bale grazing, a farmer places enough bales for a month or two. Others put out enough for three to five days. The key is to move bales around the field exposing all areas to the spreading of manure by the herd and organic matter left over from the bales. Certainly the longer the time between tractor start-ups the less fuel burned.

Some important benefits of bale grazing:

- Less labour - the herd does not need to be fed daily
- It is not necessary to start a tractor to do the feeding daily
- No manure handling – spread by the cows
- Spring forage growth is rejuvenated
- No bedding required
- Cows are healthier compared to being more confined
- There is a reduction in overall wintering cost.

Research at the Western Beef Development Centre (WBDC) in Saskatchewan shows that there is an added benefit. At a recent meeting of Wiky farmers, we viewed a ten minute video on their results.

WBDC looked at barnyard winter-feeding with manure pile and mechanical spreading, compared with bale grazing and natural spreading.



Jim Naokwegijig's cowherd

WBDC considered the animal's body weight, condition score, and were found to be similar under both situations.

They compared the soil nutrient content from manure piled in the barnyard from dry lot wintering and spread mechanically, to the cowherds spreading it themselves during bale grazing. Soil analysis was done for both situations and compared to a control sample taken the fall before wintering. While there was an increase in soil nutrient content in both scenarios, it was discovered that the nitrogen content in the soil was 2.5 times greater where cows bale grazed and spread the manure compared to mechanically spreading from a manure pile. Nitrogen in manure piles evaporated into the air or leached out by the time it was spread.

Researchers also measured forage growth following manure

spreading. Pasture production on bale grazing sites was 40% higher than sites spread with manure from dry lot wintering.

Since grass responds more dramatically to higher nitrogen levels than alfalfa or clovers, it is more advantageous to bale graze grass pastures or hay fields. The video can be seen at:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4j5ZoujysaA&feature=player\\_detailpage](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4j5ZoujysaA&feature=player_detailpage).

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## LOOKING FORWARD

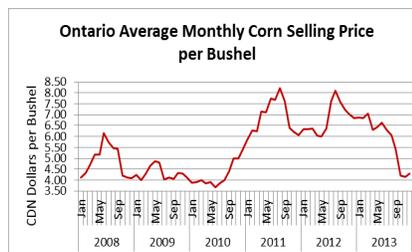
Brian Perillat at CanFax has some interesting comments on the beef industry in 2014; considering that herd expansion in Canada is not evident to date in spite of the fact conditions seem to encourage cowherd growth.

In early 2013, beef prices were lower than expected and more uncertainty developed with Country of Origin Labelling (COOL) legislation in the U.S. As a result, there were U.S. processing plant closures, reducing kill capacity and packer demand. The price basis between Canadian cattle and American cattle weakened. This resulted in a lack of confidence in the industry from beef farmers. Also, older farmers considered their future in the beef business.

On the positive side, in early 2014 feed costs are lower, the Canadian Loonie is softer, and futures prices look strong. Perillat believes there is a shortage of cattle. There is the opinion circulating that the current cowherd numbers are a new normal for the industry. We may not see the high cow numbers we have experienced in the past. He does feel that cow-calf farmers are in the driver's seat for next two years.

Brian Perillat can be viewed here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHJCSnWhOM0&feature=youtu.be>

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Graph courtesy Beef Farmers of Ontario

Graph shows dramatic decline in corn selling price per bushel since mid 2012 resulting in lower feed costs.

## COLD AIR AND TAG RETENTION

Beef farmers are continually frustrated with loss of RFID tags from cows. A recent study by the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute (PAMI) found that cold tags are one culprit. Tags inserted cold were much weaker than those inserted at room temperature. PAMI suggests keeping the tags and applicator warm during the tagging process even in cold weather.

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# Crop Information

## SOYBEANS AFTER SOYBEANS?

Source: [www.aganytime.com](http://www.aganytime.com)

It can be risky to grow soybeans in the same field year after year. However, certain management practices can be used to lessen the negative impact of continuously growing soybeans. A yield loss of 5 to 15% is realistic in continuous soybeans when compared to a corn-soybean rotation. And though you may not experience that much yield loss, some decrease in yield potential might be expected.

The yield penalty for growing continuous soybeans is generally lower in environments better suited for crop growth. Soybeans planted after soybeans may have a higher yield potential in fields that do not have a history of insect and disease problems. More problems with soybean cyst nematode (SCN) occur in continuous soybeans because the constant presence of a host crop can allow for populations to multiply quickly. SCN is effectively managed through crop rotation.

### Disease Management

When planting soybeans in a field for a second year, a buildup of disease inoculums can develop on crop debris. This can result in the potential for more disease, which may be especially problematic when environmental conditions favor disease development.

Soybean sudden death syndrome (SDS), brown stem rot (BSR), and frogeye leaf spot (FELS) are traditional disease problems in soybeans. Selecting soybean varieties with resistance or partial resistance, along with products that have above-average tolerance to SDS may help reduce potential damage caused by these diseases.

Wet fields are more prone to disease development, especially pythium and phytophthora root rot. Select soybean varieties that exhibit high levels of partial resistance or field tolerance.

### Weed Management

Weed control is also more difficult in soybeans planted after soybeans. When fields are planted in a crop rotation, weeds are constantly kept off balance. It is more difficult to rotate herbicide modes of action when planting the same crop the next year. Fields planted to continuous soybeans pose a greater potential for weed resistance or a shift to more tolerant weeds.

It is important to start the season with a clean field burn-down or tillage. Be sure to follow all plant-back restrictions listed on the product labels when using 2,4-D in a burndown application. Incorporating residual herbicides along with any soybean technology you choose, provides multiple modes of action and can help manage the potential for weed population shifts or herbicide tolerance. A residual herbicide should be applied to aid in the control of problem weed species.

## Soil and Other Considerations

It is important to maintain good soil fertility and pH levels in fields planted to continuous soybeans. Soils should be tested and the recommended amounts of lime and fertilizer should be applied. It is ideal to maintain soil pH in the 6.5 to 7.0 range to ensure optimal nutrient availability. Soybeans use a large amount of potassium (K), most of which is taken up within two to three months after emergence. Potassium deficiency restricts soybean grain development by reducing the size and weight of the seed.

### Average Nutrient (N,P,K) Removal by Common Field Crops

Grains and Oilseeds	Removal—lb/bushel		
	N <sup>2</sup> Nitrogen	P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> Phosphorus	K <sub>2</sub> O Potassium
Grain Corn	0.65-1.0	0.37-0.44	0.26-0.30
Soybeans	3.7-4.0	0.80-0.88	1.4
Winter Wheat - Grain Only	1.15-1.25	0.55-0.63	0.36
Winter Wheat Grain + Straw	1.9-2.1	0.68-0.75	1.25-2.0

Seedling mortality increases in fields planted to continuous soybeans. As a result, it is important to maintain or even slightly increase seeding rates and consider using seed treatments to help establish a good stand.

Scout continuous soybean fields regularly so that management practices can be implemented to help reduce plant stress and the possible negative impact on yield potential. Remember, crop rotation is the most effective cultural control strategy. Plan to rotate out of soybeans for subsequent growing seasons.

## RESISTANT WEEDS

Source - *BASF Knowledge Centre*

If a resistant weed takes hold on your farm, make decisions to minimize the impact it will have on your production. At the same time you will need to continue taking all the steps necessary to prevent or delay the development of additional resistant-weed biotypes. As the saying goes, “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Only in the case of herbicide resistance, there is no real “cure” once it hits your field.

The only thing that one can predict with any accuracy about herbicide resistance is that existing resistant weeds will eventually invade more acres and additional resistant-weed biotypes will inevitably make their appearance. Growers cannot depend on rescue by the development of new herbicide modes of action or new herbicide-tolerant crops, including crops with stacked herbicide traits. The best answer for now is to use the tools we have for as long as we can and add the new technologies when they become available.

# Other News

## PLANT SELECTION

For many, planning for 2014 vegetables starts now. Often, variety selections starts with assessing what worked this past year, as well as comparing notes with friends and neighbours on what worked best for them. In addition, numerous seed companies provide seed catalogues that are always an interesting read and source for new varieties. A few of the popular seed companies provide seed catalogs through retailers or by mail order include: Stokes Seeds, Dominion Seed House, and McKenzie Seeds. All provide seed catalogs for ordering.

Vegetables can be divided into groups according to the way they grow. Keeping this in mind will help you plan what to plant, as well as how and when. Please remember these are general guidelines, and if you are new to vegetable production and gardening, it is good to find someone locally to share ideas with.

### A. Hardy and Short-Season Crops

These vegetables can be planted by putting seeds directly into the garden - beets, carrots, leaf lettuce, onion sets, peas, potatoes, radishes, Swiss chard, and turnips.

### B. Hardy, Cool-Loving and Long-Season Crops

These vegetables grow well in a cool climate but need a longer season. In southern, warmer areas, these can be seeded directly, but commonly are grown from transplants. In cooler regions, transplanting is recommended. Seeds can be started indoors about six weeks before planting, or if preferred and available, purchased. Examples of these crops are broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, onions from seed and some varieties of tomatoes (ex. sub - arctic Maxi).

### C. Tender, Heat-Loving and Short-Season Crops

These can be seeded directly into the garden after the danger of spring frost is past. Examples include: bush wax beans, green beans and early maturing sweet corn. As corn is more tolerant of light frost, some growers will plant before expected date of last frost.

### D. Tender, Heat-Loving and Long-Season Crops

These vegetables thrive in the warmth of summer. For cooler northern areas, they grow best when planted in plastic-covered shelters, row covers, or greenhouses. Often vegetable growers and gardeners in warmer regions will use row covers and shelters to get earlier production for market. These tender heat-loving crops cannot grow when the night temperatures are cool

(ex. below 5 °C.). These include cucumbers, peppers, pumpkins, melons, squash, tomatoes, and zucchini. Tomatoes and peppers need to be started indoors about six – eight weeks before planting after the danger of spring frost is past. In warmer southern areas cucumbers, pumpkins and squash are often directly seeded, but in cooler growing areas, it is best when transplants are usually started four – six weeks before planting.

Source: Adapted from Basic Gardening Manual for Northern Manitoba, OMAFRA Online Gardeners Handbook 2010

## NEW YEAR - NEW BEGINNING?

*"Success is the opportunity to experience and to realize the forces that are within you." Hanoochi*



The Get Started Future Farmers Program is designed to support First Nations youth aged 15 – 29, starting up their own businesses.

IAPO is here to help with the implementation of business startup – business plans, record keeping and introducing the participant to a local mentor in their community.

Projects may include, but not limited to cow/calf, poultry, crops, market gardening, strawberries, blueberries, maple syrup and value added foods.

Interest in agriculture continues to grow in First Nations communities. Agriculture and agri-business opportunities are abundant! IAPO offers training and access to financing, to promote successful First Nations youth in agricultural and agri-food projects.

Dreams to reality by creating business success...

Growing businesses, places and communities...

For more information go to our website at [www.indianag.on.ca](http://www.indianag.on.ca) or contact Jen at [jen@indianag.on.ca](mailto:jen@indianag.on.ca) or 1 800 663 6912. We look forward to hearing from you! JW

## Calendar of Events

- **Jan. 21st** - Maple Syrup Seminar AOK First Nations, to be held at the AOK Community Centre from 10am - 3pm. To register call (705) 368 2228 Kathy Bebamash.
- **Feb 1-2** - Organic Conference, Guelph University Centre <http://www.guelphorganicconf.ca/>.
- **Feb 11** - EFP Tyendinga - All Saints Anglican Church, Ridge Road from 9 am - 3 pm lunch provided.
- **Feb. 13** - Quinte Farm & Trade Show, Knights of Columbus Hall, 22 Stella Street Trenton.
- **Mar. 5-7** - Western Fair Farm Show - Western Fair Entertainment Centre [www.westernfairdistrict/2014farmshow#](http://www.westernfairdistrict/2014farmshow#).
- **Mar 17** - Grain Farmers of Ontario March Classic, London Convention Centre [www.gfo.ca/marchclassic.aspx](http://www.gfo.ca/marchclassic.aspx).

• Please contact us if you have an item for the Calendar of Events.

## Fun Farming Facts



One farmer produces enough food to feed how many people each year?

- a) Your family
- b) 50 - 75 people
- c) Over 100 people

Answer: c