



# Native Agri Update

No. 391 October 2021

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

## TEACHING OPPORTUNITY AT IAPO!



Do you enjoy working with First Nations Youth and have an interest in farming and agriculture? If so, IAPO is accepting applications for our Seven Generations Lead to deliver the First Nations Agriculture for Seven Generations Program.

The Seven Generations Lead position is part-time throughout the school year. The role of the Seven Generations Lead will be to inspire First Nations Youth's interest in farming and agriculture careers by delivering curriculum based lessons to students in grades 11 and 12. The program will be run initially online to North Eastern and South Western, Ontario communities.

This is a great opportunity for aspiring teachers who are in their final year of Teachers College, those who are already certified teachers or those with relevant experience engaging with First Nations Youth with knowledge of farming and agriculture.

### How to apply:

If you are interested in learning more about this position, please email [Kayla@indianag.on.ca](mailto:Kayla@indianag.on.ca). If you wish to submit an application, please include a cover

letter and resume.

*KM*

## FNBSEP IS BACK

IAPO is pleased to announce that the First Nations Business Start-up and Expansion Program (FNBSEP) is back, offering financing and funding for First Nations entrepreneurs, businesses, & economic development corporations.

Funding, which extends until March 31, 2022, is provided through the Indigenous Economic Development Fund by the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs.

Financing, including term loans and working capital, is tailored to meet business needs and applications will be considered for full project financing, partial financing or leveraging to complement other financing or funding. Areas of financing include:

- **Seed Capital**
- **Start-up and Early Stage Loans**
- **Expansion Capital**
- **Business Acquisition**

The program is available to support qualified First Nations farm and agribusinesses across Ontario and qualified First Nations businesses in all sectors in South Central and Eastern Ontario.

Qualified businesses are eligible for financing of up to \$100,000 and grants of up to \$10,000. To qualify, applicants must demonstrate economic viability, as well as, the need for FNBSEP funding.

For more information including complete eligibility requirements or an application, contact 1-800-363-0329 or [info@indianag.on.ca](mailto:info@indianag.on.ca)



Indigenous Economic Development Fund

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# Agribusiness

## SMALL BUSINESS INFORMATION EXPO!



Mark your calendar for the Small Business Expo being held Nov 9 & 10. The upcoming virtual trade show will highlight financing, funding and service for Indigenous businesses.

A wide range of programs will be exhibiting on subject matters such as financing, finding support for your innovation, mentorship, access to markets and much more.

At the expo attendees will be able to ask questions directly to a wide range of program representatives on how they can support your business.

The online expo is free and will be held from 1- 3pm on Tuesday, November 9 & Wednesday, November 10.

Visit [www.investottawa.ca/event/the-small-business-information-expo/](http://www.investottawa.ca/event/the-small-business-information-expo/) for more information and to register.

## SHADES OF GRAY FINISHES FIRST IN ONTARIO POW WOW PITCH FINALS

IAPO has had the pleasure of working with Shades of Gray Rabbitry Farm and Shades of Gray Indigenous Pet Treats for the last few years. Owners Keri Gray and Brian Chaney have worked diligently to grow their farming and business operations located in Campbellford and Alderville First Nation.

After the Gray family started Shades of Gray Rabbitry selling federally inspected rabbit meat to local restaurants and grocery stores, Gray also began making treats for her own dogs so that none of the animals would go to waste. With much interest from others in these new pet products, she decided to try selling locally and from there it took off.

Slowly they grew the business through word of mouth, door to door sales, farmers markets, pet shows and more. They gained as many connections in the industry that they could and reached out for support of professionals at any opportunity.



They put emphasis on strong marketing, strategic value-added products, providing a great natural product and great customer service. With these in place the business took off. You can find their rabbits in a number of local grocery stores and in restaurants from Peterborough through to Ottawa.

The pet treat business has store front location in Alderville First Nation, but with the pandemic affecting the business they put a strong emphasis on taking the business online. You can purchase all of their products online from their website at <https://indigenoustreats.ca/>. You can also find them in numerous pet stores across Southern Ontario.



*Brian Chaney and Keri Gray of Shades of Gray Indigenous Pet Treats*

In looking for support to expand the business, Keri entered the 2021 Pow Wow Pitch Contest sharing her business and goals for the future. With strong pitches she made it to be one of four finalists for Ontario. You can see her pitch and results at: <https://www.powwowpitch.org/pitch/finalists/>

The business has grown tremendously over the last two years, especially through the pandemic. We are all excited for the future of the farm and the business and where it will go.

## START YOUR JOURNEY TOWARD FINANCIAL WELLNESS TODAY

The RBC Financial Literacy for Indigenous Peoples Course was created in response to calls from First Nations youth who recommended financial training as a means to maximizing the benefits of financial compensation.

The course is made up of five parts that will take about 15 minutes each to complete. The topics include: About Money and Banking; Protecting Your Money; Budgeting and Managing Your Money; Financing Your Goals with Debt and Credit, and Saving and Investing Your Money.

In less than 2 hours, this non-credited course will teach you some key financial basics and help you protect, save, invest, share and spend your money wisely.

Learn more at: <https://www.rbc.com/indigenous/financial-literacy-for-indigenous-peoples.html>

CL

# Market Information

## BEEF MARKET WATCH

Prices are courtesy of the Beef Farmers of Ontario Weekly Market Information Report for the week ending Thursday October 14, 2021. Changes in this chart reflect the difference in prices from the week of August 7, 2021 to the week of October 18, 2021. Weekly reports provide prices on a per cwt basis for the week but do not include Friday sale results.

There were just 215 fed steers and heifers sold through auction markets this week which down 107 from last week, but just 32 fewer than the same time last year. Fed steers ranged from \$149.41-\$163.45 averaging \$158.21 up \$0.72 from last week and \$19.58 stronger than year ago prices. Fed heifers sold from \$137.30- \$158.06 averaging \$150.56 down \$5.18 from last week but \$21.50 stronger than last year at this time. Auction markets reported trade as steady with quality considered.

Fed/cull cows sold through auctions this week was down 558 head from last week and 435 head fewer than the same time last year at 2,128 head. Cows sold from \$49.78-\$75.89 averaging \$61.11 down \$6.12 cwt from last week and \$3.95 below year ago prices.

The Ontario railgrade market was active this week with prices holding fully steady at \$270.00 dressed for steers, with heifers from \$269.00-\$270.00 but mainly \$270.00. This week's average price is \$40.00 cwt stronger than last year at this time.

The Boxed Beef Report by Kevin Grier, reports the US overview for last week: "The market keeps falling hard week

after week. Some weeks have a little more urgency than others, but the net result is steep weekly declines." With that clear fact noted, the other obvious fact is that prices remain at extraordinarily high levels. the market under pressure.

Category	Price Range \$	Ave Price	Top Price	Change
Rail Steers	270			
Fed steers	148-161	157	196	+1.3
Fed heifers	138-155	149	164	+1.3
Cows	50-76	61	128	-26
Bulls	84-102	93	129	-16
Stocker steers				
700 – 799	166-202	194	225	-4.3
600 – 699	180-220	203	239	-5.4
500 – 599	158-243	210	259	-9.5
Stocker heifers				
700 – 799	164-188	178	205	+7.8
600 – 699	150-190	175	210	-2.9
500 – 599	160-208	189	222	+1.1

All prices are on a hundred pound basis (cwt)

BB

## CROP MARKET

Adapted from Market Trends October November 2021 by Phillip Shaw GFO www.gfo.ca

**Corn** As we harvest corn it is not lost on anybody that it is expensive to grow especially in a COVID supply chain limited market. When you add inflation and high input prices to the mix it make you wonder how many farmers harvesting corn now will plant more corn in 2022?

Ethanol demand is strong, which is a very good thing and Mexico has been a big buyer of US corn. Having said that, the December 2022 corn futures price is \$5.23 a bushel, a very healthy price.

The December corn futures contract is currently priced 8.5 cents below the March contract, and this is considered bearish for new crop corn. Seasonally, corn prices tend to peak in early June and bottom in early July and in retrospect that is almost exactly what has happened in 2021.

**Soybeans** The October 12th USDA report came across as bearish for soy-

beans pushing up the new crop ending stocks figure to 320 million bu. This is a reflection of a better soybean crop being harvested in US fields. The price of soybeans is still much higher than it was a year ago.

Expect demand to remain strong and the Chinese to come in and buy in the next month. Vegetable oils are hot and agricultural commodity markets and soybean oil is the same way certainly benefiting from crude oil being above \$80 a barrel.

The November soybean contract is currently priced 17 and three quarters cents below the March 2022 contract, which indicates bearishness for new crop soybeans. Seasonally, soybean prices tend to peak in early July and

bottom out in October and that may be where we are this year.

**Wheat** The wheat complex took a bit of a bullish turn after the USDA report on October 12th. As always, you must consider the different supply and demand scenarios for each class of wheat and its regional production areas. Higher prices for SRW wheat also offer profitable opportunities for wheat producers. The difficulty is getting the proper weather to get things planted. In Ontario the weather has been brutal for getting wheat planted. It is also being incredibly harsh for the wheat that was already in the ground. It is likely that Ontario wheat acres will be much smaller this year.

### Coming Events

Nov.9, 16 & 23- Grazing Cover Crops Webinars 2021 -7p.m

Register: <https://bit.ly/3BFBZ7V>

December 15 - Farmer Wellness Webinar -1:00p.m.

Visit: <https://gfo1.typeform.com/to/G2Ug1NOfm.com>

# Livestock Information

## RAISING SHEEP AND GOATS

Sources: OMAFRA Publication 61E *Starting a Farm in Ontario*; Ontario Goat, *Goat Gazette*, September 2015 issue; *Goats vs. Sheep - Which Is Better for Your Backyard?* QC Supply staff, March 27, 2018

There has been increased interest in raising sheep and goats throughout First Nation communities in Ontario. Each type has its own set of management requirements and physical needs to meet if a successful small ruminant business is to be developed.

Goats and sheep are certainly two popular backyard livestock options available for your farm. Typically, sheep and goat are raised to produce meat., but can also raised for milk and wool/fiber.

Goat meat is consumed at an enormous level worldwide, but doesn't match beef, chicken, or pork in Canada. Many ethnic communities consume goat and lamb. Also, goat and lamb are often consumed during specific religious holidays. Goat meat is called chevon and is in high demand during certain religious holidays and festivals.

Most sheep producers finish their own lambs to market weight and condition. For the diverse Ontario market, lambs are sold over a wide weight range, from 60 to 110-pound live weight. Some consumers prefer smaller lambs for the Easter season and are willing to pay a premium for these lambs.

The reproductive characteristics of ewes are as follows: Age at puberty of the ewe is 6 - 9 months, the estrus cycle length is 17 days average, and estrus (heat) of 24-36 hours with a gestation of 5 months. One of the basic aspects of a sheep farming operation is to make sure that ewes become pregnant and have 1-2 lambs each year. Conception rate varies between season, age, breed and lambing system. Understanding the effect of these factors will enable you to determine what a good conception rate is for your farm. Sheep performance targets are 10 ewes and lambs per acre, ewe death rate of less than 3%, with 1.8 lambs marketed per ewe per year and lamb survival greater than 95%.

The reproductive characteristics of does are as follows: Goats are sexually mature from 4 to 6 months. In season (when female goats are fertile), between September and March; fertility lasts up to three days. If the female goat is not mated, she will come into season every 21 days. Does of any breed come into heat every 21 days for from 2 – 48 hours. Gestation of a female goat is 5 months. The number of goat offspring is 1 to 3 kids per doe.

How many sheep can I raise per acre? You can reasonably expect to keep six to ten sheep on an acre of grass and as much as 100 sheep on 30-40 acres of pasture. How many goats can I raise per acre? Goats are similar to sheep in that you can support about six to eight goats on an acre of land. Because goats are browsers, not grazers, it will be important that the land you have will supply them with the mixed type of forage they like to eat.



Sheep and goat fencing needs are different. A great type of fencing for sheep is smooth electric wire or non-electric woven wire. Sheep require very good fencing. They are relatively small animals, and can squeeze through fairly small holes. Once on the outside, the defenseless sheep or lamb is vulnerable to attacks by dogs or coyotes. Many shepherds have turned to high-tensile electric fences to keep the sheep in, and the predators out.

Goats, because they will challenge fencing and are able climbers and jumpers, require a little more thought. Even a little gap in your fence will be discovered by your curious goats. High tensile, smooth electric wire will work. Wooden fencing, stockade panels, and chain link fencing also can work well.

You will need to produce or source hay and have a dry place to store your hay for feeding when not on pasture.

Sheep and goats don't require sophisticated housing, generally speaking. Both will do just fine with a simple structure. A three-walled shed can be an adequate structure. If you happen to have old buildings on your land like a barn or shed, that's quite suitable. For larger numbers of sheep or goats, there are many farm building plans available.

Preparing your herd or flock for winter is important as winter can be one of the hardest seasons in which to keep animals. Plan ahead for winter feeding as there are many factors that will affect the amount of feed a goat and lamb needs over the winter, including age, stage of production, frame size and body condition, desired rate of gain, and breed and type (dairy, meat or fiber), as well as the quantity and quality of available feed.

Steady access to clean water is critical for goat and lambs all year long. Keeping water lines, buckets, troughs and waterers clean is a year-round task, but fall is a good time to check that everything is in good working order for the winter. The primary goal for winter is to keep goat and lamb facilities dry and draft free. Generally, it's better to have cold and dry goats and lambs rather than wet and slightly warmer goats or lambs.

Additional considerations are available shade and protection from wind. Sheep can put up with more weather than goats. Goats like to be kept dry and they need a place to get out of the elements. **BB**

# Crop Information

## WELCOME TO IAPO SAM CURTIS!



IAPO would like to extend a warm welcome to Samantha (Sam) Curtis as she joins the IAPO team as CREATE–Climate Smart Soils Intern. From the University of Manitoba, Sam is currently enrolled in MSc in Plant Science, where she is looking at resource use efficiency in diversified, no-till cropping systems on the Canadian Prairies. In addition to her MSc, Sam is part of the CREATE–Climate Smart Soils program which focuses on training highly qualified personnel to sustainably lead Canada’s agri-food sector. Sam is looking forward to helping create climate-smart, environmentally-minded agricultural resources during her time at IAPO, as well as making connections with and learning from First Nations producers.

## AVOIDING SOIL COMPACTION THIS FALL

source: <https://www.farmersedge.ca/7-tips-to-avoid-rutting-and-compaction-on-wet-soils-during-harvest>, Jinjer Lorenz Oct 2018

The wet weather this fall has been delaying harvest and creating the potential risk of soil compaction as harvest drags on. Harvesting in field conditions that are likely to cause soil compaction will likely be something some farmers won't be able to avoid. Here are a few ideas to consider as you return to the fields.

- Clay soils are more prone to compaction as compared to sandy soils. If you have some fields of each, it may be appropriate to harvest the sandier fields first and hope the clay fields will dry out a little.
- Studies have shown that 60 – 80% of soil compaction occurs by the first pass of a vehicle across the field. In wetter areas, dedicated traffic lanes could be considered for grain cart traffic.
- Where possible, avoid or limit truck traffic in the field or limit it to a confined area near the field approach.
- Where it is feasible, avoid loading combines and grain carts to full capacity.
- Consider having grain carts remain at one end of a field and unloading combines when they reach that area. This will limit the trips across the field with a full cart.
- Ensure tire pressures are properly adjusted to match the axle load that will be carried. Larger tires can bear heavier loads at lower pressures, reducing soil compaction. Where feasible, dual tires offer better flotation and reduce the pressure on soil surface.
- Avoid or limit tillage or fertilizer on fields until they have dried, not just the surface, but to the depth of tillage.

## SOIL & SOIL HEALTH TESTS

source: adapted from <https://www.agdaily.com/crops/difference-between-soil-tests-and-soil-health-tests/>. J. Howard Apr 2021

Soil tests are a perennial staple for many farmers, but with increasing interest in soil health, new ways of looking at soils are available.

**Soil tests** are the traditional and well-established analysis of soil chemistry. At a glance, you can quickly see your soils macro (potassium and phosphorus) and micronutrient levels and pH value, and possibly more. Your results are a snapshot designed to provide this-season recommendations and are used to guide how much fertilizer or nutrients to apply optimize crop performance.

**Soil health tests** are a newer, less common assessment. These tests evaluate the physical and biological status of your soil and its ability to support healthy crops (in addition to chemical values). They monitor long-term soil response to your farm management practices. So they are a rearview look at your soil’s performance and they reflect your soil’s status based on past practices

Soil health tests vary depending on which indicators are assessed and may include numerous indicators:

**Chemical** -Soil pH, Electrical conductivity (salt), Phosphorus, potassium, micronutrient levels

**Physical** -aggregate stability, available water capacity/ infiltration, surface/subsurface hardness, soil texture/density

**Biological measurements** -Soil organic matter/protein, total/ active carbon content, total nitrogen/nitrates, soil life (earthworms), respiration.

Soil health tests are generally for restorative evaluation, guiding farmers on how to improve the overall health and productivity of the soil. They more likely affect your management decisions including cover crop use/choice, crop rotation, tillage plans, and organic amendments. These strategies aim to support your soil’s natural ability to cycle nutrients, increase plant resiliency, and improve the environment.

Soil health tests are available through soil testing labs, but there are some simple hands on tests anyone can use to get started looking at the soil health including:9\*\*

1. Earthworm Counts - how many worms, an indicator of soil life.
2. Water Infiltration - how quickly the soil drains, an indicator of soil type and structure.
3. Soil Compaction - how hard the soil is, an indicator of soil structure.
4. Bury Underwear - how quickly things rot –faster in healthier, living soils.

For more info on these hands on tests visit <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/field/news/croptalk/2017/ct-0917a6.htm> or [www.Ifao.com](http://www.Ifao.com) for detailed instructions on the “bury underwear” test.

JH

# Other News

## DROUGHT IN THE NORTHWEST

Northwestern Ontario faced one of the driest years on record in 2021 causing disruptions and hardships for the entire region. Agriculture was heavily impacted and most of my remarks in this column will be directed to that industry.

The districts of Rainy River, Kenora and Thunder Bay experienced some of the lowest rainfall levels in recent years. This resulted in severe shortages of hay pasture for the area in which livestock farming forms the largest segment of the industry.

Rainfall data collected at the Emo Agricultural Research Station in the Rainy River District 2000 to 2021 show how this year's rainfall over the 4 main growing months compares the monthly normal rainfall over the same number of years

	<b>2021 Rainfall (Emo Ag Research Station)</b>	<b>Normal (Environment Canada)</b>
<b>May 2021</b>	<b>34mm</b>	<b>67.3mm</b>
<b>June 2021</b>	<b>43.8mm</b>	<b>113.8mm</b>
<b>July 2021</b>	<b>26.5mm</b>	<b>99mm</b>
<b>August 2021</b>	<b>83.2mm</b>	<b>84mm</b>

Agricorp has rainfall monitoring stations in all three of these districts showing similar patterns and totals for the 4 month growing season. This information is posted on the Agricorp website.

Crop farmers also faced a wide range of growing conditions. Late spring frosts. Uneven germination, lack of timely rainfall and excess heat all combined gave yields were much lower than normal in most crops.

Due to the drought livestock producers were faced with many difficult challenges. Cattle were sold early because of pasture and hay shortages and even with the early sell off producers were contemplating major culling or complete dispersal of the breeding herd.

The extremely dry conditions of 2021 also had a major impact on the wild rice and wild blueberry harvest. Much of the crop was non-existent because of the lack rain and the excess heat. Most of the wild rice that did mature was not able to be picked because water levels were to allow pickers access to the rice beds.

The drought also brought more than the normal number of forest fires across the northwest resulting in lots of timber habitat and property damage. Many communities were evacuated for safety and health reasons with some people being forced to be out of their homes for up to a full month.

Producer meetings were organized locally. Through these efforts, the severe conditions were brought to the attention of OMAFRA and other relevant agencies. As a result, several

assistance programs were accessed or created to assist with emergency feed supplies, water systems, fencing and feed transportation to help alleviate some of the stress being placed on the livestock industry and producers. Complete details of these programs are available through Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Ontario Beef Producers, OMAFRA and Agricorp.

While many programs are nearing their end, in September the **Northwestern Ontario Drought Assistance Initiative** was announced for farmers in the affected areas. It supports farmers in sourcing water to help mitigate current and future drought conditions.

Eligible farmers in the Rainy River, Kenora and Thunder Bay Districts can apply to receive up to a maximum of \$15,000 and 50% cost share grants.

Eligible projects include;

- Water supply expansion/resilience planning
- New wells for agricultural purposes
- Well maintenance and deepening
- Ponds or cisterns for storing water
- Water delivery system (piping) to bring water from off farm source to the farm
- Water treatment equipment for agricultural use

More information is available from Agricorp's website or email to [nwlivestock@agricorp.com](mailto:nwlivestock@agricorp.com). Applications are due by January 31, 2022.

All in all, a challenging year for the entire NorthWest but as farmers have always said: "We have next year."

*RT*

## ROBOTIC WEEDERS

*source: The Grower, Oct 2021*

Recently, the Berry Growers of Ontario held its twilight tour spotlighting two robotic weeders. The smallest robot, Oz is suited to market gardens. It can weed one to two acres per day. The larger robot, Roam-IO, can be set up with a hood sprayer and can carry a 1000 lb. payload.



The Oz Robotic Weeder

Kristine Obied, OMAFRA weed management specialist is compiling 2021 trial results in different crops on different soil types. More details will be available in the months to come.