



Native Agri Update

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www.indianag.on.ca

With 2022 upon us, here is a quick reminder of two programs: The First Nations Business Start-up and Expansion Program and Business Recovery Financing.

FIRST NATION BUSINESS START-UP AND EXPANSION PROGRAM

The First Nations Business Start-up and Expansion Program (FNBSEP) offers financing and funding for First Nations entrepreneurs, businesses & economic development corporations.

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 & Early Stage Loans, Expansion Capital, and Business Acquisitions.

FNBSEP is available until March 31, 2022 while funding lasts 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 funding 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.

BUSINESS RECOVERY FINANCING

IAPO is offering Business Recovery Financing (BRF) to eligible First Nations businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Up to \$50,000 is available as 50% repayable financing & 50% grant.

BRF may be used to cover general expenses and may also be used towards increasing production capacity, develop-

ing new products, moving to online marketing or to make improvements to accommodate social distancing requirements.

BRF is available until March 31, 2022 while funding lasts to support qualified First Nations farm and agribusinesses across Ontario and qualified First Nations businesses in all sectors in South Central and Eastern Ontario.

For more information on FNBSEP or BRF including complete eligibility requirements or an application, contact 1-800-363-0329 or info@indianag.on.ca

Funding for FNBSEP and BRF is provided through the Indigenous Economic Development Fund by the Ministry of Indigenous Affairs.



The views expressed in this publication are the views of IAPO and do not necessarily reflect those of the Province of Ontario.

CAREER OPPORTUNITY WITH IAPO

IAPO is accepting applications for a Farm Management Advisor in our Lambeth office serving First Nation communities and members in South Western Ontario.

The Farm Management Advisor is responsible for supporting the growth of First Nation farms and agri-businesses across the region. Key responsibilities include community engagement, as well as the delivery of IAPO's agriculture extension services & business financing.

Visit our website, www.indianag.on.ca for the job posting. If you, or someone you know, would like more information regarding the Farm Management Advisor position, contact Jamie Hall, General Manager, at jamie@indianag.on.ca or 1-800-363-0329.

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Agribusiness

TOP 6 BUSINESS PRACTICES FOR A MORE PROFITABLE FARM

source: <https://www.fcc-fac.ca/en/knowledge/farm-business-practices-resources>

The importance of solid business practices are not lost on farmers, but for those who aren't seasoned in business management, it's hard to find the time to develop and sharpen the skills that are needed for success. Here are the top six business practices to drive your farms profitability.

1. A commitment to learning and skills development

When entering into operating either a full time or part time farming operation, experienced or not there is always a ton to learn and understand. Like anything else, it is a life long journey to find the best practices to succeed and grow. Some areas one should look into for gaining agricultural knowledge are:

- Get a mentor – someone that is more experienced, has done what you are doing, where you can ask questions and get advice
- Educational courses/training sessions – there are many opportunities to learn. IAPO provides workshops on many ag based topics
- Ag Based Resources – magazines, articles, email lists, IAPO newsletter. There are many good articles and recourse available

2. Business decisions made using accurate financials

It is important to know and have the mindset that your farming operation is a business and should be operated as such. It is important to have proper financial support and records annually. Every operation should complete financial paperwork monthly and in turn consult with a professional annually. All decisions made on the farm throughout the year should be made based on your financials, the current state and seasonality of the farm.

3. Seeking help from farm and business advisors

This goes along the same lines as securing a mentor for your operation. There are many business and farm advisors that are willing to help and field any questions you may have regarding your operation. They may be up on current trends or programs that may be what your farm needs. It is always good to stay in close contact and reach out often even just to chat.

4. Having a written business plan, following it, and reviewing it annually

Having a business plan is ideal for understanding and laying out the framework for your farming operation. This plan is how you see your operation running and should be reviewed and changed annually. How you first see your farm operating and gaining success is usually the best path and wavery too

far from this plan may not bring you the results you are looking for.

5. Knowing and monitoring your cost of production

If you are on top of your financials as mentioned in point 2, there should be no problems in finding out your costs of production and what you will need to charge for an item to become profitable. Make sure you consider all of your costs: fuel, seed, fertilizer, jars, containers, wages. Knowing what goes into making your end product will help ensure you are able to remain profitable. Always be aware of the farms cashflow, especially if you are creating products that vary seasonally. Are you going to have enough cash to continue to make products if you are not going to have any income throughout the winter months?

6. Assessing risks and having a plan to manage and mitigate risk

As we all know, farming usually does not goes as we plan. There are many risks that come into play annually that can affect production. Weather, diseases, bugs and infestations. It is always important to understand the risks and have a plan. This way when these issues strike you are ready.

There are also many programs put in place to help with these issues that are worth researching. Programs such as hay and crop insurance, vet programs such as IAPO's Beef Cow Herd Health Initiative.

Practicing these 6 points annually will put your farming operation in a much stronger and confident position to make decisions and move your farming operation forward. If you have any questions regarding your farming operation feel free to reach out to your IAPO Farm Advisor for support.

SEVEN GENERATIONS LEAD POSITION

Are you looking for an opportunity to share your passion for agriculture, food, the environment and careers? Make a lasting impact on First Nations youth? Or want to create awareness on issues related to farming, food production and food security?

IAPO is seeking applications from qualified individuals for the part-time position of Seven Generations Lead. The Seven Generations Lead will be responsible for delivering our curriculum based lessons to high school students in Ontario. Program delivery will be online until the challenges of the pandemic subside.

Ideal candidates are members of the Ontario College of Teachers but IAPO will consider those who may be in the final year of their degree or those with alternate teaching experience.

For more information, please email Kayla Martin, Program and Communications Coordinator at kayla@indianag.on.ca for a detailed job description!

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Market Information

BEEF MARKET WATCH

Prices are courtesy of the Beef Farmers of Ontario Weekly Market Information Report for the week ending Thursday February 3, 2022. Changes in this chart reflect the difference in prices from the week of December 6, 2021 to the week of February 1, 2022. Weekly reports provide prices on a per cwt basis for the week but do not include Friday sale results.

Cows traded from \$61.38-\$91.04 averaging \$74.46 up \$1.20 from last week and \$13.67 above year ago prices. This is the ninth consecutive week that prices have increased week over week.

2,621 stocker and feeder cattle sold through auction markets this week which is down 1,490 head from last week and 1,191 fewer than the same week last year. Auction markets reported trade as steady on all weights and classes with quality considered.

Actual average prices this week saw steers 400-500 lbs. down \$29.81 from last week on average but on light receipts, 500-600 lb. steers were down \$18.24, 600-700 lbs. down \$3.56, 700-800 lbs. down \$8.64. 800-900 lbs. up \$3.59, 900-1000 lbs. up \$1.52 and steers 1000 lbs. and over averaged \$8.37 above last week's weighted average prices. Steers 500 lbs. and under are trading easier than last year at this time while classes over 500 lbs. are stronger than year ago prices

Heifers from 400-500 lbs. were up \$16.21, 500-600 lbs. up \$2.26, 600-700 lbs. up \$0.32, 700-800 lbs. down \$9.50, 800-900 lbs. up \$4.28 and heifers 900 lbs. and over averaged \$16.67 easier than last week on average. Heifers are general-

ly stronger than year ago prices with the exception of the 400-500 weights and 700-800 lb. categories.

Category	Price Range \$	Ave Price	Top Price	Change
Rail Steers	290			
Fed steers	166-178	172	187	+8.7
Fed heifers	158-171	165	177	+7.8
Cows	62-91	74	133	+42
Bulls	87-114	99	146	+19.3
Stocker steers				
700 – 799	172-212	196	222	+6.5
600 – 699	180-232	209	243	+6.1
500 – 599	178-235	212	256	+1.4
Stocker heifers				
700 – 799	142-179	162	190	+2.5
600 – 699	154-192	180	201	+7.8
500 – 599	158-199	186	218	+7.5

All prices are on a hundred pound basis (cwt)

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CROP MARKET

Adapted from Market Trends February & March 2022 by Phillip Shaw GFO www.gfo.ca

Corn Corn futures markets remain inverted and that will likely remain so for the near future. It is simply a reflection of the bullish nature of the corn market where commercials want the corn in hand, and they want it now. Prices are high in historical terms maybe even near the peak, but of course we will know that after the fact.

The soybean harvest of course is going well in Brazil, and this is significant regarding the second crop of corn which will be planted following the combine harvesters. USDA decreased their corn crop expectations from South America in the February report, but it is still quite early with the corn just being planted. The corn market will depend to some extent on the health of this corn being planted in the ground now.

Seasonally corn prices tend to peak in early June and bottom in early October.

Soybeans Soybeans were the market

leader last year before they handed the baton to corn in early winter. However, it's clear as we head toward spring that soybeans need to buy acres from almost anything else whether it is corn, cotton or spring wheat. They are the leader in this sense and must be watched over the next 30 days as we get some indication from the USDA on acreage projections this year.

Keep in mind that soybeans are benefiting from the soybean oil market. Watching that as well as the rest of weather conditions in South America will be helpful to determine future price direction.

Seasonally, soybean prices tend to

peak in early July and bottom in early October.

Wheat The wheat market is stabilizing and really hasn't done a lot over the last eight weeks. Yes, we all know the effect that the Ukraine and Russia have had on the wheat market.

In Ontario, the winter weather has been fairly mild compared to past Canadian winters. We all know that the crop in the ground is not as many acres as we would like as conditions were so rough last fall. However, \$9.50 wheat and \$10 wheat has been there for the taking this winter. Historically speaking, that's very good and much higher than last year.

Coming Events

- February 22nd:** High Tunnel and Hoop House On Line Workshop - 7 p.m.
- February 23rd:** Bee Production On line Workshop - 7 p.m.
- March 2nd:** Manoomin/Wild Rice On Line Workshop - 7 p.m.
- March 9th:** Managing Farm Finances On Line Workshop - 7 p.m.

For more information or to register, please email workshops@indianag.on.ca.

Livestock Information

LAMBING TIME

Spring is rapidly approaching and with that comes the start of a busy lambing period. The following information may help make the lambing season a bit easier. Are you aware that around 25% of the annual shepherd workload occurs at lambing time?

Know the lambing due date. Record all contacts between rams and ewes – accidental and planned! The gestation period of sheep is the period of time a pregnant ewe carries her lambs from breeding to delivery. The typical gestation period of a sheep is 147 days, and can range from 138-159 days in most cases. Use a gestation table to calculate probable lambing dates.

Have enough feed to supply all of your ewes through the last six weeks of pregnancy and through lactation. Have feed on hand for lamb creepers. Work with a qualified nutritionist to evaluate your feeding program.



Have enough maternity pens and small group pens ready for the number of ewes you have to lamb. Set up pens and panels ahead of time.

Have a look at the inventory of all the products you need at least a week before the ewes start lambing. Some of these items can be easily accessed when going from pen to pen if they are

put in an open utility tool tote that fits over a gate. Lambing time tool kit includes:

- gloves, sleeve length & short OB gloves, lubricant, and a lamb sling. If you've ever carried a cold wet newborn lamb to its pen, these are very handy!
- injectable vitamin A & D, E-Sel, elastrator rings & pliers for tail docking & castrating, needles & syringes of varying sizes
- colostrum feeding tube & large syringe, nipples and bottles, scour solution, powdered colostrum, powdered milk replacer
- alcohol mixed with a little food colouring kept in small squeeze bottle to use on injection sites, ear tagging or lamb navels and iodine kept in a small squeeze bottle for lamb navels
- a notebook & pencil to keep track of mother & lamb ID numbers & other important info, a spray or crayon marker for quick ID of animals that need (closely) watching,
- old towels for drying off lambs. Also, consider having on hand a hair dryer & box (for warming chilled lambs) or heat lamp.
- ear tags & pliers for your on-farm ID

Watch for signs of impending lambing. Approximately 10 days before the ewe will lamb, the teats begin to feel firm and full of colostrum. Between then and lambing the lips of the vulva slacken and become slightly swollen. In the last hours before lambing, many ewes will separate from the flock. At this point they should be moved into a lambing pen.

At birth, the normal presentation of a lamb is spine upwards, forefeet with the head between them pointing toward the cervix. The cervix, itself, is still sealed by a mucous plug. The lamb is surrounded by two fluid-filled sacs, the allantois and the chorion. These first and second waterbags acted as a cushion to prevent injury to the developing fetus. They form part of the placenta. The placenta is attached to the wall of the ewe's uterus and it is the placenta that the developing lamb has received nutrients from the ewe's blood supply. The placenta will be expelled as the afterbirth.

Full Term Ewe with Lamb in Normal Presentation



Follow the 10 minute rule. If you haven't made any progress lambing a ewe after trying for 10 minutes it is very unlikely that things will change after that time, so consider Veterinary assistance.

After the ewe has completed delivery, the ewe's udder should be checked for milk supply and potential problems, such as mastitis. Lambs should be monitored closely to make sure they nurse. Lambs that have nursed will have a full stomach upon palpation. Lambs that have not nursed should be assisted. Colostrum is the "first milk" that a ewe produces after lambing. Colostrum contains a high level of several nutrients that are important for lamb health and performance. Colostrum also contains a high level of antibodies against a variety of infectious agents.

It doesn't take bitterly cold weather for wet, newborn lambs to die of hypothermia. Hypothermia is defined as low body temperature. Lambs with hypothermia appear weak, gaunt, and hunched up. It is important to get colostrum in newborn hypothermic lambs to elevate the body temperature. Tube feeding is an effective means of doing this. It may also be necessary to move the lamb to a warmer environment to elevate the body temperature. In fact, if the lamb's temperature is 99 degrees F or less, it should be warmed first. There are several ways to warm a lamb. If the lamb is wet, dry it off and wrap it in a towel. A hair dryer can be used to warm a lamb. The lamb can also be put into a warming box.

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Crop Information

REDUCING TILLAGE FOR A HEALTHIER FARMING SYSTEM

sources: <https://www.sare.org/publications/building-soils-for-better-crops/minimizing-tillage/> Fred Magdoff, Harold van Es, 2021. <https://extension.umn.edu/soil-management-and-health/tillage-implements-purpose-and-ideal-use#erosion-and-loss-of-organic-matter-1228712> Jodi DeJong-Hughes and Aaron Daigh 2021.

In Ontario’s agricultural sector, soil erosion, reduced water quality, and loss of biodiversity are all concerns, especially in systems that use conventional tillage. Conventional tillage is a practice that relies on processes such as deep tillage, plowing, cultivation and certain types of discing to bury crop residues. This type of tillage impacts our land by increasing wind and water erosion, creating losses of soil organic matter, biodiversity, soil moisture and soil structure, and increasing labour and fuel costs. However, using conservation tillage practices that reduce soil disturbance can help combat these issues while simultaneously minimizing degradation on agricultural land.

Conservation tillage is any tillage practice that leaves more than 30% of crop residues on the soil surface. The four main forms of conservation tillage are:

- **Strip tillage:** Soil is tilled in narrow strips where the subsequent seed will be placed, while the soil between the rows is left undisturbed. Fertilizer can also be applied in the seed row during tillage operations to reduce field passes.



Strip tillage operation. <https://farmtario.com/news/omafra-strip-till-demo-to-highlight-working-units/>

- **Ridge tillage:** Same concept as strip tillage except strips are raised 3 to 6 inches above the ground in ridges.
- **No-till (zero tillage):** No-till drills and planters are equipped to seed directly into the soil without any prior tillage.



Example of a no-till seeding drill. <https://www.no-tillfarmer.com/articles/9142-no-till-innovations-from-the-2019-summer-farm-shows>

- **Mulch tillage:** Includes any other reduced or minimum tillage system that retains 30% or more soil cover. Chisel plows, discs, field cultivators, and rotary tillers are common implements that are used in mulch tillage systems.

These conservation tillage practices provide numerous benefits to our cropping systems, including:

- Increased levels of soil organic matter and biodiversity
- Greater soil moisture retention and conservation
- Improved soil structure and water infiltration
- Improved air and water quality (due to decreased levels of soil erosion)
- Reduced production costs – associated with reduced labour costs and fuel usage (due to fewer tillage passes)

- Lower greenhouse gas emissions (from increased soil organic matter and less fuel usage)

While reducing tillage has many benefits, not every conservation tillage practice will work for every farm, and some operations may benefit more from one practice over another. Here are few things to consider when choosing a tillage system.

- Land with slopes greater than 3% are more prone to water erosion; therefore, it is important to minimize (or eliminate) tillage depth, intensity, and frequency in these areas.
- The type of tillage implement used, along with the depth, speed, and frequency of tillage operations will determine the impact on the soil.
- If tillage is necessary, consider the timing of your tillage operations. Spring tillage typically increases the likelihood of compaction and soil structural damage due to wet field conditions – especially on clayey soils. Fall tillage reduces soil cover and leaves the soil exposed and susceptible to wind and water erosion over the winter months. Planting a cover crop in the fall can address both spring and fall tillage issues by increasing water infiltration (to dry up the soil) and timeliness of seeding operations in the spring, while reducing or eliminating soil erosion over the winter.
- When switching from conventional tillage to conservation tillage, keep in mind that a transitional period is often necessary to build the soil and minimize short-term yield impacts. This is especially true when converting from conventional tillage to no-till.
- Soils high in clay may require more tillage than other soil types. However, many farmers have found long-term benefits of using strip-till or no-till in clayey soils.

Cost and soil impact comparison of common tillage practices		
Tillage practice	Relative cost (1= lowest to 10=highest)	Relative soil impact (1= lowest to 10=highest)
Moldboard plow	9	10
Disk-rip	8	7
Zone till	5	9
Chisel plow	7	8
Strip till	6	3
Ridge till	7	4
Disk-harrow	6	8
Vertical till	4	5
Field cultivation	3	6
Tandem disk	4	6
No-till	2	1

source: <https://extension.umn.edu/soil-management-and-health/tillage-implements-purpose-and-ideal-use#cost-and-soil-structure-1228710>

Whether you are row cropping or vegetable and market gardening, using these reduced tillage techniques can improve both your soil and your overall farming operation. Keep in mind, to achieve the greatest benefits from reduced tillage systems, use crop rotations that increase biodiversity, and try to maintain living roots in the ground for as much of the year as possible.

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Other News

MANOOMIN

Manoomin, meaning good berry or good grain, is how the tall water grass with edible seeds was referred to by the Anishinabe of North America long before Europeans arrived. Through the ensuing years it is now commonly referred to as wild rice.

The difference in the names is significant. Manoomin, embodies the spiritual, cultural and traditional significance of this plant to the Anishinabe. Wild Rice, tends to reflect the modernization of a traditional practice of growing, harvesting and consumption of the same plant.

By whatever name we choose to use, the plant is a water grass that bears the botanical name of *Zizania Palustris*. This plant is not a rice, it is a member of the grass family and thus a cereal. The only cereal native to Canada.

Natural stands of this plant prefer to grow in shallow lakes, or slow-moving rivers and streams. The major growing area in Canada before the 1960's was west of Lake Superior. The area extended from Thunder Bay west to the Whiteshell Lake area of Manitoba, went north of the Rainy River taking in the English, Wabigoon and Winnipeg River systems as well as the Lake of the Woods.



Wild Rice Stands

To the south much of the northern part of the state of Minnesota as well as parts of Wisconsin and Michigan had large stands of natural lake wild rice. This large geographical area, covering parts of three states and two provinces was sometimes referred to as the "Rice Bowl" of North America.

With abundant waterways, sunlight and cold winters required to break the winter dormancy of the seed it had everything the plant needed and at one point produced 95% of the world production of manoomin/wild rice.

Prior to the 1960's, wild rice was hand harvested. Hand picking of lake rice continues today throughout much of the "rice bowl." In a hand harvesting operation, two people in a canoe formed the harvest team. One would paddle or pole the canoe through the rice bed, the second was equipped with a pair of sticks or knockers to gently knock the ripe kernels from the stalk and these would fall into the canoe. In ideal picking conditions an experienced team could pick 200 to 300 pounds of green rice per day.

Until the 1960's all the wild rice in the world was the shattering variety that grew in natural occurring stands.

As industries developed along the natural waterways, many dams were constructed. This had a profound effect on water levels in the rice beds and crop stability was adversely affected due to the continually changing water depths.

As this was happening, a movement also began in the state of Minnesota in the 1960's, to look at ways of domesticating this crop. Through the selection and breeding of non-shattering strains of the natural seed, a plant was developed that would ripen evenly and thus be harvested mechanically. Land levelling and the development of paddies with a constant water level gave birth to a whole new agricultural industry. The natural lake wild rice industry changed forever!

Mechanical harvest in paddy operations include a modified combine which harvests the field once water levels drop at harvest season. Shortly after this development in Minnesota, the same cropping practices were adopted in California and today the two states normally harvest in excess of 15000 acres of crop annually. The total volume of paddy wild rice harvested in a normal growing year now usually exceeds 20 million pounds of finished rice.

With these changes going on in the US, Canada's lake harvested wild rice industry initiated some major changes to try and maintain some presence in the world supply. Massive seeding projects of lake wild rice took place in Northern Manitoba, Northern Saskatchewan and the province of Ontario.

These newly seeded areas had perfect conditions for growing and rapidly expanded the supply of lake grown wild rice in Canada. Canoe harvesting/hand picking had never been the way wild rice was harvested in these areas.

A mechanical picker, a modified airboat equipped with a gathering basket and a rub bar attached to the front was the accepted method of harvest. It allowed the ripe grain, which naturally shatters from the plant, to fall into the gathering basket and be transported to shore for transportation to a processing facility. Picking is done every 5 to 7 days on the same rice bed. 3- 4 pickings are completed during the harvesting season. There is enough seed shatter off that falls into the water to provide seed for the next year and thus the rice beds are maintained.



Saskatchewan has now become the largest producer of lake grown shattering wild rice. Ontario, once the largest producer in Canada now supplies a small fraction of all lake wild rice harvested in North America.

In the 2021 crop year, one of the poorest growing years recorded, Saskatchewan harvested approximately 750,000 lbs. of green wild rice. At this writing neither Manitoba or Ontario have provided any reliable production data for 2021. Industry estimates a total Canadian production of slightly over 1 million lbs. of green rice or approximately 400,000 lbs. of marketable edible finished wild rice.