



Conflicting messages from Ottawa

by Bette Jean Crews, Member OFA Executive Committee

Canadian farmers are getting conflicting messages from government officials in Ottawa. These farmers and their organizations have been lobbying the government for programs and the necessary funding to keep the industry viable during times of some highly subsidized global markets.

The issue at stake is not only the future of food production in Canada, but also the state of the entire rural economy.

While some ad hoc funding assistance has been provided, the government

maintains it doesn't have the resources to implement the risk management and other programs farmers have identified as essential. At the same time, news reports from Ottawa tell us of federal government surpluses in the billions of dollars.

For the last fiscal year, the budget surplus in Ottawa was reported at \$13.2 billion as the fiscal year ended last March. Most recently, finance department figures for the current period – April to August – tell us of a surplus of \$6.7 bil-

lion. Finance Minister Jim Flaherty warns that a cooling Canadian economy may result in a shrinking of those surplus amounts. Farmers across Canada have been forced to live with shrinking returns for the past three years and government programs have failed to respond to the declining returns experienced by farmers.

Our government leaders need to stop and rethink their priorities. While agriculture's returns diminish to intolerable levels and farm families struggle to maintain their operations, the government coffers continue to fill up with tax dollars from a booming economy.

Food security must take a higher priority in the minds

of the people running our country. Without adequate protection from high subsidies being paid by the United States and the European Community to their farmers, Canada's farmers will continue to lose money on the food they produce for Canadians. When this situation is allowed to go on too long, the supply of domestically produced food will slowly disappear.

Canadians have enjoyed a bountiful supply of safe, healthy food from Canada's farms for decades. As these farms are allowed to fall into bankruptcy and imported foods fill the gap, Canadians have a decision to make: do they want the protection of Canada's highly-regulated food industry, or will unregulated imports

feed their families? As the rural economy crumbles and cities swell, our governments will need a lot more money to repair the damage that is so easily avoided now.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture and its provincial counterparts are conducting a campaign now to ask Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Chuck Strahl, and local members of parliament to think about the consequences of a failed Canadian agriculture sector and move to better support Canada's farmers.

Farmers are being asked to sign and send postcards with clear messages to these elected leaders. The messages point to the failures of

the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization program and call on the government to implement changes to provide stability for farmers. The improvements being sought have been proposed by the industry, but ignored to date by politicians.

The postcard message calls on the government to implement programs that would provide stability for farmers and their families through predictable and bankable safety net programs.

Farm organizations will soon be calling on farmers and all business owners affected by this income crisis to take up the issue directly with MPs and the federal cabinet.

4-H News Santa's Crafters

Our fifth meeting was on Sunday, Oct. 22. We went to the Park House Museum in Amherstburg. We did tin-

smithing and we made little snow flakes, icicles and round decorations. We did tinsmithing for 1 hour and

we made some candles out of wax and beeswax. When we left the Park House we went to the ice cream parlor across the road and had some ice cream. It was very delicious!

Our next meeting will be Thursday, Oct. 26.

– by Tori Rocheleau

Managed forests worth cash

Landowners with more than 10 acres of forested property can qualify for up to 75 percent in property tax reductions under the Ontario Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program.

The Ontario Forestry Association is hosting a free workshop at the Essex Civic Centre on Thursday, Nov. 23 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The workshop will show you how to apply for tax relief under MFTIP, set

objectives for your property, prepare a forest stewardship plan and identify local resources to assist you in achieving your management goals.

The workshop is sponsored by the Trees Ontario Foundation. Space is limited, so pre-registration is suggested.

For more information, contact the Ontario Forestry Association at 1-800-387-0790.

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Pursuant to section 132 of the Ontario Police Services Act, a public auction sale of all unclaimed and abandoned property will be held at the:

Teutonia Club

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Some of the items up for sale include: over 100 bicycles, tools, jewellery, an 8' x 6' storage shed (new), 7' snow removal blades (2), golf clubs, various electronic equipment and many more miscellaneous items.

Visit our website at www.police.windsor.on.ca to view entire list of auction items.

All items must be removed immediately upon conclusion of auction. All items sold "as is" with no guarantee or refund.

Payment by Visa, Mastercard, Interac or cash only.

RICHARD LAVIN - AUCTIONEER

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