



## Planning for RMP

by Geri Kamenz, President  
Ontario Federation of Agriculture

The drive for the Risk Management Program has been the focus of Ontario grains and oilseeds producers for more than a year. We know a lot of people have been waiting for progress in the development and implementation of the RMP.

For many grains and oilseeds producers, any initiative on developing a new safety net program took a back seat to what will likely be remembered for many years to come as one of Ontario's most difficult fall harvests.

Our provincial minister's efforts at the federal level to ensure inclusion of a Business Risk Management consultation within the next-generation national Agricultural Policy Framework review will provide a new opportunity for input.

Minister Dombrowsky is responding to Ontario farmers' insistence that the federal government's position of a 'one size fits all' safety net program does not provide assurances that Ontario's diverse agricultural production needs are met in the event of market failures.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture's boardroom was recently the site of a meeting of senior representatives from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, elected and staff representatives of Ontario's grains and oilseeds groups, and OFA leaders.

Candid discussion from all participants left a positive impression that open dialogue would set the tone for the future. The framework for an aggressive agenda has been laid out as

we move toward the goal of designing an RMP for government review.

The starting point is the RMP that was developed over a year ago by producers for producers. The RMP will serve as the backbone of a program design process. There was agreement that the overall goal would be to enable a healthy and sustainable grains and oilseeds sector in Ontario.

OFA is part of this process as a facilitator. As such we recognize that any future Business Risk Management programming must take into account farmers' responsibility to use all the management tools available to protect themselves from not only market failures, but crop failures and disease challenges.

A successful conclusion, however, is the first step in the RMP story. We continue to work with our provincial counterparts across Canada to ensure a country-wide demand of the federal government to participate financially in such provincially-based companion programs.

At OFA, we recognize the importance of this program development, and commit ourselves to working towards a timely and successful outcome.

# Farm stewardship tips help gardeners

BY MARK CULLEN  
MARKCULLEN.COM

(O.P.S.) – Since moving to the country it's become even more apparent to me that farmers' knowledge is extremely useful to me as a gardener. To a large extent the application of their intellectual wealth on the farm applies to my garden - just on a smaller scale.

Farmers have the opportunity to enhance their environmental knowledge through the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) program, which allows farmers to evaluate the environmental benefits and risks of their farm operations, and create action plans to enhance the benefits and reduce the risks. It is a voluntary educational program supported through the Agricultural Policy Framework (APF), a federal, provincial and territorial initiative that aims to make Canada's agricultural sector a world leader in environmentally sustainable production. More than two-thirds of Ontario's farmers have participated in the EFP program.

In a workshop setting, one of the first issues farmers investigate is their soil type, topography and drainage. By starting with these important factors, they are better able to make management decisions that minimize the environmental risks of their farm properties.

These factors not only

influence what types of crops can be grown, but also any environmental risks that the farmer will need to consider. For example, steep slopes are more susceptible to erosion, and therefore cropping systems that encourage a lot of protective cover, such as pasture for livestock, may be more appropriate than cropping systems that leave soil uncovered or require a lot of "working up" or tillage of the soil. In the garden a steep slope needs to be planted intensely with fast-rooting plants, or heavily mulched to avoid soil erosion.

Soil type is also important. Farmers must be careful if their soils are sandy: an excess of applied nutrients may find their way down through the sand quickly to the water table. In the garden and on the farm it is always prudent to add generous quantities of organic matter to build structure, encourage earthworms, and hold soil moisture.

Consider the condition and content of your garden soil. Heavy, clay soils favour Daylilies and Purple Coneflower, while Butterfly Bush and Mock Orange will perform better in sandier soils. If parts of your yard tend to be damp most of the season, Bleeding Heart and Astilbe are great choices, while Potentilla and Sedum are better planted in drier locations. Carefully match your plants to the climate, soil and drainage characteristics of your garden and you will be far happier with the results. Farmers know they can sometimes modify the growing environment on their farm, but they can't radically change conditions over a short period.

My first rule of green thumb in the garden: Ninety percent of the success you achieve is the result of proper soil preparation. Understanding the soil type in your yard will help you determine what to grow and what to expect from your garden.

Clay soil can inhibit growth because it compacts easily and drains poorly. It can be difficult for plants to access the moisture held in clay soil. Water is closely bonded with clay so plant roots may not be able to remove the moisture from it. The majority of water in a clay soil is therefore not available to your thirsty plants. Clay soils will often stay wet for extended periods of time and, along with compaction, this prevents

plant roots from reaching air: a necessary ingredient in healthy plants everywhere.

Sandy soils have relatively large particles allowing water, air and plant roots to move freely. It drains quickly, is well aerated and warms up quickly in the spring giving plants a quick start to the season. The price to pay for this advantage is that plants will be thirsty and hungry for nutrients. Plants that grow well in sandy soil are often adapted to low nutrient levels and dry conditions. Farmers have used mulch for generations to hold moisture in the ground - for the garden I recommend finely ground up softwood bark mulch about 3 inches (7 to 8 cm) thick on sandy soil.

Good soil is a balance between the extremes of clay and sandy soils and can be achieved over time and with some hard work. Adding composted organic matter and leaf mould will

improve all types of soil. Decaying organic matter helps sandy soil retain water and nutrients that would otherwise wash away. Clay soil amended with organic matter is looser so that air, water and roots can penetrate more easily. If starting a new garden bed you can dig the organic matter into the soil prior to planting. However, if you are working with an existing garden, lay the compost on top of the beds in the early spring. Earthworms will pull the organic matter down into the soil and do the work for you. (You have GOT to like that idea!)

Paying careful attention to the natural attributes of your property, such as soil types, topography and drainage will not only help you create a beautiful landscape more easily, it will help you prevent environmental degradation from erosion or water contamination.

## LAVIN AUCTIONS INC.

Anyone looking to purchase an out of service ambulance, we will have 2 - '00's and 3 - '99 Fords from the County of Essex Ambulance Service. These units are all diesel powered and will be on the auction block on Wednesday, January 24th at 6:00 p.m. at 13400 Desro Dr. in Tecumseh. This weekly Wednesday sale starts w/tools - re-poed vehicles, then the above units followed by dealer and public vehicles. Terms and conditions at sale time. For further information please call

**RICHARD LAVIN AUCTIONS INC.**  
**TECUMSEH, ONTARIO (519)-735-3070**

## Jack Morris Auctions Inc. Farm Machinery Auction Sale

**Saturday, January 27, 2007 at 10:30 a.m.**  
For William and David McGuire, Merlin, to be held at William McGuire's farm at 4612 Morris Line, Merlin in Chatham Kent. From Kent Middle Line (Cty. Rd. 8) between Valetta and Tilbury, take Sharp Rd. north to Morris Line. Or from Hwy. #2 at Merlin Rd., go south approx. 1 mi. to Morris Line and turn west. Watch for auction signs.

**Note:** This is an exceptional line of clean, very well maintained farm machinery selling without reserve as farms are rented. Not a lot of small items.

**Tractors:** 1997 JD 7810 dsl. and 1988 JD 4450 dsl. tractors, both in excellent cond. **Combine w/Grain Head:** 1987 Gleaner L3 dsl. w/Deutz Allis 20' grain table. **Corn Head:** Gleaner 6 row 30". **Planting:** No-till 6 row 30" New Idea dbl. frame corn planter or 11 row x 15" bean planter; Tye 13 1/2' grain drill 3 ph 24 run w/fitted tarp. **Wagons:** 4-Kilbros 385 gravity wagons. **Sprayer:** Hardie 650 gal. lg. wheel sprayer. **Auger:** Farm King hyd. lift and hyd. swing 8" x 50' auger w/8' swing intake auger. **Tillage Equipment:** 22' Kongskilde cult.; 20' M.F. 820 wheel disc; 9 tooth Int. Conser-Till; Kongskilde 300 series 5 fur. plow; Triple OK 5 fur. plow; Derynck 22' land leveler; sprocket packers. **Plus:** Tow motor fork lift; duals; front end weights; machinery trailer; water tank and wagon; grain cleaner; plus other misc. items.

**Sale Order:** Small items selling first, then farm implements. Tractors sell at 12:00 noon followed by combine and then any items not previously sold. Terms: Cash or personalized cheque day of sale. Owner or auctioneer not responsible for accidents day of sale. Lunch available. **No Reserve.**

**Proprietors:** David McGuire, 519-689-4432, William McGuire, 519-682-0817  
**Auctioneer:** Jack Morris, 519-687-2530 or 1-800-462-3561

More details and photos at [www.jackmorrisauctions.com](http://www.jackmorrisauctions.com)

## Do You Own Rural Property?

You may qualify for substantial grants to plant trees, construct rock chutes, cap abandoned wells or upgrade faulty septic systems.



Essex Region  
Conservation  
Authority

For information contact  
Michael Dick 519-776-5209,  
ext.369 or email:  
mdick@erca.org



Relax.  
It's Rheem.™

## The Relaxing Choice for Home Heating Comfort.

Virtually any furnace can make your home warmer. But few can do that job as quietly and efficiently as a Rheem furnace. There's a quality Rheem furnace that's perfect for your budget and your family's home comfort needs.

Call your authorized Rheem dealer for more information...

Wayne  
**WARKENTIN**  
PLUMBING, HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING



CALL NOW FOR A  
FREE ESTIMATE

**733-5832**

147 LANSDOWNE AVE., KINGSVILLE

**733-4751**

**WE DO PLUMBING TOO!**  
**Two licensed plumbers available 24/7**