

Government announces program details

The details of Ontario's Beginning Farmer Assistance Program have been announced by Agriculture and Food Minister Dennis Timbrell.

Timbrell said, "The beginning farmer program is one to which I have a strong commitment. It will help bring as many as 1,000 new people into farming every year

for the next five years. We need aggressive new people to bring a new vitalizing force to our agricultural industry."

Ontario will rebate interest charges on loans in excess of 8 per cent, to a maximum of 5 percentage points, based on the Farm Credit Corporation rate, currently 13 1/4 per cent.

At present, approved lenders are the federal Farm Credit Corporation, the Bank of Montreal, the Toronto-Dominion Bank and the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce.

An individual may receive the rebate on loans up to \$350,000.

The rebate will apply to loans made to cover transactions which were finalized on or after May 10, 1983. Beginning farmers may enter the program at any time during a five-year period which began on that date.

To be eligible, an applicant must never have owned a viable farm, must qualify for a loan from the lending institution and must become a full-time farmer, operating a viable farm and earning the majority of his/her income from farming.

In addition, applicants must be able to demonstrate competence as a farm manager through having either sufficient agricultural experience or an agricultural education.

A farmer's eligibility for the program will be determined by the ministry. Security, terms, interest rates and loan amount, however, will be subject to normal credit negotiations between the lender and the beginning farmer. Loans from banks and other financial institutions must be made at a fixed rate for a period of not less than five years.

"The program will run for five years, with \$135 million being made available for interest rebates over the five years," Timbrell said. "This program clearly demonstrates the Ontario government's long-term commitment to agriculture."

The rebates are available on that part of the loan used to purchase land, fixed improvements, breeding stock, quota and machinery, or to make permanent farm improvements.

The request to enrol in the Ontario Beginning Farmer Assistance Program should be made when the applicant files a request for a loan.

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YORK REGION: The Family and Children's Services of York Region (C.A.S.) is looking for people interested in volunteering.

Volunteers are required to be friends, visitors, drivers and assist with special projects.

Persons with time to spare to help enrich the lives of "special" children in York Region are asked to contact Myra Hurst-Duvall at 895-2318; 731-3150 or 722-3474, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

An orientation meeting is planned for Tues., Sept. 20 at 7 p.m. The location is 85 Eagle Street West, Newmarket. Those interested in learning more about the program are invited to attend.

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The "plenum" is the warm air chamber at the top of your forced air oil furnace. That's exactly where a plenum heater is installed. So that on most days, the fan circulates more economical, electrically generated heat.

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Today is definitely the time to investigate the savings of introducing your oil furnace to an add-on electric system. The COSP (Canada Oil Substitution Program) grant will pay for half of the installed cost or \$800, whichever is less, on all systems where oil consumption is reduced by 50% or more.

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