

FARM NEWS

Leeds OFA

Director Ed Richmond reports a number of reactions and concessions resulting from the Federation's March 23rd brief to the Provincial Government:

- * OMAF will upgrade the budget and staff of its marketing division.
- * The Ministry of Transport will amend new licensing regulations to allow farmers to drive a straight truck, if licenced for farm use, without a truck driver's licence.
- * Twenty million dollars will be made available for tile drainage.
- * The Ministry of Transport will publish new regulations for farm vehicles on highways giving farmers access within certain limitations.
- * OMAF will be one of the ministries receiving grant money for the creation of jobs this summer.
- * An undisclosed amount of Wintario lottery money will be made available for energy research.

OFA, in conjunction with CIDA, World University Service of Canada, and other Canadian agencies has agreed to assist in a large farm project in Sierra Leone in West Africa. OFA will sponsor the farm manager for the project which will include a hatchery, laying houses, a grain growing operation and abattoir.

A resolution was passed asking OMAF to defer payment of the enrollment fee for the Ontario Beef Calf Income Stabilization Program until the fall.

OFA directors are most anxious to inform the public that the federation is non-partisan and does not support any political party or candidate. Officers who wish to take part in provincial or federal politics must take a leave of absence from OFA duties while engaging in political activities.

OFA President Peter Hanna and several other members will appear on a TV program on "The Low Cost of Food" on May 3rd. Watch your local paper for details.

Farmers who have received Agricultural Letter No. 107-3:77 have been wondering about "distinct beef operation" as a stated requirement for receiving the Beef Stabilization Subsidy. Ed's enquiries on our behalf to Ottawa got the clarification that if the animal is not milked and is kept for beef, then that animal can be registered.

OFA executive is working to get two provincial bills brought into line with agricultural requirements:

- Ontario Bill 139 - Employee Health and Safety, which is a very broad bill covering all employees in terms of hours of work, chemical use and handling, sanitary facilities, weight lifting and movement. OFA feels the scope of this proposed legislation is too broad to give realistic treatment to the needs of farmers.
- Canada Bill C42 - Competition Bill - a new bill which aims to bring farm marketing boards under controls similar to the former Combines Act.

A directors' workshop was held dealing with the report of the Blair Commission on Property Tax Reform. Many ideas and reactions were presented and the directors resolved that a pilot project be set up using the property tax reform proposals to determine their workability and their effects on the taxes to be paid by individual taxpayers.

Leeds OFA will hold a public meeting in the evening late in May to debate the proposals of the Blair Commission. Ed Richmond will be pro-reform, Gerd Vonhonn will be anti-reform and resource persons from Toronto will attend to moderate proceedings and answer questions.

May 15th is the deadline for farmers' applications to participate in the 1977 Junior Agriculturalist Program: more information is available from Ag. Rep. Charles Tanner in Brockville: Tel. 342-2124.

May 12-13 are devoted to Career Search at Kemptville CAT for the Eastern counties of Eastern Ontario: May 16-17 for the Western counties of Eastern Ont.