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RENFREW COUNTY FARM NEWS WINTER 2020



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'The Kitchen Link' Calls Local Food Processors to Action

Contributed by: Jennifer Doelman, Chair, Renfrew County Agricultural Economic Development Committee

"The Kitchen Link," is a concept for a shared-use licensed kitchen in Renfrew County. The brainchild of 3 local businesswomen, this initiative intends to build regional economic capacity for Renfrew County food producers and processors.

But they need your help to do it.

The COVID pandemic has raised the general population's interest in buying local, including food. Food security is also a concern for many, creating strong demand in the Ottawa Valley for farm-grown and locally produced foods. Unfortunately, it has also shown that there are many limitations in the existing processing capacity of Renfrew County's local agri-food ecosystem.

Heather MacMillan, the owner of Little Trickle Farm and Heather's Hearth, is well known for her exceptional sourdough bread: "Selling at the farm gate or farmers markets we don't need to have a commercial kitchen because we are talking directly to our customers. What many people don't realize is that if we want to sell to a local store or to a wholesaler, the food must be prepared in a commercial kitchen."

Not only does lack of commercial kitchen capacity affect Heather's business, it extends up the value chain: "I have local stores asking to carry my bread but unfortunately, I have no ability to sell it to them," she says regretfully.

Tiffany Smiley, another partner in this venture explains: "We believe that food producers and small-scale food processors in this area will benefit from having access to a licensed facility where they can scale-up their production to develop new markets, such as selling to local stores and restaurants, or even larger customer bases like grocery stores or export markets".

Once a city girl, Tiffany fell in love with the Ottawa Valley in 2012 and decided to take the leap, moving her family to the country and creating Urban Valley Farm. Tiffany's pickles and her famous red pepper jelly have a loyal following, but she is limited in her capacity to meet her growing consumer demand.

Marie-Josée Lévesque the 3rd dynamo in the team, is taking the lead on project management: "Building and outfitting a licensed commercial kitchen is out of reach for most, unless you have already grown to a larger scale. This project is designed to break the catch-22 cycle and help local businesses thrive."

MJ brings a great deal of business experience to the project: she holds an Executive MBA, and is a Certified Professional Coach, with over 20 years of experience in Canada and internationally. When not volunteering her time for this project, MJ provides business coaching and advisory services independently and through PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise and Innovation Guelph's Rhyse-Up! program.

"We are starting with a 'Call to Action'," says MJ, "We would like to invite all food producers and small-scale food processors in Renfrew County to participate in a short survey.

We'll use this survey to gauge the level of interest among agri-food players for a shared-use commercial kitchen. This is the first step to conducting a feasibility study."

Although still in its infancy, this initiative is supported by the County of Renfrew's Economic Development Department, who will be sending the survey to all Taste of the Valley vendors.

The project is also gaining support from the agricultural community. The Renfrew County Federation of Agriculture and the Renfrew Local 330 group of the National Farmers Union (NFU) both plan to distribute the survey link to their memberships.

Marshall Buchanan, president of the local NFU and co-owner of Ottawa Valley Farm to Fork, a Scotch Bush farm that specializes in gourmet foods, fresh produce and farm-raised meats is encouraged by the initiative: "Value-added processing has been completely underserved in terms of economic development in Renfrew County. We have such a strong agricultural base and yet we don't get the boost to our local economy because there is minimal food processing in Renfrew County. We have the primary producers but not the secondary businesses that transform raw ingredients into gourmet and value-added foods. This is wealth and job creation we are missing."

The survey can be accessed online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VKM7RFC>.

When asked why these 3 busy entrepreneurs and mothers decided to add MORE to their plates (no pun intended), MJ was quick to respond: "We saw an opportunity to fill a community need, so we decided to volunteer our time and expertise to spearhead the creation of a shared resource. We believe a community is stronger together."

Contacts:

Heather MacMillan macmillan.heather@gmail.com

Marie-Josée Lévesque mj@imtransformation.biz

Tiffany Smiley urbanvalleyfarm613@gmail.com

RENFREW COUNTY BEEF

The annual meeting of Renfrew County Beef will be held on **Thursday January 21, 2021 at 7:30 pm at the Cobden Agricultural Hall**. We will be limited to the number available to attend the meeting and COVID protocol will have to be followed; meaning masks and distance separation. There will be a report from the Beef Farmers of Ontario; but at this time it has not been determined whether we will be having a guest speaker. We are asking you to pre-register with the secretary if you plan to attend this meeting by contacting Donna either by phone at 613-432-5568 or e-mail donnaofa@nrtco.net. As a board we are here to serve the beef farmers of Renfrew County and will continue to do so through this COVID 19 pandemic.

Beef Farmer Logic: Nothing is impossible with the right attitude - and a hammer.

Japanese Consumers Enjoying Renfrew Beef:

Each year feedlots in the southwest sector of the province eagerly await the migration of Renfrew calves into their yards. The majority of these fine quality calves will eventually be harvested at two federal processing plants. Cargill at Guelph and St. Helen's located in Toronto.

Thanks to the aggressive marketing now being conducted by the Beef Farmers of Ontario and the Ontario Cattle Feeders Association, Ontario is now selling beef from these plants into Japan.

With a new sales team located in Japan there are currently 16 food distributors marketing beef originating from our farms.

Why Is This Important:

Foreign markets are needed for Ontario beef especially with the ongoing struggles with Covid - 19. Currently retail sales within the province are staying constant but estimates for foodservice and restaurants sales are down about 40% according to industry analysts.

Is The Japan Market Working:

Compared to 2019 in the first 8 months of 2020 Ontario sales have increased by 23% in dollars and 20% by weight. For the rest of Canada in the same time period sales to Japan are down 9% in dollars and 10% by weight.

The Bottom Line:

With beef getting backlogged in the restaurant and foodservice sectors cattle prices were headed for a downward spiral. Thanks to the new marketing strategies within the province cattle prices remained positive. Therefore as Mr. Kawasaki, Ms. Suzuki and youngster Mitsubishi travel to the Tokyo steak house they will say, "Renfrew So Good."

*** Interested In A County Beef Career *** Contact: Renfrew County Beef President, David McGonegal at 613.582.7031. (early morning and late night calls are encouraged)



Inspired by Emily Trudeau:

Farm accidents can occur in the most remote locations, making it difficult for first responders to easily locate the situation. We have found that there is a flaw in the system – not all rural property entrances have signage. In the event of an emergency, no one should have to wait helplessly for first responders to find them. Time is everything, and a civic address at the entrance to a vacant farm field could make all the difference.

How to acquire a sign for your property:

Please contact the municipality where the property is located and ask for a civic address for the entrance to that property.

Renfrew County Farm Safety Cost-Sharing – up to \$10/sign, 2 signs per family

Submit a copy of the paid invoice from your township for the cost of the sign to Lynn Clelland (613-432-6317 or liclelland@nrtco.net)

Appreciation of local leadership: Big thanks to the Twp of Admaston-Bromley for being the first township in Renfrew County connect with this project at www.farm911.ca

Renfrew County Veterinary Services Committee

The Annual Meeting of the Renfrew County Veterinary Services Committee that was to be held Sept. 22, 2020, was postponed due to Covid-19.

The executive for 2020 is:

President – Dave McGonegal 613-582-7031
Vice President – Lloyd Robinson 613-582-3715
Director to NPAHN – Craig McLaughlin 613-646-7820
Secretary/Treasurer – Glen Smith 613-628-2987

Veterinarians on Contract

Veterinarians under contract with the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines to provide Veterinary Services to large animal producers in Renfrew County and Nipissing District:

Dr. Tony Ruyter, Cobden Animal Centre, Cobden – 613-646-2345
Dr. Linwood Fisher Veterinary Services, can be contacted through the Cobden Animal Centre - 613-646-2345
Dr. Laurie Jeffrey – Madawaska Veterinary Clinic, Renfrew – 613-432-9187
Dr. Donald Clarke - Renfrew Animal Hospital – 613-432-8884

For more information, contact any member of the executive. You may also want to visit the Northern Producer Animal Health Network web page – Northern Producer Animal Health Network.com.

Well what a year for Renfrew County 4H.

Our leaders have certainly had to think outside the box to keep this program running during this pandemic.

Clubs were run on virtual platforms and families had to become more involved than ever with the members and their assignments.

A lot of families certainly benefitted from the cooking clubs as all the food was prepped at home and served to the members' families. There are a lot of very appetizing meal pictures on our Facebook page showing what all the members prepared.

The livestock clubs concentrated more on the health and care of livestock as opposed to the grooming and training involved in show day. A few of the members also participated in virtual shows offered. We certainly miss the fairs though!

We cannot end the year with an Awards Night but there is a drive-thru event being organized for November 29th in Cobden for our members to pick up their awards.

Moving forward, we have a lot of ingenious 4H leaders who are thinking of ways to keep out members involved in the program! Let's see where 2021 takes us!

Renfrew County



CANADA
4-H Ontario

RENFREW COUNTY FARM SAFETY ASSOCIATION

INFORMATION SESSION: Silo Gas - Manure Gas - Farmers' Lung

JANUARY 20, 2021 1:00-3:00 PM Cobden Ag Hall (Snow date: Jan 27, 2021)

Plans include both virtual and live presentations from Sheila James (WSPS/Ontario Farm Safety), David Prange (Valley WorkSafe) and reps from industries demonstrating Gas Monitors, Respiratory Equipment etc. Learn more about these hazards, how to access the equipment when you need it and how to protect yourself and others from these deadly gases.

This is your chance to find out about the costs involved, the practicality of owning a device individually or sharing with neighbours or the advantage of paying a fee to a professional who visits your farm to test for dangerous gases. Local ag businesses will be invited to participate. All Covid 19 protocols will be followed. Please wear a mask.

Pre-registration is needed to ensure that we do not exceed Covid-19 hall occupancy. Your contact info makes it more efficient if, because of new gov't regulations, we must cancel the event. You can indicate your interest in attending or ask for further information by calling 613 432 6317 or emailing liclelland@nrtco.net.

RENFREW COUNTY FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE

The board of directors of the Renfrew Federation continue to navigate through this COVID 19 pandemic to serve you the farmers of Renfrew County. We have not been having regular monthly meetings, however we have continued to keep in contact as a board over the phone and the computer.

We held our annual and regional meeting virtually and went through the process even though we had no uptake from the members. Sitting at a computer for the OFA Annual General Meeting will be PAC person, David Campbell, the county President, Tyler Armstrong and members of the Federation Jenn Doelman and Charlene Whattam. What used to take place over a day and a half will be done in four hours or less. As members you will have received notice that the President of the Ontario Federation board will be elected by the provincial board of directors and not the membership of Ontario.

We say goodbye to Debra Pretty-Straathof as our Zone 8 director to the provincial board and welcome Jenn Doelman as the new Zone 8 provincial director. We want to thank Debra for 20 years' service and wish her well. She served Renfrew County well by attending most of the county monthly meetings over her 20 years as a provincial director.

As a board of directors we are currently working with Emily McKenzie on mental health in the agricultural industry. We will be sending out a survey prepared by Emily, which can also be accessed by the computer; and we ask that you take time to fill this survey out. With the trying times we are faced with; and with the future not looking brighter we are realizing that mental health is a very real risk in the agricultural industry. The survey will be sent to Emily and she will compile the results and make a presentation to the Renfrew County Federation board and we will decide where to proceed based on the replies received. **We ask you to take the time to do the survey because by completing the survey you will be entered in to a draw to receive \$500. Your membership number must appear on the hard copy or on your digital copy. Deb Knapton, the OFA Field person for Renfrew County will find your name through your membership number and a cheque will be in the mail to you if you are the lucky member whose survey was pulled.** We hope you as members will help us out with this project.

Stay healthy, stay strong and keep smiling.

Mental health is a growing concern in Canadian communities. In agricultural communities, it has been found that farmers are more likely to experience chronic stress, which can lead to physical and mental illnesses.

Additionally:

-45% of farmers report high stress

-58% of farmers meet the classifications for anxiety

-35% of farmers meet the classifications for depression

Source: National Survey of Farmer Mental Health, Dr. Andria Jones-Bitton (2016)

In Renfrew County the OFA and the NFU will be sending a survey about mental health in farmers and farm families in Renfrew County to their members this fall. The goal of the survey is to understand and address the needs for mental health services for our agricultural community. In addition an introduction to mental health and mental health resources session will be held virtually in January 2021.

More information to come for this event. Looking forward to seeing you "there".

October 27, 2020

General Release

From: Ottawa Valley Seed Growers Association

Regarding: **Ottawa Valley Farm Show and Ottawa Valley Seed Growers Association 2021**



The Ottawa Valley Seed Growers Association and the Ottawa Valley Farm Show proudly return to their roots in 2021, celebrating the history and unique tradition that make this group and show so distinctive.

The OVSGA originated in 1927 as a seed show, when a group of Ottawa Valley farmers came together to help one another merchandise their field crops. The display of the Ottawa Valley Championship Seed, Feed and Forage Show continues to be a central component of the modern-day Ottawa Valley Farm Show. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic and continued global health concerns, the OVSGA announced that the 2021 OVFS will not occur as the traditional in person event. However, the OVSGA will continue to bring the agricultural community together in a meaningful way, celebrating the people who drive the industry, and going back to their seed show roots.

The OVSGA plans to proceed with the 2021 Ottawa Valley Championship Seed, Feed and Forage Show, extending support to local County Soil and Crop Improvement Associations and encouraging all seed show exhibitors to save their samples. The show will continue to offer traditional 4-H classes as well as introduce new elements that recognize current challenges and that many 2020 4-H clubs are being held virtually. The Championship show is scheduled for March of 2021. For more information, and full rules and regulations, please visit <https://ottawafarmshow.com/2021-seed-show-program/>.

Our most significant opportunities are found in times of greatest challenge. This team, together with community and industry support, will continue to connect friends, family, farmers, and industry professionals while facilitating a 'forum to disseminate modern agricultural information and promote effective management techniques,' as their mission calls them to do.

The Ottawa Valley Farm Show is a celebration of our rich heritage, and a determined statement of a promising future. Although the COVID-19 pandemic prevents us from physically coming together this March, 2021 is a year for OVSGA and OVFS to return to their roots, reimagine ways to connect our community, and celebrate the passion, history, and traditions of the industry. Expect 2022 to showcase and explore the innovations and technologies that will power our future. Follow @ottawafarmshow on Facebook and Twitter for current updates on all activities and events.

Reuben Stone & I are Renfrew's Directors with the Ottawa Farm Show and will be glad to help receive Renfrew County and area samples to be taken to the forage show. This is a great opportunity to reconnect with our historic roots as well as new innovations (check out the 4-H Video class!) while we are limited from our usual social gatherings. You can reach me at bonnecherehaven@gmail.com.

Thanks, Mike Doelman

It has come to our attention that some of you receiving this newsletter would like to receive it electronically instead of receiving a hard copy. If you are one of these people please send your e-mail address to both Donna Campbell donnaofa@nrtco.net and Agatha Crogie rcfarmnews@gmail.com along with your address that the hard copy is going to so that we can remove you from the mailing list. This way we can compile a list of e-mail's to receive the newsletter electronically. Thanking you for your help in this matter.

The Ottawa Valley Championship Seed, Feed and Forage Show organizing committee is full steam ahead with plans for the 94th annual show in March 2021.

The current pandemic has played havoc with the Ottawa Valley Farm Show forcing cancellations in 2020 and again in 2021. However, we are optimistic that CoVid19 will not disrupt 2021 Seed Shows in each of your counties or the Championship Show and Awards. With all the current uncertainty, we are ready to be flexible and adjust plans as needed - work continues on Plans A, B and C just in case.

The 2021 Championship Show program is complete and can be found at www.ottawafarmshow.com. New classes for this year include:

Class 34B - Forage Soybeans

Class 42B - Ottawa Valley Haylage Quality Class

Class 126 - 4-H Presentation - Video or PowerPoint

Please continue to help spread the seed show message by sharing this information widely in your community with members and exhibitors, and participating in the ongoing social media posts. A recent press release is attached for your information. Let's continue to "talk it up"!

Look forward to seeing all your 2021 field crop and 4-H exhibits,

Arlene Ross Administrator Ottawa Valley Seed Growers Association
613-791-3900 arlene@ottawafarmshow.com

Health and Safety Excellence program

Our program meets you where you are - whether you are building a health and safety program from scratch, or enhancing an existing program.

Here's what our program offers to businesses:

- Support and guidance from a WSIB-approved provider
- Pandemic readiness materials to help you meet the challenges of operating safely during a pandemic and reduce COVID-19 related hazards in the workplace
- Flexible program options to make it easy to join
- Recognition to show employees, customers, and investors your commitment to health and safety
- Earn recognition with our new health and safety excellence badges

Visit our website or sign up for a webinar to learn more about how we can help keep your business safe and resilient.

wsib
ONTARIO

With the Ontario government's releasing new requirements for businesses to have a safety plan in place, we understand your top priority right now is to keep your business running by adjusting quickly. Our Health and Safety Excellence program is here to help. Our program topics, such as Control of Hazards, will support you in developing plans and implementing safe work practices to keep your employees and customers safe. Get rewarded for your work by earning WSIB premium rebates & recognition badges.

The program offers employers a minimum of \$1000.00, and up to \$250 000.00 per year for successfully participating in the program, as well as public recognition for your efforts. Our new incentive program provides more flexibility and greater rewards to employers than our previous programs. We are aligned with the Chief Prevention Officer's accreditation program, the construction industry's COR certification program, and many other recognized standards and best practices.

We will also recognize and reward any efforts you have put into place to respond to the COVID19 pandemic with both financial and non-financial rewards, even if you took these efforts prior to joining the program. **In other words, you can offset the costs you have already spent for work you have already done.**

I will be conducting webinar information sessions regarding the program, and how it can help save you money while keeping your business running safely, on the following dates:

- Wednesday, November 25 at 2:00pm
- Tuesday, December 1 at 3:00pm
- Friday, December 11 12:00pm (en français)

Renfrew County Soil & Crop Improvement Association Annual Meeting
Date: Friday December 4th, 2020 Time: 10:30 AM

Please join us in our new virtual format as we take precautions against Covid - 19.
Join by computer, mobile device or by telephone (landline)

Join Zoom meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84581299246?pwd=QXJUK1FUNnhqajBVOFdrb2tWZmdMZz09>

Meeting ID: 845 8129 9246

Passcode: 654906

By Telephone: Dial: 1 647 558 0588 Toll Free: 1 855 703 8985

Meeting ID: 845 8129 9246

Passcode: 654906

Lunch Provided By: Leftovers In Your Fridge Catering Company
Don't be shy please join this annual meeting.

If you have a QUESTION you would like answered, please text your question(s) to 613-504-1863 or
email: renfrewscia@gmail.com

Dateline

December

- 1 WSIB info seminar
- 4 Renfrew County Soil and Crop Annual Meeting – Zoom – info above
- 11 WSIB info seminar

January

- 20 Farm Safety Event - Cobden
- 21 Renfrew County Beef Annual Meeting - Cobden



PUBLICATIONS MAIL

AGREEMENT NO. 40005042

RETURN UNDELIVERABLE

CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:
RENFREW COUNTY AGRICULTURAL
LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

C/O Agatha Crogie 2978 South McNaughton
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