



NEWS RELEASE

Ontario Goat

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A MILESTONE ACHIEVEMENT FOR A UNITED GOAT SECTOR

Ontario Goat submits proposal to Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission

GUELPH, Ont- The proposal seeking marketing board status for Ontario Goat has been submitted to the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission (OFPMC). The proposal represents the culmination of industry consultations, discussion, research and hard work by the Ontario Goat Board of Directors, staff, goat producers and industry partners.

“Thank you to everyone who attended a meeting, provided feedback and signed the Petition of Support,” stated Ontario Goat President Tobin Schlegel. “We were able to gather over 100 signatures of support from meat, milk and fibre producers representing all sizes of operations. It is encouraging to see the momentum building for Ontario Goat,” he added.

The 2010 Farm Business Registration database lists 418 active Ontario farms reporting goat income. With 109 signatures received from goat producers for the Petition of Support, Ontario Goat exceeded its goal by collecting 26% of the goat farms’ signatures. “I am very happy to see how much support we have from goat producers at the farm level- it is unprecedented,” said Schlegel. “We know that there is even more support out there but logistically we needed to press on with the submission of the proposal, and we know we can count on those producers when the time comes to vote,” he added.

The objective set before the Board of Directors was to find solutions to the challenges and barriers that currently face goat producers in the marketplace, while at the same time providing producers with stability and options to succeed. Visioning for the future of the industry meant taking a hard look at existing ways of doing business, and implementing changes for the betterment of Ontario goat producers in the proposal.

This past summer and early fall, Board members and staff travelled the province to meet with producers to finalize the Farm Products proposal and collect signatures on Petitions of Support. Producers and industry members have had the opportunity to voice their opinions and question the rationale behind some of the proposed changes. These comments and concerns provided by Ontario’s goat producers have been invaluable to building the proposal.

Because of what Ontario Goat heard from goat producers across the province, there have been several significant changes to the proposal.

1. Reduced the check-off to be paid on fluid milk from \$0.01 per litre to \$0.0075 per litre.
2. Increased the check-off fee to be collected on goat meat from \$2.00 per head to \$2.50 per head.
3. Removed the exemption for breeding stock. Producers that sell breeding stock will be required to remit check-off (\$2.50) to Ontario Goat.
4. Any animal that is \$20 or less before commission and fees will be exempt from the check-off fee. This was to build in an allowance for buck kids sold through auction markets & sales barns where the sale price may not be high enough for the \$2.50 per head to be feasible.

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“The changes to the proposal make sense because it is what producers have told us they need to make the proposal work for their farm,” explained Schlegel. “We knew that changes would be necessary but we had to have a starting point from which to begin the dialogue with producers. The fact that we received such helpful and positive feedback is indication that we have a meaningful proposal that goat producers will really be able to consider carefully,” he added.

“From our discussions with processors about the proposal, they have been very supportive and want to see a strong and active Ontario Goat moving forward,” explained Haley. The processors understand the role that Ontario Goat can have in developing the meat, milk and fibre sectors and how this in turn benefits their processing businesses as well. “We have an opportunity with our industry partners to work together to achieve our goals, and Ontario Goat as an impartial organization can have an active role in facilitating development,” added Haley.

Once the Commission reviews the proposal and feels that there is enough support, a recommendation will be put forth to Ontario’s Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Hon. Ted McMeekin to call a vote by producers on the proposal. At that time, producers will receive a package in the mail from the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission which will outline the proposal and include a voting card.

Information about the proposal, the voting process and the next steps will also be posted on Ontario Goat’s website. The actual vote and the determination of the mailing list will be handled by the Commission with input from Ontario Goat. It is anticipated that the vote will occur Spring/Summer of 2012, pending approval of the initial proposal by OFPMC and the Minister.

Information meetings will be held throughout the province prior to the vote, so that questions can be answered about the proposal and the voting process. Details of these meetings will be posted on the Ontario Goat website and communicated to industry once they become available.

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