



# BROWSE

News from the Ontario Goat Breeders' Association  
<http://www.ogba.ca>

**OGBA Directors - District 1 (2 vacancies)**

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**OGBA Directors - District 2 (2 vacancies)**

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**OGBA Directors - District 3 (2 vacancies)**

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**OGBA Directors - District 5**

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Allison Taylor  
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**OGBA Directors - District 6 (2 vacancies)**

Dawn Stead  
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 Phone 705-788-1942  
 Email [dstead@ogba.ca](mailto:dstead@ogba.ca)

**OGBA President's Message**

The profile of the goat industry publicly, within the agri-food industry and in the eyes of the government, is very important. It must be positive, productive and professional. Some may wonder why this is so important. This is where connections are made and, just as importantly, decisions are made. For far too long our industry has been barely recognized and far too often overlooked. This leaves our industry at a disadvantage when it comes the planning and decision-making that shapes our future. To rebuild our profile OGBA has been making every effort to attend industry meetings, to show that we are stepping up and ready to take our place in the agriculture community. I am pleased to say that as of late last fall, and for the first time an OGBA Director, Garry Claassen, is the representative for the Sheep and Goat industry on the Toronto Stock Yard Land Development Board.

Secondly, and for the first time, this February Garry was elected to the Board of Directors of the Agriculture Adaptation Council as the Director for "Other Commodities". Both of these positions are very high profile and we thank Garry for taking the time and effort to take on these very important positions. It is a wonderful opportunity for our industry and allows us to show our commitment toward the future.

On Wednesday, March 2, 2005 the "ONE VOICE" rally, organized by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, was held at Queen's Park in Toronto. It was well attended with some 8,000 people attended along with an assortment of about 100 tractors and other agriculture vehicles. There were many creative signs waved high with messages like:  
 NO FARMS, NO FOOD, NO FUTURE  
 FARMS FEED CITIES  
 TO. GARBAGE \$95/TONNE - CORN \$91/TONNE

**ONTARIO GOAT BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION**

PO Box 596, Lancaster ON K0C 1N0  
 Tel 866-311-OGBA (toll-free in ON) Email [secretary@ogba.ca](mailto:secretary@ogba.ca)

**Executive**

President Cindy Hubble  
 Vice President Garry Classen  
 Treasurer Laura Cotie  
 Secretary Allison Taylor  
 Browse Co-ordinator Ed Cavanagh

**Committee Chairs**

Chevon Lucy Berger  
 Dairy Garry Claassen  
 Fibre Allison Taylor  
 Promotions Dawn Stead

**Interested in being a Director?**

Article VI of the current Constitution (October 2001) states that persons interested in becoming Directors must submit application to the Secretary by December 31 of each year.

If more than three (3) members indicate their desire to represent any given District, voting ballots will be mailed to each members in that District by January 31 of the following year and these members will be given a period of one (1) month to vote for up to three (3) Directors to represent their District.

Directors will assume office at the first Annual General Meeting following the election and after the conclusion of business of the retiring Board of Directors at that meeting.

## IF YOU ATE TODAY THANK A FARMER

Politicians were not allowed to speak at the rally, but there was some in attendance including Mr. Peters. There were about ten speakers from livestock, grains, crops, tobacco, tender fruits etc. One by one speakers addressed issues and conveyed personal stories about their operations. The bottom line was very clear, the situation is critical; so critical that many farmers cannot afford to put their crops in this spring.

Many interesting facts were brought up. A level playing field and subsidies that many other farmers in other countries and provinces receive was a very hot topic. We were told that these subsidy programs are calculated by taking into consideration the cost of production and include a wage based on the average wage for skilled workers. The significant subsidies Quebec and US farmers receive allow them to flood Ontario markets with products far below production costs thus driving down prices for Ontario products to the same level.

The cost that consumers pay for food was discussed. US consumers use about 10% of their income for food even with their farmers receiving their subsidies. Canadian consumers also use about 10% of their income for food, but without subsidies to farmers. Therefore, the Canadian farmer is the one subsidising the low cost of food.

The agri-food industry is the second largest in Ontario next to the auto industry. For every job that exists on the farm seven are created off the farm. The agri-food industry in Ontario creates approximately 650,000 jobs.

The auto industry does not employ any more than the agri-food industry nor does the casino industry yet they both have recently received significant injections of cash from the provincial government. The auto industry received some 260 million dollars to create 500 jobs and the casino industry some 400 million dollars.

The underlying message from all speakers, including Mr. Ron Bonnett President of OFA, was that time is quickly running out. We must have solidarity and unity, we must work together whatever sector of the agri-food industry we are in if we are going to make a difference and have a future.

Promote the Goat  
Cindy Hubble  
President, Ontario Goat Breeders' Association

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF DIRECTORS

#### **An OGBA Director:**

Is a Board member for a two year term;  
Will maintain full membership with the OGBA;  
Will strive to attend Annual & Semi-Annual meetings;  
Will maintain residence within the District represented;  
Will liaise with OGBA members in that District;  
Will assist with decision-making and committee work that is the responsibility of the Board of Directors;  
Will maintain a high moral and ethical standard and work in the best interests of the OGBA and its membership.

## Show Me!

Ad Hoc Membership Committee Chair, Dawn Stead is working on a project to increase the visibility of the Ontario goat industry at high profile farm events, such as the Canada's Outdoor Farm Show or the Canadian National Exhibition.

Under this plan, OGBA would develop a professional display promoting all three aspects of the caprine industry. OGBA would pay the costs of exhibiting (booth space etc)...OGBA members would provide the manpower and, in turn, would have the chance to promote their own farm, breeding stock and goat products.

Participating in such events has other benefits:

- 1.. the opportunity to interact with the public,
- 2.. to educate them about the goat industry, and to learn what they are looking for in goat products.
- 3.. good opportunity to interact with other members of the agricultural community.

As we all know, membership involvement and enthusiasm are critical. Our directors do not have the time to commit to all the opportunities that need attention or to promote OGBA at every opportunity that arises. This would be a co-operative effort that would benefit the entire industry. The success of this program is in your hands!

To learn more, or to become involved in the "Show Me" program, contact director Dawn Stead at [dstead@ogba.ca](mailto:dstead@ogba.ca).

## OGBA Logo Contest

OGBA would like to extend an invitation to all Ontario 4-H Goat Clubs to participate in a competition to design a new logo for the Association. The club that comes up with the winning design or concept will receive \$100.00. All members of participating groups will be given complementary 1 year memberships. If anyone on this list is an Ontario 4-H Goat Club Leader or knows of one, please have them contact the OGBA at [info@ogba.ca](mailto:info@ogba.ca) or 1-866-311-OGBA for further information!

## OGBA Farm Signs AVAILABLE

We have an inventory of OGBA Ontario Goat Producer Farm signs available for sale at a special price.

These are the older design, with dairy and Angora goats. Sorry, no meat goat. Meat goat producers may wish to wait until the new design is released, which will include a meat goat.

For the rest of you, we offer this double-sided metal sign 41 x 12.5 cm (5" x 16"), pre-drilled with mounting bracket, for the low, low price of \$10 including postage! It doesn't get any better than that!

When these signs were first produced, they were sold for \$25 each. We want to move them out so we can get the new ones in.

To order, send your cheque to the OGBA Secretary.

# Diversification and Goat Milk Production

by Lee Normet

“Is that fudge?” asked the curious shopper at the Arthur, Ontario Christmas Bazaar.

“No, it looks like it but it’s actually goat milk soap,” replied Katie Wilman, the local farmer and owner (with husband Phillip) of Man-Nor Farm and its subsidiary, Rivers Edge Soap Co.

Katie had rented a table at the local bazaar where she was selling her custom made goat milk soaps, creams and bath products. Much of her time with the customers was spent explaining the virtues of goat milk skin products. It was the one-year anniversary of her business and her second time at the Arthur Christmas sale. Many customers remembered her from the previous year, liked her products and needed little of her sales pitch to buy again. New customers usually needed lots of explanation about the qualities of goat milk soap.

Katie and Phillip Wilman began their farm life in 1999 when they bought a long-neglected 95 acre farm. They named it Man-Nor Farm and began the never-ending work to bring an old farm back to life. The farm is located on highway 109 in Arthur, which is about 45 minutes north of Guelph, Ontario. As recent gradu-

ates of the Animal Science program at the University of Guelph, they were anxious to begin to develop a dairy goat herd. Phillip grew up on his family’s farm and knew a lot of work was ahead of him and Katie. It took two years before they were ready to purchase the start of their goat herd.

In 2001 four “ladies” named Elizabeth, Bernadette, Suzy and

Josie arrived at the farm. A short time later 40 milk does were purchased and their dairy goat business was finally in operation. With the help of “George”, a reliable buck, it grew rapidly and today they house about 75 quality milking does. A new milk house was carefully planned and built as an addition to a very old existing barn. They began to ship milk to Woolwich Dairy in Orangeville, Ontario.



It wasn’t long before they realized that the “supply and demand” factor was going to affect their business. Goat herds produce an abundance of milk in the summer and significantly less in the winter. It appeared that the supply would exceed the demand for part of the year.

“What should we do to compensate for the weak market in the summer?” was the question rolling around in their heads.

During her third year at Guelph Katie had experienced “saponification” in a Chemistry class. That now twiggd her imagination and led to a lot of research on the internet and at the library. It wasn’t long before her kitchen housed oils, lye, measuring tools, a reliable scale and a big stainless steel pot. Her first batch of fragrance free goat milk soap (Simplicity) was poured into hand made molds (Phillip and her father built these) and set aside to “cure” for 6 weeks. Family members became the guinea pigs who would try the soap and comment on it. The positive response was enough encouragement to try a second type, Oat and Honey, fragrance free. December of 2003 was her first venture into the marketplace and it began with the Arthur Christmas Bazaar. Enough was sold at this first sale to begin to look on the internet for other locations looking for vendors.

It also became clear that a very businesslike approach was necessary and so Katie enrolled in a comprehensive small business course. The advice she received there was put into practice throughout 2004 and continues today. A side benefit of the course was that the members became an incredible support network throughout the year.

As part of the business approach, sales of soaps and bath products were tracked to help her decide what to make. It was decided that the soap business would be separate from the farm and so Rivers Edge Soap Co. came into being. Soap sales required a vendor’s permit (obtainable from the provincial government) and the collection of PST and GST. One advantage of the vendor’s permit is that she could now purchase her supplies

## Improve and enhance your goat management PRODUCTION MANUALS

### Manual #1 - Let's make a Decision

Aimed at the new or novice goatkeeper, or anyone thinking about raising goats, this manual has everything you need to know, starting with selecting stock to record-keeping charts. It is written by goatkeepers, for goatkeepers, in terms that everyone can understand.

### Manual #2 - How the Industry Grows

This manual has been produced for the more experienced goatkeeper. It is a more in-depth look at products and marketing. Topics include: grading meat goats, assessing a live goat's body condition, Grade A requirements for shipping milk, and faults in raw mohair. The writers of this manual have over 50 years combined experience in raising goats.

Prices:	OGBA Members	Non-Members
Manual #1	\$25.00	\$35.00
Manual #2	\$25.00	\$35.00

Prices are in Canadian funds.

Shipping is \$5 extra per manual, or arrangements can be made for pick-up in your district.

Order your manuals through the OGBA Secretary.

from “trade” suppliers without paying PST. Her computer worked full time tracking money, searching out new recipes, new ideas, designing labels, improving the design of the soap molds, laying out a web page, finding craft sales to attend. She made arrangements for a toll free telephone number. Initially the soap was wrapped with a paper sleeve made on her computer. This was to keep the soap as clean and untouched as possible. Once she was sure her soap was a viable business, she approached a printer to design and make boxes for her soap. Regulations regarding labelling had to be followed. It was a lot of work but exciting too.

Setting short term goals each week kept her on track. She and Phillip were still milking goats, looking after the barn, fields, and household chores, and two small children. (It should be noted that Phillip also has a full time job off the farm and so the farm is his second full time job!) Weekend sales meant family support was needed

to help with preparation for the sale, babysitting the children, and the sale itself. Katie’s mother and father and Phillip all helped.

December 2004 was the end of Katie’s first full year selling her soaps and creams. Along the way she has expanded her line of products. She now has fragranced and non-fragranced goat milk soaps, goat milk moisturizing creams and lotions, goat milk moisturizing baths, and liquid goat milk soap. She makes custom bars for wedding favours and gift boxes at holiday time. Internet provided a source for jars and other containers. It is important to her to keep her products looking very professional. Her display at the craft sales is informative with pictures of the farm and brochures explaining the products. She is just beginning to sell her products to retailers in Arthur and perhaps that will be a bigger focus in 2005. At the end of her first year she has learned a lot. She knows which sales she will return to, she has a better sense of what prices to charge, her product line is set, her recipes are fine tuned.

If you asked Katie why she is successful with her soap, she’d probably say that she believes she makes a very good product,



she likes to bake and making soap is like baking. Chemistry was always a favourite subject. She has enough science background to understand the chemical reactions that occur during the soap making process. Over the first year, she has attended about 10 sales and now is pleased that repeat orders are coming in, either by phone or by email. Her kitchen is usually a hive of activity and she has had to rearrange part of her house to allow for storage of supplies and product.

“Looks like fudge? Well, that is soap but I also make goat milk fudge and here’s a sample for you to try,” explained Katie to another customer at a local bazaar. Katie continues to find ways to use goat milk from their farm. What’s next? They’re keeping it quiet for now but it’s quite apparent that further diversification is planned. Want to know more? Check out the web site at [www.riversedgesoap.ca](http://www.riversedgesoap.ca) or call 1-888-209-7330.

*(Lee Normet is Katie’s mother. Katie is too busy making soap to write this!)*



## Fibre Committee Update

The Fibre committee is actively recruiting members interested in working on projects for the fibre sector. Some ideas include: a fibre workshop, farm tours, judges’ training. If these topics interest you, or you have other ideas, please contact me as soon as possible.

We are also always seeking people willing to share their stories of building a fibre-based business: your production criteria, processing choices, marketing strategies. If you don’t mind sharing the lessons you’ve learned along the way, and would like some additional exposure for your farm, this is the way to do it!

Fibre Committee Chair Allison Taylor [ataylor@ogba.ca](mailto:ataylor@ogba.ca) or call the Office.



photo credit - Finney Creek Mohair  
white & naturally coloured Angora goats  
Williamstown ON [finneycreek@primus.ca](mailto:finneycreek@primus.ca)