

Ontario Processing Vegetable Growers

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NEWSLETTER

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DISTRICT ANNUAL MEETINGS

The dates of the upcoming district annual meetings are as follows:

DISTRICT	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
DISTRICT 1 (Essex, Kent)	Friday, November 29th	1:30 pm	Wheels Inn Chatham, ON
DISTRICT 2 (Bruce, Huron, Lambton, Middlesex, Oxford, Perth, Hastings, Northumberland, Prince Edward and the Regional Municipality of Durham)	Thursday, November 28th	12 Noon (Lunch will be provided)	Four Points Sheraton 1150 Wellington Rd. S. London, ON
DISTRICT 3 (Brant, Elgin and the Regional Municipalities of Haldimand-Norfolk and Niagara)	Wednesday, November 27th	6:00 pm Supper 7:00 pm Meeting	Simcoe Research Stn. Simcoe, ON

SAFETY NETS UPDATE

Ontario Processing Vegetable Growers wish to acknowledge the efforts of Agricultural Minister Helen Johns and her staff with respect to the recently announced safety net package. Giving credit where credit is due. Minister Johns asked the Ontario agricultural industry, through the Ontario Agricultural Commodity Council (OACC), how the funding should be delivered, and then did exactly what was requested. The same cannot be said, however, about federal agriculture Minister Lyle Vanclief.

Firstly, the federal government ignored Ontario's request for an immediate cash payment and chose to deliver the funds through NISA. Secondly, after agreeing that the transition program was to be a national program, the feds then flowed dollars directly to Quebec, in effect thumbing their nose at Ontario farm groups' united request for a similar approach to funding delivery here.

Original expectations regarding funding available would have resulted in a 6% ENS top-up and a market revenue top-up from 90 to 95%. At OACC, a provision was put in place that, in the event that federal funding did not result in these funding levels, both of the above noted items would be prorated. This is what has, in fact, occurred.

Specifics of this year's transition payments funding agreement are as follows:

Growers will receive a total payment equal to approximately 4.55% of their average ENS. The federal portion of this, 4.25%, will go directly into their Fund 2 NISA account. The provincial portion, 0.3%, will be sent to growers as a cash payment. The other component of the transition funding for this year is a market revenue top-up. The rationale for directing funds in this manner, as determined at OACC, were the low prices for grains and oil seeds that prevailed for much of the 2001 crop year. Provisions for next year's transition payments have yet to be determined.

KRAFT BREACHES GREEN PEA AGREEMENT

Kraft Canada Inc. (Exeter) has refused to honour terms of the Agreement for Marketing the 2002 Crop of Green Peas for Processing, canceling a contract with a grower after the date specified in the agreement. The 2002 green pea agreement provides for the right to cancel a contract by either party **on or before April 10, 2002**. Efforts by the board to affect a settlement between the parties were unsuccessful. A subsequent proposal by the board to refer the dispute to arbitration was rejected by Kraft. The board is left with no alternative but to seek specific language in future agreements that will provide for predetermined grower compensation in the event of contract cancellation after the April 10th deadline. The only option available to the grower in question is to pursue this matter through the civil courts.

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DRIP IRRIGATION UPDATE

To date, 29 applications have been approved resulting in total drip irrigation related expenditures by growers of approximately 2.5 million dollars and Healthy Futures grants of just over \$800,000. Applications are still being accepted. You must have a processing vegetable contract to qualify. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the board office at (519) 681-1875 or fax (519) 685-5719.

DRIP IRRIGATION SCHOOL

Twenty participants have registered for the drip irrigation short course for processing tomatoes being held December 9-11, 2002 at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. The instructor for the course will be Dr. Charles Burt, Chairman of the Irrigation, Training & Research Centre and Bio Resource & Agricultural Engineering Professor at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, who recently received a national award for his work in irrigation.

1ST INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON TOMATO DISEASES**Kusadasi, Turkey – October 27 - 31, 2003**

Please refer to the Symposium web page:
<http://plantdoctor.ifas.ufl.edu/istd.html>

The meeting will be held in Turkey with the following concurrent sessions:

- Emerging Diseases and Detection
- Epidemiology
- Disease Management
- Disease Resistance
- Molecular Biology

For those interested in attending please complete and return the "Pre-Registration Form" to Prof. Saygili before December 15, 2002 at the above web address.

At present, although the program is just in its early stages of being put together, the following special sessions are planned:

- TYLCV and begomviruses - Jane Polston
- Tomato Seed Health - Sally Miller
- Disease Management in Organic Tomato Production - Sally Miller
- Bacterial Spot - Jeff Jones
- Bacterial Wilt (Rs) - Philippe Prior
- Cultural Practices in Tomato Health Management - Steve Olson
- TSWV - Tim Momol

HEINZ PLANT - STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA

H.J. Heinz Co. has told employees at its Stockton, CA tomato cannery that it is considering closing the processing portion of the plant, reported *The Modesto Bee*. The cannery serves two roles for its corporate parent: processing tomatoes into paste and manufacturing paste into ketchup, sauces and other products. The company has told employees that while jobs on the processing line are at risk, the manufacturing lines will continue operating. Heinz will make its decision before Northern San Joaquin Valley tomato growers plant their crop in the spring of next season.

Aging equipment on Stockton's processing line will play a role in the facility's future, which typically processes tomatoes from July to October. Stockton's potential closure of its processing lines will not impact Heinz's Escalon cannery, which markets sauces and sliced and diced tomato goods. If Heinz closes the processing lines at the Stockton plant, it would buy paste from other processors to meet the cannery's production needs. If Heinz carries through on its consideration of stopping processing at the Stockton facility, it would be another in a string of tomato cannery consolidations. In recent years, *ConAgra Inc.* closed a plant in Davis, CA, the *Campbell Soup Co.* shut down a plant in Sacramento, CA and Heinz closed its Tracy, CA facility.

Source: Food Institute Report - September 23, 2002

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Ontario Processing Vegetable Industry Conference
January 28th – 30th, 2003
Hilton Hotel, London, Ontario

The Conference Committee is quite enthusiastic about the excellent line-up of speakers for the next industry conference. Please mark your calendar and watch for further details in upcoming newsletters.