



Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

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OSCIA Annual General Meeting Minutes – DRAFT

Tuesday, February 2, 2021

Held virtually over Zoom webinar

Session I – Business of the Association

The 2021 OSCIA annual meeting was held over Zoom webinar due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and is broken down into four 2-hour Zoom webinar sessions. The first Zoom session focused on OSCIA business.

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

- Stuart Wright, President, welcomed the delegates to our first virtual annual general meeting.

Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

- Minister Ernie Hardman addressed the meeting delegates, commending OSCIA for their continued important work, and successes throughout this past year despite the struggles of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. President's Report

- Stuart Wright provided his President report, with mention that the full report, can be found on the OSCIA website.
- His message focused on remaining positive, despite the current global situation, as OSCIA has shown resilience and strength over this past year.

3. Executive Director's Report

- Andrew Graham, Executive Director, provided his report titled *Stresses and successes*
- 2020 was certainly a year of constant challenges and unknowns, and OSCIA proved it can endure many challenges with great strength and determination in order to continue its important work.
- Provided an update on the four strategic priorities that came out of the recent strategic plan.

4. Approval of 2019 OSCIA Annual Conference Minutes

Motion #1 – Moved by Kristen Carberry (Dufferin), seconded by Alan Kruszel (Stormont), the minutes of the 2020 OSCIA Annual Conference be approved as presented. **Carried**

5. Presentation and Approval of 2020 Audited Financial Statement and Appointment of Auditors for 2021

- Murray Short, Chartered Accountant with RLB presented highlights of the audited financial statements for the 2020 fiscal year. The financial statements are a fair representation of OSCIA's financial position. OSCIA maintains its records and controls adequately and is financially viable to deliver all projects and programs.

Motion #2 – Moved by Debra-lee Agar (North Simcoe), seconded by Alan Kruszel (Stormont), the audited financial statements for the year ending September 30, 2020, be approved as presented.

Carried

Motion #3 – Moved by Rob Kirkconnell (Grey), seconded by Cathy Vitucci (Niagara North) to appoint the firm of RLB LLP as auditors for the fiscal year of October 1, 2020, to September 30, 2021.

Carried

6. 2021 Honourary President

- Chad Anderson, in-coming President introduced the 2021 Honourary Presidents, David & Kathryn Mayberry
- David and Kathryn are the Ontario Resource Coordinators for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.
- Their interest in food, reducing hunger, and global agricultural issues has resulted in extensive travel to developing countries to work with farmers and aid development of ag. extension workers across the world.

7. Ratification of the Board of Directors

- Chad Anderson presented the 2021 slate of Directors, each elected in their respective region, for ratification by the delegates.

The 2021 Provincial Directors are:

East Central	VACANT	Northwestern Ontario	Stefan Szeder
Eastern Valley.....	Warren Schneckenburger	Ottawa-Rideau	Eleanor Renaud
Georgian Central.....	Andy van Niekerk	Quinte	VACANT
Golden Horseshoe	Steve Sickie	St. Clair	VACANT
Heartland	John Poel	Thames Valley	Phil Oegema
Northeastern Ontario.....	Birgit Martin		

- OSCIA is working with the regions to fill the Director positions for Quinte, East Central, and St. Clair.
- The opportunity was taken to thank Mark Burnham (Quinte), and Paul Hagey, (East Central) for their contributions to the Board of Directors.

Motion #4 – Moved by Kelly Armstrong (Renfrew), seconded by Alan Kruszel (Stormont) that the 2021 slate of Directors be ratified. **Carried**

Slate of Executive Committee

- The 2021 slate of the Executive Committee was presented by Chad Anderson.

The 2021 OSCIA Executive consists of:

Immediate Past President.....	Stuart Wright	Honourary Presidents..	David & Kathryn Mayberry
2021 President	Chad Anderson	Executive Director	Andrew Graham
1 st Vice President.....	Warren Schneckenburger	OMAFRA Ex-officio	Deanna Nemeth
2 nd Vice President.....	Steve Sickie	U of G Ex-officio.....	Dr. Robert Corry
3 rd Vice President	Phil Oegema		

8. Resolutions

- The Resolution Committee was composed of Birgit Martin, and Warren Schneckenburger.
- Warren Schneckenburger presented and moved each resolution, and then invited a representative from the respective local SCIA to come forward to speak to their resolution and second the motion.

Resolution #1 – Renfrew SCIA – Forage Seeding Program

WHEREAS Agricorp includes a broad list of cover crop species under the "Standard new forage seeding" program for stand establishment crop insurance coverage, and;

WHEREAS Cereal rye is not included in the current list of species covered under the new forage seeding program, while 2020 rye acreage is estimated near 150,000 acres in Ontario.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that OSCIA work with Agricorp to have cereal rye added to the list of species covered under the new forage seeding program, and to allow for fall seeded plantings of winter cover crops.

Moved by Warren Schneckenburger, seconded by Kelly Armstrong (Renfrew)

Carried

Resolution #2 – Renfrew SCIA – Standard new forage seeding program

WHEREAS The Agricorp "Standard new forage seeding" program was expanded to cover the establishment of a diversity of beneficial cover crops in Ontario some time ago, and;

WHEREAS The knowledge and awareness of this program among farmers is poor, and;
WHEREAS Crop insurance is a vital risk management tool for farmers and can also be a strong incentive to advance the cause of soil health through improving cover crop utilization among all progressive farmers.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that OSCIA work with Agricornp to promote this program to all farmers for the benefit of Ontario's soil health with the goal of increasing cover crop utilization.

Moved by Warren Schneckenburger, seconded by Kelly Armstrong (Renfrew)

Carried

Resolution #3 – Renfrew SCIA – Apprentice-style agricultural programs

WHEREAS agriculture is an integral part of our economy, and;
WHEREAS there is a significant shortage of skilled agricultural workers, and;
WHEREAS the only formal options for agricultural post-secondary education are either a degree or a diploma.
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Ontario Soil & Crop Improvement Association explores options of collaborating with other agricultural groups and educators in creating a cluster of apprentice-style programs for post-secondary education to promote more hands-on experience for students.

Moved by Warren Schneckenburger, seconded by Kelly Armstrong (Renfrew)

Carried

Resolution #4 – Prescott SCIA – Producer Crisis support program

Background:

To present to the Provincial government to initiate and fund a program to help and support farmers in crisis. A system exists in many regions of Quebec bordering the Eastern Ontario region and is showing extraordinary results to help battle mental health issues, accident issues, employee issues, psychological support, and suicidal issues on the farm.

The program hires Agricultural social workers by region to go up and down Concession roads to speak with farmers and get them to talk about their day-to-day challenges.

WHEREAS Mental Health issues are present everywhere in Agriculture in Ontario, and;
WHEREAS producers are somewhat isolated on their respective farms, and;
WHEREAS it may help producers to express their challenges by hiring social workers with an agricultural background to visit growers on their farms to bring a true discussion on Mental Health issues.
THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the OSCIA bring the Provincial government's attention to the program in Quebec where agricultural social workers are hired to help support producers locally.

Moved by Warren Schneckenburger, seconded by Marc Saumure (Prescott)

Carried

Resolution #5 – Dufferin SCIA – Property and Crop Damage due to Trespassers

WHEREAS Bill 156, Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act, 2020 was enacted on June 18, 2020, and;
WHEREAS Bill 156 is intended to protect farm animals, the food supply, farmers and others from risks that are created when trespassers enter places where farm animals are kept or when person engage in unauthorized interactions with farm animals, and;
WHEREAS the implementation of this protection for livestock producers is long overdue and very much welcome by Ontario producers, and;
WHEREAS Bill 156 does nothing to strengthen the farm property trespass act outside a location where livestock are housed or fed, and;

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- WHEREAS the current Trespass to Property Act R.S.O. 1990 applies to a "field or other land that is under cultivation", among other definitions, and;
- WHEREAS local and/or provincial police are uneducated as to the value of field crops and are unwilling to seriously address calls regarding trespassers and the damage they cause to property and crops, and;
- WHEREAS assessment of crop damage from trespassers, and application for crop insurance for such damages is very hard to measure and prove.
- THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association work with our provincial government, specifically the Minister of Agriculture, the Solicitor General and the OPP to review the current application and enforcement of the Trespass to Property Act, and;
- FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that OSCIA encourage the OPP work with local farm organizations to understand the cost inflicted on property owners, by unwanted trespassers of all types, and;
- FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that OSCIA make government aware of the need for local and provincial police to work with property owners to investigate and apprehend trespassers causing damage to farm property and crops.

Moved by Warren Schneckenburger, seconded by Alan Lyons (Dufferin)

Carried

Resolution #6 – Eastern Valley Regional SCIA – Crop Insurance for Cereal Rye

- WHEREAS according to Statistics Canada, cereal rye acreages in Ontario have been similar to those of canola, and;
- WHEREAS in 2020 cereal rye area reached around 40 times that of sunflowers, and;
- WHEREAS both canola and sunflowers are both insurable crops while cereal rye is still un-insurable under Production Insurance in Ontario, and;
- WHEREAS cereal rye area in Manitoba is similar to that of Ontario yet Manitoba offers Production Insurance for cereal rye, and;
- WHEREAS OMAFRA and OSCIA continue to promote crop rotation as a Beneficial Management Practice and;
- WHEREAS cereal rye may offer another viable crop to help expand rotations for some Ontario producers and;
- WHEREAS some producers may be unwilling to risk trying to grow an unfamiliar crop without Production Insurance.
- THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that OSCIA work with OMAFRA to convince Agricorp to develop Production Insurance for cereal rye.

Moved by Warren Schneckenburger, seconded by Alan Kruszel (Eastern Valley/Stormont)

Carried

Resolution #7 – Eastern Valley Regional SCIA – OSCIA website

- WHEREAS OSCIA members (and many others) are asked more and more to visit the OSCIA website and;
- WHEREAS an Association as important as OSCIA should have a modern, fully functional and easy to navigate website and;
- WHEREAS there is an enormous amount of valuable information available on the OSCIA website and;
- WHEREAS the OSCIA website is difficult to navigate and not user friendly and;

WHEREAS something as important as the OSCIA AGM is not even promoted on the Home Page of the OSCIA website to facilitate membership engagement, and to make it easier for participants to find information and register for the event and;

WHEREAS little positive change has occurred since the last resolution regarding the website was adopted by delegates in 2020 and;

WHEREAS at the time of writing this resolution links to previous AGM resolutions were broken.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that OSCIA hire an independent third-party web developer to work with the website committee to thoroughly assess the website and;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the necessary changes to the site be made in time for a launch at the OSCIA AGM 2022.

Moved by *Warren Schneckenburger*, seconded by *Alan Kruszel (Eastern Valley/Stormont)*

Carried

Resolution #8 – Eastern Valley Regional SCIA – OSCIA Financial Visioning committee

WHEREAS OSCIA has mainly relied on program delivery contracts from very few funders for the bulk of its income and;

WHEREAS judging by the 2020 financial statements, some of those funders may not be as reliable a source of funding in the future and;

WHEREAS in 2020 board and staff did a great job reducing non project related expenses by lowering them by over \$200k compared to the previous year and;

WHEREAS OSCIA was still in a deficit position in 2020 prior to the one-time charge from one of its funders.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that OSCIA investigate hiring a business advisor to assist the Finance Visioning Committee fulfill its strategic priority of developing multiple revenue streams to help bring the association back to a well balanced and reliable income position.

Moved by *Warren Schneckenburger*, seconded by *Alan Kruszel (Eastern Valley/Stormont)*

Carried

9. Comments from incoming President

- Chad Anderson addressed the delegates as the incoming President for 2021.
- Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic it was still a great year for OSCIA. He thanked Stuart Wright, Immediate Past President; Andrew Graham, Executive Director; and the OSCIA staff for all their hard work this past year.

10. Welcome from Agriculture Agri-Food Canada

- Parliamentary Secretary, Mr. Neil Ellis, of Agriculture, Agri-Food Canada brought greetings on behalf of Federal Agriculture Minister the Honorable Marie-Claude Bibeau.
- Took the opportunity to thank OSCIA for their continued excellent work as an important organization for agriculture during this past year.

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**Session II – Association updates**

The second Zoom session focused on various OSCIA association and program updates.

**11. New project for the association in 2021 – Taking Field Learning to the Next Level**

- Margaret May, Regional Program Lead for OSCIA and Ian McDonald, Applied Research Coordinator, OMAFRA presented the new OSCIA project, which will launch in 2021, funding provided by OMAFRA.
- This project will drastically change the way we can conduct field events. Objective is to have a simplified way for OSCIA to provide access to high-tech equipment at the various field demonstration events.
- OSCIA owned, and will include a rental fee, and trained technicians to transport and operate the equipment.

- The OSCIA suite of equipment will include things like:
  - A 7x10' 3.9mm high resolution weatherproof LED screen mounted on a trailer
  - A mobile Soil Health Laboratory, including a suite of tools/equipment to conduct field demonstrations
  - High resolution video camera suite of equipment
  - Portable pad scale system with Wi-Fi connectivity and enhanced soil compaction monitoring equipment

## 12. Cost-Share Program and Projects Update

Angela Straathof, Program Director, provided updates on Workshops, Programs & Cost-share Opportunities

- Program delivery had to weather a lot of challenges and had to be very responsive and adaptive this year and Angela thanked all the teams at OSCIA who pulled together and adapted quickly to these challenges.
- Workshops & Webinars – quickly transitioned to virtual events when health and safety situations required.
- Canadian Agricultural Partnership – Year 3 of a 5-year Federal-Provincial funding program
  - Two intakes in 2020, with three priority areas – Economic Development; Environmental Stewardship; and Protection and Assurance
- Targeted Intake Supporting Managed Bee Health
- Lake Erie Agriculture Demonstrating Sustainability (LEADS) with Farmland Health Check Up within the Lake Erie Basin
- Species at Risk Partnership on Agricultural Lands (SARPAL)
- Species at Risk Farm Incentive Program (SARFIP)
- Operation Pollinator – final year of current Syngenta program
- On-Farm Applied Research & Monitoring (ONFARM) – a 4-year initiative developed by OMAFRA and delivered by OSCIA, focusing on soil health and water quality. Panel on the first-year progress will be presented later in the agenda.

## 13. Applied Research Programs Update

Tracey Ryan, Applied Research Coordinator, provided updates on the current applied research projects.

- Reducing Barriers to BMP adoption – soon entering 3<sup>rd</sup> year of a 3-year program
  - Will be launching the pilot program in three geographic areas beginning in April 2021
- Living Lab Initiative (official announcement was expected soon)
  - OSCIA hopes to be working collaboratively with several other organizations and AAFC to deliver.

## 14. Association Development Advisor Update

Brittany Roka, Association Development Advisor, provided updates on association activities.

- Skills development resource videos available on the OSCIA YouTube channel and OSCIA website
- Various virtual training sessions available throughout the year
- The Innovator, News from the Grassroots – newly launched online province wide e-newsletter.
- Online membership platform available for maintaining membership lists by secretaries and RCCs, and members themselves to access various resources and renew their membership(s).

## 15. ONFARM Panel

ONFARM update and Farm Cooperator panel hosted by Don King, representing the Soil Resource Group

- Farm Cooperators presentations were made by Zac Cohoon, Twin Erin Farms Inc., and Nick Stokman.
- Live Q&A session followed the pre-recorded video presentations.
- The panel focused on the three pillars of the program: Water Quality, Soil Health and Engagement.

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Session III – Awards & OMAFRA Panel Presentation

The third Zoom session focused on the presentation of the OSCIA awards and an OMAFRA panel session.

16. Presentation of the 2021 OSCIA Soil Champion winners

- Chad Anderson announced the 2021 Soil Champion winners:
- In the Research & Extension category the 2021 winner is Dr. Laura Van Eerd, Professor of Sustainable Soil Management, School of Environmental Sciences at the University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus.
- In the Producer category, the 2021 winner is Henry Denotter, from Denotter Farms in Essex County, and past president of OSCIA.
- Senator Robert Black provided congratulations. Certificates of recognition will be sent to the two winners.

17. Don Hill Legacy Award

- This Award recognizes a recipient who has applied on-farm innovation and ingenuity to effectively address an identified environmental risk associated with soil, water, air, or biodiversity on their farm.
- The 2021 winner is Roger and David Buurma, of Buurma Acres in Lambton County, for their innovative drop-hose applicator design to help increase efficiency of side-dress nitrogen and reduce losses to the environment.

18. Presentation of the 2020 Soil Health Graduate Scholarship Winner

- Winner of the 2020 OSCIA Soil Health Scholarship at University of Guelph is Jacob Coppolino.
- Mr. Coppolino's work looks to address the effect of freeze-thaw cycling on the bio-geochemical dynamic of phosphorus in southern Ontario riparian buffer zones.

19. Presentation from the 2019 Soil Health Graduate Scholarship Recipient

- 5th OSCIA Soil Health Graduate Scholarship Recipient, Gordon Bell, presented his first-year findings on "Quantifying impacts of crop diversity and simulated climate change on agroecosystem water budgets".
- His research focuses on water conservation and how different farming practices, specifically the crop rotation employed, can affect water dynamics in that field.
- Hopes to show that by increasing the diversity of crops grown in a field and with careful management we can increase the amount of water available to plants and decrease the risk of droughts in dry seasons.

20. Soil Champion 2020 Presentation

- 2020 winner Anne Loeffler, Conservation Specialist with the Grand River Conservation Authority pre-recorded her presentation. Following the video Anne was available to answer questions.
- Anne works to deliver the Rural Water Quality Program assisting in soil and water conservation projects.

21. OMAFRA Field Crop Specialists Panel

- The panel consisted of three topics and five OMAFRA specialists:
 - Tar Spot – Albert Tenuta, Field Crops Extension Pathologist
 - Corn Rootworm and Bt. Resistance in Ontario and Crop Rotation – Tracey Baute, Entomologist, Field Crops; and Christine O'Reilly, Forage and Grazing Specialist, Field Crops
 - Winter Barley and Winter Canola in the Rotation – Joanna Follings, Cereal Specialist 21. and Meghan Moran, Canola & Dry Bean Specialist

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**Session IV – Knowledge Transfer session**

The final Zoom session of the day focussed on a comprehensive review of the Compaction Day results

**22. Compaction Day Panel**

Alex Barrie, Soil Management Engineer, OMAFRA and Warren Schneckenburger, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, OSCIA

- Presented the process, success, and preliminary results of the 2019 Compaction Day events, which took place in Thames Valley Region, Elgin County and Eastern Valley, Dundas County.

The conference ended at 9:30PM.

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Andrew Graham, Executive Director

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Chad Anderson, President