

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 23, 2011 (Guelph, ON) – In collaboration with the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI), the Ontario Cattlemen's Association (OCA) has committed to the development and implementation of a pilot program to recruit and retain a group of visionary organization leaders who are capable of moving the Ontario beef industry forward. This pilot program will increase the leadership skills of existing or potential organization leaders, enhance the credibility of the association and better prepare leaders to move the industry forward in times of change or challenge.

"This leadership investment will not only equip our industry leaders across the province with the knowledge, resources and confidence to excel as future ambassadors in our industry, it will provide stronger leadership capabilities for our entire association," states Curtis Royal, OCA President.

The future of any agricultural sector relies heavily upon the strong leadership abilities of those within the sector. This long-term strategy will work to ensure that participants of this program will gain the skills, confidence, and expertise to create important alliances and foster innovation and creative thinking within and beyond OCA for years to come.

"Leadership effectiveness has a huge impact on organizations, the agriculture/agri-food sector and rural communities," says Jim Whaley, ROI chair. "The Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is excited to be working with OCA in the development of this pilot program which will build leadership capacity within Ontario's beef industry and beyond."

The concept of this program arose from a county resolution brought forward to OCA. The pilot program is scheduled to begin late in the fall of 2011 for approximately 40 selected participants and will include a number of training days covering various topics such as governance, meeting management, leadership styles and organization assessment and planning.

The Ontario Cattlemen's Association (OCA) is a grassroots organization representing 19,000 beef producers in the province and provides leadership to cattlemen from all sectors of the industry. OCA is involved in a wide range of issues that are of concern to Ontario's beef producers. These include industry sustainability, trade, animal health, environment and animal care. In addition, OCA works closely with other sectors of the agriculture and food industries on matters of mutual concern.

The Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is a not-for-profit organization formed in 2010. ROI has a mandate to provide leadership development, initiate dialogue, support collaborations and promote action on issues and opportunities facing rural Ontario. The vision of ROI is: Building Vision, Voice and Leadership for a strong and vibrant rural Ontario. www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca

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