



# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

*Ontario's Agri Business Sector — With it...Ontario will grow!*

# VISION STATEMENT

“ To be the voice of Ontario Agri Business to all stakeholders, consumers and government. ”

# MISSION STATEMENT

“ To promote Ontario agri business through representation to stakeholders, consumers and government. To coordinate the services of all member sectors in the areas of food safety, environmental stewardship, education, communication, and operations. ”

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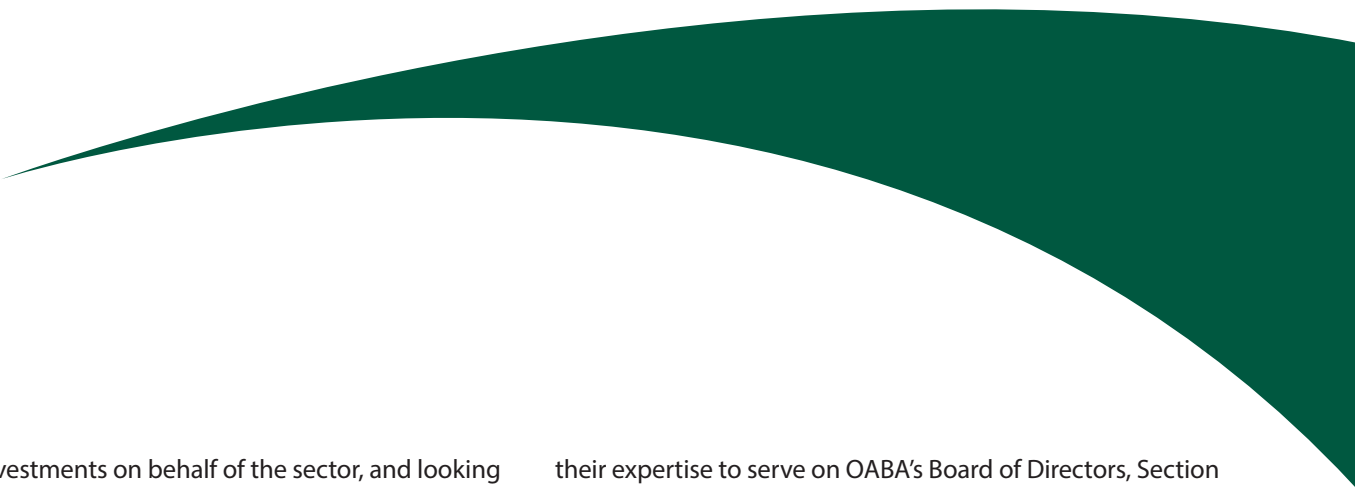
# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

This past year has been a milestone year for the Ontario Agri Business Association as we embark on our 25th anniversary. While a lot has changed for both the association and membership over those years, OABA's commitment to effectively representing our sector's interests to government, stakeholders and consumers, to the members we serve has remained ever present.

This Annual Report includes a brief outline of the efforts the OABA Board of Directors, section Committees, working groups and staff undertook throughout the year to ensure Ontario based crop inputs, grain elevators, and livestock feed companies continued to operate safely and successfully, while also navigating continued agricultural supply chain disruptions, disease threats, and sometimes challenging government policies that have, or had, the potential to negatively impact our sector.

I am proud to note that we are closing in on year three of an updated organizational strategic plan that identified five key priorities for your association. This laser focused direction has resulted in a more focused organization, but also includes actionable objectives for OABA that drive both our human and financial resource allocations to better serve the needs of our sector and increase the impact of OABA as the voice of Ontario agri businesses, to drive member value and create a more sustainable business environment that is profitable, prioritizes safety, promotes growth and supports continued innovation and investment.

2024 has afforded OABA staff and members an expanding number of opportunities to meet face-to-face with elected officials and government staff, as compared to previous years that were impacted by the pandemic. We have welcomed the opportunities to establish OABA as a recognized authority on a number of key policy priorities over the past year at both the federal and provincial level. We held a number of meetings with government officials directly and in partnership with various value chain partners, to address our concerns and identify potential solutions for various labour disruptions, transportation blockages, navigating new feed regulations, carbon taxation, temporary foreign worker permitting, seeking new



infrastructure investments on behalf of the sector, and looking to remedy the continued impacts of the federal government's decision to remove Russia's most-favoured-nation status which triggered a 35 percent tariff on fertilizer imports from that region.

In support of our members, we have undertaken a number of significant projects in the past year; as we continually look to establish OABA as a thought leader, increase membership engagement and drive growth and innovation. Projects include updating our previously released Economic Impact Assessment study with updated financial statistics that highlights the role OABA members play within the economy, with a particular focus on job creation, and showcasing the diversity of our members' businesses that range from crop inputs, country and terminal grain elevators and livestock feed manufacturing. Under the direction of the Board of Directors, we also provided a significant financial donation to Farm and Food Care Ontario in support of their release of the 6th edition of the *"Real Dirt on Farming"* publication, and all member companies received a copy to share with their employees and customers. Furthermore, we are reaching the end of a 3-year partnership focused on the continued delivery and expansion of the 4R Ontario program in collaboration with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness and several leading grower, industry, and conservation associations, with the aim of showcasing data driven examples of responsible nutrient use while at the same time striving for continual improvements in nutrient management practices. Plans are currently underway to renew this agreement into the future.

Our staff at OABA are elite and have demonstrated incredible resilience and adaptability working together as a team, with our members and stakeholders. There is no doubt that our sector's foundation is built on human interactions and business relationships, and we cherish the ability to welcome members back to in-person meetings, training events and deliver our suite of networking events throughout the year which have been a cornerstone of OABA since its inception in 1999.

Accomplishing our collective goals is possible because more than 90 individuals volunteer their time and more importantly

their expertise to serve on OABA's Board of Directors, Section Committees, sub-Committees, and working groups. This past year, the Association committed to the future by fully resourcing a Human Resource Committee to provide sector leadership on one of the most challenging issues our sector faces, whether it be employee recruitment and retainment, managing a changing workforce, or gaining compliance with new pay equity regulations. We also concluded our re-imagined 18-month leadership program that saw significant changes to the program curriculum, our approach to peer-to-peer networking, and included various site visits to showcase the breadth of our sector to the next generation of industry leaders. We were pleased that 16 individuals chose to participate in this program and we have launched the program again for 2025 with a new cohort.

OABA is ready to meet the challenges and seek opportunities as we head into 2025, and beyond. We have an experienced and dedicated staff, and are well positioned to support our members and drive value by continuing to deliver on our strategic priorities and advocating on behalf of all members in the best interests of both the crop inputs, grain and feed industries, both provincially and federally on issues and opportunities that matter the most. OABA has a bright future as the voice of Ontario agri business.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
**Russel Hurst**  
*Executive Director*  
**Ontario Agri Business Association**



# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As the President of OABA, as we enter our 25th year as an Association, I cannot help but reflect on all the efforts of those that have come before me. For the past 25 years, this organization has been a leader in advocating for the interests of agri businesses who operate within Ontario and that long-term success is in no small part due to the commitment and dedication of the members and staff through the years. What's been consistent through that time has been member company employees continued willingness to sit together, whether it is at the Board or Committee level, and put aside individual business interests and work collectively towards the common good of the industry.

Our sector continues to be impacted by global challenges and elevated uncertainty that has presented both risks and opportunities for a resilient and stable agri business sector. Amidst the continued presence of highly pathogenic avian influenza, higher levels of DON in the 2023 corn crop, the impacts of major labour disruptions to critical transportation infrastructure, global disease outbreaks, global conflicts and increased fiscal and economic pressures; OABA has been a constant with a focus on advancing our members' collective interests and driving sector innovation and competitiveness through effective communication to our membership on key issues and with timely information that impacts your business.

As President of the Ontario Agri Business Association this past year, I am proud to be playing an active role in providing strategic direction, along with my Board colleagues, on behalf

of all members. Together through engagement with our Association we can achieve our collective economic, social and environmental goals and ensure our sector continues to prove resilient both today, and well into the future. I would like to personally thank all OABA members for their participation and continued support of our various committees, networking events and training and education programming. OABA has a highly engaged membership, Board, Committees and staff team that put in the hours to identify challenges, strive for solutions, and represent the interests of our diverse membership to government and industry stakeholders.

The Crop Inputs, Grain and Feed Section Committees continue to be very active throughout the year addressing issues that have arisen, as well as proactively addressing sector specific matters with an eye to the future. I highly encourage you to read the various Section Committee reports included in this Annual Report for more details.

Our Board and staff are driven by our strategic plan that was released in 2022. There are five strategic priorities including: Member Engagement and Communications; Advocacy and Government Relations; Safety, Training, Education and Leadership; Stakeholder Relationships; and, Organizational Excellence. As we transition into our third full year under this strategic plan we look to focus on priorities that matter the most to our membership, as well as drive progress on key files that directly impact both the safety and competitiveness of our members' businesses.

In the area of member engagement, we have fully transitioned back to a full slate of in-person social and networking events. It was extremely refreshing to welcome members back to our Summer Conference in Muskoka and a full slate of golf events province wide. A key role for your Association is to continue to host in-person events throughout the year, well into the future.

In the area of government relations, OABA continues to build and foster relationships with elected officials and senior bureaucrats at the federal and provincial levels to effectively represent members' collective interests. OABA continues to provide a significant number of submissions on behalf of the sector. Federal submissions included consultations on fertilizer emissions, gene editing, Pest Management Regulatory Agency data usage, various requests for the government to intervene in labour and transportation stoppages, temporary foreign worker programming, carbon taxation exemptions, clean fuel standards, European Union deforestation policies and various budget consultations. Engagement at the provincial level also included a number of budget consultations, as well as advocating for an agri-food sector labour strategy, addressing barriers to attracting new truck drivers into the sector, and ensuring cost share programs include agri business sector opportunities. Moving forward, we anticipate increased levels of union related

work stoppages in critical supply chains through strike action and will be proactively engaging with applicable government ministries to ensure potential impacts to the agri business sector are well understood and mitigated.

In the areas of stakeholder and member relations, OABA continues to build strong relationships with allied industry and grower associations within the province and federal agri-food landscape. During the past year, highlights have included a number of communication collaborations with Grain Farmers of Ontario, Soy Canada, Fertilizer Canada, Ontario Bean Growers, Ontario Canola Growers, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Canada Grains Council, Seeds Canada and the Animal Nutrition Association of Canada to issue industry aligned guidance to members on the review of pre-commercial technologies, addressing union strike actions, advocating for continued market access, seek resolution to the 35% tariff on fertilizer, relief from carbon taxation, supporting new agri-business investments within Ontario, and ensuring our sector has access to new agri-tech funding streams. These collective efforts were undertaken to ensure our sector is highly aligned with our interests to government at all levels and the value chain. Additionally, I am pleased to note that under the direction of the Board of Directors, OABA provided significant financial support to Farm and Food Care Ontario's updated 6th edition of the "Real Dirt on Farming" publication that was released earlier this year, and was followed up by providing each OABA member company with a hard copy.

A cornerstone of OABA over the past several decades has been the delivery of premium, health, safety and leadership programming to our membership. Our staff team successfully transitioned all of our programs back to in-person events this past year. Highlights included several lead-hand courses delivered in Guelph and at member locations, various grain grading programs were delivered, and the successful relaunch of the Operations Forum. Furthermore, the Safety Network welcomed a number of new industry professionals into the program where they can learn and network with industry peers with an aim of providing best in class health and safety program in partnership with ACUTE Environmental and Safety Services.

A significant change for OABA this past year included the transition of our longtime office from our original premises within the University of Guelph's Research Park to a new location in the south end of Guelph. I feel that this transition was well timed, provides our staff with a professional office environment with appropriate IT infrastructure to undertake Association business and hold meetings, and puts us in a geographic location closer to our stakeholder network. I anticipate it will serve as the organizational base for years to come.

I would like to thank the many volunteers and staff for their commitment to both the Association and advancement of the Ontario agri business sector. The effective combination of volunteer experience on the Board of Directors, Crop Inputs, Feed and Grain Section Committees, along with the dedicated and professional staff of Ron, Tracey, Joanne and Russel continue to position OABA as a strong leadership organization. They effectively represent and advance the interests of our membership to industry stakeholders that include Government and Ministers, staff and other allied organizations that routinely look to OABA for our collective perspectives, thought leadership, and as a key collaborator in driving sector growth by identifying and effectively implementing solutions to issues as they arise.

It has been my pleasure to serve as your President over this past year. I would like to thank OABA staff and the Board of Directors for their support and guidance during the many challenges and opportunities we faced this past year. I firmly believe that the crop inputs, grain and feed sectors are all further ahead thanks to our collective efforts, and your continued support. OABA has a bright future as the voice of Ontario agri business.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
**Andrew Coghlin**  
*President*  
**Ontario Agri Business Association**

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

## Key Strategic Areas of Focus

### MEMBER ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATIONS

Maintain and enhance the role of OABA as a leading voice for the sector, seek membership feedback and guidance from all members, foster a high degree of member engagement via two-way communications and the utilization of member services such as meetings and networking events.

### STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS

Maintain and form productive working relationships with allied industry associations and government to the benefit of OABA and its members.

### SAFETY, TRAINING, EDUCATION & LEADERSHIP

Show educational leadership by delivering programs and resources that meet the current and anticipate the future needs of OABA members.

### ADVOCACY & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Be the leading voice of Ontario agri business to both provincial and federal (where applicable) elected officials and public servants.

### ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Maintain a high degree of organizational integrity and adherence to organizational vision, mission, and management structure; ensure both human and financial resources are prioritized to ensure resources are allocated to deliver on organizational strategic objectives efficiently and successfully on behalf of all members.



# 2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS

## A YEAR IN NUMBERS



### Membership

**462** members strong from across the Ontario crop inputs, feed and grain sector

**12** new members joined OABA this past year

**92** OABA member company staff participate on board, committees, sub-committees and working groups



### Government Relations

**41** meetings with federal and provincial senior bureaucrats and elected officials



**17** media interviews

**39** government policy submissions

**65** topic specific regulatory, political and biosecurity member updates issued

### Social & Networking



**6** Social and Networking events held throughout the year with over **781** attendees

**15** training & education events with over **240** OABA member company staff participating

**16** next generation leaders participate in OABA's mentorship program



# GRAIN COMMITTEE REPORT

It is my pleasure to provide an update on the activities of the Grain Section Committee during the past year. The Committee has been engaged in many discussions to navigate through both the issues and opportunities affecting our industry.

As a result of the 2018 corn harvest and the issues with deoxynivalenol (DON), OABA has continued work with Grain Farmers of Ontario (GFO), Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA) and the University of Guelph – Ridgetown Campus on a series of initiatives to better prevent or manage mycotoxin issues in the future.

This year the Grain Section Committee was given a demonstration from representatives of Sasso Mills and the Grain Farmers of Ontario of a grinder designed to grind a 2kg sample of corn. This grinder was designed based on the research conducted by Dr. Art Schaafsma at University of Guelph – Ridgetown Campus which showed that grinding the full 2kg sample provided more consistent results. Members interested in acquiring this equipment were encouraged to contact Sasso Mills.

OABA, in partnership with OMAFRA and GFO, conducted the annual pre-harvest corn DON survey. Results were published in October. Corn ear moulds such as Gibberella and their corresponding mycotoxins occur every year in Ontario. The 2024 survey found 94% of samples tested low (below 2.00 parts per million (ppm)) for DON and is one of the lowest DON level years compared to the 10-year average (86% of samples below 2.00 ppm).

The Ontario Corn Committee (OCC) released variety specific results from the DON susceptibility trials. This is the first year that the Committee has released these results. OABA is supporting the OCC by coordinating industry funding for these trials and hopes that over time producers will take advantage of these trial results when selecting hybrids, with the expectation of reducing the risk of widespread infections.

OABA continues to have representatives for both the Ontario Cereal Crops Committee and the Ontario Corn Committee. These committees oversee the performance trials of corn and wheat, in addition the Cereal Crops Committee approves new varieties for commercial release.

OABA engaged the Ontario Cereal Crops Committee in conversations regarding recent years trial results after harvest revealed some drastic falling number and test weight deficiencies attributed to specific varieties compared to the general quality of the 2024 harvest. OABA reinforced the importance of quality specifications that meet milling specifications when approving wheat varieties for sale.

OABA was contacted by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to conduct a dwarf bunt survey of the 2024 wheat crop. In eastern Canada, dwarf bunt is not known to occur in Quebec or in any of the Atlantic Provinces, although climatic conditions favour its potential establishment. The eastern grain handling system linked to the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway that handles wheat from Ontario is considered by CFIA to be contaminated with dwarf bunt spores. The main driver to

regulate dwarf bunt is to protect the pest free status of western Canada and to prevent the cross-contamination of the western grain handling system. Currently, export shipments in western Canada are certified based on area freedom to key markets that regulate dwarf bunt. OABA members were contacted to provide samples for the survey. The results have not been made available by CFIA at this time. The results aim to provide a foundation towards updating CFIA policies and transportation restriction regarding dwarf bunt in Ontario.

The Grain Section Committee reviewed documentation requirements under the Clean Fuel Regulations (CFR). This year the Federal Government's Clean Fuel Regulations come into effect. These regulations have been put in place to reduce the carbon intensity of fuels produced in Canada, including fuels produced from grains and oilseeds. To assist the grain industry in preparing to meet these regulatory requirements, OABA along with Grain Farmers of Ontario and western Canadian grain industry groups developed documentation templates that can be used by the grain trade. The CFR is a Government of Canada policy that is expected to increase demand for liquid biofuel use created from certain Canadian crops like canola, corn, soybeans and wheat.

Crops grown by Canadian farmers (referred to as "harvesters" in the CFR) have streamlined eligibility to participate in the CFR through legislative recognition. This means that Canadian farmers are exempt from demonstrating individual compliance with sustainability requirements related to Land Use and Biodiversity (LUB) Criteria. However, to confirm the eligibility of crops used in the CFR, the origin of the crops must be documented through the supply chain. The CFR uses declarations to ensure feedstocks have originated from Canadian farms. For any crops harvested in 2024 or after, farmers will be asked to sign an attestation when marketing crops destined for the CFR market.

Over the last year the Grain Section Committee has spent significant time discussing how to comply with the upcoming European Union Deforestation Regulations (EUDR). The goal of this regulation is to ensure that soybeans shipped to the EU are not harvested from recently deforested land. The EU definition of recently deforested land is any land cleared after 2020. Soy production from these acres will not be eligible to ship to the EU under their proposed policy. To enforce this regulation, the EU has indicated that it will require GPS coordinates from each farm field and periodic audits by EU member states will be conducted to ensure compliance. Violations of this regulation would have significant financial consequences for companies. OABA has been actively communicating with Soy Canada, GFO, grain industry members and government trade bureaucrats to determine the best path forward to align our industry's practices within the guidelines of the regulations. In June, Soy Canada organized an industry meeting with presentations from federal

government officials regarding the EUDR. Subsequently after repeated calls from various industry groups, including OABA, that were being impacted by the impending regulation, the EU announced it would delay enforcement of the regulations by twelve months to the end of 2026. This regulation will continue to be at the forefront of discussions with the Grain Section Committee.

OABA staff and Grain Section Committee members attended a meeting with the Canadian Grain Commission (CGC), hosted by the Grain Farmers of Ontario. The scope of the meeting was to introduce the new Chief Commissioner – David Hunt, as well as provide updates on current CGC initiatives.

The Committee reviewed the decision by the U.S. FDA to approve a GMO wheat variety for field trials. At this time the variety is years away from commercialization, OABA will be communicating with CFIA, industry and producer groups on the trade impact this might have, if it enters the marketplace.

At each Committee meeting, Agricorp staff provide updates on the Grain Financial Protection Program, dealer/operator licensing, production insurance and claims registered for crop insurance. The Committee reviews the reports to discuss any irregularities and to continue the open dialogue with Agricorp.

Thank you to all the Grain Section Committee members and OABA staff for their collective contributions in support of the Ontario grain industry.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Robert Anwender  
Chair, OABA Grain Section Committee*



# FEED COMMITTEE REPORT

I am pleased to share the 2024 annual report for the Feed Section Committee. Our Committee, which includes leading figures from Ontario's livestock and poultry feed manufacturing and supply sector, meets regularly to discuss and address a wide range of issues affecting the industry at local, provincial, and federal levels. We benefit from the national support of the Animal Nutrition Association of Canada (ANAC), particularly in our interactions with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). Additionally, we review and discuss reports from various producer and livestock committees, as well as OABA's Feed Technical Committee.

One of the prominent matters we addressed this year was the introduction of new federal Feeds Regulations, 2024. These long-anticipated modifications to the Regulations, developed by the CFIA with input from ANAC, aim to modernize and enhance the safety and sustainability of feed production across the country. While these changes are a positive step forward, they require significant adjustments in how we operate our businesses. OABA has been proactive in helping our members understand, prepare, and implement these new regulations. ANAC presented a webinar which provided an overview of the new regulations and their impact on the feed industry. Over 50 participants registered, many from feed dealer locations affiliated with OABA members. The webinar was recorded and made available to OABA members who could not attend. Our involvement has ensured that all segments of the feed industry, particularly small mills, and dealers, are well-prepared to comply with the new standards. This collaborative effort underscores our commitment to maintaining a safe and sustainable feed supply chain.

The Feed Section Committee has continued with its valuable involvement with the Feather Board Command Centre (FBCC). Thankfully, Ontario has managed to avoid significant issues with Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) throughout 2024, it continues to be an ongoing topic of awareness and constant reminder of the value of biosecurity and the importance of monitoring activity in and out of operations. Additionally, information and education sessions were organized to discuss the outbreak of HPAI in U.S. dairy cattle and its potential implications for Ontario.

We also benefited from a presentation from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA), Animal Health & Welfare branch sharing their focus areas and preparedness for African swine fever (ASF), a virus that continues to pose a threat globally to the swine sector although it has not become a reality within our trading regions.

OABA is a member of the Ontario Livestock and Poultry Council (OLPC). The OLPC is dedicated to helping the livestock and poultry

industries improve their ability to respond to an emergency animal disease outbreak and consists of livestock and poultry producer groups, veterinary organizations, government staff and other groups with an interest in biosecurity and managing animal diseases.

Each meeting of the Feed Section Committee includes a presentation from one of Ontario's livestock and poultry producer groups. These meetings are an excellent opportunity to better understand what these organizations are focusing on and build relationships that are helpful when future issues arise. This year we met with Ontario Sheep Farmers and Ontario Pork.

The Feed Technical Committee convened earlier in the year at the University of Guelph, where they explored the newly renovated meat lab and delved into research connecting nutrition to meat quality. Each meeting includes presentations by graduate students from the Department of Animal Biosciences at the University of Guelph. It is an excellent opportunity for these students to meet industry representatives and a number of presenters from past years are now employed by OABA member companies.

Both the Feed Section Committee and the Feed Technical Committee have endorsed a proposal from the University of Guelph to construct a new feed mill in Elora; adjacent to a number of recently constructed research facilities, that is aimed at supporting the nutritional needs for these sites. Concerns were raised by some government officials about commercial feed mill ability to meet research requirements. Exploration of using commercial feed mills to supply research formulations was examined by stakeholders, however, upon review by both Committees, it was determined that a stand-alone research feed mill is required. The need for small batch sizes and the use of novel ingredients by researchers were identified as challenges for commercial mills, both from an operational and HACCP perspective. A letter was issued to OMAFA and University of Guelph officials by OABA supporting the need for a modern feed manufacturing facility focused on research diets.

OABA representation has been invited to join a dairy industry committee coordinated by OMAFA to develop resources for dairy farmers updating their facilities. Upcoming changes to the Dairy Code of Practice will necessitate modifications, especially for producers with tie-stall facilities. The Committee aims to create a central resource database for farmers to determine if new barns are needed and explore available options. OABA will also be providing financial management support for this initiative.

OABA continues to partner with OMAFA to host the annual Ruminant Feed Industry Days in Elora and eastern Ontario. This

year's events attracted almost one hundred people to sessions in Elora and Metcalfe.

The Committee had the pleasure of having three members of the OABA Leadership Development Program join the committee over the past year and enjoyed their perspectives and active participation.

As the outgoing Chair of OABA's Feed Section Committee, I reflect on the privilege it has been to serve in this capacity. Working alongside the dedicated members of the Feed Section Committee, the Chairs of the Feed Technical Committee, and the OABA staff has been incredibly rewarding. This position has afforded me the chance to contribute to the outstanding efforts of this organization, its staff, and its volunteers.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Phil Roberts  
Chair, OABA Feed Section Committee*



# CROP INPUTS COMMITTEE REPORT

The Crop Inputs Committee began the year by welcoming three new members Chris Pattison, Kevin Van Eerd and Mike Pastir. In addition, OABA Leadership Development Program members Sarah Long, John Hermans, Kayle Stevenson and Lisa Shier were also able to participate as part of their program commitments. As a testament to the success of the Leadership Development Program, Sarah is already a member of the Crop Inputs Committee.

This past year certainly saw its share of challenges, from a very wet period in the spring planting season, the continued march of corn tar spot across the province, and some milling quality issues with specific varieties in the Ontario winter wheat crop. Despite all these challenges, we've had an exceptional fall harvest season, and we are truly blessed to have overall excellent yields across the province again this year.

OABA continued over the last year to be very involved in the growth and evolution of the 4R Ontario Nutrient Stewardship framework. The 4R Ontario approach revolves around a retailer audit based on the principles of the right source of nutrients, at the right rate, at the right time, and in the right place. There are currently 29 retail locations and independent crop advisor companies in Ontario that are certified. 4R certified businesses currently 'influence' around 1.1 million acres provincially. Most of the certified locations are in the Lake Erie basin and efforts are being made to expand across the rest of the province. Initially established as a response to algal blooms in Lake

Erie, the program is evolving to incorporate greenhouse gas emissions from nitrogen use and other challenges. Within the 4R Ontario group, the Science and Technical Committee is in the process of reviewing standards and the audit process with the goal of developing a more streamlined approach that will encourage more retailers to become certified. At the time of printing, OABA is working on a new Memorandum of Cooperation that will extend our participation for another 3-year term when the current agreement ends on December 31, 2024. Work is also being completed on a 4R Economic Impact Assessment that will be useful in promoting 4R to retailers and producers.

OABA members are also participating in a project with the Holland Marsh Growers' Association and Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness to incorporate 4R principles into vegetable production on high organic matter soils.

This past year the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry released a report on soil entitled "Critical Ground: Why Soil is Essential to Canada's Economic, Environmental, Human and Social Health." The report sets out a number of recommendations to the federal government. As soil health becomes more of a focus at the government and public level, it is important for crop input retailers to demonstrate the role we play in helping producers implement best practices and achieve soil health goals, which can often get overlooked.

At the provincial level, OABA continues to participate in the Soils Action Group, a coalition of producer groups, government, academia and industry. The role of this group is to develop and implement a soil health strategy for Ontario. The group attempts to coordinate efforts by the various stakeholders and prioritize initiatives that will have the biggest impact on soil health. OABA's involvement this year culminated with a meeting hosted by Holmes Agro on October 29, which provided an excellent opportunity to showcase the knowledge and equipment utilized by Ontario retailers to help producers implement practices that improve soil health.

Adam Van Passen continues to represent OABA on the Ontario Pesticide Education Program (OPEP). Discussions this year included streamlining renewals, on-line options for testing, digital certificate options and a revised targeted course for retail vendors.

Seeds Canada provided our committee with regular updates throughout the year. Their mandate is to support the growth of the seed sector in Canada and worldwide, focusing on plant breeding innovation, seed regulatory modernization, international trade, value creation, and plant breeders' rights. It is a valuable opportunity to share with them the retailers' perspective on a number of seed related issues. The committee also reviewed the issue of a wheat variety with low falling number issues this year, and supported OABA's efforts to

ensure that quality parameters are established and followed during the seed variety registration process.

The Committee reviewed and offered input on a number of regulations, impacting labour, carbon charges, prevention of forced and child labour and the future of supply management.

Also on the regulatory side, OABA provided a submission to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) as part of their consultation on the proposed implementation of a per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) standard for municipal biosolids imported or sold in Canada. OABA hosted a webinar to discuss new CFIA labelling requirements that came into effect in the fall of 2023, with OABA providing guidance to help members meet new compliance standards.

The Committee also continues to closely monitor a recent change by the Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) to no longer accept maximum residue limit (MRL) testing from foreign jurisdictions. This change could add significant costs to minor use product registrations in Canada and could create a significant competitive disadvantage.

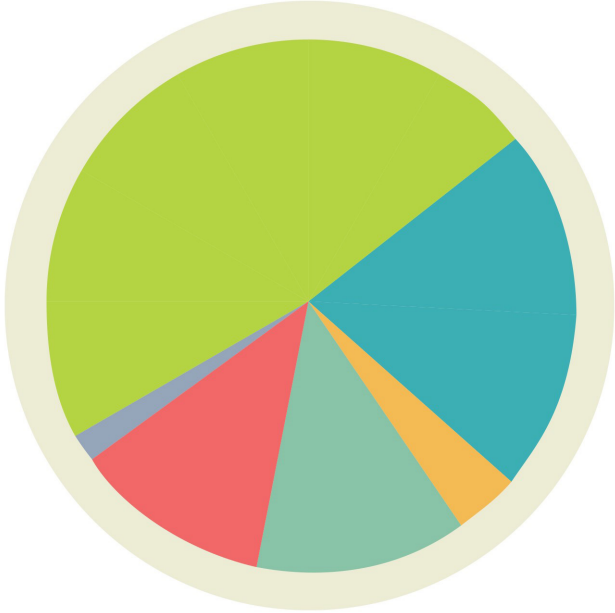
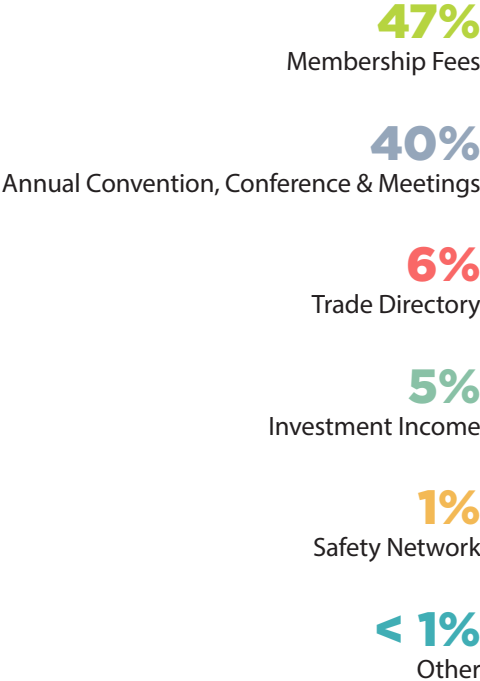
Finally, on the regulatory side, the Crop Inputs Committee continues to lobby and maintain open lines of communication with the federal government with regards to the tariffs on imports of Russian sourced fertilizer. We continue to emphasize that the eventual removal of these tariffs needs to be done in a manner that does not disrupt normal buying cycles and does not create competitive unfairness within our industry.

On behalf of the Crop Inputs Committee, I would like to thank the Association for all the work it does on behalf of its members. As the regulatory environment continues to evolve at home and abroad, it is increasingly important that we have an active association to look out for and advocate for our members' best interests.

*Respectfully Submitted,*  
*Murray Van Zeggelaar*  
*Chair, OABA Crop Inputs Section Committee*

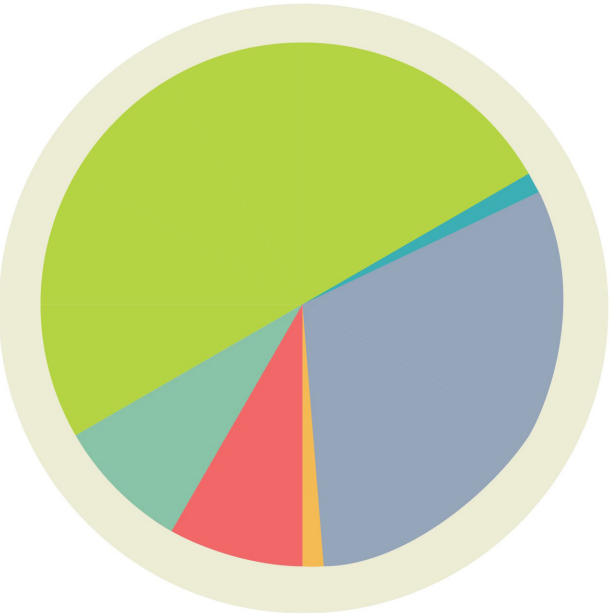
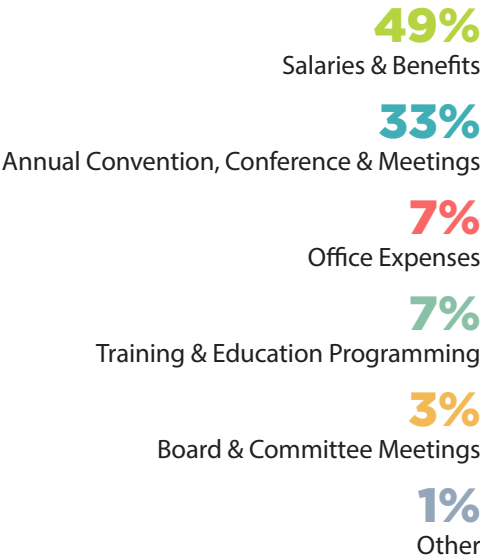
# 2023 - 2024 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

## Where our funding comes from



**Total Revenue \$970,695**

## How we allocate funds to support OABA's strategic priorities



**Total Expenditures \$967,945**



# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

# INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

## To the Members of the Ontario Agri Business Association Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

### Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of the Ontario Agri Business Association, which comprise the Statement of Financial Position as at September 30, 2024 and the Statements of Operations, Changes in Net Assets and Cash Flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Ontario Agri Business Association as at September 30, 2024 and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of Financial Statements section of our report.

We are independent of the Association in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

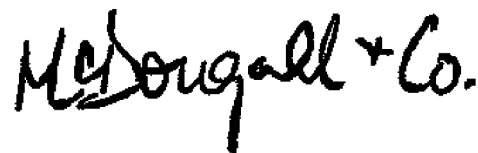
## Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal control.

- Evaluate the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



**Chartered Professional Accountants  
Licensed Public Accountants**

November 5, 2024  
Baden, Ontario

# Ontario Agri Business Association

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

### ASSETS

	2024	2023
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Cash	\$ -	\$ 41,658
Accounts receivable	32,444	10,065
Accrued interest receivable	23,130	21,237
Prepaid expenses	24,314	44,772
Inventory (Note 2(b), 3)	10,175	9,052
Investments (Note 5)	1,063,367	1,153,624
	1,153,430	1,280,408
<b>CAPITAL ASSETS (Note 2(c), 4)</b>		
At cost less accumulated amortization	110,205	6,101
	\$ 1,263,635	\$ 1,286,509

### LIABILITIES

<b>CURRENT</b>		
Bank indebtedness	\$ 33,342	\$ -
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	10,953	4,119
Memberships received in advance	4,558	70,358
	48,853	74,477

### NET ASSETS

<b>UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS</b>	1,214,782	1,212,032
	\$ 1,263,635	\$ 1,286,509

*The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.*

# Ontario Agri Business Association

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

	2024	2023
<b>REVENUE</b>		
Annual convention, conferences and meetings	\$ 389,978	\$ 332,537
Investment income	43,551	36,246
Membership fees	455,597	428,132
Other income	9,541	8,405
Safety Network	9,582	9,828
Trade directory	62,446	63,520
	970,695	878,668
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
Amortization of capital assets	3,838	2,211
Annual convention, conferences and meetings	317,138	294,538
Association services and activities (per schedule)	33,023	39,530
Automobile, travelling and meetings (per schedule)	19,247	23,209
Office and general (per schedule)	34,174	31,226
Other expenses	6,573	5,554
Rent, utilities and taxes	61,019	57,206
Salaries and benefits	480,726	464,751
Trade directory	12,207	12,520
	967,945	930,745
<b>EXCESS (DEFICIENCY) OF REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES FOR YEAR</b>	2,750	(52,077)
<b>NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	\$ 1,212,032	\$ 1,264,109
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	\$ 1,214,782	\$ 1,212,032

*The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.*

# Ontario Agri Business Association

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

	2024	2023
<b>CASH PROVIDED BY OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenditures for year	\$ 2,750	\$ (52,077)
<b>Items not requiring an outlay of cash:</b>		
Amortization of capital assets	3,838	2,211
	6,588	(49,866)
<b>Changes in non-cash working capital:</b>		
(Increase) decrease in accounts receivable	(22,379)	10,368
Increase in accrued interest receivable	(1,893)	(6,853)
Decrease (increase) in prepaid expenses	20,458	(1,110)
Increase in inventory	(1,123)	(872)
Increase (decrease) in accounts payable and accrued liabilities	6,834	(15,911)
(Decrease) increase in memberships received in advance	(65,800)	65,094
	(57,315)	850
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Proceeds from sale of investments	721,493	717,320
Purchase of investments	(631,236)	(661,114)
Purchase of capital assets	(107,942)	(3,110)
	(17,685)	53,096
<b>NET (DECREASE) INCREASE IN CASH</b>	(75,000)	53,946
<b>CASH (BANK INDEBTEDNESS), BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	41,658	(12,288)
<b>(BANK INDEBTEDNESS) CASH, END OF YEAR</b>	\$ (33,342)	41,658

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

# Ontario Agri Business Association

## SCHEDULE OF GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

	2024	2023
<b>ASSOCIATION SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES</b>		
4R Ontario	\$ -	\$ 10,000
Economic Impact Analysis	-	6,206
Employment and benefits survey	-	50
Farm and Food Care	10,000	-
Government relations	960	1,000
Human resources services	6,225	6,225
Internet home page	710	690
Membership fees	7,654	7,300
Membership stickers	585	579
Newsletter expenses	150	-
Ontario 4-H Foundation	1,000	1,000
Safety Network	3,489	3,630
Scholarships	2,250	2,250
Webinar and online learning	-	600
	\$ 33,023	\$ 39,350
<b>AUTOMOBILE, TRAVELLING AND MEETINGS</b>		
Directors and committees	\$ 7,488	\$ 9,262
Staff expenses	11,789	13,947
	\$ 19,247	\$ 23,209
<b>OFFICE AND GENERAL</b>		
Audit	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,250
Bank charges	419	626
Insurance	6,103	5,740
Janitorial service	3,459	3,395
Miscellaneous	444	364
Office expenses	11,167	10,628
Postage	1,831	2,038
Telephone	6,751	5,185
	\$ 34,174	\$ 31,226

*The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.*

# Ontario Agri Business Association

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

### 1. Purpose of the Organization

The Ontario Agri Business Association was incorporated on May 25, 1999 as a corporation without share capital to promote and represent the interests of the crop inputs, grain and feed industry, and related agricultural businesses operating in the Province of Ontario through the effective delivery of products, programs and services.

For Canadian income tax purposes, the Association is qualified as a not-for-profit organization, which is exempt from income tax under the *Income Tax Act*.

### 2. Summary Of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial statements were prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and include the following significant accounting policies:

(a) **Revenue recognition**

The Association follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Convention, conference and meeting fees are recognized as revenue when the event is held. Membership fees are recognized as revenue during the year to which they relate.

Investment income is recognized as revenue when earned.

All other revenues are recognized as revenue when received or receivable.

(b) **Inventory**

Inventory is recorded at the lower of cost and net realizable value. Cost is determined using the first in, first out method.

(c) **Capital assets**

Capital assets are recorded at cost. Generally, capital expenditures in excess of \$2,500 are capitalized. Minor expenditures which do not extend the life of an asset are expensed.

Amortization is provided from the date the asset is put into service on a straight line basis over the expected useful life as follows:

Leasehold improvements	10 years
Office furniture and equipment	5 years
Computer equipment	3 years

(d) **Contributed services**

Volunteers contribute numerous hours per year to assist the Association in carrying out its activities. Because of the difficulty of determining their fair value, contributed services are not recognized in the financial statements.

(e) **Use of estimates**

The preparation of financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements, and the reported amounts of revenues and expenditures during the reporting period. Actual results could differ from management's best estimates as additional information becomes available in the future.

(f) **Financial instruments**

The Association initially measures its financial assets and financial liabilities at fair value. It subsequently measures all its financial assets and financial liabilities at amortized cost.

The financial assets subsequently measured at amortized cost include cash, term deposits and amounts receivable. The financial liabilities measured at amortized cost include accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

### 3. Inventory

	2024	2023
Manual grain storage receipts	\$ 795	\$ 916
Computer grain storage receipts	1,286	1,420
Laser grain storage receipts	6,368	3,188
Postage	1,726	3,528
	\$ 10,175	\$ 9,052

The cost of inventory recognized as an expense during the year amounts to \$6,573 (2023 - \$6,507).



# Ontario Agri Business Association

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

### 4. Capital Assets

	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Amortization</b>	<b>Net 2024</b>	<b>Net 2023</b>
Leasehold improvements	\$ 107,942	\$ 900	\$ 107,042	\$ -
Office furniture and equipment	8,860	8,860	-	-
Computer equipment	20,820	17,657	3,163	6,101
	\$ 137,622	\$ 27,417	\$ 110,205	\$ 6,101

### 5. Investments

Details of the investments are as follows:

	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Market Value</b>
GIC - 2.37%, due November 12, 2024	50,000	51,049
GIC - 4.77%, due January 23, 2025	40,000	41,312
GIC - 4.40%, due February 18, 2025	100,000	102,748
GIC - 1.85%, due June 23, 2025	95,000	95,477
GIC - 1.52%, due July 15, 2025	29,000	29,093
GIC - 1.52%, due July 15, 2025	25,000	25,080
GIC - 1.45%, due November 17, 2025	37,000	37,467
GIC - 4.85%, due February 17, 2026	100,000	103,030
GIC - 4.63%, due February 16, 2027	75,000	77,169
GIC - 4.81%, due December 8, 2027	50,000	51,957
GIC - 4.30%, due January 4, 2028	100,000	103,193
GIC - 4.05%, due February 15, 2028	100,000	102,530
GIC - 4.40%, due February 15, 2028	75,000	77,061
GIC - 4.26%, due June 20, 2029	65,000	65,774
GIC - 4.26%, due June 20, 2029	100,000	101,190
2,236.693 RBC Investment Savings Account	22,367	22,367
	\$ 1,063,367	\$ 1,086,497

The weighted average interest rate of the portfolio is 3.65% (2023 - 3.20%).

The investment portfolio is maintained in order to provide a source of funds in the event the Association is unable to generate sufficient revenues to cover intended expenses. Funds are invested in low risk investment instruments in order to preserve the capital and achieve predictable positive returns.

# Ontario Agri Business Association

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

### 6. Commitments

- (a) The Association leases office space under a lease expiring August 31, 2029. The annual cost, exclusive of utilities, taxes and maintenance, is as follows:

2025	\$21,000
2026	\$21,000
2027	\$21,000
2028	\$21,000
2029	\$19,250

- (b) The Association entered into an agreement in January 2022 to contribute \$10,000 a year over three years to the 4R Ontario Nutrient Stewardship Program. All funding partners agreed to forgo the annual contribution for calendar year 2024 to draw down program surplus prior to the conclusion of the current agreement.

### 7. Financial Instruments

The Association's financial instruments consist of cash, amounts receivable, investments and accounts payable and accrued liabilities. The fair values of these financial instruments approximate their carrying values, unless otherwise stated. Unless otherwise noted, it is the opinion of the Board that the Association is not exposed to significant liquidity, interest, currency or credit risks arising from these financial instruments.

### 8. Capital Management

The Association considers its capital to be the balance maintained in its Net Assets. The primary objective of the Association is to invest its capital in a manner that will allow it to continue as a going concern and comply with its stated objectives. Capital is invested under the direction of the Board of Directors of the Association with the objective of providing a reasonable rate of return, minimizing risk and ensuring adequate liquid investments are on hand for current cash flow requirements. The Association is not subject to any externally imposed restrictions on its capital.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## EXECUTIVE

ANDREW COGHLIN, President

JOHN TAYLOR, Past-President

MARTIN KIEFER, Vice-President

SANDRA WOLFE, Treasurer

## DIRECTORS

JOANNE CAPUTO, *Sylvite*

ANDREW COGHLIN, *Molesworth Farm Supply Ltd.*

MATT GARDNER, *Snobelen Farms Ltd.*

DON KABBES, *Great Lakes Grain*

MARTIN KIEFER, *Agrico Canada L.P.*

TRUDY MCGOVERN, *Richardson International*

DAN RIVAIT, *Nutrien*

JOHN TAYLOR, *Collwest Grain Ltd.*

GREG VANDEN BOSCH, *Vanden Bosch Elevators Inc.*

KEVIN WEPPLER, *Agribution Canada Ltd.*

SANDRA WOLFE, *Sharpe Farm Supplies Ltd.*

## MEMBERS EX-OFFICIO

PHIL ROBERTS, **Feed Committee Chair**

*New-Life Mills, a div. of Parrish & Heimbecker Ltd.*

ROBERT ANWENDER, **Grain Committee Chair**

*BroadGrain Commodities Inc.*

MURRAY VAN ZEGGELAAR, **Crop Inputs Committee Chair**

*Nachurs Alpine Solutions*

## OABA STAFF

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Executive Director

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**Ron Campbell**

Operations & Member Services Manager

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**Tracey Forrester**

Education & Communications Coordinator

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**Joanne Buell**

Office & Financial Coordinator

[joanne@oaba.on.ca](mailto:joanne@oaba.on.ca)

# 2025 UPCOMING EVENTS

## **OABA Curling Bonspiel**

Elora Curling Club - Elora  
February 5, 2025

## **OABA Summer Conference**

Deerhurst Resort - Huntsville  
June 22-24, 2025

## **OABA Western Ontario Golf Day**

Craigowan Golf Club - Woodstock  
July 8, 2025

## **OABA Eastern Ontario Golf Day**

Smuggler's Glen Golf Course - Lansdowne  
July 15, 2025

## **OABA "Fall Classic" Golf Day**

Grey Silo Golf Course - Waterloo  
September 16, 2025



## **Ontario Agri Business Association**

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Guelph, ON N1G 5G6

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