



## **E3-2011 - Southwest Agricultural Conference 2012**

# **CROP ADVANCES**

## **Field Crop Reports**

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Field Crops Team, Agriculture Development Branch  
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs  
In partnership with  
Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association  
And other Agricultural Organizations and Businesses



<http://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/cropadvances.htm>

# SOUTHWEST AGRICULTURAL CONFERENCE

## Southwest Agricultural Conference 2012

The 19<sup>th</sup> Southwest Agricultural Conference was held January 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at the University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus. The conference experienced record attendance again this year with just over 1400 attending the first day and over 1200 the second day.

The theme of this year's conference was "Seizing the Opportunities" and presented

topics from What Part of 30% Residue Cover Didn't We Understand to Fertilizer Hot Buttons to the Quest for Amazing Soybean Yields to The Invaluable Earthworm. Topics on cover crops, manure, on farm energy production, soil testing, commodity marketing smart phones and weed control were some of the other topics included this year.

Dr. Patrick Moore, chair and chief scientist of Green Spirit Strategies and co-founder of Greenpeace, provided the audience with a perspective on radical environmentalists and his vision on the path forward on a number of environmental issues in his feature presentation on the first day of the conference. On the second day of the conference, Michele Payn-Knoper, a principle of Cause Matters Corp., encouraged the audience to celebrate agriculture and educate others about the industry. Also on this day the Honourable Ted McMeekin, Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs gave a brief presentation commenting "This is a dream job for me" and that agriculture is the largest industry in Ontario.



The webcast of the sessions from two rooms on January 5<sup>th</sup> increased to five locations this year. 116 participants at Kemptville, Thunder Bay, and Thessalon enjoyed the program. In a partnership with the Grain Farmers of Ontario two new locations were added and 65 participants took in the program at John Deere dealerships in Omemee and Walkerton. The sessions were well received and it is a great way to deliver this high quality program to those who may not wish to travel to Ridgetown or who may not have the same access to speakers.

The format of the conference is seven 50 minute concurrent sessions plus the feature speaker so it is a full day of learning! The presenters are a mix of farmers, researchers, government extension staff and agriculture industry personnel. The goal of the conference is to bring in the best speaker possible for a topic, by a number of means.

Here is a sample of the more than 40 sessions that were offered concurrently over two days at the conference:

- Weed Invaders
- Ag Nerds
- Disease Dilemmas
- Tile Drainage Pays
- Tractor Trailer Tune-up
- Corn Belt Savvy!
- Health Soils Make Money
- Wheat – the Next Big Step
- Farmstead Energy Options
- The Buzz on Bees
- Cover Crops and Reduced Tillage
- Make Hay Pay

Once again the conference hosted a reception at the end of the first day. The Taste of Ontario reception featured meat, vegetables, fruit, honey, mead, wine, beer and spirits from southwestern Ontario. A poster session was offered again. Posters were presented from the University of Guelph (professors and students), OMAFRA, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and others. The trade show once again attracted a large number of exhibitors.



The conference is a cooperative effort between the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Southwest Soil and Crop Improvement Associations, many agribusiness supporters and Ridgetown Campus, University of Guelph.

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Visit our website [www.southwestagconference.ca](http://www.southwestagconference.ca) for conference information. A number of the presentations were recorded this year and are posted on the website under proceedings.

