

FarmSmart Agricultural Conference 2013

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The FarmSmart Agricultural Conference celebrated its 15th Anniversary on Sat. Jan. 19th, 2013. The conference which began at Redeemer College Ancaster in 1999 and moved to the University of Guelph main campus in 2003 continues to build to offer participants, speakers and sponsors more opportunity to learn and network. FarmSmart wishes to thank the many participants, organizers, speakers and sponsors who have supported this conference over the past 15 years. Attendance again surpassed expectations with over 1200 people participating in the newly expanded 2 day event. In an effort to expand the value of the FarmSmart franchise, the organizers added a full day single stream event, CornSmart, which brought over 250 producers and Ag business people together at Puslinch Community Centre in nearby Aberfoyle to learn from Ken Ferrie, a well know Illinois based crop consultant. The event was a tremendous success and plans are already underway to make a Friday session part of the annual program.



Continuing on the success of our parallel feature speaker program from last year of sharing the time with a speaker from the Ontario Beef Symposium which has become a permanent fixture of the event and our main program, our speakers were Dr. Joe Schwarcz from McGill Universities Office of Science and Society speaking on “The Public’s Perception of Agriculture, and Dr. Bob Weaber from Kansas State University speaking on “Using Genetics to Meet the Food Demand of 205”.

Crop Advance: OMAF Field Crop Project Reports

The FarmSmart Agricultural Conference is produced in partnership between OMAFRA, Golden Horseshoe and Heartland Regional Soil and Crop Improvement Associations, The University of Guelph and is supported broadly by Ontario's Agricultural Industry.

The conference mandate is to provide an opportunity for farmers, extension, academics and industry to interact and learn from a series of approximately 50 sessions and workshops held in up to 10 concurrent formats throughout the day. Topics included crop and livestock production sessions along with nutrient management, alternative energy, business management, general interest and others. A series of computer workshops in the OAC multi media laboratory including various financial and precision agriculture software tools. Participants chose their own program from the diverse slate of topics allowing each participant to tailor the day to their interests and requirements. The FarmSmart Committee is pleased to see that the attendance at the conference continues to spread itself across the wide range of diverse sessions. We are always intrigued by the mix of people who show up at some of less agricultural topics. This diversity of program is what makes FarmSmart unique among the wide range of conferences held each year, and based on the success of the format will continue to be the focus of the program committee in the future.

The Youth Program was again a great success with close to 40 participating. We continue to emphasize this aspect of the conference. Kids, come out and have a fun and interesting day exploring the University of Guelph and all it has to offer. For the first time this year we were able to arrange a tour of the OVC Vet College which was well received by the kids and we returned to the School of Environmental Sciences Space Lab, always a perennial hit.

FarmSmart 2013 was an outstanding success and all the partners are looking forward to bringing you FarmSmart 2014 on January 18th, 2014. Mark your calendars today, so as not to miss the exciting and informative chance to join fellow producers, industry, extension and academics at next year's event.

Stay current with FarmSmart Ag Conference news by monitoring our website at:
<http://www.uoguelph.ca/farmsmart>

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