



2011 Federal Election Campaign Tool Kit

Our Campaign Objective:

Ontario Cattlemen's Association, Ontario Grains and Oilseeds and Ontario Pork have a common goal which is first, to see MP's elected, no matter the political party, that will give our farmers strong, supportive representation in the next parliament. We want MPs to stick up for Ontario, because they realize that all regions are different and what works for one, may not work for Ontario. As our representatives, they need to be working hard to find solutions for the people who elected them.

That means to support your industry, you have to be heard. You need to meet with candidates, question them, educate them, and make sure that they are sincere in earning your vote.

Second, our collective organizations and members have worked hard to get permanent provincial funding for RMP in place. It is time to get a commitment from our new MPs to join us in finding a way for the federal government to become a full funding partner as their top priority in the new parliament. They need to know that this is our top priority.

Who:

Candidates who are running for election in your riding, but especially those that are most likely to win the next election or form an opposition party. In addition to the candidate, the campaign manager is often a very important contact as well and should not be ignored in your meetings and contacts.

What:

In each riding a speak up member will be appointed that will be the focus for our contact with the candidates in that riding. It will be their job to organize a local meeting with each local candidate, to identify and bring producers from our commodities along with them to the meeting, and to report back the results of the meetings to our campaign headquarters (see contacts below) so that we can keep track of who is supporting our cause.

However, you will also have a role. You are encouraged to attend any all candidate meetings and use this guide and the key messages below to question them and to ask for their support as they are asking for your vote.

Where:

Meetings can be arranged anywhere. Expect to be flexible, which may require you to meet the candidate early or while they are on transit from one point of the riding to the other. They are extremely busy during a campaign, but they will usually find the time to meet sincere and genuine industry representatives with a focused request.

When:

Meetings and contacts need to be arranged as soon as possible as this is a very short campaign. Look for OFA , chamber of commerce and other organized meetings to attend.

How:

Meetings are best arranged by dropping by the campaign office and talking to the campaign manager. They control the campaign for the Candidate and where and when the meetings with individuals and delegations will occur.

If you are particularly known to the candidate or campaign manager, explore the option of getting a delegation of producers together or coffee meeting at your farm.

As well take advantage of previously organized town hall sessions and all candidates meetings to attend and ask questions to incumbent MPs and new candidates.

Participating in online surveys and radio call in shows, are another way to join in the debate. Your commodity organization will work to keep you posted on upcoming events.

Key Messages and Talking Points for Candidate Discussions:

- Ontario farmers need MPs who will stand up for Ontario farming families and communities in Ottawa.
- MPs are elected to represent local concerns. We want assurances from all candidates that they will truly defend the interests of Ontario's farmers.
- One size fits all approaches do not work in a country like Canada. Business risk programs should be national in scope but tailored to be responsive and flexible to regional needs.
- Ontario's farmers created and support an insurance-based Risk Management Program (RMP) that meets the needs of Ontario producers. Not the West or East, but Ontario.
- RMP is responsive to farmers' needs and provides the stability, predictability, bankability, and positive cash flow we require to invest in innovation and make our farming operations more competitive.
- RMP was designed as a three way partnership, on a voluntary basis Ontario farmers pay premiums representing 30% of the long-term cost of the insurance program with the federal and provincial governments contributing the remainder in accordance with the traditional 60/40 (federal/provincial) split.
- We have done our homework. Ontario's RMP will be simple to administer. In fact the system to set it up is being done right now.

- RMP will not trigger a trade action or countervail. In fact it carries about the same trade risk as Growing Forward does now. Suggestions that it will are unhelpful and may attract nuisance complaints against the program.
- If and when a payout is triggered, virtually all the funds will be spent in rural Ontario, underpinning the local economy and contributing to the tax base and maintaining rural services.
- On March 29th the Ontario government acted during tough fiscal times to create a permanent RMP insurance program so farmers can provide high quality, locally grown food to Canadian families. Two of the three sides are committed to the RMP solution, but one partner, the federal government is thus far absent.
- In the absence of federal government participation, both the premiums and the program benefits are reduced. Without the participation of the federal government, Ontario farmers will need to finance the largest share of their current and future losses without an adequate business risk management tool.
- AgriStability has been beneficial but on its own, it is not an adequate enough solution.
- The significant effort and energy expended by the federal government to negotiate freer access to new markets will mean nothing if Ontario producers cannot participate in these opportunities.
- For Ontario producers the establishment of the RMP insurance program that includes federal participation is our top priority for the next parliament.
- As a candidate seeking to represent Ontario farmers, will you support your constituents by advocating for additional regionally flexible funding for Agriculture when you get to Ottawa?
- Can we count on you to work hard to find a way for the federal government to become a full RMP funding partner as soon as possible?

Contacts:

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