

OMAFRA UPDATE

Presentation by:
Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs

OMAFRA & OAAS History

- The ministry has had a long standing relationship with Agricultural and Horticultural Societies across the province.
- The ministry works closely with the OAAS board and district directors to provide information to agricultural societies about compliance for their incorporation under the *Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations Act*.
- The ministry also works with agricultural societies to strengthen their organizational and leadership capacity and increase their economic development impact.

Ontario's Response To COVID 19

COVID 19 presents increased concerns for all the people living in Ontario

Ontario government is taking action

- enacting a [declaration of emergency](#) to help stop the spread and keep people safe
- monitoring hospitals for potential cases of the virus in individuals with travel history to areas under a [travel health advisory](#) for COVID-19
- adding the 2019 novel coronavirus as a designated disease reportable under Ontario's public health legislation, enabling local public health units to quickly and effectively take all necessary measures to investigate, complete lab tests and do case and contact management to prevent and control further spread of the infection

Ontario's Response To COVID 19 (cont'd)

- ongoing planning with federal and provincial/territorial partners and readiness to coordinate with other provinces/territories
- through the work of the Command Table, refining and finalizing plans for the implementation of enhanced measures to ensure the province continues to be prepared to respond quickly and effectively to any scenario, including:
 - [enhanced access to screening](#)
 - expanding lab-testing capacity
 - implementing new initiatives to keep the public and frontline workers safe

Annual Grants to Agricultural Societies

Agricultural Exhibition Grant

- ▶ Up to \$3,000
- ▶ One-third of the costs incurred for exhibition expenses (or two-thirds of costs incurred in Northern Ontario)
- ▶ Farmstead improvement competitions and local amateur talent may not exceed one-third of the total grant

Improvements and Repairs Grant

- ▶ Up to \$2,000
- ▶ For repairs to society's land and buildings that will advance or be used to advance the objects of the society
- ▶ 25% of the costs incurred for eligible expenses

Wet Weather Grant

- ▶ In a year where wet weather causes a decrease in the revenue an agricultural society receives from admission tickets, a grant to the society may be given, up to \$1,000, of the difference between the admission ticket revenue from the current year and 90% of the average admission ticket revenue for the three preceding years of normal weather.

Resources

Ontario COVID-19 Updates

[Ontario's Updates](#)

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs Fact Sheets

www.ontario.ca

Agricultural & Horticultural Organizations Act

www.e-laws.gov.on.ca

OMAFRA Contacts

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Questions Submitted

Questions & Answers

Does an Agricultural Society have to have a Fair to remain in good standing?

Good Standing = Incorporated

- NO

Agricultural Societies are concerned that their OMAFRA Grant will be affected if their 2020 Fair is cancelled or there is a significant difference from 2020 to 2019 attendance and income. We are asking that OMAFRA allow Agricultural Societies to use the higher of their 2018 or 2019 figures to apply for their 2021 OMAFRA grant.

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Questions & Answers

What is the minimum membership number to retain in good standing? 60 members to originally incorporate – is that the number that is required to maintain their incorporation?

- ▶ There is nothing in the ACT that mentions a Society must maintain 60 members to remain incorporated

If Agricultural Society membership is down for 2020 and even 2021, there are concerns that they might not have the minimum membership numbers to be incorporated for those years – can that requirement be waved for 2020 and 2021?

- ▶ There is no minimum membership to remain incorporated

Questions & Answers

What is the definition of a member?

- ▶ Any person may join an agricultural society by paying the annual fee set out in a by-law of the society but no person under the age of eighteen years is eligible to vote at meetings of the society. R.S.O. 1990, c. A.9, s. 32.

Someone that pays a membership fee – other than members must be 18 to vote - are there any other stipulations?

- ▶ NO

Do they have to be considered a ‘voting member’ of the Agricultural Society?

- ▶ The ACT does not specify this

Questions & Answers

What are the requirements to receive an annual grant for Societies?

In order to receive a grant from the Ministry, an agricultural society must, in the year for which the grant is paid,

- (a) have at least sixty members;
- (b) work to advance its objects;
- (c) comply with the requirements of the Act; and
- (d) hold an agricultural exhibition. R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 16, s. 2.

Questions & Answers

What are the specific requirements to remain in good standing?

Good Standing = Incorporated

15 (1) Every organization shall, within ninety days of the annual meeting of the organization, submit to the Director,

- (a) a copy of the audited financial statement;
- (b) a statement of the number of current members;
- (c) a list of the directors and officers of the organization and their addresses; and
- (d) a copy of the annual report submitted at the annual meeting. R.S.O. 1990, c. A.9, s. 15 (1).

Questions & Answers

What if an Agricultural Society does not meet all the requirements to remain in good standing?

Good Standing = Incorporated

► 18 (1) If an organization fails to comply with section 15, the Minister may cancel the certificate of incorporation of the organization and it is dissolved on the date specified by the Minister. R.S.O. 1990, c. A.9, s. 18 (1).

How long does an Ag Society have to achieve the requirements before they lose their incorporation?

Notice of dissolution

► (2) No organization shall be dissolved under this section unless twelve months notice has been given to the board of the organization by the Minister of the intention to dissolve the organization and the board is given the opportunity to bring the organization into good standing within that time. R.S.O. 1990, c. A.9, s. 18 (2).

Questions & Answers

Proof of incorporated status/non-profit status/ in good standing? Would it be possible to look at issuing numbers similar to Ontario incorporation numbers that are issued under Service Ontario?

Organizations incorporated under the Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations can obtain a corporate number from MGCS by filing an initial return under the *Corporations Information Act*.

- ▶ Initial Return by an Ontario Corporation

Thank You