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## **WELCOME**

I am excited to report to OIA members that the ten Institutes of Agrology in Canada are collaborating to research and develop guidelines and standards to be used as a foundation for the development of a national Agrology labour mobility agreement. All Institutes of Agrology in Canada acknowledge the right for all licensed Agrologists to be able to practice in any province within their scope of practice and the limits of their professional designation. However, it has been recognized at the national level that Ontario has the weakest governing Agrology legislation. Labour mobility as identified in June 2008 by all Premiers as a priority can not be achieved under Ontario's outdated legislative framework. It is clear that other provinces will not reduce professional standards in order to reduce work barriers; rather, Ontario must enhance its professional standards within Agrology. This can not occur so long as license to practice Agrology remains voluntary in the province. I am pleased to report that this summer the OIA was invited to begin dialogue with Ontario government representatives to achieve compliance with labour mobility within the agriculture, agri-food and agri-life science.

Kindest Regards,



Terry Kingsmill, M.A., P.Ag.  
Acting Registrar, OIA

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## **A CHANGE AGENT IN ONTARIO AGROLOGY**



Youming Zhao, P.Ag., M.Sc., was born and raised in a rural area of eastern China. He obtained his first university agricultural education in China. He also graduated from the National University of Ireland (UCD) and the University of Toronto. Youming has over 20 years experience within the Chinese and Canadian agricultural and agri-food industries. He has worked as an agricultural specialist for the provincial Chinese government. He also has experience as a biotech developer at a scientific academy and has also been tremendously successful as a technology sales representative for a technology market in China. In 1991, he led a group of fifteen people to Helsinki, Finland for a five-month food and meat science training program. During 1997-1999, he received a scholarship from the Irish government for his research in agricultural environment. After he immigrated to Canada in 2000, he

studied and worked for three years at the University of Toronto. For the last several years, he has worked in the flower and horticulture sectors in the Golden Horseshoe area of Ontario.

Youming joined the Ontario Institute of Agrologists in 2002 and achieved P.Ag. status in 2004 after completing his articling period. He gained extensive Canadian agricultural and agri-food knowledge through wide contact with other senior Agrologists and professional training programs.

Youming is a strong advocate for Canada-China cooperation and exchange in agricultural, agri-food and life sciences. The explosive growth of the Chinese economy has created opportunities in Canada. He has founded The Canada-China Agriculture and Food Development Exchange Center (ccagr.com). CCAgr organizes Canadian agriculture and agri-food businesses and organizations to attend trade and academic missions, exhibitions, and conferences in China as the CCAgr-Team Canada. In fact, Youming has organized an October 2008 mission to China specifically designed to help Canadian agriculture and agri-food organizations and businesses discover new opportunities. For more information please visit [www.ccagr.com](http://www.ccagr.com).

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## **YOUR PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY**

In the June issue of The Post the opportunity for all OIA members was provided to join the four standing committees of the Board. Although work has begun this summer within the committees, your invitation to participate still stands. If you would like to join the Finance Committee, Right to Practice Committee, the Marketing Committee, or the Professional Standards Committee, please get in touch with Terry and he will pass along your contact information to the appropriate Chair.

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## **OIA EFFORTS TO RECOGNIZE SENIOR PROFESSIONAL AGROLOGISTS**

Members of the Board and staff have collaborated to ensure that the OIA moving forward, policies, procedures and operational protocol fully appreciate the contribution to the profession of all designated Agrologists. One area that was acknowledged as requiring attention involved our retired and senior members.

Regarding seniors' voting right, the OIA must follow proper by-law change procedures. As a result, the OIA could not make the formal by-law change in time for the May 3<sup>rd</sup> AGM. Early in the AGM proceedings, OIA President Don Good, P.Ag. acknowledged the goal to make a formal by-law change regarding seniors voting rights; however, in the interim, entertained a motion from the floor to allow seniors in good standing the right to vote. This motion was moved, seconded and unanimously passed.

The OIA has moved to further acknowledge those who have dedicated their lives to Agrology. The final seat on the Board of Directors of the OIA must be filled by a public representative. The Board is pleased that Mike Jenkinson has agreed to fill this vacancy on the OIA Board of Directors.

Most recently Mike served as Acting Registrar of the OIA on an interim basis. A long-serving Professional Agrologist, Mike had a successful and distinguished career at the Ontario Agricultural College. "Mike brings integrity, credibility and a detailed knowledge of the OIA to his role on the Board. Mike will provide a valuable contribution as efforts progress to achieve Right-to-Practice legislative reform", said Don Good.

## **COMMERCIAL HEMP - SPECIAL REPORT TO THE POST BY LATIF HALIM, P.AG. AND DANIEL VAUTOUR, P.AG.**

Hemp is considered by many to be a new potential crop, with fiber suitable for producing items such as paper, animal bedding, garden mulch, insulation and composite construction materials. The fact that hemp does not need to have land cleared to grow it, grows faster than any of the crops currently used for these purposes and leaves the ground in a better state when it is harvested, should surely be enough for it to be considered a perfect crop. It can even offset the carbon currently produced by fossil fuels and by the less efficient biofuels currently being so roundly criticized by the various official research bodies. Hemp contains all the essential and non essential proteins as well as being the only source of omega 3,6 and 9 in precisely the same ratio as they are in the human body. It can provide nutrition, building materials, fuel, animal fodder, clothing, and biomass for compost and soil improvement. Plus it used to be grown in massive quantities in Ontario, particularly in the region stretching from Prince Edward County all along the Lake Ontario shore to Oshawa.

Hemp is not marijuana. Hemp and marijuana belong to Cannabis Sativa. Marijuana has an average potency of 5-15% THC. Hemp has less than 0.3% THC. Commercial hemp has no psychoactive properties.



*Kalima Mwange, P.Ag. and Asif Mohammad, A.Ag. take a tour of a commercial hemp plot at the recent ELORIN biofibres conference in Trenton, Ontario. Speakers at the 6th Annual Conference on Biofibres and Building included Peter Matthewman, P.Ag. (President, Performance Plants Inc.) and John Baker, P.Ag. (President and Founder, Stonehedge Bio-Resources Inc.) In attendance at the conference was Terry Kingsmill, P.Ag. and Ken Wright, P.Ag. (Senior).*

Presently, the single largest use for hemp fiber produced in North America is for automotive composite products. There are a number of ways hemp fiber can be used to create a biofibre based composite for automotive applications. Typically, hemp fiber is blended with polypropylene or polyester fiber to produce a non-woven (felt) material. There are a wide range of thermo-set resins being developed that are compatible with hemp fiber for composite products. Some of these are plant based so that a 100% biocomposite is technically feasible and soon to be in full commercial production using resins based from soy canola or corn. In addition to hemp fiber non-woven composites from non-woven materials it is also possible to make other hemp fiber and plastic composites. The use of injection molding technology is utilizing commercial hemp fiber as a reinforcing material. There are compounding systems that can blend hemp fiber with different thermoplastic and extrude them for use in injection molding, thus allowing hemp fiber to be used in more complex shapes and structures.

New developments in hemp textile production in Italy are leading to new investment in the production of hemp yarns on wet spun systems. A German-Dutch project is utilizing steam explosion as a means to produce hemp fiber for making jean grade hemp fabrics, with new product to be made available in the next few years. There has even been discussion about expanded uses of hemp fiber to replace cotton in

the Asian textile market. In applications of paper and construction products, both areas highlighted increasing demand for hemp fiber caused by shortages of wood. Hemp fiber pulp is particularly suitable for upgrading recycled paper, thanks to its longer fibers.

“It is no surprise that more Ontario farmers are growing hemp, with the Ontario-adapted varieties that exist, and particularly now for the solid oilseed market”, says Gordon Scheifele, president of the Ontario Hemp Alliance (OHA), a non-profit promotional organization based in Tavistock. While Manitoba remains the hemp hotbed of Canada, producing most of the 35,000-40,000 acres grown nationwide this year (up 10,000 acres from 2005), Ontario farmers grew 800 acres in 2006, doubling 2005’s amount. It is right to call it the miracle crop. It would be safe to say that hemp will be the plant that is most widely used in 20-50 years time, just as it was in the past. The sooner it’s mainstreamed the better.

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### **PROFESSIONAL AGROLOGISTS IN THE COMMUNITY**

Peter Hannam, P.Ag. and Terry Kingsmill, P.Ag. participated in the Heart and Stroke Foundation “Big Bike Ride”. The Ag Beaters team raised over \$2,400 for Heart and Stroke Foundation.



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### **IN MEMORIAM**

Dr. Ernie A. Kerr passed away in August 2008. He had recently celebrated his 91<sup>st</sup> birthday. Ernie was very community minded as he was a long serving member of the Rotary Club of Simcoe. Ernie was arguably Canada’s most successful vegetable breeder and spent the major part of his professional career at the Research Institute at Vineland before he transferred to the Simcoe Research Station in the 1970s to continue his work breeding mainly tomatoes and sweet corn. When he retired from the public service in 1982 he became the first Research Director for Stokes Seeds in St. Catharines. Ernie was a very active member of the OIA, serving as a former President of the Niagara Branch and continuing as an active member of the Long Point Branch. He was recognized for his commitment and contribution to agriculture in 2001 when he was inducted into the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame in Milton. Our condolences to the Kerr family on your loss.