Ontario Livestock & Poultry Council

Newsletter

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OLPC 2026 Membership Meetings
In-person meetings will be at Beef Farmers of Ontario, 130 Malcolm Road, Guelph.

- April 10, 2026
- June 12, 2026 – in person
- August 14, 2026
- October 16, 2026 – in person
- December 11, 2026

Avian Influenza in Ontario
There have been no new domestic cases of Avian influenza in Canada since February 24, 2026. As of the last week of March 2026, there was only one Avian influenza control zone in Ontario in the Amherstburg area. However, there are ongoing wild bird HPAI detections in Ontario as reported by Canadian Wildlife Heather Cooperative click here As well, cases in the U.S. have begun increasing over the past month.

Agriculture Related Calls to Animal Welfare Services
In 2025, 28,000 calls were triaged by Animal Welfare Services. Of those, 1,300 were related to livestock. This was an increase of 500 calls from 2024. The majority were for equids and small flock poultry.

Engineers Build Emergency Management Training Game
Iowa State researchers are working with Polk County Emergency Management to develop an online, multiplayer training game to help emergency forces plan and practice their disaster responses.

The game will force players to grapple with the uncertainty and trade-offs in their actions, Decisions will be tracked and scored. As resources are deployed, outcomes will shift. It could allow for players to switch roles – the mayor's office playing as firefighters, for example – to learn what other responders must

Exploring biosecurity knowledge, attitudes, and practices among Ontario sheep and goat producers

At the February OLPC meeting, members heard a presentation by Juliet Germann, a PhD student in Epidemiology at the University of Guelph. Juliet's work investigates biosecurity knowledge, attitudes, and practices among Ontario sheep and goat producers. Using a One Health approach, her research explores the human, animal, and environmental factors that influence biosecurity use, aiming to identify barriers that hinder the implementation of effective measures and assess the potential for disease spread on farms.

In her initial surveys she found that biosecurity use is variable with these small ruminant producers and information resources matter. The top three sources of biosecurity information were: veterinarian, other producers, and educational websites.

In response to questions about diseases of concern entering the herd/flock, respondents listed:

- Caseous Lymphadenitis (33%)
- Caprine Arthritis and Encephalitis (27%)
- Maedi Visna (26%)
- Johne's disease (22%)
- Parasites (16%)
- None (10%)

Concerns about diseases already in the herd/flock included:

- Caseous Lymphadeniti (21%)
- Parasites (13%)
- Orf (9%)
- Caprine Arthritis and Encephalitis (4%)
- Coxiellosis (Q-fever) (4%)
- None (48%)

Only 31% of respondents were concerned about themselves acquiring any diseases from the herd/flock.

On-Demand: Large Animal Emergency Rescue Awareness Training

Equine Guelph launched a Large Animal Emergency Rescue (LAER) course, available on-demand starting February 2026. It is designed to provide awareness-level preparation on best practices for handling large animal emergencies.

The LAER online course is self-paced and on-demand so participants can learn at their convenience. Registrants must be a minimum of 18 years of age. They are given one-year access to all materials which require approximately 15–20 hours to complete. The cost is $45, or free with registration for an Equine Guelph LAER hands-on course.

The course is divided into six units, introducing participants to key concepts and foundational principles complete with "what would you do" scenarios. The training utilizes the Incident Command structure for the management of large animal emergency rescue. One training unit is devoted to understanding large animal behaviour and safe handling practices, including dealing with loose animals.

consider and decide. Click here for more details.

Rabies Numbers in Canada for 2026

To February 28, 2026, there have been 293 samples submitted for rabies testing from across Canada. Ontario accounted for 206 of those samples. Nationally, nine samples tested positive. Ontario had one positive sample as did Saskatchewan. Quebec accounted for the remaining seven positive tests. Three bats and six raccoons tested positive. All of the rabies-positive raccoons came from Quebec.

New World Screwworm

Following the news of New World screwworm being detected in Mexico in November 2024, USDA increased efforts to prevent the insect's entry into the United States. Monitoring and mitigation practices were initiated, including the regular aerial introduction of sterile NWS insects in Mexico to curb population growth.

For more information on New World Screwworm, check out the links below:

- Mexican NWS dashboard
- USDA Current Status of New World Screwworm
- AVMA -New World screwworm Information
- CDC Health Alert Network
- USDA Grand Challenge
- CVMA Webinar with Dr Scott Weese

The course is ideal for: firefighters and pre-service students, law enforcement, animal welfare officers, veterinarians and veterinary technicians, transporters, horse owners and livestock producers.

Visit TheHorsePortal.ca to register for the LAER online offering and to view the upcoming hands-on course opportunities.

HPAI Risk Factor Research Study

There are a number of Avian influenza research projects currently underway or wrapping up involving the University of Guelph, OMAFA, CFIA, Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative, Ministry of Natural Resources, University of Montreal, Carleton University, Feather Board Command Centre, Turkey Farmers of Ontario, and others. One project was a case control study comparing biosecurity and production practices on infected premises as compared to non-infected farms in the same geographic area. The initial results of risk factor assessment are summarized in the infographic shown. To download a copy, click here.

New resource for Canadian Cattle Producers: Protect your herd from the Asian Longhorned Tick

The Asian longhorned tick continues to spread through U.S. states bordering Canada. While the tick has not been detected in Canada, the parasite it can carry, *Theileria orientalis Ikeda*, was confirmed in an imported dairy cow in October 2025. This parasite can cause significant illness, production losses and long-term impacts on herd health.

Animal Health Canada produced a fact sheet that lists:

- What to watch for in your herd
- Key signs of bovine theileriosis
- Simple steps to reduce risk
- How and where to report ticks

Access the fact sheet here.

Produced by Animal Health Canada in collaboration with the Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS) Longhorned Tick Task Force.

Our Mission

Provide a forum to facilitate the development and coordination of an Ontario strategy to deal with foreign animal disease and other transmissible livestock and poultry diseases.