



2022 OSCIA *Resolutions & Responses*



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Resolution #4 – Renfrew SCIA – EFP standardization

WHEREAS The Environmental Farm Plan is recognized as a world-class voluntary education and awareness program & is often the starting point for on-farm stewardship initiatives by allowing farmers to highlight their farm's environmental strengths, identify areas of environmental concern, and set realistic action plans with timetables to improve environmental conditions, and;

WHEREAS Following best management practices isn't as simple as it sounds and increasing access to tools that help farmers and their crop advisors weigh options to balance trade-offs and find sustainable solutions in their cropping systems that are backed by science and supported by articles and videos can be incredibly beneficial, and;

WHEREAS Farmers have financial and time limitations by the nature of their businesses and find value in simple, effective, and streamlined programs, and;

WHEREAS Resilient Fields (www.resilientfields.ca) is a new, free app designed to help Ontario farmers work through field-specific challenges using sustainable solutions, that was originally funded by the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture but will require additional resources to maintain the app and increase awareness of the tool, and;

WHEREAS Duplicative projects & initiatives can be competitors for resources such as time and funding.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Ontario Soil & Crop Improvement Association evaluate the potential for the Resilient Fields application to be adapted or integrated into the Environmental Farm Plan to better serve farmers in their evaluation process and action plans moving the Environmental Farm Plan from a 'one and done' item to a more systems approach, perpetuity tool that helps farmers continue to improve environmental conditions in their operations.

MOVED BY: Warren Schneckenburger

SECONDED BY: Jennifer Doelman
(Renfrew SCIA)

CARRIED

SEEK - TEST - ADOPT



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SEND TO: OSCIA Program staff to consult with Environmental Management Branch to consider inclusion of Resilient Fields App in a future edition of EFP.

PROGRESS TO DATE:

UPDATE: October 20, 2022:

OSCIA recognizes the considerable effort and resources that were required to develop the Resilient Fields app and trust it will serve as a valuable resource for farm businesses striving to improve the sustainability of their operations. In addition to the request to include the app on the OSCIA website, received from CFFO on behalf of the collaborative that developed the app, the posting also serves to address this resolution which was supported by the OSCIA delegates at the 2022 annual general meeting. It can be found on in the list of “Soil Health Resources” under the “Research & Resources” tab <https://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/soil-health-resources/>

ORIGINAL RESPONSE:

OSCIA has approached the Environmental Management Branch (EMB) to seek their support to have OSCIA include a link to Resilient Fields on our website. The Ministry has always been responsible for the technical content of the EFP, and we think it is important that OMAFRA supports the idea before we consider inclusion of Resilient Fields on our site.

The EFP has always been presented as a document that should be re-visited and updated periodically as the operations or land base of the farm business changes. This principle has been supported through subsequent programming delivered through OSCIA. To heighten the educational value of EFP the farm business should strongly consider re-visiting the worksheets regardless of the availability of incentive opportunities.

AAFC has coordinated working groups with representation from different provinces to investigate how EFP could continue to evolve most effectively in the next policy framework to meet the needs of the agricultural sector as an educational instrument and possibly a tool to support sustainable sourcing.