

## Canada's Outdoor Farmshow 2012

"The place where farmers meet", Canada's Outdoor Farm Show offer visitors an opportunity to see and learn about innovative advances in farm equipment, agriculture technology and agriculture sector initiatives. Each year since the farm show started, the Ontario Soil & Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) and OMAFRA Crop Technology staff has collaborated to prepare and participate in an interactive demonstration site.

This year's theme "*Wanted - 30 Percent Surface Cover – Dead or Alive*" allowed staff from the field crop and horticultural crop units, in partnership with OSCIA field staff to offer visitors a hands-on look at unique perspectives in agriculture - most not featured in other areas of the farm show. Highlights of the demo site emphasizing aspects of soil sustainability and soil health included: tillage and residue options that maintain over 30% residue cover; long-term organic amendment demo and a cover crop garden - soil pit combination. Other plot displays included an in-crop liquid manure injection unit featuring flexibility for application timing, and demonstrations that displayed common types of edible beans, biomass and new crops for industrial use and a woodlot management / tree crop site featured something for everyone.

Inside the tent displays, publications, and posters provided information about provincial weather data, crop heat unit data, management strategies to control insect pests, and hands-on finding a specific farm using the new Agricultural Information Maps (Ag maps), and information on current programs and cost share opportunities.

Close to 40,000 visitors from across the province had the opportunity to talk to staff. Guided plot tours were given to the groups of students from high school agricultural programs coordinated by the Ontario Agri-food Education program (OAFE). Lunch hour presentations each day gave Certified Crop Advisors (CCA's) the opportunity for education credits.

Both the field plots and the tent display were designed to invite farm show goers over the three days to visit the displays, and to discuss and ask questions of the OSCIA and crop technology specialists. Situated beside the OSCIA-Sylvite sponsored breakfast, and combined with ideal weather all three days, the site experienced excellent attendance.

### **Event Contact**

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## Crop Advances: Field Crop Reports



A soil pit reveals a Guelph loam soil profile and the impact of roots and earthworms for sustainable soils.



Crop specialists show CCA members the features of alternate crops, such as grain amaranth.



Site preparation to allow discussion on the impact of tillage for maintaining at least 30 percent soil cover.



The agro-forestry display allows farmers to see some alternative potential income sources from tree crops.



Displays and activities in the tent, such as *Strategies For Managing New Insect Pests* gives producers instant access to OMAFRA and OSCIA staff.



A cover crop garden displays 20 alternatives based on planting date and cover crop goal