



449 Laird Road, Unit 12
Guelph, Ontario N1G 4W1
Tel: (519)824-2942 Fax: (519)824-2534
www.ontarioveal.on.ca
www.ontariovealappeal.ca

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

April 2nd, 2015

Veal Farmers of Ontario Becomes a Reality

New marketing board created on April 1st, 2015

GUELPH, ON– The Ontario veal industry has realized a long sought after goal with the creation of the Veal Farmers of Ontario as Ontario’s newest marketing board. The regulations under the *Farm Products Marketing Act* creating the board came into force on April 1st.

The inaugural Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) Board of Directors is comprised of eight producers who have been appointed by the Farm Products Marketing Commission for the first year of the organization’s operations. At their meeting on April 1st regulations and by-laws allowing for the start-up of operations and collection of its own licence fees were approved.

Brian Keunen was elected as Chair and Chris Vervoort was elected as Vice Chair. Brian Keunen and his family have a grain-fed veal operation and milk replacer business near Palmerston. Chris Vervoort and his family have a mixed operation of grain-fed veal, sheep and beef in addition to a hoof trimming and bedding business near Arthur.

Keunen has previously served as a Director on the Ontario Veal Association (OVA) Board of Directors for ten years as well as represented the veal industry on a number of committees including the Veal Risk Management Program reference committee and most recently on the Veal Code of Practice Review Committee. Vervoort has previously served as a Director with the OVA for two years and most recently as its Vice President.

“I am pleased to represent Ontario’s veal farmers as we begin the work of the Veal Farmers of Ontario. The Ontario Veal Association built a solid foundation during the past twenty five years of service to the veal industry” stated VFO Chair Brian Keunen. “I look forward to strengthening the connections we have in the calf industry, starting with the dairy farm all the way through the production system to processors, retailers and consumers” he added.

“There are a number of opportunities, but also challenges, that veal farmers need to address and I know the structure of the VFO will provide a more collective and stronger voice for all us involved in the Ontario veal industry” stated Vice Chair Chris Vervoort.

Also joining the first VFO Board of Directors is Pascal Bouilly- Cambridge, Judy Dirksen- Harriston, Randy Drenth- Clifford, Joyce Feenstra- Belwood, Tom Kroesbergen- Ailsa Craig and Tom Oudshoorn-Auburn.

“On behalf of the entire veal industry, I would like to thank Judy Dirksen for her ten years as President of the OVA and for her leadership and guidance that has brought us to this historical day” stated Keunen. “We would also like to thank our VFO staff for all their tireless work on this initiative and the staff and members of the Commission for all their support and guidance that has helped us realize our goals” added Keunen.

The creation of the VFO comes as a result of the producer expression of opinion vote conducted by the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission in March 2013 where Ontario's veal producers voted overwhelmingly in favour of a veal marketing board. While new regulations have been created for the VFO, at the same time, exemptions have been provided from the *Beef Cattle Marketing Act* for veal cattle.

"The formation of the Veal Farmers of Ontario is a huge milestone for the Ontario veal industry and it is appropriate that it comes almost to the date of the 25th anniversary of the start up of the Ontario Veal Association" stated Executive Director Jennifer Haley.

The Ontario Veal Association was incorporated in 1990 under the Agricultural and Horticultural Organizations Act and has served the grain-fed and milk-fed veal sectors for twenty-five years through collaboration with the Beef Farmers of Ontario. At the 2014 OVA Annual General Meeting, veal producers voted unanimously to formally dissolve the OVA and transfer all assets to the VFO.

Effective April 1st, the VFO has the regulatory power for the collection of its own licence fees set at \$4.00/head, remaining the same amount as what was previously collected by the Beef Farmers of Ontario. Important to note is that veal farmers will now be exempt from the beef check-off system so there will not be a double collection of fees.

The VFO is collaborating with industry partners to create awareness and understanding about the remittance of license fees. Industry communications will be ongoing as VFO establishes policies and programs for the industry.

For more information about the veal industry, go to www.ontarioveal.on.ca; contact the VFO office at 519-824-2942 or 1-866-311-6422.

-30-

For more information contact:

Jennifer Haley, Executive Director
519-824-2942 or jhaley@livestockalliance.ca