

Ontario Sheep Farmers 2023 Annual General Meeting Summary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Guelph, ON [October 30, 2023] – Ontario Sheep Farmers (OSF) hosted the 2023 Annual General Meeting on Friday, October 28 where they welcomed several new board members to the OSF team. Wesley Godden (District 9), Devon Wensink (District 10), and Grant Cowan (District 6). Art Alblas (District 1), is the new OSF Chair, joined by 1st Vice Ken Lamb (District 7) and 2nd Vice Chair Karen Davis (District 8).

The remaining board members include Keith Todd (District 3), Jay Lennox (District 2), Marusha Kostuk (District 4), Ryan Schill (District 5) and Jenna Wight (District 11). All new members were elected earlier this year at their district meetings.

“I am very pleased to be elected as chair of such a great organization with such a bright and prosperous future,” says Art Alblas OSF Chair. *“I look forward to the industry coming together and working hard to advance our strategic plan and the Ontario Sheep Sector.”*

OSF will continue to build on the strategic plan Building Strength for a Better Future. The Five key deliverables identified in the OSF strategic plan are designed to build greater public trust, more dynamic market relationships, more effective business support, a more robust system to identify leadership and support districts, and a more effective organization to support each member. A copy of the full OSF strategic plan is available at www.ontariosheep.org

Speaker Yassir Al Qayem from Parkhill Meats spoke about meeting the needs of Ontario’s Ethnic Market. His session shared the opportunities and challenges facing industry and consumers and provided advice for producers looking to target the ethnic markets with their production.

Speaker Steve Duff, Chief Economist with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs, provided an update on the Lamb Market.

OSF Awards and Scholarship recipients are as follows:

- **Long Service Award(s)** - John Hemsted and DVM John Hancock,
- **Outstanding Shepherd** - Ted and Joanne Skinner
- **OSF Undergraduate Scholarship** - Rachel Gras
- **Emerging Leader Award** - Courtney Vriens
- **Mapleseed Pasture Award** - Mike Swidersky

Genovis – Ontario Genetic Improvement Awards are as follows:

- **Prolific Breed Category** - Ted and Joanne Skinner Cedar Creek Charollais – Rideau Arcot
- **Maternal Breed Category** – Frank & Ned Cursio – Curiso Farms & Arkell Valley Dorset
- **Terminal Breed Category** - Ted and Joanne Skinner Cedar Creek Charollais – Rideau Arcot



- **Commercial Category** - Earl Brubacher – Brubacher Ovine – Maternal composite
- **Hybridizer** – Wayne Kreklewich – Australian White/Romanov, Australian White/Rideau Arcott, Dorset/Romanov, Rideau Arcott/Romanov

Ontario Sheep Farmers (OSF) is a producer-run organization established in 1985 and represents the province's 3,000 sheep farmers who contribute over \$530 million to Ontario's economy. Ontario is home to the country's largest sheep flock and processes over 50% of the sheep and lambs born in Canada. We believe passionately that sheep farming is an agricultural business sector that is profitable, contributes to the well-being of our communities and our province and offers unique opportunities to develop new markets, provide needed environmental benefits and grow both our domestic and international markets.

-30-

For more information, contact:

Erin Morgan OSF Executive Director emorgan@ontariosheep.org

