

Ontario Master Shepherd's Course Update

Eadie Steele, Program Developer, Master Shepherd's Course

Have you ever asked yourself, "How can I make my farm profitable?" or "How can I manage my flock to be more productive?" or "Where can I find the answers to my lamb production questions?" If you've answered yes to any of these, then enrollment in the Ontario Master Shepherd's Course could be for you. Twelve education modules of two days each will be starting the first week in August 2014. We are currently developing the course curriculum to cover such topics as business planning, goal setting, selecting flock replacements through genetic selection, record keeping and understanding reports, nutrition, feeding systems including pasture management, infrastructure, flock health management, lambing and lamb rearing, predation, marketing, future planning and much more. Over a period of 14 months, you will hear presentations from leading experts, seasoned farmers and Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF) specialists. We already have commitments from numerous OMAF specialists. A full list of guest speakers will be posted on the OSMA website as they become available. Also included is the opportunity to participate in practical demonstrations and farm tours.

The first module regarding business planning is scheduled to begin the first week of August 2014. Modules will be opened to extra participants who may wish to enroll in only selections from the course. The registration cost for individual modules is \$250 per person for two days of instruction. A late registration fee of \$350 applies to individual modules and the deadline will be 2 weeks prior to the start date of each module.

The application deadline has been extended to July 7th. For those students who have already enrolled in the complete 12 education modules, remember that a deposit of \$1,000 is required by July 7, 2014 to secure your enrollment, with the balance of \$1,400 due on December 1, 2014.

We have had many inquiries as to the location of these education modules. The first four modules will be held in Guelph and we are investigating other locations for subsequent modules. Ideally, the course locations will rotate around the province, and consideration will be given to the geographic location of the selected course participants.

Photo Credit Grace Walker

Module 1

**Business and Time Management
August 7 & 8**

Module 2

**Flock Replacements and Flock Health
September 11 & 12**

Module 3

**Nutrition
October 9 & 10**

**Location of the first three modules will be
at the Fairfield Inn and Suites by Marriott,
35 Cowan Place, Guelph**

Module 4

**In conjunction with the
OSMA Annual meeting and the
OMAF Sheep Seminars in Guelph.**

OSMA is willing to accept sponsorship from other sheep clubs or organizations, agri-business and breeding stock vendors to assist with funding for acquiring expert speakers for these education modules. Benefits to sponsorship include, but are not limited to, your business logo on the cover of handout material, the opportunity to give a presentation about your business to course participants, the opportunity to offer a tour of your place of business to course participants, and the opportunity to have a display regarding your business at education modules. This is an excellent opportunity for agri-businesses and sheep organizations to promote themselves to commercially minded producers who are seeking information on expanding their flocks. Please send an email, with your expression of interest in sponsorship to mastershepherdsourse@outlook.com and a sponsorship form will be sent to you.

This project was funded in part through *Growing Forward 2* (GF2), a federal-provincial-territorial initiative. The Agricultural Adaptation Council assists in the delivery of GF2 in Ontario. **OSN**

Application deadline has been extended to July 7th. Enroll today by emailing mastershepherdsourse@outlook.com or contact the OSMA office at 519-836-0043 to have a form mailed to you.