



2020 OSCIA *Resolution Package*



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Resolution #13 – Eastern Valley SCIA – OMAFRA Staffing

WHEREAS, the Agri-Food Sector is the largest sector of the provincial economy, and;

WHEREAS OMAFRA has provided invaluable services to this sector for many years, and;

WHEREAS these services are essential to keeping the sector healthy, competitive and sustainable, and;

WHEREAS we continue to see the number of OMAFRA staff go down, and;

WHEREAS the level of service has recently been on the decline due to a number of vacancies within the Ministry's extension staff.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that OSCIA encourage OMAFRA to replace all extension staff who have recently retired or who have otherwise left the Ministry, and;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the positions being refilled that were originally bilingual remain bilingual positions.

MOVED BY: Birgit Martin

SECONDED BY: Alan Kruszel (Eastern Valley SCIA)

CARRIED

SEND TO: Honorable Ernie Hardeman, Minister of OMAFRA – with specific note around position in the Northern area and focus on bilingual employees

RESPONSE FROM: Honorable Ernie Hardeman, Minister of OMAFRA (see separate document for letter-Resolution #13 link)

Dear Mr. Graham:

Thank you for sharing the resolution brought forth by Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association's Eastern Valley Regional Association regarding the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs' (OMAFRA) staff vacancies, specifically those in northern Ontario and traditionally bilingual positions.

There are currently vacancies within OMAFRA due to retirements and other recent staff movements. A number of these positions are currently at various stages of the recruitment process.

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We are ensuring all decisions, including ministry staffing decisions, focus on delivering front line services to the agriculture and food sectors efficiently and effectively. I recognize the importance of staff in the north and of bilingual staff, and we are looking at various options to ensure all stakeholders, including those in northern Ontario and in Francophone communities, continue to receive relevant services, resources and information.

Providing information to the agriculture sector is one of OMAFRA's key priorities, and we will continue to focus on this priority as we make business decisions. We are committed to supporting the province's farmers, businesses and sector organizations who work hard to help the agriculture and agri-food sectors innovate and thrive.

The recent situation due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has reinforced the need for us to all work together to support our agriculture industry and our food supply.

I encourage you to contact Doug Reddick, director of my ministry's Business Development Branch, to discuss your organization's specific priorities to help us as we move forward to fill vacancies. Doug can be reached at 519-826-4167 or douglas.reddick@ontario.ca.

Again, thank you for writing and I wish you all the best at this challenging time.

Sincerely,



*Ernie Hardeman
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs*

c: Doug Reddick, Director, Business Development Branch, OMAFRA

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