

FarmSmart Farming Systems Expo 2012

FARMSMART

The 2012 edition of the FarmSmart Farming Systems Expo was another great success. The expo event is meant to provide a practical hands-on extension to the winter FarmSmart Agricultural Conference

The purpose of these diagnostic days is to highlight current issues in crop production. This is done through creating and exploring “field issues” which provided participants with skills and knowledge needed to identify and solve problems as they become evident, or better yet, identify and correct issues before they become problems.

The FarmSmart Expo is a two day event, with the first day inviting farmers and agribusiness to the Elora Research Station of the University of Guelph. The participants are organized into small groups who rotate through a number of sessions that challenge them in problem solving current and obscure agronomic events that have been experienced in the field. The sessions also highlight new technologies and techniques.

This year’s event included Dr. Tom Wolf from Agriculture Canada in Saskatoon, who is an internationally renowned researcher/extensionist in pesticide application technology. Tom worked with our own highly respected Helmut Spieser to explore the importance and impact of sprayer nozzle selection. Other speakers included Dr.’s Bill Deen and Dave Hooker talking about learning’s from long term crop rotations where the dry conditions of 2012 were showing the importance of making the right choices in this area. A large fertilizer frenzy session included a range of demonstrations by Greg Stewart, Horst Bohner, Bonnie Ball and Brian Hall. Peter Johnson also concentrated on fertility of P and K as it impacts cereal production. Mike Cowbrough showed off symptoms of herbicide injury symptoms typical on a range of crops, helping people to understand what they needed to look for to diagnose such problems in the field. Tom Cowan, on loan to OMAFRA from the Ministry of Environment during 2012 rounded out the program with a session on the new Aphid Advisor Smartphone application.

The second day we welcome Ontario Rural Youth to Elora. In 2012 ~30 youth descended on Elora for a fun and exciting day of tours and hands on demonstrations. This year for the youth program we organized tours of neighboring farms and Ag businesses who hosted interesting sessions at their locations.

Mark your 2013 calendars for Thursday and Friday July 11th and 12th when the FarmSmart Expo will return to the Elora Research Station. Consult our event website to keep current with this and other associated events: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/farmsmart>

Event Contact

Ian McDonald, OMAFRA, ian.mcdonald@ontario.ca