



Ottawa Valley FARM SHOW

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2012 OTTAWA VALLEY FARM SHOW COMING TOGETHER AT NEW CE CENTRE

January 5, 2012.

Two major milestones for the Ottawa Valley Farm Show will be celebrated with the 2012 edition set for March 13-15. It's the 85th anniversary for the OVFS that grew from its roots as a rotating seed exhibition in Renfrew County to one of the premier agricultural trade shows in North America, a member of the prestigious Farm Show Council with members in Canada, the U.S. and New Zealand. And for the first time in more than 50 years, the OVFS will be presented in a new location, the CE Centre across from the Ottawa International Airport, a move made necessary by redevelopment of Lansdowne Park, the show's former Ottawa home.

Recently completed and open for business, the CE Centre offers 150,000 square-feet of space, 120,000 square-feet of which comprises the exhibit floor.

"For the first time, we'll be totally contained under one roof," said farm show General Manager Tom Van Dusen. "Loading docks and doors right across the back of the building – including a 20 x 20-foot door - should make moving in and out a snap... once we all get used to the new setup."

The building can be divided into four halls, each with its own services; the OVFS will be using all of the halls and some outside space, making it one of the CE Centre's biggest customers.

"We could use more floor space," Van Dusen said. "We'll fit in our existing exhibitors plus a few new ones with no room to spare. And we'll still have a fairly long waiting list." The fact the Ottawa Valley Seed Growers Association, which sponsors the show, was forced to raise the booth fee to help compensate for the higher CE Centre rent didn't deter any exhibitors, the manager said.

"Most machinery and equipment dealers wanted to expand. Because of tight space, we couldn't accommodate all of those requests. Getting that new floor to come together while trying to satisfy everybody has been a challenge."

One drawback at the new site is limited outside exhibit space. Where Lansdowne featured plenty of room outside for large machinery, at the CE Centre, only a narrow strip is available across the front of the building.

Van Dusen suggested heightened interest in participating in the refreshed farm show is a sign of a healthy farm economy, with exhibitors anticipating good customer response this year.

He expects an increase in attendance, with visitors from across Eastern Ontario, West Quebec, Northern New York State, and beyond interested in checking out the new centre itself, as well as the shiny new exhibit line up.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR PHOTO OF BRUCE HUDSON:

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