



Ottawa Valley FARM SHOW

Official Ag Business Partner



OVFS SPONSORS ATTEND KENTUCKY FARM SHOW

February 21, 2012.

A delegation from the Ottawa Valley Seed Growers Association returned from Kentucky Feb. 19 after a visit to the 2012 National Farm Machinery Show in Louisville, America's largest indoor agricultural trade exhibition.

The Seed Growers are sponsors of the annual Ottawa Valley Farm Show, this year celebrating its 85th anniversary in a new venue, the CE Centre located outside Ottawa International Airport. Dates for the 2012 OVFS are March 13-15.



The Kentucky show and the Ottawa show are both members of the Farm Show Council which groups several prominent agricultural trade events across North America and beyond. The objective is to improve the presentation of council members through education, communication and evaluation.



The contingent of 35 Eastern Ontario residents made the return trip by chartered coach over four days; they included OVSGA president Bruce Hudson, several members of the board and various committees, and spouses; most of the cost was covered by the association.

“It was a fact finding mission,” said OVSGA director John Joynt who organized the trip. “We like to see how others operate their events and we hope to pick up a few useful ideas along the way.”

Although it's several times bigger than the Ottawa show, Joynt noted it was particularly helpful to view

Kentucky's sprawling layout as the Ottawa show is about to set up at the CE Centre, the first time the OVFS will be contained under one roof.

“We came away convinced we're on the right track with our layout and we spotted a few things we might be able to incorporate,” he said.

The Kentucky show boasts 850 exhibitors in eight halls for a total of 1.2 million square-feet of space; last year, combined with its championship tractor pull, the event drew more than 300,000 visitors. The Ottawa show will have 350 exhibitors in one hall for a total of 120,000 square-feet of display space; it draws 10,000-12,000 visitors annually.

“There’s definitely a marked difference in size,” said OVFS general manager Tom Van Dusen. “But I believe both shows deliver to their markets equally well. In Kentucky, agriculture rules and you can feel it right across Louisville when the show is underway.”

During a recent meeting, the Seed Growers put the finishing touches on the upcoming OVFS, including finalizing seed judging, the annual seed auction, 4-H judging competition, official opening, exhibitor move-in, and other details.

They also named the OVFS guest artist for this year, Heather Metcalfe-Griffith who also filled the role in 2011. Her landscape “Crisp Winter Scene” will be included in the seed auction, with proceeds to be directed to the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario.

In other business, directors allocated a maximum of \$500 to the Ottawa Rideau Regional Soil & Crop Committee, and granted \$300 to three Eastern Ontario students at Nova Scotia Agricultural College to help them attend a judging competition at University of Guelph.

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