



Annual Report 2012–2013



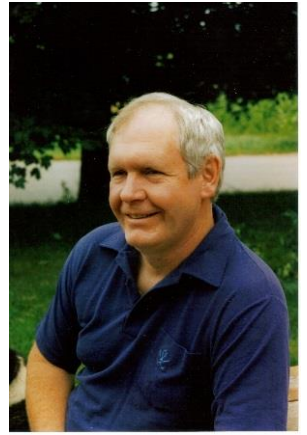
Quebec Farmers' Association

www.quebecfarmers.org

President's message

Knowledge is Power

It starts at birth. When a baby cries, it gets fed. This is the first lesson that the baby learns! Soon thereafter the child learns that if it looks up at mom with "pleading, innocent eyes", she can be swayed. We go to school to get more knowledge of how the world works. Some of us will spend 2 to 4 years at college or university to give us a "leg up" on others when we enter the working world because people with college educations on average earn tens of thousands of dollars more over their lifetimes than those who do not go beyond high school.



At the QFA we dedicate most of our time and energy towards assuring that information and knowledge get to English-speaking agricultural producers across the province. Our Quebec Farmers' Advocate contains page upon page of useful material that we can use to improve our production and bottom line. All this helps to make farming in Quebec easier.

QFA's day to day work behind the scenes also makes a big difference in the lives of our members and their farm neighbours. For example, the farm safety in the schools project informs rural kids about dangers found on farms. Also, QFA meets with La Financière Agricole to encourage them to produce more forms and information about their programs in English and to expand the amount of English content on their website. Why? To give our farmers opportunities that are equal to those offered to Francophone producers in Quebec. We also represent your interests to the ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ) and to the federal government, and very importantly, to the Union des producteurs agricoles.

Our "farm forums" delivered by video conference are another innovative way that we bring world class speakers to areas all over Quebec. (If you haven't sat in on one yet it's a great experience to listen to the best experts in their field and to ask your own questions.) On another front we are working jointly with the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) to get more access to training in English for volunteer firemen and courses on spraying of pesticides. We strongly believe that La Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail (CSST) should offer training in English because safety matters should not pose a language barrier.

We are regular participants at all UPA major events and consultations from the local syndicate level right up to its general council and annual conventions. We attend to express our community's points of view and to hear firsthand the opinions of other districts and specialized federations. In addition, we also attend the annual meetings of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) as a voting representative of the UPA and do our best to bring an added perspective from Quebec. We gain many "allies" from other provinces too.

This fall, the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) had its annual conference and general meeting in Quebec City. The QFA was well represented with three delegates. The new president is Denis

Bilodeau, vice-president of the Union des producteurs agricoles (UPA). In related matters, Ivan Hale, our executive director, is the only active Quebec representative sitting on the agricultural machinery technical advisory committee of the Canadian Standards Association developing standards for the most commonly used farm machines.

In recent years the QFA has been consulted several times by farmers outside Quebec who are considering moving their operations into Quebec. And, this fall the QFA hosted a delegation of 21 senior government officials from China who wanted to learn about Quebec farm organizations, their powers and freedoms. The Chinese visitors also wanted to visit a commercial greenhouse so we arranged a trip to Laval where we saw “acres” of poinsettias that will supply Costco and Loblaws stores across Quebec this Christmas season.

We are keeping a very close eye on the new Canada-European Union trade deal. So far there are very few details. I question “have our negotiators looked at the non-GMO food policy of the EU and have they assessed any impact of the EU’s animal welfare policy if Canada were to export meat to the EU?” Lots to watch there!

Thanks to our many QFA directors and volunteers for their community involvement and help in keeping agriculture centre stage on the agenda. Consumers are becoming far too removed from knowing real farmers and they know very little about where their safe Canadian food comes from. Our schools, service clubs, even our rural municipalities need further education. Keep up the pressure!

A major project of the QFA in the coming year will be to offer a “voluntary self-assessment of safety” on your farm. Statistics Canada records approximately 3,000 agriculture-related injuries across Canada requiring medical services annually. Agricultural work poses significant risks to the health and safety of workers. Every year nearly 20 people, young and old, die as a result of farm accidents in Quebec.

It has been an honor to represent the QFA as president this year. I wish to give special thanks to staff members Ivan, Dougal, and Andrew for their excellent and professional approach to make the QFA run so smoothly. Special thanks also to our QFA board of directors and Gib Drury, our past-president, and to John McCart, our vice-president, for helping to do things that I couldn’t.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Judd", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Judd, President

Quebec Farmers' Advocate

Putting the QFA first

2013 has been a banner year for showcasing association news in the *Advocate*

Andrew McClelland,
Advocate Managing Editor

The *Quebec Farmers' Advocate* has always kept promoting the activities of the Quebec Farmers' Association its number one priority. Since its first incarnation—as a four-page newsletter—in 1980, the *Advocate* has reported on events, news and information that matter to English-speaking farmers in this province. However, 2013 has been a great year for promoting what we're doing and where we stand in our growing newspaper.



This is thanks to our great initiative, the “Farm Food Forums”. With more QFA

events to cover, the *Advocate* has been able to give its subscribers a look into



how the QFA is changing with Quebec's farming community. So far in this calendar year, the *Advocate* has run six feature articles covering the forums—one for every event—and several others promoting the series. This has allowed us to show how active the QFA is in getting the word out to agriculture producers regarding subjects that interest them—from the complications of land-zoning to regulations for transporting farm equipment on provincial highways.

We've also shown ourselves as agricultural media leaders in promoting and covering farm safety. In the past year, we've published no less than 11 articles on farm safety-related topics in the same number of issues. Much of this is thanks to great content provided by the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA).

Full Colour!

Last year, we promised that we would go full-colour with our newspaper sometime in 2013. I'm happy to say that we did just that with our February issue. I'm sure you've found that the paper is looking better because of it—the

presence of all those colour pages has made the *Advocate* look more vibrant. Plus is attracting more advertisers!

From every corner of Quebec

February was a landmark issue for other reasons. We inaugurated our most ambitious new section since our “UPA News Highlights” pages were started by publishing four new pages of farm stories from different regions within Quebec. Entitled, “Quebec Regional News” our new section aims to make the *Advocate* more relevant to readers in far-flung areas like Abitibi, Gaspé, the North Shore, and the Lower St. Lawrence. We’ve also been featuring many small-town stories from the Townships, the Outaouais and Lanaudière. These articles are translated from *La Terre de chez nous* and allow us to include on-the-spot coverage of areas all over Quebec without the expense of paying reporters’ expenses.

Advertising

Part of our reason for going full-colour is that advertisers are, in effect, forced to pay our more expensive colour advertising rates. This boost helps to offset the additional cost of colour printing. This strategy has worked: in 2013, our advertising revenues totalled \$85,168, compared with \$72,648 for 2012. In 2011, that figure was at \$71,378 and in 2010, \$66,232. So, in the short space of four years our ad sales

have climbed nearly \$20,000. You no doubt have noticed that many of our recent issues have had 8-pages of ads from Case International smack dab in the middle of them. We expect to gain more regular advertisers of this size in the future.

Quebec Farmers' **Advocate**

Vol. 33, No. 2 February 2013

Japan relaxes ban on Canadian beef

What's Inside

- Our NEW "Quebec Regional News" section... pp. 6-9
- OFA meeting on farm insurance... p. 14
- Townships 4-H'er wins big... p. 5
- Beef wintering pens... p. 11
- Ag Safety Week is coming up!... pp. 17-19

A bigger and better Advocate!

Dive in to our full-colour issue—now featuring a monthly section of four pages of local news from across Quebec on pages 6 to 9!

LaTerre DE CHÈZ NOUS

Quebec Regional News

Japan relaxes ban on Canadian beef

The Japanese government has agreed to relax its ban on Canadian beef. The Far Eastern country now accepts Canadian beef from cows younger than 30 months old.

Andrew McCallum
Advocate Staff Reporter

Good news is a rare commodity in agriculture. With drought hitting many producers in central Canada, and input costs seemingly always on the rise, the beef industry has been especially hard hit in recent years. But the nation's beef farmers got some good news on February 1, when the Japanese government agreed to relax its ban on Canadian beef. The Far Eastern country now accepts Canadian beef from cows younger than 30 months old—the previous protocol was to ban imports of beef from animals older than 20 months.

That may not sound like much on paper, but when the dollars are counted it's certainly nothing to be scoffed at. The marketing agency for Canada's beef industry—Canada Beef Inc.—says that the change will likely double this country's beef exports to Japan.

"Japanese consumers will soon enjoy increased availability of high-quality Canadian beef, and Canada's cattle producers and beef industry will greatly benefit from increased trade with Japan," said Rob Mejer, president of Canada Beef Inc., following the announcement.

Canada Beef Inc. was created when the Canada Beef Export Federation (CBEF)—the agency formerly charged with promoting the nation's beef overseas—was merged with the Beef Information Centre (BIC) and the Canadian Beef Cattle Research Market Development and Promotion Agency (National Check-Off Agency-NCCA).

The Japanese market is highly sought-after on the world stage. During the past few years, Canadian beef shipments to Japan have ranged between 15,000 to 16,000 tonnes, valued between \$70 to \$75 million per year. With the slight change in age restrictions, that dollar amount could go up to \$140 to \$150 million per year.

One step closer

Beef representatives breathed a sigh of relief in the wake of the announcement. Canadian Cattlemen's Association President Martin Ureux explained how the easing of restrictions is another step forward in the long process of Canadian beef farmers recovering from the lingering effects of the Mad Cow crisis.

Ureux explained that Japan closed its beef market to Canada completely in May 2010 following the detection of a single case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) in an Alberta-born cow. Its market partially re-opened in December 2012, but only for cattle under 21 months of age—referred to as "U21" in industry jargon.

"The limitation to U21 has presented a significant challenge to Canada's ability to supply beef to Japan on a year-round basis," the CCA president explained. "As the majority of Canadian calves are born in the late winter and early spring, the U21 cut-off typically means few cattle qualify for Japan between December and April. The

expansion of beef access to UTM (under 30 months) resolves this issue and enables Canadian beef exporters to better serve Japanese meat importers who have wanted a steady year-round supply."

A big player

Japan is Canada's third largest export market for beef, and government officials have been steadily pressing their counterparts in the Asian country to re-open markets since the Mad Cow crisis hit Canada's beef industry.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

OFA

"People who work together will win, whether it be against complex football defenses, or the problems of modern society."
—Vince Lombardi

We've also been able to attract many advertisers in purchasing flyer inserts with the *Advocate*. This has the added benefit of ensuring the paper is always wrapped in a clear plastic bag—which protects it from the hazards of rural mail delivery—as ad buyers tend to pay for the cost of bagging to make sure their promotional insert doesn't fall out.

Awards—again!

In 2012, the *Advocate* swept the “Best Agricultural Story” category at the Better Newspaper Awards—a contest that takes submissions from all English-language community newspapers across Quebec. It was our best-ever showing at the competition. This year we got first place thanks to Alyssa Fourneaux, who wrote a great story about the disappearing “Lynch Linebacks” breed of cattle, and third place thanks to Claudia Villemaire, whose story about a rare bird breed lover from the Townships earned the bronze medal. If you’d like to take another peek at these stories, you can always look at all past issues of the *Advocate* (as far back as 2005) on our website. Just visit www.quebecfarmers.org, click on the word “*Advocate*” and then the word “Archives”.

This is a time when most print publications are scared for their survival. You’ve no doubt noticed that many of Canada’s major newspapers, like *The Montreal Gazette* and the *Globe & Mail*, no longer publish Sunday papers. But the *Advocate* is bucking this trend by staying local, staying print-based and growing slowly. It’s a position that a lot of newspapers would love to be in.



Operations and Activities Report

Dougal Rattray,
Director of Operations

This year has been a particularly active one for our Association.

Memberships

Recruiting and retaining members continue to be a challenge to the QFA. Every issue of the newspaper includes a member application form. Likewise, it is available on-line on the Association’s website. From time to time editorials and articles remind UPA members of the value and importance in them becoming QFA members as well. On-line reminders are being investigated by staff as a cost saving measure. Despite best efforts, results are disappointing.

The *Quebec Farmers' Advocate* is mailed to all English-speaking members of the UPA, including 955 individuals who are not members of the QFA. This represents a loss of potential revenues totalling \$57,300 (955 x \$60 membership fee).

The number of English-speaking farmers in Quebec who are members of the UPA in 2013 is 1,310. There are 1,395 Anglophone farms who pay UPA memberships. This is down from 2,507 in 2008 and 1,646 in 2003.

Membership Period	Number of QFA Members
December 2012 – November 2013	316
December 2011 – November 2012	446
December 2010 – November 2011	350
December 2009 – November 2010	421
November 2008 - October 2009	410

Table 1.1 *Membership Numbers 2008 – 2013* (numbers include 'spousal' members)

Farm Food Forums Videoconference Series

The QFA's *Farm Food Forum* had another successful run during the winter of 2012-2013. In October, tax accountant Mario Dumas was joined by representatives from the financial advisory group Assante Ag Group to present on 'The Tax Implications of

Farm Transfer and Wealth Management'. We welcomed in November, speakers from Calgary based livestock handling equipment manufacturer Hi-Hog, and one of the Canadian livestock industries leading experts on animal welfare, Dr. Renée Bergeron from the Alfred Campus of University of Guelph, to present on 'Livestock Handling Equipment'. Turnout for both events was strong with over 30 for each evening. January saw us bring to the Forum insurance industry representatives Nadine Raill and France Brochu from Quebec based insurance company Promutuel who shared invaluable insights in to the world of 'Farm and Health Insurance'. March saw the largest turnout of the Forums to date. Two officers from the Contrôle Routier St-Jean were on hand to answer a long list of questions pertaining to 'Farm Vehicles on the Road – Know the Highway Regulations'. With 94 participants, this was a lively evening where perceptions were developed and much useful information was shared. The CPTAQ was represented by lawyer, Isabelle Ouellet, who gave a very meaningful presentation to 59 attentive farmers in April. This session covered the subject of 'Interpreting the Agricultural Land Zoning Laws of Quebec'.

In all, we had over 250 farmers come out to listen to professionals and participate in Forums on a broad variety of subjects. This demonstrates the vibrancy of our community spirit and a

strong interest in learning amongst the Anglophone farming community of Quebec.

Sponsorships

Sponsorships were sought for the 2012 season, and \$7,000 was received from seven donors. Sponsorship packages have been created for the 2013 season. To date, one sponsor has committed \$2,500 for the season. We await responses from other potential sponsors.

Translations Services

Demand for our ***specialized agricultural translation service***, providing for members, national and provincial organizations, partners, and community stakeholders, continues to grow. New clients, include a newly formed organization based in Ontario – the Canadian Agri-business Education Foundation. This new client came from a referral of *La Terre de chez nous*.

Rates remain the same as last year at \$0.28 per word with discounts of up to 12% depending on UPA affiliation and word count.

Net income for the services rose to approximately \$12,200 for the year.

Group Health Insurance Benefits

Uptake of our competitively priced ***Group Health Insurance Benefits Package*** slipped slightly. Changes were made in 2012 and the QFA's file continues to be administered by Montreal-based firm Beneflex Quebec. There are 17 single members and 11 family members. Good news for the upcoming year: renewal rates will be going down, negotiation is on-going with Manulife and final rates will be published in the *Advocate*.

Marks Work Warehouse

Members continue to be eligible for discounts on purchases at Marks Work Warehouse.

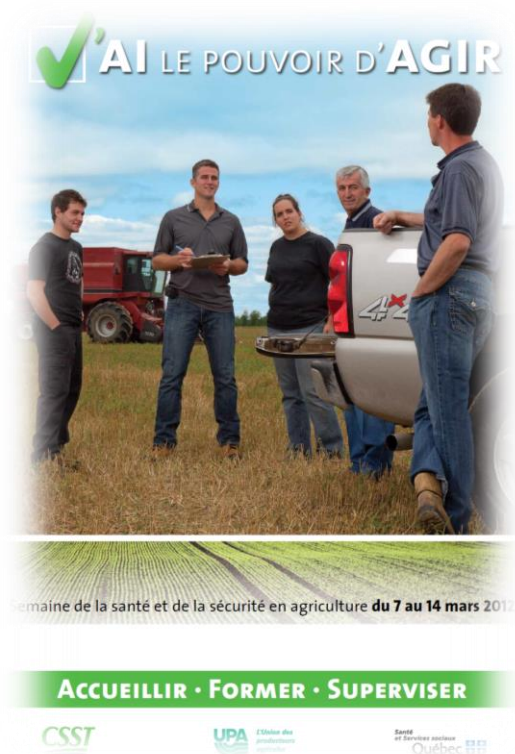
Farm Safety and Farm Fairs

Farm Safety awareness raising efforts continued through school-based workshops, Farm Fairs and other events. We conducted one such workshop in a school in west Quebec in March and had learning tools on hand at the Ottawa Valley Farm Show, as part of the QFA's promotion of National Farm Safety Week. The Cookshire and Shawville Fairs were attended this year where interviews with farm producers uncovered some very interesting industry perspectives. Coverage appeared in the *Advocate*.

The QFA, besides consistently publishing farm safety information in the *Advocate*, continued through staff to represent the membership on an advisory committee

of the Prairie Agricultural Management Institute. QFA representation was once again present at the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) annual conference and the UPA's conference on farm safety. Both events bring together key stakeholders in the farm safety world which allows the QFA to keep connected and informed on current issues. In addition, a QFA representative participated in CASA meetings that developed a national initiative to address farm safety.

Like CASA, QFA believes that **every farm should have its own farm safety plan**. The UPA agrees but is producing very few resources in English. In recognizing this, the QFA was proactive in applying and was successful in receiving funding for a grass roots project that will ensure English-speaking farmers have the tools to develop farm safety plans. To this end, a training weekend will take place in the Fall of 2013 to 'train the trainers'.



QFA continues to sit on the Farm Machinery Technical Committee of the Canadian Standards Association. Meeting twice each year, the committee focuses on design standards, labelling and other matters that can reduce or prevent accidents and injuries. The committee is made up of representatives of equipment manufacturers, government regulators, and farm organizations. The *Commission de la santé et de la sécurité du travail* (CSST) is the only other representative from Quebec.

Advocacy and Representation

Throughout the year QFA represented rural and agricultural minority-language community issues to national and provincial organizations and governmental partners. Meetings were

Segment	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Total
All Visits	733	1,005	1,148	1,176	4,062
Returning Users	129	197	279	257	862
New Users	604	808	869	919	3,200
Mobile and Tablet Traffic	74	114	153	106	447

attended by staff and volunteers contributing to consultations with Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN), the *Union des producteurs agricoles* (UPA), Agriculture and Agri-food Canada and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. The annual 'Breakfast on the Hill' event, organized by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) was once again attended by QFA representatives where they met with politicians in an effort to shed light on agricultural issues.

Website

Since the change of the web master in the Fall of 2012, the QFA website has a new look that includes Industry News, an on-line calendar and more user friendly display for visitors to the site. QFA now has 119 Facebook 'friends', up 23 on last year and 38 'followers' on Twitter which is a new account

introduced this year. Website stats show both a significant increase in returning and new visits.

Agriculture in the Classroom

Agriculture in the Classroom Quebec – a collaborative community effort brought partners and farmers and farming youth together to talk to Grade 6 school children on the importance of making healthy food choices. Videos were created and shown to illustrate where milk comes from and where apples are processed into apple sauce.

Question/answer sessions were interwoven throughout the day, to allow nurturing of understanding amongst our younger community. We had over 200 children attend alongside teachers, Quebec 4-H and QFA volunteers

Warren Grapes Agricultural Education Fund

QFA has a registered charity called the Warren Grapes Agricultural Education Fund. Its objectives are to promote agricultural and silvicultural education and learning among the English-speaking farm and rural community of Quebec through the provision of

bursaries to students enrolled in college and university programs. Unfortunately the number of donations has been declining in recent years. In 2012-13 we received donations totalling \$615. Five students applied for the 2013 bursaries. The Fund's trustees reviewed all applications and \$250 awards were given to 2 students.

Special thanks are extended to the trustees of the fund for their service.



5-Year Strategic Plan

Work continues on implementing QFA's 5-year strategic plan covering 2011-2016. Significant progress is recorded in addressing the following priorities:

- Advocating for policies, programs and services that

support vibrant and active English-speaking, agricultural communities throughout Quebec

- Representing their rights to the *Union des producteurs agricoles* (UPA), government, media, educational institutions and other relevant agencies and organizations
- Providing pertinent and timely information
- Delivering programs and services; and,
- Supporting people entering and retiring from careers in agriculture.

Finances

QFA ended the fiscal year with a surplus of \$11,801. During the year it managed to pay back \$3,600 in principal on the long term loan it has with the UPA bringing the balance owing to \$76,427.

A copy of the full audited statements can be found on-line at

www.quebecfarmers.org, or by requesting a print version from the office. QFA is grateful for the financial support provided by the federal department of Canadian Heritage, as well as its other sponsors, clients and advertisers.

Board of Directors

Chris Judd, president

John McCart, vice-president and treasurer

Gib Drury, past-president

Mark Boyd

Douglas Brooks

Ken Brooks

Armin Ruf

Patricia Keenan

Ben Nichols

Ron Strutt

Wendall Connor

Wally Last



Not yet a member of the **Quebec Farmers' Association**?
Why not join today for the small price of \$60/year plus tax.
It's that simple!

Our Vision ...

The QFA's actions contribute to a sustainable future for both agriculture and the environment while providing a decent quality of life and financial return for the individuals and their families who have made agriculture and food production their chosen professions.



Goals 2011 - 2016

- 1. Health, farm safety and injury prevention***
- 2. Supporting entry into agricultural careers and retirement from careers in agriculture***
- 3. Access to information***
- 4. A supportive policy-making environment for income security***
- 5. Harmonizing governance structure with the Union des producteurs agricole (UPA)***
- 6. Financial stability and independence***

QFA Staff

Andrew McClelland, Managing Editor of *Quebec Farmers' Advocate*

Andrew McClelland was raised in Cantley, Quebec and wrote his first article for the *Quebec Farmers' Advocate* at age 19. He graduated from McGill University with a degree in English and Humanistic Studies, and became managing editor of the *Advocate* in January 2005.



Dougal Rattray, Director of Operations

Dougal Rattray, a native of Scotland, brings with him over 20 years of farming experience in the production of milk, beef, sheep, cereals and vegetables, from smaller, family owned operations, to the value-added, super-market supply chain. Settling in West Quebec in 2006, with his wife and family of two, he has been a part of the QFA team since the June of 2010.



Ivan Hale C.M., Executive Director

Ivan Hale and his family own and operate a farm in western Quebec.



QFA Mission

**To defend the rights, provide
information and advocate for the
English-speaking agricultural
community in Quebec**

Quebec Farmers' Association (QFA)

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