

Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS)

*Helping farm families acquire skills
and training for the road ahead*

www.ontario.ca/cass

CASS Helps Farm Families Strive For Success

Betty Becker is a CASS participant who has been very successful in improving her farm business skills. She has managed a dairy farm in Clifford, Ontario for over 38 years. She has been involved in all areas of farm production and management including baling hay and delivering loads, as well as raising a family.

Since Betty began farming, she has been in charge of bookkeeping by recording the farm's financial records by hand. She knew that she could improve her farm business by learning valuable computer skills but she lacked confidence on the computer.

Betty enrolled in the CASS program after visiting the Wingham Centre for Employment and Learning in Fall 2007. Betty met with her Skills Assessment Advisor on a regular basis and they worked to create an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). With guidance from her CASS Skills Assessment Advisor, Betty began the Skills to Go program, a step-by-step introduction to the computer.

As busy as Betty is she still manages to visit the Centre for Employment and Learning between her peak busy hours to work in the computer lab. CASS provides Betty with the opportunity to set her goals and achieve success through training and skills assessment. CASS helps fund Betty's tuition and costs while she is taking training.



CASS Skills Assessment Advisor Murray Hunter is committed to helping CASS participants reach their goals at the Wingham Centre for Employment and Learning.



CASS participant Betty Becker works on her computer skills at the Wingham Centre for Employment and Learning

Betty has gained confidence with her new skills and is also motivated to invest more in herself and her abilities. The training and skills development Betty has gained by being a CASS participant helps make her farm management practices more efficient.

She is so successful in her studies that she is now working on advancing her skills by learning more advanced computer farm management software.

The goal of CASS is to provide farmers and their spouses with opportunities to access skills training with the goal of improving farm profitability and net family income.

Betty has gained many skills by being a CASS participant including the confidence and self-motivation to try something new while at the same time being able to add to the continued success of her farm.

For more information or to receive an application form, please contact
CON*NECT CASS Centre
1-877-830-0200

or visit the website located
at www.ontario.ca/cass

CASS GENERATING NEW IDEAS THROUGH TRACTION WORKSHOP

Bringing Farm Families Together to Achieve Success

Family farms have communications issues that are unique to their enterprises and farm succession is one example.

CASS participants Jim and Debbie Puffer own a dairy farm near Morganston, Ontario and have four adult children. They had been dealing with succession planning issues for a number of years.

The Puffers wanted to proceed very cautiously when it came to the succession of the farm. They also wanted to make sure their children knew how to plan and manage the family business. Their children had their own views about the future of the farm.

The Puffers have a good family relationship but they were unable to share their concerns and come to an agreement. Their CASS Skills Assessment Advisor suggested a workshop known as Traction that would help.

Traction is a two-day workshop geared

towards learning effective communication skills and problem-solving techniques.

The workshop is designed by farmers and is relevant to both personal and professional farming relationships. Through a series of exercises, Traction helps participants find better ways to understand different personalities, identify issues, resolve conflict and find solutions. Participation in the workshop is approached in a non-threatening and comfortable way.

After 20 minutes of going through a very simple list of standard questions, the Puffer family agreed on a time frame to develop a succession plan. Jim and Debbie Puffer agree that the workshop is valuable for them as a couple and as a family.

The workshop gives them the tools to set goals for themselves, to help communicate business planning with their children and to ensure the future success of their farm.

Traction qualifies as skills training that can be included in your Individual Learning Plan through the Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS) program. For more information on the workshop, please contact:

JUICE INC.

info@juiceinc.com

www.tractionskills.ca

Toll Free:

1-888-822-5479

Upcoming 2008 Traction Workshops:

Nov. 17-18'08 ANCASTER
Nov 24-25'08 ORANGEVILLE
Nov 27-28'08 BARRIE
Dec 1-2'08 BELLEVILLE
Dec 4-5'08 ST. CATHARINES
Jan 19-20'09 KEMPTVILLE
Jan 22-23'09 LONDON
Jan 29-30'09 GUELPH

FIND OUT IF CASS IS RIGHT FOR YOU

There is Still Time to Apply

Farmers and their spouses can use the CASS program to increase their skills in areas such as business management, financial accounting, and agricultural leadership. CASS participants are eligible to take programs or certificates in welding, heavy equipment operation, nutrient management and organic agriculture.

It is a great opportunity for farmers and their spouses to be funded for developing new opportunities for their farms and to use the program to develop off-farm or supplemental income options.

CASS contains special provisions to assist beginning farmers and their spouses develop the skills and knowledge to establish or become part of a commercial farm business.

CASS provides qualified applicants with no-cost access to a professional advisor who will meet with them and focus on understanding existing skills, plans and goals, and provide a clear path on how to achieve them.

Depending on net family income, participants may also receive financial assistance to complete their training activities. Financial benefits range from \$8,000 - \$16,000 for qualified participants, depending on their

averaged net family income and other eligibility requirements. For example, a farmer and his spouse who have an average net family income over the past three years of up to \$35,000 can be eligible for up to \$16,000 in training costs each for both the producer and their spouse.

In farming, as in other businesses, having a plan creates a better future for you and your family. The Canadian Agricultural Skills Service (CASS) is available to assist qualifying producers and their spouses develop the skills and knowledge to increase their farm profitability and family income. CASS is designed to help farm families acquire skills and training for the road ahead.

For more information on CASS or to receive an application form, please contact the CON*NECT CASS Centre at 1-877-830-0200 or visit the website located at www.ontario.ca/cass.

CASS is a Renewal program under the federal-provincial-territorial Agricultural Policy Framework. The Colleges of Ontario Network for Education and Training (CON*NECT) delivers CASS in Ontario, in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.