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THE ONTARIO AGROLOGIST

Tony Morris, P.Ag., Senior Relationship Manager, Agriculture, Meridian Credit Union, talks about the Ontario Institute of Agrologists (OIA) 2016 Annual Conference. Tony is the Conference Chairman and reports' planning is well underway with the support of local OIA Members and related agri-businesses.

Tell us how the OIA's conference will be a significant sector event.

The conference theme, "Responsibilities in a Demanding World", reflects the many challenges and opportunities happening throughout the food chain, from primary production to retailing. As demands on our industry increase, our actions for which we are responsible come under ever-increasing scrutiny. Whether it is gearing up to feed 9 billion people, protecting the environment or managing the impacts on the daily lives of people, the decisions we make every day have consequences.

There are demands to go beyond traditional testing, inspection and training, with all sectors involved in the production and retailing of food adopting principles related to values and beliefs. Our place in the global market will be enhanced with proven assurance and the credibility of Ontario practitioners.

The conference will have wide audience appeal involving all OIA practice disciplines, production agriculture, the agri-food industry, students, food processing, retailing, producer organizations, and government. I have spoken with a number of food company representatives in Ontario and the United States who have expressed

strong interest in attending given the speakers who have already confirmed their involvement.

Who are the confirmed speakers for the conference?

We are very pleased **Frank Yiannas**, Vice President of Food Safety with Walmart has accepted our invitation to speak. Walmart is the largest retailer and buyer of food in the world with over 11,000 stores. Frank's position is truly global in nature, and with his position as Vice Chair of the Global Food Safety Initiative, he brings valuable insight to the Ontario agriculture and food sector.

Also confirmed is **Dr. Colin Sage**, Professor of Geography, University College, Cork, Ireland. His primary research is the inter-relationship of food and environmental resources; the development of the global food system; and issues of governance and risk construction.

Dr. Sylvain Charlebois, University of Guelph, College of Business and Economics, is confirmed. He has authored almost 200 peer-reviewed publications, written four books, and his research has been featured in countless newspapers.

We are excited to bring insight from the world of professional litigation.

Naomi Leowith is a lawyer at Lenczner



Slaght. She will speak to matters of professional negligence. Accreditation and licensure is important in matters of public health, credibility and trust in the marketplace today.

For our banquet, **Richard P. Ellis**, Senior Vice President, Communications, Public Affairs & Corporate Social Responsibility, McDonald's Canada has been invited. In his role he is very focused on sustainability initiatives and quality assurance. He is an accredited member of the Canadian Public Relations Society and Chair of Ronald McDonald House Charities in Canada.

Following the Conference all will be welcome to attend the OIA Banquet. The OIA Annual General Meeting will take place on Friday April 1st together with a tour to highlight the local agriculture and food industry.

How can we find out more about the agenda?

Information regarding the agenda is to be finalized and available in November. Watch the OIA website for regular updates. www.oia.on.ca

OIA 2016 Conference: "Responsibilities in a Demanding World"

Thursday, March 31st 2016 • Delta Hotel and Conference Centre, Guelph, Ontario