



News Release

New chair at Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association

Potato grower elected at annual general meeting

For immediate release

(Niagara Falls, ON, January 11, 2012) – There is a new leader in place at the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association (OFVGA). Potato grower Mac James was elected Chair of the Board at the organization's 153rd annual general meeting yesterday. He succeeds Brian Gilroy who stepped down after serving two years as OFVGA's chair.

"Fruit and vegetable growers are faced with many issues that affect the viability of our farms, from labour, research and crop protection to safety nets and property issues," says James. "The need for horticulture to have a strong voice has never been greater and as the OFVGA's new chair, I'm looking forward to working with our government and industry partners on behalf of our members."

James is a lifelong farmer from the Leamington area, where he grows potatoes, peppers and other horticultural crops on a century farm. He has been on the OFVGA board for seven years, most recently serving two one year terms as Vice Chair of the organization. James is also currently a director with the Ontario Potato Board.

OFVGA's 2012 board also includes directors Brian Gilroy (apples) who is also serving as chair of the property section, Norm Charbonneau (small fruit/berries), Jason Verkaik (fresh vegetable – muck), Ray Duc (grapes), Jason Ryder (asparagus), Fred Meyers (tender fruit), Jan VanderHout (greenhouse), Don Taylor (greenhouse), Ken VanTorre (ginseng) and Mary Shabatura (fresh vegetable). Ex-officio board members are section chairs Ken Forth (labour), Mark Wales (safety nets), Charles Stevens (crop protection), Harold Schooley (research) and Murray Porteous (Canadian Horticultural Council).

"We have a strong and dedicated Board team at the OFVGA and it's an honour for me to have been elected as their chair," says James. "Collectively, we will continue to work towards building and maintaining a prosperous and sustainable fruit and vegetable industry in Ontario."

The Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association is the voice of Ontario's 7,500 fruit, vegetable, and greenhouse farmers on issues affecting the edible horticulture sector. Visit www.ofvga.org.

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