

Ontario CCA Board Initiatives



**CERTIFIED
CROP ADVISER**

Topics

1. Attracting new CCAs
2. Recruiting and retaining an effective Board of Directors
3. Collaborating with third party groups

Attracting New CCAs

- Marketing Committee gives presentations at colleges and universities - often Crops and Soils Clubs
- Companies talk about the CCA designation to summer students and interns and urge them to pursue it
- Employers list the CCA designation in job ads - ask employees to either have the certification or willingness to get it, most employers pay costs
- Committee produced tabletop sign “A CCA Works Here” for trade show booths or retail counters - raise awareness
- CCA staff attended the Outdoor Farm Show this year and talked to staff of exhibiting companies



Composition of Ontario CCA Board

14 voting directors

- 11 elected CCAs
- 3 designated seats for non-CCAs (appointed)
 - University of Guelph
 - Ontario Soil & Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA)
 - Grain Farmers of Ontario

3 non-voting directors

- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness
- Conservation Ontario

Plus

- OSCIA staff member liaison
- Board mentee(s)

Ontario CCA Board Terms

Each elected director serves a three-year term and is eligible to stand for re-election for another term (6 years maximum)

Exception for Executive members who are allowed to serve until they have fulfilled their roles - Chair, Vice Chair, Past Chair - 2 years each

Appointed directors also serve a three-year term but no limit on number of terms

No restrictions for non-voting directors

Recruiting New Directors

- Call for nominations for seats up for election goes out in fall newsletter and via multiple emails to all Ontario CCAs
- Interested candidates can self-nominate
- Have never had an acclamation
- Bios for candidates sent out to CCAs via email
- Two-week on-line voting window in early December
- New Board takes effect after Annual Meeting in January

Board Commitment

- Two one-day in-person Board meetings per year
- Dates set six months in advance
- Agenda one month prior and full meeting package two weeks prior
- If necessary, virtual meetings are called to deal with any issues arising
- Board directors are asked to serve on at least one committee
- All committee chairs are directors
- Committees - Standard & Ethics, Marketing, Continuing Education, Exam, Research and Innovation, Awards, Mentorship



CCA Board Mentorship Program

Purpose - To encourage newer CCAs to consider taking on a leadership role in the Association

Up to 2 candidates selected per year

Preference given to CCAs certified in the preceding 5 years

Attend Board meetings for one year

Take on a CCA program-related project

Give a presentation on their project at annual CCA conference

Third Party Partnerships

Background

- Federal and provincial money is available for farmer cost-share programs - typically five-year funding cycles
- Criteria for farmers to work with CCAs or P.Ag.s has continued in the most recent round of funding at both the federal and provincial level
- Pleased to see CCAs specifically named as subject matter experts in some programs
- Raises profile of the CCA designation
- Provides value to grower customers and thus to the CCAs' employers


ROOTED IN RESILIENCE

Strategic partnership to support evidence-based agronomy and build stronger, productive soils

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 **Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association**

Nitrogen Management


Cover Cropping


Rotational Grazing


Empowering advisors through collaborative, targeted education in key best management practices

In support of OSCIA Programs

On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF)
Provides cost-share funding to farmers to support the implementation of best management practices to tackle climate change.

Farmland Health Check-Up (FHCU)
Provides farmers with a unique opportunity to work with a CCA or Professional Agrologist (P.Ag.) free of charge to assess risks to on-farm soil health and water quality.

 **SCAN HERE**

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Funding for this project has been provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Agricultural Climate Solutions (ACS) - On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF). The Farmland Health Check-Up (FHCU) is funded by the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP).

 **Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership**

 **Ontario**

 **Canada**

Increased Interest in Partnerships

- OSCIA and other organizations delivering grant programs lack sufficient human resources to reach growers directly, either in terms of number of staff or contacts
- They want to connect with CCAs through the Ontario CCA office in order to effect change at the farm level
- Recognition that CCAs can be valuable extension force
- Caution - need to ensure credibility and practicality of organization and programs



OSCIA and CCA Relationship

- OSCIA has a seat on the Ontario CCA Board - has been an OSCIA Board director
- In 2024, included the OSCIA Director of Research and Knowledge Transfer (staff position) in Board meetings as a liaison
- Also began discussing with OSCIA staff how to collaborate more closely and address identified challenges
- In Q1 of 2025, OSCIA received a second tranche of funding from the federal government which included a required component of developing and delivering resources for agronomists

Collaboration Agreement

- OSCIA and CCA discussed the potential for a mutually beneficial service delivery agreement
- Signed contract in July 2025
- Focuses on developing training and resources for agronomic advisors
- Training will focus on nitrogen management, cover cropping, and rotational grazing
- Webinars, workshops, and print articles
- Initial term to March 2026 with potential expansion to December 2027



Benefits of Collaboration Agreement to CCA Program

- Cooperative initiatives or co-branded programs raise the profile of CCAs as trusted experts within farm communities and policy circles
- Enhances public and agricultural sector's awareness of CCAs' role in advancing crop production and stewardship
- CCAs have access to free CEU opportunities that are available live or on-demand
- Project supports a subject matter staff position in CCA office and offsets some administration costs

Questions?

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