



March 7, 2008

INVITATION TO NEWS AND ASSIGNMENT EDITORS

The 81st Ottawa Valley Farm Show will be held at Lansdowne Park March 11-13. Show times are 9 am-5pm the 11th, 9am-8pm the 12th, and 9am-4pm the 13th.

With 330 exhibit booths, it's Ottawa's largest trade show in terms of space occupied. It's also the largest annual agricultural show in Ontario east of Toronto.

Every year, 10,000-12,000 Eastern Ontario, West Quebec and even some Northern New York farm and rural families pass through the gates to check out the latest in machinery and equipment, rural services and organizations.

This is your invitation to use the farm show as a backdrop for stories about agriculture and the people in the business. Some possibilities:

1. Increasing price of corn thanks to the ethanol industry.
2. High-tech agriculture as reflected in modern computerized tractors and robotic milkers housed in million-dollar dairy barns.
3. Farm politics relating to subsidies and compensation for land taken over for the common good. The Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Ontario Landowners Association have booths at the show.
4. Current emphasis on water quality protection and impact on agriculture.
5. Easter Bunny anyone? One farm show exhibitor sells rabbits for eating rather than delivering Easter eggs.
6. Electricity from manure. The concept is sweeping Eastern Ontario, with working manure "digesters" in place at Cobden and near St. Anne de Prescott.

And one more:

7. Of course, the farm show serves to illustrate the predicament which will arise when Lansdowne Park is redeveloped as the City of Ottawa is proposing, bumping out - or so it seems - major trade shows. Where will they go?

If you're interested in any of these topics or others, please contact me for names and booth locations of those who might figure in the stories.

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