Board Highlights: August 12-13, 2026

2026 Policy Day

Ontario Pork's 2026 Policy Day will take place on Wednesday, September 9 at Cutten Fields in Guelph. The morning session will focus on swine industry and on-farm emergency preparedness, including how a foreign animal disease (FAD) response could unfold and the work underway to develop mitigation measures, tools and program support for producers. The session will also provide an opportunity for producers to share perspectives that will help inform Ontario Pork's ongoing emergency preparedness and advocacy efforts. The afternoon will focus on resolutions and broader issues identified by producers, providing delegates with an opportunity for discussion and debate. Additional information and meeting materials will be circulated to delegates approximately two weeks before Policy Day.

Ontario's Agriculture Strategy

Drew Spoelstra, President, and Cathy Lennon, General Manager of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), joined the Board to discuss OFA's work to strengthen and advocate for Ontario's agriculture sector. The discussion highlighted the importance of agriculture to Ontario's and Canada's economy and food system, as well as opportunities for greater collaboration among commodity organizations on shared priorities. Board members emphasized the value of working together on issues affecting farmers across the province, including insurance costs, taxation and infrastructure.

Business Plan – Progress Report

Staff provided a progress report on Ontario Pork's 2026–2030 business plan, outlining work underway across the organization's five responsibility areas. The Board discussed several highlights from 2026, including expanded producer engagement through focus sessions and individual meetings intended to create more direct interaction with producers. Advocacy efforts have included constituency meetings that bring discussions directly to local communities and help connect provincial issues with local impacts. Progress also continues in emergency preparedness through training for producers and industry stakeholders, and in producer services through collaboration with researchers on Ontario Pork's economic and applied on-farm research priorities. Consumer marketing and promotion activities have focused on reaching new audiences through agricultural fairs and classroom education, consumer sampling with retail partners, and partnerships with chefs to demonstrate pork's versatility, affordability and ease of preparation.

Leadership Training

Registration is ongoing for the Ontario Pork Leadership Course, designed to help pork producers strengthen their leadership skills, deepen their understanding of the industry and build confidence participating in industry discussions, decision-making and advocacy.

The program combines leadership development, farm business knowledge, industry and value-chain awareness, communication skills and government relations experience. The curriculum progresses from personal leadership and farm-level decision-making to broader industry engagement, collaboration and advocacy. Ontario pork producers interested in advancing their leadership journey are encouraged to apply. The cost of the program is covered by Ontario Pork.

For more information or to apply, visit: https://ontariopork.on.ca/resources/leadership-course/