

## **OMAFRA SUPPORTS ONTARIO'S BEEF PROCESSING INDUSTRY**

GUELPH, ON — January 17, 2008 — Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Leona Dombrowsky, announced today that the province is providing \$14 million in transitional funding to abattoirs and deadstock collection services to assist the sector as it continues to adjust to new federal regulations surrounding the Enhanced Feed Ban.

\$9 million is transitional funding that will help abattoirs adapt to new rules that further protect against BSE and \$5 million is interim funding to support affordable deadstock collection and disposal, while the rules for this industry are updated to further protect public health and the environment.

"We are very pleased with the provincial government's support shown today," said Tony Facciolo, President of the Ontario Independent Meat Processors. "We encourage the federal government to recognize the need for funding in Ontario to help abattoirs comply with the new regulations."

The enhanced feed ban regulations, which came into effect in July 2007, require that specified risk material be kept separate from other inedible materials, and not go into any animal feed, pet food, or fertilizer manufacturing.

This funding will assist with operational costs incurred as a result of implementing the federal enhanced feed ban regulations. In a survey conducted by the OIMP, the estimated average cost for Ontario's provincial abattoir to comply with this federal regulation is \$34/head.

All licensed abattoirs in Ontario that slaughtered cattle between July 1 and December 31, 2007, will receive funding. Funding will be based on the proportion of cattle slaughtered by each plant that were 30 months of age and over, and under 30 months of age, compared to the provincial total, using 2006 slaughter statistics. Abattoirs do not need to submit applications to receive funding from this program. Due to the urgent need for support, payments under this program will be made in one lump sum to each eligible abattoir before March 31, 2008.

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*The OIMP is a voluntary non-profit association founded in 1979 that currently represents 150 of Ontario meat and poultry processors. Ontario's meat and poultry industry contributes over \$6.5 billion to Ontario's economy representing 20% of Ontario's food manufacturing industry.*