

# ONTARIO MARKET INVESTMENT FUND

## *Building opportunities for Ontario-produced foods*

The OMIF program is targeted to promoting consumer awareness of Ontario-produced foods and encourages Ontarians to buy locally.

### **Putting More Ontario Pork on Forks**

Ontario's pork producers are excited about getting more of their products onto Ontarian's forks, and they're doing this by aggressively promoting the nutritional benefits of pork to an expanded consumer market.

Ontario Pork, the organization that represents the province's 2,800 pork producers, is leading a project to build awareness of locally-produced products and create a better understanding of the pork industry's vital contributions to the Ontario economy.

Those contributions are significant. According to Ontario Pork, the pork industry in Ontario contributed \$4.7 billion and 33,000 jobs from "farm to fork" to the provincial economy in 2008. Yet, like all farm numbers, the number of pork producers has declined - down 86 per cent from the highest number of 20,354 producers in 1979.

Ontario Pork came up with a strategy to help sustain the industry and applied for assistance from the Ontario Market Investment Fund (OMIF) to embark on a marketing and education program to market pork. "The funding has enabled our organization to expand our marketing activities in the province and to help educate consumers about the benefits of eating pork and the contributions pork producers make to the Ontario economy," says Mary Jane Quinn, Ontario Pork's Assistant Director of Marketing.

With a contribution of \$25,000 from OMIF, the organization has developed a number of resources and branding opportunities that encourage consumers, health care providers and dietitians to "Put Ontario Pork on Your Fork".



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The support is helping producers reach thousands of people in a variety of ways. The “Put Ontario Pork on Your Fork” message has aired on radio in major markets including Toronto, the Hamilton region, Kitchener-Waterloo, Bradford, Ottawa and Windsor. “By promoting Ontario pork through promotional items and radio, we are reminding consumers that the pork industry is vital to Ontario,” says Quinn.

The OMIF funding was also used to produce a series of recipe cards that have been widely distributed through new partnerships and marketing channels. Thousands were distributed to children and their parents by City Parent Newsmagazine at Ontario Place and Wild Water Kingdom. Another 65,000 were distributed as inserts in What’s UP-Canada Family Magazine. They were also part of a gift package given out to parents at a number of Ontario Early Years Centres while thousands of others were included in each box of fresh pork offered through the Conestoga Meat Packers fundraising initiative.

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*– Mary Jane Quinn*

With OMIF support, Ontario Pork was able to develop a new tradeshow booth that has attracted attention at fairs in Lambton County, Paris, Caledonia, Norfolk, Listowel and Bruce County. “We’ve had several comments from producers who love the booth and think it is a great illustration of the pork products offered by our Ontario producers,” says Quinn.

If the increasing number of visits to the Ontario Pork website is a clear indication the marketing effort is gaining momentum and attention she says. “Certainly the movement towards buying more local products is on the minds of many consumers. I think that by promoting Ontario pork we’re serving up the message that it is a nutritious protein alternative and by purchasing it, they’re helping our producers.”



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## **Ontario Market Investment Fund**

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