

# 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.

### **Driving the Message – Nothing Tastes Like Home**

The Ontario Cattle Feeders' Association is driving home the message that "Nothing Tastes Like Home," especially when it comes to Ontario corn fed beef and the abundance of other locally-grown Ontario food products.

That's the highly visible message that decorates the outside of the association's state-of-the-art, 46-foot travelling kitchen trailer and the 18-wheel highway tractor that pulls it.

With the support of a \$60,000 contribution from the Ontario Market Investment Fund (OMIF), the "Nothing Tastes Like Home" project is increasing awareness and educating consumers about local foods and the benefits of buying local by using the kitchen trailer for cooking demonstrations and tasting opportunities at industry, community and school events.

The high-end, fully self-contained kitchen unit, funded in part by OMIF, includes a large oven, a 48-inch flat grill and a 36-inch char broiler for preparing the corn fed beef, chicken or other meat that is available for sampling at the events. There is a large walk-in cooler and a freezer to keep the beef and other meat and poultry products at optimum temperatures. An on-demand hot water unit provides safe and clean potable municipal water, wherever the trailer travels.

Visitors can taste authentic Ontario-grown and prepared foods at a sampling window. They are also welcome inside to watch the food preparation demonstrations and pick up information on Ontario products and food safety.

"Our strategy is to get more people trying Ontario food products," says Jim Clark, the association's executive director. "The more they try them, the more they will ask for them at their favourite retailer or restaurant, and the strategy seems to be working for us."



**The "Nothing Tastes Like Home" 46-foot trailer parked outside the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs office in Guelph, Ontario**

As an added bonus, the kitchen unit has the capacity to cook full meals for up to 2000 people each day and can function for up to one week with its own power, fuel and water. In addition to promotional events, the association will make it available for emergency situations.



**Inside the trailer is a fully contained kitchen unit**

Since its debut at Sarnia's Bayfest Festival in June 2009, Jim has toured across southwestern Ontario along with a certified chef to events and parades in Palmerston, Glencoe, Wellington County, Guelph, Woodstock and the University of Western Ontario in London. The association has developed a close working relationship with the university to educate students about the benefits of healthy eating by providing meal suggestions and showcasing Ontario products at cooking demonstrations.

The association believes in the power of partnerships and getting the message out about the goodness of Ontario-produced foods. They continue to support local producers by sourcing their products for cooking demonstrations wherever they go, and they will make the unit available to other food associations interested in using it.

While the original goal was to use the trailer to market the association's signature brand, Ontario Corn Fed Beef, the group decided to promote all Ontario food groups and celebrate the great relationship it has with Foodland Ontario. The vivid, exterior decal wrapping funded by OMIF is a feast for the eyes and that catches attention wherever the trailer travels.

*"I'm driving home 80 feet of very powerful messaging that moves all aspects of Ontario's agriculture forward, not just part of it." – Jim Clark*

Their powerful marketing message is far-reaching. The trailer will be part of the backdrop in the Ontario pavilion at the Vancouver Winter Olympics and there have been requests to bring it to stores in Pennsylvania and Boston, Massachusetts.

"It's amazing, wherever I go with it – down country roads or across the 400 series of highways – people honk and give us the thumb's up. I'm so proud to be able to promote the professionalism of Ontario's producers and the great partnership we have with the Ontario government and Foodland Ontario. I'm driving home 80 feet of very powerful messaging that moves all aspects of Ontario's agriculture forward, not just part of it," says Clark.

He is also proud to point out that the trailer was totally built in Ontario. The frame was made in Hamilton. The trailer itself was built in Kingston, and the tractor was purchased in Palmerston.

## **Ontario Market Investment Fund**

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