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Ontario Pasture Award winner named

Bruce County Farmer Wins 2015 Ontario Pasture Award

February 18, 2015 (Toronto) - The sponsors of the Ontario Pasture Award - Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO), MAPLESEED and the Ontario Forage Council (OFC) - are pleased to announce that Dr. Peter Kotzeff of Chesley, Ontario *is the winner of the 2015 Pasture Award. The award was announced today at the BFO Annual General Meeting.*

For his environmental and pasture improvements and management, Dr. Kotzeff will receive a cash award of \$750 and a bag of forage seed, plus a complimentary hotel room for one night at the BFO Annual Meeting.

Dr. Kotzeff is a veterinarian and also operates a livestock and cash crop farm in Bruce County, with a major focus on pasture management. He operates an intensive grazing system where he grazes individual paddocks or strip grazes for three to five days with a 40-45 day rest period. Water is provided to each paddock with a variety of systems sourced from ponds and well water.

This past year Dr. Kotzeff pastured 69 cow calf pairs and 330 yearling steers. The cows calved unsupervised in late April and May in sheltered glade paddocks. In early October the cows were moved to farms with a cover crop and the calves were weaned by leaving them at the pasture farms. He says, "The sheltered paddocks and good quality pastures on his intensive rotational grazing system and an ample supply of fresh water at each paddock, played a major role with a 100% weaning rate and a 97% conception rate, in the fall off 2014."

Lawrence Levesque, District Sales Manager, Western Ontario with MAPLESEED, comments that the use of cover crop and the pasture management program being utilized on Dr. Kotzeff's farm is a model that not only makes greater use of pasture resources, but is also another good example of positive environmental practices.

Ray Robertson, Manager of the Ontario Forage Council, said that as producers try to maximize the net profit from every acre, the practical techniques being followed on Dr. Kotzeff's Farm is a great example of how other producers can improve their pastures and overall profitability of their operation.

The deadline for applications for the 2016 Ontario Pasture Award is November 30, 2015.

For details, call the Ontario Forage Council at 1-877-892-8663 or visit either the Ontario Forage Council - www.ontarioforagecouncil.com or the Beef Farmers of Ontario - www.ontariobeef.com

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