



# STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS SUMMARY 2013 – 2018

*Vision, Action, Impact*



ONTARIO BEEKEEPERS'  
ASSOCIATION  
Since 1881

# Introduction

In March 2012 the Board of Directors of the OBA embarked on a strategic planning process to chart the organization's course for the next five years. The Board had a number of reasons for this decision, including keeping up with the increasing complexity of the beekeeping environment requiring a more focused, strategic response; addressing the expanded demands on limited resources; and growing the OBA membership base. A committee was created, chaired by board member Hugh Simpson, and included Board Chair, John VanAlten; Incoming Chair, Dan Davidson; board members, Kelly Rogers, Doug McRory and Julie White; and staff Maureen VanderMarel and Tech-Transfer Lead Les Eccles.

**Mandate and Process:** The committee was mandated with the analysis and development of a five-year strategic plan with the board approving progress at key decision points. During the planning process the committee looked outward as well as inward and was future-oriented in its deliberations. As well, the committee focused on relevance, effectiveness and efficiency as it progressed, and included what we are doing right as well as what we could do differently. The committee asked itself key questions at each stage of the process as shown in the following Planning Framework. They relied on varied sources of information: the results of a member survey undertaken earlier in the year, input from the President's Summit with the local beekeeping associations, Memorandum-of-Understandings with funders and other framing documents, staff input, current activities and industry information.

The plan was approved at the November 2012 board meeting and the committee was then charged with developing a committee and staff structure that would strengthen the OBA's capacity to carry out its plan. This structure was approved at the January 2013 meeting.

We wish to note, however, that making wise choices for the future is work that does not end with a strategic plan. This plan is intended to influence and build the capacity to respond to changing issues and opportunities with strategies that reside in our mission, vision and values and reflect our measurements for success.

We look forward to keeping you abreast of developments and your involvement in implementing our plan over the coming years.

**Dan Davidson**, *President*

**Hugh Simpson**, *Chair Strategic Planning Committee*



# The Planning Framework

*Following is the timeline, sequence and analytical questions for each stage of the planning process.*

## APRIL – AUGUST 2012

### MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

- What is our purpose?
- What does success look like?
- Who do we serve?
- What do they need?
- What matters to us?

## OCTOBER 2012

### SWOT (STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS)

- Who are our stakeholders?
- What do we owe them?
- What are the key issues in our environment?
- What might stand in the way of our vision?
- What might get us there?

## NOVEMBER 2012

### CORE GOALS, MAJOR OUTCOMES, 2013 – 2018

- What are the high level goals we need to achieve to meet our vision?
- What are the indicators that we have succeeded?

## NOVEMBER 2012

### CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- What critical internal issues might prevent our success?
- What are the 'must do's' to succeed?

## JANUARY 2013

### KEY STRATEGIES, RESPONSIBILITY, TIMELINES, RESOURCES FOR 2013

- What is our contribution to our long-term goals for this year? (2013)
- Who will carry out this work?
- When will it be achieved?
- What resources do we need to allocate to make it work?

## JANUARY 2013

### STRATEGIC PLAN AND FIRST YEAR ACTION PLAN

- What do we communicate and how?
- How do we measure our progress?

# Mission, Vision, Values

## OBA MISSION STATEMENT

We work to ensure a thriving and sustainable beekeeping industry in Ontario. To this end, we advocate for beekeepers' interests, support honey bee health research and deliver practical training and information.

## OBA VISION STATEMENT

In our vision, Ontario leads with well-informed and skilled beekeepers, healthy and plentiful honeybees raised in Ontario, a prosperous beekeeping industry as well as a widespread appreciation for honey and for the critical role that honey bees play in agriculture.

## OBA VALUES

*In pursuit of our Vision and in execution of our Mission we value:*

**INCLUSIVENESS:** We recognize the interdependence of all beekeepers in Ontario and strive to include everyone whether they keep bees for commercial purposes or pure enjoyment.

**RESPONSIVENESS:** We are committed to responding quickly and thoughtfully to urgent issues that could potentially affect beekeepers or the wellbeing of honey bees.

**ENGAGEMENT:** We are committed to ongoing dialogue and engagement through a variety of means with our members and local associations to further the mission of the OBA.

**COLLABORATION:** We work in partnership with a broad range of organizations and initiatives to strengthen our strategic impact.

**SCIENCE-BASED RESEARCH AND INFORMATION:** The information and training we support is based on the most up-to-date research and analysis from Ontario and globally.

**ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY:** We are committed to strategies and policies that support and advance a sustainable environment.

# SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis

*The SWOT analysis provides a way to look at the current state by identifying both internal and external perspectives. The purpose of the SWOT is to help align the OBA's resources and capabilities to the requirements of the environment we operate in.*

**STRENGTHS:** internal characteristics of the OBA that could help it succeed.

**WEAKNESSES:** internal characteristics that prevent the OBA from reaching its full potential.

**OPPORTUNITIES:** external chances to improve performance.

**THREATS:** external elements in the environment that could cause trouble.

## (INTERNAL)

### STRENGTHS (What we can capitalize on)

- OBA-TTP highly regarded in North America and cited by beekeepers as a major draw for membership.
- Workshops and other knowledge transfer efforts provide learning opportunities unique to the beekeeping industry.
- Growing reputation of the Bee Breeding Program.
- Committed members – high renewal rate.
- Staff are skilled, highly committed and work hard.
- Board are committed & respected in the industry.
- Confidence of and stable funding from OMAFRA.
- No other Ontario-wide beekeeping organization.
- Local Associations appreciate the support given by TTP and visiting board members.
- OBA is part of the agriculture commodities sector.
- U of Guelph recognizes the OBA as industry representative.

### WEAKNESSES (What we need to shore up)

- OBA required a larger membership base to increase its voice.
- Need better vehicles to understand or meet member needs or to communicate with them.
- Funding, although stable, is insufficient for expectations.
- Governance systems are overdue for review.
- High workload and expectations of the Chair result in 'burnout' and make succession planning difficult.
- The current one-year term reduced board effectiveness.

## (MOSTLY WITHIN OBA CONTROL)

## (EXTERNAL)

### OPPORTUNITIES (Places where we can invest)

- The growing awareness that apiculture is key to the agricultural industry.
- Opportunity to take a stronger leadership role in the CHC that will increase influence at the national and international level.
- Increased interest in beekeeping provides an opportunity to increase membership.
- Public awareness of importance of honey bees to food security and environmental health is growing.
- Local food movement enhancing markets for honey.
- There are effective commodity organizations that we could work with toward mutual goals.
- Growing demand for domestic honey bee stock.

### THREATS (Things we need to offset)

- Limited reach among small beekeepers and therefore limited access among them to current best practices could result in more prevalent diseases and pests.
- Repeal of the Ontario Bees Act to one that folds bees into the Animal Health and Welfare Act could result in less responsive legislation for bees.
- The on-going issue of pesticide-linked poisonings requires a strong policy and spokesperson to work with the media.
- Continued decrease in the Provincial Apiarist's role could reduce his effectiveness.
- CHC does not always reflect Ontario's priorities.
- OMAFRA seems to be increasing its regulatory focus at the expense of extension, research facilitation and industry resourcing.

## (MOSTLY OUTSIDE OBA CONTROL)

# The Ontario Beekeepers' Association Strategic Plan Framework

## MISSION STATEMENT

We work to ensure a thriving and sustainable beekeeping industry in Ontario. To this end, we advocate for beekeeper's interests, support honey bee health research and deliver practical training and information.

## VISION STATEMENT

In our vision, Ontario leads with well-informed and skilled beekeepers, healthy and plentiful honey bees raised in Ontario, a prosperous beekeeping industry as well as a widespread appreciation for honey and for the critical role that honey bees play in agriculture.

## CORE GOALS 2013 – 2018

### ADVOCACY

Amplify our voice for beekeeping through stronger influence with government and industry.

### KNOWLEDGE

Be the authoritative source for knowledge about the practice and profession of beekeeping.

### SUSTAINABILITY

Promote the development of a diverse and economically sustainable apiculture industry.

### REACH

Increase OBA membership through outreach, communications and member service.

### CAPACITY

Optimize organizational performance through effective structures, systems, policies and funding.

## DESIRED OUTCOMES

- Respected relationships and influence with all political parties and government policymakers in Ontario.
- Capacity to respond quickly and effectively to emerging issues.
- Influence with industry and agriculture that protects bees.
- Ability to mobilize beekeepers to support our positions.
- Research is cited widely.
- Website is 'go-to' place for beekeeping information.
- Courses reflect best practices and are always filled.
- Convening efforts result in collaborated strategy on important issues.
- Ontario's beekeepers are aware of best management practices.
- Legislation reflects the importance of apiculture.
- OBA's breeding program increases health of bees.
- Pollination practices insure thriving businesses.
- Govt. financial support programs enable viability.
- Honey promotion efforts increase retail sales.
- Increased public support for the critical role apiculture plays in food security and the environment.
- Organizational structure, systems and staffing enable priorities.
- Governance policies are comprehensive and accountable.
- Workload and expectations of board and staff are fair, manageable and accountable.
- There is adequate funding to implement plans.
- Our database is current and comprehensive.
- The majority of beekeepers in Ont. are OBA members.
- High membership retention.
- Members are aware of and appreciate OBA activities and positions.
- Demographics reflect population of Ont. beekeepers.
- OBA and local associations support each other's efforts.