

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BMO Becomes Presenting Partner of the International Plowing Match and Rural Expo

- BMO Financial Group and Ontario Plowmen's Association announce three-year partnership
- Partnership includes introduction of BMO Farm Family Awards in Ontario
- 2012 International Plowing Match estimated to bring a local economic benefit of more than \$20 million to the Waterloo region

CAMBRIDGE, ON, October 1, 2011 – BMO Bank of Montreal and the Ontario Plowmen's Association (OPA) today announced the signing of a three-year sponsorship agreement by which BMO will become a Presenting Partner of the International Plowing Match and Rural Expo (IPM) from 2012 to 2014 inclusive. The enhanced relationship confirms the two organizations' shared understanding and appreciation of the agricultural sector and underscores BMO's longstanding commitment to the industry.

"BMO has long been active in the agricultural sector, dating back to 1817, when it first began working with farmers," said Susan Brown, Senior Vice President, BMO Bank of Montreal, Ontario Regional Division. "Having supported the International Plowing Match for more than five years, this strengthened partnership is proof of our mutual commitment to farms and agriculture in the region."

The partnership also includes sponsorship of the local OPA branch matches across Ontario. The 2012 branch season matches began today in Cambridge.

As part of the partnership, the BMO Farm Family Awards will also be introduced in Ontario in 2012. Derived from the BMO Farm Family Awards held during the Calgary Stampede, this title will recognize and award up to 10 Ontario families, as chosen by the newly established OPA Farm Family Provincial committee. All nominated Farm Families will receive special recognition at their local Branch Plowing Match Awards Banquet and the 10 selected families will be honoured at the 2012 International Plowing Match and Rural Expo.

“We are proud to partner with the Ontario Plowmen’s Association, and with the launch of the BMO Farm Family Awards in Ontario, are thrilled to demonstrate our continued support of our local farmers and their contribution to an important industry,” added Ms. Brown.

“Because of the shared commitments to the Ontario Agri-Food industry, our new partnership with BMO is a natural one,” said Cathy Lasby, Executive Director of the Ontario Plowmen’s Association. “Their focus on the International Plowing Match and Rural Expo, and in particular the Plowing Competition, will lead to even greater success for the event and the 48 Branch Plowing Associations in communities throughout Ontario.”

The 2012 International Plowing Match will take place in Waterloo Region on September 18 to 22, 2012. The five-day outdoor event will spread over hundreds of acres of land near the village of Roseville, with an expected attendance of 100,000 and a calculated economic benefit to the local economy of more than \$20 million. The event will showcase Waterloo Region’s business, manufacturing, tourism, and agriculture industries.

The 2012 IPM will draw world-class competitors to the plowing competitions and over 12,000 school children to the agricultural education events designed just for them. As presenting corporate partner, BMO will have its own avenue in the IPM’s 100-acre Tented City, which will have exhibitors and vendors presenting everything from farm machinery, alternative energies, local artisans and innovative methods of farming.

About the Ontario Plowmen’s Association

The OPA is the parent host of the International Plowing Match. Each year the OPA partners with a local plowing association to organize and host the International Plowing Match. The IPM is a sanctioned member of the North American Farm Show Council. As such, it maintains the highest standards set by the council.

The organization of a provincial Association in 1911 gave life to branches all across the province. The numbers grew until today, with 48 local plowing groups affiliated with the parent body: the Ontario Plowmen’s Association (OPA).

About BMO and Agriculture

BMO enjoys a well-founded reputation for providing customized loan and deposit solutions Canada’s agri-business owners, the single largest core commercial sector that BMO serves.

BMO boasts an extensive team of commercial ag-industry experts who understand their customers' local business and local business environment, and who apply a consistent approach through all business cycles, in good times and bad.

Programs and products include a specialized farm-equipment line of credit, flexible farm mortgages, BMO's Agri ReadLine, and loans under the Canadian Agricultural Loans Act.

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