

**Ministry of Agriculture, Food  
and Rural Affairs**

63 Lorne Ave. East, Suite 2B  
Stratford, ON N5A 6S4  
Tel: (519) 271-0280  
Fax: (519) 273-5278

**Ministère de l'Agriculture,  
de l'Alimentation et des  
Affaires rurales**

63 Lorne Ave. Est, Suite 2B  
Stratford, ON N5A 6S4  
Tél.: (519) 271-0280  
Télec.: (519) 273-5278



**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION  
REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BRANCH**

October 3, 2016

*\*By E-mail Only\**

---

**Re: Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Update  
Information Session Invitation**

---

To whom it may concern,

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) is pleased to provide this invitation to attend one of several upcoming information sessions for the revised Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Document and accompanying AgriSuite software.

MDS is a land use planning tool developed by OMAFRA with the objective of minimizing potential nuisance odour complaints associated with livestock facilities and anaerobic digesters. This tool generates reciprocal setbacks between livestock facilities and sensitive land uses with the long-term goal of reducing land use conflicts.

Since its inception in the late 1970's, OMAFRA has committed to a regular review of MDS to ensure it:

- reflects current land use planning policies and practices;
- reflects current technology and trends in the livestock industry;
- continues to meet the needs of Ontario's agriculture and rural communities.

The latest review process began in December 2012 and culminated with an Environmental Registry (EBR) posting that concluded in May 2015. The comments received throughout the process were generally positive, with strong support from both agricultural and municipal stakeholders for the proposed changes. The revised MDS Document is scheduled for public release this fall with an official in-effect date of **March 1, 2017**.

**How Do I Get a Copy of the New MDS Document?**

Electronic (.PDF) copies of the revised MDS Document will be sent to all registrants shortly after the registration cut-off date, prior to the information session they are attending. Printed hardcopies of the MDS Document will not be available until February 1, 2017. After that date, printed hardcopies will be available at no cost from Service Ontario Publications.

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2014 requires that new land uses, including the creation of lots, and new or expanding livestock facilities comply with the minimum distance separation formulae. The *Planning Act* requires that municipal decisions regarding land use planning matters shall be consistent with the PPS (2014). Municipalities will therefore play an integral role in the implementation of the revised MDS Document through the inclusion of policies and provisions in their official plans and zoning by-laws. For the latest information on MDS, please visit OMAFRA's website at: <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/landuse/mds.htm>

**Where Do I Get a Copy of the New MDS Software?**

The new MDS software (AgriSuite) will be available both in a web browser-based version, or a downloadable program. As of November 1, 2016 a link will be posted on OMAFRA's [MDS webpage](#) to access the software program, and we encourage you to do so before attending the information sessions. Please note that although the software will be available as of November 1, 2016, the official in-effect date for implementing setbacks calculated with this software is not until March 1, 2017.

The following information sessions have been scheduled to introduce users to the latest MDS Document, highlight revised concepts and explore the all new AgriSuite software used for carrying out MDS calculations.

### MDS Information Sessions

Date	Location	Registration Cut-Off
Monday, Nov. 14, 2016	<b>Webinar (English)</b> Log-in details to be emailed to registrants.	<b>Nov. 10</b>
Wednesday, Nov. 16, 2016	<b>Webinar (English)</b> Log-in details to be emailed to registrants.	<b>Nov. 10</b>
Tuesday, Nov. 22, 2016	<b>Grenville Mutual Insurance</b> 380 Colonnade Dr., Kemptville, ON	<b>Nov. 15</b>
Wednesday, Nov. 23, 2016	<b>Peterborough Naval Association</b> 24 Whitlaw St., Peterborough, ON	<b>Nov. 15</b>
Tuesday, Nov. 29, 2016	<b>Walkerton Knights of Columbus Hall</b> 1658 Highway 9, Mildmay, ON	<b>Nov. 22</b>
Wednesday, Nov. 30, 2016	<b>Mohawk Inn &amp; Conference Centre</b> 9230 Guelph Line, Campbellville, ON	<b>Nov. 22</b>
Tuesday, Dec. 6, 2016	<b>Hellenic Community Centre</b> 133 Southdale Rd. W, London, ON	<b>Nov. 29</b>
Thursday, Dec. 8, 2016	<b>Webinar (English)</b> Log-in details to be emailed to registrants.	<b>Dec. 7</b>
Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2016	<b>Webinar (French)</b> Log-in details to be emailed to registrants.	<b>Dec. 7</b>

There is no cost to attend these information sessions; however, registration is required for all participants as space is limited for the in-person sessions and we must provide numbers to the caterer. To register, please contact [Marg Templeman](mailto:margaret.templeman@ontario.ca) at **519-271-0354** or [margaret.templeman@ontario.ca](mailto:margaret.templeman@ontario.ca) and indicate which information session you are planning to attend. The agenda below provides more details as to how the day will be structured.

#### Important Dates:

<u>Registration for MDS information sessions:</u>	<b>November 10 - December 7, 2016</b>
<u>MDS software available to download:</u>	<b>November 1, 2016</b>
<u>First MDS information session:</u>	<b>November 14, 2016</b>
<u>Hardcopy of MDS Document available to order:</u>	<b>February 1, 2017</b>
<u>Official in-effect date for new MDS Document:</u>	<b>March 1, 2017</b>

The intended audience of these sessions are municipal building officials, land use planners, zoning enforcement and members of land division committees or committees of adjustment; as well as private sector land use planning consultants and nutrient management consultants. If you are not the correct contact in your organization, please share this invitation as appropriate.

Sincerely,

*Marg*

Marg Templeman (OMAFRA, Stratford)

on behalf of the MDS Review Working Group:  
 Dan Ward (OMAFRA, Stratford)  
 Vicki Hilborn (OMAFRA, London)  
 John Turvey (OMAFRA, Guelph)  
 Drew Crinklaw (OMAFRA, London)

## MDS Information Session Agenda

The information sessions will run from 10 AM until 4 PM. Lunch and afternoon coffee will be provided at the in-person sessions. To confirm number of participants for catering, registration will be required and will be accepted up to the registration cut-off dates noted. Registration will also be required for the webinars so that Ministry staff can send out the log-in details to participants in advance.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Topic</b>
<b>9:30am - 10:00am</b>	<b>Registration/Arrival</b>
10:00am - 10:30am	Brief background on the review process & Introduction and overview of new MDS Document
10:30am - 11:00am	The Basics of MDS
11:00am - 12:00am	Details of Key Implementation Guidelines
<b>12:00pm - 1:00pm</b>	<b>Lunch (to be provided)</b>
1:00pm - 1:30pm	Identifying Livestock Facilities
1:30pm - 2:45pm	Details of Key Implementation Guidelines Con't
<b>2:45pm - 3:00pm</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>
3:00pm - 3:30pm	Transitioning
3:30pm - 4:00pm	Software Demonstration
<b>4:00pm</b>	<b>Adjourn</b>