

Farm building code overhauled

The new provisions are intended to bring the code in line with modern farm construction practices

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Guelph—It was a long time coming but one of the architects of the revamped National Farm Building Code said it was worth the wait for new provisions that improve safety and flexibility, and bring the document in line with modern agricultural construction practices.

Will Teron, who has been part of the revamping effort for the past 15 years, said he first approached the Canadian Commission on Building and Fire Codes (CCBFC) in 2006 about the farm code being seriously outdated. Representing the Canadian Farm Builders Association (CFBA) of which he was president at the time, Teron was successful in instigating the lengthy process.

The CFBA declared it was imperative that the National Farm Building Code of Canada (NBCA) be updated to integrate with the National Building Code and reflect all current environmental and construction standards.

An engineer with Tacoma Engineers, which has designed 200 large farm buildings over the past 40 years, Teron is pleased the code has been brought into the updated NBCA with its own section. The new arrangement provides an automatic review every five years, he emphasized.

National farm building requirements have always included safety provisions, said Doug Crawford, past chair of the CCBFC. Updated requirements reflect hazards unique to modern farm buildings larger than 600 square metres or more than three storeys in height.

A committee of industry volunteers, the CCBFC is responsible for development of National Model Codes for adoption – or not – at the provincial level. Teron said Ontario is now considering implementation of modified codes and is expected to reach a decision next year; until then, existing codes prevail.

The models are intended to make Canadian homes and other buildings safer and more accessible while responding to climate change. Released this March and dated 2020, they encompass the National Building, Fire, Plumbing and Energy codes of Canada.

The codes include nearly 400 changes developed through an “open, transparent and consensus-based process.” The public was given an opportunity to review and comment on all proposed changes before codes were finalized; Teron said 200 public comments were fully considered.

In 2016, the CFBA received an invitation from the National Research Council of Canada which oversees the process to participate in a joint task group on the farm building code in which OMAFRA representatives were also involved.

The association set up a committee to review proposed updates when they became available early in 2020 and forwarded them to several construction and agricultural organizations. The impact of changes, the association stated, will be felt throughout the agricultural industry across the land.

Among general highlights of the updated codes, which include references to safer openable windows, modifications to evaporative equipment and drainpans, and adjustments to accommodate a wider

variety of mobility devices, are the introduction of technical requirements for large farm buildings and addition of new agricultural occupancies.

Both Teron and Crawford underlined requirements are intended to protect human occupants from specific risks and hazards. Some changes may add costs to a project but savings may be realized in the design phase as updated requirements provide prescriptive solutions for building configurations.

Deeply involved in the code rejuvenation process on behalf of CFBA alongside Teron, farm building contractor Gary van Bolderen, whose son now operates his Dutch Masters company, described updated specifications as a major fine tuning based on common sense.

Global dicamba market expected to grow

Growing need for broadleaf weed regulation will continue to be the key driver to the demand for dicamba globally, says a new report by Future Market Insights.

The global dicamba market is foreseen to witness healthy growth, with North America potentially outpacing the largest dicamba market in Europe.

In addition to easy usage and widespread availability, rising need for food safety and security, and growing awareness about efficient crop protection, are likely to favour the growth of the dicamba market,

especially in developing countries, the report says.

A number of modern agricultural practices involve replacement or combination of glyphosate with dicamba, which may create lucrative opportunities. Moreover, wide acceptance of integrated pest management is also expected to spur the consumption of dicamba, the report adds.

But the report also warns that drift damage concerns and reported cases of illnesses and allergies in humans post-exposure could be “a major barrier to mass adoption”.

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