Ontario’s Wildlife Damage Compensation Program

A Guide for Livestock and Poultry Owners

January 2019
WHO IS ELIGIBLE

The Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program (OWDCP) provides compensation to eligible producers whose livestock and/or poultry have been injured or killed as a result of wildlife predation or whose bee colonies, beehives and/or beehive-related equipment has been damaged as a result of wildlife predation.

CAN I APPLY FOR THE PROGRAM?

In order to be eligible for the program, you must:

- Have a valid Farm Business Registration (FBRN) number in the current or the previous calendar year or a valid FBRN exemption (religious, gross farm income or cultural exemption for Indigenous producers). ([www.farmbusreg.com/Logon.ASP](http://www.farmbusreg.com/Logon.ASP))
- Have a valid Ontario Premises Identification (PID) number for the farm property where the damage or kill occurred. ([www.ontarioppr.com](http://www.ontarioppr.com))

If you do not have either of these numbers and do not have a FBRN exemption, your application will come back as ‘ineligible’ OMAFRA staff will reach out to you to provide the missing required information in order to process the application.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I FIND INJURED/KILLED LIVESTOCK?

Step 1. Ensure animal well-being

- Immediately seek veterinary care or other treatment to prevent further suffering if an animal sustains an injury. If the animal is severely injured due to an attack, it should be euthanized, according to the species specific Code of Practice, to prevent further suffering before the investigator arrives.
- Veterinary care costs are eligible under this program up to the Fair Market Value of the livestock. Costs related to a producer’s on-farm “inventory” of medications do count as an eligible expense. In this case, proof is required that a vet directed the drug use as a treatment for the injury as well as a receipt for the medication purchase.
- All veterinary or medication receipts and invoices should be saved and submitted with the application.
- If the animal is injured or dead notify the municipality (see step 2 below).
Step 2. Notify

- Notify the municipality within 48 hours of discovering the injury or death of livestock or poultry due to predation. If the injury or death of livestock or poultry occurs in a territory without municipal organization, the owner must notify OMAFRA (1-877-424-1300).

Step 3. Preserve the Site

- Preserve the carcass(es) and kill/injury site until the municipal investigator has arrived on site. In order to preserve the carcass(es) and the site it is strongly recommended that the livestock owner:
  - Take as many photos as possible to show that the animal(s) were predated. Take at least two colour photos of the injuries and/or wounds sustained, one close up photo of the injuries and one photo of the entire animal. Another photo showing the location where the carcass was found is recommended as well as photos of any other evidence such as predator tracks, scat, predator damage due to fencing, etc. These photos can be submitted as additional evidence and will be included as owner-supplied photos. These will be used in the review process as long as the pictures align with the evidence gathered by the municipal investigator.
  - Example photos can be found in Figure 1-3.
  - If the animals have sustained injuries and have received veterinary care, take photos of the injuries, the site where the injuries occurred (for example, blood, signs of a struggle, tracks, scat, etc.)
- Suggested methods of preserving the site include: avoiding walking in or around the area, placing a tarp over the carcass(es), adding lime to the site, etc.

Figure 1 - 3: A picture of wounds sustained; a wide angle picture of location; a picture of the kill site and animal.

Step 4. Prepare Documentation

- Retrieve the following required information to have ready for the municipal investigator:
  - A valid Farm Business Registration Number (FBRN) or valid FBR exemption.
  - A valid Premises Identification (PID) Number for the farm property where the damage or kill occurred.
  - Photos as described above.
• Prepare any relevant documentation that will be accepted as additional evidence. This may include: additional photos, purebred documentation (e.g. Certificate of Registration), breeding records such as breeding dates or pregnancy scanning reports or veterinary reports / invoices.

Step 5. Complete & Sign

• When the municipal investigator arrives, provide as much relevant information as possible and complete the first page of the application form requesting contact information, FBRN and PID.
• After the municipal investigator has collected and documented evidence, carefully review the application form for level of detail. The more detailed the descriptions in the application the better.
• If you plan on submitting additional evidence, check the box indicating this and provide all relevant documentation within 7 days.
• Once you are satisfied that the form is complete and accurate, sign the application form. The form must be signed by the owner to attest that the evidence provided is correct. Failure to sign may result in delays in application processing or it being deemed ineligible for processing.

Step 6. Disposal of the Carcass(es)

• The owner is required to dispose of the carcass(es) within seven (7) business days under Food Safety Quality Act (FSQA) - Ontario Regulation 105/09 and the Nutrient Management Act (NMA) - Ontario Regulation 106/09, even if the municipal investigator has not yet visited the site. In this case the owner must collect all relevant evidence to demonstrate that predation occurred in order to apply to the program.
• Once the investigation has been completed, all dead livestock/poultry must be disposed of in a manner that is in compliance with Ontario Regulation 106/09 - Disposal of Dead Farm Animals, under the Nutrient Management Act, 2002, S.O. 2002, c. 4, (See www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/livestock/deadstock/index.html).

WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM THE MUNICIPAL INVESTIGATOR?

• The investigator will visit your premises to perform a detailed investigation within 72 hours of you contacting the municipality.
• The investigator will collect data required to satisfy eligibility requirements such as Farm Business Registration Number (FBRN) and Premises Identification (PID) number.
• The investigator will focus on collecting evidence of a predation incident occurring by an eligible predator.
• Presence of the injured animal or carcass is required in order to be eligible for compensation.
The investigator will be looking for evidence of predation including:
  o Evidence the animal was alive prior to the attack
  o Evidence that the livestock/poultry bled from the attack.
  o Signs of tissue damage (bruising) under the lacerations and puncture wounds.
  o Signs of a struggle, drag marks, broken vegetation and/or blood around the site.
  o Other evidence such as predator tracks, scat, herd/flock behaviour, predator damage to fencing, etc.

The investigator will also be recording that reasonable care measures have been taken by the livestock/poultry owner.

All information collected should be documented by the investigator in the application form in a detailed manner.

As the livestock/poultry owner you can submit additional evidence to the investigator.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER MY APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED?

Your local municipality will review the application for completeness.
The municipality will send your application to Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA).
OMAFRA will assess the application and determine:
  o If basic eligibility requirements have been met
  o If there is sufficient evidence to support predation as the cause of death
  o If reasonable care has been employed
  o Value of compensation being assigned

Premiums will not be considered if supporting documentation is not provided.
The Ministry will provide you with a letter indicating the value assigned to your application. Refer to the “Standardized Valuation Tables” section at the bottom of the OMAFRA predation page (www.ontario.ca/predation) to see how Fair Market Value (FMV) and premium pricing is calculated on a monthly basis by OMAFRA.
You will have twenty (20) business days; from the date the letter was issued, to appeal the decision.
If you do not request an appeal, the Ministry will begin the process of transferring the assigned funds.
You will receive compensation through your municipality or, if you reside in an unorganized territory, directly to the address provided on your application.
AM I DEMONSTRATING REASONABLE CARE?

Owners should employ recommended predation prevention practices outlined in Ministry and industry resources.

Some recommended practices include:

- Fencing
- Livestock guardian animals
- Routine checks of livestock
- Night time enclosures; which may not be possible or feasible for large flocks and herds
- Moving livestock & poultry to less vulnerable areas (i.e. young lambs / calves); this may not be possible for large flocks / herds
- Deterrents such as lights, noise, or visual
- Hunting
- Trapping

Refer to "reasonable care" section of the program guidelines or the general OMAFRA Predation page (Ontario.ca/predation) for further details.

For more information please refer to the complete program guidelines available at: www.ontario.ca/predation.