

Layoffs at Ontario Pork; Tough market conditions force major job cuts

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FULL TEXT

The pork industry has been hard hit and now employees at Ontario Pork will be feeling the crunch too.

Ontario Pork recently announced it will cut about 25 per cent of its staff to reduce costs and focus on mitigating the crisis the industry is facing.

"It is always regrettable when an organization must reduce staff to maintain the necessary level of operational efficiency when market conditions are unfavourable," Curtiss Littlejohn, chair of Ontario Pork, said in a statement.

The board expects to save \$1.3 million in 2008 through job cuts, a reduction in services and "project reallocation."

Ontario Pork supports 3,100 farmers who market hogs in Ontario through marketing, research, government representation, consumer education and food quality assurance.

"Given the decline in our industry, we have performed a thorough review of our business and we have formulated a plan that will enable Ontario Pork to continue its role as a sound regulatory body for our producers," said Jack Slibar, executive director of Ontario Pork. "We can see this crisis through -- for our producers and partners, our employees and our stakeholders -- and we will."

The pork industry accounts for 33,000 Ontario jobs and the estimated total industry output from farm gate sales is worth \$4.7 billion to the Ontario economy.

CREDIT: BY BEACON HERALD STAFF

DETAILS

Subject:	Layoffs
Identifier / keyword:	employees; feeling; industry; ontario; recently
Publication title:	The Beacon Herald; Stratford
First page:	7

Publication year:	2007
Publication date:	Nov 20, 2007
Section:	News
Publisher:	Postmedia Network Inc.
Place of publication:	Stratford
Country of publication:	Canada
Publication subject:	General Interest Periodicals--Canada
ISSN:	08344892
Source type:	Newspaper
Language of publication:	English
Document type:	News
ProQuest document ID:	2174257892
Document URL:	https://www.proquest.com/pq1academicnew/newspapers/layoffs-at-ontario-pork-tough-market-conditions/docview/2174257892/sem-2?accountid=35812
Copyright:	Copyright Postmedia Network Inc. Nov 20, 2007
Last updated:	2019-02-18
Database:	ProQuest One Academic

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