

Media Release

## Green Energy Act the Solution to Environmental and Economic Crises is theme of Markdale Meeting

(Markdale ON., March 4, 2009)- Citizens from Markdale and surrounding areas attended a public meeting at the Markdale Community Centre last night, organized by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Ontario Sustainable Energy Association (OSEA). A presentation was made outlining what the Green Energy Act Alliance recommends be included in the Green Energy Act, which was tabled on February 23, 2009.

The theme of the evening was quickly established by the opening comments, “A Green Energy Act will bring economic prosperity and new ‘green’ jobs to Ontario, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and allow individuals, communities and companies to become energy producers and conservers,” made by Roberto Garcia, Marketing & Membership Services Manager of OSEA., a founding member of the Green Energy Act Alliance (GEAA).

The public meeting was attended by about 50 people, including several local politicians. Most people were supportive of renewables, in particular biogas and farm based renewable energy. Opposition to wind power was expressed by a small number of attendees. Wind farms are located in this area, therefore much of the discussion centered around wind power.

Renewable energy is the solution to both climate change and the economic crisis but to get enough windmills erected, solar panels installed and biodigesters operating, legislation is needed to make renewable energy a provincial priority.

Garcia went on to say, “The fundamental components we expect to see in Ontario’s Green Energy Act flow from similar legislation adopted in Germany. That country is now a world leader able to produce 20,000 MW of new green power, developed in less time than it would take to build a 1,000 MW nuclear plant. Germany is also able to meet tough climate change targets by avoiding the emission of 100 million tonnes of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere a year, while a quarter of a million new green collar jobs have been created, all for just an extra \$5 a month per household.

The GEAA is recommending guaranteed access to the electricity grid for all producers of sustainable energy, priority purchase of green electricity before coal and nuclear power, fair prices, fixed over the long term for renewables and a strong commitment to continually improve conservation and efficiency.

Across Ontario, farmers, First Nations and communities are eager to contribute to the province’s electricity supply by producing clean, renewable energy. However, they are being hindered by outdated regulations that slow the adoption of renewable energy technology, a lack of access to the grid to sell their energy and opposition from lobbyists for the coal and nuclear power industry.

“The Green Energy Act opens up real opportunities for farmers to provide green electricity for themselves and Ontario’s towns and cities. This will be sustainable energy produced without greenhouse gasses, pollution or reducing the food supply. The Act will bring more stable income to Ontario’s farms and create jobs throughout the province. I encourage the government to move forward on this,” says Bette Jean Crews, President of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Ontario’s largest farm organization.

**For more information, contact:**

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**To request interviews, contact:**

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A schedule of all the GEAA workshops in this provincial series can be found at [http://www.greenenergyact.ca/Storage/23/1476\\_Handout\\_v2\\_revised.pdf](http://www.greenenergyact.ca/Storage/23/1476_Handout_v2_revised.pdf)

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*The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is a dynamic farmer-led organization working to represent and champion the interests of Ontario farmers.*

*The Ontario Sustainable Energy Association (OSEA) works to initiate, facilitate and support the work of local sustainable energy organizations through membership services, province wide capacity building and non-partisan policy work. They work to catalyze the efforts of community organizers and raise awareness of the benefits of community power and renewable energy through various communication channels and by offering a variety of workshops and guidebooks on topics.*