

Since 1977 **FARMVIEW**

A newspaper with something for everyone | August 2026 | Volume 49 #08

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Food Growing, Cooking & Sharing Program Rolls-Out to Serve Community Needs in Essa Township

A new Food Growing, Cooking & Sharing Program that connects people with fresh, healthy, locally prepared food has been rolled out by the Friends of the Utopia Mill & Park ("Friends"). With expanded community kitchen capacity at the Utopia Hall, the program has a number of local distribution locations where people can pick up free prepared meals. To-date, both the Angus Food Bank and Essa Public Library: Angus Branch have signed on to serve as food-sharing pick-up locations.

This is a volunteer-driven program that grows local food, brings volunteers together through the full cycle of food – from planting and growing, to cooking and sharing. The loop is further completed by returning kitchen scraps from the food preparation process back to the soil through composting.

This program has been made possible by Agriculture and AgriFood Canada under the Local Food Infrastructure Fund.

Friends has set up essential equipment to expand growing and cooking and equip each community distribution location with freezers that will keep prepared food ready for sharing. As the program continues, the food preparation will be fueled by produce grown through the initiative itself, along with welcoming the generosity of donations from gardeners, farmers and other community partners.

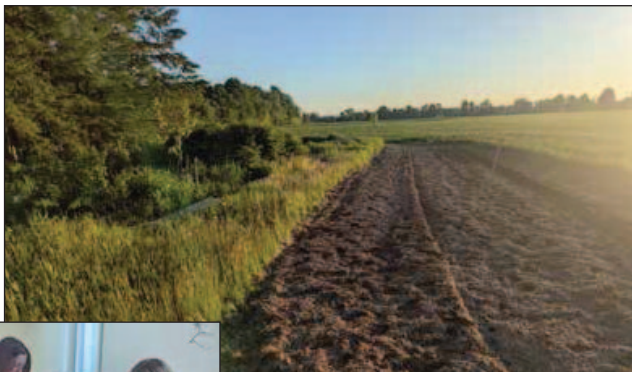
"For now, our program is about the sharing of prepared soups, made from locally grown vegetables," said Susan Antler, Chair, Friends of the Utopia Mill & Park. "Our volunteers are great chefs and are cooking these nourishing soups in the kitchen at the Utopia Hall. Other volunteers are also giving of their time in bringing this food to local pick-up sites for sharing."

"This simple beginning reflects the heart of

the initiative — neighbours coming together to grow, prepare and share good food with other neighbours in ways that strengthen our community connections and support and help us all."

For more information, please contact Susan Antler; susan@utopia.ca.

www.utopia.on.ca



AGcalendar

Farm View's Ag Calendar is free to non-profit agricultural groups, up to a maximum of 40 words. All others are invoiced at \$25 per month. Please note the format of the listings below and submit your item by mail or email, in a similar fashion. Submission deadline is the 14th of the month for the following month's issue.

July 31st - August 3rd: Georgian Bay Steam Show

The very popular Georgian Bay Steam Show returns taking place July 31st to August 3rd. Featuring Case and David Brown equipment, a fun filled family event! Visit www.steamshow.ca

August 1st & 2nd: Essa National Draft Horse Show

The Essa National Draft Horse Show takes place August 1st & 2nd at 7505 10th line, Thornton, ON. Showcasing magnificent heavy horses, competitions and vendors! Call 705-726-1200 or email admin@essaagriplex.ca for details.

August 8th: St. John's Pancake Breakfast

St John's United Church will be hosting the annual Potato Pancake breakfast during the Alliston Potato Festival. Taking place in the East parking lot of the Church, all are welcome! Visit www.allistonpotatofest.com and find more details in the article on page 8.

August 14th: News and Advertising Deadline

The advertising and news deadline for the September issue of Farm View is Friday, August 14th.

August 14th and 15th: Carrot Fest

Carrot Fest kicks off on Friday, August 14th, from 4:00 to 10:00 p.m. and continues on Saturday, August 15th, from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. in downtown Bradford. Visit the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury's Carrot Fest page for details.

August 14th & 15th: OSCIA Summer Farm Day & Tour

The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) invites farmers and agri-professionals to gather in Huron County for its Summer Farm Day & Tour, taking place Aug. 14–15, 2026. The two-day event will showcase innovative agricultural practices, field demos and regional ag highlights as part of its theme of Turning Research into Results—Evidence from the Fields. More information on page 9.

August 15th: Simcoe County Plowing Match

Simcoe County Plowmen's Association presents the 2026 Plowing Match. Contact Barry DeGeer 705-734-5193 for details. All are welcome, free admission. See the ad on page 9.

August 27th: Farm Safety Corn Roast

Farm Safety Corn Roast hosted by York Federation of Agriculture will take place on Thursday, August 27th at 6:30 p.m. This free family event is open to everyone and will be held at the Sutton Fairgrounds. See the ad on page 14 for more details.

August 27th - 30th: Barrie Fair

The Annual Barrie Fair takes place at 7505 10th line, Thornton, ON August 27th to the 30th. Many exciting activities, shows and vendors! Visit www.essaagriplex.ca.

Sept. 23rd: Program announcement for E.D.G.E.

Elmvale District Garden Enthusiasts' Sept. 23rd open Meeting: "Delightful Dahlias", with Gail Cocker master gardener, Elmvale Legion at 7 John Street. Lift available as we meet upstairs at 7 pm. Guests always welcome. Lug your mug and bring a friend.

Sept. 25th - 27th: Bolton Fall Fair

The Bolton Fall Fair is taking place on September 25-27, 2026. Featuring a Monster Truck Show, Livestock, Demo Derby, Midway. Celebrating Barns, Yarns & Country Charm. Check us out <https://www.boltontractorpull.ca/>

Wednesdays ongoing: Open Stage at The Hive

Wednesdays, after chores: Open Stage at The Hive Restaurant & Pub, 1441 Mosley Street, Wasaga Beach, 6–9 p.m. A supportive place to share music, poems, stories, or magic! Host Don Beaulieu. Professional sound system. Reserve a dinner table: text 705-606-0500. Sign up for stage time after arrival.





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Simcoe County twilight social held at Cookholme Farms

Synopsis by Don Beaulieu

The Simcoe County Holstein Club held its twilight social last month in Oro-Medonte. This year's installation included results from the Breeders' Cup which was held in March. Usually those results are presented at their annual banquet, but that event was not held this year.

Early in the evening, children were having their faces painted and playing with balloon animals and balloon swords made by Blown Balloon Party Rental.

As those fun things were happening, Sarge's Pit Crew was feeding the 250 or so attendees delicious salads and outstanding smoked brisket.

Matt Lang was the master of ceremonies for the awards presentations which took up most of the later evening activities.

Veteran breeder pins were also noted and presented with regard to how long a prefix from Simcoe County has been active. 30-year veteran breeders are: Prefix Tryome, the Keffers. Prefix HoneyPod, the Spences. A forty-year pin went to Doug Lloyd of Sprucestone Holsteins. A fifty-year veteran pin went to Dave Johnson of Grumble Hill. Dalton J. Faris of Farisview Hosteins recieved a 60-year pin.

A 70-year veteran breeder pin went to John McCallum of McCallum Farms. As Lang said "I don't imagine they hand many of those out".

Holstein Ontario designates one cow per county as Heart of the Herd. Ridgoro Farms, run by the Crawford family, saw their Ridgeoro Winbrook Amy win this award.

Spirit of 4-H

Holstein Ontario presents an award to each of the dairy clubs in 4-H across Ontario. In each club, a member is selected who demonstrates exceptional skills in areas such as team

work and leadership.

This year's recipient in Simcoe County was Grace Finch of Elmvale. As Lang read, this 2026 Spirit of 4-H award recipient ...has shown a lot of dedication to our Elmvale dairy club through her willingness to step-up as a leader at meetings as well as team events for the association. She is also willing to assist leaders without being asked and has provided some

great ideas to help the younger or less experienced members to learn and succeed in their 4-H journey.

"This member has provided leadership through her skills at shows by helping members learn how to properly care for and prepare animals for showing at the Simcoe County Holstein show, local fall fairs or on the big stage at the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto. We feel this member is very deserving of this award for her dedication and participation in our club and association in the last few years.

"She has been a great role-model to her fellow members whether they are just beginning in their 4-H journey or are her fellow senior members. She has also been a great help to the leaders of our club through meeting planning and helping to prepare for big team events, organizing people and supplies, to help everyone succeed."

Following the 4-H presentation were the Lactanet awards.

David Schwartz gave the attendees the run-down on his judging of 4 year olds.

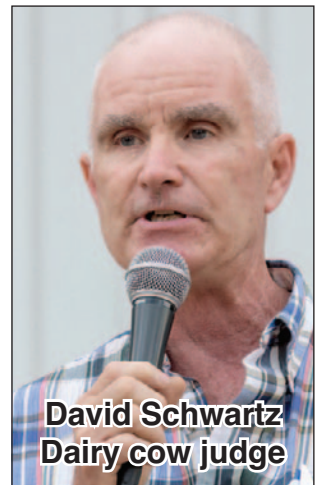
Schwartz was impressed with how well the cows were clipped, given the week of extreme heat. He congratulated Jeff Cook's crew on this point.



Matt Lang
MC for the evening



Katrina Kort, secretary of the Simcoe County Holstein Club is seen here presenting Grace Finch, of Elmvale, her well-deserved Spirit of 4-H award.



David Schwartz
Dairy cow judge



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OPINION
VIEWPOINT

Investing in the next generation is investing in agriculture’s future

By Brian Crews, Director, Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Ask any farmer about the future of agriculture, and chances are the conversation will quickly turn to the next generation.

Who will be farming our land, caring for our livestock, fixing our equipment, developing new technologies and leading our agricultural organizations in the years ahead?

Those are important questions, and they’re why supporting young people and helping them find their place in this critical industry matters so much.

I’m a farmer just north of Trenton and director with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the largest farm organization in the province. For us, investing in the next generation has long been an important part of what we do.

One way we put that commitment into action is through our annual scholarship program, which is underway for 2026. OFA and its partners will be awarding a minimum of 11 scholarships worth \$2,000 each. The number of scholarships identified within each category represents the minimum number of awards to be granted in that category.

The scholarships support students pursuing a wide range of educational and career pathways linked to agriculture. That includes three undergraduate scholarships, as well as awards for post-graduate studies, apprenticeships, veterinary medicine and veterinary technology, leadership development and, for the first time this year, sustainable energy.

New to the line up this year is a sustainable energy scholarship supported by Hydro One that will go to a student enrolled in agricultural engineering, electrical engineering, bioresource engineering, energy management, renewable energy or environmental sciences with a focus on sustainable energy in agriculture and land use.

It’s a welcome addition to a program that has continued to evolve alongside the changing needs of our sector. Last year, OFA introduced a scholarship for students studying veterinary medicine and veterinary technology, and we were pleased to have Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Beef Farmers of Ontario, Veal Farmers of Ontario, Ontario Sheep Farmers and EastGen join us in supporting scholarships for students in this field.

The shortage of veterinarians, particularly those who work with large animals, has long been a serious concern for farmers across Ontario, making it a priority for our organization’s advocacy efforts.

Governments and the agricultural sector are working on initiatives to encourage more people to pursue veterinary careers and practise in rural and underserved areas, and the scholarship program is one way we are helping support that work.

This year’s program also sees the return of the Peter Hannam Leadership Award, launched in 2025 in memory of a respected agricultural leader and former OFA president.

Peter was a driving force behind the establishment of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program and believed deeply in developing people who could step forward to lead our industry. This award recognizes emerging leaders who embody that same commitment to advancing Ontario agriculture.

The scholarship program is supported by the contributions of OFA partners, supporters, and members as well as the proceeds of the extremely successful silent auction held at the OFA annual meeting every year.

Last year, OFA awarded a record \$30,000 in scholarships to 15 outstanding students, and we are proud to continue our scholarship program for another

year by investing in the people who will help shape what comes next.

Applicants for OFA scholarships must be Ontario residents and either OFA members, children of OFA members or employees of OFA members. Applicants should be able to demonstrate industry-related accomplishments, an interest in agriculture and rural issues, and community involvement.

The deadline to apply is Aug. 31, 2026, and recipients will be recognized at OFA’s annual general meeting in Toronto Nov. 24-25. Information is available at ofa.on.ca/scholarship-program.

Scholarships are only one part of how OFA supports young people and the future of our sector, however. We host special events for young farmers, support the Junior Farmers’ Association of Ontario and work with partners on initiatives that give young people opportunities to build skills, make connections and become involved in their communities.

We also work to promote the broad range of careers in agriculture as our industry needs many kinds of people and skills to succeed. Farmers are the key, but there are opportunities for veterinarians, technicians, tradespeople, engineers, researchers, computer and IT specialists, entrepreneurs, marketers, community leaders and many more.

The future of agriculture doesn’t happen on its own; it also depends on giving the next generation the opportunities, encouragement and support they need to build it.

Correction: The Potato Pancake Breakfast was incorrectly listed in the July edition of Farm View as taking place on August 7. The correct date is Saturday, August 8.

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Farm View is delivered to these businesses between the 25th and 29th of each month, with copies available while supplies last.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Farm View invites letters to the editor. They should be fewer than 300 words and deal with a single topic affecting farmers. All letters must be signed, including your full name, address and daytime phone number. All letters are subject to editing for brevity. Please no phone calls.

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Jill Beischer**

Farm View attempts to present a forum for varying points of view from the agricultural community. Editorial opinions are freely expressed by individual authors.

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W.J. Bryan

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What Makes an Agricultural Event Worth Attending?

By Leah Emms, OFA Member Services Rep.

One of the best parts of my job is working with volunteers. Over the years, I've had the opportunity to work alongside people who quietly give their time to organize events, serve on committees, attend municipal meetings, and speak up for agriculture. They aren't looking for recognition. They do it because they care about farming and want to make a difference.

Recently, I attended a local agricultural event that brought together farmers, municipal elected officials, municipal staff, environmental organizations, and others who share an interest in agriculture. It was well organized, the speakers were engaging, and it created an opportunity for people with different perspectives to come together and have meaningful conversations.

It wasn't the first time I'd left an event thinking about this. Over the past few years, I've noticed fewer people volunteering and, in many cases, fewer people attending. The same familiar faces continue to organize events, serve on committees, and create opportunities for others to connect. Their commitment is remarkable, but it also makes me wonder how we encourage more people to become part of those conversations.

I understand that time is limited. Farming isn't a nine to five job. Between planting and harvest, caring for livestock, repairing equipment, family commitments, and often off farm work, every hour matters. Taking time away from the farm isn't always easy.

Driving home afterward, I found myself thinking less about attendance and more about the conversations that never happened. One of the greatest strengths of events like these is the opportunity to build relationships. A conversation with a municipal councillor, a discussion with municipal staff about a local issue, or meeting someone from an environmental organization can help build understanding long before a difficult issue reaches a council agenda or public meeting.

Those relationships matter. They don't replace good policy or strong advocacy, but they often make those conversations easier because people have had the opportunity to get to

know one another first.

It also reminded me that behind every agricultural event is a group of volunteers who believe it's worth bringing people together. They give their time because they care about agriculture and their community, hoping those opportunities will spark conversations that continue long after the event is over.

It also made me wonder if we're asking the right question.

Agriculture has changed, and perhaps the way we engage members needs to evolve as well. Farmers have more demands on their time than ever before, and there are countless ways to access information without leaving the farm.

So what makes an event worth attending today? Is it hearing from a particular speaker? Learning about local issues? Networking with other farmers? Meeting municipal leaders? A different format? Better timing? If attendance is changing, perhaps the most important thing we can do is listen.

Agricultural organizations have always evolved alongside the industry they represent. Listening to members isn't about abandoning traditions. It's about making sure the time and effort that volunteers invest creates opportunities that farmers truly value.

One thing I know hasn't changed is the importance of agriculture being represented in our communities. Strong relationships with municipal leaders, municipal staff, environmental organizations, and community partners don't happen by accident. They are built one conversation at a time, often at events like the one I attended.

Maybe the question isn't simply, "How do we get more people to attend?" Maybe it's, "What would make an agricultural event worth taking time away from the farm to attend?"

I'd genuinely like to know the answer because I think it's a conversation worth having.

Leah Emms can be contacted at 1-866-660-5511 or Leah.Emms@ofa.on.ca





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Women in farming

Speaker series presented by Purple Hills Arts & Heritage society and Valerie Smith, realtor

Synopsis by Don Beaulieu

The United Nations declared 2026 as the International Year of the Woman Farmer. Coincidentally, a partnership between Valerie Smith of Sotheby's International Realty Canada and the Purple Hills Arts & Heritage Society, presented their first in this speaker series, fell right into that theme.

This panel discussion took place in Creemore's Station on the Green late in June, just about when the July edition of *Farm View* was on the press.

Following a land recognition, it was duly noted that it was the indigenous women who led their people in agriculture.

Smith has hosted two prior events at Station on the Green about sustainable farming, organic farming and food insecurity. She told of her experience as a volunteer in Laos, in southeast Asia working with small-scale farmers and helping them achieve success as larger farms were moving into their communities. She returned, very inspired and this event was a result of her want to bring attention to issues facing smaller farms, to recognize women's roles and present their stories.

Nadine Melemis of Purple Hills Arts and Heritage Society was invited to say a few words and introduce the moderator of the panel of women farmers, Meghan Brennan.

Brennan is a co-founder of Ferngully Farm, located near Creemore. She is self-described as a "...transplant to the area from Oakville, a first generation farmer"... who suffers from imposter syndrome, recognizing she is surrounded by people who have been farming all their lives.

Questions were prepared ahead of time, sometimes

intended for a couple of panel members, sometimes for all of them. One of the questions for two of the panel members was aimed at Grace Millsap and Taylor Legge.

It asked, as they had family history in farming, what they have noticed as trends and changes in the past couple of years.

Legge answered: "There have been changes that have been in motion for a long time. What we see as a traditional farm family is constantly in motion... we've moved away from subsistence farming. Farming has become very much a business". She doesn't believe family farms will disappear entirely but suspects we'll see specialization in the future and more consolidation.

Her background is in the Chesley, Ontario area on a feedlot farm. She has a degree in crop science from Guelph University and is currently an agronomist with Holmes Agro in Stayner.

On the same topic, Grace Millsap agreed that the "small 100 acre family farm is not the sustainable way anymore". She has learned how important it is to have diverse knowledge in different types and areas of farming. She feels the younger farmers are going to be more eager to take on the latest technologies to advance themselves.

Millsap is the sixth generation on her farm near Creemore. She's found herself

in a good place with Huron Tractor and is currently their parts manager. This is after learning all she could at the Ridgeway Campus about animals, crops, machinery, business; as many aspects as she could.

Also on the panel was Heidi Sterrenburg of Rural Roots

Nursery and Market Garden. Her parents bought a hobby farm when she was 14 where they had gardens. It was during her university years in a course not related to farming, that she had experience in a greenhouse. Her parents tilled a 1-acre field for her and she fell in love with farming. She married a man with extra acres of land and with his support, grew her business and has been enjoying helping him with his goats.

Also on the panel was Rachel Brooks. She described herself as "an import" from East York. In her mid-teens her family moved to Barrie. Her husband is a second-generation farmer whose family runs a cash crop operation.

Brooks got the farming bug herself during the pandemic while helping a friend with her sheep. Now she has her own flock.

These days, Brooks is also very concerned and outspoken about the Department of National Defence' Over-the-Horizon radar plans in Clearview Township taking out farmland and livelihoods.

Questions were prepared ahead of time, sometimes



Taylor Legge
Panelist



Grace Millsap
Panelist



Heidi Sterrenburg
Panelist

Questions were prepared ahead of time, sometimes



Rachel Brooks
Panelist



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Growing Agriculture, Strengthening Communities

A message from MPP Jill Dunlop

Agriculture continues to be a cornerstone of Simcoe North's economy and way of life. The dedication of our farmers, producers, processors, and agri-businesses helps feed communities across Ontario while supporting local jobs and economic growth throughout our region.

I am pleased to share several recent investments that will help strengthen Ontario's agri-food sector and create new opportunities for producers. Most recently, Ontario announced a \$24 million investment in agri-food manufacturing to support the development of Canada's first large-scale non-GMO soymilk processing facility. This investment will help create jobs, strengthen domestic food processing capacity, and expand markets for Ontario-grown crops.

The province has also continued its support for agricultural innovation through investments in research and technology. Recent funding for agri-food research projects is helping advance new solutions in crop management, livestock production, food safety, and sustainability. These initiatives will provide farmers with new tools and resources to improve productivity and remain competitive in an evolving marketplace.

The agricultural community continues to demonstrate remarkable resilience in the face of changing economic conditions, supply chain pressures, and unpredictable weather. By investing in innovation, processing capacity, and research, Ontario is helping ensure that farmers and agri-businesses have the support they need to succeed for generations to come.

I also look forward to welcoming residents to the rescheduled Annual Simcoe North Community BBQ on Sunday, September 13, from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Hewitt's Fun Farm in Coldwater. While we were disappointed to postpone the event due to inclement weather, we are excited to come together this September for an afternoon of great conversation, community spirit, and family-friendly fun. It is a wonderful opportunity to connect with friends, neighbours, and residents from across Simcoe North, and I look forward to seeing everyone there.

Thank you to the farmers and agricultural leaders of Simcoe North for your hard work, dedication, and commitment to excellence. It is an honour to represent you and advocate for investments that support the long-term success of agriculture in our region.

Meet the Farmer

Connolly Farm: Growing Food, Family and Community

By Andrew Hind

Connolly Farm is about agriculture, naturally, that timeless labour of feeding people from the bounty of the land. But more than that, it's about love of family.

Alden and Kayla Connolly founded Connolly Farm as a lifestyle choice. It was an opportunity for Alden, a firefighter, and Kayla, a nurse, to raise their young family in a self-sufficient manner where they knew where their food came from and how it was raised.

Neither Alden nor Kayla had any previous experience in raising crops and livestock when they purchased their Tiny Township farm. Alden's father grew up in southern Ontario where he worked as a laborer on fruit and tobacco farms, while Alden himself worked a dairy farm and then horse farm during his teenage years – that was the extent of their agricultural roots.

"We're certainly not generational farmers," says Alden. "But I always had a passion for farming and have always loved the idea of feeding my family and the community from my own land."

The original goal was for a small parcel of land, perhaps 5-10 acres, but they ended up with 100 acres. The size of the farm meant they scaled up their ambitions.

"Much of the farm is pasture for cattle. We practice rotational grazing because it's better for both the cattle and the land," Alden explains.

In rotational grazing, fields are divided into smaller paddocks. When cattle are restricted to a smaller area, they'll consume all available greens, not just their favorites, which helps prevent selective overgrazing. Once they've eaten through the area the animals are moved to the next paddock, and then the next. This allows grazed over paddocks to recover, supports soil health and

plant diversity, and reduces weed growth.

"Working sustainably is important to us," explains Alden. "Our slogan is 'working with nature' and that means we care for the land we are blessed to live upon."

In addition to beef cattle, Alden and Kayla also raise chickens for meat and eggs. The chickens are free range, feeding off insects, seeds and plant life found in the fields.

"People are increasingly interested in knowing what the animals they eat were raised on and how they were treated. I welcome people onto the farm to show them what we are doing. Everything is in the best interest of the animals," Alden explains.

In addition to cattle and chickens, Connolly Farms raises bees.

"If you asked me five years ago if I had an interest in beekeeping, I would have absolutely said no, but it's addictive. Once you start you get hooked," he laughs. "The bees benefit nature and surrounding farms, and we get the benefit of honey that we sell and from which my mother makes candles. I plan to continue to grow our hives."

Another area of growing interest is the production of maple syrup. This past spring was the first year that Connolly Farm tapped trees, and Alden sees growth potential there. "It's another area I find interesting and want to explore further," he explains.

In addition to direct sales from a small but loyal customer base, Connolly Farm has a stand at the end of its drive at 1219 Baseline Road from which it sells its honey and maple syrup.

But for Alden and Kayla the commercial aspect of farming is almost secondary.

"The motivation is really to provide a healthy lifestyle for our three children," explains Alden. "Farming really is a wholesome way to live."

51st Potato Pancake Breakfast

St John's United Church, Alliston, will be hosting our 51st Potato Pancake Breakfast on Saturday August 8 from 7:30 – 11:00 a.m. By 9:00 am. we have lineups, so come early!

Since we are right downtown, many people begin their day at the festival with our breakfast, then walk along the street to check out the downtown vendors. It's become a Potato Festival tradition.

As in past years, we have tried to keep the price affordable so that whole families can enjoy our all-you-can-eat potato pancakes. Part of our proceeds support various local charities eg. the hospital and the Food Bank.

We are very fortunate to have many volunteers to help host this event, including youth from the South Simcoe 4-H Club and Banting Memorial High School. It is truly a community event.



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OSCIA Summer Farm Day & Tour Returns with Focus on Farm Innovation



The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) invites farmers and agri-professionals to gather in Huron County for its Summer Farm Day & Tour, taking place Aug. 14–15, 2026. The two-day event will showcase innovative agricultural practices, field demos and regional ag highlights as part of its theme of Turning Research into Results—Evidence from the Fields.

Friday, August 14: Huronview Demonstration Farm

Join industry peers at Huronview Demonstration Farm in Clinton, Ontario. This practical day will highlight field-tested research and on-farm innovations that support sustainable, resilient farming. Attendees will see agricultural practices in action through in-field demos and presentations from industry experts. Topics include:

- Innovative Tile Drainage Systems – Control Gates, Contour System and Sub-Irrigation
- Integration of Cover Crops after Corn and Soybeans
- Real-Time Collection of Water Flow and Water Quality
- Strip Till, No-Till and Nutrient Management
- Upside Robotics Demonstration Using Maize Runner
- & much more!

The event also provides valuable opportunities for producers, agronomists, researchers and industry professionals to learn, exchange ideas and connect with peers. The Summer Farm Day runs from 9am to 4pm. Registration is \$45 and includes lunch.

This event is recognized as an OSCIA Knowledge Sharing Event (KSE) for OFCAF applicants under the Nitrogen Management and Cover Cropping BMP categories.

Saturday, August 15: Huron & County Farm Tour

Take part in a full-day bus tour highlighting research, innovation and on-farm practices shaping the future of Ontario agriculture. The tour will showcase the diversity of Huron County agriculture while providing opportunities to connect with producers, researchers and industry peers.

- Tour stops include:
- Dekalb Demo (short stature corn)
 - Hensall Co-op
 - Huron Cover Crops
 - Morrison Dam Conservation Area
 - Ontario Crops Research Centre – Huron

By bringing together research institutions, industry and producers, the tour showcases collaborative efforts to advance productive, resilient and sustainable farming systems.

The bus will depart from the Oakwood Resort in Grand Bend at 8:30am. Registration is \$45 and includes lunch.

Tickets for both events are limited and must be purchased in advance at <https://membership.ontariosoilcrop.org/event/oscia-summer-farm-day-bus-tour-2/>

The OSCIA Summer Farm Day & Bus Tour is made possible through the support of local sponsors and partners committed to advancing sustainable agriculture in Ontario.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Julie Powers, OSCIA Events Coordinator
Phone: 519-841-0680 | Email: jpowers@ontariosoilcrop.org
<https://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/workshops-and-events/>

ADVENTUROUS WORD SEARCH

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Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

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BUMPS
BUNGEE
- CHILLS
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A Blast at the Schomberg Fair!

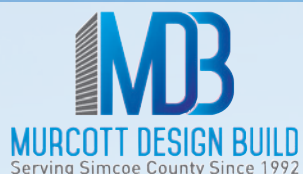
Reports and photos submitted by Simcoe County 4-H

South Simcoe 4-H Community Club

By Charlie Leal

I had a blast at the Schomberg Fair, and so did my fellow 4-H members. My family and I came to the Schomberg Fair and went straight to all the fun. I visited the face-painting station with my sister, while my brother headed to the water ball station. I loved seeing all the animals. My favourite animal was the Silkie chickens. Thank you to all the 4-H members who came out, our leaders, and the Schomberg Agricultural Society for giving us the opportunity to be there.





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New sprouting idea for feeding livestock

Story and photo by Cathy Hamill-Hill

Eric and Pauline O'Brien of Cameron have perfected a new way to finish their cattle for market. The new system produces zero waste, has low maintenance costs and results in happy, contented cattle. The "Elite Sprouting System" was revealed during a recent tour of O'Brienview Organic Farm, organized by Farms at Work.

The new sprouting system came in place for two reasons. Pauline explained, "we were growing 20 to 30 acres of barley- and then running out of it by February. It is not easy to find organic barley in February." The second reason was the farm had a request for "grass fed beef with sprouts" as a special order. The order could not be filled, but the idea was planted.

Sprouting involves growing grain seed in a controlled, warm environment until it develops into what looks like rich, green grass. There are several options available for sprouting, but the work involved would take one person a full day, Pauline and her husband, Eric, predicted. The O'Brien family has nine children and 18 grandchildren, all with busy lives. All nine siblings work in the trades, ranging from agriculture to steamfitting to cabinet-making. There was simply

no one available to spend a full day tending to the sprouts.

"We had the idea and Eric planned it all out being a steamfitter and being so good at inventing," Pauline says. Explaining that barley seed is placed on flat trays, under lights. An automatic misting system comes on every few minutes. Every day the large trays are moved, one tray represents one meal to the cattle that are being finished so when the meal is removed, another tray of seed is added.

"This system put up our hydro by \$12 per month. We used high efficient LED lights. It takes about 9 litres of water every day for the automatic watering system," Eric explains.

"In 7 days, sprouts have grown up to about 7 inches high," Eric says, pointing out the next meal for the shiny-coated, peaceful steers lounging in the pasture beside the barn on the day of the tour.

Pauline points out the incredible stats for this feed that qualifies as "grass fed". Sprouted barley has 28% protein and 98% digestibility. This combination makes for a meal to

be so filling for the steers, they eat every scrap- and then go to lie down for the next few hours to digest.

The sprouts grow naturally into a clump of white roots. The sprouts smell like, according to Eric, "a combination of cucumbers and honeydew melons. And they are good enough for us to eat." The sprouts' roots form such a clump that the trays are simply slid into a wheelbarrow- and the sprouts are dumped in front of the steers with zero waste, either in containers or leftovers.

The conversion is impressive: 90 pounds of barley seed grows into 650 pounds of sprouts. The worry of running out of feed in February is now a thing of the past. Today, 12

acres of barley can feed the family farm's 15 steers until they are finished. Sprouts can also be fed to dairy cattle, sheep, goats and chickens.

Pauline is well known at the Fenelon Farmers' Market, where she is a regular vendor at the weekly Friday market. Between this and occasional other markets, farm-gate sales and custom orders, the need is for 15 finished steers per year. The calves are born and finished on the farm. The cattle are processed at Ron Hall Meats in Manilla.

She explains, "Ron always does a great job, and

we can count on him. We are pleased that he gives so much back locally. We were at the 4-H Market Steer Sale last summer, and Ron was a buyer—and that helps the 4-H youth."

Farms at Work was pleased to be part of bringing this new idea to the public. "Farms at Work was glad to offer this event in partnership with O'Brienview Organic Farm. Eric's innovative ability and determination to invent the sprouting system, along with the passion he and Pauline have for agriculture, inspires both farmers and local food enthusiasts. The tour generated excitement among the attendees regarding how the system could be used on their farms. Our visit to the O'Brien's farm and all of our monthly farm tours align with our mission to support the growth of resilient, thriving farms that contribute to community food security in east central Ontario."

Anyone looking for more information on Elite Sprouting Systems, can contact Eric & Pauline O'Brien at 705-887-3974 and farming1011@outlook.com



This beautiful, healthy, well-fed Angus-type steer was finished on pasture and barley sprouts. The barley sprouts were grown on the farm using the innovative Elite Sprouting Systems, designed and owned by Eric and Pauline O'Brien. Tours of the system are available, and the system can be designed specifically for unique farming operations. See the contact information at the end of this story.

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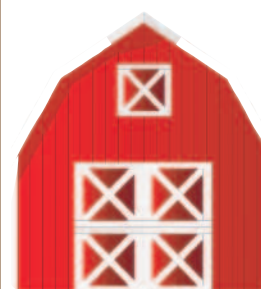
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Still Smiling at 100: Dorothy Munro of Epsom

Story by Cathy Hamill-Hill, photos provided by the Somerville family

Next year, Dorothy Munro of Epsom will once again have to take a driver's licence test, and it is a safe bet that she will pass with flying colours. Turning 100 on July 15 has done nothing to slow down this highly intelligent, contented and happy woman, who loves life.

Dorothy was born in Wick, a tiny community near Sunderland. She was the middle child of three. Her older brother was five years her senior, while her younger sister was three years younger. Her brother has since passed away, but her "baby" sister, now 97 years old, is doing fine.

The family lived on a small property with a modest house and a small barn. Her father supported the family by working as the custodian for the church, the school, and the cemetery, all located in the Wick area. Her mother was a homemaker who made almost everything the family needed, from clothing to food.

"Everything was done by hand," Dorothy recalls. "Cooking was done by hand, washing was done by hand, and even heating the house was done by hand." She added that they had only outdoor facilities, with an outhouse being a normal part of everyday life.

The only source of heat in the house was a woodstove. Every piece of wood had to be cut by hand—this was long before chainsaws—and stored in a wood cellar on the lower level of the house. The woodstove was on the main living level, so each piece of wood had to be carried up the stairs and placed in a woodbox beside the stove.

Dorothy remembers the woodbox well. "It was my job to fill that woodbox every day. It was still better than the daily dusting, I never could see any dust on the furniture."

Graduating from grade 8 at the Wick school, Dorothy moved to "Continuation School" in Sunderland which would be considered high school today. She left high school after two years and went straight to work.

"I went out to work helping neighbour women with their new babies," she says, explaining that the role was much like what we would call a live-in nanny today. One of those neighbours would ultimately shape the course of Dorothy's life.

"There was a War on so there were War Dances every Friday and Saturday. The neighbor asked me to go with her friend to the Dance and there, I met Ray Munro from Epsom," Dorothy remembers.

Dorothy was only 17 years old so she had to get her father's permission to marry. The permission was granted though there was one rule. "My mother was from England and she said weddings should happen only in a Church. She didn't like the at home weddings there were then one bit. So Ray and I had the first Wedding at Wick Church. All the neighbours came for both of us. It was a grand day in 1944 when I married Ray."

The young married couple moved to Ray's parent's farm and shared a house until a house on another family farm

was renovated. Ray and Dorothy moved to their own place- and soon were a family with a first child arriving ten months after the wedding- and a son arrived right after. It was not an easy life especially the first years. "We had to wash everything by hand for the babies, diapers included. I had my 100 hens outside and a big garden that needed to be "put down" in the cellar for the winter- and I had my two babies to care for," she explains adding her husband was always busy outside.

Ray was a fulltime farmer with a herd of dairy cows he milked by hand for cream production. At that time, there was a creamery in Port Perry. With the milk portion left from the cream, he raised pigs that he kept until finish. He also raised up ready-to-lay pullets from baby chicks. Working at his parent's farm was part of his life too as the two families worked together. There were also crops to be planted and harvesting crops were all done with draft horses in the early years. He was as busy as Dorothy was in the house as the property had no tractor or hydro until years later.

It wasn't that common then that the husband would encourage his wife to drive the family car. "Ray taught me how to drive. He said that I could do more with our children if I didn't have to wait for him to come and drive us. He didn't mind at all me going out when I needed to," Dorothy remembers and she says she still likes to drive to this day. "I don't drive too far now but I can go to get my hair done and around to the neighbours just fine."

Dorothy appreciates she is 100 years old and living in her same matrimonial home. She was parted with her husband through death, 9 years ago. She isn't sure how she got to be this age, but she believes she knows exactly why her mind continues to be as strong and sharp as any young adult today. She doesn't do crossword puzzles or anything usually prescribed for memory explaining, "I have my sound mind all because of my family."

"I talk and visit with my family of three daughters (Helen, Betty and Suzanne) and one son (Ross) all the time- and my eight grandchildren. I also have great grandchildren. They all keep me young. They share their lives with me so I know what is going on in the world today. I want to keep up with their lives so I make sure I remember things when they tell me. I am so lucky to have them all in my life. I love them all," she says.

The 100 year old birthday girl has purpose to her days. She follows a schedule "so I can accomplish something each day". She watches some tv in the evening and enjoys Vision TV on Friday night especially the "Your All Time Hit Classic Parade" music show.

The biggest change in the last 100 years, according to Dorothy, is how "by hand" is replaced by machines. "Years ago when something bad happened, all the neighbours got together. The women went to the house and the men went



Dorothy Munro still resides on the family farm, and is pictured here at her recent 100th birthday celebration.



outside and everyone used their hands to help out the person in trouble. Now, big machines come in to help and not as many neighbours," she says.

There was some difficulty recently in Dorothy's life. Her arthritic knee caught her off balance one evening. She ended up falling and breaking her hip. She came through surgery at 99 years old. "I got all fixed up with surgery. I wish I could get a bit more strength in that hip but I'm working on it. I take physio and I'm grateful for all the good that has done for me. I sometimes take a Tylenol but sometimes I don't need to for pain. I do need my walker a bit more now but really it isn't bad at all."

She adds that her daughters that live close to her have been extra helpful in this time. Each daughter takes one day to visit her and help as needed. "My daughters would do all my meals but I can make my own supper and tell them I can do that much," she clarifies.

When one reaches 100 years old like Dorothy has in such incredibly good health, she is asked for advice about life. She has a quick response, "Be happy. We have a lot to be thankful for in this wondrous country of Canada that we live in. We need to get along and even if we have to bend over backwards to get along with someone, we need to do that. If we all get along, we will make a better world."

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History Roars to Life at the Kawartha Antique Power Show

Story and photos by Cathy Hamill-Hill

Vintage machinery, treasured memories, and a shared passion for preserving agricultural history drew thousands of visitors to this year's Kawartha Antique Power Show. From beautifully restored tractors and rare logging equipment to historical construction machinery and family-friendly displays, the show celebrated Canada's rural heritage while bringing together collectors, volunteers, and enthusiasts from across Ontario. Whether reconnecting with old friends, honouring loved ones, or admiring the craftsmanship of decades past, visitors found plenty to enjoy at one of the country's premier antique power shows.



These two tractors to the right have been beautifully restored by Phil and Cliff Archer. The tractor at the far right is a 1968 Massey Ferguson 1130, 120 horsepower that was bought in Burk's Falls. The other tractor is a 1969 Massey Ferguson 1100, 92 horsepower that was bought from the late Calvin and Carolyn Coolidge's farm in Woodville. These two beautiful tractors were amongst the rows and rows of restored tractors on display.



Pictured to the left is young Matthew Yoshiki of Courtice trying out a home-made tractor from the 1960s–1970s owned by Terry Carlaw of Warkworth. Beside Matthew is Sam Hazelwood of Codrington. Sam is a member of the planning team for the Second Annual Ag Day, to be held at the Codrington Farmers' Market on Saturday, September 19. The event will feature vintage implements and machinery, as well as a "Dairy: Now and Then" display.

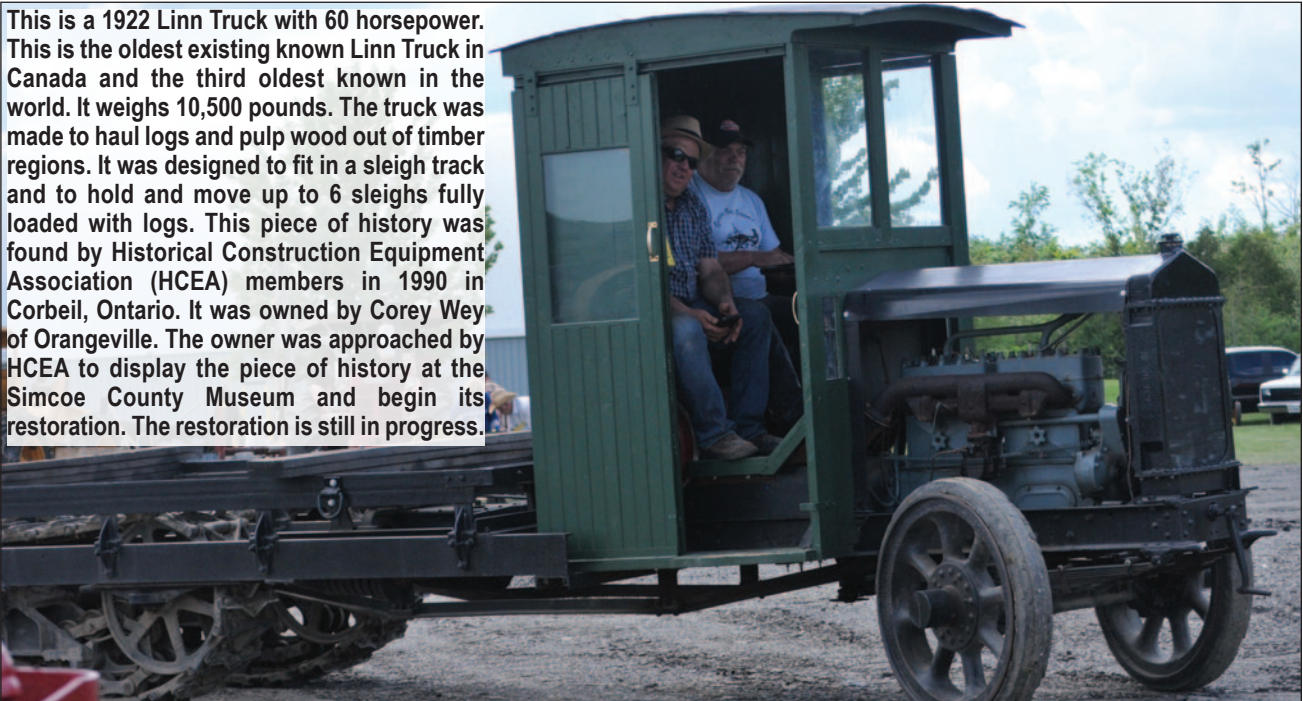


Pictured at left is Lisa Harrison of Sandford, showing her Canadian pride at the Kawartha Antique Power Show. Lisa was introduced to vintage tractors largely by her late friend, Arthur Powell. The two friends attended the show together every year. In memory of Arthur and other family members, Lisa brought a collection of plates featuring local churches to display at the show. "I come here to remember Art and to meet up with friends that I only get to see at this Show every year," she said. Lisa especially liked the 2026 display of Historical Construction Equipment.



This happy couple, Barb and Dave Henderson of Utopia, came to the Kawartha Antique Power Show specifically to see the Historical Construction Equipment Association (HCEA) display featured at this year's show. Dave is part of the team at the Simcoe County Museum, where the HCEA is based. Barb said she especially enjoyed the historic tractor pull held in front of the large covered grandstand as part of the show.

This is a 1922 Linn Truck with 60 horsepower. This is the oldest existing known Linn Truck in Canada and the third oldest known in the world. It weighs 10,500 pounds. The truck was made to haul logs and pulp wood out of timber regions. It was designed to fit in a sleigh track and to hold and move up to 6 sleighs fully loaded with logs. This piece of history was found by Historical Construction Equipment Association (HCEA) members in 1990 in Corbeil, Ontario. It was owned by Corey Wey of Orangeville. The owner was approached by HCEA to display the piece of history at the Simcoe County Museum and begin its restoration. The restoration is still in progress.



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Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture annual barbecue

Synopsis by Don Beaulieu

This year’s annual barbecue for the Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture was held in Oro Medonte at AV Farms. AV Farms is operated by Andrew and Victoria Eisses, the fourth generation on this land.

The barbecue part was presented by Shaws Catering who offered delicious barbecue-roasted tri-tip beef with all the trimmings.

Guest speakers are always a large part of the day and this one was no exception. There was a theme of health and safety among them.

David Ritchie welcomed everyone and got right to the presentations, introducing Avery Dixon of Agriculture Awareness Ontario.

Mental health support

Dixon explained that their *Farmer Wellness Initiative* is free and comes to where you are. They offer free, unlimited mental health counselling to Ontario farmers, farm families and farm employees, including international agricultural workers and trained Guardians.

They understand the unique challenges of agricultural life and deliver help with care, compassion and a deep respect for the people who make up our Ontario farming community.

Part of Dixon’s presentation included a walk through the Preparing for Uncertainty in Agriculture workshop workbook.

Agriculture Wellness Ontario has several facets to the organization, one being the Farmer Wellness Initiative, but also *The Guardian Network*. This is a suicide prevention program with volunteers trained to identify signs of mental



distress in farmers and connect them with the necessary mental health services.

In The Know is a three-hour mental health literacy workshop tailored to the agricultural community designed to increase mental health knowledge and help-seeking behaviours among farmers.

Growth Workshops This is a series of short, focussed workshops designed to provide our community with accessible mental health education.

International Agricultural Works Wellness Program Aiming to address the unique mental health and wellness challenges faced by temporary international workers in Ontario.

The Farmer Wellness website can be found at: farmerwellnessinitiative.ca

How insurance can help

Representing Co-operators Insurance, a company well-known in agricultural circles. Tying into Dixon’s talk involving uncertainty, Sarah, made the connection to insurance and its role to help mitigate uncertainty and bring peace of mind. Someone mentioned that the Co-operators started in small farm communities and to this day, they are still in our farm communities.

“Financial security includes insurance products” she said. Someone also stressed how important it is to have a good relationship with your insurance advisor as no two farms



are the same, going as far to say “Your advisor is your closest friend”.

She spent some time discussing risk and risk management, explaining that insurance can help farmers identify potential issues before they become claims. Examples included aging structures, house-keeping, chemical storage and whether buildings are being used appropriately.

To some, it may have sounded like a checklist of maintenance items to address before the advisor’s next visit, although the message was intended to emphasize prevention rather than repair.

She closed her talk with “In your financial planning, in your protection of mental health, protecting everything, insurance is one of the main components of that protection.”

Emergency preparedness

In general, the Simcoe County Emergency Preparedness folk look at larger issues, the ones beyond the 911 calls at the forefront of most peoples’ thoughts. Emergency management does not deal with everyday emergencies.

Emergency management comes into play when there is a larger scale situation that affects a wide area, a larger number of people or a threat to public safety. One may think of it as disaster management.

The official definition of emergency in Ontario is: “A situation or impending situation that constitutes a danger of major proportion that could result in serious harm to persons, substantial damage to property and can be caused by either forces of nature, disease, an accident or potentially intentional act.”

ROAR

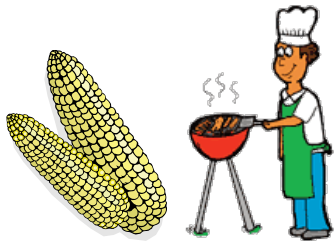
A familiar topic, particularly in Clearview and Springwater Townships, is the Department of Defense Over-the-Horizon radar plans. Rachel Brooks and Terri Jackman brought the latest news about this situation, which still leaves us with many unanswered questions and concerns.

Public Access Defibrillation Program

Kim Oxley, Co-ordinator for Public Access Defibrillation program (PAD) at the County of Simcoe also gave the crowd a good outline of how to obtain and register a unit. She also explained some of the pitfalls of first responders locating a rural location with acres, various buildings involved, and what dispatchers need to know to be most efficient.

A bevy of local politicians and other leaders brought words of appreciation to the agricultural community.

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Thursday, August 27th

6:30 pm

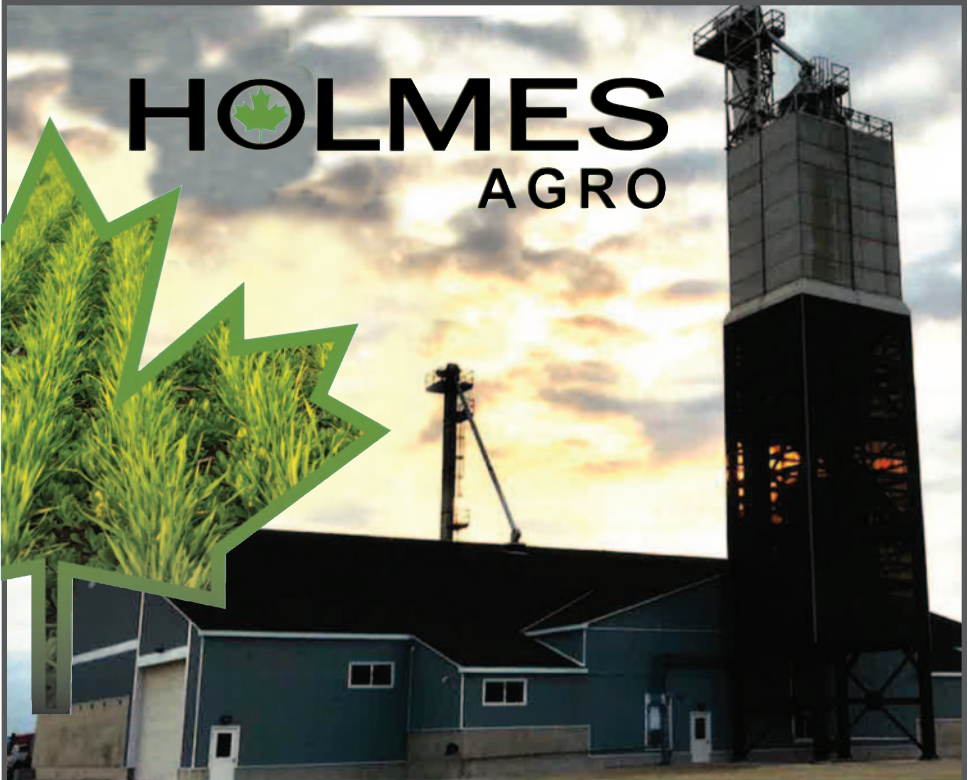
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Understanding Diseases in Row Crops

By Taylor Legge, Agronomist Holmes Agro, 705 428 4444

The heat and humidity in midwestern Ontario this summer is conducive to disease development on some of our key commodity crops, including corn and soybeans. How do producers take risk and investment into account when deciding to protect crops against diseases?

Between timely rains and moderate heat, the 2026 growing season hasn't left us too much to complain about so far. Unfortunately, the weather that our crops love is also highly conducive to many diseases in Ontario row crops. If I walk outside to scout my crops at 11:00am and there is still dew getting my jeans wet, I take that as a cue to watch for diseases, especially in corn and soybeans.

Most Ontario diseases impact the crop in one of two ways: foliar diseases that colonize the leaf surface and reduce photosynthesis, and diseases that reduce the yield and quality of the crop at harvest. Both groups often need to be managed preventatively, but across the industry our management approaches to each differ. Ultimately, like any management activity in a crop, we compare the fundamentals: the cost of doing it versus the cost of not doing it.

The cost of protecting crops against diseases is fairly straightforward. The cost of the product and the cost of applying it are both something you can factor into your cost of production budget in the winter. If you employ management strategies to reduce disease like adapting row spacing and tillage, these can also be easily pre-determined. What we often struggle to put our finger on is the cost

of not doing it, or the risk of occurrence. In the Georgian Bay area, we have crops where fungicide response is easily proven, like wheat, and crops where we are still exploring the potential, like corn. While there are dozens of factors at play, I try and focus on a few primary metrics: field history of disease, environmental likelihood of disease, and current yield potential of the crop in the field. In recent years there has been more research in favour of the plant health aspect of disease prevention- which suggests that fungicides promote water use efficiency and chlorophyll production in addition to protecting against disease. "Staygreen" is highly genetic and can also be an important management tool for crops where quality is a concern.

Ultimately, we're on the lookout for diseases in fields this summer, as the long range forecast suggests we are going to have frequent storms and moderate temperatures. If growers are concerned about protecting their fields against diseases and weighing the risks, I always suggest protecting your best field first, as well as your most at-risk field. It's important to scout frequently for diseases, so we can catch the problem before it becomes widespread.

Agricultural Anecdotes from Farmer Tim

After a lot of sleepless nights, hard conversations, research, second-guessing, and prayers, we've finally made the decision to build a new dairy barn. I just signed my life away!

Honestly, in a way, it feels like a huge burden has been lifted off my shoulders just by making the decision. The worrying doesn't disappear as I'm sure there will still be plenty of nights staring at the ceiling, wondering how we're going to pay for it all, but deep down, I know this is the right move for our family, our physical health, our mental health, and most importantly, the health and happiness of our herd.

Over the last while, I've learned more about barn building than I ever imagined possible. Layouts, ventilation, cow comfort, manure systems, robotics, traffic flow, bedding, feed access, concrete, financing... the list never ends. It's been a learning process every single day. Along the way, so many people have stepped up to offer advice, share experiences, calm my nerves, and remind me that every farmer who's built before us has had the same fears and doubts. I can't thank those people enough, and I will be mentioning many of them in the coming days.

I know there will be bumps and bruises along the way. Nothing worth doing ever comes easy, especially in farming. But I've also been promised by people I trust that when the dust settles, we'll wonder why we didn't do it sooner. Happier cows. Better working conditions. A more sustainable future. A better life for the next generation.

And honestly, I'm not just doing this for myself, my family, or even my cows. I'm doing it for you too.

As a Canadian dairy farmer, I've dedicated my life to this job because I genuinely love caring for cattle and caring for the land. Every day, I silently promise to do the very best I can to produce some of the highest quality milk from some of the best cows in the world. This new barn is another step toward keeping that promise.

So stay tuned... it's going to be a very interesting summer. With a little luck, some ground will start moving in the next couple of weeks.

We're going to need all the support we can get, and I truly appreciate every single person who follows along with this journey. Thanks for believing in farmers, believing in Canadian dairy, and believing in us.

Wish us luck.

Farmer Tim farms in Southern Ontario and has been sharing his stories through social media for many years. Tim is quoted saying "All farmers need to get their stories out there and have fun while they do it!"

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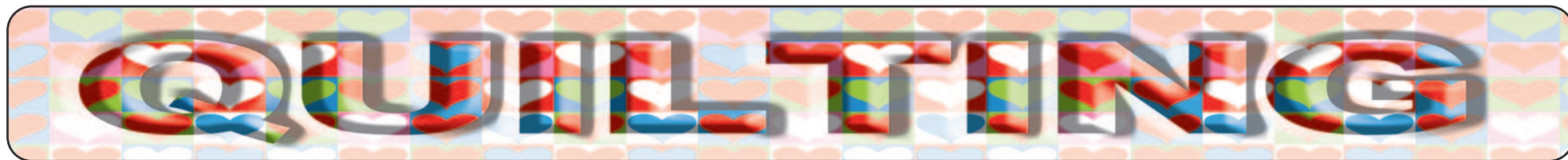
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A Creative Weekend Awaits at the Simcoe County Quilt, Rug & Artisan Fair

By Janis Hamilton

With all this extreme heat, I'm sure you are not wanting to fire up the sewing machine. Just thinking of filling a bobbin may be just too much. But if you are working with a fan or able to find a breeze, more power to you.

By the end of August most of us are thinking let's get some fall projects ready to start or on a really good day, maybe finish some. Could they be presents for Christmas? If you're stuck for an idea of what to do, I have a suggestion: the annual Quilt, Rug and Artisan Fair at the Simcoe County Museum! It takes place Friday through Sunday, September 18–20, from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.

Admission fees apply: adults, \$10; seniors, \$8; youth, \$8; and children, \$5. Preschoolers ages 0–3 are admitted free.

So, what is there to see and do... well grab a comforting drink and I'll explain. Artisans from all over the county will be there - hands-on demonstrations, vendors with supplies for crafts shown, selling crafts or just come and get some ideas or purchase early Christmas presents. Several of the groups there will have wonderful items for sale. I can always find unique and affordable treasures to take home. Quilts and other items sewn by members and volunteers will be on display, and volunteers will be available to answer questions. You can even vote for your favourite quilt, wall hanging or quilt challenge entry.

This year's quilt challenge is to create anything with a 120-inch perimeter, using black and white with a splash of colour. Imagination is the only limit for this challenge!

The artisan groups this year are as follows:

Huronian Handweavers Guild
Barrie Modern Quilt Guild - Barrie
Huronian Spinners Guild
Georgian Bay Quilters Guild - Midland
Huronian Branch of Ontario Hooking Craft Guild
Kempenfelt Quilters' Guild - Barrie
Orillia Sunshine Rug Hookers
Quilting Corners Guild - Alliston
Simcoe County Arts & Crafts Assn. (SCACA)
Simcoe County Quilters' Guild - Barrie
Simcoe County Embroidery Guild
Slope to Shore Quilters' Guild - Wasaga Beach
Simcoe County Lacemakers
Simcoe County Potters Guild

I was given a "Brief History of the Simcoe County Quilt, Rug & Craft Fair" by Ruth Byers of SCACA. The name was recently changed to reflect the fair's artisan component, but its purpose has always been to share with the public a love of art through quilts.

In 1948, Midland was preparing to celebrate its centenary in 1949, so the Simcoe County Arts and Crafts Association (SCACA) was asked to help organize a quilt and rug show. Members of the public were encouraged to lend their heirloom quilts, and many were inspired to make new quilts featuring designs based on local history and colour. Thor

Hansen, an outstanding artist and designer of Canadian Themes, offered to draw some quilt and rug designs inspired by Simcoe County's history and nature. July of 1949 saw 140 quilts displayed in St. Paul's United Church, Midland.

The show was such a success it was held twice a year, but over time it became a burden and was reduced to every other year. In 1960 the scope was extended to include many more local artisans and craftsmen. By 1971 visitors missed the quilts and rugs, so it was renamed the "Quilt, Rug and Craft Fair" and they were held every other year till the end of that decade.

Eventually the fair became an annual event and has continued to grow each year. Finally, in 1975 the Fair found its new permanent home at the Museum. Costumes of duster caps, aprons and butcher style aprons worn by volunteers so they could be recognized among the thousands of visitors over the next few years. 1999 was the last year SCACA organized the fair and the Staff of the Museum with the countless volunteers from each group continue to offer one of the most unique shows of arts and crafts in all of Ontario. Each group allows its members to make items and sell them to the public. So, if ever you thought I'd like to try pottery, lacemaking or just check out how you could spin your long haired dog's fur into a pair of mittens, come and enjoy all that is offered.

The Museum also has food if you stay over lunchtime and is so reasonably priced and an outdoor venue for eating while you decide what vendor you wish to visit in the outer buildings. Usually, musical entertainment as you eat and all is wheelchair accessible.

The quilts, wall hangings and challenge in the quilt area will inspire you and maybe you will even see some pattern you would like to try. Most full quilts have write ups including the pattern they use, the person who did the quilting and the reason they made the quilt. Take the time to read those write-ups, there is always a story behind each work of art. If you wish to see the back of any quilt there are volunteers there wearing white gloves who would be more than willing to let you see the back and try to answer any questions you may have. Often the person who made the quilt will be there and if the volunteer knows them would be more than happy to have you connect with them so your questions can be answered. In the quilt room you will be given a program including all the information about each quilt guild and a ballot so you are able to help choose the Viewer's Choice quilt of the weekend.

A fun weekend filled with creativity, new art to try and dedicated volunteers who love the craft they are doing. Seems like a perfect event to enjoy!

Quilting stories and photographs
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Dufferin Farm Tour

We are busy planning the 2026 Dufferin Farm Tour! The tour will take place on October 3 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

A big thank you to our sponsors, and volunteers for making the farm tour a success each and every year!

To stay up to date on our 2026 tour, please follow us on Facebook or Instagram, or join our email list <https://dufferinfarmtour.com>

We are always on the look out for tour hosts, sponsors or volunteers for the tour, please contact us.

Since 1998 Dufferin farmers have opened their doors for one day in the fall to show people how farming really happens.

Each year a different section of the county is chosen and the the tour takes visitors to several different farms, making each tour a totally unique experience.

The tour is a self-guided tour and is open to the public. The host farms offer a glimpse of the diversity of agriculture in the area. Our farmers are excited to share their farming knowledge and the day to day operation and challenges of farming. There will be many animals to see, farm-related activities, commodity displays, local produce to purchase. You will end your day with an appreciation for local farming and the commitment of the farm families. Admission is a non-perishable food donation or cash for the Local Food Bank.

You are encouraged to eat local, eat healthy and support farmers.

Fire Safety Essentials for Off-Campus Living

By Dennis Gannon

It may still be August, and many of us are thinking about summer fun, but for families with someone heading to college or university in the coming weeks, it's also time to find safe accommodations. For many students, moving away from home is a first-time adventure. While searching for affordable housing can be challenging, safety should never be compromised.

Colleges and universities that provide student residences are required to have working smoke alarms, fire safety plans, and staff who monitor the safety of residents. However, many students choose to live independently in shared houses, apartments, or rental units. When considering these options, there are several important fire safety features to look for.

First, ensure there are working smoke alarms on every level of the home and outside each sleeping area. Ask when they were last tested, how old they are, and who is responsible for their maintenance. If the home contains fuel-burning appliances such as a gas furnace, water heater, fireplace, or gas dryer, confirm that carbon monoxide alarms are installed and properly maintained. They should be located outside sleeping areas in accordance with Ontario requirements.

Safe exits are equally important. There should be at least two ways out from every level of the home, with exits that are unobstructed and free of unusual locking devices. Doors and windows should open easily. If the bedroom is located in a basement, make sure the window meets minimum size requirements for emergency escape.

Electrical safety should not be overlooked. Are there enough electrical outlets to accommodate computers, chargers, televisions, and other devices? Extension cords and power bars should only be used temporarily and should never serve as a permanent source of electrical power. They should also never be run under carpets or rugs, where heat can build up unnoticed.

If the property is marketed as student housing, ask whether it has been inspected by the local fire department or fire prevention officials and whether it complies with the Ontario Fire Code. Request to see the most recent fire inspection report and note the date

it was completed.

Once safe accommodations have been found, students should follow a few basic fire safety practices throughout the school year.

Cooking remains the leading cause of residential fires in Ontario. Stay in the kitchen whenever cooking and never allow alcohol or drugs to impair your judgment. If you're craving French fries, they're much safer prepared in the oven or an air fryer than in a pot of hot oil left unattended.

Candles may create a relaxing atmosphere, but battery-operated LED candles provide the same effect without the fire risk. Whenever possible, avoid using open flames.

If additional heat is needed during colder weather, use a space heater carefully. Keep it at least one metre away from anything that can burn, including bedding, furniture, clothing, and curtains. Turn it off whenever you leave the room or go to sleep.

Student life often includes social gatherings. Keep the number of guests manageable and be alert to excessive alcohol consumption or the use of recreational substances, as impaired judgment significantly increases the risk of fire. If anyone smokes or vapes, have them do so outside. Never use flower planters as ashtrays, as the contents can be surprisingly combustible and may ignite unnoticed.

Finally, always know exactly where you are. It sounds simple, but knowing the correct street address and the municipality you're in can save valuable time during an emergency. When calling 9-1-1, providing accurate location information helps emergency responders arrive more quickly. Apps such as What3words may also be useful in areas where emergency services support them.

A few minutes spent checking the fire safety features of a rental property can make all the difference. Choosing safe accommodations allows students and their families to focus on what really matters—enjoying the exciting opportunities and challenges of the coming school year.

For more information, contact your local fire department or visit the Ontario Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management.

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Echoes of a Vanished Village

Melancthon is one of countless vanished villages scattered throughout Ontario. Today, wind turbines stand where once a thriving community stood. So, what happened? What turn-of-fate caused it to die?

Before there was a Melancthon, there was a vast swath of wilderness called the Queen's Bush. This expanse, roughly bounded by Kitchener, Orangeville, Goderich and Hanover, was until the mid-19th a dark and largely unsettled wilderness. When settlement began to encroach upon the forested region around mid-century, it clung to the settlement roads that were lifelines of civilization, the few tenuous links to the outside world. In the horse-and-buggy era, travellers could expect to find a stopping place every ten to fifteen miles – an average day's journey – along these primitive roads. At these roadside inns, often originally little more than cabins hastily constructed of logs, people could find refreshment, lodging for the night, and stabling for their horses.

Many villages developed around these way stations, Melancthon among them.

James Beachall, a native of Yorkshire, England, was the pioneering proprietor of the first hotel in what would be Melancthon. When he arrived around 1850, the area was still wilderness, but Beachall was an ambitious man and determined that the spot was ideal for a roadside inn. He was right. Almost overnight, the enterprise prospered, and soon

enough a community began to spring up in its shadow.

Beachall built on his initial success by adding a post office in 1851. He used his prominence as a springboard into local politics, becoming a longtime councillor, the first reeve of Melancthon Township, and the first warden of Grey County.

Beachall was far from being the only businessman in Melancthon, however. Encouraged by his example, other enterprising men began to carve out niches for themselves. Soon, there were two additional taverns, a store, and a blacksmith shop. But as impressive as this early growth might have been, greater things were looming in the horizon.

In 1873, the Toronto, Grey and Bruce Railway was completed. The line ran from Toronto to Orangeville where it branched, with one arm passing through Melancthon on its way to Owen Sound. The arrival of the railway resulted in an economic boom for Melancthon. Within the span of a few years, the village swelled to include a second store, a Methodist church, school, town hall, an Orange hall, a sawmill operated by James Sloan, and a railway station. There were also more than two dozen homes in town, including a row of simple cabins built by Sloan to accommodate his workers and their families.

Though villagers couldn't know it, this would be Melancthon's highwater mark. Within less than fifty years, the illusion that was Melancthon's success had faded and most of the

businesses had disappeared. There was no single cause, no dramatic deathblow, just a slow and lingering demise brought about by a variety of factors. The post office and store were the most enduring of the village functions. The former closed in 1969, while the latter hung on until around 2000.

The most obvious reminder of the village are the headstones from its cemetery, moved from their original location to a roadside site. Of the church that once presided over these markers, there is no sign; it has faded with the rest of Melancthon.

Village stories

by Andrew Hind



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After The Chores: Smart as a Boer

By Cathy Hamill-Hill



Boer goats Percy and Penny have been credited to saving their owner's lives. In Enid, Oklahoma a massive tornado coming directly at them made a family of three go down into a storm cellar. The tornado, clocked at over 200 miles per hour, smashed everything to bits, burying the storm cellar under rubble. One of the family members had cell service so called 911 from inside the shelter. The emergency responders quickly arrived finding nothing except a massive chaotic pile of debris. Percy and Penny were the only living things seen on the property and they were bleating at the top of their lungs while stomping their hooves on one specific spot. Under that same spot, a terrified family heard their goats- and prayed. The emergency responders started to dig in the same spot- and the goats were reunited with their shaken and very grateful family.

I can see Francis being my rescue goat- if it was chore time.

Francis the boer buck here is beyond demanding- and smart. A smart demander gets attention, every time. It started when Francis had pen mates. The boer was smart enough to know that I have zero tolerance for an animal in pain like every other farmer. He would pound his pen mates making them cry- and then move away to stand next to his bucket calmly waiting for grain. It became a game: pound, cry, grain. Once he got grain, he was respectful again until he wanted his next helping then it all started over. I couldn't take this abuse so he ended up living alone quickly.

Weighing in at about 120 pounds, if not more, Francis made me nervous when his kids went into his pen. He happily shared his hay manger with them. He plowed them when they got near his grain bucket but otherwise, he was pleasant to them. The kids soon learned that there was a zero tolerance policy around the grain bucket but it was okay to cuddle up to him on cool nights.

With no goats to pound, Francis needed another way to get his grain on demand. Francis went around his pen slamming it and then raising his voice. The pen has no feelings so his pounding yielded nothing- until he found a weak spot. I wondered what all the noise was

with upset kids when they were left eating grain. The part boer kids were all yelling at me at the door as Francis had taken over their grain- and pushed them all out. Francis had broken down his pen. I fixed the pen and got Francis back in- but my fix was no match for 120 pounds of a smart demander.

For the second time, I had upset yelling kids and a big boer buck in the wrong place happily eating grain. This time Sweetie out-smarted Francis and really fixed the pen. Francis was beaten- and he was some mad. He stood up and then smashed his way around the pen yelling for grain. He got his three servings- but he wants minimum five on demand.

I have the final baby sired by Francis for this year. His mother is old and he has a giant appetite. With the new milk replacer being so easy to use now, I put him on a "top up" bottle. That means that he can live on what his mother produces, but he gets as much as he could ever possibly want, twice a day.

I feared he would get pounded by the much older and bigger kids, but this little guy is as smart as his father. He can drop and slide like a Blue Jays baseball player on tv into his mother's pen where the big kids cannot get to. This kid is fast- and fearless. I found him one morning hanging out with his father, over 110 pounds or so apart in size, standing together, both yelling at me for breakfast.

It started off as a brush to my boot and then ramped up to a steady push. I wondered what was going on until I found the source of this constant pushing. The new little buck kid rams my boot until I feed him his bottle. He backs up and hits me as hard as his little head can- and he keeps at it until I move into the rabbit section of the barn away from him- or feed him.

I wonder if my smart boers have any genetics shared with Penny and Percy in Oklahoma.

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Mom & Dad



Happy Birthday Anna!

From kindergarten to today, we've shared a lifetime of memories, and I can't imagine this journey without you. You are truly one of the most beautiful people I know inside and out. Here's to many more years of friendship, adventures, and making memories together. Love you, Roslyn.

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New Holland L218

2230 hours showing, cab/heat/air, 10x16.5 tires, hydraulic QC, 66" low pro bucket front aux hydraulics, 2 speed, hand/foot controls, Unit is located at Stewart's Equipment in Erin.

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Stock Number: U29498
Serial Number: TC0757B043240

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Serial Number: 17727
Stock Number YU0434

\$2,350



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