

Peggy Brekveld

What drives someone, possibly someone like you, to get involved in OFA and county federations?

I have heard many reasons over the years. But as I reflect on both words and actions, I see some common threads among those who get involved. They are: a love for one's community, a desire to protect farming and farmers, and a vision of how agriculture can be better yet!

I know what this feels like, for it is the reason I got involved in my local federation all those years ago, and why I ran for the provincial board as a zone director, and then as a director at large. I have been on the OFA board for 9 years – the last 6 as your director at large, and I still feel the passion for “Food and Farming Forever!”

My name is Peggy Brekveld, and I am seeking re-election for director at large.

There is amazing diversity to be seen across Ontario agriculture. With over 200 foods and farm products grown, we go from dairy to grapes, to corn, to crickets and beyond! Farms vary from single digit acreages to thousands of acres, and “just me” working on the farm, to hundreds of employees. Collectively, we contribute more than \$47 billion to Ontario's annual GDP, and support more than 860,000 jobs. (Wow. Even as I write it, I am once again amazed by the scope of our industry.)

We are also an industry that isn't without challenges. In the last 6 years, whether it was in person - at farm shows, regional events and at PAC- or more recently at the many virtual meetings I attended, you have spoken up. I have heard the need for solutions to outstanding labour issues, continued investment in rural infrastructure such as broadband and roads and bridges (shovels in the ground), and protection of farmland, including issues around Ministerial Zoning Orders. There is a need for practicality around proposed legislation, such as the Clean Fuels Standard, and there is need for follow through with appropriate regulations, such as with Bill 156.

I am thankful that you continue to share your “on the ground” perspectives, and I have brought your concerns to the board, to politicians and regulators as we together work towards a better province, a stronger agriculture industry. Your stories make the messages real.

As your director at large, I will continue to bring your concerns forward, to represent both our challenges and solutions for a progressive farming industry.

Beyond our shared interest in good policy, I also believe in good governance of OFA's resources and assets. You have entrusted this to your Board of Directors, and as a director, I continue to be an active participant at board and on committees



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Finally, OFA has worked hard to build better connections with our commodity and regional partners. I am proud to be one of the connectors within our broader farm community, and a part of this relationship building. Whether it is through Agriculture Adaptation Council, through AALP alumni, through President's Council, or other organizations, I know that we are at our best when we work together. I believe that this will continue, and I hope to be a part of it as we go forward.

I love our Ontario farming community. As your director at large, I will continue to work with OFA to protect our farming interests, and to build toward an even stronger Ontario agriculture industry.

Thank you- it has been a privilege to represent you as director at large for the last 6 years. And, thank you for your continued support.

Peggy

Peggy Brekveld At a Glance

At Home:

- Dairy Farmer, Thunder Bay, Ontario for 26 years
- Married to Gert and mother of five
- Hobbies – writing, singing, walking in nature
- Past Ontario Outstanding Young Farmer finalist, Past BMO Farm Family of the Year Winner, Influential Women of Canadian Agriculture honoree
- Past board member and Past President, Thunder Bay Federation of Agriculture

At OFA:

- OFA Board Member - 9 years (3 as Northern Director, 6 Director at Large)
- OFA Vice President – 6 years
- 6 years - Finance Committee
- 4 years – Governance Committee
- 2 years – Audit Committee

In the Greater Farming Community:

- Agricultural Adaptation Council board member for 5 years, 4 as vice president
- Canlead Solutions 1 year vice president
- President's Council member
- Canadian Ag Human Resources Council 1 year board member
- Labour Issues Coordinating Committee 1 year
- Alumni of Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program