

July 4, 2022

Hon. Lisa M. Thompson, Minister
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
11th Floor, 77 Grenville St,
Toronto, ON M7A 1B3

Sent via email to minister.omafra@ontario.ca

Dear Minister,

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) continues to encourage the finalization and release of the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Guidance Document for widespread use.

Ontario's Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe was developed as a means to plan for and support the growth and development in this area, in a manner that supports economic prosperity, protects the environment, and helps communities achieve a high quality of life. Specifically, this plan is based on the priorities:

- Support complete communities with more options for living, working, learning, shopping and playing
- Reduce traffic gridlock by improving access to a greater range of transportation choices
- Provide housing options to meet the needs of people at any age
- Curb sprawl and protect farmland and green spaces
- Promote long-term economic growth

Achieving these results do not just happen; they require tools for assessing, evaluating and guiding decision making to balance the many important priorities. One of these critical tools is the use of AIA's. AIA's provide an opportunity for avoiding, minimizing and/or mitigating negative impacts on agriculture while still working to achieve all of the above stated goals.

It is imperative that the Agricultural Impact Assessment Guidance Document be finalized and released for widespread use by all municipalities, qualified assessment professionals, aggregate producers, development proponents, landowners and other stakeholders, so they are able to meet their regulatory requirements for undertaking an AIA. It will also strengthen the ability of the agricultural community to continue to contribute to the economic prosperity and quality of life in their communities when they can be assured that negative impacts to their operations will be minimized and mitigated, if not avoided.

The AIA is one of many important assessments and reports required to ensure strong planning decisions are made. However, no development proposal should even reach the AIA stage if the municipality, within its existing urban boundary, has not exhausted all development options and has not at least attained its established minimum urban density target.



OFA requests that OMAFRA prioritize the release of the final AIA Guidance Document. We remain available to provide our assistance with this.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Peggy Brekveld". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end. It is positioned to the left of a vertical line.

Peggy Brekveld
President

cc: John Kelly, Deputy Minister, OMAFRA
OFA Board of Directors