

## **2023 AGM Submitted Resolutions**

### **A. OFA Meetings & Agendas**

#### **Arnprior Hybrid Meetings**

**WHEREAS** travel remains a significant barrier to the engagement of Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) members from across the province; The province of Ontario extends to over 1.076 M kilometres; and

**WHEREAS** the cost of travel, accommodations and most significantly the time it takes away from other important farm duties leaves most OFA members not in a position to engage with the OFA directly; and

**WHEREAS** if the OFA is to remain relevant and for its membership to be engaged, the OFA needs to consider adopting a hybrid meeting model for all meetings going forward; In this model, meetings like the AGM, Committee and other related OFA meetings are made accessible to OFA members from across the province; Hybrid in this case refers to in person and remote access to the identified meeting; Hybrid and face to face video communications have become front and centre during the pandemic; It has accelerated the adoption of these technologies across all sectors of business; and

**WHEREAS** this resolution is to propose the OFA embrace this everchanging technology landscape in effort to improve engagement and connectivity to its members across this vast province,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture offers a hybrid meeting model for all of its key meetings; AGM, PAC and other committee meetings; Included in this change would be the ability to Vote if the meeting presented such opportunity.

#### **Elgin AGM Resolutions**

**WHEREAS** the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is a grassroots member-driven organization; and

**WHEREAS** the OFA goes to great expense to bring the convention delegates together, and the OFA delegates spend substantial time considering each resolution at the annual general meeting; and

**WHEREAS** OFA delegates are here to address the issues surrounding the agricultural community in Ontario,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture will modify the annual agenda to prioritize the discussion and votes on resolutions, including increasing the time allotment.

**Background:**

At previous meetings, not all resolutions were discussed and voted on by the delegates.

**B. Farm Property & Land-use**

**Oxford  
CP Railway Company**

**WHEREAS** a Farm Crossing is defined in the Canadian Transport Act section 102 'if an owners land is divided as a result of the construction of a railway line, the railway company shall, at the owner's request, construct a suitable crossing for the owner's enjoyment of the land; and

**WHEREAS** it goes on to further say 'that the landowner has statutory right to a crossing at the railway's expense, typically, there is no formal agreement for construction and maintenance between the landowner and railway, and typically crossing use is seasonal and/or agricultural activities; and

**WHEREAS** this new agreement being forced on landowners to sign will supersede and invalidates all prior agreements, understandings, negotiations, representations, warranties, whether oral or written, with respect thereto; and

**WHEREAS** rail lines are throughout the province and across Canada, this is not a local issue as we have seen similar concerns arise in the past,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture ask Canadian Federation of Agriculture to lobby Transport Canada's Minister to advise the Federal Railway company that they should not require a new agreement from landowners.

<https://ofa.on.ca/resources/ofa-letter-to-transport-canada-minister-pablo-rodriguez-regarding-federal-regulated-railway-companies-imposing-new-agreements-on-existing-private-crossings/>

**Elgin  
Finalization Draft Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Guidance Document**

**WHEREAS** the Government of Ontario continues to move forward with its target to create 1.5 million homes in the province; and

**WHEREAS** Ontario's Building Ontario's First Food Security Strategy is actively working to tackle the issue of food insecurity and poverty in Ontario; and

**WHEREAS** Ontario's farmland is a limited resource that provides sustainability and security for our food systems, environment, and Ontario's economy,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby for the revision, strengthening, and finalization of the Draft Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Guidance Document, March 2018.

**Background:**

**OMAFRA's draft Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) Guidance Document** supports provincial plan policies in A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020; Greenbelt Plan, 2017; Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, 2017 and Niagara Escarpment Plan, 2017 that require an agricultural impact assessment for certain types of development (i.e., settlement area boundary expansions, infrastructure projects and mineral aggregate operations within prime agricultural areas).

**Ontario's Building Ontario's First Food Security Strategy** is to support the capacity of our province to produce high-quality food now and in the future – including increasing the production of culturally diverse crops.

**Grow Ontario:** a provincial agri-food strategy to strengthen the agri-food sector, support economic growth, and ensure an efficient, reliable, and responsive food supply for Ontarians.

Ontario accounts for \$14.5 billion, or 41.9% of Canada's contribution to the national food and beverage GDP, and also represents the third largest contributor of farm cash receipts in the country in 2021.

750,000 Ontarians, or 1-in-10 of the province's labour force, are employed throughout the agri-food supply chain.

**Elgin**

**Strengthening the Protection of Agricultural Lands**

**WHEREAS** the Provinces More Homes More Choice Act proposed revisions to the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020 and A Place to Grow; and

**WHEREAS** the Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act, 2023, Bill 97 proposed significant legislative changes with continued implementation into 2051; and

**WHEREAS** the government's decision on these proposed changes are estimated to take effect in the winter of 2024; and

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) lobby to participate as part of the comprehensive review process with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for the completion of the 2023 Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), and

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that the OFA lobby for changes to Section 2.3 of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020 to strengthen the language used in the planning process to protect agricultural areas; Specifically, using words like 'shall' should be prioritized over 'encouraged', to ensure the protection of farmland and arable land.

**Background:**

**More Homes Built Faster Act** has reduced red tape and fast-track zoning approvals; timelines were reduced to 45 days, and urban boundary expansions were created across the province.

**Bill 3- Strong Mayors Building Homes Act 2022** legislation gives the head of council powers to overturn housing-related by-laws or approve them with less than one-third of a majority vote.

**A Place to Grow: Growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe** - *GGH* has one of the world's most vibrant and diverse economies – generating upwards of 25 percent of Canada's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Due to the absence of clear and specific planning policies, the municipalities in Elgin have witnessed a surge in lot creation, severances, land swaps, and rezoning requests. Further, without precise changes to the PPS, permission has also been granted to landowners with multiple holdings to switch their land zoning from A2 back to A1 for development purposes.

**Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020 section 2.3** encourages planning authorities to use an agricultural system approach as a best practice to support a thriving agri-food sector. To do this, a continuous land base for agriculture (i.e., prime agricultural areas and rural lands in agriculture) and elements of the agri-food would be identified.

### **C. Energy & Transportation**

#### **Huron Battery Energy Storage Systems**

**WHEREAS** the population of Ontario requires an abundant and reliable electricity supply; and

**WHEREAS** green energy sources are becoming increasingly abundant, yet can not fluctuate to respond to the demands of our electricity needs; and

**WHEREAS** Battery Energy Storage Systems could improve the ability of green energy to respond to these needs; and

**WHEREAS** there are currently no rules and regulations with regards to noise, minimum distance, location of the storage sites, especially the use of prime farmland,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby the provincial government to develop rules and regulations to govern the planning of the Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) sites.

#### **Lambton Truck Drivers**

**WHEREAS** Ontario has a shortage of approximately 6000 Class A/D truck drivers and this number is expected to increase as current drivers are nearing retirement which poses a significant risk to the economy; This shortage is a particular hardship to rural areas and rural small businesses due their limited manpower availability; and

**WHEREAS** the Ontario government is investing 1.3M to offer free driver training needed to obtain DZ and AZ licenses to help fill job vacancies to ensure businesses receive goods on time; and

**WHEREAS** skilled, qualified drivers have completed government mandated driver training and road safety courses and passed government managed skills and knowledge testing therefore demonstrating their ability to safely drive these Class A/D vehicles; and

**WHEREAS** insurance companies are not willing to insure new truck drivers without a minimum of 3 years driving experience due to inherent risks,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby the government to create a program to offset the risk for insurance companies to allow new qualified truck drivers to be insured.

**Supporting Documentation:**

[PWC Report: Truck Driver Shortage a Risk to Canada's Economy - Ontario Trucking Association \(ontruck.org\)](#)

[Ontario Providing Free Training for Truck Drivers | Ontario Newsroom](#)

#### **D. Agricultural Science**

**Leeds**

**Simplifying Dealing with Specified Risk Materials (SRM)**

**WHEREAS** there have been no new cases of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in Canada in many years and there has never been any in Ontario; and

**WHEREAS** protocols are in place for the safe slaughtering of cattle so there is no risk to food safety; and

**WHEREAS** it is very costly for small abattoirs to separate the Specified Risk Materials (SRM) renderings and send them to the same location, but in two different trucks; and

**WHEREAS** if an outbreak were to happen it would be easy to go back to the two different truck systems,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, along with Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO), lobby the Federal and Ontario governments to eliminate Specified Risk Materials (SRM) separation and transportation requirements imposed on small abattoirs; This would be in keeping with the provincial government wanting to keep the cost of food down.

#### **E. Health & Education**

**Grey**

**Lyme Disease**

**WHEREAS** Lyme Disease is becoming a prevalent problem in Ontario and the health effects can be severe and cause unnecessary suffering; and

**WHEREAS** Lyme Disease is a high risk to rural populations and farmers especially; and

**WHEREAS** the cases of Lyme Disease have increased significantly from approximately 140 to over 1400+ per year; and

**WHEREAS** concerns arise from inconsistent testing, diagnosis and treatment by the medical community, and even misdiagnosis due to similar symptoms to other ailments,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby the Ontario Government to direct the Ministry of Health to review current best practices available around the world for modern diagnosis and treatments for Lyme Disease and to take steps to publish / educate and promote options to the medical community for immediate improvements to existing outdated protocols.

#### **Leeds**

#### **OMAFRA Support is Needed for Algonquin College Agriculture Program**

**WHEREAS** 8 years ago, the University of Guelph without consultation ended the long-standing tradition of hands-on Agricultural education at Kemptville College Campus; and

**WHEREAS** the agricultural producers in the east relied on an Eastern Ontario presence to help fulfill regional needs of the industry in the areas of post-secondary education, producer education, regional research, and the promotion of agricultural education; and

**WHEREAS** students from Eastern and Northern Ontario relied on getting quality education at Kemptville College Campus; and

**WHEREAS** the Eastern Ontario agricultural industry needs college graduates in agriculture to answer regional industry needs; and

**WHEREAS** Algonquin College is offering a two-year agriculture diploma program with a focus on managing the farm business with volunteer participation by dozens of local farmers and regional stakeholders; and

**WHEREAS** Algonquin College gets no funding from OMAFRA; The only funding comes from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby OMAFRA to provide financial resources for the Algonquin College Business-Agriculture program.

#### **F. Agriculture Economic Development**

##### **Huron**

##### **Groceries**

**WHEREAS** groceries and taxes continue to put pressure on Canadian pocketbooks; and

**WHEREAS** the federal government has asked the heads of the grocery stores to lower grocery costs; and

**WHEREAS** the greatest impact of this task will be carried by farmers alone,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby the Provincial Government and Federal Government in partnership with the Canadian Federation of Agriculture to be included in conversations with regards to the impact the food chain infrastructure has on grocery prices.