

AGM 2024 Resolutions

1. Prince Edward Federation Resolution Noxious Weed List

WHEREAS noxious weeds present a threat to Ontario agriculture as they are difficult to manage once established on agricultural land and reduce crop yield and quality, negatively affect the health and well-being of livestock and present a threat to the health and well-being of agricultural workers; and

WHEREAS a noxious weed is a plant that has been listed in the Schedule of Noxious Weeds found in Regulation 1096 under the Weed Control Act of Ontario, and the Act requires destruction of noxious weeds on private and public lands; and

WHEREAS waterhemp, Canada fleabane and Palmer amaranth present specific threats to Ontario agriculture as they are difficult to control, and waterhemp and Canada fleabane are often present on public lands neighbouring agricultural lands, however these weeds are not currently on the Schedule of Noxious Weeds; and

WHEREAS the Lieutenant Governor in Council makes regulations designating plants as noxious weeds and prescribing conditions for destroying noxious weeds and weed seeds in Ontario,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Federation of Agriculture work with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Agribusiness and the Lieutenant Governor in Council to add waterhemp, Canada fleabane and Palmer amaranth to the Schedule of Noxious Weeds in Ontario.

2. Halton OFA Supporting Local Administrators

WHEREAS local administrators provide a wide range of supports to local federations including; event planning, advocacy, information gathering, research, correspondence which requires knowledge on a wide variety of issues, budgeting, bookkeeping, local contact point for OFA members, local governments (politicians, economic development, planners, etc), and agricultural associations, supports farmer wellness, plus any other tasks assigned for the local OFA boards; and

WHEREAS Administrators have limited to no opportunity to connect with peers which enables relationships and additional benefits of coming together as a group; and

WHEREAS OFA encourages enhanced relationships between adjoining federations, sharing of programs and projects, knowledge transfer and acquisition, support, and wellness; and

WHEREAS current resources are predominantly on-line with little to no human interface, discussion, or interaction; and

WHEREAS Administrators are expected to provide the necessary measures to enable local federations to meet the requirements of various government Acts (Accessibility for Ontarian Disabilities Act) and develop/incorporate policies and training at a local level,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Federation of Agriculture at the 2025 OFA Annual General Meeting hold an in-person Administrator program.

**3. Lambton/Kent
Permitted by Unused Disposal Permits**

WHEREAS there are hundreds of permitted but unused disposal sites across the Province of Ontario; and

WHEREAS disposal sites in rural areas have substantial negative impacts on local residents and agricultural business; and

WHEREAS Ontario continues to lose hundreds of productive farmland acres each day, therefore food production on prime agricultural land and feeding the people of Ontario must be a priority

WHEREAS one such site was resurrected in Chatham-Kent, sold to developer and had potential to become a major disposal site without any environmental assessment required due to previous permitted use; and

WHEREAS these stagnant permitted disposal sites would have significant detrimental effects on agricultural production and rural infrastructure and communities if they were become active again:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Federation of Agriculture aggressively lobby the Provincial Government, Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) to revoke these disposal site permits if unused for 5 consecutive years.

**4. East Nipissing/Parry Sound
Slow Moving Vehicle Education**

WHEREAS farm equipment often travels public roads at speeds of 40 km/hr or less where it can take seconds for a motor vehicle to overtake; and

WHEREAS the majority of farm vehicle road accidents happen during the day, under favourable conditions and good visibility; and

WHEREAS the Ministry of Transportation references the Slow-Moving Vehicle sign in their drivers handbook and is responsible for the education and licencing of new drivers in the province; and

WHEREAS the Ministry of Transportation also licences government-approved driving schools that help people become safe and responsible drivers; and

WHEREAS some drivers don't know what the SMV sign means, how quickly their vehicle can overtake farm equipment or how to share the road safely,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby the Ministry of Transportation to increase its outreach regarding Slow Moving Vehicles when educating and licencing drivers.

**5. Kent
Climate Change Research**

WHEREAS climate change topics, whether natural or influenced by man's activities related to fossil fuels, methane, and nitrous oxide, to name a few, are affecting agriculture in Ontario, Canada, and the world; and

WHEREAS climate change topics affect the cost to agriculture as well as all industries. For example, the Carbon Tax on our fuels, fertilizer use and types and livestock production are all impacted by this topic and related costs,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Federation of Agriculture focus its research resources on studying both sides of these issues, starting with the International Panel on Climate Change research reports and including sources, such as the Friends of Science Society out of Calgary, Alex Epstein, Roy Spencer, William Happer and many others so as to provide the OFA membership with a comprehensive and balanced report on this issue.

**6. Glengarry
Private Drain Education Program**

WHEREAS private drains are an integral part of the drainage and flood control system across watersheds in the province; and

WHEREAS from time to time, new residents to rural areas don't understand the implications to other neighbours, including agricultural businesses, when blocking or modifying private drains, so,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) develop an educational outreach program that local municipalities can use to address the knowledge gap in private drains.

**7. Bruce
Drinking Water Stewardship Program**

WHEREAS Ontario farmers are the primary stakeholders in matters related to water and the landscape; and

WHEREAS there is a need for increased quantities and quality of drinking water in Ontario,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Federation of Agriculture lobby the provincial government to adequately fund the Drinking Water Stewardship Program under the Clean Water Act.

**8. Bill Parks and Bob Kerr
Annual Compensation from Hydro One Networks**

WHEREAS multiple organizations (Oil/gas wells, windmills, solar panels) pay annual compensation to private landowners yet **Hydro One Networks Inc** have been unwilling to pay Annual Compensation to private landowners when their powerlines cross their lands; and

WHEREAS while Hydro One Networks Inc do pay Adequate Compensation to Landowners at initial construction phases, this does not compensate landowners over the many decades these towers will exist on these lands. Yet landowners will continue to farm around and maintain the towers for decades into the future; and

WHEREAS Hydro One Networks Inc acquires lands using the Expropriation Act and under the Act, the annual expense caused by the easement should be considered injurious affection and needs to be compensated annually, for the life of the easement; and

WHEREAS the burden of these towers falls on the private landowner every year, yet the initial compensation amounts only benefit the initial landowner; and

WHEREAS Alberta's public utility ATCO Electric does pay annual compensation to Landowners in addition to initial compensation amounts. This represents a clear precedent that should be followed across Canada,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Federation of Agriculture aggressively lobby the Ontario Minister of Energy and Minister of Finance to require Hydro One Networks to provide annual compensation to all affected private landowners in addition to any initial compensation paid.

Background Information – Please see Attachment #1

**9. Renfrew
MDS II**

WHEREAS in Ontario's rural and prime agricultural areas, the Provincial Policy Statement, 2024, and other provincial land use plans require that new land uses, including the creation of lots and new or expanding livestock facilities, comply with the Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) formulae and guidelines; and

WHEREAS MDS is comprised of two separate, but related, formulae that act reciprocally to help site either new development or new/expanding livestock facilities:

- MDS I setbacks are determined between proposed new development and existing livestock barns, manure storages and/or anaerobic digesters.

- MDS II setbacks are determined between proposed new or altered livestock facilities and/or anaerobic digesters and existing or approved development, lot lines and road allowances; and

WHEREAS many agricultural parcels in (Eastern) Ontario may be longer than they are wide (ie. much greater depth than road frontage), and smaller in size than parcels in other areas of the province, resulting in dwellings, barns, and other out-buildings being built close to the road, and in proximity to their neighbours; and

WHEREAS the current MDS II reduction guideline is quite rigid, in that it states that a reduction can only be made for specific reasons, such as a hazard avoidance or an environmental concern, causing concerns for rural planners that opportunities for new or expanded operations may be limited by this, particularly as pressures increase to develop more housing near/adjacent settlement areas, which puts pressure on the available lands for new/expanded livestock barns, and often the advice received from the province is to get legal advice, but small municipalities do not always have financial capacity to do so,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Federation of Agriculture work with OMAFA to determine if there could be greater flexibility to amend MDS II, or create an exemption from MDS II in Areas designated/zoned as Agriculture; provide additional guidance/information in Guidelines documentation with examples of what works and what land use matters to consider (beyond section 8.2) for MDS II reductions; and continue to stress the importance of MDS I, particularly with politicians and the agricultural community.

Background Information:

This resolution came from a member's frustrating experience with a local municipality. Following a barn fire, a member had a challenging experience with their municipality when dealing with MDS II requirements around granting permits for reconstruction of the new barn. Initially, based on the MDS II formula, the member should not have been allowed to rebuild the new larger barn in the same location as the one that burnt. After a long and frustrating process, the municipality and the member were able to come to an arrangement for the new barn to be built in the desired location. This experience has brought forward concerns that the rigid formulae in MDS II could continue to unnecessarily burden the system when it comes to rebuilding in the same location as a previous building or expanding on an existing building and similar such activities.

10. Renfrew CRA Paper Filing of HST Returns

WHEREAS in 2024 Canada Revenue Agency began notifying individuals and businesses that for reporting periods beginning after December 31, 2023, all GST/HST registrants, with the exception of charities and selected listed financial institutions, would be required to file returns electronically, and if paper returns continued to be filed a penalty would be charged; and

WHEREAS access to reliable cell phone & internet service continues to be a barrier to many Ontario farms, compounded by concerns of technological literacy (ability to access or be

comfortable with using a touch tone telephone or computer/internet without assistance) to submit these returns; and

WHEREAS the Canada Revenue Agency did not indicate that individuals must annually request in writing to be allowed to continue filing returns by paper without penalty,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Federation of Agriculture works with CRA to ensure that farmers and other individuals who are GST/HST registrants are made fully aware of the potential penalties and the process required to be exempted from these penalties and provided with annual reminders of the same; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT that OFA work with CRA to ensure that adequate training is available to assist with transition to ensure compliance with these new requirements for filing returns online or via telephone.

11. Renfrew MTO Highway Access Management Policies

WHEREAS under the Ontario Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act, an MTO Permit for Building and Land Use, Entrance, Sign, and/or Encroachment may be required if you are planning to construct on or adjacent to a provincial highway; and Highway Corridor Management Permits are required when a residential or farmstead lot is redeveloped for commercial purposes; and

WHEREAS in 2017 MTO updated its Highway Access Management Policies to redesignate a number of highways in Ontario to be included as controlled access highways; and

WHEREAS MTO policies state that when access to a controlled highway is possible from a municipal road, entrances must be removed from the controlled highway when there is a change of use/intensification or upgrades required due to development; and

WHEREAS the landowner may be required to bear the cost of highway improvements and/or changes in access points if deemed necessary by the MTO and/or an MTO designated consultant based on a Traffic Impact Study (of which the landowner must also bear the cost); and

WHEREAS the Highway Corridor Management Manual indicates that a permit is not required for an addition to a legally existing agricultural building, where the addition is not closer to the highway than the existing building, and where there are no changes to the grading, access or parking associated with the construction; and

WHEREAS the construction of grain storage and handling (bins, dryers, elevator legs), machinery storage, manure storage, and other agricultural structures, as well as installation or upgrades to wells and septic systems are not considered part of the exemption noted above for additions to buildings as they are considered independent structures, and all of which is open to interpretation by MTO as the redevelopment of agricultural lands for commercial purposes; and

WHEREAS definitions of a farm are not consistent across provincial legislation and regulations and provincial policies such as Highway Access Management policies, Grow Ontario Strategy, 2024

Provincial Planning Statement and On Farm Diversified Use policies often seem at odds with each other,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Federation of Agriculture work with OMAFA and MTO to put in place reasonable exemptions for farm businesses to add agricultural buildings, such as grain bins and dryers, to their property without being reclassified as a commercial entity and subject to the additional costs to upgrade or change their property entrances onto a controlled access highway.

Background Information:

In Renfrew County, along Highway 17, some farms have been upgrading or expanding their facilities to include new agriculture buildings, mainly for grain storage and handling. In instances where the farm property is in the MTO Zone of Control, following facility developments or expansions, MTO can reclassify the farm business as a commercial entity, which allows MTO to enforce changes to entrance permits onto controlled access highways. Some members have been experiencing this challenge when seeking permits to expand their operations. MTO has advised these members that they would be required to move their entrance onto the controlled access highway to an alternative access point, like a sideroad, before they would be granted a building permit. These required changes in entrances will result in additional costs to the landowner and the municipality.

**12. Perth
Rail Butchery**

WHEREAS rail butchery is not recognized as a skilled trade in Ontario; and

WHEREAS there is a need for more trained butchers; and

WHEREAS a rail butcher is a tradesperson specialized in slaughtering, reducing carcasses to primal cuts, and further reducing to retail cuts; and

WHEREAS a retail meat cutter is considered a skilled trade but it is only responsible for preparing primal cuts into smaller cuts intended for sale in a retail environment, such as a grocery store,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Federation of Agriculture work with Meat and Poultry Ontario and all other appropriate commodity groups to lobby the provincial government to:

- a) have rail butchery included in the list of skilled trades as defined by Skill Trades Ontario
- b) investigate/develop appropriate butchering courses with Ontario post-secondary institutions.

**13. Elgin
Bill C-293**

WHEREAS Bill C-293 has the potential to abruptly alter livestock operations throughout the Country with its vague references to animal agriculture; and

WHEREAS Bill C-293 grants government officials arbitrary discretionary power to close agricultural facilities without clear criteria; and

WHEREAS livestock production is one of the backbones of agriculture as we know it,
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ontario Federation of Agriculture work with all of the livestock commodities, and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, to inform all farming members about the implications of Bill C-293.

Background Information:

Section L of Bill C-293:

- **(l)** after consultation with the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, the Minister of Industry and provincial governments, provide for measures to
 - **(i)** reduce the risks posed by antimicrobial resistance,
 - **(ii)** regulate commercial activities that can contribute to pandemic risk, including industrial animal agriculture,
 - **(iii)** promote commercial activities that can help reduce pandemic risk, including the production of alternative proteins, and
 - **(iv)** phase out commercial activities that disproportionately contribute to pandemic risk, including activities that involve high-risk species