



## News & Notes

*Working for a Vibrant and Innovative Agriculture Industry*

### Message from the President Allan Carruthers

2024 is almost complete! It's been a great year for most crops here in Northumberland County with exceptional yields, although the summer made it challenging to get dry hay. There are many challenges on the farm that can tax our energy physically and mentally.

Please take some time to reflect and recharge your batteries and enjoy your family during this upcoming holiday season. On behalf of Northumberland Federation of Agriculture I would like to wish every one of our members and their families a very

special Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year. Please feel free to contact anyone of your NFA team with questions or concerns and we can discuss them further at our county meetings in 2025. Enjoy the holiday season.

*Allan*

#### Inside this issue:

Directors contact info	2
Resi's Report	2
Preserving Farmland	2
A Year in Review	3
OFA AGM	4
2025 Food Trends	4
Canada Ag Day Feb. 11th	4

### Notes from



### Agriculture Issues

The OFA AGM 2024 has come and gone and by all accounts was a resounding success. There were 14 resolutions up for discussion. Renfrew County submitted a resolution on MDS 2 that suggests livestock operations ought to take priority in areas zoned agriculture. The resolution recognizes that encroaching non-farm land uses can sometimes restrict livestock expansion on an existing farm. The resolution was defeated on the floor. At the first full board meeting following the AGM, the board follows much the same resolution process as the AGM. While the decision from the floor was upheld, the board moved that further discussion is warranted. I want to recognize Prince Edward Federation for working with OFA and OMAFA staff to prepare a resolution to have Water hemp, Fleabane and Palmer Amaranth added to the noxious weed list. An amendment came from the floor and Phragmites were added.

Prince Edward is experiencing real issues when non-farm people buy a farm and decide the best use for the land is to let it return to the natural environment. That is their decision, but along with that decision comes the responsibility to control noxious weeds.

I would like to draw attention to a proposal to turn 1600 acres of Prime Agricultural land between Port Hope and Cobourg into houses. Whether you are for it or against it, the influx of that many people will definitely have an influence on agriculture in the western part of the county. OFA acknowledges the need for development but at the same time recognizes that farmland, particularly class 1 and 2 farmland is a finite resource and every effort must be made to preserve it for future generations.

As my first year as your director comes to a close, I feel privileged to have been your director on the provincial board. If I look behind me, I can see the bottom of that steep learning curve, but looking forward, the top remains out of sight. As always, I encourage all to get involved in your OFA. It's as simple as checking out the website. I had no idea how important it was to be involved, until I got involved.

I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year

**Brian Crews, OFA Provincial Director Zone 12**



# Resi's Report OFA Member Service Rep

## Be Social

Like us on Facebook:  
@OFAzone12



www.FARM911.ca

## NFA Directors 2025

**President**  
**Allan Carruthers**  
**Alnwick/Haldimand**  
905-376-5049  
carruthersallan@gmail.com

**Vice President**  
**Brighton - Martin Opsteen**  
613-920-1170  
martinopsteen@gmail.com

**OFA Director**  
**Brian Crews**  
613-391-8990  
brian-crews@ofa.on.ca

**PAC - Lisa Meekes**  
905-269-7419  
nfa.lisam@gmail.com

**Cramahe - Matt McComb**  
905-373-8200  
matt.mccomb88@gmail.com

**Hamilton - Paul Burnham**  
905-372-8263  
burnham.market@sympatico.ca

**Port Hope - Brian Nelson**  
519-835-2964  
brnelson17@gmail.com

**Trent Hills - Kristen Carberry**  
226-343-1344  
carberry.holsteins@gmail.com

### Directors at Large

**Bruce Buttar - 905-373-6175**  
happyus@xplornet.ca

**Bette Jean Crews - 613-921-0597**  
bettejean.crews@gmail.com

**Rod DeJong - 905-375-4370**  
dejongrn@gmail.com

**Reuben DeJong - 905-207-8530**  
dejongcropcare@gmail.com

**Arlene Dorland - 613-475-0891**  
dorlandab@xplornet.com

### OFA Members Service Rep

**Resi Walt** 613-847-3037  
Toll free: 877-277-3037  
resi.walt@ofa.on.ca

### Northumberland County Rep

**Trissia Mellor, Ag Manager**  
905-372-3329 ext. 6492

### Conclusion of the Farmer Wellness Program

We wish to let our members know that as of December 31, 2024, the Farmer Wellness Program (FWP) will conclude its service in Northumberland and the seven counties where it's available. When we launched the FWP, farmers didn't have access to counselling services tailored to their needs. Now, farmers have access to the provincial Farmer Wellness Initiative – a free and unlimited service for farmers across the province.

We appreciate NFA's support of the FWP and their commitment to helping farmers get access to the mental health services they need. We truly believe the grassroots FWP paved the way for the provincial FWI. To access it, call **1-866-267-6255** or [farmerwellnessinitiative.ca/](http://farmerwellnessinitiative.ca/)

### New mental health self-assessment tool [hayareyouok.ca/](http://hayareyouok.ca/)

Check out a new tool launched by Bayer Crop Science and Do More Ag. The resource uses statistics from the National Survey of Farmer Mental Health, involving producers from across Canada, conducted by Dr. Jones and Dr. Briana Hagen in 2018 and 2021. The self-assessment is confidential and helps boost awareness of the signs and symptoms of poor mental health.

### OFA Annual General Meeting

A big thank you to all of the delegates who represented Northumberland at the two-day event.

For any members who wish to watch any of the guest speakers, or panels, watch on our YouTube page at [youtube.com/ontariofarms](http://youtube.com/ontariofarms)

The agenda and resolutions is available here: [ofa.on.ca/community/annual-general-meeting/](http://ofa.on.ca/community/annual-general-meeting/)

Finally, President Drew Spoelstra was re-elected for another one-year term by the board of directors immediately following the AGM.

### Cultivating Local

In response to the increasing demand and interest in selling local food, OFA has launched the *Cultivating Local* workshop series offering 9 free online workshops to help new and experienced farmers looking to learn more about the opportunities to sell direct to consumers in Ontario. These webinars are open to everyone and are available for viewing after their launch dates.

1. Market Trends and In-Demand Local Products in Ontario: November 14
2. Getting Started in Value-Added Agriculture, Food and Beverage November 21
3. Selling at Farmers' Markets December 5
4. Selling to Restaurants and Institutions December 12
5. Selling Online and Leveraging Social Media Platforms January 9
6. Labeling and Attributes: Organic, Free-Range, Gluten-Free, and more January 16
7. Exploring Agritourism Opportunities January 30
8. Selling Local in Rural and Remote Ontario February 13
9. Beyond Food: Opportunities in Textiles, Ornamental Horticulture and More February 27

**Resi Walt** Member Service Representative  
Hastings, Lennox and Addington, Northumberland, Prince Edward

Learn more at [ofa.on.ca/cultivating-local](http://ofa.on.ca/cultivating-local)

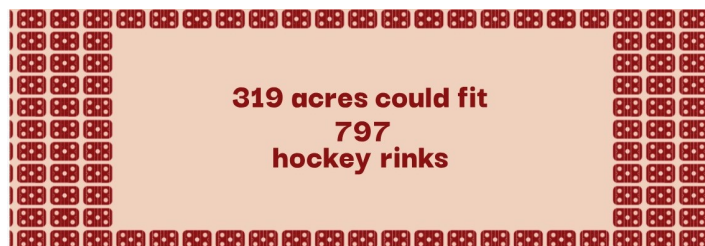
\*\*\*\*\*

## Preserving Farmland

The last calculation showed that we in Ontario are losing 319 acres of farmland per day to development. Those figures were taken from the latest census as compared to the previous one. Stay aware of the development in your area and attend the meetings. This affects the agriculture industry everywhere and affects how farming is done in our county.

Check out the Home grown page and sign the petition.

[homegrownofa.ca/](http://homegrownofa.ca/)



NFA was able to donate  
**\$1000**

to Northumberland Food 4 All which helps keep safe and healthy food available to all the groups who use this facility.



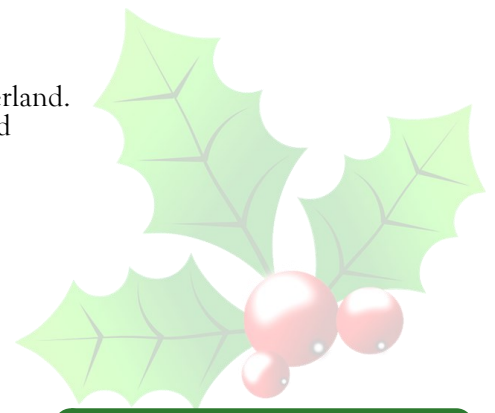
Miss any newsletters or want to find an old one? Try out this QR Code to take you right to the page

# A Year in Review - 2024

In 2024 NFA directors continued to advocate for the agriculture industry in Northumberland. Monthly board meetings as well as events and special meeting kept the directors busy and engaged. The following is a list of things NFA has been working on for you!

- Migrant Workers Taco dinner in Victoria Park
- Scholarships awarded to Northumberland Youth for their schooling
- Grain Entrapment Workshop for first responders @ TCO
- Foodland Ontario flag donated to Northumberland county for AG Week
- Delegates represent Northumberland at OFA AGM in Toronto
- Advocating for farmers to eliminate the Storm Water Management Fee in Cobourg
- Cost of Community presentation to County Council
- Helped facilitate OFA Connect Zone 12 members meeting
- Breakfast meetings with MP Lawrence and MPP Piccini
- Spring Radio Campaign about road safety on Classic Rock 107.9
- Promoted the Guardian Network Workshop for suicide prevention
- Was part of a panel on SWM at the virtual Policy Advisory Committee of OFA
- Tree dedication for Sid Atkinson on the Atkinson farm
- Crop signs in place for the season for consumer awareness
- Reviewing County drain policy with staff
- Panelists on the Local Food Solution Think Tank head in in Hastings
- Supported farmers with their local municipal policy issues
- Facilitating the PoliAg tour linking local politicians with Northumberland's Ag Industry
- Participating in farmland preservation meetings

When you get a chance thank this dynamic group of farmers who continue to volunteer their time to keep policies that affect agriculture in Northumberland "farmer friendly".  
Way to go NFA and keep up the good work for 2025.



Welcome  
**Matt McComb**  
to our board of directors.

## Mental Health Moment

Great news for farmers and mental health as our local program is replaced. Check out the web site and familiarize yourself with it. You never know if a loved one may need help or yourself and knowing about what is available is an essential tool.

[farmerwellnessinitiative.ca/](http://farmerwellnessinitiative.ca/)

FARMER  
**WELLNESS  
INITIATIVE**

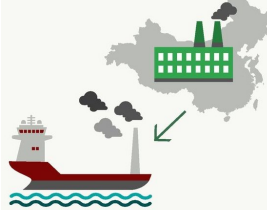
**Agriculture  
Wellness  
Ontario**

Mental Health Support, Education and Community

## Support a Farmer and Stay Real!

### Fake Trees

Manufactured and shipped from **factories** in China, Taiwan and South Korea



Distances of **nearly 10,000km**

### Real Trees

Grow right here in Canada, needing only **sunlight, rainfall and soil**



Approximately **70,000 acres** of farmland allocated to growing Christmas trees



### Annual General Meeting

Thursday, January 18, 2025

Alderville Community Centre

8913 County Rd. 45 Alderville

Trade Show 5pm

Dinner 6 pm

Meeting to follow

Tickets \$25.00

Contact 905-344-1100 or any director

### 2024 Annual General Meeting

### Ontario Agriculture:

*Always in Season*



The OFA AGM was well represented by Northumberland farmers. We heard from numerous politicians who were engaged with the issues of our industry. There were two panel discussions, one about having effective municipal delegations and the other on the role agriculture will play in delivering energy. It is also valuable to listen to the support and opposition to the resolutions presented, which gives all delegates an opportunity to hear first hand about the issues for agriculture in the province. There is a nice video year in review for OFA and a short video on what local federations have been doing in 2024 and Northumberland is in it. The team is working for You.

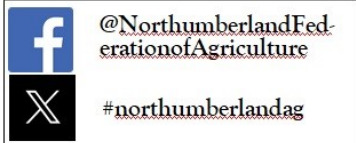
You can watch the video recording of the whole event here.

[www.youtube.com/OntarioFarms](http://www.youtube.com/OntarioFarms)



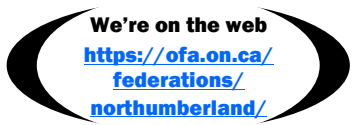
**NORTHUMBERLAND  
FEDERATION OF  
AGRICULTURE**

Contact: *Lisa Meekes*  
Secretary-Treasurer/Newsletter Editor  
1246 Dingman Rd. Castleton, ON K0K1M0  
Phone: 905-269-7419  
Email: [nfa.lisam@gmail.com](mailto:nfa.lisam@gmail.com)



@NorthumberlandFed-  
erationofAgriculture


#northumberlandag



We're on the web

[https://ofa.on.ca/  
federations/  
northumberland/](https://ofa.on.ca/federations/northumberland/)

**Gadgets**  
Digital resource that you  
may find useful.



Do you know what it means to be AG Data Transparent? In this new digital age we need to learn to protect our data. Let's push for companies to have this seal of approval.  
Learn more here.  
<https://www.agdatatransparent.ca/om/about>



Let's celebrate the food we love



**February  
11, 2025**

**How will  
you  
Celebrate?**

[cdn-ag-day/](http://cdn-ag-day/)



**HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE AND BEST WISHES  
FOR A SAFE & PROSPEROUS 2025**

*Lisa*

## Right to Repair Gets Royal Assent

In November, two federal bills received Royal Assent in Canada, marking a significant step forward for consumers and farmers alike in their ability to repair and service the products they rely on daily. These include a wide range of items, such as phones, fridges, and even tractors. The legislation is particularly important for farmers, who have faced challenges in repairing their own equipment due to restrictions imposed by digital locks and passwords embedded in modern farm machinery.

Without laws protecting repair rights, farmers who attempt to repair their equipment on their own or through independent technicians risk violating Canada's Copyright Act by bypassing these digital barriers. As agricultural machinery increasingly incorporates digital systems, this issue has become more prevalent.

In contrast, the automotive industry in Canada has had right-to-repair laws in place for decades, allowing independent mechanics to access the same repair manuals and software as dealerships. This has led farm organizations such as the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture to advocate for similar laws to support farmers.

The passing of Bill C-244 and Bill C-294, both of which received Royal Assent, is a victory for farmers. These bills aim to protect farmers' right to repair their own equipment, and work is now underway to draft the regulations that will guide their implementation. This legislative development is expected to make it easier for farmers to maintain their machinery and reduce their dependence on expensive dealership services.

Check out OFA Vice President Ethan Wallace's interview on CBC Radio about the topic.

[www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-112-ontario-morning/clip/16115161-ontario-farmers-fighting-right-repair-equipment](http://www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-112-ontario-morning/clip/16115161-ontario-farmers-fighting-right-repair-equipment)



The ninth annual edition of Nourish Marketing trend report for 2025 from Canada's only marketing agency specializing in the food sector from field to fork

- ⇒ Intuitive Cooking
- ⇒ Life After Ozempic
- ⇒ Enhanced Hydration
- ⇒ Eating For Longevity
- ⇒ Multisensory Eating Experiences
- ⇒ Dine-Out-Level Experience at Home
- ⇒ Plant Based finds it's Groove
- ⇒ See Genetics to Cope with Climate Change

Check it out here and learn more about what consumers will be looking for.

[2025 Food & Beverage Trend Report: Insights for Innovation & Growth | Nourish Food Marketing](https://www.nourishfoodmarketing.com/2025-Food-Beverage-Trend-Report-Insights-for-Innovation-Growth)