



**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
AGRICULTURAL POLICY & ACTION COMMITTEE
FINAL AGENDA**

APAC 2-2021

Friday, April 30, 2021

9:00 a.m.

Meeting will be held by electronic participation only

Due to efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 and to protect all individuals, there is no public access to Niagara Region Headquarters. If you are interested in viewing this meeting or would like to speak to an item listed on the agenda please contact the Office of the Regional Clerk at clerk@niagararegion.ca at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

	Pages
1. <u>CALL TO ORDER</u>	
2. <u>DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST</u>	
3. <u>PRESENTATIONS</u>	
3.1. <u>Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) Greater Golden Horseshoe Agricultural System</u>	3 - 31
Helma Geerts, Policy Advisor, and Nick Kinkel, Agriculture & Rural Economic Development Advisor, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs	
3.2. <u>Food Security and Expanding Access to Nutritional Food Throughout the Niagara Region</u>	
Renee Delaney, Resident, Town of Allanburg and Steven Soos, Resident, City of Welland	
4. <u>DELEGATIONS</u>	
5. <u>ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION</u>	

6. CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- | | | |
|------|--|---------|
| 6.1. | <u>PDS 13-2021</u>

Municipal By-law Enforcement Appointments - Woodland Conservation By-law | 32 - 34 |
| 6.2. | <u>CWCD 2021-92</u>

Correspondence from The Honourable Ernie Hardeman, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, to Regional Chair Bradley, dated April 14, 2021, respecting \$10 Million Investment to Extend Funding for a Re-designed Enhanced Agri-food Workplace Protection Program | 35 - 36 |
| 6.3. | <u>APAC 1-2021</u>

Agricultural Policy and Action Committee Meeting Minutes - February 26, 2021 | 37 - 42 |

7. OTHER BUSINESS

- | | | |
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| 7.1. | <u>Irrigation Update</u> | 43 |
| 7.2. | <u>Farm Help Housing Update</u> | |
| 7.3. | <u>Migrant Farm Worker Vaccinations</u> | |

8. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Friday, September 24, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

9. ADJOURNMENT

If you require any accommodations for a disability in order to attend or participate in meetings or events, please contact the Accessibility Advisor at 905-980-6000 ext. 3252 (office), 289-929-8376 (cellphone) or accessibility@niagararegion.ca (email).



Implementing the Agricultural System

Niagara Region

Agricultural Policy & Action Committee
(APAC)

April 30, 2021

Helma Geerts and Nick Kinkel
OMAFRA

Today's discussion

Significance of the agri-food sector and rationale for the Agricultural System approach

Provincial Agricultural System policy

- Greenbelt Plan, A Place to Grow, Niagara Escarpment Plan

Agricultural Land Base mapping

Economic development

- Approach and resources
- Examples

Future steps

Greater Golden Horseshoe

Best farmland under pressure

Agriculture

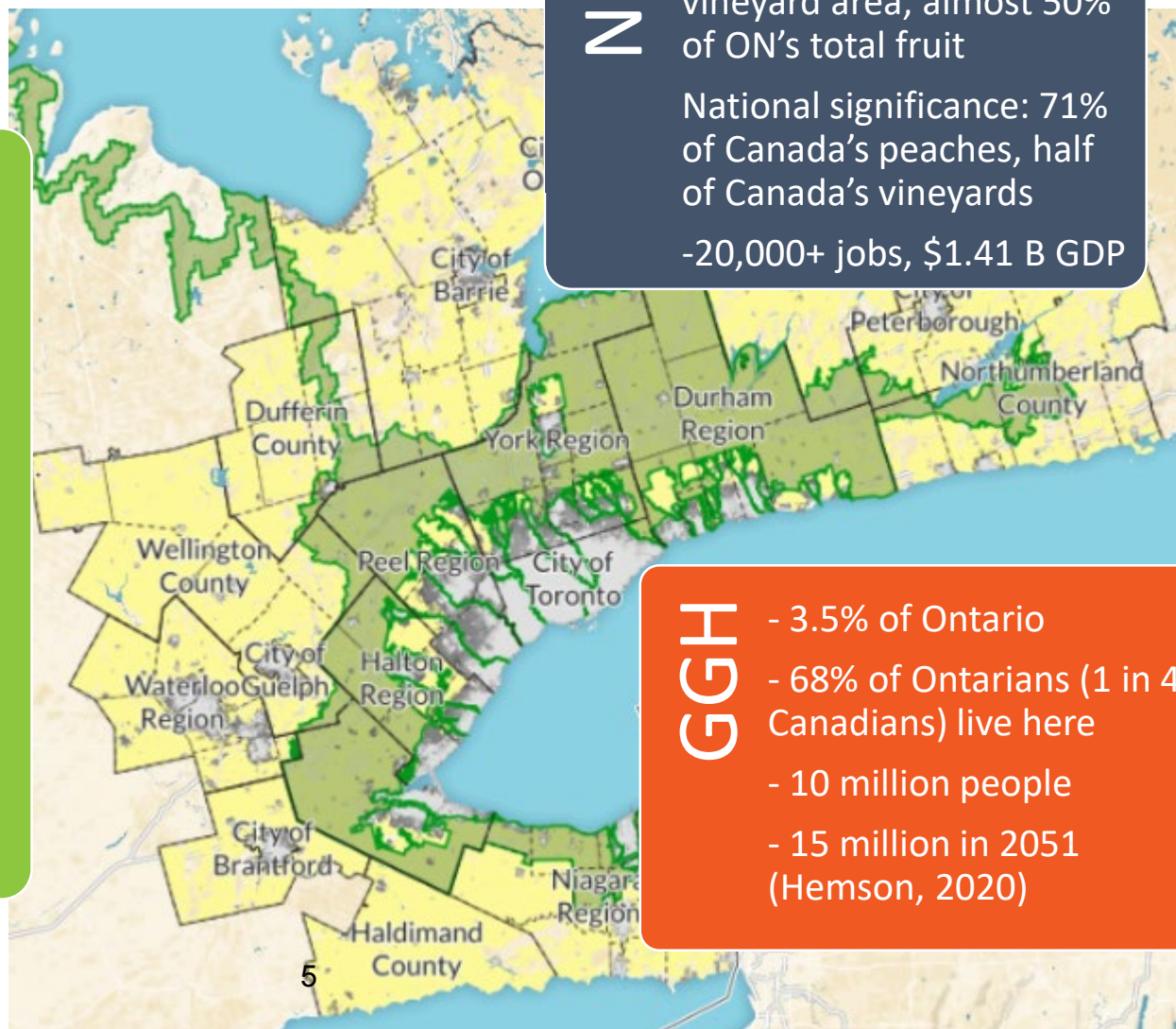
- 40% in agriculture
- 60% prime agricultural land
- 42% of ON's best Class 1 land
- 2 specialty crop areas
- \$5 B in gross farm receipts
- 3000 farms sell direct to consumers
- 38% of ON's livestock
- One of North America's largest food processing clusters

Niagara

- Gross farm receipts >2.5 times the ON average
- 90% of ON's peach acreage; 92% of ON's vineyard area, almost 50% of ON's total fruit
- National significance: 71% of Canada's peaches, half of Canada's vineyards
- 20,000+ jobs, \$1.41 B GDP

GGH

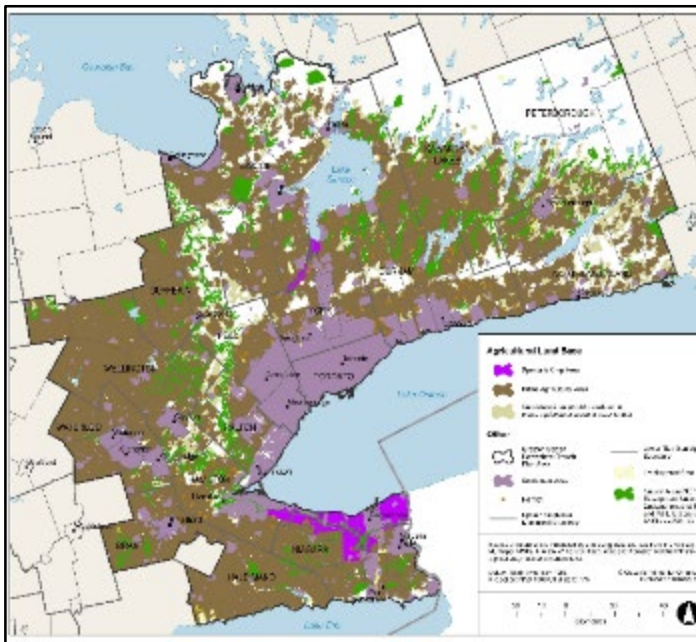
- 3.5% of Ontario
- 68% of Ontarians (1 in 4 Canadians) live here
- 10 million people
- 15 million in 2051 (Hemson, 2020)



What is the Agricultural System approach?

*An **Agricultural System** is a group of inter-connected elements that together create a viable, thriving agricultural sector*

Agricultural Land Base



Continuous, productive land base comprised of prime agricultural areas and other lands that support agricultural production

Agri-Food Network

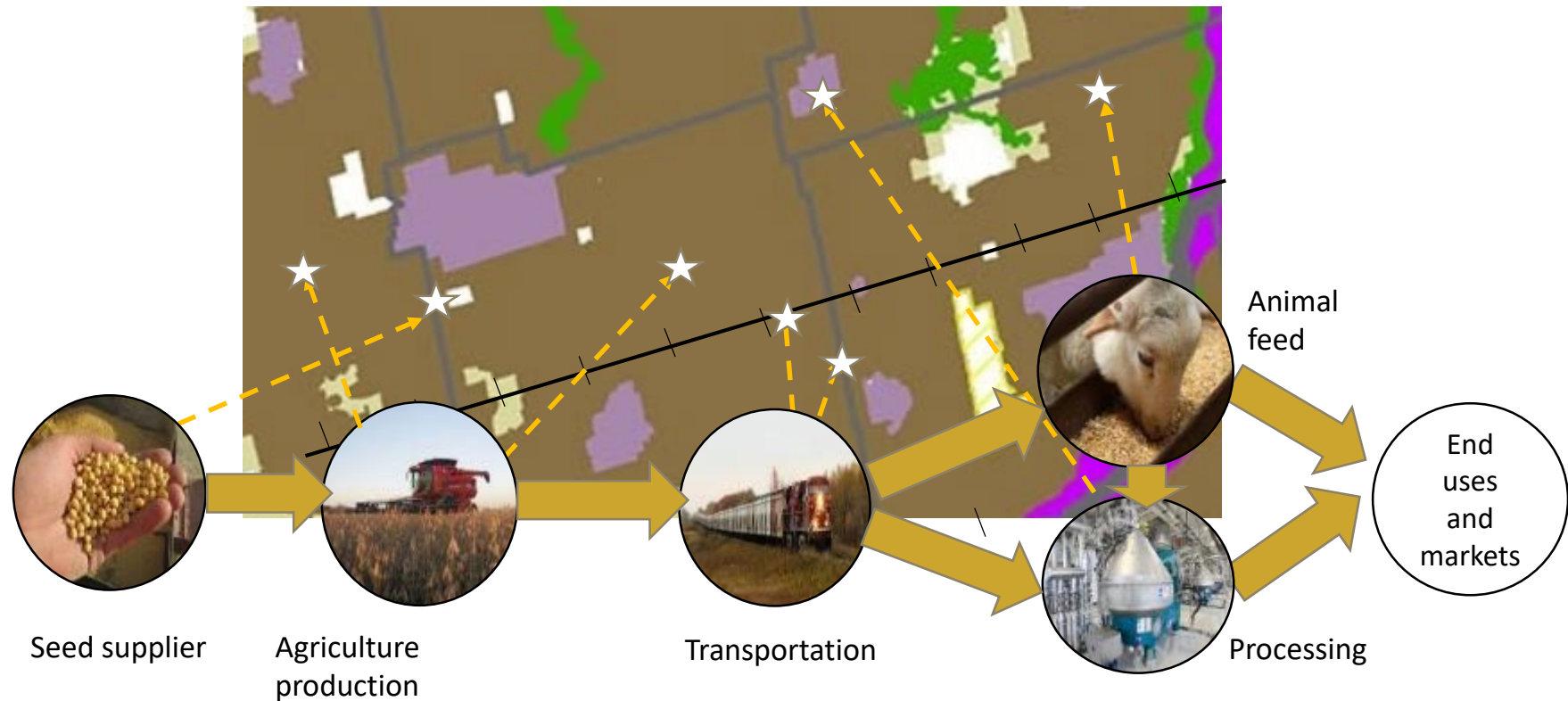


Infrastructure, services, and agri-food assets (processors, feed mills, etc.) important to the viability of the agri-food sector



Agricultural System Concept

- ✓ Ontarians expect government to protect farmland to support economic opportunities and provide a measure of food security.
- ✓ To make business decisions, farmers need to know the land is secure and supply chain is intact.
- ✓ Enabling the agri-food sector to grow and prosper requires deliberate, strategic planning.
- ✓ Impacts on the Agricultural System are considered before decisions are made

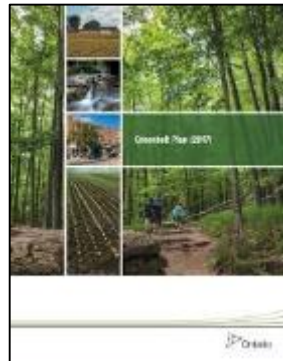


A thriving agri-food sector depends on a protected land base and a complete supply chain that may extend across municipal boundaries

Provincial agricultural system policy

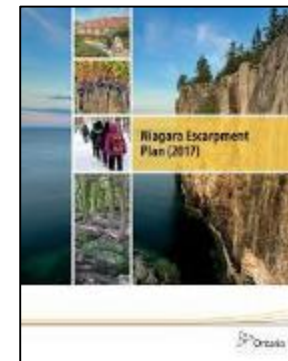
A Place to Grow and Greenbelt Plan

- Municipalities are **required** to protect the agricultural land base and enhance the economic connections to the agri-food network
- Municipalities are **encouraged** to implement regional agri-food strategies and actions to sustain and enhance the agricultural system and economic prosperity



Niagara Escarpment Plan

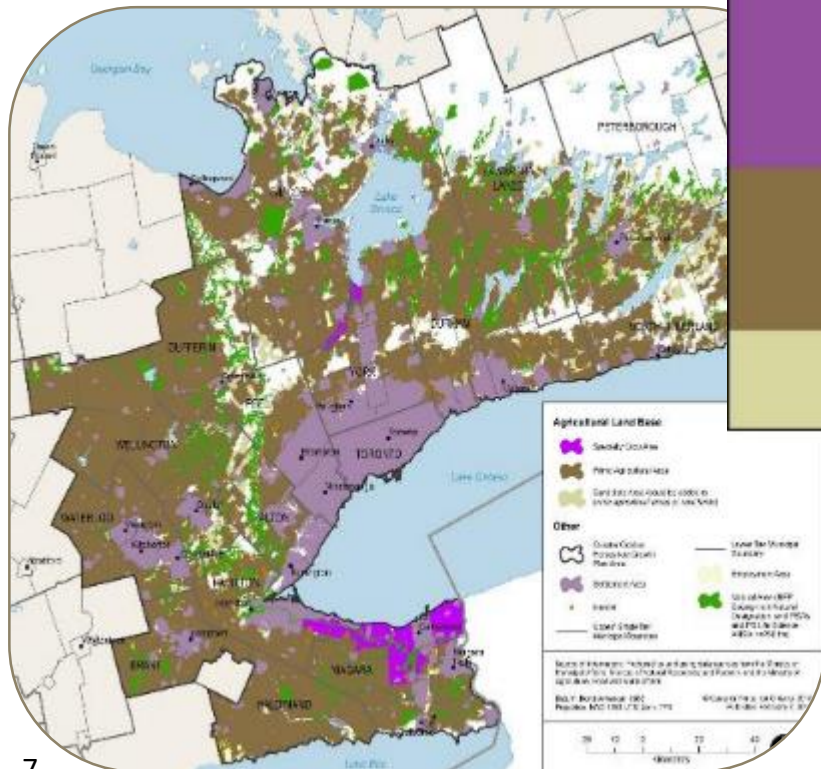
- Prime agricultural areas in the NEP area should be identified according to the broader Agricultural System, recognizing both the agricultural land base and agri-food network
- Linkages to the Agricultural System outside the plan's area should be considered



See Appendix A for
detailed policies

Agricultural land base mapping refinements

- A collaborative process between municipalities and the Province using criteria in the Implementation Procedures



Specialty crop areas
Defined by Greenbelt Plan

- No municipal refinement

Prime agricultural areas
Designated in official plans or identified by OMAFRA

- Municipal refinement under specific circumstances

Candidate areas for the agricultural land base

- Could be added to *prime agricultural areas* or identified as *rural lands*
- Flexible approach to refinement

Outside the agricultural land base

- Not part of the agricultural land base refinement

- Occur during municipal OP review
- Within the Greenbelt area, provincial mapping applied when it was released (2018)
- In the area under APTG, mapping applies when incorporated into the OP

Agricultural System Implementation Procedures

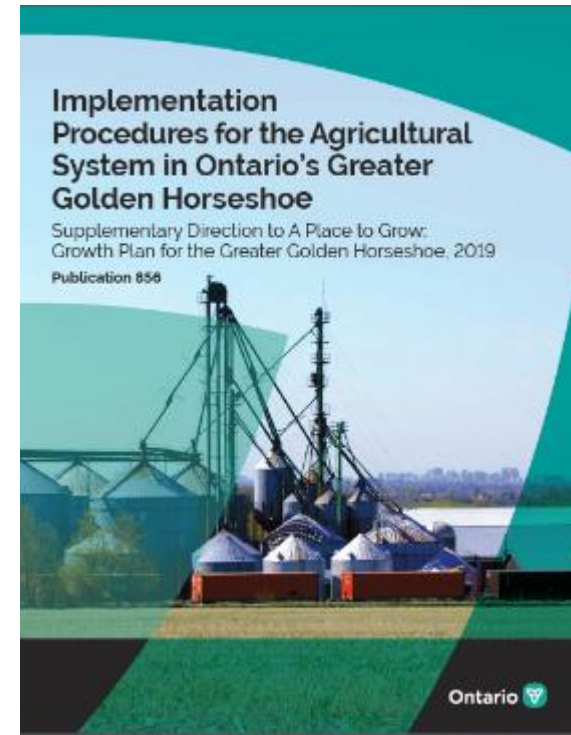
- Guides Agricultural System implementation
- Is “supplementary direction” to APTG

Land use planning:

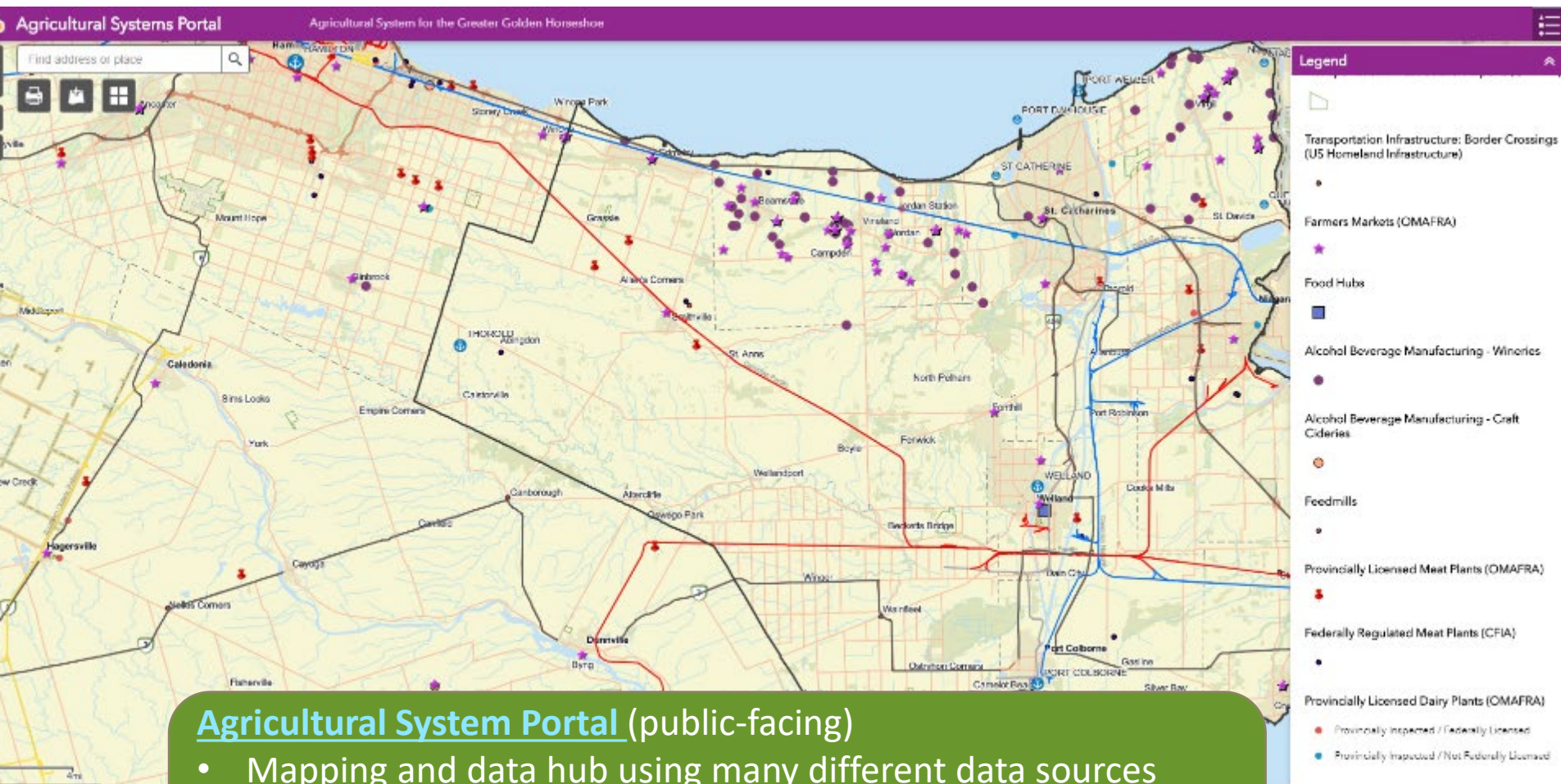
- Explains how the agricultural land base was identified, treatment of overlapping Natural Heritage and Agricultural Systems, implementation of the AgS prior to completion of the MCR, and criteria for municipal refinements to the agricultural land base.

Economic development:

- Discusses how to consider impacts on the Ag System when decisions are made on investments, growth, programs, policies, and services
- Introduces the agriculture economic development process and provides ideas to strengthen the prosperity of the agri-food sector depending on municipal capacity



Agricultural System Portal showing elements of the agri-food network in and around Niagara Region

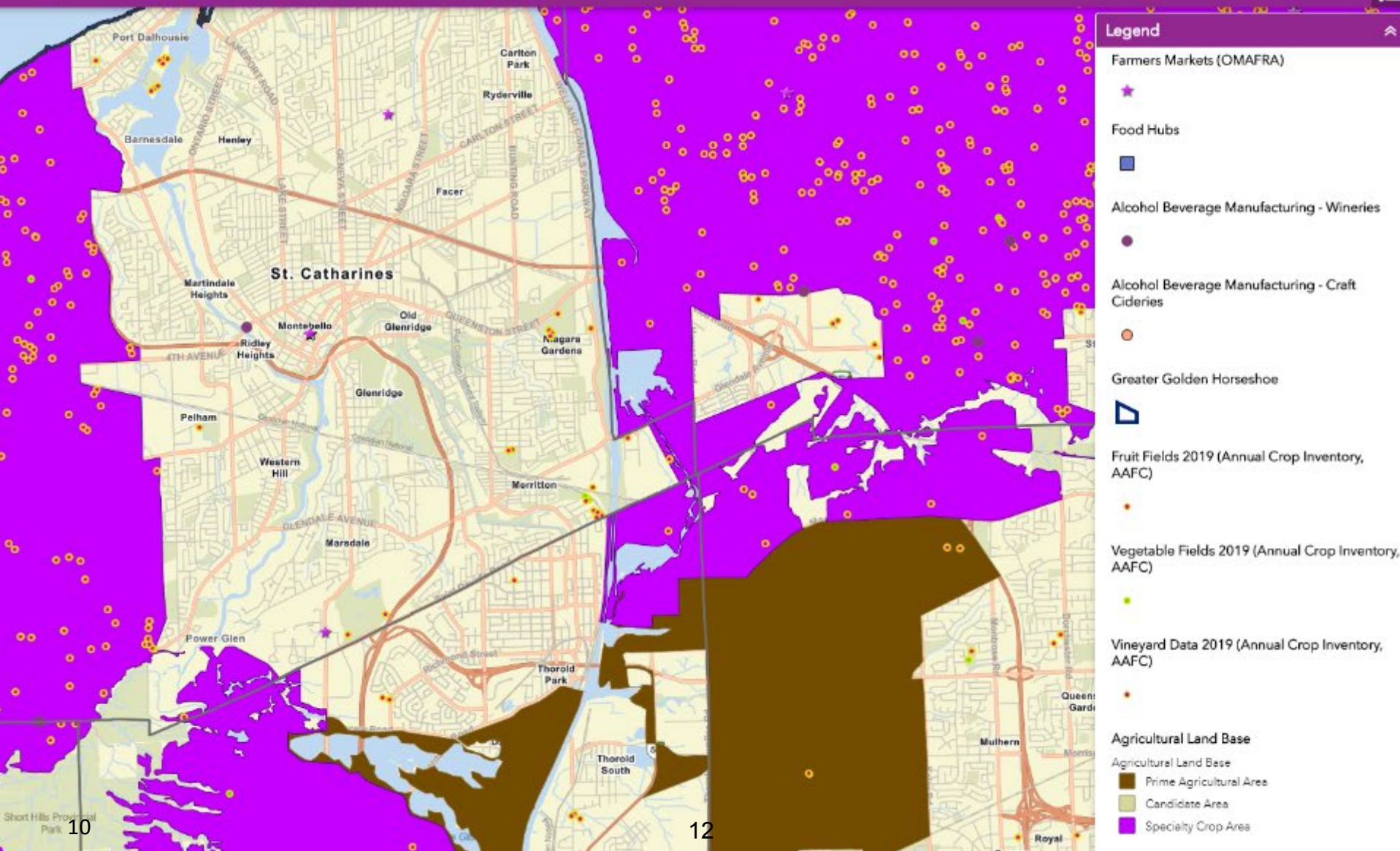


Agricultural System Portal (public-facing)

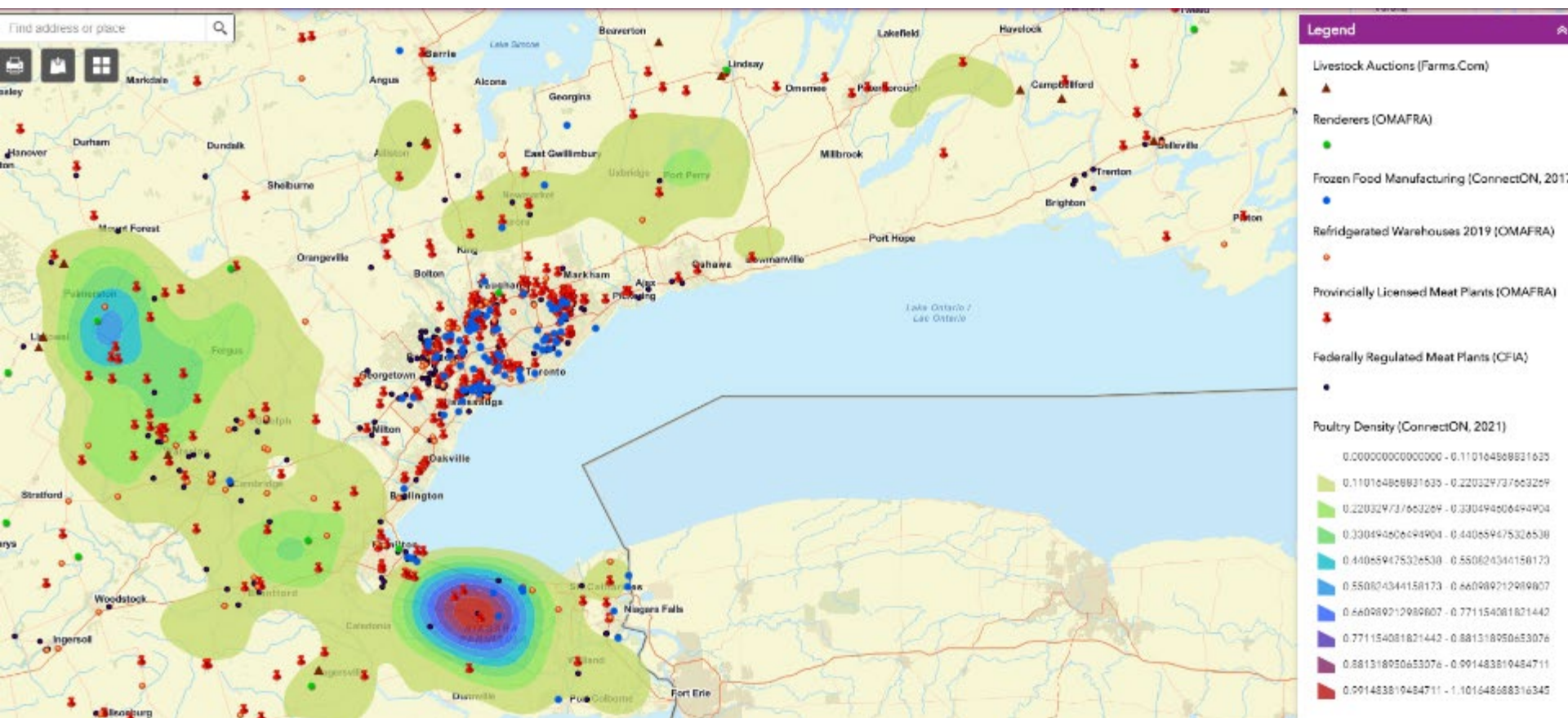
- Mapping and data hub using many different data sources
- Used to identify agri-food clusters, attract and locate new businesses, and inform Agricultural Impact Assessments
- Most layers can be downloaded to recreate maps in own GIS

Fruits and Vegetables

Agricultural System for the Greater Golden Horseshoe



Poultry



Agricultural Impact Assessments (AIA)

to improve compatibility between agricultural and non-agricultural uses

- A study to evaluate potential impacts of non-agricultural development on the Agricultural System (farmland, farm operations and the agri-food network).
 - Determines how to avoid impacts (e.g., through site selection), and recommends ways to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts (e.g., through site design, use of buffers).
 - For aggregates, addresses rehabilitation to an agricultural condition where that is required.
- Provincial guidance expected to be released soon.
- **A Place to Grow** and **Greenbelt Plan** require AIAs for
 - Settlement area boundary expansions
 - Mineral aggregate operations
 - Infrastructure projects
- **Niagara Escarpment Plan** requires AIAs for
 - Mineral aggregate operations
 - Infrastructure projects



Agriculture Economic Development

What is it?

The Agriculture Economic Development resource, helps create the right conditions for local agri-business to prosper.

Purpose:

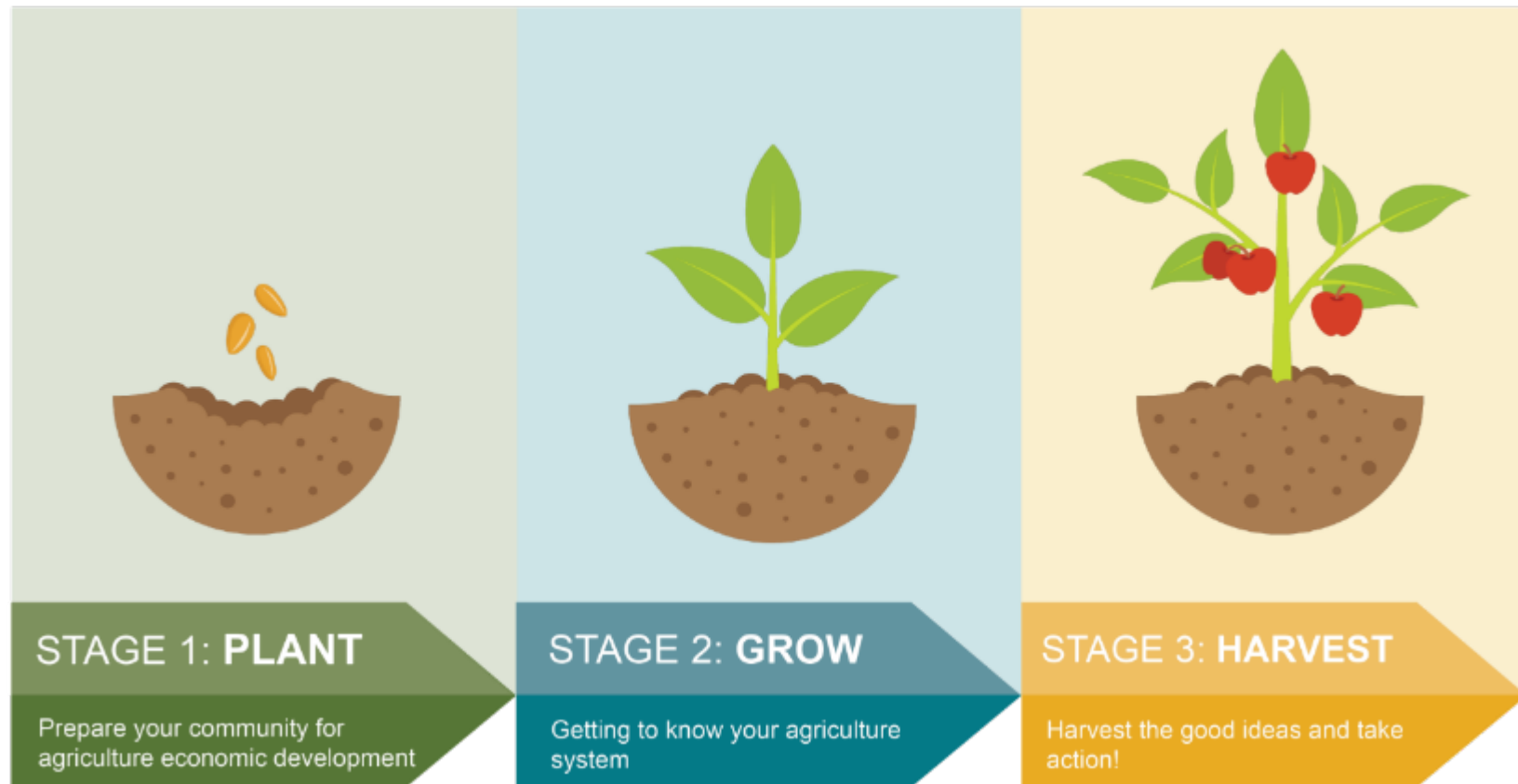
The Agriculture Economic Development resource helps communities to:

- Identify opportunities, assets and challenges to agriculture economic development
- Support their community strategic planning process



A Resource Guide for
Communities

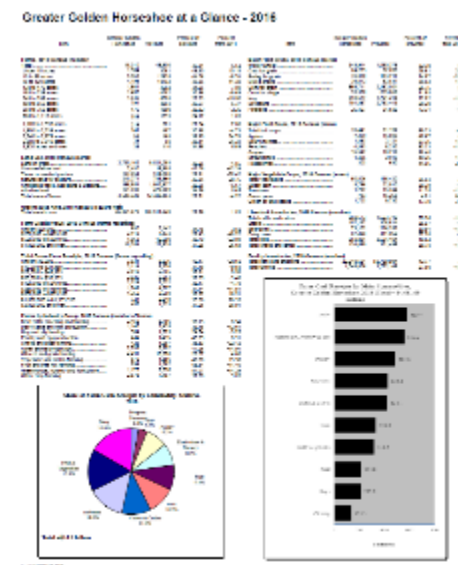
Agriculture Economic Development: A Process for Change



Supporting Communities: Know the Sector to Grow the Sector

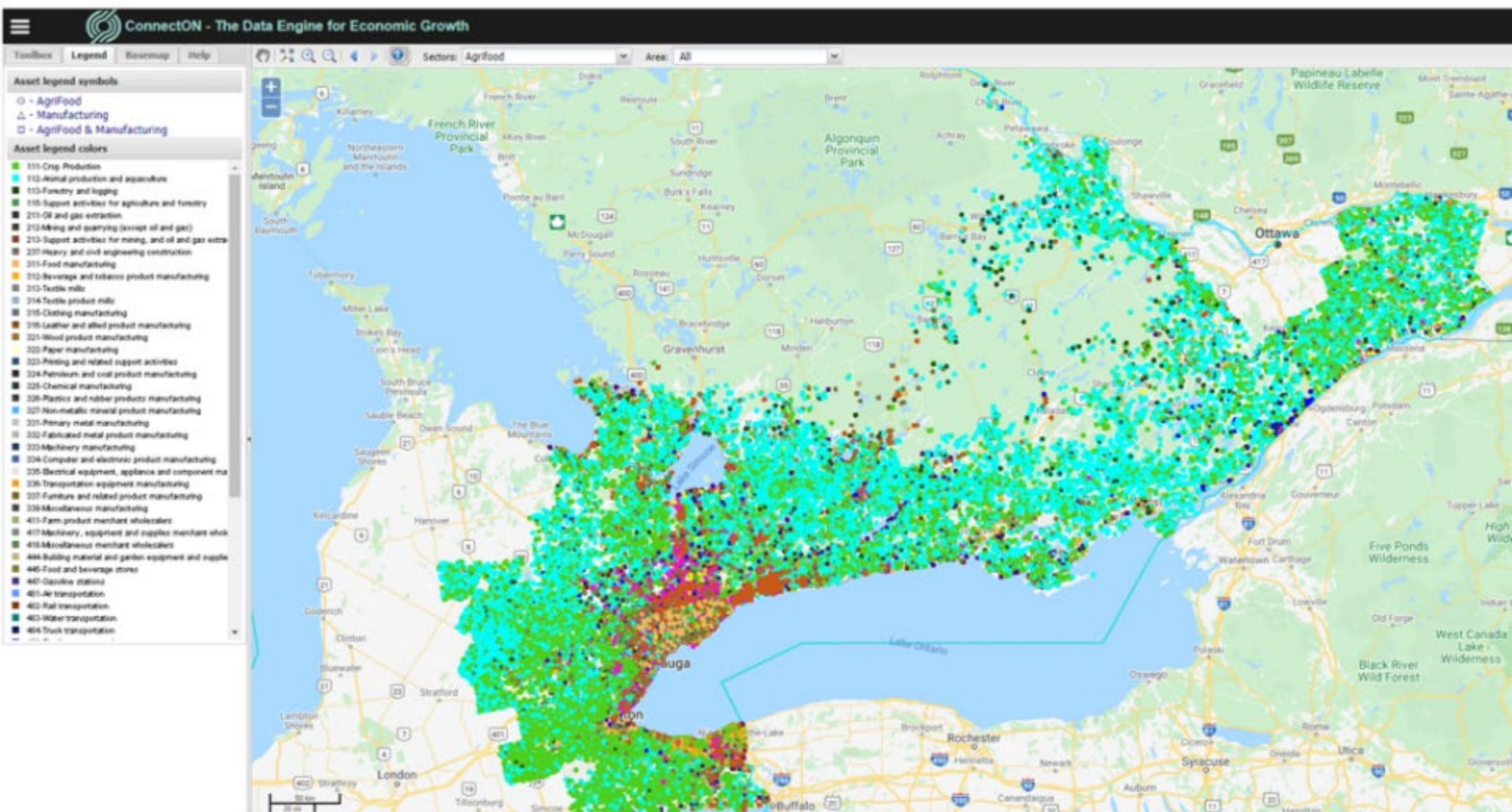
Data can help communities identify strategic opportunities to grow the sector and support an Ag Systems Approach

- [OMAFRA Agricultural Information Atlas](#)
- [Census of Agriculture](#)
- [OMAFRA Agricultural Census Maps](#)
- [AAFC Soil Survey Reports](#)
- [County Agricultural Profiles](#)
- [County Business Profiles](#)
- [OMAFRA Ag System Portal](#)
- [OMAFRA's Regional Economic Analysis Tool \(Analyst\)](#)
- [GHFFA's ConnectON Asset Mapping Tool](#)



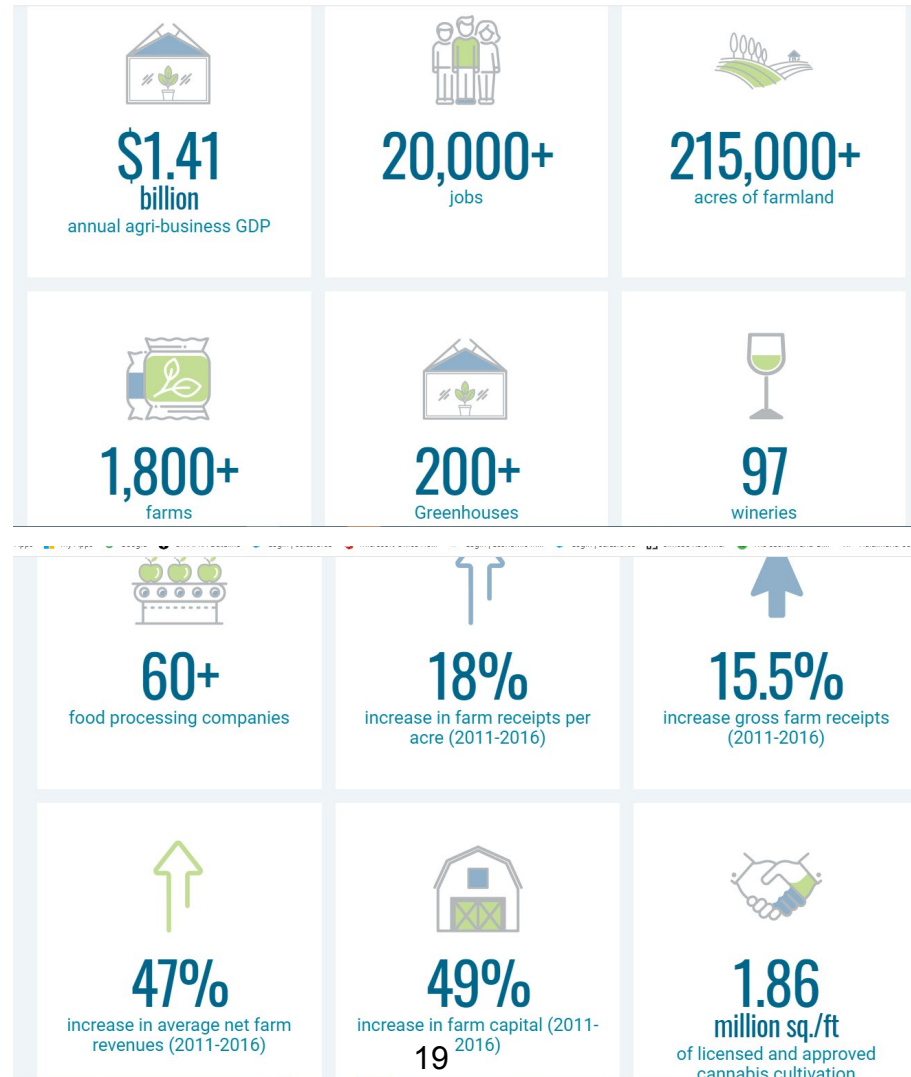
ConnectON agri-food business assets

Expanding province-wide



Know the Sector to Grow the Sector

Niagara's Agri Business



STAGE 1: PLANT

Prepare your community for agriculture economic development

The first step is to plant the seed:

- develop an understanding of community readiness
- build a baseline understanding of local agriculture
- identify and share opportunities for agriculture economic development
- organize an advisory committee or leadership team and
- provide direction to identified collaborators (roles and responsibilities).

STAGE 2: GROW

Getting to know your agriculture system

The next step is to build an inventory of what is going on in the *Agriculture System* in the community. From this baseline data, trends and strengths can be identified. Conversations are held about the *Agriculture System* with local collaborators. Opportunities are identified to provide the evidence needed to garner support for new initiatives:

- develop an inventory of activities taking place across the *Agriculture System*
- engage with the agricultural community (e.g., surveys, focus groups) and
- conduct data analysis, environmental scans and opportunity identification.

STAGE 3: HARVEST

Harvest the good ideas and take action!

After identifying community priorities, an action plan can be developed to achieve the community's goals. Across the agri-food value chain, action areas could include:

- stakeholder engagement
- communications and marketing
- business development
- workforce and leadership development
- investment attraction
- agriculture infrastructure and land use planning and
- research and innovation.

NIAGARA AGRICULTURE PROFILE

NIAGARA AGRICULTURE ECONOMIC IMPACT

→ niagaracanada.com/key-sectors/agri-business/

Apps [My Apps](#) [Google](#) [OMAFRA Dateline](#) [Login | Salesforce](#) [Microsoft Office Ho...](#) [Login | Economic M...](#) [Login | Salesforce](#) [Simcoe Reformer](#) [The Sachem and GL...](#) [Haldimand County/...](#)

OVERVIEW **RESOURCES** **REPORTS**

Niagara College's Agriculture and Environment Innovation Centre works with private and public sector partners to develop innovative solutions to address today's challenges in precision agriculture, GIS, computer programming, sustainable food production, plant growth, horticultural practices, greenhouse operations, aquaponics, environmental management and renewable energies.

Niagara College's Canadian Food and Wine Institute has 40 acres of on-site vineyards, a hop yard, culinary gardens, and a greenhouse to provide students with valuable hands-on farming experience and collaboration opportunities with local industry. The Innovation Centre team offers a full suite of services to support industry innovation and commercialization of new products and processes.

Brock University's Cool Climate Oenology and Viticulture Institute (CCOVI) has established itself as a successful, internationally recognized research institute that is producing important work focused on growing and harvesting cool climate grapes.

Brock University's Advanced Biomanufacturing Centre pairs the cutting-edge work of Brock's plant biologists and chemists with biotechnology companies that develop this research into innovative products and services. With its research strengths in plant biology and natural product chemistry, Brock's partnerships with Niagara's agricultural businesses are expected to create jobs and economic growth in Niagara and beyond.

Vineland Research and Innovation Centre is home to 20 on-site PhDs who are conducting research in plant biology, horticulture, and horticultural research that is changing

A climate, land base, talent pool and research capabilities that support sector growth

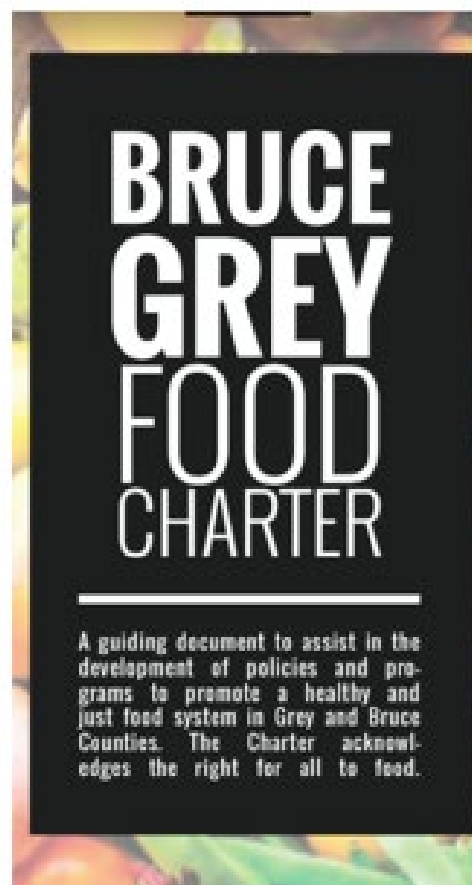
47% increase in farm revenues
from 2011 to 2016

200+ greenhouses
200,000+ acres of farmland

Economic Sustainability and Development



The Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee advises and assists the Region's work to maintain a permanently secure, economically viable agriculture industry and preserve the character and landscape of Halton's rural areas. The Committee's work includes reviews and recommendations on many aspects of agriculture and agricultural policy in Halton.



An online collection of projects, programs and policies to help you support agriculture and food.
 To view, click the topic button. A Google Drive folder will open in your web browser.

STUDIES	AGRICULTURAL SECTOR	FOOD LITERACY
	BROADBAND + INFRASTRUCTURE	FOOD SYSTEM
	BUSINESS RETENTION + EXPANSION	LABOUR + WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
	ECONOMIC IMPACT OF AGRICULTURE	LAND USE PLANNING STUDIES
	FEASIBILITY STUDIES	LOCAL FOOD PROCUREMENT
	FOOD DISTRIBUTION HUBS + INCUBATORS	OTHER STUDIES
STRATEGIES	AGRICULTURAL SECTOR	FOOD
	AGRICULTURE + CULINARY TOURISM	FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT
	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	OTHER STRATEGIES
PROJECT/PROGRAM	AGRICULTURAL SECTOR INFOGRAPHICS	STEWARDSHIP / ECO G+S PROGRAMS
	AGRICULTURAL SECTOR PROFILES	FOOD HUB SERVICES
	ASSET MAPPING PROJECTS	LOCAL FOOD PROMOTION
	COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLANS	OTHER PROJECTS/PROGRAMS
GUIDANCE	AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES	MUNICIPAL OFFICIAL PLANS
	FOOD CHARTERS	ZONING BY-LAWS
	FOOD POLICY COUNCILS	OTHER GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS
OTHER	FUNDING PROGRAMS	ONLINE TOOLS
	HOW-TO GUIDES AND TOOLKITS	OTHER RESOURCES

Notice a document missing? Please email the pdf, or web link to pdf, to danielle.collins@ofa.on.ca.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) makes no warrantee, express or implied, as to the accuracy, completeness, quality or reliability of the Directory or the information contained therein, nor of the products or the results to be obtained from the use of Directory contents. The inclusion of content does not constitute OFA endorsement. Please use this resource at your own discretion.

Future steps

- Continue to support municipal implementation (OMAFRA's Rural Planners and Agricultural and Rural Economic Development Advisors are available to assist)
 - In GGH by July 2022 to conform with A Place to Grow
 - On-going
- Agricultural System Portal enhancements
 - Province-wide
 - Data portal
 - User friendly tools
- Release Agricultural Impact Assessment guidance document
 - Training

Collaborative process

Early engagement with OMAFRA will be helpful to implement both land use (Rural Planner) and economic development (Agricultural and Rural Economic Advisor) initiatives

OMAFRA will share data, provide advice on being consistent with the Ag System mapping method, purpose and outcomes and provide agriculture economic development support



Thank you!

Nick Kinkel

Agriculture and Rural Economic
Development Advisor

Phone:

(519) 420-7686

Email:

nick.kinkel@ontario.ca

Helma Geerts

Policy Advisor

Phone:

519-546-7423

Email:

helma.geerts@ontario.ca

OMAFRA's Regional
Agricultural and Rural
Economic Advisor for Niagara:

name

phone

email

OMAFRA's Rural Planner for
Niagara:

Sarah Caster Kielek

226-962-8933

sarah.kielek-caster@ontario.ca

Appendix A: Prime Agricultural Area Policy Summary - APTG and Greenbelt Plan

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan	Greenbelt Plan
Prime Agricultural Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Official plans must conform with the Provincial plans Prime agricultural areas must be protected for long term use in agriculture All types, sizes and intensities of agricultural uses and normal farm practices shall be promoted and protected Minimum Distance Separation applies A full range of agricultural, agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses are permitted AIA required for settlement area boundary expansions, infrastructure and mineral aggregate operation 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lot creation in prime agricultural areas as per PPS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As per APTG but new lots for agriculture must meet minimum lot sizes (16 ha in specialty crop areas; 40 ha in other PAA)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure, settlement area boundary expansion and aggregate extraction may be permitted subject to an AIA or equivalent; SABE may occur outside a Municipal Comprehensive Review as long as expansion <40 ha 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New non-ag uses are discouraged and only permitted for infrastructure, mineral aggregate extraction, and modest expansion of towns and villages subject to an AIA or equivalent.

Appendix A: Agricultural System

Policy Summary – APTG and Greenbelt Plan

A Place to Grow: Growth Plan

Greenbelt Plan

Agricultural System

- Shall maintain and enhance:
 - Geographic continuity of the agricultural land base
 - Functional and economic connections to the agri-food network
- Integrated planning for growth management, including goods movement and transportation planning shall consider opportunities to support and enhance the Ag System
- Municipalities encouraged to implement regional agri-food strategies and other approaches by
 - Supporting access to healthy, local and affordable food, urban and near urban agriculture, agri-food and agri-product businesses
 - Supporting opportunities for infrastructure, services and assets in the agri-food network. Negative impacts to the agri-food network should be assessed, minimized and mitigated
 - Consulting with agricultural advisory committees or liaison officers
- Where agricultural uses and non-agricultural uses interface, impacts to the Ag System must be avoided, minimized and mitigated; mitigation to be incorporated as part of the non-agricultural use
- Agricultural land base refinements may be proposed by the upper tier municipality for Provincial approval during municipal comprehensive review (MCR) based on provincial Implementation Procedures

Appendix A: **Agricultural System**

Niagara Escarpment Plan Area

Niagara Escarpment Plan

- Prime agricultural areas in the plan areas should be identified according to the broader Agricultural System, recognizing both the agricultural land base and agri-food network
- Linkages to the Agricultural System outside the plan's area should be considered
- Impacts to prime agricultural areas must be avoided, minimized and mitigated
- Municipalities delineate and incorporate prime agricultural area mapping into their official plans including the NEP. This will occur during municipal comprehensive review
- Prime agricultural area policies in the NEP apply (e.g., permitted uses, lot creation)

Subject: Municipal By-law Enforcement Appointments –
Woodland Conservation By-law

Report to: Planning and Economic Development Committee

Report date: Wednesday, February 17, 2021

Recommendations

1. That the following Regional staff **BE APPOINTED** as Municipal By-law Enforcement Officers for the purpose of enforcing Niagara Region By-law No. 79-2020, being the Woodland Conservation By-law:
 - Cara Lampman, Manager, Environmental Planning
 - Daniel Root, Regional Forester
2. That the necessary by-law **BE PREPARED** and **PRESENTED** to Council for consideration.

Key Facts

- On January 31, 2021, the Woodland Conservation By-law (79-2020) came into effect and the responsibility for administration of the Woodland Conservation By-law was transferred from the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) back to Niagara Region
- Niagara Region may appoint Municipal By-Law Enforcement Officers pursuant to the *Police Services Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.15, subsection 15 (1)* and when appointed are deemed Peace Officers pursuant to *subsection 15 (2)* of the same Act. Those appointees are further designated as Provincial Offences Officers under the *Provincial Offences Act, R.S.O 1990, c. P.33, subsection 1(1)(d)*.
- The appointments will allow staff to ensure compliance with the Woodland Conservation By-law and escalate enforcement options when deemed necessary.

Financial Considerations

The 2021 Operating Budget for the Environmental Planning Division includes funds for staff wages, benefits and business operations.

Analysis

Section 135 of the Municipal Act allows municipalities to prohibit and regulate the destruction or injuring of trees through enacting tree bylaws. Upper-tier municipalities may enact such a bylaw for trees in woodlands as defined in the Forestry Act that are greater than one hectare. Local municipalities may also enact such a bylaw for individual trees and trees within woodlands that are less than one hectare. The Act also provides upper-tier and local municipalities with the option to delegate all or part of their power to pass such by-laws to each other, with agreement.

Niagara Region's Tree and Forest Conservation Bylaw (30-2008) has been in place since 1981. The most recent update to the bylaw occurred in 2020, in order to modernize the document as well as to facilitate the transfer of responsibilities for enforcement of the bylaw back to the Region from the NPCA (see Reports PDS 13-2019 and PDS 16-2020). The bylaw came into effect on January 31, 2021 and the name has been updated to the Woodland Conservation Bylaw (79-2020).

The Environmental Planning Division will be administering the bylaw and have hired Daniel Root as the new Regional Forester.

Enforcement provisions shall only be used when all other methods of regulatory compliance have been exhausted including voluntary compliance, restoration and education

Alternatives Reviewed

N/A

Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities

"Advancing Organizational Excellence" is a strategic priority of Council. The appointments will ensure consistent service delivery and application of the bylaw across the Region.

Other Pertinent Reports

- PDS 13-2019 Initiation of the Woodland Bylaw Review
- PDS 16-2020 Woodland Conservation By-law Review

Prepared by:

Cara Lampman
Manager, Environmental Planning
Planning and Development Services

Recommended by:

Doug Giles, BES, MUP
Acting - Commissioner
Planning and Development Services

Submitted by:

Ron Tripp, P.Eng.
Acting Chief Administrative Officer

This report was reviewed by Pat Busnello, Acting Director, Development Approvals.

Appendices

None

**Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs**

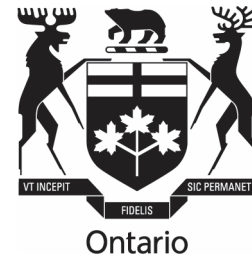
Office of the Minister

77 Grenville Street, 11th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1B3
Tel: 416-326-3074
www.ontario.ca/OMAFRA

**Ministère de l'Agriculture, de
l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales**

Bureau du ministre

77, rue Grenville, 11^e étage
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 1B3
Tél. : 416 326-3074
www.ontario.ca/MAAARO



April 14, 2021

Jim Bradley
Regional Chair
Regional Municipality of Niagara
jim.bradley@niagararegion.ca

Dear Regional Chair Bradley:

One of our government's top priorities is to guard against the spread of COVID-19. I know this has been a challenging time for everyone and I would like to start by thanking you for your dedication and commitment to ensure your farms and agri-food workplaces are safe during COVID-19, and Ontario's food supply stays healthy and strong.

As announced in the 2021 Ontario government budget, Ontario is investing \$10 million to extend funding for a re-designed Enhanced Agri-food Workplace Protection Program to enable more farmers and agri-food operators to protect their workers' health and safety, and increase the sector's resilience in managing the extraordinary costs related of COVID-19.

I encourage you to watch for detailed program information and application forms when the intake opens on April 22, 2021. Applications will be accepted while funding is available or until November 30, 2021. The approval process has been simplified and will be expedited to help support workplace health and safety in the agri-food sector.

.../2

- 2 -

I encourage you to share the information in this letter as well as upcoming details that will be shared through social media with others who may find it helpful.

Again, thank you for your commitment to safeguard against the spread of COVID-19.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ernie Hardeman', with a large, stylized initial 'E'.

Ernie Hardeman
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

COVID-19 Reminders

- For vaccination booking details visit: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/book-vaccine/>
- Follow your local public health/safety measures: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/zones-and-restrictions>
- Practice physical distancing – stay 2 metres away from others in public
- Get the facts - www.ontario.ca/page/covid-19-stop-spread

**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF NIAGARA
AGRICULTURAL POLICY & ACTION COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

**APAC 1-2021
Friday, February 26, 2021
Committee Room 4 / Video Conference
Niagara Region Headquarters, Campbell West
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, Thorold ON**

Committee Members Present in Committee Room 4: Councillor Witteveen (Committee Chair)

Committee Members Present via Video Conference: Bradley (Regional Chair); Councillors Disero, Easton, Jordan; C. Hamilton, G. Janes, J. Kikkert, C. Mullet Koop, B. Schenck (Committee Vice Chair), J. Schonberger, L. Troup, K. Wiens

Other Councillors Present via Video Conference: Councillor Huson

Absent/Regrets: Councillors Butters, Steele; A. Vaughn

Staff Present in Committee Room 4: E. Acs, Manager, Community Planning, K. Costantini, Senior Planner, K. Lotimer, Legislative Coordinator, L. Sicoli, Economic Development Officer

Staff Present via Video Conference: M. Evely, Legislative Coordinator, S. Norman, Senior Planner, G. Spezza, Director, Economic Development, K. Young, Planner

Others Present via Video Conference: J. Horner, Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance, T. Humphrey, Vineland Research Innovation Centre, J. Janiec, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, K. MacPhearson, Greenbelt Foundation, S. Marshall, Ontario Tender Fruit Growers, R. Vandezande, AG Enterprises

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mark Evely, Legislative Coordinator, called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

2. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

3. SELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

3.1 Call for Nominations for Committee Chair

Mark Evely, Legislative Coordinator, called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee for the 2021-2022 term.

Moved by Councillor Easton
Seconded by Councillor Jordan

That Councillor Witteveen **BE NOMINATED** as Chair of the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee for the 2021-2022 term.

3.2 Motion to Close Nominations for Committee Chair

Mark Evely, Legislative Coordinator, called a second and third time for nominations for the position of Agricultural Policy and Action Committee Chair. There being no further nominations it was:

Moved by Councillor Disero
Seconded by B. Schenck

That nominations for the position of Chair of the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee for the 2021-2022 term, **BE CLOSED**.

Carried

3.3 Voting for the Position of Committee Chair

There being only one nominee for the position of Committee Chair, Mr. Evely, announced that Councillor Witteveen would be the Chair of the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee for the 2021-2022 term.

3.4 Call for Nominations for Committee Vice-Chair

Mark Evely, Legislative Coordinator, called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee for the 2021-2022 term.

Moved by K. Wiens
Seconded by G. Janes

That Bill Schenck **BE NOMINATED** as Vice-Chair of the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee for the 2021-2022 term.

3.5 Motion to Close Nominations for Committee Vice-Chair

Mark Evelyn, Legislative Coordinator, called a second and third time for nominations for the position of Agricultural Policy and Action Committee Vice-Chair. There being no further nominations it was:

Moved by Councillor Disero
Seconded by J. Kikkert

That nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee for the 2021-2022 term, **BE CLOSED**.

Carried

3.6 Voting for the Position of Committee Vice-Chair

There being only one nominee for the position of Committee Vice-Chair, Mark Evelyn, Legislative Coordinator, announced that Bill Schenck would be the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee Vice-Chair for the 2021-2022 term.

At this point in the meeting, Councillor Witteveen assumed the Chair.

4. **PRESENTATIONS**

4.1 Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance Action Plan

Janet Horner, Executive Director, Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance, provided information respecting Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance Action Plan. Topics of the presentation included:

- Action Plan 2021-2026
- The Vision
- Goal A - Refine Organizational Capacity
- Goal B - Enable Economic Growth
- Goal C - Sustainable Outcomes
- Objectives and Action Items

5. **DELEGATIONS**

There were no delegations.

6. **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

There were no items for consideration.

7. CONSENT ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

7.1 APAC 3-2020

Agricultural Policy and Action Committee Meeting Minutes - November 27, 2020

Moved by K. Wiens

Seconded by Councillor Easton

That Minutes APAC 3-2020, being the minutes of the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee meeting held on November 27, 2020, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Carried

7.2 APAC-C 2-2021

Niagara Region Official Plan Draft Agricultural System Policies

Richard Vandezande, Consultant, AG Enterprises, and Karen Costantini, Senior Planner, provided information respecting Niagara Region Official Plan Draft Agricultural System Policies and Agricultural Land Base Mapping. Topics of the presentation included:

- Basis
- Policy Areas
- Initiatives
- Next Steps
- Context
- Provincial Agricultural Land Base Map
- Engagement Process
- Current Status

The Agricultural Land Base Mapping portion of the presentation is attached to these minutes as APAC-C 4-2021.

Moved by J. Schonberger

Seconded by G. Janes

That Correspondence Item APAC-C 2-2021, being a memorandum from E. Acs, Manager, Community Planning, dated February 26, 2021, respecting Niagara Region Official Plan Draft Agricultural System Policies, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Carried

7.3 APAC-C 3-2021

2020 Niagara Region Tree and Forest By-law Annual Report

Moved by K. Wiens

Seconded by Councillor Jordan

That Correspondence Item APAC-C 3-2021, being a letter to Councillor Witteveen, Chair, Agricultural Policy and Action Committee, from Grant Bivol, Executive Coordinator to the Chief Administrative Officer and Board, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, dated February 23, 2021, respecting 2020 Niagara Region Tree and Forest By-law Annual Report, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Carried

8. **OTHER BUSINESS**

8.1 Irrigation Update

Bill Schenck, Committee Vice-Chair, provided an update respecting the Niagara Irrigation Project, highlighting the various activities that have occurred since his last update as well as next steps. Councillor Disero requested information respecting the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake's interest in running a water supply line under the Garden City Skyway. Mr. Schenk, suggested forwarding this item to the Irrigation Committee for inclusion in the Irrigation Master Plan.

8.2 Official Mapping Schedules

Sarah Marshall, Ontario Tender Fruit, enquired about a letter sent to the Region in October of 2020, requesting fish habitats not to be included in Official Plan mapping schedules and the consideration of an agricultural mapping system for irrigation and drainage infrastructure. Sean Norman, Senior Planner, confirmed receipt of the letter and advised that the requests are being considered by staff.

8.3 Farm Help Housing

Committee members discussed possible exemptions from the Regional Development Charges By-law, specifically for farm help houses, as many farmers have had to build additional housing in order to remain compliant with Public Health protocols related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

8.4 Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) Update

Joe Schonberger, Committee member, advised that the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Public Advisory Committee met virtually on February 25, 2021, and discussed building permit delays and watercourse mapping.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Friday, April 30, 2021, at 9:00 a.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Councillor Witteveen
Committee Chair

Mark Evely
Legislative Coordinator

Ann-Marie Norio
Regional Clerk

To: Ann-Marie Norio, Regional Clerk
From: Niagara Irrigation Committee of the Whole
Motion for consideration at: Public Works

NIAGARA'S AGRICULTURE SECTOR AND ACCESS TO UNTREATED WATER FOR IRRIGATION

WHEREAS agriculture plays a crucial role in Niagara's economy, contributing over \$1.4billion to the Regional GDP;

WHEREAS The Province of Ontario has identified agricultural lands in Niagara through the Greenbelt Plan, Growth Plan and Niagara Escarpment Plan with a vision to protect against their loss and support their viability;

WHEREAS Niagara farms play an important role in ensuring Ontario's food security;

WHEREAS Niagara farms also produce value add products which contribute to increased jobs and tax revenues;

WHEREAS climate change has resulted in more frequent cycles of drought like conditions;

WHEREAS the Niagara Irrigation Committee, a subcommittee of the Agricultural Policy Action Committee, has determined growers are willing to invest in a more sustainable system for access to untreated water for irrigation;

WHEREAS agricultural infrastructure, including irrigation is supported by Provincial and Regional policies;

WHEREAS a system that relies on gravity is the most economical way to provide that water;

WHEREAS certain reservoirs and channels that are in the control of the Ontario Power Generation Corp (OPG) have been determined to meet the criteria of a gravity fed system;

WHEREAS the Irrigation Committee has met with the OPG at the staff level and was told there was no interest in entering into an agreement with growers for access to their infrastructure;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. That the Regional Chair BE DIRECTED to Request the Minister of Energy to initiate a meeting with the Senior VP of Renewable Generation & Energy Markets at OPG, Mayor Sendzik, Committee Chair Bill Schenck, APAC Chair Albert Witteveen to discuss the role of OPG power generation in developing an agriculture irrigation system for Niagara.
2. That the Regional Council BE DIRECTED through the CAO/Public Works Director to provide staff support to assist the Irrigation Committee in developing a Niagara Region Irrigation Water Utility Board.