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ISSUE 6 / FALL 2023

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John and Lois A. Douglas



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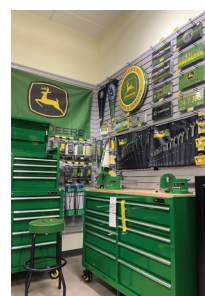
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Mark Eddy wants to bring people together

New Brant County Federation of Agriculture president embraces role

Education, advocacy and relationship building are going to be Mark Eddy's main focuses in his new role as president of the Brant County Federation of Agriculture (BCFA).

"That's what our board's goal is right now, to bring people back together post-pandemic," he said.

As has always been the case with farming, "There's lots of issues in agriculture," Eddy noted.

Some of these challenges are beyond anyone's control – Mother Nature will do as she will, after all. But other items are ones that farmers, lawmakers and the general public can have an impact on.

Recently, the BCFA did a survey to ask its members what issues they were most concerned about.

"At the local level, farmland preservation is definitely one of the hot topics in ag – in this area especially, with St. George growing, Brantford growing, Paris growing," Eddy said. "It's definitely an issue that we have to deal with in the future, and more so as time goes on."

He noted that while the Greenbelt doesn't fall within the BCFA's catchment area, just from a farmland preservation perspective, the idea of removing development restrictions on that designated land is a concern.



Mark Eddy is the new president of the Brant County Federation of Agriculture.

Another issue that many of the farmers in the BCFA are contending with is gaps in infrastructure, Eddy said.

For instance, "There are a lot of farms and rural people that don't have access to natural

gas. The ones who do are at a big advantage to the ones who don't."

He pointed out that between heating homes, shops and barns, as well as for tasks

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Mark Eddy wants to bring people together

Continued from page 4

like drying grain, “different farms need different amounts of heat.”

While some farms, like his, are outfitted with woodburning stoves – which means cleaning up the treeline becomes a double duty sort of job – that’s not the case for everyone. For farms that have to depend on oil or other such fuels, the costs can mount quickly.

“The federation of agriculture keeps pushing for expanded natural gas infrastructure, but it’s slow to get,” Eddy said.

Another infrastructure piece that’s lacking in the area is rural high-speed internet.

“We learned over COVID; we thought we had good high-speed internet – we don’t,” Eddy said, adding that during the height of the pandemic, when the BCFA board was holding virtual meetings, “People were getting knocked off (the calls) all the time,” because of poor connections.

“We’ve been advocating for years, but it just seems like it’s taking forever for some areas to get really good, reliable high-speed internet.”

With farmers consistently facing so many challenges – many times, all at once – it’s understandable that sometimes they may feel overwhelmed.

“There’s a lot of stresses in agriculture,” Eddy said. “A person (might) shoulder more stress than maybe is healthy. Some people just need a bit of help, and just someone to talk to.”

It’s something Eddy has personally faced, and having sought out help in the past for himself, he can now say, “I know how much it helps.”

The topic of mental health in general, and in particular for farmers, is one that has been more common in recent years.

In 2020, the BCFA offered some mental health training to the membership, which Eddy said, “was very popular.”



Last year, the Farmer Wellness Initiative launched. Through it, farmers and people in farming households can access free counselling sessions with a mental health professional. This service is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year by calling 1-866-267-6255. The Farmer Wellness Initiative is supported by the Canadian Mental Health Association, in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture.

Eddy sees all of this as a very positive shift. “I advocate for (mental health) a lot,” he said. “I’m passionate about that.”

Another issue Eddy is passionate about is, “keeping young people in agriculture and getting young people involved.”

It can be a bit of an uphill battle sometimes.

“It seems everybody’s short staffed these days and looking for good people,” Eddy said. That’s particularly true for the skilled trades.

Eddy said a lot of industries like to hire people with an agricultural background, because they’re generally hard working, good learners and adaptable.

While that is a compliment, “that takes away from us as well,” Eddy said, when kids from farm families opt to go into careers outside of agriculture.

The flip side of the coin is, even though “There’s lots of opportunity to work a farm,” Eddy said, if someone didn’t grow up on a farm, or have a connection to a farming family, it’s not as likely that that would be on their radar as a possible field in which to pursue a career.

Even then, “There’s lots of people who are interested in agriculture, whose chances to own a farm and run a farm are limited,” Eddy said, because of factors like the cost to start an operation, the knowledge gaps, etc.

“It would be nice if there was a way that (there could be) a mentorship program or something with retired or farmers who are retiring. You do hear about it once in a while, but not maybe enough,” Eddy said.

Over the years, there has been a gradual shift towards large, commercial farms, but Eddy doesn’t think that’s ideal.

“We definitely want to keep the family farm alive,” he said. “A lot of our food is grown or produced on family farms, and we want to promote that.”

That’s why “We’re trying to get more youth involved, and getting more of the 4-H-ers and Junior Farmer aged members to come out and get them involved,” Eddy said. “In the future, they’ll be what the board consists of.”

He added, “My goal as president is to get more people involved and get more people out in a post-COVID world. We’ve all been sheltered a lot, and I think it’s good for mental health to mingle and get people out. That’s what (the BCFA is) trying to do with our (upcoming) summer

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social and different events we're planning for this year."

Eddy is also an advisory councillor for the Beef Farmers of Ontario, and is a director with Brant County Soil and Crop Im-



Without my kids and my wife, I probably wouldn't be doing what I'm doing



provement Association. He and his wife, Sue, recently joined the 4-H board as well, because the group was having difficulty getting members involved.

"We thought we'd better step up, because our kids really appreciate and enjoy doing 4-H," Eddy said.

That sense of duty and paying it forward is what made Eddy

take on the president's role with the BCFA.

"That's the natural progression through sitting on the board – that you put your time in and gather information and experiences, and bring them to the president's role," he said.

It's not something he could do without the support of his family, though: Sue, and their three children, Brendan, 20, Ryan, 16, and Emily, 11.

Together, they own and operate Brookside Farm near Paris, ON. They do a lot of custom baling alongside their beef cattle operation and growing corn, soybeans, wheat and hay on about 1,000 acres (about 400 of which they own).

"My kids are very involved. I wouldn't be running near the acres (without them)," Eddy said.

"Without my kids and my wife, I probably wouldn't be doing what I'm doing, because they enabled me to be able to go to meetings and do more of that type of role, because they're here to take up the slack when I go on conventions and stuff like that; they do everything." 🌱

Brant Federation of Agriculture University Scholarship Winners

Two Brant County university students won scholarships from the Brant Federation of Agriculture (BFA) .

Kara Sickle of McLean School Road, Glen Morris, and Jonathon Vamos, of Colborne Street, Burford each receive \$1500 to use in their studies.

Sickle is working toward her Bachelor of Science Animal Biology degree at the University of Guelph.

Vamos is registered in Business Administration at Brock

University, where he is also attaining a bachelor degree.

The BFA awards two scholarships to registered university students living within the county annually. The federation's criteria decrees that applicants must be studying a subject related to agriculture, said BFA secretary Linda Snyder. 🌱



Jonathon Vamos



Kara Sickle

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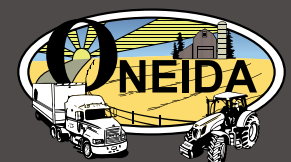


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Brant-Wentworth Holstein Club exhibit at Paris Fair

One livestock highlight of this year's Paris Fair, held over the Labour Day weekend were the Holsteins exhibited by the Brant-Wentworth Holstein Club.



Adults and youth exhibited at the event, with the Coleman family of Bridgeview Farms, in the former Onondaga Township winning the Premier Breeder and the Premier Exhibitor Awards; Bridgeview Farms also had the Reserve Grand Champion and Breeders' Herd. Holstein Club secretary, Janet Ringelberg reports that a number of children under age 9 showed up for the Junior Showmanship competition; each child received cash sponsored by Quality Seeds and Pete Coleman. 🌱



Weston Talsma, with his dad, Mark, of Talsma Farms near Burgessville.



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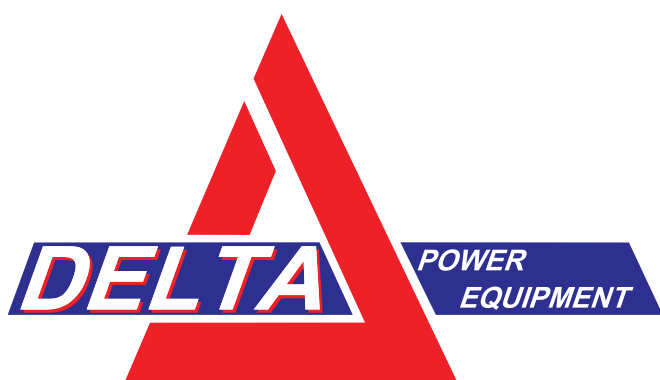
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Healthy Cloves and Lucky Lee's: "venture capitalist" and fifth generation farming cousins create a new enterprise

Seeing that there is a good return with garlic, three men collaborated to create a new garlic enterprise, and then opened an on-farm market to retail that and other produce.



Stephan Yaworski (left) and Chad Lee grew cabbage for Lucky Lee's Farm Market

Stephan Yaworski, a self-described "venture capitalist", along with Simcoe-area Chad Lee and his cousin, Jason Lee, founded the Healthy Cloves Garlic Company last year. "Our farm is dedicated solely to the cultivation of premium garlic varieties," the company's webpage states. "Our passion for garlic inspired us to create a farm that is dedicated to producing the finest quality garlic while using sustainable farming practices."

—“

There's nothing better than fried cabbage and potatoes!

—”

They harvested their first garlic crop this summer – 12 acres of Music and Duganski – in time to sell at the Perth Lion's Garlic Festival. They previously sold their garlic scapes, pulled at second curl, to markets in Toronto.

"Garlic gives the best returns compared with other produce," said Yaworski.

But they grow and sell more than garlic.

In August, the trio opened a farm market called Lucky Lee's Farm Market. It's located in an old tobacco pack barn on the former Kent Creek Apple farm on McDowell Road west of Simcoe. The store retails garlic, squash, late-season corn, cabbage, as well as produce from other local farms.

"We intend to sell more of our own produce next year," said Yaworski, while sitting in the store with Chad shortly after its grand opening.

Yaworski explained that Lucky Lee's and Healthy Cloves forms part of a larger compilation of five farms which are known as R Stephan Farms. It is currently being rebranded as RLY Farms Inc. to be inclusive of the Lees as partners.

The entire enterprise totals 350 acres, including the former Kent Creek Farm location, which they took over in April this year. This last acquisition not only had bountiful storage facilities, but also 35 acres of apples consisting of 13 varieties,

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Red Haven peaches and an asparagus field.

The farm store was a natural fit: "It gives better returns than wholesale," said Yaworski. "Although we do sell off farm." Lee added that they are also members of Norfolk Fruit Growers.

The Lee cousins handle the bulk of the crop production. Chad is the fifth generation of Lee to farm near Simcoe. Their family's home farm near Colborne Village is still farmed by his father, Robert, and has been long reputed for their heavy draft horses. Chad does some local livestock trucking, and is married to Crystal, with two children: Carter, aged two and Georgia, four.

Sharing the same Lee roots, Jason already had his own produce enterprise. Lee said Jason is the partnership's "chief orchardist" and does much of the fieldwork.

Yaworski labeled himself as "a venture capitalist" with much of his investments going into Crescent Homes of Waterloo, which does builds and renovations throughout the region, including Simcoe. "But I love farming," he stressed.

The businessman cited his Irish and Polish roots as his

source for his agri-philial: "There's nothing better than fried cabbage and potatoes!" Both sides of Yaworski's family farmed near Stoney Creek, meaning that in his youth, he spent his summers and spare time on those farms.



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Yaworski said that his maternal ancestors – the Colemans – have one of Canada's longest-running farm markets, beginning in the 1800s; now known as Dilly's Farmacy on York Boulevard in Hamilton, it is owned by his cousin.

So while Yaworski previously lived in Cambridge and then

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Lee with four-year old daughter Georgia and Yaworski by the garlic drying racks

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Healthy Cloves and Lucky Lee's: "venture capitalist" and fifth generation farming cousins create a new enterprise

Continued from page 11

Scotland, he eventually bought his own farm near Waterford – and expanded. His daughter, Keaira, 18, worked at the McDowell Road farm this year.

The Healthy Cloves team chose the Duganski variety of garlic to grow along with the popularly-grown Music because there is "more bite to it," said Yaworski. This hard-neck variety with purple wrappers grows taller than most, have wider leaves and larger scapes, matures mid-season and stores from to nine months. Grown on heavier soil at another farm, the garlic slowly air-dried with fans on racks at the McDowell Road site.

Lee said that garlic enhances the crop rotation plan; the partners are thinking of a three-year

rotation with produce, then garlic, with root vegetables in the third year. They overwinter with oats, disking it down in spring to increase soil matter.

The Lees planted 50 acres of pumpkins this year, including Gladiator, which can weigh up to 11 kilograms and has strong handles; the white-coloured Flat White Boer and Crystal Star, and blue and pink varieties.

Said Yaworski, "Every family and every home in North America wants a pumpkin in their yard."

"There are endless possibilities about what we can grow here," said Yaworski. But his love is the garlic. "I'm a businessman first, but farming is enjoyable." 🌿



Stephan Yaworski (foreground) and Chad Lee inside their newly-opened farm market



Lucky Lee's Farm Market is one venue for Healthy Cloves Garlic Sales

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Auction blocks and livestock

John and Lois A. Douglas reflect on their lives in agriculture

John Douglas had been working at a factory for about a decade when he and his fellow workers went on strike. Since he was in his late 30s at the time and hated working at the factory anyway, John took the opportunity to pursue a new career that he'd always been interested in: auctioneering.

"My grandfather (Harry Lamb) was an auctioneer. I never really knew him very well; he was gone when I was young," he said.

Lois Douglas, John's wife, noted that he'd grown up on a farm – next door to where the couple now live, just outside of Middleport.

"He was used to being outside," she said, adding that going into a building all day was not good for him.

While now retired from auctioneering, in reflecting back on his time in the career, John said, "It worked out well for me."



Lois and John Douglas spent many years working together on local farm auctions. Lois would do the bookkeeping, while John was an auctioneer. The couple live on a farm outside of Middleport.



We breed for action, really, more so than draft. They're not made for the horse pulls.



There was a lot to learn in the early days.

Some budding auctioneers find that the rhythm of music can help them practice their art, but John noted, "I'm not much of a singer."

Instead, he found repetition and tongue twisters to be what worked best for him.

"Big brown bear bit a big brown bug," he demonstrated, adding, "I'd run around the house saying that 100 times. You get your tongue tired out."

A big part of what helped John out in his early days was "I had a damned good mentor – I was an apprentice under Sandy Shantz."

Shantz, who has since passed away, was from St. George.

"He taught you a hell of a lot; he'd put you up there and say, 'Go to work. You get in trouble, you get out of it,'" John said with a laugh.

One of the tricky things about being an auctioneer is that "A lot of it's how the public perceives you," John said, explaining that while you don't want to humiliate anyone, sometimes you do need to needle people a bit to get the bids to go up.

You also have to pay close attention to the proceedings.

"You can't write down notes (of) who's bidding," he said, and tapping his head, added, "That's up here."

Of course, there is paperwork that has to be processed at the end of the day, which

is why John said, "You can't do it without a good bookkeeper behind you."

That role was filled by Lois, who had worked at a bank. She would also look after the advertising in the days ahead of the sales, and would be in the office trailer the day of, making sure all the transactions were completed properly.

John said one of the most interesting sales they ever did was for John Crane from Norfolk; Crane was still alive at the time, but was taking the opportunity to clear out his farming operation.

"There was so much stuff," John said. "We started at 10 o'clock in the morning, and we were still there at midnight doing paperwork, and we weren't near done then."

"It should have been a two-day sale," Lois added.

There were any number of items that could end up on the auction block, from farm equipment and livestock to all sorts of vehicles – including one fire engine.

"It's amazing to see, when you drive in in the morning, there's stuff everywhere, and how quickly it disappears at the end of the day," Lois said.

"In so many hours, you see a whole person's lifetime gone," John said.

Besides the local farm sales, John was on the road a lot, working auto auctions in Toronto, Oshawa, Kitchener, Barrie and throughout the United States for a while.

"All vehicles, cars and trucks; every day, thousands of them ... we used to drive a lot of miles," John said.

While he was certainly keeping busy in that time, John was also a beef calf club 4-H leader in Brant County,

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John Douglas said when it comes to Clydesdale horses, "I've always liked them; I'm a Scotsman, and they're a Scottish horse."

a member of the Auctioneers Association of Ontario, and has been a member of the Caledonia Agricultural Society for 60 years.

Whenever work took John on the road, Lois stayed at the farm and looked after the couple's three daughters, Karen, Donna and Joanne, as well as their livestock.

The couple had taken over the farm from John's dad, Cecil Douglas, in the late 1960s; it was a commercial beef and pork operation, and in its heyday, had about 100 cattle, plus pigs. On top of that, they also raised Clydesdale horses.

John said his dad had "raised the Clydes team I grew up with. I



guess I grew up, but I never quit raising them."

However, John said, "When we got busier and busier with the auctions, we cut down on the livestock," and eventually just stuck to the horses.

"I was a horse dealer then; we had a lot of horses come and go."

When asked what he likes about the breed, John joked, "They're more work – all that hair

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John and Lois Douglas, and now their daughter Joanne, are carrying on the family business of raising Clydesdale horses.

Auction blocks and livestock

Continued from page 15

on their legs. Right now, it's mud to their knees."

Really, though, he said, "I've always liked them; I'm a Scotsman, and they're a Scottish horse."

The years have brought a lot of changes to the breed, he said.

"We breed for action, really, more so than draft. They're not made for the horse pulls," John said, explaining that action refers to the way the horses can lift their feet. He said that Clydesdales used to be a lot thicker through the body, but now, the focus is more about breeding for height.

Just as horse breeding has changed a lot over the years, so too has auctioneering and farming.

In both cases, many times "The little guy's gone," John said.

Most auctions are now done online, and many smaller farms have become part of larger company farms, or – as was particularly the case for tobacco producers – have had to adapt to different approaches to their operations to stay viable.



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"You had to, or get out of business – you had two choices," John said.

To farm or not to farm was a decision Lois also had to make.

While her parents had both been raised on farms, they moved to the city when she was about three years old.

"So really, I was a city girl," Lois said with a smile. "But I spent my summers on farms. My grandparents still had their farms, and I had an aunt and uncle with a farm near here."

Their daughters remain connected to farming, to varying degrees. Karen married a dairy farmer near Oshawa. Donna works in healthcare, but still comes out to help on the farm from time to time, particularly during fair season when they're showing the horses. Joanne is working her way towards being the successor of her parents' Clydesdales business.

Lois said, "She's pretty well taken over getting things ready for fair, transporting the horses and showing them."

"I go in a supervisory capacity," John added with a smile.

When asked how they would consider themselves – working, semi-retired or retired – the couple chuckled.

"Farmers, they never quit as long as they're vertical," John said. "You don't know enough to quit; you're too damned dumb to quit. You just keep going as long as you can." 🌱



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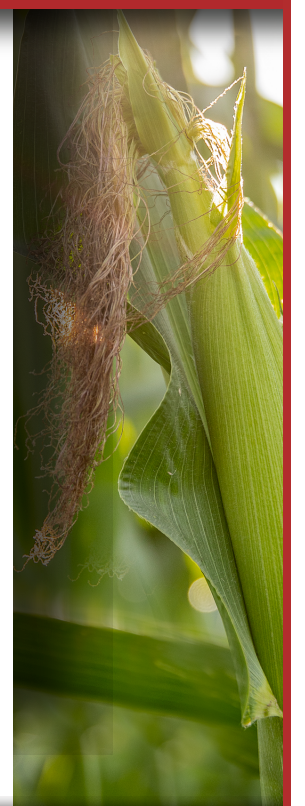
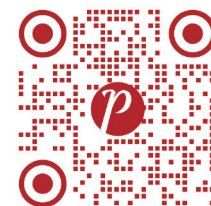
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BRANT 4H

Brant Students Learn To Do By Doing In Full Swing This Year

4-H Members Enjoy A Variety Of Clubs In 2023

In addition to the wonderful agricultural themed clubs that 4-H traditional hosts, Brant students are offered many unique clubs.

The 4-H Fine Art spring club had fourteen members ranging in age from nine to nineteen. In the club they explored collage, marker, salt dough clay, homemade watercolours (made from spices) and glass painting. Each meeting began with the 4-H pledge ('I pledge My Head to clearer thinking, My Heart to greater loyalty, My Hands to larger service, My Health to better living, for my Club, my community, my country and my world.'), and was followed by a sketching warm up exercise. During this exercise, members were challenged to draw differently using their non-dominant hand or with their eyes closed. Then, they had a short lesson which introduced an art medium. Lastly, they made a large project together and parted with a homework assignment.

Leaders Emily Summerhayes and Scott Archer saw to it that

the meetings culminated with a virtual paint night where each member ended the evening having a new acrylic summer scene to hang proudly. Fittingly, these scenes included four leaf clovers. These works of art will

“
showed how the power of positivity can change someone’s perspective and give them the courage to push through
 ”

be entered at the Burford Fair on Thanksgiving weekend.

Sporting Chance-Walk On The Wild Side was another unique club which sought to provide members the opportunity to

try new activities they might not otherwise experience independently, thereby increasing the activity level and healthy mindsets of youths in Brant. The group met six times where the twenty members dove into curling, pickleball, disc golf, rock climbing, kayaking and lawn bowling. They were aided by the FCC 4-H Club Grant of \$500 to offset costs of activities. Club leaders Sarah Hamilton and Pam Charlton wanted to thank guest leaders Scott Archer and Betty Summerhayes as well as offer gratitude to the Paris Curling Club, Ascension Climbing Centre and St. George Lawn Bowling members who demonstrated contagious enthusiasm for the day’s sport to the students. Club leaders also noted that it was heartwarming to see the older students showing the younger ones the 4-H way by cheering, encouraging and helping everyone to succeed. The twenty, ages nine through nineteen, “showed how the power of positivity can change someone’s perspective and give them

the courage to push through” said Hamilton, who herself was a 4-H Club member in childhood.

In both clubs, new friendships were fostered and skills learned. Students will look forward to fall clubs offered, as well as the Annual Awards Night and Banquet in January and the Rally Night in March of 2024 where spring and summer clubs are promoted.

Volunteers are always sought, and students are welcome to join Brant 4-H at any time. A variety of new and favourite fall clubs are also being offered. For more information about 4-H in Brant, email Elaine at brant4h.programmanager@gmail.com. There is also a private Brant County 4-H Facebook page with upcoming activities and club information, and their Instagram page ([brant_county4h](https://www.instagram.com/brant_county4h)) as well as their website (www.4-h.ontario.ca) have plenty of information for those seeking to “Learn To Do By Doing” this fall in Brant County. 🌿

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The County of Brant is focusing on the development of the Agriculture sector through the following initiatives:

ON-FARM DIVERSIFIED USE

The County of Brant has updated its land-use policies to allow for on-farm diversified uses including on-farm processing, retail, and other home occupations that support rural areas. By diversifying land use, farms can branch out and add to their income potential, creating jobs and promoting valuable services.



ENHANCE BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY

The Paris and District Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the County of Brant and County of Brant Public Library has produced a guide to internet connectivity. The Brant Connectivity Guide provides information to residents and businesses on internet connection options and internet service providers. The guide can be found at brant.ca/connection.



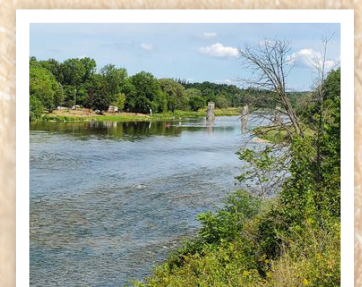
AGRI-TOURISM

Through Agri-Tourism, the County of Brant and our agriculture partners look to close the rural/urban divide by providing on-farm agriculture awareness, while allowing farmers to diversify their revenue.



RURAL WATER QUALITY PROGRAM

Financial assistance is available to qualified landowners to share in the cost of selected projects that improve and protect water quality. Cost-share rates are available from 50% - 100% for a variety of projects. This program is operated by the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) and funded by the County of Brant.



Contact the County of Brant Economic Development team today for more information.



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Local Farmers Aid Ingenuitive Nonprofit That's

The local Raw Carrot brings meaningful employment to individuals living with disAbilities and mental illness through the creation of delicious, handcrafted gourmet soups using fresh and primarily locally grown ingredients.

The Raw Carrot, which began in 2014 in Paris, is built on the premise that every person who wants to work should have the

opportunity for a Hand Up (instead of just a handout) in life and works with churches and nonprofits across the province

to create meaningful employment and community for individuals with disAbilities and mental illness. They currently employ

32 staff on the Ontario Disability Support Program across their four locations (Paris, Innerkip, Kitchener, and Mount Forest), where close to 70 volunteers and an employed Kitchen Manager for each branch provide various support to the initiative.



Even though Canada has so much wealth, there are still people living on the margins

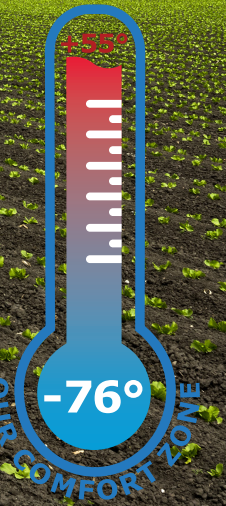
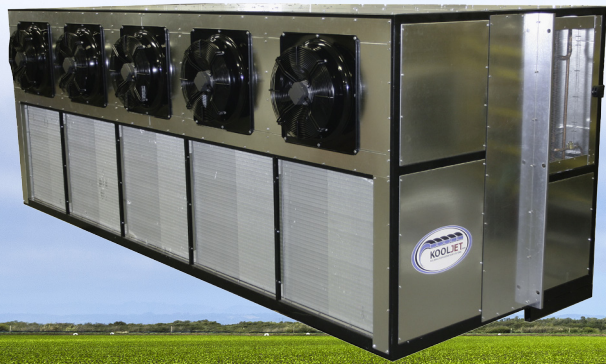


Essential to the success of the almost decade of operation of The Raw Carrot are local farmers and gardeners who have faithfully donated vegeta-



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bles or provided discount pricing because they believe in the mission of The Raw Carrot. “Some of our soups are not able to be produced unless we receive donations to help us offset the cost of more expensive ingredients,” says Director of Communications and Outreach Diane Talbot-Schoenhoff. The Raw Carrot also provides a good alternative to excess veggies headed to the

landfill when “local gardens are in full swing” and excess produce gets donated to The Raw Carrot. In turn, employees produce preservative-free, small-batch and locally-made soups packed with nutrients that are sold in over 50 locations across Southwestern Ontario.

“Even though Canada has so much wealth, there are still people living on the margins” ex-

plains Talbot-Schoenhoff: “There are people that are functionally illiterate, others that have learning challenges, some that grew up in families of abuse or neglect and some with physical limitations or are living with mental illness. We all have something in common: the desire to live a purposeful life. In addition to the challenges of meeting their basic needs, those who face barriers to em-

ployment suffer from social exclusion, poverty and a harm to dignity that accompanies a lack of participation in the paid workforce and community life. That’s why the Raw Carrot came into existence: to provide meaningful employment and livelihood security to individuals on social assistance who want to, and CAN, work.” Talbot-Schoenhoff adds

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Local Farmers Aid Ingenuitive Nonprofit That's "Stirring Up Change" In Brant County & Beyond

Continued from page 21

that The Raw Carrot provides employment primarily in rural areas, which meets a real need, as the lack of public transit is a

large barrier to finding resources for marginalized individuals.

Local growers can help by making donations of vegetables based on their seasonal soups

like asparagus in June, tomatoes in September, butternut squash in October, and kale in November. Additionally, they accept donations of large and

clean carrots, onions, potatoes, zucchini, rutabaga and celery anytime, and encourage producers big and small to contact any of their kitchen managers to make arrangements. In fact, everyone is encouraged to email them to arrange a time when the soup is being made to pop in and see the goodness in action! Although it all started in Paris, they are thrilled to announce the expansion to their fifth site in Guelph this year. They also participate in national awareness campaigns like National Disability Employment Awareness Month (watch for the Penman's Dam in Paris to be lit up purple in support on October 17th)!

The Raw Carrot employees are proud to produce homemade goodness by hand in 21-litre pots. Because their soup is frozen and most scraps composted, they are able to maintain a zero-waste initiative, so everyone can feel good about purchasing the soup from local vendors like The Country Table and the Windmill Country market or directly at market Saturdays at Wincey Mills Co. and Fridays



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and Saturdays at the Brantford Farmers Market or Saturdays at the Woodstock market.

Talbot-Schoenhoff reminds us that "In the same way that farms provide food security, The Raw Carrot has a vision to provide food and livelihood security to people that are living under the

“
Some of our soups are not able to be produced unless we receive donations to help us offset the cost of more expensive ingredients.
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poverty line through a purposeful, supported job." If you would like to volunteer in the kitchen, as a driver, at the market, donate excess produce or donate to create more job opportunities, check them out on their website at www.therawcarrot.com for more details! 🌱



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Cochrane family has been farming



Scott Cochrane, pictured, and his brother, Brent, are the latest generation to co-own and operate the farm, with their dad, Brian, and uncle, John.

Two generations collaborate on agricultural enterprise

In 1913, the Cochrane family moved to a farm in rural Paris, and began to put down roots. Over 100 years later, the legacy of agriculture is still going at Cochrane Farming Inc.

Scott Cochrane and his brother, Brent, are the latest generation to co-own and operate the farm, with their dad, Brian, and uncle, John.

Scott explained that his great grandparents had moved to the farm when his grandpa, also named Scott, was about seven years old.

Grandpa Scott and Grandma Dorothy eventually took over the farm, and were later joined by their sons, Brian and John.

Brian and John both left the family farm to work elsewhere for a few years. Brian worked at a different farm locally, while John went out to western Canada for a while. They formed a partnership in the 1970s.

They weren't the only ones who worked off farm for a bit; so did Scott and Brent after they graduated from University of Guelph's agriculture program.



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"Brent had another job for a little bit," Scott said, adding that his brother had worked on a cash crop farm for Bill Perry in Milton and also worked in Australia, travelling and harvesting for multiple producers there. Brent started working full-time on the farm in the early 2000s.

“Getting a job off the farm is very important, because then you really decide whether you want to come back or whether you want to keep working for somebody else,

Meanwhile, Scott got a job at Grand River Bean Inc. out of university.

"I worked there for eight years after I got out of school, and then helped out here on the weekends and nights, stuff like that."

Scott said growing up on a farm, he always enjoyed working in agriculture and knew that was where he wanted to have his career, which is why he made it the focus for his post-secondary studies.

However, working on the family farm was not always a bygone conclusion for him.

"Getting a job off the farm is very important, because then you really decide whether you want to come back or whether you want to keep working for somebody else," Scott said.

It's a personal decision that everyone has to make for themselves, and it's important that it's a decision informed by experience, he noted.

Scott said that he personally "got to a point where I wanted to help the (family) farm instead of working for somebody else," and that ultimately, the decision came down to, "There's an opportunity to work at home, so let's figure it out."

Scott and his wife, Renée, moved to the family farm in 2007 with their oldest son, Brady, who is now 20 and attending school at the University of Windsor. Their second son, Bennett, was born a year later; he's now 15.

Around the same time, Scott began working for the partnership with his dad, brother and uncle, and a few years later, the group began working more earnestly on their succession planning.

Scott said they hired a professional consultant, "Just to help get everything sorted," through the process; they would all meet together one or two times annually.

"A lot of those decisions and talks are hard to have, so she helped us get rolling. That was good," he said.

The work included making sure the language was all correct in their shareholders' agreement, and making sure everything was reviewed by a lawyer.

"We're pretty lucky as a group - our families get along pretty well, and it wasn't too big of a deal," Scott said.

While the farm has been running for over a century, there's still a lot of things to keep track of throughout the operation as a whole.

“Well, never say never, but I'm 90 per cent sure.

Besides the cash crops, the farm also has beef cattle, which it sells commercially.

"We have room for about 650 head in Ontario, and then we have about 170 out west in Alberta on feed. We've built up the inventory," Scott said.

For a while, they would transfer their cattle in from out west, but over the last five or six years, market and transportation costs have been on the rise. Not wanting to lose their investments or

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Cochrane family has been farming in Paris for over 100 years



Cochrane Farming Inc. is a beef cattle operation in rural Paris.

Continued from page 21

give up the inventory, they've instead opted to buy local cattle out west in the winter, and feed and sell those head out there.

"The idea was, if you wanted to build another barn or something in Ontario, you have the inventory kind of ready to go," Scott said.

Closer to home, since the farm is not focused on breeding stock, the majority of their feed yards is crossbreed cattle, mostly purchased at the Ontario Livestock Exchange, OLEX.

Scott said they pick the cattle they're going to add to their feed yards based on "whatever we can try and make a profit on," which he added is fairly standard practice for beef cattle.

"Most commercial cow / calf producers use cross-breeding," he said.

The cattle are kept in barns with outdoor yards; there are two barns on the family farm, and one on John's property.

Scott said the barns help keep the cattle out of the elements.

"They need shade in the summer when it's hot; keep them out of the ugly weather. And keep the wind off them more than anything in the winter," he said.

After all, a big part of farming is protecting your investment, as much as you're able to around Mother Nature's whims. And farming certainly is a big investment.

Scott said that looking ahead to the future of farming, he expects that there will be more larger farms, simply because it would be too difficult for someone to earn a living income off a smaller farm.

"Not that it's not possible to, (but) it's so hard to get started," Scott said. Even if someone only wanted a farm that was around 200 acres, "That 200 acres could cost you \$2 or \$3 million trying to get started, whereas an establishment that already has 1,000 acres has the ability to buy that hundred and the next hundred (acres); it's easier than somebody starting out, which is why we were so lucky that Dad and John let us carry on with what they started."

As to whether his own sons are likely to be the next generation to farm, Scott is doubtful.

"Well, never say never, but I'm 90 per cent sure," he said.

It's not a thought that upsets him, though.

"If they want to do other things, that's good ... It doesn't bother me a bit," he said. Because ultimately, when it comes to farming or life in general, "Make sure you're doing what you want. We wanted to do this, so we're doing it, but if they don't, that's fine." 🌱



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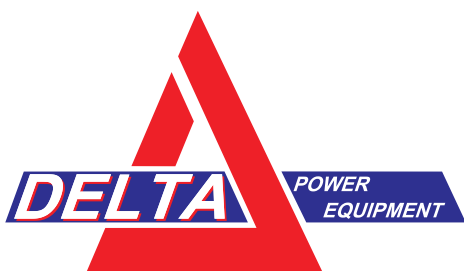
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1276 Burford-Delhi Townline Road, Scotland. \$1,150,000



124 Eighth Con Road, Burford. \$1,250,000



123 Middle Townline Road, Harley \$1,499,900



2509 Dunmark Road, Alberton \$2,999,997



145541 Potter's Road, Tillsonburg. \$1,500,000



241 Harley Road, Harley. \$1,499,900



471 Lynedoch Road, Delhi. \$1,400,000



Bishopgate & Fairfield Road, Scotland \$1,250,000



1704 Con 7 Townsend, Waterford. \$1,200,000



2277 Lakeshore Road, Dunnville. \$1,500,000



96 Baker's Lane, Windham Centre. \$1,100,000



774767 Oxford Road 14, Woodstock. \$3,750,000



Windham W. Quarter Townline & Burford-Delhi Townline Road, Norwich. \$999,900



710 North Road, Langton. \$1,625,000



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*Not intended to solicit those currently under contract.
*Re/Max Top 100, 2023 YTD



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