

UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

Grey & Bruce Farmers Unions, Federations of Agriculture and Christian Farmers are sponsoring an Agri-Food Conference from 1:00-4:00 p.m., October 15th at the Elmwood Community Centre. This forum is for all interested parties to discuss the recommendations found in the Agri-Food Study and their impact on the local farm economy as well as strategies for their implementation. For more information, Contact: Rae MacIntyre at 519-376-0859.

Prescott/Russell, Stormont/Dundas/Glengarry, Ottawa has a planning meeting scheduled for Oct. 22 at 7:30 pm at the home of Christine Estermann, 16780 McKillican Rd., RR1 Mouse Creek. All members welcome. Contact Christine Estermann at 613-528-2331 for more info.

Huron NFU will host a fall meeting on Oct. 25, from 7:30 - 9:30pm at the Clinton OMAFRA office. Invited guest speaker is Wayne Caldwell, Huron County Planner on the topic of Land Use Planning and the impact on the family farm. For more information contact Tony McQuail, 519-528 2493.

Haldimand/Norfolk/SE Oxford invite you to a meeting at the Courtland Lion's Hall at 7:30pm on Thursday, Nov. 01. Tentative speaker is Toby Barrett, MPP. Delegates and resolutions for the National Convention will also be discussed. For more information, contact Martin Driese at 519-863-5050 or Garry Proven at 519-842-6532.

Middlesex will hold their Annual General Meeting on Nov. 07 at the Coldstream Community Centre. The meeting will begin at 7:30pm and elections of officers, choosing delegates for the National Convention and resolutions are on the agenda. For more information, contact Ray Smith at 519-461-1974.

Lambton NFU invites you to an information meeting at the Brigden Community Church on Nov. 13 at 7:30pm. Delegates and resolutions for National Convention will be discussed. For more information, contact Mac Brown at 519-844-2024

Hastings/Prince Edward/Northumberland will hold its AGM at 7pm on Wed. Nov 14, 2007 at Wooler United Church. Guest speaker is Devlin Kuyek, on "Seed Politics and the Future of Food in Canada". Call Ken Marisett, 613-476-5758 or Mark Richardson, 613-367-1261 for more info.

OTHER EVENTS

A.D. Latornell Conservation Symposium: "Your Watersheds, Our Great Lakes" to be held in Alliston, Ontario on Nov. 14.15.16. For more information check the website at www.latomell.ca.

The Great Lakes Dairy Sheep Symposium, being held in at the Ramada Inn, Guelph, ON, November 1-3, 2007. For more information contact the Agricultural Information Contact Centre at 519-826-4047 or ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca

Local Food Forum: Capturing Local Food Opportunities – What's the Hype, Making it Happen and Current Innovations at two locations: December 4th – Scugog Community Centre – Port Perry (Durham Region), December 6th – Nassagawaya Community Hall – Campbellville (Halton Region). For agenda details and registration information contact: The Ontario Rural Council (TORC) at www.torc.on.ca

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NFU in Ontario

Newsletter

FALL 2007

Regional Coordinator's Report.

For many of us, this past summer has been a difficult one, dealing with the realities of very dry weather. On our farm we began feeding hay in July and I know many others have had to do similar things.

Still through it all many of us managed to find reason to smile and to share some fellowship and celebrate the good things of summer. The family fun picnic at Joan Brady's was a great, if chilly time, for all who attended on Canada Day and it was really encouraging to see all the young people there. Something I know that is becoming rare at other agricultural events.

This fall is going to be a busy time for the NFU and I hope you will consider getting involved more. Our work on our complaint with the Ombudsman against the Ministry of Agriculture in pursuit of policies damaging to the family farm continues. The NFU is continuing to try to get the solid information necessary to have a hard look at the province's Risk Management Program so we can analyze whether it will be a positive for farmers or not. Our work on building more local food networks will continue through the fall. For a very long time it was only the NFU who was talking about these issues so it is gratifying to see that effort begin to take root and grow. The Ontario Regional Council of the NFU has begun discussion and planning to begin to address the growing number of food products labelled as Product of Canada that don't have a drop of anything produced by a Canadian farmer. Look for more on this in the coming months.

Most importantly Ontario will be the host to this year's National NFU Convention. I'm not a big convention goer so last year was actually the first one I had ever attended. It is no exaggeration to

say it was a great time – fun and interesting all at the same time. I want to encourage you to take time to attend. You will never regret that you found the time and motivation. You will learn and you will laugh and you will make connections that will serve your farm business and life for a long time to come.

Finally I am going to ask you to do something very important. You may have noticed that the influence of the NFU has been growing over the past few years. That is thanks to you. But for that to continue we need to bring more farmers into the NFU so that we can grow even more in size and be even stronger in our defence and be positive solution providers for family farmers. Take one or two people you know who, just like you and I, know that farmers are important and that we need to work together to make sure that we are able to make it through to a next generation of farmers. Personally invite them to join the NFU. If each and every one of us did this with someone we know well enough to talk about it without feeling like you are a salesman, the NFU would literally double in size. Kind of like that old shampoo commercial where she told two friends and they told two friends and so on. That kind of growth would make people sit up and take notice and would strengthen the NFU to be able to command the kind of attention that advocating for solutions on farm income issues, the sustainability of our communities and the future of farming deserves.

All the best and please take the time to attend the Convention in London – you won't regret it and remember if you run into Don Mills tell him I said he is buying. That would be ginger ale, right.

*In Solidarity,
Grant Robertson*

It is time for National Convention again and I'm looking forward to the boost of inspiration and energy I get from attending. This year's theme is Reclaiming Food Sovereignty, and we are fortunate to have two guests attending Women's Caucus who have worked extensively on this issue. Dena Hoff is a farmer, a farm leader with the U.S. National Family Farm Coalition and has been a member of the Via Campesina International Coordination Committee. Our second guest is Priscilla Settee. Priscilla is First Nations Cree and a professor at the University of Saskatoon. She has worked extensively on regaining food sovereignty in First Nations communities in Canada. Both of these amazing women will share their stories with us which will lead us into a discussion on the impact of globalization on our farm families. Women's caucus is open to all and is one of the highlights of convention for me. I hope to see you there.

Many of you are aware of NFU's involvement with the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW). We submit resolutions and attend their events whenever possible. This year we are ramping up our involvement and applying for a position on the ACWW

Agricultural Committee. Representation on this committee provides an opportunity for dialogue with women from around the world as well as a presence to ensure our message is heard. Meetings are held in London England and, if successful, we will have to fund travel and accommodation costs for the position. This is where you come in. We will be setting up a fundraising table at convention and your donations are needed. You can donate an item or a service. Be creative, there is a lot of talent out there. We also need volunteers to work the table during convention. Please contact me by phone, 519-343-3375, or email, kim.hawthorn@sympatico.ca, if you have some time or a donation.

Well, the sun's coming up and I had better get outside. There are still tomatoes, onions and squash in the field and seed to be cleaned and stored. The field work season is almost over and I'm looking forward to a winter of reading, learning and meeting more of you. See you at convention.

*In Union, Kim Delaney,
Region 3 (Ontario) Women's Advisor*

(Photo):

Regional Council Retreat, September, 2007

(back row left to right)

Joe Dama, Kim Delaney, Marion Watkins

(middle row left to right)

Don Mills, Peter Dowling, Joan Brady

(front row left to right)

Grant Robertson, Caitlin Hall



- (10) What is the future of farming in Ontario?
- (11) How important is local food consumption to you?
- (12) What slogan should we use to support local food and Ontario farming?

Lucy Sharratt, Coordinator of CBAN, will work as Project Manager to help coordinate. Send your comments and ideas to Lucy BEFORE OCT 22.

Email: coordinator@cban.ca

Phone: 613 241 2267 / Fax: 613 241 2506

431 Gilmour Street, Second Floor, Ottawa, Ontario, K2P 0R5

FARMSTART

We welcome farmers, farm and community leaders, politicians, and the public to join us at our upcoming November Conference:

***Bringing World Agriculture to Ontario
Innovation ~ Opportunities ~ Ethno-cultural Markets***

Keynote Speaker: Bill Sciarrapa

An agricultural extension expert from Rutgers University, Bill has organized a broad team to focus on creating a new market for ethnic specialty crops to meet the emerging ethnic population changes in the Northeast USA. Many growers are transitioning to these higher-value, ethnic and heritage crops. In diversifying, growers are achieving increased profitability, and consumers obtain nutritional, health and culinary benefits.

The conference will take place:

Tuesday, November 27—Durham Region

Wednesday, November 28—Toronto

Thursday, November 29—Guelph

For more information, and updates, please visit www.farmstart.ca, or contact Melissa Benner, MarketLINK Coordinator at: melissa@farmstart.ca

This conference is a joint endeavour by FarmStart, the Centre for Land and Water Stewardship (CLAWS), the Ontario Institute of Agrologists, and Durham Region. It is made possible through support from the Agricultural Management Institute (A.M.I).



NFU GATE SIGNS

To receive your NFU gate sign, please call:

—your Local President, or

—the Ontario Office at 1-888-273-5545

NFU Ontario launches new project with Ecological Farmers Association and the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network!

Get Involved!

Thanks to a new grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, NFU Ontario will be coordinating with EFAO and CBAN this year and next to create new resources for farmers and consumers. It's time for us to update our information on genetic engineering and to share more of our farming experiences with the burgeoning urban local food movement.

We need your help to develop factsheets and organize and participate in events. Here is what we will be doing:

- **Factsheet for Urban Consumers about Farming:** to promote local food consumption, promote understanding of ecological agriculture and challenges for farmers, and offer information on genetic engineering.
- **Factsheet for Farmers about Genetic Engineering:** to offer updated information about genetic engineering including the seen and potential impacts of GE crops in our areas, how crops are regulated and what the latest crop developments are.
- **Events in Rural Ontario:** to offer a forum for discussion and information-sharing on genetic engineering and related issues.
- **Events in Urban Ontario:** to offer city folk a chance to hear about genetic engineering and challenges in farming directly from local farmers.

If there is a need in your community for this type of rural-urban exchange, we can help organize an event.

Please take some time to answer one or all of the below questions to help us develop the best materials – you can email us your responses or clip this out and send it to us:

Questions for Ontario farmers

- (1) What questions do you have about genetic engineering (GE)?
- (2) Do you need a clear definition of GE?
- (3) What information about genetic engineering would you like to have?
- (4) Do you get regular updates on GE crops from farm magazines?
- (5) What do you think your neighbours need to know about GE crops?
- (6) Are you worried about new GE crops being approved in Canada (like wheat, alfalfa, sugar beets)?
- (7) Do you think that GE crops will eventually affect your farm? And if so, How?
- (8) What would you like consumers to know about the agricultural industry, about how you farm, and the challenges you face in the industry?
- (9) What information do you think consumers need in order to support farming in Ontario?

(continued on page 7...)

Frank Morrison was cutting his winter supply of wood on his farm in northern Frontenac County in October of 2006. He suddenly came across stakes and severely damaged trees in his woodlot. This was the first warning that a company called Frontenac Ventures was exploring for uranium in the area. People soon learned that the provincial government had given Frontenac Ventures permission to stake uranium claims on privately owned land and on crown land that is claimed by Algonquin First Nations people.

On June 28, 2007, the Algonquin people set up a blockade at the main gate to the exploration site. Within a few days the white settlers in the area had formed the Community Coalition Against Mining Uranium, www.ccamu.ca, to support the Algonquin action. These pristine hills and forests of north Frontenac are the head waters of the Mississippi River which flows down to the Ottawa River through Carleton Place, Almonte and Pakenham. People from all along the river right down to Ottawa are supporting the blockade.

Several weeks ago Christian Peacemaker Teams sent a team to the blockade. I joined the team for a week on September 16. Tents and trailers are set along the road and just inside the gates of the property. People come when they have days off work to be part of the blockade. A circle of some 20 chairs is drawn up around an open fire in front of the gate. People come and go, bringing coffee and snacks, stopping to get

news of latest court actions. Inside the gates, generators provide power to run a kitchen and keep freezers cold. Those freezers are stocked with food that has been donated by hundreds of supporters.

On Saturday, September 22, a flotilla of canoes set off from Ardoch on Mud Lake to paddle down the Mississippi River to Ottawa. About 100 people gathered in front of a cairn by the lake that commemorated the efforts of Algonquin war chief Harold Perry's efforts to save the wild rice in Mud Lake from destruction in the 1980s. Algonquin Grand Chief and Grandfather of all Grandfathers, William Camanda from Maniwaki Quebec performed some opening pipe and smudging ceremonies with sweet grass and sage. Two young women, Corrie and Jill, went down to the lake to fill two mason jars with clear water from Mud Lake, to be presented to the people of Ottawa. Several Algonquin drummers beat out a travelling song on the big drum. Harold Perry, now a wiry 77 years old slid his canoe, that he himself had made, into the water to lead the way to Ottawa.

We often hear stories from around the world of farmers and native people trying to protect their lands from miners, loggers, and other resource extractors. In North Frontenac County, I have now experienced that same struggle here in Southern Ontario.

—Allan Slater
baslater@quadro.net

Grey County Sept/Oct Activity Report

- All Candidates meeting sponsored by the Grey/Bruce General Farm Organizations.
- As a guest farm organization, attended Grey/Bruce Agriculture and Culinary Association meetings. www.foodlinkgreybruce.com
- Contributed to a Bruce County Tourism Strategic Planning Session
- Part of the nominating committee for the three agricultural representatives to serve on the Source Water Protection Committee.

Kingston Local Food Summit

November 2 to 4, 2007

St Lawrence College, Kingston, Ontario

Care about where your food comes from? Want to eat better with locally grown food?

Interested in helping develop the Kingston area's capacity to grow its own food?

Come to the Food Down the Road Local Food Summit,

November 2nd to 4th, 2007

"Local farm and food advocates are organizing a conference that will help people within a 100 kilometre radius of Kingston learn more about our local food system, and participate in developing ways to make that system more sustainable," said Peter Dowling, a farmer and a director of Local 316 of the National Farmers Union. Food Down the Road – Towards a Sustainable, Local Food System is a project initiated by NFU members in Frontenac and Lennox and Addington Counties and the city of Kingston.

Thomas Homer-Dixon to Speak

Thomas Homer-Dixon, chair of Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Toronto and author of The Ingenuity Gap and The Upside of Down, will open the summit Friday, November 2.

"Homer-Dixon is able to synthesize the many challenges facing our food system, our society and our planet, and offers a hopeful and practical vision for a sustainable future," said Andrew McCann, FDTR Co-ordinator. "Local farms and food are key to the renewed civilization he calls for."

On Saturday, November 3, sessions will cover a range of topics: cooking and tasting for the whole family, the future of farming, hunger, food justice, biotechnology, the connections between food security and energy security, the role of policy and government, and taking food action at home.

Under the theme of Food Fights, Lucy Sharatt, of the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network, and Colleen Ross, National Women's President of the NFU, will discuss seeds, biotechnology and food sovereignty. Rick Munroe, a local teacher and farmer, will share his research on peak oil, energy security and food security. Debbie Field, of Toronto's FoodShare, will explore the future of food justice.

For those interested in taking food action at home, Tibrata Gillies, chef at Pan Chanco, will offer a workshop on seasonal cooking and eating local all year round, while food activists will describe how to grow food in the city (in home and community gardens). Meanwhile, Chef Thomas Elia and students in the culinary arts program at St. Lawrence College will offer tasting workshops for the whole family.

Local farmers Pat Dawson and John Wise and University of Guelph professor Anne Clark will discuss the question, "What is sustainable farming?" on Saturday morning. In the afternoon, speakers will propose ways to support new farmers and new models for producing, processing and direct marketing local food.

"Saturday's program is intended to inspire participants in drafting a local food declaration on Sunday," said Beth Pater, member of the



Nourish Yourself, Nourish Our Community

(continued on page 5...)

Kingston Local Food Summit (cont'd...)

Food Down the Road Community Council and chair of the Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington Health Unit. "The declaration will be the beginning of a food charter for Kingston and countryside, a statement of principles and practical directions for the future of food in our region."

"We will seek endorsement of the food charter by local municipal governments, institutions, organizations and individuals, so that these shared principles and practices will be integrated into decision-making processes," Pater said.

"We are looking forward to a very exciting summit and to working toward a sustainable and inclusive local food system for Kingston and the surrounding countryside," Dowling said.

The registration fee is \$10 per day, which includes local food lunches and refreshments that celebrate the bounty of our region's fall harvest.

Partners in sponsoring the Summit are the NFU, the Eat from Kingston's Countryside project, KEDCO (Kingston Economic Development Corporation), KFL&A Public Health and St. Lawrence College.

For more information and to register, go to www.fooddowntheroad.ca

Along with contributions from local organizations and many volunteers, *Food Down the Road* is funded in part through contributions by the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario under the Agricultural Management Institute (AMI), an initiative of the federal-provincial-territorial Agricultural Policy Framework designed to position Canada's agri-food sector as a world leader. The Agricultural Adaptation Council administers the AMI program on behalf of the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario. ★

BRANT COUNTY REPORT

—submitted by Ella Haley

Due to severe growth pressure on Brant County from the leapfrog effect of the Greenbelt, and the purchase by developers of huge tracts of farmland, key members of the NFU helped to form the Sustainable Brant working group. (www.sustainablebrant.ca).

Learning sessions are held which borrow the best of ideas from other communities and planning documents regarding the protection of prime farmland, and of the agricultural community. Key committee and council meetings in Brant County are monitored and reported on. Clarifying questions and recommendations are routinely submitted.

The group will gladly welcome any help to do this. Please contact **Richard Tunstall at 519-647-0040, Nick Greenacre at 519-442-2399 or Ted Shelegy at 519-446-1824** if you wish to get involved.