



National Farmers Union – Ontario NEWSLETTER

*Strong Communities.
Sound Policies.
Sustainable Farms.*

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Save our swallows with Nature Canada



By
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Everyone loves swallows, the busy little birds that zip around the barn and over the hay fields, scooping up insects like moths and mosquitos. Have you noticed fewer swallows lately? It's not just you— there actually are fewer around. In fact, swallow populations across Eastern Canada are crashing at dramatic rates.

Nature Canada, one of our country's oldest national nature conservation charities, is taking action to *Save Our Swallows*. This new project, funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, aims to help these beloved birds back to recovery. As many of these species live in rural Ontario and are dependent upon farms for their survival, we are looking for

your help and support to Save Our Swallows. We are teaming up with the National Farmers Union and other farming groups to promote beneficial practices for these at-risk species. Examples of these practices include the provision of safe nesting habitat in barns, mitigating threats in barns and out buildings, providing foraging habitat that is close to nest sites, building alternative nesting habitat nearby when necessary, and weaning ourselves off pesticides that directly or indirectly impact these species.

Over the course of this two-year project, we will be developing and sharing our beneficial practices online and promoting them at farming events and demonstration sites in three catchments along the Southern Great Lakes: Quinte-Kingston-Rideau, Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk, and Essex-Kent-Lambton.

Our goal is for at least 250 farmers in these areas to implement beneficial practices for swallows on their farms. To kick-off this project, we would like you to complete a short survey on

your current practices and knowledge of swallows. This will provide us with a baseline against which we can measure progress. Please join us to Save Our Swallows! Visit nfontario.ca to take the survey. Your responses are extremely important to helping us understand how we can help you.

For more information, please contact Ted Cheskey, Nature Canada's Naturalist Director at tcheskey@naturecanada.ca

Coming Events

Renfrew Local 330 – Next meeting is Monday, August 6, 7:30 p.m. at the Barr Line Community Centre. Everyone is welcome.

Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Ottawa, Prescott-Russel Local 362 – Summer Social Potluck is Saturday, August 25, 3:00 p.m. at Andrew Hayden Park in Ottawa. Please bring a dish along with your own plates, cups and utensils. All are welcome.

Frontenac, Lennox, Addington Local 316 at Kingston Fall Fair – Local 316 will partner with the Kingston Area Seed System Initiative to present hands-on activities related to seeds at the Kingston Fall Fair education day, Friday, Sept. 14. With corn on the cob on the lunch menu for 500 elementary school children attending the education day program, organizers will demonstrate how corn grows from seed to maturity. Many thanks to NFU members at Kitchen Table Seed House for their help with the presentation. Also participating in the education day program are NFU members from Sonset Farms demonstrating spelt grains and flours and from Orbit Valley Farm bringing livestock to the program.

Save the Date Local 316's Third Annual Fall Feast will be held Saturday, November 3, at Battersea United Church. The event is held to celebrate food grown by local farmers and to raise funds to support education opportunities for new and young farmers in Kingston, Frontenac, and Lennox-Addington. Tickets sold out in advance in 2016 and 2017, so get your ticket early when they become available in the fall.



Renfrew County Local 328 recently hosted a public showing of the movie *Modified*. We were fortunate to have the producer and director at the viewing. Renfrew County NFU members Bob Dobson (far right) and Marshall Buchanan presented Aube Giroux, the director, and producer Camelia Freiberg with a gift basket following the showing.

The Renfrew County NFU is also taking on the NFU-O Making Your Voice Heard challenge outlined in the June Rural Voice. Members will be running booths at various Renfrew County events with displays – Think About the Trade Dispute; Food Sovereignty Must be Taken Seriously; and Buy Renfrew County/Ontario/Canadian locally produced food. The events include the Beachburg, Cobden, and Renfrew area fairs; Taste of the Valley in Cobden, which draws close to 4,000 people; and the Renfrew County Plowing Match.

A subscription to The Rural Voice is one of the benefits of being an NFU-O member