



National Farmers Union – Ontario NEWSLETTER

*Strong Communities.
Sound Policies.
Sustainable Farms.*

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Encouraging a new generation of farmers

In Ontario, 55 per cent of farmers are over the age of 55 and only 9.4 per cent are under the age of 35. The average age of a farmer in Canada is also 55, and only one in eight have a succession plan in place. As these farmers get ready for retirement, we need to ensure that a new generation of farmers is able to take their place.

The good news is that the 2016 census showed an increase in the number of young people entering the agricultural industry for the first time since 1991. According to the NFU's New Farmer Survey, of farmers with less than 10 years of farming experience 83 per cent of them are first generation farmers who didn't grow up on a farm. Obtaining land is not easy for these farmers as farmland prices in Ontario are some of the highest in Canada with a provincial average of over \$10,000 per acre. As farmland prices increase, land access becomes a barrier for a new generation of farmers who want to help secure a sustainable and local food system in Ontario.

Farmland succession and access aren't the only issues young farmers

are dealing with. Farm debt, climate change, and lack of resources and supports are also barriers to success. If we want our young farmers to succeed, and if we want to entice more young people to become farmers, we will need to address challenges within the agriculture system, including financial security, land access, rural infrastructure, policy changes, and more.

Addressing these challenges has been part of the core mandate since the founding of the NFU in 1969 which ensured leadership roles for youth at all levels of the organization. Recently, we also developed the Ontario Land Access Guide to provide a comprehensive overview of land access options and creative

business models with an emphasis on non-ownership options (www.nfontario.ca/new/land-access-guide) and follow us on social media or sign up for our e-newsletter for info on additional workshops coming in 2019.

The NFU-O is also pleased to announce our fundraising campaign for a 2019 Farm Youth Gathering. Farmers have always learned from each other, and support for this campaign will allow young farmers all over Canada to gather together to share new ideas, build skills, and plan for more resources and supports. Please visit www.nfontario.ca/new for more information and to offer your support for the next generation of farmers.

Coming Events

Renfrew County Local 330 – Next meeting is Monday, November 5, 7:30 p.m. at the Barr Line Community Centre. Everyone is welcome.

Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry, Ottawa, Prescott Russell Local 362 – Next meeting is Thursday, November 8, 7:00 p.m. at Riverbend Pub and Dining, 3256 River Rd, Osgoode. Our Christmas dinner and meeting is on Tuesday, December 13, 6:00 p.m. at The Red Dot, 5673 Main St. Osgoode, Osgoode, ON. All are welcome.

Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox-Addington Local 316 – Our Annual General Meeting will be held Thursday, January 10, 2019 at Inverary United Church, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the formation of the National Farmers Union in Canada, 1969-2019. Further details to come.

NATIONAL FARMERS UNION
49TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION

**UNLEASHING
THE POTENTIAL OF
FOOD SOVEREIGNTY**

NOVEMBER
22-24, 2018
**HILTON
GARDEN INN,**
90-22ND STREET E.
SASKATOON

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
**RAMONA
DOMINICIOIU**

FREE PUBLIC
EVENT: 7 PM,
THURSDAY,
NOVEMBER

22

#NFU49



EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO ATTEND THE ENTIRE
CONVENTION – REGISTRATION IS AT THE DOOR
FULL PROGRAM INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.NFU.CA

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