



# National Farmers Union – Ontario NEWSLETTER

*Strong Communities.  
Sound Policies.  
Sustainable Farms.*

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## Farmland, water protection and new farmers should be top priorities for new government

Recently, the NFU-O asked you how the new Ontario government could best support farmers and food production. We had a great response, and we will be bringing your comments with us in our upcoming meetings with the Minister of Agriculture and other MPPs.

It's not much of a surprise that farmers care about protecting farmland with 45 percent of respondents ranking it in their top two priorities. Key to those concerns was limiting the development of farmland and prohibiting its sale to investors and foreign buyers. Respondents also want the new government to promote agricultural land reserves to enhance farmland preservation.

Water protection is another key issue. Along with stronger policies to protect and expand the Bluebelt,

farmers and eaters want the government to ban bottling permits for water to help preserve the clean water supply in Ontario.

The topic that generated the most diverse range of comments regarded new farmers. It was clear based on feedback that assistance for new and young farmers to access land is something the current generation of farmers cares deeply about. One member commented, "As a young couple (with student debt), land costs are stupidly inaccessible, land size and lack of severance options/building multiple homes options makes land access even harder." Coupled with this, many participants wanted to see more work done around succession planning. There was also a strong focus on providing education to students regarding farming.

We want to thank everyone who took the time to respond. Your comments and feedback are key to the work the NFU-O does and helps focus our priorities as we move into the fall. As we meet with government officials, our message can be summed up by this comment, "Simply make supporting farmers/agriculture a priority."

### Coming Events

**Renfrew Local 330** – Next meeting is Monday, September 3, 7:30 p.m. at the Barr Line Community Centre. Everyone is 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.



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