

# AGRI-TOURISM

*A Guide for Farmers in Burlington*



## Understanding this Guide

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The City of Burlington has identified agri-tourism as a potential growth industry in Burlington, based on the following factors:

- Burlington's prime agricultural lands are protected for long-term agricultural use through provincial, regional and local policy;
- Rural Burlington is near large urban markets, and benefits from easy access to transportation networks;
- There are numerous attractions in Burlington and the surrounding area which draw tourists to visit;
- Demographics in Burlington align with the agri-tourism target market; and
- There are a wide variety of supports available for agri-tourism business development, including government funding and technical resources.

This guide is intended to help current and prospective farm operators develop an agri-tourism business plan, understand the relevant land use policies in place, and access supporting resources.

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# Introduction

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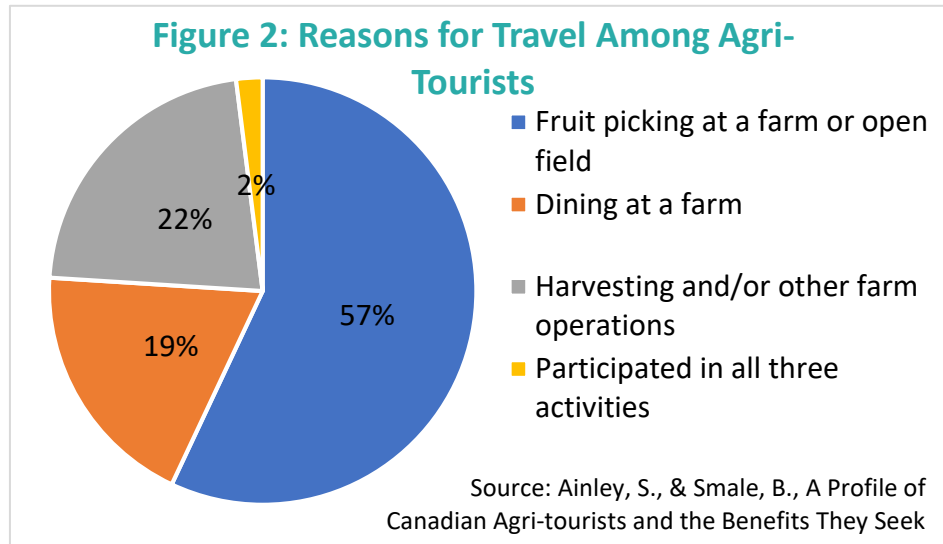
‘Agri-tourism’ is the act of visiting a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural or agribusiness operation for the purpose of enjoyment, education or personal involvement in the activities of the farm or operation.

Agri-tourism is a subset of a larger recreational industry called rural tourism that includes visits to rural settings or rural environments to participate in or experience activities, events or attractions not readily available in urbanized areas.

**Figure 1: Types of Agri-Tourism**



Past Canadian studies have shown pick-your-own operations to be the most popular agri-tourism activity, offering a relatively low-cost avenue to boost farm revenues.



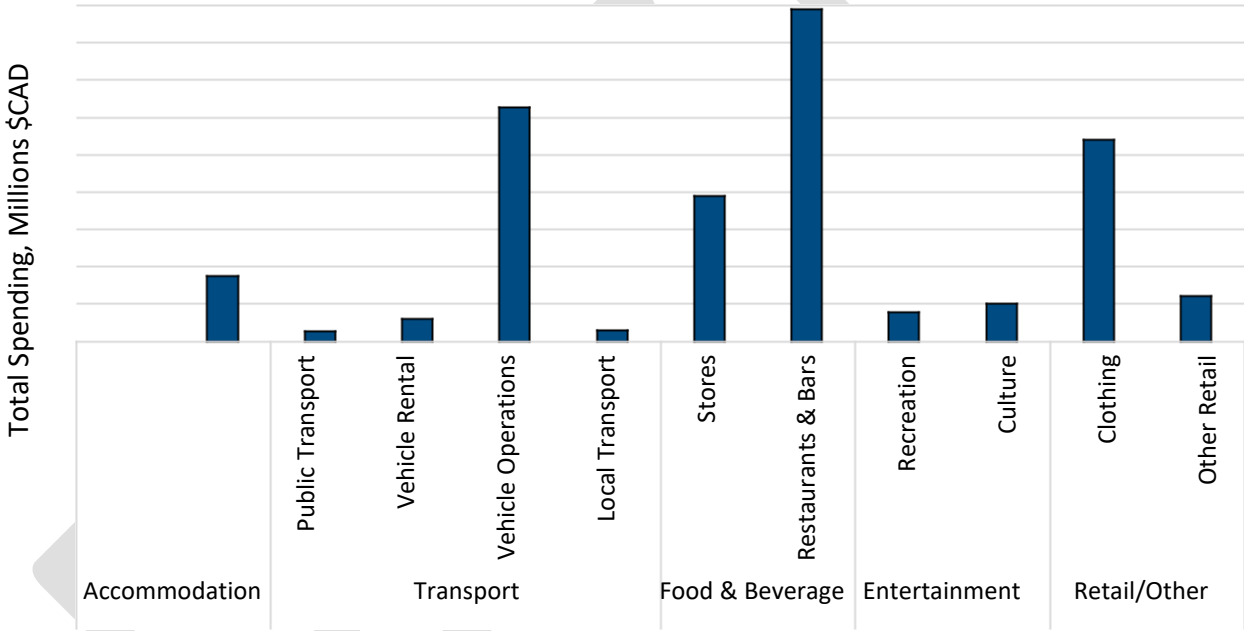
Other types of agri-tourism activities include:

- roadside stands and markets
- food activities - pick/cut/gather/grow/process your own
- farm activities - haying, threshing, plowing, fencing, sheep shearing, lambing, egg hatching
- bed and breakfast/farm vacations
- specialties - wine, cider, maple syrup, flowers, herbs
- animal feeding and petting areas
- seasonal festivals - fall harvest, Halloween, Christmas, spring, strawberry, sweet corn
- hay and/or sleigh rides
- birthday and corporate parties
- horseback riding
- school tours and summer day camps
- cross-country skiing/snow shoeing/snowmobiling
- historical interpretation and re-enactments
- mazes, rock climbing
- wildlife viewing - birds, deer, etc.
- scarecrow-making, pumpkin carving/painting
- theatrical or puppet shows and musical events
- community charity events
- movie shoots
- farm dinners or culinary events
- classes - cooking, flower arranging, canning, etc.

Note that, in Ontario’s prime agricultural areas, agri-tourism is considered an ‘on-farm diversified’ use and must be secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property and limited in area. The Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas provide more information on the range of uses allowed: [omafra.gov.on.ca/english/landuse/permitteduses.htm](http://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/landuse/permitteduses.htm)

The chart below breaks down tourism spending patterns within Halton Region. Agri-tourism falls under the “recreation” spending category. Most money is spent at restaurants and bars with tourism to the wider region being minimal across all forms of entertainment.

**Figure 3: Spending Categories of Visitors to Halton Region, 2016**



While agri-tourism is an underdeveloped industry in Burlington, nearby regions demonstrate the potential benefits of supporting investment in this sector. For example, Niagara Region and Prince Edward County are home to thriving agri-tourism industries, largely based on culinary or food and beverage tourism. Some studies have shown that that approximately 64% to 81% of farms that implemented agri-tourism operations saw their profits rise by an average of 56% to 68%<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Tew, C. Perceived Impact on Farm Economic Standing, Sales and Profits and Barbieri, C. Assessing the sustainability of agri-tourism in the US: a comparison between agri-tourism and other farm entrepreneurial ventures

## 10-Step Action Plan

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This guide outlines a 10-Step Plan to start your agri-tourism venture, based on consideration of the following key success factors<sup>2</sup>:

- Creating a visitor experience consisting of products and/or activities
- Access to land and space
- The farm is in an accessible location for visitors
- Agri-tourism operation is marketed as a destination
- Activities provided through experience match the visitors' expectations
- Access to financial resources to cover start-up costs and invest in the future
- Access to human resources
- Activities adhere and comply with local government regulations
- Presence of other agri-tourism operators

Burlington's Agri-Tourism Guide is based, in part, on the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs' (OMAFRA) "Developing an Agri-Tourism Operation in Ontario" factsheet. While the City's guide provides more detail on local processes and considerations, the OMAFRA factsheet should be considered a complementary resource.

[omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/16-029.htm](http://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/16-029.htm)

Another complementary resource is AGPAL, a web-based discovery tool developed by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to help those in the agriculture and agri-business sector find the federal and provincial agricultural information that specifically applies to them. AGPAL was designed as a one-stop shop for information about agricultural resources, programs, services, market intelligence and research.

[agpal.ca/#/search](http://agpal.ca/#/search)

The OMAFRA Agricultural Business Management portal also houses many of the resources referenced throughout this document:

<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/agbusdev.html>

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<sup>2</sup> British Columbia Ministry of Agriculture 'Farm Diversification Through Agri-Tourism' guide

# 1

## Know Your Market

Market research is a critical first step to pursuing a new business venture. Visiting other agri-tourism operations, surveying potential customers and attending industry events are all ways to conduct an initial evaluation.

The Halton Region ‘Simply Local’ guide, which lists agri-tourism operations throughout Halton, offers a starting point for understanding the types of businesses that have been successful in the local market.

[halton.ca/The-Region/Explore-and-Enjoy-Halton/Simply-Local-Halton-s-Farms](http://halton.ca/The-Region/Explore-and-Enjoy-Halton/Simply-Local-Halton-s-Farms)

For networking and to gain a better understanding of the issues and opportunities facing the agricultural sector, it may also be helpful to pursue membership with local agricultural associations, such as:

- Halton Region Federation of Agriculture
- Halton Soil and Crop Improvement Association
- Halton Wentworth Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association
- Halton Agricultural Society

In addition, there are opportunities to participate in public advisory committees that work with local government to support agricultural viability, such as:

- Burlington Agricultural and Rural Affairs Advisory Committee
- Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee
- Hamilton-Halton Watershed Agricultural Advisory Panel

The Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee (HAAC) works with Halton Region to host events that showcase the local agricultural sector, while also highlighting upcoming trends and innovations. Events include the annual HAAC Farm Tour, as well as the Halton Region Agricultural Forum. By following current industry trends and news, you can tap into new demands and meet evolving consumer needs.



Sources of agricultural market data include for Burlington and beyond include:

<b>BEDC Data Centre</b>	Data on development and economic activities, demographics, labour and industry characteristics, and the competitiveness of the Burlington economy.	<a href="http://bedc.ca/data-centre/">bedc.ca/data-centre/</a>
<b>Burlington Business Directory</b>	Burlington-specific data from the Halton Region Employment Survey	<a href="http://bedc.ca/burlington-business-directory/">bedc.ca/burlington-business-directory/</a>
<b>Halton Rural Agricultural Strategy Background Report</b>	Provides the basis for the Halton Region Rural Agricultural Strategy and describes the economic climate, as well as key components or sectors that are likely to thrive in the agricultural and rural areas of Halton.	<a href="http://halton.ca/Repository/2016-Halton-Region-Rural-Agricultural-Strategy">halton.ca/Repository/2016-Halton-Region-Rural-Agricultural-Strategy</a>
<b>Ontario Agriculture System Portal</b>	More than 60 maps on agricultural production, land use, infrastructure, agri-food assets and services.	<a href="http://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/landuse/gis/WCAG_AGOL/index.html?appid=3cbd2393a1e548949450e21d90646353">omafra.gov.on.ca/english/landuse/gis/WCAG_AGOL/index.html?appid=3cbd2393a1e548949450e21d90646353</a>
<b>Statistics Canada Census of Agriculture</b>	A statistical portrait of Canada's agriculture industry and its farm operators and families.	<a href="http://statcan.gc.ca/end/ca2016">statcan.gc.ca/end/ca2016</a>
<b>OMFRA Research</b>	Information on OMAFRA's investments in research and innovation.	<a href="http://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/research/programfunding/index.htm">omafra.gov.on.ca/english/research/programfunding/index.htm</a>
<b>Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance</b>	A partnership between the University of Guelph and the Ontario government to support and help shape the future of the province's agri-food industry and rural communities.	<a href="http://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/research/uofgagreement/alliance.html">omafra.gov.on.ca/english/research/uofgagreement/alliance.html</a>
<b>Specialty Cropportunities</b>	A resource designed to assist growers transitioning to production of new, specialty or non-traditional crops.	<a href="http://omafra.gov.on.ca/CropOp/en/">omafra.gov.on.ca/CropOp/en/</a>
<b>Niagara College Innovation Centres</b>	Research, innovation and funding opportunities (see Agricultural & Environmental Technologies Innovation Centre, and Canadian Food and Wine Institute Innovation Centre).	<a href="http://ncinnovation.ca/">ncinnovation.ca/</a>

Target customers are distinct groups of visitors that you hope to attract with focused marketing strategies. For most agri-tourists, the primary reasons to visit a farm visit are as follows:

- To have an adventure
- To go on a vacation
- To reminisce
- To build and strengthen relationships
- To improve health and well-being
- To rest and relax
- To escape
- To learn

With the above in mind, creating potential customer profiles based on the following questions can help to clarify your target market:

- *What kind of visitors do I want?*
- *What kind of visitors can my existing business cater to?*
- *What kind of visitors will I be able to grow my business to cater to?*

Typical agri-tourists are likely to be middle-aged or older adults, with varying levels of income and education. Some research suggests that older adults with children over the ages of 12 are most likely to participate in agri-tourism, and that interest increases with household income.

Figure 4: Agri-Tourist Characteristics<sup>3</sup>

Characteristic Attribute	Customer Segments Agritourist (n = 182)
Sex	
Male	46.7
Female	53.3
Age	
Young adult	17.0
Middle-aged adult	36.3
Older adult	46.7
Income	
Under \$40,000	34.6
\$40,000 to \$59,999	23.1
\$60,000 to \$79,999	13.5
\$80,000 to \$99,999	10.3
\$100,000 and over	18.6
Education	
High school or less	40.8
Post high school diploma	32.4
University degree	26.8

<sup>3</sup> Land Research Inc. Participating in Agro-Tourism Activities While on Trips of One or More Nights university of Waterloo Agritourism Characteritis, 2010

### 3

## Review Land Use Planning Framework

Burlington's agricultural area is subject to a variety of land use plans, policies and by-laws which can vary depending on the location of a property. Arrange to speak with City planning staff to understand how various policies may apply (contact information is located at the end of this guide). Key documents to be aware of are:

- *City of Burlington Official Plan*
- *City of Burlington Zoning By-Law*
- *Halton Region Official Plan*
- *Niagara Escarpment Plan*
- *Greenbelt Plan*
- *Conservation Halton Regulations*

The City of Burlington Planning Process is as follows:

1. Pre-consultation meeting
2. Pre-application consultation meeting hosted by property owner/developer
3. Development application is submitted
4. Notification to neighboring property owners
5. Circulation of application to agencies
6. Preparation of information report for members of City Council
7. Statutory public meeting
8. Preparation of recommendation report to approve, modify or refuse the development application
9. Recommendation report to Planning and Development Committee and City Council decisions
10. Notice of Council decision/appeal period

Details on the City of Burlington development process are available here: [burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/burlington-planning-process.asp](http://burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/burlington-planning-process.asp)

The majority of Burlington’s rural area is within the Niagara Escarpment Plan area, where the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) is the primary development approval authority. Details on the NEC development process are available here: [escarpment.org/DevelopmentPermits/ApplyForDevPermit](http://escarpment.org/DevelopmentPermits/ApplyForDevPermit)

Parts of Burlington are also regulated by Conservation Halton (CH). In addition to any City or NEC approvals, permission from CH is required to develop in areas of natural hazards, to alter a waterway, or interfere with a wetland. Details on the CH permit process are available here: [conservationhalton.ca/permit-review-process](http://conservationhalton.ca/permit-review-process)

Other potential approval processes to be aware of include:

<b>City of Burlington Zoning Clearance Certificate</b>	Must be approved prior to building permit application. Note: development charges are calculated during this process.	<a href="http://burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/zoning-clearance-certificate.asp">burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/zoning-clearance-certificate.asp</a>
<b>City of Burlington Site Plan Control</b>	Must be approved prior to building permit application (most agricultural buildings and structures are exempt).	<a href="http://burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/site-plan.asp">burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/site-plan.asp</a>
<b>City of Burlington Building Permit</b>	Required for all construction projects, renovations, demolitions and certain changes of use of buildings.	<a href="http://burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/building-permits.asp">burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/building-permits.asp</a>
<b>City of Burlington Site Alteration Permit</b>	Regulates how a piece of land can be altered, e.g. filling, grading or excavation.	<a href="http://burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/Site-Alteration-Permits.asp">burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/Site-Alteration-Permits.asp</a>
<b>Halton Region Excavation, Road Occupancy and Municipal Consent Permits</b>	May apply if the proposed development impacts a Regional road.	<a href="http://halton.ca/The-Region/Permits/Excavation,-Road-Occupancy-and-Municipal-Consent-P">halton.ca/The-Region/Permits/Excavation,-Road-Occupancy-and-Municipal-Consent-P</a>
<b>Burlington Hydro Service Request</b>	Early consultation is recommended to identify potential servicing needs that may impact the design or layout of a proposed development.	<a href="http://burlingtonhydro.com/other-business-service-requests.html">burlingtonhydro.com/other-business-service-requests.html</a>

Agricultural uses are divided into the following land use categories:

**Agricultural Use** - the growing of crops, including nursery, biomass, and horticultural crops; raising of livestock; raising of other animals for food, fur or fibre, including poultry and fish; aquaculture; apiaries; agro-forestry; maple syrup production; and associated on-farm buildings and structures.

→ *Example: growing apples*

**Agriculture-Related Use** - farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses that are directly related to farm operations in the area, support agriculture, benefit from being in close proximity to farm operations, and provide direct products and/or services to farm operations as a primary activity.

→ *Example: processing locally grown apples into cider*

**On-Farm Diversified Use** - uses that are secondary to the principal agricultural use of the property and limited in area. On-farm diversified uses include, but are not limited to, home occupations, home industries, agri-tourism uses, and uses that produce value-added agricultural products.

→ *Example: selling locally produced apple cider in an on-farm store*

While agricultural uses may be eligible for a lower tax rate through the provincial Farm Property Class Tax Rate Program, the tax rate applied for agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses will depend on the nature of the operation. For example, while land used to grow apples may be eligible for a reduced taxation rate, land and buildings used for an on-farm diversified use such as a retail store would be taxed as a rural commercial use.

An overview of the City's tax rates is available here:

[burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/Rates.asp](http://burlington.ca/en/services-for-you/Rates.asp)

An overview of the Farm Property Class Tax Rate Program is available here:

[agricorp.com/en-ca/Programs/FarmTaxProgram/Pages/Overview.aspx](http://agricorp.com/en-ca/Programs/FarmTaxProgram/Pages/Overview.aspx)

Many agricultural operators have existing assets that can be leveraged for agritourism, including:

### Physical Resources

- **Land:** List what you have, including pasturelands, wood lots, cropland, wetlands, elevation, topography, etc. Check with your local municipality on what uses are permitted on the farm, based on the official plan and zoning by-law.
- **Climate:** Consider weather patterns (rain, snow, humidity, wind) and temperature and how they may affect the types of activities you might provide.
- **Infrastructure:** List what structures you could use - buildings, equipment, roads/trails, fences, commercial kitchen space, etc.
- **Other attractions:** List those things already on your farm that might appeal to a visitor, such as wildlife, streams, ponds, fishing, livestock, proximity to natural or manmade points of interest, etc.

### Operations and Management

- **Owner/manager strengths and goals:** Owner/manager strengths and goals: List the intangible assets you have that can help you with a farm recreation operation, such as people skills, marketing ability, knowledge or skills such as maze building, livestock management, cooking, historical knowledge of the area, etc.
- **Family and staff strengths and resources:** List any skills and strengths that family members or staff could add.

The Ontario Agricultural Information Atlas (AgMaps) is an interactive online application that can help you to assess physical assets. AgMaps allows you to create custom maps based on agricultural data on soils and drainage, as well as data layers from other Government of Ontario ministries.

[omafra.gov.on.ca/english/landuse/gis/portal.htm](http://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/landuse/gis/portal.htm)

A business plan helps to set realistic goals, secure funding, measure success, clarify operational requirements and establish a reasonable financial forecast. Some of the key considerations your business plan should address are as follows:

- Is it a new business venture, a purchase of an existing business or the expansion of an existing business?
- The industry sector your business falls within
- The uniqueness of your product or service
- The advantages that your business has over your competition
- The main objectives of your business
- Market projections for the future of the business
- Number of visitors and estimated revenues
- Your legal business structure (sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation)

OMAFRA offers a detailed guide to preparing a farm business plan:

[omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/08-051.htm](http://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/08-051.htm)

The Halton Region Small Business Center (HRSBC) is a free, confidential and self-directed support service and hub of local business start-up resources:

[halton.ca/For-Business/Halton-Region-Small-Business-Centre](http://halton.ca/For-Business/Halton-Region-Small-Business-Centre)

FedDev Ontario offers small business services, and can assist with finding information on starting a business, government financing programs, exporting, taxation or how to hire employees:

[feddevontario.gc.ca/eic/site/723.nsf/eng/01701.html?OpenDocument](http://feddevontario.gc.ca/eic/site/723.nsf/eng/01701.html?OpenDocument)

A complete business plan should also include a Financial Plan, a Marketing Plan and an Evaluation Plan. These components are addressed in steps 7, 8 and 9 in the following sections.

Developing a sound financial plan is key to ensuring that your agri-tourism business contributes positively to the principal farm's bottom line. A financial plan should address the following questions:

- *How much financing do I need?*
- *What costs do I need financing for?*
- *Where will I get the financial resources to start my business?*

Detailed financial statements should include a start-up budget, two-year projected cash flow and two-year projected income. In addition to start-up and construction expenses (including potential development permit fees and development charges), costs can include insurance, business licencing, advertising, and staff recruitment and training.

HSBC offers a 'Financials - Start-up Cost, Cash Flow, Balance Sheet' template: [halton.ca/For-Business/Halton-Region-Small-Business-Centre/Help-Along-the-Way-Start,-Manage-and-Grow-Your-B](https://www.halton.ca/For-Business/Halton-Region-Small-Business-Centre/Help-Along-the-Way-Start,-Manage-and-Grow-Your-B)

OMAFRA also offers a variety of agriculture-specific Financial Management Tools: [omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/finance.html](https://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/finance.html)

Your ability to secure financing will also be impacted by the strength of your business plan – demonstrating a comprehensive understanding of every aspect of your business and its ability to generate profit is critical for funding applications and potential investors.



The following resources provide more information on available financial supports and resources specific to agriculture:

<b>OMAFRA Programs and Services for Ontario Farmers Factsheet</b>	A summary of programs and services available to Ontario farmers thanks to funding from the Ontario and/or Canadian governments.	<a href="http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/progserv.htm">http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/progserv.htm</a>
<b>Canadian Agricultural Partnership</b>	A five-year, \$3 billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen the agriculture and agri-food sector.	<a href="http://agr.gc.ca/eng/about-our-department/key-departmental-initiatives/canadian-agricultural-partnership/?id=1461767369849">agr.gc.ca/eng/about-our-department/key-departmental-initiatives/canadian-agricultural-partnership/?id=1461767369849</a>
<b>Farm Credit Canada</b>	A financially self-sustaining federal Crown corporation providing loans and other services to primary producers, food operations and agribusinesses that provide inputs or add value to agriculture.	<a href="http://fcc-fac.ca/en.html">fcc-fac.ca/en.html</a>
<b>Fair Finance Fund</b>	A non-profit social finance fund dedicated to providing loans and mentorship services to local food and farm enterprises that value strong local food systems, local economies, and a healthy planet.	<a href="http://fairfinancefund.org/">fairfinancefund.org/</a>

A marketing plan should address advertising needs by clearly outlining the intended message, medium, and target audience. Tips for getting started:

- Carefully consider all forms of media and focus on those that fit your budget, brand and target audience. The market segments you wish to target will determine the type of advertising and the best media placement.
- Focus on two or three strong selling points and additional information about your products and services. Keep your message simple.
- Incorporate both online and offline tactics, and leverage strategic alliances with other businesses and community organizations. Positive word-of-mouth, or 'relationship marketing' is one the easiest ways to develop a solid, loyal customer base.
- Consider cost/budget and performance measurement, i.e. Key Performance Indicators and Return on Investments.

OMAFRA offers a variety of Direct Farm Marketing Business Resources:

[omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/directfarmmkt/index.html](http://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/directfarmmkt/index.html)

Additional marketing resources to consider include:

<b>Ontario Farm Fresh Marketing Association</b>	A not-for-profit, farmer-led organization focused on promoting the direct farm sales industry.	<a href="http://ontariofarmfresh.com/">ontariofarmfresh.com/</a>
<b>Harvest Ontario</b>	Promotes Ontario agritourism and farm-gate businesses to consumers while helping farmers market and promote themselves.	<a href="http://harvestontario.com/">harvestontario.com/</a>
<b>Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance</b>	A not-for-profit organization devoted to connecting taste-makers, sharing their stories & sparking delicious developments in food tourism.	<a href="http://ontarioculinary.com/">ontarioculinary.com/</a>

Developing a framework to track and measure progress against business plan objectives can help to determine new areas of opportunity, while also identifying and managing risks. Monitoring your business requires having tools in place to evaluate both operations and financials.

The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association also offers a 'Grow Your Farm Profits' workshop to help agricultural businesses improve their processes through self-assessment and action plan development, to support access to a range of cost-share funding through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

[ontariosoilcrop.org/oscia-programs/workshops-webinars/gyfp-workshop/?tribe\\_paged=1&tribe\\_event\\_display=list&tribe-bar-search=GYFP](https://ontariosoilcrop.org/oscia-programs/workshops-webinars/gyfp-workshop/?tribe_paged=1&tribe_event_display=list&tribe-bar-search=GYFP)

For farmers enrolled in AgriStability (a program to protect producers from large declines in their farming income caused by production loss, increased costs or market conditions), OMAFRA offers the TIP (Towards Increased Profits) reporting service. TIP reports compare the financial performance of an individual farmer to their previous 5-year average and to an industry benchmark.

[omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/tipreport.htm](https://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/tipreport.htm)

OMAFRA also offers a series of Farm Business Decision Calculators, to help create a budget, forecast revenues or plan for expansion, based on farm type.

[omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/downtown.htm](https://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/downtown.htm)

**It's time to launch your agri-tourism business!**

Starting small will allow you to manage risk effectively, while strategically growing into the areas that show the most promise. BEDC, Burlington planning staff, the Halton Region Small Business Centre, the Halton Region Agricultural Liaison Officer are available to provide support and guidance along each step of the way.

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## Contact Information

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To discuss business plans, site selection, or statistical queries:

**Andrew Elliston, Burlington Economic Development**

905-332-9415 Ext. 7248 | [Andrew.Elliston@burlington.ca](mailto:Andrew.Elliston@burlington.ca)

To discuss land use planning, policies and process:

**Kelly Cook, Community Planning Department**

905-335-7600 Ext. 7641 | [Kelly.Cook@burlington.ca](mailto:Kelly.Cook@burlington.ca)

To discuss small business tools, training and other resources:

**Halton Region Small Business Centre**

905-825-6000 Ext. 7900 | [SmallBusiness@halton.ca](mailto:SmallBusiness@halton.ca)

To discuss other Halton Region programs and supports for agriculture:

**Anna DeMarchi Meyers, Legislative and Planning Services**

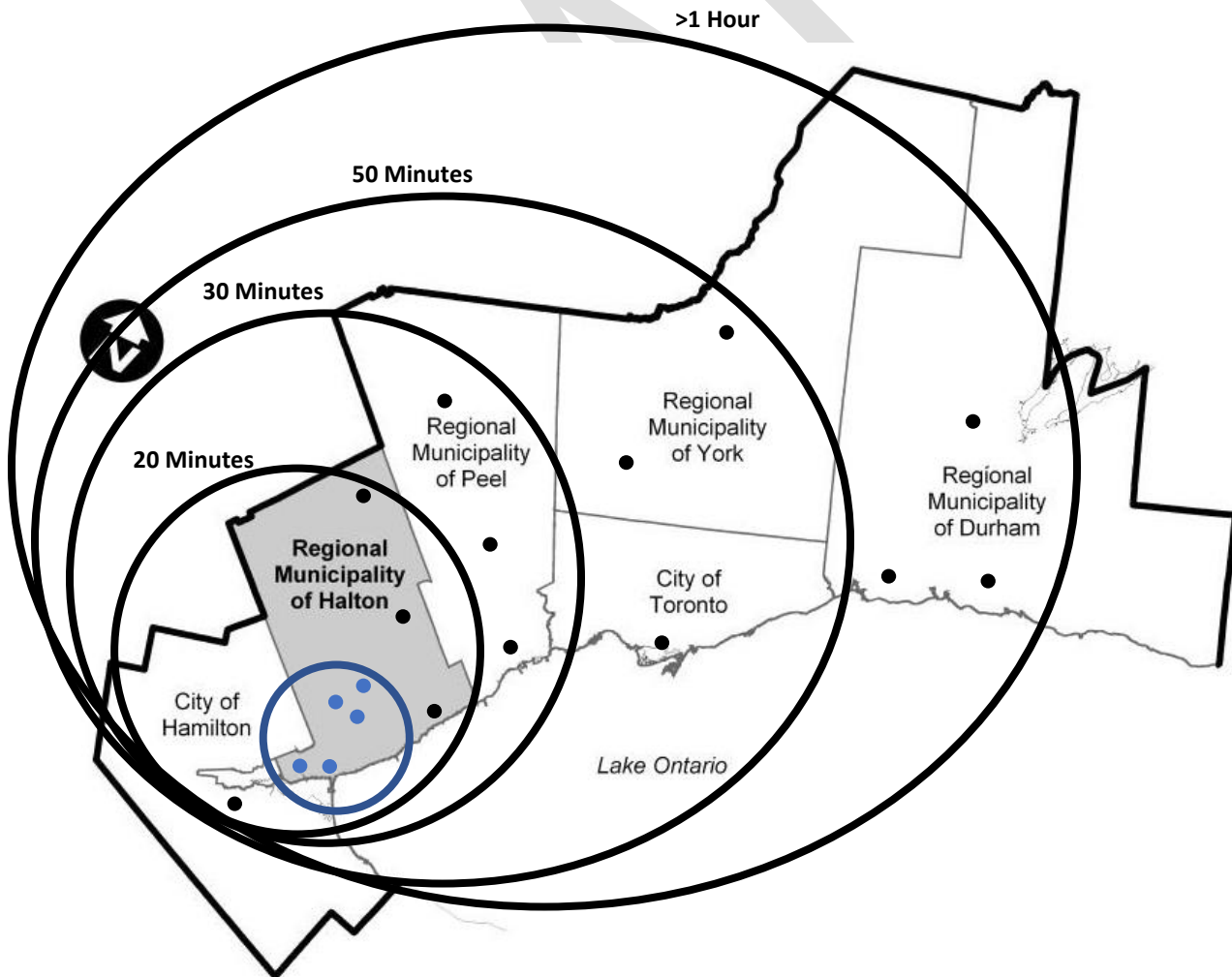
905-825-6000 Ext. 7574 | [Anna.DeMarchi-Meyers@halton.ca](mailto:Anna.DeMarchi-Meyers@halton.ca)

## Appendix A: Burlington Profile

### Geography

Nearby urban areas have easy access to rural Burlington, and visitors can take advantage of a wealth of scenic attractions while remaining close to accommodations and transportation networks. Many agri-tourists live within 65 kilometers of the farm visited, which puts Burlington at an advantage due to its location within the densely populated GTHA. Figure 5 is a map that encircles Burlington in the blue and displays approximate travel times from urban centres across the GTHA.

**Figure 5: Travel Times Across the GTHA<sup>4</sup>**

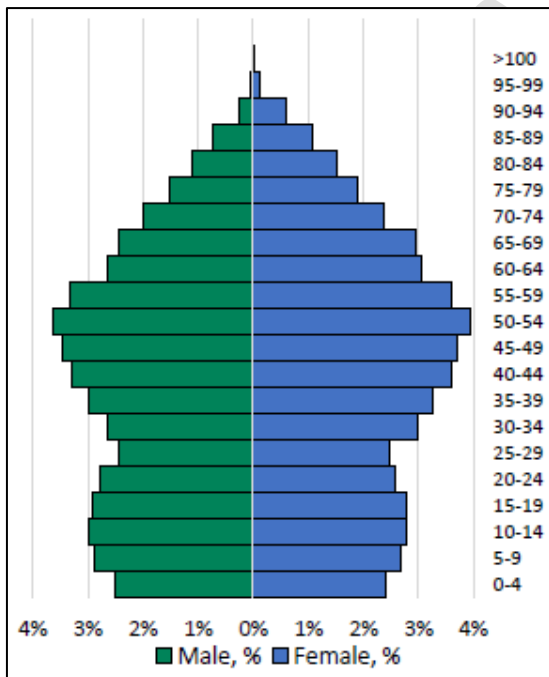


<sup>4</sup> Halton Region Official Plan

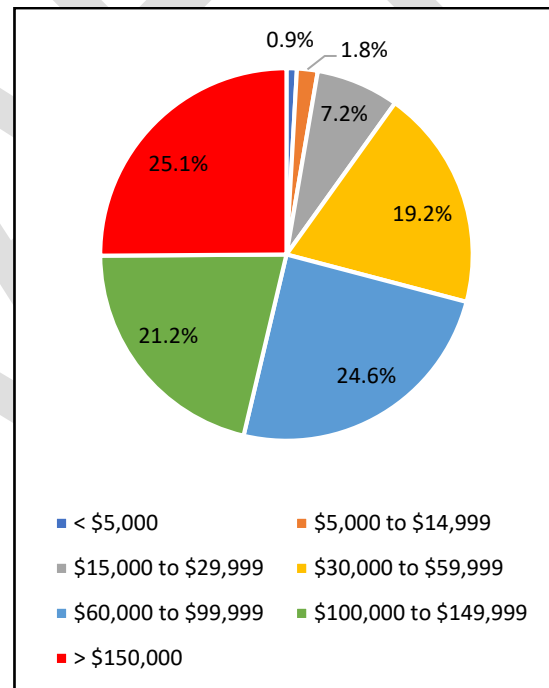
## Demographics

Figure 6 below shows a breakdown of Burlington's population according to age and gender. Figure 7 shows Burlington's household income and the percentage of residents in that bracket. Burlington's population is largely educated, with the majority having some level of post-secondary education or technical training and falling within the higher income range – over 25% reporting a household income greater than \$150,000. Age, education and income within the agri-business catchment area are relevant in that the main target markets for agri-tourism are typically young adults and young families with children, who have disposable income to spend on experiences.

**Figure 6: Age and Sex, Burlington (2016)<sup>3</sup>**



**Figure 7: Income, Burlington (2016)<sup>4</sup>**



<sup>6, 7</sup> Canada Census 2016

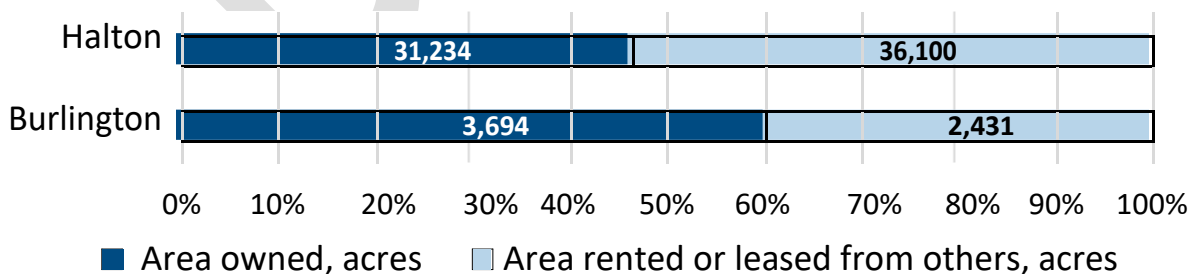
## Agricultural Industry

Across South Central Ontario, average agricultural land value per acre was estimated to be \$16,535 in 2018, with 90% of lands falling within the \$9,500 to \$24,000 range<sup>8</sup>. In 2018, Halton Region experienced a 6% increase in land values compared to the rest of the province. For the year 2018, Burlington land values range between \$500 per acre to \$16,000 and are expected to continue rising in coming years. Significant increases in property values do create upward pressure on tax rates, but capping limits are imposed. Generally, if a property's Current Value Assessment increases more than the average, the property will see an increase in property taxes. Agri-tourism can be an opportunity for farmers to diversify their operations to boost revenues and support long-term farm viability in the face of rising land costs.

Burlington's rural area contains 66 operating farms with total land use area of 6,458 acres<sup>6</sup>. While pressure from urban development has been contained through the protection of the Greenbelt since 2005, the amount of farmland has declined greatly overall. Since 1981, agricultural land has decreased by 59% in Halton Region.

Although farmland in Burlington is more likely to be operated by owners than across Halton as a whole, approximately 40% of farmlands are rented or leased. Land tenure is a critical consideration when evaluating agri-tourism opportunities, as some operations require more significant development or land use changes that can only be undertaken with landowner support.

**Figure 8: Agricultural Land Tenure<sup>8</sup>**

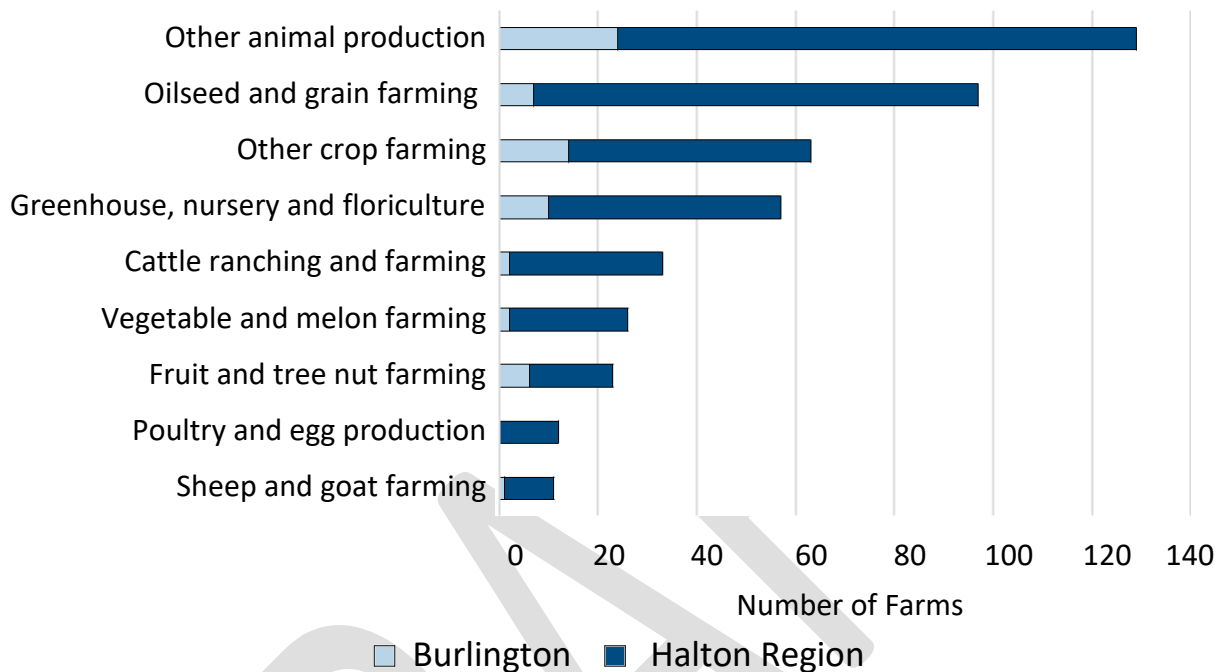


<sup>8</sup> 2011 & 2016 Census of Agriculture and Strategic Policy Branch, OMAFRA



Figure 9 breaks down the farm types across Halton Region and within the City of Burlington. Understanding the dominant farm types in Burlington can provide insight on gaps and opportunities, as well as available agri-food network infrastructure (i.e. complementary or supporting agricultural and agriculture-related operations).

**Figure 9: Farm Types in Halton Region<sup>9</sup>**



However, despite their smaller size, Burlington farms produce higher Gross Farm Receipts than the Halton average. This is likely reflective of an industry shift toward types of agriculture that are more compatible with near-urban land uses, such as horticultural production (e.g. market gardens and greenhouses) and equine operations (e.g. training, riding and boarding facilities)<sup>10</sup>. These types of higher-value agricultural operations lend themselves well to agri-tourism and direct-farm sales, while also benefitting from proximity to the large Greater Toronto Hamilton Area urban markets.

The average farm size in Burlington is 98 acres, which is lower than the Halton average of 152 acres. Due to fragmentation of the agricultural land base and increased conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural uses (e.g. odour from livestock operations in proximity to residential uses), many of the types of

<sup>9</sup> 2011 & 2016 Census of Agriculture and Strategic Policy Branch, OMAFRA

<sup>10</sup> Halton Region Rural Agricultural Strategy Background Report, 2016

operations requiring large contiguous tracts of land and specific local supports (e.g. feed lots for livestock) have moved to less urbanized areas<sup>11</sup>.

The average farm size in Burlington is 98 acres, which is lower than the Halton average of 152 acres. The map below outlines different land uses in Halton Region. Oakville has very limited agriculture land, while Halton Hills and Milton are less urbanized than Burlington. Due to fragmentation of the agricultural land base and increased conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural uses (e.g. odour from livestock operations in proximity to residential uses), many of the types of operations requiring large contiguous tracts of land and specific local supports (e.g. feed lots for livestock) have moved to less urbanized areas.

**Figure 10: Halton Regional Structure<sup>11</sup>**

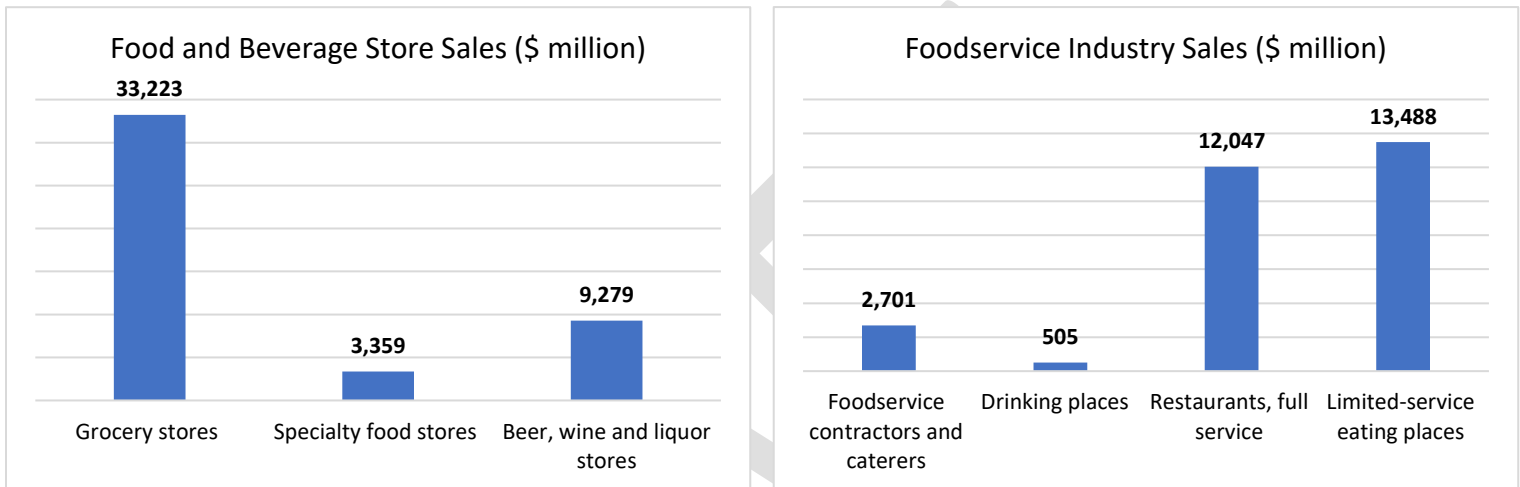


<sup>11</sup> Halton Region Rural Agriculture Strategy, 2016

## Food and Beverage Industry Trends

The food and beverage industry includes restaurants, cafeterias, cafes, fast-food joints, delis, food manufacturing operations, processing facilities, catering businesses, food transportation services. Occupations and functions in the industry can range from packaging to preparing, transporting and serving food or beverages.

**Figure 11: Food and Beverage Sales in Ontario (2018)<sup>12</sup>**



### Local Food Trend

There is a growing demand for access to locally produced foods from local farms and producers and in stores, markets and restaurants. There is a strong opportunity to strengthen the local food sector.

OMAFRA acknowledged the potential and created a Local Food Strategy built on three pillars<sup>13</sup>:

1. **Consumer awareness and education:** Ontario consumers are aware of, value and choose more local foods.
2. **Access to local food:** Local food is identifiable and widely available through a range of distribution channels.
3. **Sufficient supply:** Ontario agri-food sector is competitive, productive and responsive to consumer demand.

<sup>12</sup> OMAFRA Food Store and Foodservice Industry Sales, Ontario and Canada, 2017 and 2018 (\$ million)

<sup>13</sup> OMAFRA 2015/16 Ontario Local Food Report

## Appendix B: Additional Resources

<b>AgriCorp</b>	AgriCorp delivers a variety of programs and payments on behalf of the federal and provincial governments to protect Ontario producers against many of the business and agricultural risks they face.	<a href="http://agricorp.com/en-ca/Programs/Pages/Default.aspx">agricorp.com/en-ca/Programs/Pages/Default.aspx</a>
<b>Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada</b>	Supports the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector through initiatives that promote innovation and competitiveness.	<a href="http://agr.gc.ca/eng/home/?id=1395690825741">agr.gc.ca/eng/home/?id=1395690825741</a>
<b>Canada Temporary Foreign Worker Program</b>	Outlines the various program streams through which agricultural operators can hire a temporary foreign worker.	<a href="http://canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/foreign-workers/agricultural.html">canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/foreign-workers/agricultural.html</a>
<b>Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan</b>	A voluntary self-assessment to increase environmental awareness in up to 23 different areas on-farm.	<a href="http://ontariosoilcrop.org/oscia-programs/workshops-webinars/environmental-farm-plan/">ontariosoilcrop.org/oscia-programs/workshops-webinars/environmental-farm-plan/</a>
<b>Farm Management Canada</b>	A national organization dedicated to the development and delivery of leading-edge resources, information and tools for farm business success.	<a href="http://fmc-gac.com/">fmc-gac.com/</a>
<b>Farmers' Markets Ontario</b>	Resources for anyone running or thinking of starting a farmers' market.	<a href="http://farmersmarketsontario.com/market-resources/">farmersmarketsontario.com/market-resources/</a>
<b>FarmLink</b>	A national land listing and linking tool designed to connect those looking for land to rent, lease or buy, on farm employment, business partnerships in agriculture, or farm succession arrangements with landowners and retiring farmers who have farmland or other on farm opportunities.	<a href="http://farmlink.net/">farmlink.net/</a>
<b>Food and Beverage Ontario</b>	A not-for-profit, leadership organization dedicated to advancing the interests of Ontario's food and beverage processors.	<a href="http://foodandbeverageontario.ca/index">foodandbeverageontario.ca/index</a>

<b>Foodland Ontario</b>	Resources to encourage the purchase of locally produced food,	<a href="http://ontario.ca/foodland/page/finding-local">ontario.ca/foodland/page/finding-local</a>
<b>Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation</b>	An independent, charitable organization, funded by the Government of Ontario and other public and private supporters to make strategic investments that bolster the richness of life in the Greenbelt.	<a href="http://greenbelt.ca/food_farming">greenbelt.ca/food_farming</a>
<b>Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance</b>	A multi-stakeholder partnership focused on food and farming viability to ensure that the Golden Horseshoe retains, enhances and expands its role as a leading food and farming cluster.	<a href="http://foodandfarming.ca/">foodandfarming.ca/</a>
<b>Greenbelt Fresh</b>	Helps consumers find local food grown in Ontario's protected Greenbelt.	<a href="http://greenbeltfresh.ca/">greenbeltfresh.ca/</a>
<b>Halton Agritourism Action Plan</b>	A project support Halton Region's agricultural sector and attract more visitors to Halton through agri and food tourism development.	<a href="http://sirepub.halton.ca/councildocs/pam/16/Nov%206%202013%20Administration%20and%20Finance%20LPS8513%20Economic%20Development%20Agritourism%20Action%20P%20%20Halton%20Region%20Agritourism%20Action%20Plan%20%20FINAL%20Oct%209pdf%20167153.pdf">sirepub.halton.ca/councildocs/pam/16/Nov%206%202013%20Administration%20and%20Finance%20LPS8513%20Economic%20Development%20Agritourism%20Action%20P%20%20Halton%20Region%20Agritourism%20Action%20Plan%20%20FINAL%20Oct%209pdf%20167153.pdf</a>
<b>Knowledge Translation and Transfer (KTT)</b>	A Community of Practice for bringing scientific information and technology into the agri-food community.	<a href="http://uoguelph.ca/alliance/accelerating-research-impact/knowledge-translation-and-transfer">uoguelph.ca/alliance/accelerating-research-impact/knowledge-translation-and-transfer</a>
<b>Normal Farm Practices Protection Board</b>	A Provincial body tasked with the resolution of disputes regarding agricultural operations and determining what constitutes a normal farm practice.	<a href="http://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/engineer/nfppb/nfppb.htm">omafra.gov.on.ca/english/engineer/nfppb/nfppb.htm</a>
<b>OMAFRA Agricultural Information Contact Centre</b>	With experience and backgrounds in agriculture and agri-business, the centre's agents are available to answer questions, provide information to help you make decisions, and if needed, put you in touch with one of their experts.	<a href="http://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/realign/aicc.htm">omafra.gov.on.ca/english/realign/aicc.htm</a>

<b>OMAFRA Factsheet: Legislation and Farming Practices</b>	An overview of the federal and provincial laws that could affect farming operations.	<a href="http://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/engineer/facts/12-027.htm">omafra.gov.on.ca/english/engineer/facts/12-027.htm</a>
<b>Ontario Federation of Agriculture Resources</b>	A resource library for issues-based fact sheets, submissions and correspondence, webinars, resolutions, archives etc.	<a href="http://ofa.on.ca/resources/">ofa.on.ca/resources/</a>
<b>WWOOF Canada</b>	Links visitors with organic farmers and growers to promote cultural and educational experiences based on trust and non-monetary exchange, to help build a sustainable global community.	<a href="http://wwwoof.ca/">wwwoof.ca/</a>

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