



The Regional Municipality of Durham

Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee Agenda

Tuesday, March 8, 2022

7:30 PM

Council Chambers
Regional Municipality of Durham Headquarters
605 Rossland Road East, Whitby

Please note: In an effort to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and to generally comply with the directions from the Government of Ontario, it is requested in the strongest terms that Members participate in the meeting electronically. Regional Headquarters is closed to the public, all members of the public may view the Committee meeting via live streaming, instead of attending the meeting in person. If you wish to register as a delegate regarding an agenda item, you may register in advance of the meeting by noon on the day prior to the meeting by emailing delegations@durham.ca and will be provided with the details to delegate electronically.

1. Roll Call

2. Declarations of Interest

3. Adoption of Minutes

- A) Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting held on February 8, 2022
([Attachment 1](#))

4. Presentations

- A) Pam Duesling & Emily Sousa - University of Guelph - OMAFRA Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas - Assessment of Effectiveness and Implementation Best Practice
- B) Allison Brown and Stacey Jibb, Region of Durham Planning and Economic Development, Economic Development - Agriculture Industry Roundtable and Tour with Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs & Draft Agri-Food Growth Plan
([Attachment 2](#))

5. Discussion Items

- A) Rural and Agricultural Economic Development Update – S. Jibb
- B) 2022 DAAC Farm Tour Sub-Committee Report – D. Risebrough

6. Information Items

- A) Snow Disposal Information – M. Scott
- B) Secondary Suites in the ROP – M. Scott
- C) [#2022-EDT-2](#) – Evaluating the Feasibility of Establishing a Durham Region Local Food Logistics Hub and Innovation Centre (**Attachment 3**)
- D) DFPC – Food Strategy For Durham Region Working Group
- E) Durham Region Works Department Response to National Farmers Union (**[Attachment 4](#)**)

7. Other Business

8. Date of Next Meeting

April 12, 2022

Notice regarding collection, use and disclosure of personal information:

Written information (either paper or electronic) that you send to Durham Regional Council or Committees, including home address, phone numbers and email addresses, will become part of the public record. This also includes oral submissions at meetings. If you have any questions about the collection of information, please contact the Regional Clerk/Director of Legislative Services.

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 2097.

The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

February 8, 2022

A meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee was held on Tuesday, February 8, 2021 in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby at 7:30 PM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: Z. Cohoon, Federation of Agriculture, Chair
T. Barrie, Clarington
N. Guthrie, Member at Large
G. Hight, Regional Councillor
K. Kemp, Scugog, attended the meeting at 7:38 PM
G. O'Connor, Member at Large
D. Risebrough, Member at Large
H. Schillings, Whitby
B. Smith, Uxbridge, Vice-Chair
G. Taylor, Pickering, attended the meeting at 8:07 PM
T. Watpool, Brock, Vice-Chair, attended the meeting at 7:35 PM
B. Winter, Ajax
***members of the Committee participated electronically**

Absent: B. Howsam, Member at Large
K. Kennedy, Member at Large
F. Puterbough, Member at Large

Staff

Present: R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
M. Scott, Project Planner, Department of Planning and Economic Development
K. Smith, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
***all staff except R. Inacio participated electronically**

2. Election of Officers for 2022

K. Smith called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Moved by H. Schillings, Seconded by G. O'Connor,
That Zac Cohoon be nominated for the position of Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

K. Smith asked if Z. Cohoon wished to stand. Z. Cohoon indicated he would stand.

Moved by Councillor Highet, Seconded by D. Risebrough,
That nominations be closed.
CARRIED

Zac Cohoon was acclaimed as the Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

K. Smith called for nominations for the position of First Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Moved by Z. Cohoon, Seconded by Councillor Highet,
That Bryan Smith be nominated for the position of First Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

K. Smith called for nominations for the position of Second Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Moved by H. Schillings, Seconded by B. Winter,
That Tom Watpool be nominated for the position of Second Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

K. Smith asked if Bryan Smith and Tom Watpool wished to stand. B. Smith and T. Watpool indicated they would stand.

Moved by T. Barrie, Seconded by B. Winter,
That nominations be closed.
CARRIED

Bryan Smith was acclaimed as the First Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Tom Watpool was acclaimed as the Second Vice-Chair of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee.

Z. Cohoon assumed the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by B. Winter, Seconded by G. O'Connor,
That the minutes of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee meeting held on December 14, 2021 be adopted.
CARRIED

5. Discussion Items

A) Rural and Agricultural Economic Development Update

M. Scott provided the following update:

- Vertical Farming 101 Workshop Series is partnering with OMAFRA and York Region and is featuring a vertical farm from Oshawa and representatives from the Durham College Centre for Food.
- So You Think You Want to Farm? 2-Part Workshop Series, is partnering with Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland, York, and Peterborough and there is a 2-part webinar series taking place in March for aspiring or new farmers to assess their fit and learn about the business considerations for starting a farm.
- Farm Succession Planning Workshop is partnering with BDO Canada for a workshop titled Turning Roadblocks into Building Blocks and will feature presentations from Lisa Kemp and Bryan Huck and will be moderated by Maggie VanKamp.
- Migrant Worker Information Session is taking place on February 17th and is an invite only workshop for farm operators in Durham Region who hire temporary foreign workers and/or seasonal agricultural workers. The Durham Region Health Department will provide a presentation on protocols, and OMAFRA will be at the workshop to provide information about resources and funding opportunities.
- Promotion of Canadian Agriculture Day on February 22nd
- S. Jibb and A. Brown will be presenting at the March meeting to provide an overview of the draft Durham Region Agriculture Action Plan and to gather input/feedback. A copy of the draft action plan will be circulated in advance of the March committee meeting for review.

B) Agri-Food Career Video Series

M. Scott advised that the goal of the video series is to inform youth and non-traditional audiences about the variety of career opportunities available in the agri-food industry, specifically in Durham, and to encourage youth to consider a career in agriculture, which can extend beyond just farming. He indicated there are 8 videos which highlight the diverse opportunities available in agriculture, including (but not limited to):

- Farming
- Farm finance and lending
- Post-Secondary Programing
- Crop Agronomy
- Agriculture Equipment Technician (x2)

- Animal Nutrition and Sales
- Precision agriculture and agri-tech

M. Scott advised that the videos will be shown in the grade 10 careers and civics classes across the Region. He also advised that the Agriculture and Food Workforce Development website was developed to house the Agriculture Career Videos and is a resource for teachers and students to find next steps and information on specific career areas within agriculture.

A video was displayed from the Agri-Food Video Series featuring the Nature's Bounty 100-acre mixed use farm in Port Perry.

C) 2022 DAAC Farm Tour

D. Risebrough stated planning is underway for an in-person farm tour with the possibility of having to switch to a virtual tour. He also stated that the final decision on potentially switching to a virtual tour can be deferred to June and will obtain costs for a virtual tour without making final commitments.

D. Risebrough advised that the sub-committee will meet before the next committee meeting to finalize a commitment from a host farm or host property, whether the tour will be in-person or virtual.

D) Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee 2021 Annual Report and 2022 Workplan and Presentation to Planning and Economic Development Committee

A copy of Report #2022-P-2 of the Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development was provided as Attachment #2 to the Agenda.

Z. Cohoon advised that he presented to the Planning and Economic Development Committee on January 13, 2022 with regards to the DAAC 2021 Annual Report and 2022 Workplan. He advised that the presentation was well received by committee and that the questions received from councillors were energetic and proactive.

7. Information Items

A) OMAFRA Updated AgriSuite's Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) I & II

M. Scott advised that OMAFRA updated the AgriSuite's Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) web tool for calculations for anyone that uses the tool online.

Discussions ensued regarding rebuilding barns within the minimum distance separation standards.

B) Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee 2021 Annual Report and 2022 Workplan Council Resolution

A copy of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee 2021 Annual Report and 2022 Workplan Council resolution was provided as Attachment #3 to the Agenda.

C) Farm Wellness Program

A link to the Farmer Wellness Program website was provided as Attachment #4 to the Agenda.

D) OMAFRA – Nutrient Management Act, Further Burden Reduction Opportunities Decision Notice

A link to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Nutrient Management Act, Further Burden Reduction Opportunities Decision Notice was provided as Attachment #5 to the Agenda.

M. Scott advised that the Agricultural Operational Planning Certificates no longer have a 5 year expiry date. Z. Cohoon inquired as to whether the nutrient management plan will renew after five years as long as there are no changes.

E) Durham Food Policy Council – Food Strategy for Durham Region Working Group

M. Scott advised that Durham Food Policy Council reached out to Durham Region regarding a Food Strategy for the Region. He also advised that the working group is meeting in mid February and will provide an update to the committee at the next meeting.

8. Other Business

A) Durham Community Energy Plan Task Force

D. Risebrough advised that the first meeting of the Durham Community Energy Plan (DCEP) occurred on January 27, 2022. He advised that Durham Region developed the DCEP a few years ago and are now looking to create a governance structure for implementation. He also advised that his representation in the group is for agriculture and that agriculture is a 4% contributor to energy issues in Durham Region.

D. Risebrough advised that there are 6 meetings scheduled until the end of June for the task force and he will report back to the committee, or have a representative present at a committee meeting.

M. Scott advised that this item can be added as an agenda item for future meetings.

B) Snow Removal

Discussions ensued regarding protocols for dumping municipal snow in the greenbelt, and next to farmland and rural wells.

C) Secondary Residences on Rural Properties

Discussions ensued regarding the relationship between the Durham Regional Official Plan and building secondary residences on rural properties, and whether the buildings can be severed.

M. Scott advised he would review the Official Plan and provide additional information on this topic.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee will be held on Tuesday, March 8, 2022 starting at 7:30 PM.

10. Adjournment

Moved by D. Risebrough, Seconded by K. Kemp,
That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.

Z. Cohoon, Chair, Durham
Agricultural Advisory Committee

K. Smith, Committee Clerk

Revised: Feb 2022

INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE

The Durham Agricultural Action Plan 2021-2026 (the Plan) is a 5-year action focused document to guide the activities of the Agriculture and Rural Team within the Region of Durham's Economic Development and Tourism Division. The Plan is intended to be task oriented towards activities that will benefit the agri-food sector and support agri-food stakeholders across the Region.

The successful implementation of this Plan will only be possible with the support of the agri-food community, stakeholders and organizations across the region who are doing work on-the-ground that is pivotal to maintaining and growing the agri-food sector. While not identified as a specific overarching goal of this Plan, it goes without saying that positive relationships between the Region of Durham, local area municipalities, post-secondary (e.g. Durham College) and the agri-food sector are imperative if progress is to be made in advancing the sector overall. This Plan has been developed bearing in mind that relationship development is ongoing, overarching and built upon mutual respect that must be earned over time.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The agriculture and agri-food sector is a key economic driver in the Region of Durham (the Region). In fact, the Region is home to more farms and agricultural lands than any other jurisdiction in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The Region is home to a grassroots culture, where agriculture and agri-food communities have worked together to achieve their common goals. At the same time, farmers in the Region are adopting innovative technology and practices that are advancing the Region in terms of sustainability and efficiency. The food processing sector is also well-positioned to thrive in the Region.

Since the first strategy (2013-2018), the sector in the Region has evolved to adapt to new and emerging trends such as urban agriculture, a changing climate and advancements in agricultural technology and innovation. As such, this new Agricultural Action Plan 2022-2027 will be a tool to support and facilitate the long-term growth of the agriculture and agri-food sector in Durham.

The Plan identifies 4 overarching themes and 11 goal areas. The implementation plan, contained within this document, details the tasks to be completed within each of the 11 goal areas.

Overarching themes:

1. Attract, retain and expand agriculture and agri-food businesses
2. Promote outreach and agri-food education
3. Enable a supportive policy environment
4. Support an agriculture workforce

Goals Areas:

1. Implement the Local Food BR&E Action Plan
2. Enable and encourage agriculture related and on-farm diversified uses
3. Review and provide input towards regulation, policy changes and land preservation that supports agri-food
4. Advocate for infrastructure support (including broadband)

5. Increase agri-food processing capacity in the Region
6. Identify opportunities and solutions for the workforce and labour shortages in the agri-food sector
7. Provide resources for ageing farmers and young farmers
8. Partner with stakeholders and agricultural organizations to deliver and expand agricultural literacy in the Region
9. Enable agri-innovation capacity
10. Expand Export development opportunities for agri-food operators
11. Enhance urban agriculture

ABOUT THE ACTION PLAN: THE ROADMAP

BACKGROUND: HOW DID WE GET HERE

Durham Region Agriculture Economic Development created the first Durham Agriculture Strategy in 2013. From 2013-2018 many actions and projects were completed, and it came time to assess the accomplishments and changes the industry experienced and create a new strategy for the coming years.

This Plan is based on feedback gathered through a combination of engagement including a survey, interviews, and community engagement sessions and open houses, which were primarily conducted in late 2018/early 2019. This Plan is a result of insights from the agriculture and agri-food sector in the Region including farmers, Regional and area municipal staff, processors, politicians, academia and key grassroots agricultural groups (please see Stakeholder Engagement Summary). Just as this Plan could not have been made possible without the insights from the community, it will take the dedication of the vibrant and diverse agriculture and agri-food sector stakeholders in the Region to achieve the goals set out in this Strategy.

In 2019, Wilton Consulting was hired to lead the consultations for an updated strategy. A series of targeted consultations were held throughout the community in the form of a survey, in-person information sessions, 1-1 interviews and presentations to Agriculture Advisory Committees in Durham Region. Information and feedback was gathered to inform the development of the implementation plan and strategy.

In early 2020 as the 2019 – 2024 Agriculture Strategy was being finalized, several changes occurred within the Durham Region Agriculture Economic Development team including a full staff change over, a renewed approach to program delivery and the global COVID-19 pandemic began. As a result, staff undertook an exercise to incorporate the changes and new priorities of the industry which resulted or were emphasized by the pandemic. Over the course of the year, changes were made to the strategy and implementation plan to better reflect the sector's current needs and the new approach to program delivery. One of the major changes includes transitioning the strategy to be more action-oriented plan, henceforth referred to as the Durham Agricultural Action Plan.

In 2021, the current version of the Plan was shared with agricultural stakeholders in Durham Region as a second round of consultations to ensure the revisions aligned with the view of our local agriculture and agri-food sector. **The current version has been presented to the Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee, Agriculture Advisory Committee of Clarington, Durham Farm Fresh Marketing Association and Durham Region Federation of Agriculture.** (Add to the consultation section in the Appendix once complete)

INFORMED ACTION PLAN

The Region is a vibrant municipality with significant and growing opportunities for the agriculture and food sector. Through this Plan, the Region will enable expansion and retention for existing businesses, while identifying emerging opportunities to help diversify our agricultural and agri-food landscape. The statements below help to inform the action plan.

[not included but we can share once available]

Durham Agri-Food Growth Plan

Implementation Plan- Tracking Success

Item	Goal Area	Action(s)	Lead and Support	Timeline (Short, Medium, Long Term)	Performance Metric	Outcome
1	Retain and expand local food businesses	a. Conduct an annual exercise to prioritize and implement actions within the Local Food BR+E Action Plan. This will correspond with an annual update report to Regional Planning and Economic Development Committee (PEDC).	Lead: Invest Durham Ag & Rural	Ongoing	Annual report to PEDC – Prioritization plan included as an attachment. Track actions from the local food BR+E plan (new, completed, and ongoing)	Increased growth and viability of food businesses and farms in Durham Region.
		b. Accelerate new business start-ups in the agri-food space by developing an information package/toolbox that can be used by BACD and economic development staff at municipalities. (e.g. Development approvals check list, stakeholder information, information for local area	Lead: Invest Durham Ag & Rural Support: DEDP, BACD, LAM's	Medium	New toolbox created and distributed to Economic Development Staff, BACD and DEDP members	New agri-food businesses established, and existing agri-food businesses retained/provided an environment to expand their business.

		municipalities with signage by law information etc.)				
		c. Develop a business case and strategic next steps to advance an agri-food logistic hub and innovation center. Build on the results of Durham Farm Connections Ag Centre business case.	Lead: Invest Durham Ag & Rural Support: Durham Tourism, DFC, DRFA, DFF	Long	Short term -> Complete business case analysis Medium term -> Secure funding Long term -> Establish facility	Local food business startups and expansions resulting from services provided through the creation of a local food hub.
		d. Support 'buy local' campaigns such as Durham Farm Fresh activities to promote agri-food in the Region. E.g. Gates Open, local food directory, local food week, Ontario ag week campaigns, DFF initiatives, etc.)	Lead: Invest Durham Ag & Rural and Durham Tourism Support: Durham Farm Fresh, DRFA, DEDP	Short/Ongoing	Increase in local food visibility and awareness in the region. Increased participation in events, high website traffic and engagements with campaigns.	Increased consumer awareness and support of local food within the region.
2.	Streamline the regulations and approval process for agri-food businesses	a. Hold regular check-in meetings and/or communication with Durham Region Planning staff to ensure a united approach to agri-food business development. (get involved in pre-cons)	Lead: Invest Durham Ag & Rural and Durham Region Planning	Ongoing	Regular check-in meetings twice a year between Economic Development & Planning staff.	A unified and balanced approach to agri-food business development is achieved which considers both planning and economic development priorities.
		b. Leverage greater community involvement in upcoming policy	Lead: Invest Durham Ag & Rural and	Medium/Long	Information shared on upcoming	Agriculture sector awareness of upcoming policy changes

		<p>reviews (MCR/Envision Durham) by sharing information through communications channels. Advocate for the value of providing comments to policy reviews. (e.g. create a targeted email/communications plan for agricultural stakeholders on Envision Durham proposed policies)</p>	Durham Region Planning		comment periods with stakeholder groups through meeting updates, social media, newsletters, webinars, advertisements, etc.	so feedback can be provided towards policy that may impact agri-businesses.
		<p>c. Plan and host an 'Agriculture Planning Summit/Workshop' to facilitate knowledge sharing between planners and economic developers.</p>	Lead: Durham Ag & Rural, Durham Economic Development, Durham Region Planning	Medium	Planning Summit hosted.	Planners and economic developers understand the nature of agri-food business and the role of the sector within communities.
		<p>d. Reach out to area municipal planning staff to share information about the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and other agricultural organization's resources related to Planning and Economic Development.</p>	Lead: Durham Ag & Rural	Ongoing	Increased participation of local municipal staff at Community of Practice sessions. Information packages shared with LAM staff.	More awareness and utilization of agriculture and agricultural planning resources within planning departments in Durham Region.
		<p>e. Implement an expedited approvals process and a concierge service model for agri-food developments to assist with overcoming barriers to business startup and expansion (e.g. site plan approval, building permits)</p>	Lead: Durham Ag & Rural, Durham Planning, LAM planning.	Long	Expedited approval process launched.	Approval process simplified and wait times reduced for food business expansions and startups, which will help reduce barriers for agri-food businesses.
3.	Enable and encourage agriculture related	<p>a. Write a policy paper to outline the economic advantages of on-farm diversification and agritourism. For</p>	Lead: Invest Durham Ag & Rural	Medium/Long	Policy paper published and	Increased municipal support and reductions in red tape

	and on-farm diversified uses.	example, promote the use of CIPs for agriculture.	Support: Durham Region Planning, LAM's		shared with stakeholders. Policy paper provided as input for the MCR and OP reviews	towards on-farm diversified activities.
		b. Provide information sessions and workshops focused on tools businesses can use to take advantage of diversification opportunities through value added agriculture.	Lead: Invest Durham Ag & Rural Support: Durham Farm Fresh	Short	Information sessions and workshops hosted.	Increased understanding of the value added and on-farm diversified opportunities for farmers and more farms offering diverse product offerings.
		c. Build on action 2.d. to share information about the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and other agricultural organization's resources related to value added agriculture and on-farm diversified uses with planners and economic developers within the region.	Lead: Invest Durham Ag & Rural Support: OFA, DRFA, OMAFRA Economic Development and Planning.	Short/Ongoing	Information and resources shared with planning and economic development staff within Durham Region.	Increased internal support for, and understanding around, on-farm diversified uses and the benefits they bring to our community.
		d. Build on action 2.e. to implement an expedited approval process and a concierge service model for value added and on-farm diversified developments to assist with overcoming barriers to business startup and expansion (e.g. site plan approval, building permits)	Lead: Durham Ag & Rural, Durham Planning, LAM planning.	Long	Expedited approval process launched.	Approval process simplified and wait times reduced for food business expansions and startups, which will help reduce barriers for agri-food businesses.
4	Advocate for infrastructure support (including broadband).	a. Encourage the acceleration of the Employment Lands Servicing Project from an agri-food perspective (e.g. food processing, abattoirs, cold storage, vertical farming).	Lead: Durham Economic Development, Durham Region Planning, Durham Region Works	Long	Commitments are made for future servicing allocations and investments in rural employment areas.	Increased availability of serviced land, particularly in underserved rural areas.

	<p>Recognize infrastructure is a key component of the agri-food system.</p>		<p>Support: Durham Ag & Rural</p>			
		<p>b. Organize conversations with HOPA/Port of Oshawa and Sollio Ag so Durham Region Economic Development is in a position to provide support when needed.</p>	<p>Lead: Durham Ag & Rural</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Discussions held with Oshawa Port regarding infrastructure investment plans.</p>	<p>Increased grain export and crop input import into Durham Region through the Oshawa Port.</p>
		<p>c. Ensure agriculture and rural communities are a key consideration for the expansion of broadband services in Durham. (e.g. assist with getting letters of support from the ag sector for funding applications)</p>	<p>Lead: Durham Economic Development Broadband Specialist Support: Durham Ag & Rural</p>	<p>Long</p>	<p>Broadband expansion into rural communities.</p>	<p>Improved access to high quality internet for agribusinesses to improve competitiveness in the growing trend of virtual business.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Increase agri-food processing capacity in the Region.</p>	<p>a. Undertake an Agri-Food Processing BR+E, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop a comprehensive list of food processing businesses in Durham Region to understand the region’s current food processing capacities. - Investigate co-packing opportunities and areas where business support could be provided by connecting with businesses. - Maintain and inventory of vacant buildings available that can meet the food grade requirements. - Identify food clusters in agri-food processing and areas where the region is lacking across the agri-food processing value chain. </p>	<p>Lead: Durham Ag & Rural/Business Development Team</p>	<p>Long</p>	<p>Create a food processing business list. Investigate co-packing opportunities. Provide business support. Scan of food grade vacant properties in the region.</p>	<p>Stronger and more resilient agri-food processing sector in Durham.</p>

		<p>b. Schedule meetings between the Business Development/Investment Attraction, Ag/Rural Team and OMAFRA Investment Attraction Consultants twice each year to discuss strategic opportunities and priorities to enhance Durham’s agri-food sector. Highlight successful businesses for the purpose of investment attraction through the Ontario Food Cluster.</p>	<p>Lead: Durham Business Development/Durham Ag & Rural Team/OMAFRA Investment Attraction Team</p> <p>Support: Ontario Food Cluster</p>	Ongoing	<p>Meet twice a year with focused conversations on Durham’s Agri-food sector.</p>	<p>Increased internal coordination with regards to agri-food investment attraction. Create strategic joint plans to approach agri-food investment and grow the agri-food processing sector.</p>
		<p>c. Support our existing primary processors including abattoirs, meat processors, and poultry processors by understanding their needs, sharing funding opportunities & resources and advocating for their importance to our agri-food sector. Attract additional food and meat processing facilities to the region.</p>	<p>Lead: Durham Ag & Rural</p> <p>Support: Durham Business Development</p>	Medium/long	<p>Resources provided to agri-food processors in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Increased meat processing capacity in the region. Increased local meat processing investment startups.</p>
6	Identify opportunities and solutions for the workforce and labour shortages in the agri-food sector.	<p>a. Develop an agriculture and agri-food sector report to determine composition of the workforce, labour marketing information, education, training supports in the Region (e.g. DWA SPPG Agriculture Project)</p>	<p>Lead: DWA</p> <p>Support: Durham Ag & Rural</p>	Medium	<p>Completion and implementation of DWA SPPG report.</p>	<p>Use the report to further understand the composition of the Durham agri-food workforce and identify areas with a need for support.</p>
		<p>b. Through collaboration with Durham College and Ontario Tech University, develop a pilot project for internship, co-op and micro-credential</p>	<p>Lead: Durham College, Ontario Tech University</p>	Long	<p>Implementation of agriculture supportive micro-credentials,</p>	<p>Address labour shortages through skills training programs and education to</p>

		opportunities with the goal of increasing skilled-labour capacity in the Region. (e.g. Businesses provide specific training (ex: John Deere), meat cutting and vertical farming micro-credentials, etc.)	Support: Durham Ag & Rural		internships and other ag skills training programs.	help fill the gaps in the agri-food labour force.
		c. Collaborate with Ontario Tech University faculty of education by offering agricultural resources and speakers to provide an agricultural context related to current university programs. (e.g. organize a precision ag speaker to lecture to the engineering program to expose students agricultural occupations/opportunities in their field of study.)	Lead: Durham Ag & Rural Support: Ont Tech U	Medium	Resources shared, guest lecturers organized, etc.	Increased level of agricultural exposure to Durham's students to increase awareness around the careers available in Durham's agriculture and agri-food industries.
		d. Educate youth in the region about the diverse career opportunities available in agriculture through videos, presentations, resource sharing and agricultural programming.	Lead: Durham Ag & Rural Support: Durham Farm Connections, Durham Region School Boards	Medium	Resources, videos and presentations shared with schools and students.	Increased awareness of agricultural career options for high school students. Increased number of students interested in working in the agriculture sector.
7	Provide resources for aging farmers and young farmers.	a. Collaborate with leading industry professionals to host a succession planning workshop focused on sharing best practices and resources for successful transition.	Lead: Durham Ag & Rural	Short	Workshop delivered.	More awareness around the importance of planning for farm transition to the next generation or successors. Encourage farms to initiate succession plans.
		b. Evaluate the feasibility of developing, or partnering to offer, a	Lead: Durham Ag & Rural	Long	Plan developed, feasibility	Support young people interested in entering the

		regional leadership/mentorship program for young farmers and new Canadian farmers in the Region.	Support: Durham College, Farms at Work		investigated, program implemented (if determined feasible)	agriculture industry, and the need for younger generations to enter the industry.
8	Partner with stakeholders and agricultural organizations to deliver and expand agricultural literacy in the Region.	a. Provide Regional Council with agricultural events updates with the purpose of garnering support for councilor attendance at local agricultural fairs and other rural and agriculture-related community events throughout the Region. (e.g. Celebrate Ag, Spring/Fall Fairs, Farm Connections Open House etc.)	Lead: Durham Ag & Rural	Ongoing	Events shared with council. Councilor attendance and support of agricultural events increased.	Increased political support and recognition of the importance of agriculture and agri-food to our region's economy and community viability.
		b. Consider offering financial support for a program developed by stakeholders (such a DFC) to promote agriculture and agri-education in the Region. E.g. Producers post signage that includes information on the crops being grown or livestock raised, and its end uses (see Oxford County example)., or mural art to showcase agriculture (Signs of life project).	Lead: Durham Ag & Rural, Durham Farm Connections Support: Durham Region Federation of Agriculture, Durham Region and LAM Works Departments	Long	Signs are installed across the region.	Increased agriculture awareness in our communities with the goal of creating supportive communities with a positive view towards, and basic understanding of agriculture and agricultural practices.
		c. Promote and assist with events such as Gates Open, the DAAC Annual Farm Tour, and Durham Farm Connections Open House.	Lead: Durham Ag & Rural	Ongoing	Events hosted and promoted. Increased awareness and attendance.	The agri-food sector in Durham is recognized and valued by the community.
		d. Have an active role in educating non-farm communities about agriculture	Lead: Durham Farm Connections,	Ongoing	Successful agriculture	More awareness of what's grown/raised in the Region,

		<p>in partnership with Durham Farm Connections (e.g. sharing resource kits, supporting educational events, social media presence and targeted promotional material).</p>	Durham Ag & Rural		<p>education initiatives and programming offered in Durham Region. (Need to make this measurable)</p>	<p>and the importance of the agri-food sector to the overall economy.</p>
		<p>e. Develop agri-food focused economic factsheets with 2021 census data for local area municipalities and stakeholders. (e.g. municipal specific agri-food profiles, land use planning flow chart for development approvals)</p>	<p>Lead: Durham Ag & Rural</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Fact sheets developed and shared with local area municipalities/DEDP.</p>	<p>Municipal staff are knowledgeable about the role of agri-food in their local economy and can make supportive policy decisions.</p>
9	<p>Enable and encourage a culture of innovation in agriculture.</p>	<p>a. Build capacity for agri-innovation in partnership with local post-secondary and accelerator institutions. E.g., Host agri-innovation field days, or create and deliver an agri-innovation competition including private investors, post-secondaries and industry stakeholders. (e.g. smarcities program, Huron County AgPrize); or alternatively or in addition, support establishing an agri-tech category in existing Durham pitch or innovation competitions (such as SPARK Ignite, Access IO)</p> <p>Explore key stakeholder relationship/partner development options for agri-tech innovation</p>	<p>Lead: Durham Ag & Rural, Intelligent Communities/Smart Cities Durham</p> <p>Partner: Ontario Tech University and Durham College</p>	<p>Long</p>	<p>Implementation of an ag tech competition program.</p>	<p>Youth understand the opportunities to use innovative approaches to solve challenges in the agri-food sector.</p>

		<p>b. Organize and host a roundtable on vertical farming with key sector stakeholders to discuss requirements for attracting and retaining vertical farming operations in Durham. Develop a list of potential sites with a view to continuing to promote Durham Region as an ideal location for vertical farming (e.g. organize a roundtable). Work towards a supportive zoning environment and actively encourage area municipalities to build an inventory of available real-estate options to improve investment readiness.</p>	<p>Lead: Durham Ag & Rural Support: Durham Business Development</p>	Long	Roundtable hosted. Potential sites for vertical farms identified.	Staff can effectively respond to the needs of vertical farms.
10	Expand export development opportunities for agri-food operators.	<p>a. Provide or share resources (e.g. OMAFRA PROFIT training and export development workshops) to increase business export capacity in Durham Region.</p>	<p>Lead: Durham Ag & Rural, OMAFRA, Agriculture Canada</p>	Medium	Resources shared, and workshops held/promoted.	More agri-food businesses are undertaking export activities.
		<p>b. Expanding on action 4a (Agri-Food Processing BR+E) implement specific actions related to gathering feedback from agri-food processors to quantify export capacity and understand where support could be provided.</p>	<p>Lead: Durham Ag & Rural, OMAFRA Support: Business Development Team</p>	Long	Actions implemented from the Agri-Food Processing BR+E	More agri-food businesses are undertaking export activities.

11	Enhance urban agriculture	a. Conduct a policy and best practices scan for urban agriculture in Durham Region.	Lead: Durham Ag & Rural Support: GHFFA, DFPC, TNDF	Medium/Long	Create a document outlining urban ag policy and best practices in Durham	More capacity to support urban agriculture across the Region.
		b. Undertake an exercise to identify urban agriculture assets (e.g., community gardens) and stakeholders (e.g., DFPC) to understand the urban agriculture environment and potential in Durham. Share results with the GHFFA therefore contributing to the 5 Year Action Plan.	Lead: Durham Ag & Rural Support: GHFFA, DFPC, TNDF	Long	Map and understand the urban ag assets and policies related to urban agriculture in Durham	More capacity to support urban agriculture across the Region.
		c. Provide support to the start-up of the Durham College Barrett Center of Innovation and Sustainable Urban Agriculture	Lead: Durham College Support: Durham Ag & Rural	Long	Regular conversations held between Durham Ag & Rural and Durham College. Support provided where applicable.	More capacity to support urban agriculture across the Region.



Memorandum

Date: February 11, 2022

To: Regional Chair Henry and Members of Regional Council

From: Susan Siopis, P.Eng., Commissioner, Works
Giuseppe Anello, M.Eng., P.Eng., PMP, Director, Waste Management Services
John Presta, P.Eng., MPA, Director, Environmental Services

Subject: Response to National Farmers Union – Ontario letter to Municipality of Clarington dated February 7, 2022, regarding Durham Region’s Proposed Mixed Waste Pre-sort and Anaerobic Digestion Facility

The Regional Municipality of Durham

Works Department

The Regional Municipality of Durham (Region) received a copy of the above noted letter outlining National Farmers Union – Ontario (NFU-O) concerns with the Region’s proposed Mixed Waste Pre-sort and Anaerobic Digestion Facility. The enclosed letter contains several misstatements and inaccuracies that the Region would like to address here.

Firstly, the land application of sewage biosolids has a long and safe history in Ontario, dating back to the 1970s and is supported by both the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) and the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), and the Water Environment Association of Ontario (WEAO), an organization representing wastewater professionals.

Sewage biosolids are defined as a Non-Agricultural Source Material (NASM) and are regulated by the Nutrient Management Act (Ontario Regulation 267/03). Biosolids are applied to farmland using a NASM Plan. A NASM Plan is a detailed summary of the farmer’s crop rotation over five years and accounts for all nutrients applied to the farmland, including sewage biosolids, and tracks the safe addition of nitrogen, phosphorous, and metals to promote soil and crop health. Sewage biosolids are regularly analyzed for nutrients, metals, and pathogens to ensure that they meet the standards detailed in the Nutrient Management Act and Regulations. Strict regulatory oversight provides a

quality assurance program for farmers, the community, and the environment.

OMAFRA provides training, education, and licenses/certifications to operators who are applying nutrients to land and for individuals creating NASM Plans. These individuals adhere to the strict standards of the Nutrient Management Act and its regulations to ensure the protection of soils, water resources, human and animal health.

The Region's Biosolids Program is supported by the Durham Region Soil and Crop Improvement Association and by many local farmers who benefit from the application of biosolids. For many farmers in Durham Region, the Region's biosolids program is an important source of nutrients, organic and other material that improves soil and crop health.

Independent research into the effects of metals, pharmaceuticals, and personal care products in biosolids is very active at the University of Guelph, Agriculture and Agrifood Canada, and several other institutions. Independent research continues to support the land application of sewage biosolids.

Secondly, the Mixed Waste Pre-sort and Anaerobic Digestion Facility (MWP/AD) is a new and separate facility from the Durham York Energy Centre (DYEC), or incinerator as referred to in the letter. The DYEC began commercial operations in 2016 and is capable of processing 160,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste each year. The DYEC operates under an Environmental Compliance Approval (ECA) that limits waste processing to 140,000 tonnes per year. In 2019 the Region and York Region initiated an Environmental Screening Process to increase the permitted capacity of the DYEC to 160,000 tonnes per year.

In 2020, at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Region and York Region requested and received an emergency ECA amendment to process 160,000 tonnes in 2020. **At no time has the DYEC ever exceeded its permitted waste processing capacity.** In fact, the purpose of the MWP/AD facility is to reduce the quantity of waste sent to the DYEC for processing. Rather than residential waste going directly to the DYEC, it will first be sorted to remove remaining recyclables, organics and non-combustible materials. Only the garbage residue from the MWP will be sent to the DYEC therefore delaying the need to expand the facility to further increase capacity.

The DYEC operates under Environmental Assessment Approval conditions and an ECA which both stipulate emission limits. Emission limits apply to emissions measured via stack tests which occur twice per year and to emissions monitored continuously. Results of all emission measurements are posted for public review on the DYEC website. There was one stack test exceedance in 2016 during facility commissioning

that was reported to and investigated by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks. The DYEC was shutdown until the MECP was satisfied that the facility could operate within the emission limits set out in its approvals. **The DYEC has not exceeded stack emission limits since this single incident in 2016.** There are occasional exceedances of Carbon Monoxide limits as noted in the continuous emissions monitoring. Carbon Monoxide is considered an operational parameter and is not a contaminant of concern.

The proposed Anaerobic Digestion (AD) facility will operate two digestion trains. One will receive source separated organics from the Green Bin program servicing single family homes in the Region. The second train will receive facility separated organics from the Mixed Waste Pre-sort (MWP) facility. Output from the two digestion trains will be kept separate when the facility begins operations. The Region has committed to work with the MECP to evaluate the digestate from the facility separated organic train to confirm it is of consistent quality with the source separated organics digestate. **The Region is committed to producing a high quality, beneficial agricultural product as an output from the AD facility and will do so with MECP and OMAFRA involvement and approvals.**

The Region has been in regular communication with MECP regarding the planning and regulatory requirements for the MWP/AD Facility. MECP has confirmed in writing to the Region that **the MWP/AD Facility does not meet the criteria under the Environmental Assessment Act that would necessitate an Environmental Assessment.** The Region will apply for an Environmental Compliance Approval that will stipulate operating parameters for the facility.

End of Memo

Enclosed: Letter dated February 7, 2022, to Municipality of Clarington from
Don Ciparis, President, National Farmers Union - Ontario

Copy: Honourable David Piccini, Minister, Environment, Conservation and Parks
Lindsey Park, MPP (Durham)
Mayor Foster and Members of Council, Municipality of Clarington
Mary-Anne Dempster, Chief Administrative Officer, Municipality of Clarington
June Gallagher, Municipal Clerk, Municipality of Clarington
Don Ciparis, President, National Farmers Union – Ontario

Elizabeth Stocking, President, Local 345 (Durham, Peterborough, Victoria),
National Farmers Union – Ontario

Gord Robinson, Chair, Durham/York/Victoria/Northumberland Chapter - Ontario
Landowners Association

Agricultural Advisory Committee of Clarington c/o Amy Burke, Senior Planner, Planning
and Development Services

Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee c/o Michael Scott, Project Planner, Department
of Planning and Economic Development

Elaine Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer, Durham Region

Brian Bridgeman, Commissioner, Planning and Economic Development, Durham Region

Don Beaton, Commissioner, Corporate Services, Durham Region

Ralph Walton, Regional Clerk / Director, Legislative Services, Durham Region

February 7, 2022

Mayor Foster and Municipal Council
Municipality of Clarington
40 Temperance Street
Bowmanville, ON L1C 3A6

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

It has come to the attention of the National Farmers Union – Ontario (NFU-O) that the Region of Durham is proposing to build an anaerobic digester near its municipal incinerator in Clarington. This proposal has raised the concerns of our members in the Region and those of the Provincial Council of the NFU-O.

The NFU-O is an accredited farm organization representing thousands of sustainable family farmers in Ontario and has advocated for farm families across Ontario and Canada since 1969. The NFU-O believes agriculture should be economically, socially and environmentally sustainable and lead to enriched soils, biodiverse ecosystems, financially viable farms, healthy and safe food and thriving rural communities. Members work together to achieve agricultural policies that ensure dignity and income security for farm families, while protecting and enhancing rural environments for current and future generations.

We advocate for the province to provide concrete supports for farmers to build soil health while continuing to minimize soil contamination. Our policies on sewage sludge request that spreading of untreated sludge be prohibited (Nov. 2001) and that spreading treated sewage sludge be prohibited until processes are in place to remove heavy metals, pharmaceuticals, chemicals and other toxic residues that are harmful to humans, animals and the environment (Nov. 2001, Nov. 2011).

The proposal presented here has a number of design flaws that are not being addressed including: an incinerator that has violated Provincial Air Emissions standards, that same incinerator is now being called on to perform service on three times the waste tonnage that it was designed for and an anaerobic digester that uses mixed organic waste that cannot be used as agricultural fertilizer as determined by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. The legality of the proposal has been challenged by non-government organizations and First Nations communities.

The Durham Regional government must demonstrate the same forethought and leadership in this important decision that it displayed in declaring a climate emergency in 2020 and developing a plan for 100% reduction in GHG emissions by 2045.

Local members of the NFU-O and their Provincial Council are calling on the Regional Government to impose an interim control by-law on the proposal until all Environmental

Assessments are completed. Regional decision-makers can count on the NFU-O's support in making the right decision.

Sincerely,



Don Ciparis
President, National Farmers Union - Ontario

cc.

Minister Piccini
Lindsey Park, MPP
Gord Robinson
Elizabeth Stocking