

# STAKEHOLDER TOOLKIT




Ontario's agricultural sector has come together to back a campaign, **“Home Grown”** to increase awareness around the importance of local food, grown right here in Ontario.

# ONTARIO FARMERS HAVE A LOT TO BE PROUD OF.

Day in and day out, they provide fresh, healthy and local food to Ontarians in all communities, from big cities to rural towns.

Almost all of Ontario's farms – **98 per cent** – are still family owned and operated. There are **38,000** farm families across the province. Members represent everything from market produce and livestock to cannabis and apiaries. When combined, Ontario's agriculture sector is the number one driver of economic activity in the province. The numbers speak for themselves: Ontario's agri-food sector contributes more than **\$40 billion** a year to the Ontario's economy and supports more than **860,400** good jobs.

Agricultural land is a strategic and vital resource required to ensure food sovereignty and food security. But with ever-growing urban centres in Canada, farmers are losing their right to do what they want with their land.



Based on census data,  
**Ontario is losing 319 acres  
of productive agricultural  
land every day.**

**Once farmland is gone, it's gone forever; there is no getting it back. We lose the food that was grown on that land permanently.**

Significant wetlands, key shorelines, and forests are threatened by urban sprawl. We have to protect our landscapes and water before we lose it to development.

**GOVERNMENT  
INTERVENTION  
IS KEY.**

OUR **FARMS.**



OUR **FOOD.**



OUR **HEALTH.**



OUR **ENVIRONMENT.**



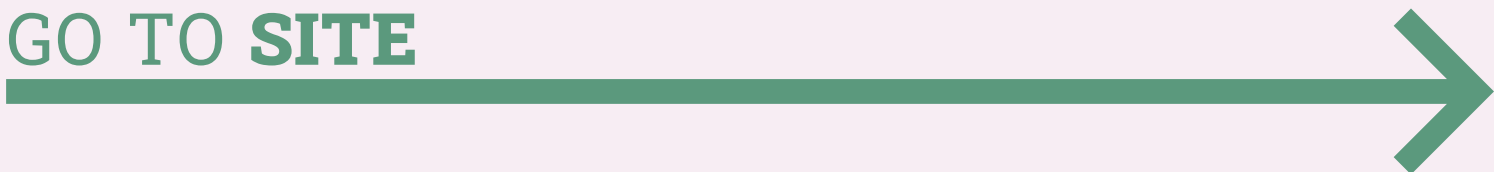
OUR **FUTURE.**



**THEY'RE ALL  
CONNECTED.**

**Join the  
Home Grown  
community &  
help protect  
our local  
farms & food.**

**GO TO SITE**



# TOOL KIT

## In this tool kit you will find:

- ✓ Key messages and proof points
- ✓ Social media posts
- ✓ Shareable campaign video
- ✓ Community flyer
- ✓ How to engage decision-makers

# LEND YOUR VOICE TO SUPPORT HOME GROWN



**Share our posts  
with your network**

GO TO FACEBOOK

GO TO TWITTER

GO TO INSTAGRAM

**Amplify our community  
video - “This Is Agriculture”**

GO TO VIDEO

**Donate space on your  
platform, farm or business  
to protect local food**

EMAIL US

# KEY MESSAGES

We've put together a handful of messages you can use to highlight the Home Grown community and bring awareness to the issue. Feel free to email this information to a friend, post on social media, or have a conversation with like-minded people who want to protect local food.

People trust that Ontario grown and raised food is safe and reliable.	Local food looks better, tastes better and is better for you – and the planet.	Local food is a vital resource in any society.
Farming and food production is the leading economic driver in the province of Ontario.	Agricultural land is a strategic resource required to ensure food sovereignty and food security.	Every day, Ontario loses 319 acres of productive agricultural land to urban or industrial development.
When we lose agricultural land to urban sprawl, it is lost forever.	We support smart urban development in the right places. Ontario needs a workable plan to guide responsible urban development that permits growth while protecting productive farmlands.	We support the preservation of farmland and water resources through advocating for provincial land use policy.

# SECONDARY MESSAGES & PROOF POINTS

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Arable farmland is a finite resource. Less than 5% of Ontario's land base can support agricultural production of any kind.

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Ontario's agri-food sector contributes \$40 billion a year to Ontario's economy and supports 860,400 jobs.

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Our province loses an average of five farms per week to urban development. And over 1.5 million acres have been lost since 1996.

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When we lose food growing and processing capacity, we are forced to look abroad for less reliable and safe food options.

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The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the precarious nature of Ontario's food supply chains. When we protect our farmland and our food supply chain, we reduce our need to import food.

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Canada was left scrambling in the global market because due to a lack of local manufacturing capacity for PPE and vaccines. Do we want the same thing for our food?

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Farmers need confidence and predictability in the future viability of their property for agricultural use to invest in land, buildings and facilities required for food production.

# SECONDARY MESSAGES & PROOF POINTS

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There are two choices – local food and imported food. Food that was grown thousands of kilometres away, in an unknown regulatory environment, with unknown farming practices, then shipped across roads, rails and water – spewing carbon emissions along the way. Or food from the farms in your community, subject to regular and stringent testing, with fewer chemicals and smarter farming practices.

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If the environment is an issue you care about, there is only one choice: local food. Ignore the labels that may boast about sustainability or organic; if the source of that food is anywhere other than Ontario, it is not an environmentally conscious choice.

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With ever-growing urban centres in Canada, farmers are losing their right to do what they want with their land.

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Ontario's economic engine is at its best when cities grow within urban boundaries, and rural Ontario feeds the population.

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The rate at which our province is losing agricultural land is not sustainable, especially with the demand to increase the production of food, fibre, and fuel for an ever-growing population.

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Land capable of supporting agricultural activity ensures a safe, sustainable supply of food, fuel and fibre for Ontario.



# HOME GROWN LOCAL FOOD

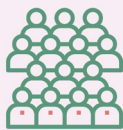
ONTARIO  
FARMS  
& FOOD  
FOREVER

HOME  
GROWN



200

fruits vegetables  
and grains



860,400

support their families

175

acres lost  
every day



1,500,000

acres lost since 1996



17,000

amazing people



HELP  
PROTECT  
LOCAL  
FOOD &  
FARMS

HOME  
GROWN



“Farmland  
& resources  
over pavement  
any day.”

Kim  
McElroy  
London, ON

HOME  
GROWN



“Locally grown food  
is so important for  
slowing climate  
change & ensuring  
food security.”

Emily  
Norman  
Brampton, ON

HOME  
GROWN



“We can't let  
urban sprawl  
starve us to  
death.”

Nicole  
Brooker  
Temagami, ON

HOME  
GROWN



Local  
food:

Safe, healthy  
& always fresh

Supports  
local families

Preserves  
crucial habitats

Reduces your  
carbon footprint

ONTARIO  
FARMS  
& FOOD  
FOREVER

HOME  
GROWN

# ENGAGE DECISION- MAKERS

## How do I find my local MPP and request a meeting?

Most local candidates will start promoting right away and you should start seeing their promotional materials online and in your region. A quick search should bring you to their campaign website where you can find contact information.

You can find a list of MPPs on party websites:



# ENGAGE DECISION- MAKERS

**To request a meeting, send the email below to the email address provided on your local candidate's website:**

Dear [insert candidate's name],

Thank you for representing our community.. I am a proud constituent and [insert your profession ie. dairy farmer, store manager, labourer etc.].

I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and share information with you on the value of local, home grown food and how urban sprawl is impacting our ability to feed your family, my family and the rest of our province.

Thank you for considering my request and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[insert your name]

[insert your email address and phone number]

# ENGAGE DECISION- MAKERS

## **My local MPP is not willing to meet with me - what do I do?**

Sometimes MPPs have too many requests for meetings and prioritize public appearances and door knocking. Although an in-person meeting is preferred, if you are unable to meet with the candidate, send them another email with the key messages included in this toolkit and attach the community flyer we have provided.

## **I have met with my local MPP and used the key messages, now what?**

After you meet with your MPP, email them thanking them for their time and reiterate the key messages and takeaways from your meeting. Attach the community flyer to the email as well.

Email Cathy Lennon ([cathy.lennon@ofa.on.ca](mailto:cathy.lennon@ofa.on.ca)) at the OFA to let them know you had a chat with your local MPP specifying the name and party they represent.

GET THE **COMMUNITY FLYER**



# ENGAGE DECISION- MAKERS

## **If I have a question about the campaign, who do I contact?**

OFA staff are here to support you. If you have questions, please contact us: [info@homegrown.ofa.on.ca](mailto:info@homegrown.ofa.on.ca).

# HOME GROWN



[homegrownofa.ca](http://homegrownofa.ca)