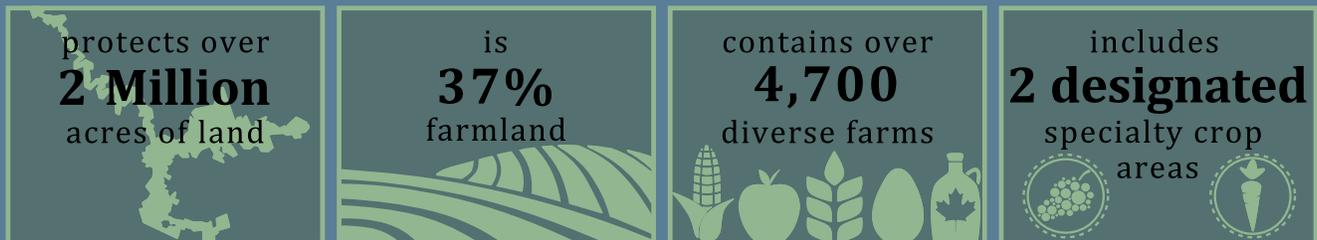


Agriculture in the Greenbelt

Ontario's Greenbelt offers many benefits to farmers, the agricultural sector, and food security.

The Greenbelt:



Provides strong and consistent protection from non-compatible land uses. This means that productive agricultural land in the Greenbelt can stay that way for future generations.

Provides certainty in land-use planning. This means that farmers can make long-term personal and financial investments in their land and businesses.

Provides access to some of the province's most productive agricultural soils. This means farmers can continue providing a variety of quality agricultural products for generations to come.

Protects the health of water systems. This means that the drinking water farmers and communities depend on can continue to be clean for years to come.

Protects habitat for pollinators. This means that crop productivity is improved for pollinator-dependent crops.

Provides unique ecosystem services. This means by also protecting natural river, wetland, and forest systems, the greenbelt provides services like flood management that will help farmers adapt to a changing climate.

Provides access to domestic and international markets. This means maintaining farmland close to urban centres, near processing and manufacturing industries, and surrounded by a well-developed transportation network.

Facts & Misconceptions

Misconception:

The Greenbelt causes farmland prices to decrease.



Facts:

Over the past 10 years farmland values across the Greenbelt have consistently increased by 10% or more per year, and now we are no longer seeing the inflated prices that had been previously created by land speculation for its development.

Misconception:

Farms can't be successful in the Greenbelt.



Facts:

Farmers have been successful in the Greenbelt for many years. Future generations of farmers will have this same opportunity because of the Greenbelt's strong and consistent protection. Some farmers closest to cities are adapting by using practices that are more compatible with nearby residential land uses and producing diversified and high-value agri-products that are more successful in an urban market; a trend that is consistent across Canada.

Misconception:

The Greenbelt doesn't work because farmland is being developed anyway.



Facts:

The Greenbelt's strength comes from permanent boundaries. Since 2005, the Greenbelt Plan has stopped over 24,000 acres of land from being taken out of its protection. Farmland that is currently being converted to residential or industrial uses was rezoned before the Greenbelt Plan came into effect.

Misconception:

The Greenbelt prioritizes protecting environmental features over farmland.



Facts:

One of the main objectives of the Greenbelt is to protect agricultural land, prevent farmland fragmentation, and protect the viability of the agricultural sector. To achieve this, while also protecting important environmental features, different rules for farm businesses are built into the policies. This helps to ensure agriculture can remain viable and allows farmers to continue being excellent stewards of the land.



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