



# 2021 Donor Impact Report



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## Who We Are

The Ontario Farmland Trust is a provincial charity that protects Ontario farmland for the future. We do this by working in partnership with farmland owners to place Farmland Easement Agreements on the land, permanently protecting the agricultural areas, along with the natural areas like forests and wetlands, from development and other non-agricultural uses.

Our Vision is for a future where Ontario’s farmland is valued and permanently protected through sound policy, partnerships, and proactive community engagement; where diverse farming communities thrive; and where the protection of farmland, agriculture, and local food production is recognized as the foundation of a sustainable rural economy in Ontario.



# Message from the Chair of the Board

2021 has been an interesting year. While the world ever so slowly moves away from Covid-19 and back into a bit of normalcy, our thoughts once again turn back to in-person meetings and events. This is something we have been missing over the last few years and we look forward to the future where we can once again see all of you.

Now more than ever the future of farmland needs to be discussed. This brings us to our supporters – be they board members, donors, volunteers or people interested in preserving agricultural lands for future generations. In every area of this province we are seeing a steady pace of development, and we could not protect and preserve farmland without your valuable support and commitment.

At the end of 2021, the Ontario Farmland Trust protected its 20th farm, and amazing accomplishments of which we should be so proud. That work is highlighted here in our 2021 Donor Impact Report. Now is our chance at OFT to show you how much you mean to us, and what your support can do to protect farmland for a lifetime.

In 2021 we completed the protection of almost 628 acres of land in Bruce County, in addition to almost 100 acres in Simcoe County. We still receive regular inquiries from landowners who are interested in learning more about the protection an easement can offer their land.

OFT is working hard to make sure our most precious, finite resource continues to be viable for generations to come, and we want to say thank you for your support.

## Meet the New Executive Director

Starting June 1st the Ontario Farmland Trust is pleased to introduce our new Executive Director – Martin Straathof. Martin comes from a farming background, and most recently worked in agricultural land planning policy at Halton Region.

In addition to his experience with fundraising and relationship management, Martin also has experience with other non-profits.

When he's not helping out on the farm, Martin is in the process of finishing his Masters degree in Rural Planning and Development at the University of Guelph.

Martin's dynamic enthusiasm for farmland protection are in alignment with Ontario Farmland Trust's and the Board of Directors look forward to working together to expand on OFT's vision of protecting agricultural lands across Ontario.

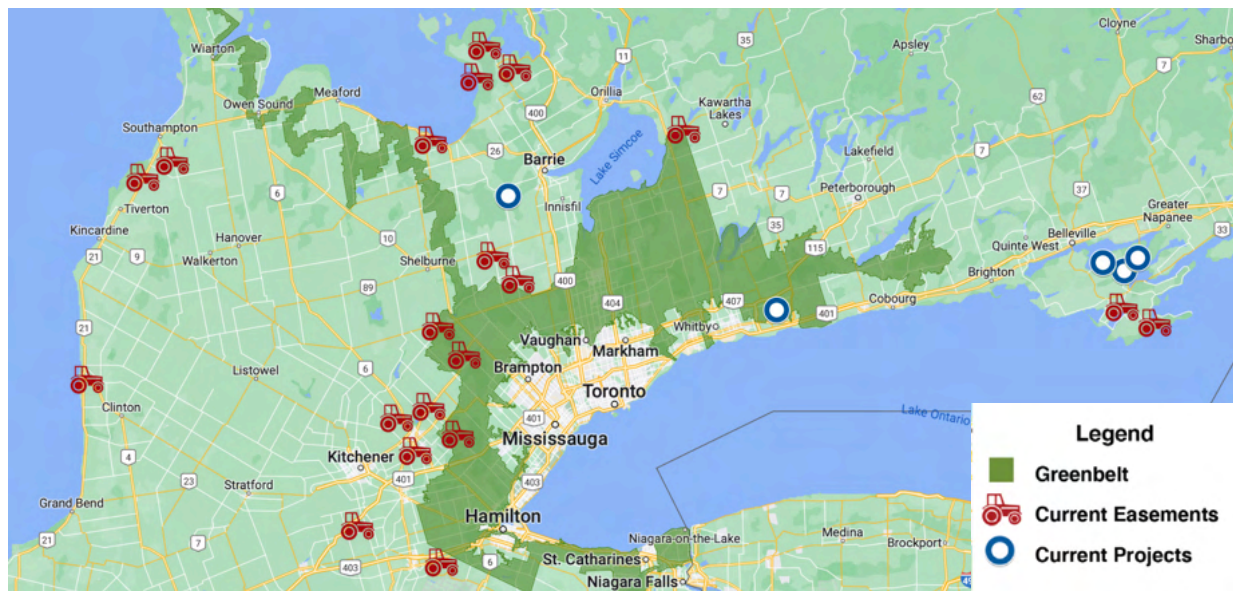


**Bernard Pope**  
Board Chair



**Martin Straathof**  
Executive Director

# Farmland Protection



## Beyond the Soil Class: The Value of All Farmland

With more than 200 commodities farmed on a commercial scale in Ontario, the provincial agricultural sector is diverse. Having the farmland on which to grow a wide variety of crops is key to protecting the resilience of our agricultural sector.



Possibility grows here.

Ontario's farmland has been sorted into classes that show how capable it is of supporting agriculture. The surveys that created this classification system provide valuable data about the land, however they don't tell the whole story.

While soils that fall into higher-ranked classes are typically better at producing traditional row crops (corn, soybeans, wheat) and horticulture, the soils that fall into lower-ranked classes are still a highly valuable agricultural resource capable of supporting a large variety of agricultural activities. In fact, some crops are actually better suited to the conditions lower-ranked classes of soils can provide.

Ontario has an innovative agricultural sector that is constantly evolving. Farmers continue to produce new crops and develop management techniques to adapt to changing opportunities. Land that may not be considered 'good' for agriculture now may be well-suited for different crops in the future.

All of Ontario's farmland deserves protection, no matter the soil class. Learn more about this project on our website, under the Value of All Farmland.



# Species at Risk on OFT Properties

In addition to providing us with food, fuel, fibre, and flowers, Ontario's farmland also provides key habitat for different species at risk! Many of OFT's permanently protected farms are home to species that are considered at risk in Ontario or Canada, our Farmland Easement Agreements now permanently protecting the habitat that they rely on. Check out some of the amazing species we have had the pleasure of observing on our farms below.

## **BUTTERNUT** - *Endangered*

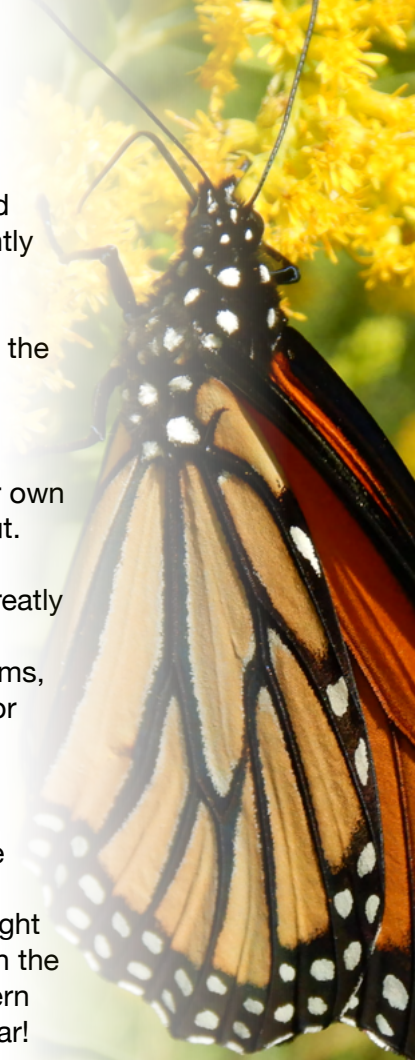
Standing tall and proud the Butternut tree's leaves appear to droop under their own weight, making their appearance similar to their close relative, the Black Walnut. However, unlike the Black Walnut the Butternut tree is not nearly as common throughout the landscape. A fungal disease called the Butternut Canker has greatly reduced the number of Butternut trees, and remains a significant threat to the Butternuts that remain. Butternuts have been found on six of our protected farms, and each year when we visit them we note the health of the tree and whether or not the canker is present.

## **EASTERN MEADOWLARK** - *Threatened*

Ofentimes invisible, the Eastern Meadowlark is another species at risk that we have observed making a home out of the farmland we protect. This chunky songbird is a master at camouflage, and remains invisible unless it turns its bright yellow chest towards you. As a grassland species, they are most often found in the hay fields and pastures of farms. We were lucky this year to observe two Eastern Meadowlarks on our protected farms, more than we have seen in any other year!

## **MONARCH** - *Special Concern*

Easily one of the most iconic butterflies in Ontario, the Monarch is one that brings us delight whenever we see it on our protected farms. In the past 25 years, this butterfly has faced population declines of over 80%, so observing them thriving and breeding on our protected farmland is always a wonderful sight. Not only do we often find Monarch caterpillars feasting on milkweed in both the natural areas and the agricultural areas on our farms, but we have also witnessed Monarchs using one of our farms as a migration stopover, where thousands of butterflies stopped to feast on the bright purple blooms of a clover field.



# Protected Farms



## Robson Farm

**Region:** Oxford County

**# of Acres:** 85

**Species at Risk:** 5

**Agricultural Features:**

Cash Crops

**Natural Features:** Wetlands, Forests, Habitat Expansion (Wildlife corridors)

**Easement Donors:**

Craig & Nancy Robson



## Copeland Farm

**Region:** Wellington County

**# of Acres:** 72

**Species at Risk:** 5

**Agricultural Features:**

Cash Crops

**Natural Features:** Speed River, Riparian Habitat, Provincially Significant Wetland, Forest, Meadow

**Easement Donors:**

Dave & Cindy Copeland



## Morrison Farm

**Region:** Simcoe County

**# of Acres:** 173

**Species at Risk:** 5

**Agricultural Features:**

Cash Crops, Squash

**Natural Features:** Section of the Pretty River, Forest

**Easement Donors:**

Murray & Jo-Anne Morrison



## Dean Farm

**Region:** Wellington County

**# of Acres:** 94

**Species at Risk:** 4

**Agricultural Features:**

Pasture, Currants

**Natural Features:** Forest, Section of the Lutteral Swan Creek Provincially Significant Wetland Complex

**Easement Donor:**

Kathryn Dean



## Haley Farm

**Region:** Brant County

**# of Acres:** 31

**Species at Risk:** 4

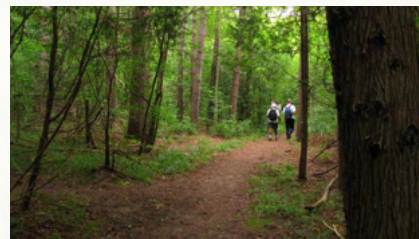
**Agricultural Features:**

Cash Crops

**Natural Features:** Pond, Forest

**Easement Donor:**

Margaret Haley



## Ignatius Jesuit Centre

**Region:** Wellington County

**# of Acres:** 92

**Species at Risk:** 7

**Natural Features:**

Regenerating Field, Forest, Section of the Speed River, Old Growth Forest Project

**Easement Donor:** Ignatius

Jesuit Centre





### Tiny Township Farm

**Region:** Simcoe County  
**# of Acres:** 342 (3 farms)  
**Species at Risk:** 0  
**Agricultural Features:**  
 Cash Crops, Hay  
**Natural Features:** Field,  
 Forest  
**Easement Donor:**  
 County of Simcoe



### Bethell Farm

**Region:** Peel Region  
**# of Acres:** 100  
**Species at Risk:** 4  
**Agricultural Features:**  
 Cash Crops, Hay  
**Natural Features:** Wetland that  
 is part of the headwaters of the  
 Credit River  
**Easement Donor:**  
 Lorna Bethell



### Samuel-Stevens Farm

**Region:** Halton Region  
**# of Acres:** 48  
**Species at Risk:** 0  
**Agricultural Features:**  
 Fallow, Tree Farm  
**Natural Features:** Forest,  
 Wetland, Regenerating Field  
**Easement Donor:**  
 Alan Samuel



### Little Rock Farm

**Region:** Simcoe County  
**# of Acres:** 150 (2 farms)  
**Species at Risk:** 0  
**Agricultural Features:**  
 Hay and Pasture  
**Natural Features:** Forest,  
 River, Grassland, Riparian  
 Habitat, Ephemeral Swamp  
**Easement Donor:**  
 Helen Martinic



### Hindmarsh Farm

**Region:** Huron County  
**# of Acres:** 141  
**Species at Risk:** 4  
**Agricultural Features:**  
 Hay, Cash Crops  
**Natural Features:** Forest,  
 Ponds, Wetlands, Meadows  
**Easement Donor:**  
 Marian Hindmarsh



### Belain Farm

**Region:** Peel Region  
**# of Acres:** 102  
**Species at Risk:** 4  
**Agricultural Features:**  
 Cash Crops  
**Natural Features:** Wetlands,  
 Ponds, Forests  
**Easement Donor:**  
 Deirdre Wright





### Hudson Farm

**Region:** Prince Edward County

**# of Acres:** 208 (2 farms)

**Species at Risk:** 7

**Agricultural Features:**

Organic farm producing hay and forage, and other various heritage grains that go to support the local food system

**Natural Features:** Forests and an ephemeral pond; A creek called Butternut Creek for the sheer number of endangered Butternuts that call the banks home.

**Easement Donor:**

Don and Deb Hudson



### Farrow Farm

**Region:** Bruce County

**# of Acres:** 627

**Species at Risk:** 5

**Agricultural Features:**

Rich and fertile ag soil dedicated to row crops, hay, and pasture for sheep

**Natural Features:** Mature riparian forest along the banks of the Saugeen River preventing erosion and pollution into the river, upland forest, ponds, early succession meadows

**Easement Donor:**

Kevin and Irene Farrow



### Douglas/Bourgeois Farm

**Region:** Simcoe County

**# of Acres:** 98

**Species at Risk:** 2

**Agricultural Features:**

Cash crop, hay, and beef cattle

**Natural Features:** Wetlands and forest that act as a wildlife highway for animals in the surrounding landscape.

Landowners have observed bears, deer, moose, snapping turtle, sandhill cranes, and more using the habitat to travel throughout the landscape

**Easement Donor:**

Michael Douglas and Anna Bourgeois







## Another Family Farm Protected Forever

Craig and Nancy Robson's farm in Oxford County was purchased by John Robson on his arrival from Scotland. The property had been a clergy reserve. Other than a brief hiatus in the midst of the Great Depression, the farm has been in the family since 1855.

"I am hopeful ownership of this property will stay in our family," Craig said. "It's an area worth preserving for future generations."

Craig and Nancy have granted a conservation easement to the Ontario Farmland Trust ("OFT").

Craig advises the experience with OFT was very easy. He and Nancy are thankful the farm will be protected in perpetuity.

Craig worked on the farm while growing up. After graduating from university Craig and Nancy moved to Kitchener before returning to a new home on the farm in 1984.

The farmland is achieving organic status in 2022 through a sharecropping arrangement with an organic farmer.

The original stone house on the farm is now home to Craig and Nancy's daughter, son in law and two grandchildren.



## Farmland Protection Offers Environmental Benefits

An important wildlife corridor that buffers two tributaries of the Speed-Lutteral Swan Creek Wetland, when Dave and Cindy decided to protect their farm through the Ontario Farmland Trust, it was to protect the property's farmland and many environmental benefits.

The farm, located in Wellington County, is 72-acres, and features not only a homestead, but also a forested and nature area in addition to farmland.

Home to not just Cindy and Dave, the two share their property with species at risk, including the snapping turtle, midland painted turtle, barn swallow and monarch.

Dave and Cindy first reached out to the Ontario Farmland Trust to protect their farm in 2014.

Originally part of a larger 116-acre farm owned by the Johnstone family, the property was sold in the late 1960s as three pieces, one of which is the farm Dave and Cindy purchased in 1993, moving onto the farm full time in 2003.

Many improvements to the property have been made over the years, including invasive species removal, the creation of a tall grass meadow and wetland habitat, the planting of native vegetation throughout the property, and the creation of walking trails throughout the natural areas. The land is also protected under the EcoGifts program.





## Natural Corridor; Farmland Worth Protecting

Michael and Anna know that any farmland worth having, is worth protecting. They see it every day, with a natural corridor for animals along the lower level portion of their property. It gets regular use by deer, bear, coyote, foxes, wild turkeys, cranes, skunks and even occasionally moose. Travelling back and forth from areas west of Brechin using the currently existing woodland and wetland for cover, the animals then travel on towards Lake Dalrymple, possibly onwards still towards the Black River Watershed and eventually the Haliburton and Kawartha Lakes areas.

Though none of this wildlife movement is supported by documented studies, Michael said it is uncanny how often wildlife can be seen on their property on a daily basis.

“It is our belief,” Michael said “Supported by almost 30 years of living on the property, that this corridor supports the movement of animals across this portion of the farm landscape.”

In addition to watching the wildlife, Michael and Anna, having purchased the almost 100-acre property in 1991, grow a wide variety of rotational crops including hay, field corn, sweet corn and soya beans. They also raise freezer beef.

The primary reason Michael and Anna wanted to protect their farm with the Ontario Farmland Trust was to protect the land against nearby aggregate mining. It is their belief that the land should remain forever protected.



# Farmland Policy

Your continued support allowed the Ontario Farmland Trust to remain a strong voice for farmland protection, advocating for consistent farmland protection measures in Provincial policies.

## JANUARY

### **Minister's Zoning Orders (MZOs) in the Planning Act**

OFT wrote to the Provincial government to ask that changes to the Planning Act proposed in Bill 197 be repealed. Bill 197 gave the Province enhanced authority to issue MZOs, and OFT believes that MZOs not be expanded from their traditional role of providing guidance to municipalities that lack comprehensive land use planning, as local governments already have sufficient land use planning guidance from the Province. OFT also suggested that measurable standards regarding the provincial significance of a project are introduced into the MZO approval process.

## MARCH

### **Long-term viability of agri-food sector needs to be protected**

A letter was sent from OFT to praise the proposed expansion of the Greenbelt, adding that it will complement the newly expanded emphasis on the Agricultural System and protect the long-term viability of the provincial agri-food sector. OFT believes that the expansion provides an opportunity for Ontario to become a leader in farmland conservation in Canada.

## APRIL

### **Broadband bill could negatively impact farmland**

OFT wrote to the Provincial government to advise that Schedule 3 of the proposed Bill 257, which enhanced the powers of the Province to issue MZOs in areas with comprehensive land use planning policy already in place, would not work to advance rural broadband services, and will negatively impact farmland. OFT suggested that Schedule 3 should be removed from the Bill.

### **Farmland requires strengthened support**

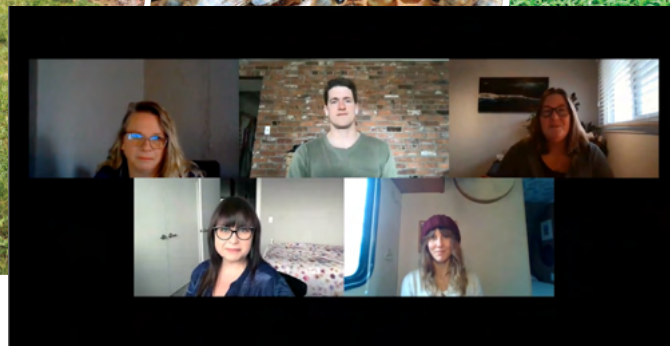
With the 10-Year Review of the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan leading to re-evaluation of the policy, OFT called for strengthened support for farmland. Strengthened support will help ensure that Ontario's farmland, a finite and non-renewable resource, will be available for future generations. Additionally, they will ensure that farmland is available to continue providing ecosystem services that can enhance the health of Lake Simcoe, like water filtration.

## DECEMBER

### **OFT response to Bradford Bypass**

Concerns over the possibility of an exemption from Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act for the Bradford Bypass could result in the loss of thousands of acres of prime agricultural land. While there is a growing need for transportation, OFT noted that it should not come at the expense of compromising the farmland that will nourish and sustain Ontarians for generations to come.





## 2022 Farmland Forum

This year marked Ontario Farmland Trust's 17th annual Farmland Forum! The event is a wonderful opportunity for planners, researchers, municipal staff, students, farmers, and conservationists to gather and discuss important issues in the agricultural sector. This year's theme was *The Future of Farmland Diversification* and explored how humans, plants and animals can work harmoniously to produce agricultural commodities, create ecosystem services, and mitigate climate change.

With over 200 online attendees, keynote speakers included David Phillips, Senior Climatologist at Environment and Climate Change Canada, Dr. Evan Fraser, Director of the Arrell Food Institute and Professor of Geography at the University of Guelph, and Philly Markowitz, Economic Development Officer of Grey County. Additionally, two panels were held on A Variety of Ecosystem Services across Unique Farmland Uses and Sustainable Innovations in the Agricultural Sector.

Throughout the day, presentations discussed the intersection between climate change and agriculture, highlighted challenges to maintain global food security and encompassed ways in which technology and strong community partnerships can work to achieve a more sustainable future.

In order to create a resilient agricultural system, we must work together to support local farmers and as opening keynote David Phillips said he believes everyone should "Be loyal to the soil." As we continue to lose farmland across the province, Ontario Farmland Trust works diligently to bring awareness to the importance of farmland protection and thanks to the support of our donors, the conservation of these lands is made possible.

# Thank You

## to our donors, monthly friends of farmland, members, and supporters

You are helping to save farmland in Ontario today, so that future generations can rely on it tomorrow.

### \$10,000+

David and Louise Bazett Jones  
Anna Bourgeois and Michael Douglas  
John and Rosemary Dunsmore  
Lloyd Monteith  
The Greenbelt Foundation  
The Nature Conservancy of Canada  
Echo Foundation  
The Consecon Foundation  
The McLean Foundation  
McLean Smits Family Foundation  
Blidner Family Foundation  
The Takla Foundation  
The Grand River Agricultural Society

### \$5,000 - \$9,999

Rodger and Nancy Cummins  
Don and Deb Hudson  
Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario  
RBC Foundation  
Uplands Charitable Foundation

### \$1,500 - \$4,999

Dave and Cindy Copeland  
Doug Culbert  
Bernard Pope  
William Ross  
Stuart and Jen Rutledge  
Ontario Federation of Agriculture  
Walter J. Blackburn Foundation

### \$500 - \$1,499

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Douglas Buck  
Sarah Elizabeth Crawford  
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Katherine Dean  
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Grey Bruce Christian Farmers Association  
University of Guelph, SEDRD

### \$200 - \$499

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Deborah Rogers  
Melissa Schneider  
Frank Shaw  
Chris Stone  
City of Kawartha Lakes  
Ellen Ruth May Reesor  
William Rosenfeld  
Margaret Walton  
National Farmers Union  
Southern Cliff Brands

Thank you to our donors who wish to remain anonymous.



## < \$200

Ken Alderson  
Richard Archbold  
Brian and Jane Buckles  
Sue Campbell  
Susan Chan  
Margaret Channon  
Matthew Colley  
Donna and Stan Colley  
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The Co-operators Insurance (Darren Scott)  
Town of Caledon  
Wilton Consulting Group  
4 Anonymous donors

## In Memory

Deidre Wright

## In Honour

Jim and Nancy Patridge  
Jim and Kim Drury  
Scott and Connie Brown  
Jay and Susan Reesor  
David and Katie Douglas





## Remembering Margaret Haley

Ontario Farmland Trust easement donor, Margaret Haley, passed away on March 8, 2021. Haley's farm, in Brant County, was the 11th farm to be protected by OFT through an easement.

Though Margaret was a city girl from Brantford, she left her city life and settled on a farm in Brant County after husband Jim proposed to her.

Margaret adapted to farm life quickly. She started a large garden. She cooked large meals and baked many pies at harvest time over the years. And, she started her own poultry business. She involved each of her kids in the business and they kept busy grading the eggs.



Daughter Jane, along with sister Ella, remembers this as a special time with their mother, "Almost all of us share the memory of special time together while grading and candling eggs, together in the dark. It was a time when we each had her all to ourselves. She would talk about her family history, the great depression, events going on in the world from the radio. We each adored this one on one time together. It meant a lot to us. And it meant a lot to her."

Margaret carved out special places on the farm for her family. They planted trees, built a pond, and created a natural haven at the back of the property. This area would be the site of many nature walks and picnics over the years. Spring and especially Mother's Day were a favourite time as the woodland wildflowers were all in bloom – Trilliums, Mayapple, Adder's Tongue.



And this is the place that Margaret wanted protected forever with an easement agreement. The section of farmland along the back of the property and the wonderful woodland paradise remain forever for future generations, and the species that make their home there, such as the Wood Thrush, Eastern Wood-pewee, Boblink, Eastern Meadowlark, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Snapping Turtle, will forever have a place to call their own.

Margaret was a generous person who loved to help and share what she had with others. This gift of preserving a piece of the land that she so loved was very fitting of who Margaret was and how she saw the world around her.

## Remembering Marian Hindmarsh



Ontario Farmland Trust easement donor Marian Hindmarsh passed away on May 1, 2022. Her farm, in Huron County, was the third farm to be protected by an OFT easement.

Born in Portsmouth, Ohio in 1919, it was Marian's pursuit of knowledge that eventually led her husband John, who she met while spending summers at Pointe au Baril on the shores of Georgian Bay. After getting married in 1941, the couple moved around Ontario, eventually landing in Goderich, on the shores of Lake Huron and deciding to permanently settle there in 1947, after the war. That farmhouse was the site of many family gatherings.

In 2009, Marian decided to preserve the family farm through the Ontario Farmland Trust, so that it is protected in perpetuity.

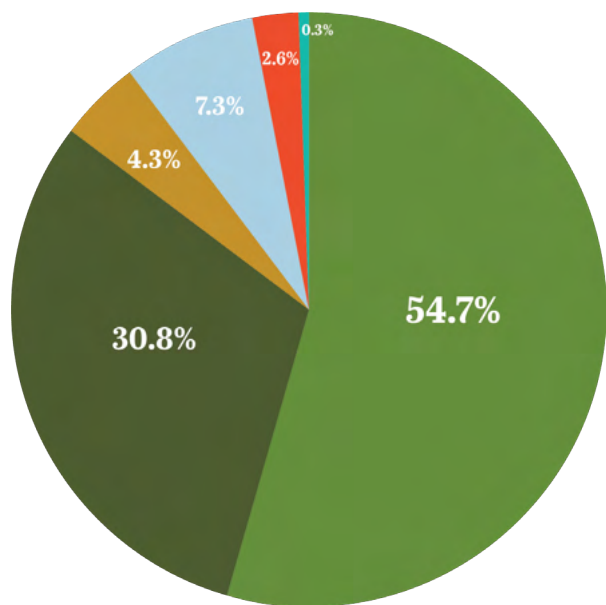
In addition to her farm interests, Marian was also well known for having a love of adventure, books, family and the natural world. She was also famous for her homemade pies in addition to being a charter member of the local IODE Canada.

Fiercely independent, Marian continued living on the farm after the death of John in 1995, and stayed there on her own until age 99. The last years of her life we spent at the Elliott Community in Guelph, where she received exceptional care.





# 2021 Financials Report



- Foundation
- Government
- Donations & Membership
- Donations In Kind
- Event
- Other

	Audited 2021	Audited 2020
Revenue	\$ 374,733	\$ 214,253
Expenses	\$ 286,522	\$ 198,361
Balance	\$ 82,211	\$ 15,892



# Meet the team

## Staff

Emma Jane Woods, Farmland Ecology Coordinator  
Hershil Sheth, Policy and Event Planning Coordinator  
Melissa Schneider, Communications and Development Manager

## Board of Directors

Bernard Pope, Chair	Collette Aeschlimann
Margaret Walton, Vice Chair	Matthew Colley
Peter Peeters, Vice Chair	Suzanne Lawrence
Megan Mills, Secretary	Spencer McDonald
Bethanee Jensen, Treasurer	



*OFT Board members, staff, supporters and friends gathered at the Hudson Farm in Prince Edward County in Fall 2021 to celebrate the Hudson's new easement.*





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*“As we have seen with the updated census statistics, losing 319 acres per day of viable farmland is not acceptable. We need to do better to protect and preserve this crucial, finite resource.”*

- Bernard Pope, Board Chair