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Media release

February 4, 2021

## **Town of Essex Seeking Feedback from Farmers, Food Producers, and Agricultural Businesses**

Virtual forum to feature presentation by agritourism expert Caroline Millar

**Essex** – If you're farmer, brewer, cheesemaker, or other type of food or beverage producer, the Town of Essex wants to hear from you as part of the development of a local agritourism strategy.

Local producers and agricultural business owners are invited to attend a **Virtual Industry Forum on Thursday, February 18 from 9:30am to 11:30am**, to learn about agritourism and provide their feedback on opportunities to grow and spotlight agritourism in the Town of Essex.

"The Town of Essex already has a rich agricultural history and a number of thriving agritourism businesses, from award-winning wineries to on-farm accommodations and experiences," said Nelson Silveira, Economic Development Officer. "This project will help the municipality plan to grow that sector of the economy and provide business owners the tools they need to expand their agritourism offerings."

The Town is working with the [Culinary Tourism Alliance](#), a not-for-profit organization dedicated to bridging the gap between farming, food and drink, and the tourism industry, to facilitate research and create the local agritourism strategy. An important part of this process is gaining a clear understanding of industry needs, including identifying current and prospective agritourism businesses.

**If you are a farmer or food or beverage producer currently engaged in agritourism, or considering it as an opportunity for your business, the Town wants to hear from you.** To RSVP for the virtual event, please [fill out the online form](#) or email [nsilveira@essex.ca](mailto:nsilveira@essex.ca) with the following information (full name, email, telephone number, business name and address, type of business, and whether the business currently offers agritourism experiences.)

Forum participants will also hear from guest speaker **Caroline Millar**, a world-renowned agritourism industry expert. Caroline and her relatives operate a 650-acre mixed farm and the 5-star Hideaways accommodations. Caroline is also passionate about developing farm tourism and leisure as a means of driving additional income for farmers, engaging with the public, and growing the rural economy.

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