



Essex County Federation of Agriculture

P.O. Box 36 • Essex, Ontario N8M 2Y1

March 17, 2021

To: Mayor, Councillors, CAO, Clerk, Drainage Department, Planning Department, Infrastructure Department and Roads Department

On behalf of the Essex County Federation of Agriculture (ECFA) I would like to introduce myself and our organization.

The Essex County Federation of Agriculture is a local voice for more than 1350 farm members: a significant source of food, fiber and fuel and employment for the region. Local Federations of Agriculture are the grassroots component of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) which represents 38,000 of Ontario's farms. Our membership encompasses all of agriculture from fruits and vegetables to honey, from dairy and beef to pork and poultry, from field crops like soybeans and corn to agritourism operations. The local Federation is comprised of farm leaders who meet monthly to discuss issues of concern to farm businesses and have many ways to communicate with and contact local farmers. We work towards a regulatory environment in which farms can thrive. The ECFA Board of Directors has representation from across the county.

In the past, the Essex County Federation of Agriculture has attempted to keep the dialogue open by arranging meetings for councillors and administration. The Ag Discovery tours gave our farmers the opportunity to showcase their success and show the need for improvements. These visits provided the opening for good discussions. The ECFA also organizes the W.E. Heart Local/BUY LOCAL map project with Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island. This project connects farmers with consumers. It promotes trust between the two groups and in the end, increases the local economy.

The ECFA has always worked towards a respectful relationship with municipal government. These relationships are vital for our industry to survive and succeed. Decisions made at local council meetings impact local farmers directly. We believe that our experience with agricultural/rural issues would be an important addition to any discussions regarding issues. We can provide you with information and resources to help make decisions that will be beneficial to all parties.

We thank you for the instances that you have included agricultural voices in developing existing programs, planning and consultation. We are interested in ensuring that agriculture is incorporated in other aspects of the municipality's important work, and to that end would appreciate the opportunity to introduce some key Federation contacts to you and your team.



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We look forward to further discussion which can be arranged via email, phone or virtual meetings at this time.

Sincerely,
Leo Guilbeault, President
Essex County Federation of Agriculture