

10TH ANNUAL



EFAO CONFERENCE WATERSHEDS NOVEMBER 29 + 30, 2023 L O N D O N CONFERENCE.EFAO.CA

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GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE



FUNDERS



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WELCOME TO THE 10TH ANNUAL EFAO CONFERENCE

We are so pleased to welcome you to the first fully in-person EFAO conference since 2019!

This is the 10th Annual EFAO Conference, which feels like an important milestone. The first EFAO Conference was held in Orillia at Geneva Park, which was then a YMCA facility. It was a fantastic first conference in a beautiful outdoor setting, on EFAO's 35th Anniversary. Some of you may remember the 35 cakes that were baked by members and assembled into one giant and delicious conference cake!

We have since held the conference in eight different locations, in an effort to move it around the province while being limited by the availability of venues that can accommodate our conference goals: lots of simultaneous workshops, a large banquet hall for shared meals, chefs who will work with farm produce, and a space big enough for a bustling Trade Show. In addition to Orillia (2014), the conference has also taken place in London (2015, 2018), Kingston (2016), the Blue Mountains (2017), and Belleville (2019), with regional gatherings last year in Sudbury, Hamilton and Batawa. An online conference was held in 2020, 2021 and 2022.

Although much has changed since 2014, the initial vision and motivation for EFAO's Conference remains the same: to provide a fantastic annual gathering that supports attendees in building resilient ecological farms and growing a strong knowledge-sharing community. EFAO is especially pleased to present this conference under the theme of Watersheds. For the ecological farming movement, the last 10 years have brought new efforts and focus from farmers to protect the fields, forests, and bodies of water that sustain us all. At the same time, much more work needs to be done to grow agriculture toward a vision where the Earth's precious watersheds are valued and honoured in the way we produce our food.

We hope that this year's conference will provide you with new ideas and knowledge, strengthened relationships, and renewed inspiration for your farms, watersheds and communities, for the coming year.

A big thank you to all the presenters, exhibitors, sponsors, partners and participants who have helped make this conference possible!

- The EFAO Conference Organizing Team

Thank you to EFAO members and supporters for another great year!

Curious about your membership status or renewal date? Thinking about becoming an EFAO member? You can check your account online at efao.ca/membership or ask at the conference registration desk.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE - AT A GLANCE

Wednesday, November 29		
7:30 - 8:30 AM	BALMORAL BALLROOM - Breakfast for overnight guests	
8:45 - 9:00 AM	BRISTOL BALLROOM - Welcome to EFAO's 10 Annual Conference	
9:00 - 10:00 AM	BRISTOL BALLROOM - Keynote - Agroforestry Across Watersheds: Regeneration from the Wyoming Valley to the Mississippi River Basin	
10:00 - 10:30 AM	TRADE SHOW HALL - Break: Refreshments, Trade Show, and Seed Swap	
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM	MANCHESTER - Engaging Youth in Revitalizing Indigenous Food Systems	
	LONDON A - The Grass is Greener: Getting Creating with Accessing Grazing Land	
	LONDON B - Facilitating Belonging on Teams	
	BALMORAL A - No-Till Intensive Vegetable Culture (Part 1)	
	BALMORAL B - Mechanized Weed Management	
	LYNDEN - Agroforestry Campfire with the Ontario Woodlot Association	
12:00 - 1:30 PM	BRISTOL BALLROOM - Locally Sourced Lunch	TRADE SHOW HALL - Trade Show and Seed Swap
12:15 - 1:15 PM	BRISTOL BALLROOM - Meet-Up for the Farmers Network for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour	LONDON B - Meet-Up for Queer Farmers and Land Stewards
1:30 - 3:00 PM	MANCHESTER - Metrics for Success: Using Your Farm Records for Decision Making	
	LONDON A - Wetlands on Farms: Conservation and Management	
	LONDON B - Courageous Conflict on the Farm	
	BALMORAL A - No-Till Intensive Vegetable Culture (Part 2)	
	BALMORAL B - Tools for Managing Pasture Using Nature's Model for Ecological Sustainability	
	LYNDEN - Growing Small Grains in Ontario: A Speaker Panel (Part 1)	
3:00 - 3:30 PM	TRADE SHOW HALL - Break: Refreshments, Trade Show, and Seed Swap	
3:30 - 5:00 PM	MANCHESTER - So You Want to be a Seed Farmer? How to Incorporate Seed Work into Your Farm System	
	LONDON A - Beyond Deworming: Practical Strategies to Reduce and Manage Parasites in Sheep	
	LONDON B - Alternative Land Access Conversation: Farming On Public Lands, A Speaker Panel	
	BALMORAL A - Nitrogen Calculations for Cover Crops	
	BALMORAL B - Innovations in Rainwater Catchment Systems	
	LYNDEN - Growing Small Grains in Ontario: A Speaker Panel (Part 2)	
5:00 - 6:30 PM	BRISTOL BALLROOM & TRADE SHOW HALL - Variety Tasting Showcase & Trade Show Reception	
5:30 - 6:30 PM	MANCHESTER - Meet-up for Indigenous Farmers & Land Stewards	
6:00 - 8:00 PM	TRADE SHOW HALL - Seed Swap	
6:30 - 8:00 PM	BRISTOL BALLROOM - Banquet Dinner & 10 Year Celebration of Seed Work Across Canada	
8:30 - 9:30 PM	BRISTOL BALLROOM - Live Music with the Kumbao Latin Band	

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE - AT A GLANCE

Thursday, November 30		
6:45 - 7:30 AM	LONDON B - Yoga: Sustain Your Farming, Powered by Organic Movements and Grounding Stretches	
7:30 - 8:30 AM	BALMORAL BALLROOM - Breakfast for overnight guests	
8:45 - 9:00 AM	BRISTOL BALLROOM - Opening the Day with the Strong Water Singers	
9:00 - 10:00 AM	BRISTOL BALLROOM - Keynote - Homelands & Homewaters: Mnoomin (Wild Rice) Resurgence and Contaminants Testing	
10:00 - 10:30 AM	TRADE SHOW HALL - Break: Refreshments, Trade Show, and Seed Swap	
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM	MANCHESTER - Getting Started in the Artisanal Chicken Program	
	LONDON A - Year End Review	
	LONDON B - A Year in the Life: Flower Farming	
	BALMORAL A - No-Till Potatoes: A Farmer-Researcher Panel	
	BALMORAL B - Gamechangers	
	LYNDEN - CSA Support Meet-Up: Opportunities for Outreach and Member Retention	
12:00 - 1:30 PM	BRISTOL BALLROOM - Locally-Sourced Lunch	TRADE SHOW HALL - Trade Show & Seed Swap
12:15 - 1:15 PM	MANCHESTER - Resilient Seed Systems Meet-Up: A Vegetable Farmer and Seed Grower Consultation	
1:30 - 3:00 PM	MANCHESTER - Seed Saving is for Everyone: Harvesting and Processing Seed From Wild & Cultivated Crops	
	LONDON A - Kids on the Farm: Getting Creative with Childcare!	
	LONDON B - It All Starts with Water: Permaculture and the Order of Design	
	BALMORAL A - Balancing Nutrients in Your Soil	
	BALMORAL B - Ag Policy Roundtable: What's Happening and How to Get Involved	
	LYNDEN - Chickens in the Garden: Integrating Poultry and Vegetable Operations	
3:00 - 3:30 PM	TRADE SHOW HALL - Break: Refreshments, Trade Show, and Seed Swap	
3:30 - 5:00 PM	MANCHESTER - Pig-Proof Infrastructure for Pastured Pork Production	
	LONDON A - Scaling Up Your Vegetable Production: Economics, Equipment, and More	
	LONDON B - Growing Hazelnuts and Other Edible Tree Crops in Ontario	
	BALMORAL A - Soil Health Panel: Soil Health Indicators for Farmers and the Future of Soil Health in Ontario	
	BALMORAL B - Irrigation: Things I Wish I Knew When I Started, A Speaker Panel	
5:00 PM	Departure	

SESSION TOPICS



Stewardship



Field Crops



Livestock



Horticulture



Soil



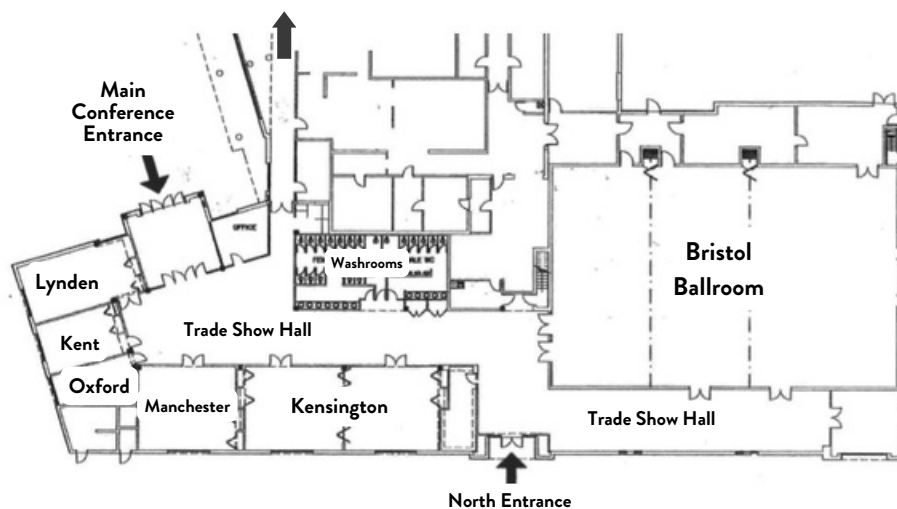
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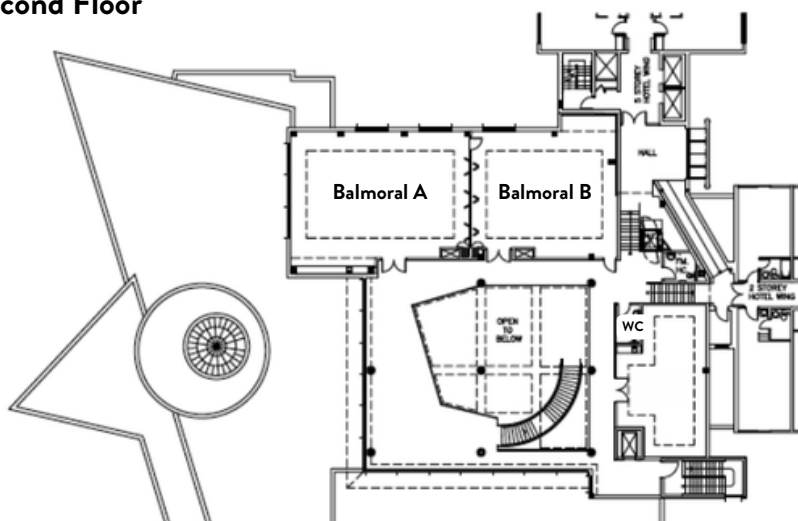
Community
& Business

Ground Floor

To London Room A & B, stairs to Balmoral A & B, Derby Room, hotel lobby, main entrance + all-gender (main floor) and single stall (second floor) washrooms



Second Floor



WEDNESDAY KEYNOTE

Wednesday, November 29

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Agroforestry Across Watersheds:

Regeneration From the Wyoming Valley to the Mississippi River Basin

Bristol Ballroom



Omar and Erik will take us on a journey from the idyllic Wyoming Valley of Wisconsin to the expansive Mississippi River Basin as they illuminate the potential of interconnected farming communities. This presentation will weave together stories of individual farmers to sketch out a vibrant and integrated tapestry of perennialization—a powerful testament to what can be achieved when folks reconnect with the land and each other.

Omar de Kok-Mercado, a creative soul born amidst the vibrant culture and lush landscapes of Puerto Rico, has always had a deep connection with the earth. His rich ancestry links back to generations of farmers, seeding in him a passion that has traveled across continents and decades. Omar's work has focused on supporting regenerative farmers in incorporating perennials into their farming systems.

Erik Hagan sets the perennial vision for Savanna Institute's campus in Spring Green, WI. Since 2005, Erik has devoted himself to studying, teaching, and managing agroecological systems across the country. He has a Master's in Ecology, and developed and managed a diversified agroforestry farm while co-coordinating outreach and training programs on agroforestry opportunities specific to the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic region.

SEED SWAP

Trade Show Hall



Seed sharing and trading are a vital part of a diverse and adaptive regional seed system. Everyone is invited to participate in this age-old practice at the EFAO Conference. Bring seeds you saved yourself, or seeds you acquired elsewhere and would like to trade or share! The emphasis is on trading, but if you don't have seeds to share, it's okay to take some to try, with the intention of giving back in future. Please label any seeds you bring with your name and as much info about the seed as you are able to share! Small envelopes are provided.

Wednesday:

10:00 - 10:30 AM, 12:00 - 1:30 PM, 3:00 - 3:30 PM, 6:00 - 8:00 PM

Thursday:

10:00 - 10:30 AM, 12:00 - 1:30 PM, 3:00 - 3:30 PM

Wednesday, November 29

10:30 AM - 12:00 pm

WORKSHOPS

The Grass is Greener: Getting Creative with Accessing Grazing Land

London A



Growing and feeding your herd of cattle can require a lot of pasture, and land access can be a big barrier for folks getting into livestock or who want to expand their livestock operations. As is so often the case, your local community can help! Connecting with your neighbours can help you find creative solutions to this challenge. Come to this session to hear from speakers who are involved in grazing livestock on others' land through agreements with neighbours and their wider farming communities. This session will discuss the challenges, opportunities, and lessons learned about access to grazing land, from experienced graziers in Ontario.

Cory Van Groningen and his wife, Heidi, live and work on the VG Haldimand farm. They are proud to be rubber boot-wearing Ontario farmers. In addition to running the farm with his wife, Cory is also referred to as VG's in-house politician. He is often meeting with officials on behalf of the beef industry as well as attending meetings and conferences to promote the mission and mandate of VG Meats.

Engaging Youth in Revitalizing Indigenous Food Systems

Manchester

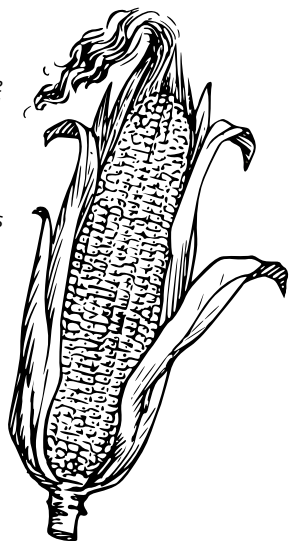


One of the fundamental impacts that colonization has had on Indigenous communities and the land is to disrupt the practices of harvesting, cultivating, and interacting with food. But a new generation of Indigenous youth is working to revitalize traditional food systems and foodways, in tandem with language and lands-based cultural renewal, guided by the principles of balance and reciprocity. Join this inspiring panel of speakers to hear about the initiatives they are each involved in to engage the next generation in growing food, strengthening community, and reconnecting with the land.

Tiffany Traverse (moderator) grew up on her Great Grandparents' homestead, on her peoples' traditional Secwépemc territory in the Columbia Valley. Now living in northeastern BC, she continues to foster the belief that if you care for the land, it will give back to you. She has participated in various seed variety trials, and has received mentorship from Rowen White and Métis Seedkeeper Caroline Chartrand.

John Bonaparte is a Mohawk of Akwesasne and has been farming his whole life. For the last seven years, John has been at Bare Bones Farm in Bombay, NY, an educational eco-farm where he grows both vegetables and the next generation of Mohawk Farmers. He helped found the Akwesasne Farmers Market in 2019, and sits on the leadership council of the Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance (NAFSA).

Chloe Maracle is Kayen'keha:ka (Mohawk), Turtle Clan born and raised in Kenhte:ke (Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory). She has been in the role of garden intern with the Kenhte:ke Seed Sanctuary and Learning Center for over two years, where she has been learning the care and cultivation of a seed collection of close to 300 varieties.



To see the bio for **Annette Peltier Flamand**, refer to page 16

Facilitating Belonging on Teams

London B



This session will focus on nurturing belonging through positionality on the land. Hannah and Chrystal will discuss how to create space for those who want to learn and belong on a farm, and will delve into the history of the land, what has been lost and what is being reclaimed, exploring the relationship between food, plants, and the lost knowledge surrounding them. They will encourage participants to dig deep into their understanding of the land and acknowledge where they have been to know where they are going and who they are. All are welcome. This session will lead naturally into the afternoon session, "Courageous Conflict on The Farm". You do not need to attend one to attend the other.

Chrystal Toop~Story Healing Thunderbird, is an Anishinaabekwe matriarch and member of Pikwakanagan (Sarazin family) who is a Registered Social Services Worker, Storyteller and plantkin helper with experience in grassroots spaces in connection to reproductive, restorative, and healing justice.

Hannah Atkinson Renglich works with individuals and groups to foster cultures of belonging and accountability. Hannah supports folks grappling with power and privilege to achieve their goals for multi-level transformation. Hannah's fields of practice span co-operative development, cross-cultural dialogue, local food systems, community economies, and popular education.

Agroforestry Campfire with the Ontario Woodlot Association Lynden



This session will begin by offering a brief and incomplete introduction to agroforestry in Ontario, with insights into how the presenters' work intersects. Then attendees will participate in smaller "campfire groups" to weave the social yarn and cultivate a shared understanding of agroforestry challenges and opportunities with a focus on our local watersheds. In closing, the groups will share common challenges, useful resources, and future visions. This morning's keynote speakers, Omar de Kok-Mercado and Erik Hagan, will also join in facilitating this session.



Erica Dixon is a Forest Technician and Arborist who has extensive experience in agroforestry in the global and provincial context. Erica joined the Ontario Woodlot Association (OWA) in 2020 and led their application to the Agricultural Climate Solutions - Living Labs Program to launch an agroforestry network and programming for Ontario. She is now growing a new tree service and agroforestry business called Treenut Canada.



Elliott Groen is the Sustainable Forestry Coordinator in a shared position between the Ontario Woodlot Association and the Kawartha Land Trust. He is tasked with finding solutions for some of the challenging issues in forestry including degrading plantations as well as exploring the interface between forestry and agriculture. He also enjoys being out on the water, cycling on the land and playing music around the fire.



Rachel Barrington is the Partners in Conservation Coordinator at Kawartha Land Trust. For the last decade, Rachel has worked for several environmental organizations including conservation authorities, environmental consulting firms and Ontario Parks. She is invested in protecting species at risk and balancing land use to support human needs while preserving ecological integrity.

To see the bios for **Erik Hagan** and **Omar de Kok-Mercado**, refer to page 5

Mechanized Weed Management Balmoral B



This session will start by looking at strategies for crop layout to help make the best use of mechanical weed control solutions. Ryan will talk about row and bed spacings and how growers can set up their plantings to succeed with weed control. From there, he will look at the wide array of weed control tools available and how they can fit into individual farms' systems. Although this session will focus on mechanization for mid-sized horticulture, attendees from other disciplines and farm scales will also come away with tools that can help them with their own operations!

Ryan Thiessen provides weed control equipment for vegetable operations, nurseries, vineyards, orchards, hop yards and hemp. Working out of his barn in St. Catharines, he fabricated the Adaptive Cultivation System (ACS) for vineyards as well as the Undercutter (35", 42", 48" and 60" sizes), as well as several walk behind systems to help with small farm cultivation needs.

WORKSHOPS

Wednesday, November 29

10:30 AM - 12:00 pm

No-Till Intensive Vegetable Culture (Part 1)

Balmoral A



Join celebrated author Bryan O'Hara for two sessions that will help you reduce or eliminate tillage! These workshops will present the details for growing large volumes of high-quality crops out of any given area without the use of tillage. The methods utilized in this system have demonstrated tremendous levels of weed control and irrigation reduction, as well as excellent soil improvement. Techniques include solarization, composted mulches, multi-cropping, cover-cropping, broadcast seeding, and more.

***Bryan O'Hara** has been growing vegetables on his farm in Connecticut for over 30 years. He speaks throughout the Northeast on vegetable production techniques and is known for providing "mountains of details in a concise, practical, and cohesive manner." His farm produces high-quality, nutrient-dense food using no pesticides, herbicides, or fungicides, working with nature as much as possible.*

Wednesday, November 29

FARMER MEET-UPS

12:15 PM - 1:15 pm

Meet-Up for Queer Farmers & Land Stewards London B

Welcome all 2SLGBTQIA+ farmers, farm-workers, ag enthusiasts and anyone who lives and/or works at the intersection of queerness, food and farming! Grab your lunch and come meet other queer and trans folks, chat about farming, and have fun. This is a casual, unstructured time to make connections with other farmers. An optional, affirmation-writing activity will be available to help lift the spirits of next-season you! For anyone who identifies as part of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.

Meet-Up for the Farmers Network for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour Bristol Ballroom



Let's catch up after a busy season! A time to connect, relax, share stories, and laugh with new and old friends! For current / former / aspiring farmers, food growers or producers and land stewards. Look for our table with signage. Folks interested in also attending the **Meet-Up for Queer Farmers & Land Stewards** are very welcome to drop in both spaces at any point over the lunch hour

WORKSHOPS

Wednesday, November 29

1:30 PM - 3:00 PM

Metrics for Success: Using Your Farm Records for Decision Making

Manchester



How do you define "success" for your farm business and for yourself as a farmer? What metrics do you track to determine your farm's economic viability? At this session, hear farmers speak in detail about how they define "success" for their farms and what they measure and track to inform sound decision-making. You can expect to walk away with knowledge of how to gauge success for yourself, as well as an understanding of the role of record keeping for finances and decision making. The speakers will be focusing on their experience in market gardening, but all are welcome!

***Angie Koch (moderator)** has been operating Fertile Ground Farm in Waterloo for over 15 years. Her passion for vegetable production is rivaled by her passion for spreadsheets and profitability analyses - a point of both pride and discomfort. Angie is thrilled to guide her conference session's conversation in both thoughtful and geeky directions.*

***Ryan Spence** operates Field Good Farms/La ferme j'me champs bien - a small-scale, organic vegetable farm in Northeastern Ontario founded in 2011. Currently Field Good Farms operates a 40 member winter CSA program, a 60 member spring CSA program, a 90 member summer CSA program, a 70 member fall CSA program and sells to Click Fork, an online farmers market they helped to create in 2018.*

***Stuart Oke** is the co-owner of Rooted Oak Farm, a certified organic CSA and market farm in North Augusta, Ontario. Together with his partner Nikki they market produce and flowers in the Kingston and Capital Regions. He is also a former Youth President of the National Farmers Union, has worked in various capacities with Farmers for Climate Solutions, and is the former Vice President of Canadian Organic Growers.*

Growing Small Grains in Ontario: A Speaker Panel (Part 1)

Lynden



Part 1 of this 2-part speaker panel focuses on practicalities. You'll hear from farmers that have been learning in the literal field, growing small grains. Here we discuss the necessities of the process: where to get seed, what equipment is necessary for production, who to ask for advice, and how to market grain. From planning to selling, we'll work our way through the whole process, tackling some broader questions about building community in the small grains world and what the future has in store for grain growers along the way. Bring your questions!

Jackie Clark (moderator) manages EFAO's Small Grains Program, helping to encourage farmers to realize the benefits of incorporating small grains in field crop rotations. She is passionate about innovation and collaborative research across the agri-food industry, and connecting farmers with the resources they need to improve the sustainability of their operations.

Norm Lamothe is a 6th generation farmer from Cavan, in Peterborough County. He manages a diverse 500-acre farm which includes a four-crop rotation of corn, soybeans, wheat and oats. Norm combines his life-long interest in soil health and biodiversity with extensive soil sampling data, imagery and variable rate technologies to demonstrate the economic benefits of being ecologically sustainable in a modern cropping system.

Jennifer Doelman farms in the Upper Ottawa Valley with her husband, Mike, & their children, AJ & Becky. Farming heavy silty clay in a rain shadow, they learned early on in their farming career that good soil health was paramount to their farm's success. Early adopters of no-till and reduced tillage practices, they have recently added cover crops and honeybees to complement their diverse rotation.

Andrew St Jean's passion for farming began early in life and was cemented while working for an organic farmer while attending the University of Guelph for Ag Business. After graduation he began his career as a commodity trader, which led him to his current position at Beechwood Agri Services where he manages their organic grain business. Andrew began his own farming career in 2014, growing a variety of field crops on approximately 350 acres.

Tools for Managing Pasture Using Nature's Model for Ecological Sustainability

Balmoral B



E. Ann Clark suggests managing pasture in such a way as to offer "cheap feed", using diverse plantings of perennials that do not require mechanized maintenance. Sward genetics, fertility, and defoliation will all be discussed in this practical session for graziers. This talk will also explore why making a living in this work is so challenging and how pasture can be a template for a fairer return to farmers while still doing right by Nature. Ann will present a concept from New Zealand – making money by not spending money – by invoking more thought-intensive and less resource-intensive designs, and will talk about how post-oil farming motivates her.

This event is an OSCIA-recognized Knowledge Sharing Event (KSE) for farmers with On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF) projects in the rotational grazing category. This event is also offered in partnership with Farmers for Climate Solutions.

E. Ann Clark joined the farming community in 2010, after a 30+ year career as a professor in Plant Agriculture. Her research and teaching program on grazing and organic farming systems now supports custom grazing of beef cow/calf and pastured poultry on her 100-acre farm near Warkworth, in Northumberland County.

Courageous Conflict on the Farm

London B



Have you struggled with staff turnover? Is it uncomfortable to offer feedback at work? Do you find sometimes tension seems difficult to resolve? This session offers a supportive space for helping farm teams learn how to move through conflict. Hannah and Chrystal will help participants explore key conflicts that arise on farms, and invite them to bring their own examples so that we can learn from one another. Advocacy is an essential part of this workshop, and we will discuss ways to create, seek, and define space for everyone who is part of the farm. All are welcome. This session will build on the "Facilitating Belonging on Teams" session from this morning. You do not need to attend one session to attend the other.

To see the bios for **Chrystal Toop** and **Hannah Atkinson Renglich**, refer to page 6

No-Till Intensive Vegetable Culture (Part 2)

Balmoral A



Join celebrated author Bryan O'Hara for a pair of sessions that will help you reduce or eliminate tillage! This workshop (part 2 of 2) will present the details for growing large volumes of high-quality crops out of any given area without the use of tillage. The methods utilized in this system have demonstrated tremendous levels of weed control and irrigation reduction, as well as excellent soil improvement. Techniques include solarization, composted mulches, multi-cropping, cover-cropping, broadcast seeding, and so much more.

To see the bio for **Bryan O'Hara**, refer to page 8

Wetlands on Farms: Conservation and Management

London A



What makes wetlands so important on a farm, anyway? In short, wetlands are the lifeblood of any ecosystem – including farms. Encouraging wetland ecosystems to flourish can reap benefits for all those who are supported by the land. In this session, you will hear from folks involved with managing wetlands on the land they steward, as well as from people working at organizations like ALUS Middlesex and Ducks Unlimited to support farmers, stewards, and landowners to create and support wetlands on farms. A diversity of types of wetlands and approaches to management will be represented, with lots of photos!

Drake Larsen (moderator) manages Three Ridges Ecological Farm near Sparta, Ontario. His background in wetlands and waterfowl conservation is what brought him to his interest in regenerative agriculture. His farming work is founded in design paradigms intended to slow, sink and store every drop of water for the farm.

Jennifer Lavigne is an experienced Conservation Specialist who has worked with Ducks Unlimited Canada for over 16 years. Jenn takes pride in working with farmers across Central Ontario to deliver wetland projects as on-farm solutions that benefit farmers, the environment, wildlife and waterfowl.

Chris Crump established The Crump Family Farm in 1990 with his wife, Vivian. What began with a pick-your-own strawberry patch eventually developed into a family-run farm including livestock, honey, grains and more. Chris is passionate about environmental stewardship, employing various measures to slow down water and reduce erosion on the property.

Peter Moddle is an environmental professional with a focus on building greener and more resilient landscapes. Peter comes from a non-profit background, working heavily in the Middlesex region through the ALUS program to create wetlands with farmers on marginal farmland. He is currently with Forests Ontario/ Forests Recovery Canada.

So You Want to be a Seed Farmer?

How to Incorporate Seed Work into Your Farm System

Manchester



Come hear from experienced seed producer, Dan Brisebois, about practical and straightforward ways growers can incorporate seed work into commercial farming systems. What are the top accessible seed production projects that have value to market gardeners? What are the top commercial opportunities? What's it like to work with seed and with seed companies? How does one go about fitting seed production into the farm work balance? What traits do farmers want to select for, and what are seed companies looking for? Dan will address these questions, as well as those of the audience, at this insightful session.

Dan Brisebois wants market growers to grow some of their own seed, which is why he hosts the *Seed Growers Podcast* and blogs about seed. Dan is a seed farmer at *Tourne-Sol* co-operative farm in Les Cèdres, Quebec, where they also grow vegetables for 500 weekly veggie baskets. He also runs the *Farmer Spreadsheet Academy* to help farmers learn to be better farm managers.

Growing Small Grains in Ontario: A Speaker Panel (Part 2)

Lynden



Part 2 of this 2-part speaker panel focuses on an agronomy deep dive. We'll get into the nitty gritty agronomic decisions that go into growing high-quality grains using ecological methods: tillage, timing, fertility, cover crops, crop protection and all the tools an ecological farmer can use to get the most out of their small grains crops. We'll also discuss mentorship in the grain growing community: who can we learn from, and how?

This event is an OSCIA-recognized Knowledge Sharing Event (KSE) for farmers with On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF) projects in the cover crops category. This event is also offered in partnership with Farmers for Climate Solutions.

Quentin Martin co-owns *Wintermar Farms*, a seed production farming operation. The operations include seed cleaning, packaging and marketing of *Cribit Seeds* brand products and services for *SeCan* and *Dekalb* brand seeds. Quentin is also involved in running a food grade cereal conditioning facility for roasting and flaking whole grains distributed into the beverage (mostly beer) and baking industries.

To see the bios for **Jackie Clark**, **Norm Lamothe**, **Jennifer Doelman**, and **Andrew St Jean** refer to page 9

Beyond Deworming:

Practical Strategies to Reduce and Manage Parasites in Sheep

London A



Struggling with internal parasites? You are not alone! Internal parasites are one the biggest challenges when we keep sheep or goats on pasture in Ontario. In this session Dr. Talia Fletcher will review the life cycle of the main parasites and how that influences your pasture and management plans. She will also review some testing strategies and look to future tests on the horizon. Attendees can expect to also learn about genetic selection, conventional dewormers and deworming alternatives, pasture management, multi species grazing, and pasture plants. The goal of this session is to help you think of strategies that can help on your personal farm and what changes can have the biggest impact.

Dr. Talia Fletcher is a mixed animal veterinarian working in Grey and Bruce County who has a special interest in regenerative agriculture, small ruminants and pasture management. At *Markdale Veterinary Services*, Talia works with a variety of animals and enjoys developing flock and herd management plans. Talia and her husband *Simon* practice intensive grazing with their sheep as they revitalize their no-longer-abandoned farm.

Nitrogen Calculations for Cover Crops

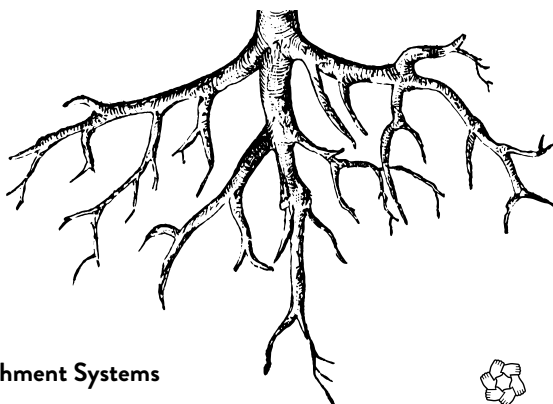
Balmoral A



Jesse and his partner Meghan recently conducted a farmer-led research trial with EFAO to better understand how cover cropping was impacting their soil health. They investigated tools available to farmers for predicting the Plant Available Nitrogen (PAN) contribution of organic amendments and cover crops in agroecosystems. In this session Jesse will describe what he learned from his research, how to do biomass sampling in the field, and how to make sense of lab results using a free online calculator. He will work through an example of predicting PAN, and highlight the potential to reduce reliance on lab testing using an on-farm database.

This event is an OSCIA-recognized Knowledge Sharing Event (KSE) for farmers with On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF) projects in the cover crops category. This event is also offered in partnership with Farmers for Climate Solutions.

Jesse Way co-owns Milky Way Farm with his partner Meghan Brandenburg. Milky Way Farm is a mixed vegetable, four season, ecologically focused family farm, growing on 1.5 acres just south of Woodstock, Ontario. With a regenerative agriculture approach, Jesse and Meghan strive to improve soil health and produce fresh nutrient-rich vegetables for their local community.



Innovations in Rainwater Catchment Systems

Balmoral B



Understanding how to work with the land and weather in a way that ensures water resources are not wasted is an ongoing process that professionals like Garrett Tribble and Michael Albanese invest in constantly. In particular, they focus on how to design landscapes with rain as a priority. Learn about rain gardens, swales, infiltration mechanisms, catchment systems, and the thinking behind design, placement, and construction. Attendees will hear about rainwater harvesting project planning (calculations, system components) including tile drainage.



Garrett Tribble is the owner & operator of WaterFarmers Urban Agriculture, a design-build firm specializing in functional landscaping and agricultural infrastructure. Based in Guelph and founded in 2017, WaterFarmers supports homeowners with tile drainage, rainwater harvesting, irrigation, rain gardens, off-grid irrigation, and more.

Michael Albanese is a landscape consultant, designer, contractor, writer, and public speaker with Avesi Stormwater & Landscape Solutions. He helps people incorporate rainwater into their landscapes through rainwater harvesting earthworks and ecological planting design. He also wrote a book called 'The Modern Rain Garden: Scape Shape & Plant'.

WORKSHOPS

Wednesday, November 29

3:30 PM - 5:00 pm

Alternative Land Access Conversation: Farming On Public Lands. A Speaker Panel London B



This farmer panel will address your questions about leasing public lands for farm operations, including: the process of applying and being approved, why to choose public long-term lease over land ownership, how to build equity on land you lease, how the proximity of the land to urban areas factors into accessibility, the size of land and whether it is sensible for farming, and more.

Rav Singh (moderator) is a young farmer in the Region of Peel. She operates Shade of Miti, specializing in South Asian vegetables such as okra and bitter melon. Rav has a background in environmental science and environmental education, which she brings into her farming practice. She co-founded the Peel Youth Food Circle and sits on the National Farmers Union - Ontario board as the Youth Advisor.

Fianna Dirks has been working as a farmer for the last 13 years focusing on organic growing, on-farm compost production, and beneficial insect habitat creation. When not sharing their contagious enthusiasm for the micro universes of soil microbes and insects, they are usually reading *Sci-Fi*, elbow-deep in a sourdough starter, or on the hunt for a sequin outfit.

Ekow Stone has been working as a farmer and educator for the last four years focusing on growing culturally significant crops, cut flower production, and seed saving. He's also an artist working in the mediums of ink + pyrography, and has exhibited in a number of galleries across Southern Ontario.

Genevieve Marquis is the Agricultural Liaison and Property Manager with the National Capital Commission in Ottawa ON. She manages the leases held by 60+ farm tenants who rent farms of all types and sizes in the Greenbelt, a swath of protected land that surrounds the core of Ottawa. Genevieve spent a total of 14 years managing farms before joining the NCC.

Chadwick Lewis is a Saint Lucian citizen who migrated to Canada many years ago. After years of study, apprenticeship, and working in greenhouse management, he founded Green's Creek Organic Nursery and Urban Fresh Produce. He manages a greenhouse and farm, offers landscape design and training services, teaches at Algonquin College and is a Land Access Field Coordinator with NFU-O

Karen Hutchinson is passionate about working on food system innovation and transition to sustainability. Over the past 20 years, her work has focused on local food systems, farm to school, farmers' markets, food and agriculture standards, society/policy transitions and community farming. She is a founder and current President of the Albion Hills Community Farm in Caledon.

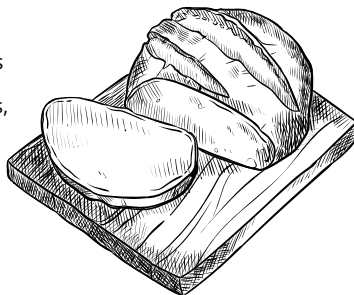
VARIETY TASTING SHOWCASE

Wednesday, November 29

5:00 PM - 6:00 pm

Trade Show Hall

Come to the Variety Showcase to sample the flavours of regionally-adapted varieties of vegetables and grains grown at EFAO's Seed Demonstration Gardens, which are coordinated in partnership with the Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security! Enjoy some bread baked using farmer-bred grains, taste different vegetable varieties, and test some tasty toppings. Weigh in on your favourite varieties, chat with fellow seed nerds, and walk away full of snacks and ideas for what to grow next season!



TRADE SHOW RECEPTION

Wednesday, November 29

5:00 PM - 6:00 pm

Bristol Ballroom & Trade Show Hall

Enjoy a beverage and socialize with members of the EFAO Community while learning more about businesses and organizations that offer products, programs, and services of interest and value to ecological farmers. The trade show exhibitors and sponsors make this conference possible, so please take some time to visit the booths and find out how you can benefit from these organizations.

BANQUET DINNER & 10 YEAR CELEBRATION OF SEED WORK ACROSS CANADA

Wednesday, November 29

6:30 PM - 8:00 pm

Bristol Ballroom

A delicious meal, followed by musical entertainment, and good conversation with new and old friends. Dinner will feature food donated and provided by EFAO members and other local ecological farmers and food providers. We will also celebrate the 10th anniversary of The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security.

Aabir Dey is Director of the The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security. He developed his passion for seeds while completing his Sustainable Farming Certificate at Everdale, and supporting research trials for Seeds of Diversity. Aabir has been instrumental in shaping and leading training, research, and policy programs for the Bauta Initiative.

WATER STORIES: ROLLING FILM(S)

Wednesday, November 29

8:30 PM - 9:30 pm

Manchester

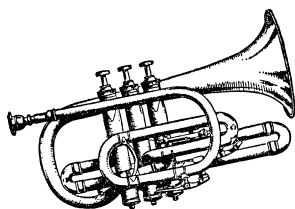
If you need a break from the post-dinner festivities, consider catching a short film about water and stewardship. Water Stories is a community platform for water restoration that trains and connects people who are concerned about the health of Earth to create a meaningful impact, through Community Driven Decentralized Water Retention. These short film(s) were produced by Water Stories and can be freely streamed through the Community when you sign up for a free account.

LIVE MUSIC WITH THE KUMBAO LATIN BAND

Wednesday, November 29

8:30 PM - 9:30 pm

Bristol Ballroom



Join us for some lively upbeat music with the Kumbao Latin Band, a nine piece salsa band from Hamilton! If you're keen to get your feet moving, you're invited to join a salsa dancing lesson, where instructors Julie and Rafael will teach us a few steps, while Carlos Velasquez, Danny Castro and their musical friends provide the latin rhythms that inspire us to move. This will be a beginner-friendly dance experience, and tons of fun for young and old!

MORNING YOGA

Thursday, November 30

6:45 AM - 7:30 AM

London B



Sustain your farming, powered with organic movements & grounding stretches. Join The Farmer Yoga Teacher to start the day out right: with a farmer-approved yoga session that will not only prepare you for a day of sitting in chairs (unfortunately EFAO cannot guarantee the comfort of the seating provided by the conference venue!), but that will also provide you with tips and tools to help you work safely, strengthen your muscles, and protect your body while working hard on the farm.

*Over the course of her yoga teacher training and years of experience as a farmer, mother, and yoga teacher, **Julie Bradley-Low** has come to understand the power of yoga for the farming body. Julie's classes are inclusive, and she offers a wide range of variations to empower her students. Julie offers yoga in-person and virtually with a focus on farmers & gardeners.*

OPENING THE DAY WITH THE STRONG WATER SINGERS

Thursday, November 30

8:45 AM - 9:00 AM

Bristol Ballroom

The Strong Water Singers are a collective of Indigenous and non-Indigenous women from across the Niagara region. Created in 2015 and housed at the Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre, this community-based initiative uses drumming and singing as a means of achieving wellness, strength and unity.

THURSDAY KEYNOTE

Thursday, November 30

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Homelands and Homewaters:



Mnoomin (Wild Rice) Resurgence and Contaminants Testing

Bristol Ballroom

The Waterways Collective is an Anishinaabe paddling collective whose interests are retracing their ancestral waterways. Through the amazing work from community partners such as the Nimkii Youth Collective and Serpent River First Nation's Culture Program, they were able to reseed Mnoomin (wild rice) back into their community's waters. In this Keynote session, you'll hear the story of how the Waterways Collective has come together to re-seed the future of foodways in their community.

Quinn Meawasige is Anishinaabe from Serpent River First Nation. He graduated from Algoma University with a Bachelor of Arts in Community Economic and Social Development and a Certificate in Anishinaabemowin from Shingwauk Kinooaage Gamig. Quinn is a founding member of the Waterways Collective, and the Nimkii Youth Collective, an Anishinaabe land-based language and cultural revitalization initiative.

Taylor Johnston is from Genaabaajing (Serpent River First Nation). She attends Carleton University where she is majoring in Anthropology with a minor in Indigenous Studies. She is a founding member of The Waterways Collective. Taylor is very passionate about the outdoors sustainable harvesting, learning off the land and giving back to her community.

Keegan Grant is Anishinaabe from Serpent River First Nation. He grew up close to and spent much of his life on the water. His love for his lands and waters brings him out to the far reaches of his territory, retracing ancestral travel routes and homelands. Keegan is a founding member of The Waterways Collective. He enjoys creating opportunities for family and community members to visit their homelands and homewaters.



CSA Support Meet-Up: Opportunities for Outreach and Member Retention Lynden



Join Kristine Hammel and other CSA farmers for a frank and open conversation with the goal of demystifying some of the challenges around CSA membership outreach and retention. This supportive meet-up will explore some of the broader systemic challenges impacting CSAs so that farmers don't get so bogged down in blaming themselves as individuals. Let's gather here to share innovative approaches to meet the needs of consumers while meeting our own needs as farmers!

Kristine Hammel farms with her husband and 3 kids (aged 4 to 11) on the Saugeen Peninsula. The farm includes a 1.5 acre market garden, plus small flocks of sheep, geese and chickens. Kristine also holds a M.Sc. in Organic Food Chain Management, and has played a major role in the Eat Local Grey Bruce local food co-operative.

Year-End Review London A



You might know this session's host as the mind behind the Farmer Spreadsheet Academy, which is the name under which Dan shares insightful strategies to help clarify what data to collect and how to look at it in order to have a clear assessment of your team, clients, and field. This clarity informs sound business planning and problem solving opportunities. The audience of this talk can expect to learn more about: what information you need to make sure you have and how to collect it, how to review your season with your team, how to evaluate your sales channels, how to understand client needs, and how to use this information to improve your farm systems and business.

To see the bio for **Dan Brisebois**, refer to page 11

Getting Started in the Artisanal Chicken Program Manchester



The Artisanal Chicken program is designed for farmers growing 600 to 3000 chickens annually for select target markets such as local retail outlets, restaurants and farmers' markets. Hear from Annette Peltier-Flamand, a recently successful program applicant, who got an artisanal license for Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory to produce their own chicken for the community, and Peggy Baillie, who has been involved with the Artisanal Chicken Program from the very beginning. They will discuss the approval process, getting started with chickens, long-term takeaways regarding unforeseen expenses, feed, weeks to maturity, and much more.

Annette Peltier-Flamand is from Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory in northern Ontario, where she works as the Agricultural Resources Management Coordinator. In addition to the gardening program there, she is responsible for the backyard chicken program, beef cattle initiative, the Wiikwemkoong 4-H group, and other community support services. Annette is a Master Gardener, EFAO board member, and was recently awarded an "Excellence in Agriculture" award by the Government of Ontario.

Peggy Baillie is co-owner of Three Forks Farms, a certified organic chicken vegetable and seed farm. Three Forks has been part of the Artisanal Chicken Program since inception in 2017. Being part of the program has helped the farm improve its operations year over year. Peggy will share their experience working with the Chicken Farmers of Ontario.

A Year In The Life: Flower Farming London B



It can be exciting and enticing to consider branching out into flower farming. After all, who wouldn't love to spend their time taking in the beauty of locally and ecologically grown florals and arrangements? But we can't spend time creating that beauty to share with the world for too long if we aren't able to make money while doing it. In this session, Akosua Asare of re:Planted Farm & Floral studio will help you understand how the finances of flower farming can work. She will discuss the complete sales year for her flower farm, share the various income streams that are available to keep cash flow consistent throughout the year, identify the most profitable income streams, and discuss marketing flowers in a challenging economic climate.

Akosua Asare runs re.Planted Farm, an urban flower farm based in Deep River, ON. She cultivates cut flowers for weddings, a CSA, retail and wholesale on less than 2200 sq ft of growing space, using organic & regenerative agricultural practices, in Zone 4b.

Gamechangers Balmoral B



In this session, join a lineup of fellow farmers who will share stories of investments made in some form or another that turned out to be a "gamechanger" on their farms. From setting up a farming system that actually allows you to take a day off, to purchasing equipment that saves hours of labour, to caring for your body in the very way you move throughout the day, these farmer gamechangers will inspire you to think of new ways you can ensure you are taking care of business and yourself.

Brenda Hsueh (moderator) is a Canadian-born Chinese agroecological sheep farmer, who ran a 1-acre market garden and CSA for 14 seasons. Now she and her partner Skyler concentrate on raising sheep, and Brenda works with Farmers for Climate Solutions to help more farmers convert to climate beneficial farming practices through the FaRM Program.

Tony McQuail bought his farm near Lucknow, Ontario in 1973. He and his wife, Fran, ran a diversified organic farm with livestock, apples and a CSA, before turning farm management over to their daughter Katrina. They were early adopters of rotational grazing and Tony has decades of experience in pasture management and fencing systems.

Jason Hayes farms at Burdock Grove Farm in Williamsford, Grey County, ON. He raises chicken, pork, sometimes duck, sometimes lamb, and sometimes vegetables. Recently he established the foodio, a farmstore with commercial kitchen, to add value to the ingredients the farm produces.

Stephanie Laing co-owns and manages Fiddlehead Farm in Prince Edward County with her wife Heather Coffey. They've been farming since 2012, and now manage a large CSA. Stephanie is Fiddlehead's crop planner, production manager, pack shed coordinator, fertility manager, tractor mechanic, builder and jokester.

Alvis Julien started his farm journey in Toronto on small square foot plots, and worked his way up to farm labourer, farm manager, and then to co-owning and co-operating Deeper Roots Farm. Now, Alvis operates his 1.5 acre mixed vegetable farm with a focus on broadening the number of culturally appropriate crops of the African Diaspora that he grows.

To see the bio for **Ryan Spence**, refer to page 8

To see the bio for **Julie Bradley-Low**, refer to page 15

WORKSHOPS

Thursday November 30

10:30 AM - 12:00 pm

No-Till Potatoes: A Farmer Researcher Panel

Balmoral A



No-till production practices for potatoes might sound like an oxymoron for this hilling-intensive crop. Or is it? Join EFAO members and farmer-researchers Matt Jones, Patti Charboneau, Rob Read, and Ken Laing as they describe the methods they are trialing and the varieties they are working with to make organic no-till potato production a reality in Ontario. Some of these promising methods include use of spoiled hay, woodchips, compost, and planting directly into a cover crop.

This event is an OSCIA-recognized Knowledge Sharing Event (KSE) for farmers with On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF) projects in the cover crops category. This event is also offered in partnership with Farmers for Climate Solutions.

Matt Jones grew salad greens on other people's farms before Jones Family Greens found a permanent location in Eden Mills in 2020. Salad greens, a wide variety of in season produce and now gourmet mushrooms are grown and sold primarily at Farmers' Markets. Matt is interested in finding new methods to build soil organic matter and improving soil health.

Ken Laing grew up on a farm near the town of St. Mary's and earned a degree in horticulture from the University of Guelph before he and his wife, Martha, established Orchard Hill Farm in 1979. Over the years they produced pick-your-own strawberries, raspberries, peaches and elderberries, grain crops, and a vegetable CSA. Today livestock is the major focus. From 2020-2022 Ken ran no-till organic vegetable trials with Living Labs - Ontario and EFAO.

Rob Read is the primary human land steward for Willow Creek Permaculture Farm, near Dutton. He grows food, raises animals, and gathers from nature with gratitude. He runs a small fruit and nut tree nursery, and a learning pod for kids with his partner Julie Walter. He has been involved with EFAO Farmer-Led Research for the past several years.

Patti Charboneau runs a small farm with her family in Durham County and participated in EFAO's no-till potatoes trials in 2022 and 2023.

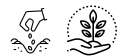
RESILIENT SEED SYSTEMS MEET-UP

Thursday November 30

12:15 PM - 1:15 PM

A Vegetable Farmer and Seed Grower Consultation

Manchester



As we look to build resilient food systems, more and more farmers are trying to figure out how to integrate seed production into their operations. Local seed companies are growing, and new networks of seed producers are being created. Come to this community meeting to talk about how we, as a farming community, can support each other in learning how to conserve, improve, and create new high quality Canadian seed. Come speak with EFAO's Seed Program Manager and Research & Soil Health Program Manager about what challenges you are having in regards to this work, and share ideas for how to improve our seed work and seed programming together!

Rebecca Ivanoff supports farmers to learn about regional seed production, and to implement participatory variety trials and plant breeding projects as part of The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security and EFAO's Farmer-Led Research Program. Rebecca holds a M.S. in Anthropology and International Development from the University of Guelph. In farming, plant breeding, and seed saving she seeks to honour the past, present and future.

Dillon Muldoon supports EFAO's farmer-led research and soil health programs. He has a passion for agriculture and food systems and a broad range of research interests including agroecology, sustainable production, community food systems, integrated pest management, and agricultural education and outreach. Dillon holds a M.Sc. in Environmental Sciences from the University of Guelph.

Kids on the Farm: Getting Creative with Childcare!

London A



Farming is a full-time job — and so is childcare. In this session, you'll hear from three different farmers who are also parents about lessons learned from starting a school in a farm setting. Caitlin Hall will share about the collaborative process of starting a farm school, including insurance, zoning, and infrastructure — and how it works to farm with 30 kids around. Glynis Macleod will share about co-creating a cooperative nature preschool with other farming parents which developed into its own Forest School, as well as different philosophies for envisioning childcare. Kristine Hammel will share the challenges and opportunities she encountered in the process of hosting a privately-operated summer camp and pilot "farm school" between 2017-2020.

Caitlin Hall owns Reroot Farm in Harriston, a diversified farm growing 4 acres of organic veggies and raising mixed livestock on a 70 acre property. Reroot Farm is also home to The Owl's Nest Holistic Alternative School, a registered private school offering pre-school - grade 8 programming year-round.

Glynis MacLeod is co-owner of Aldergrove Organic Farm, a 1.5 acre market garden; and a graduate student (English) at the University of Guelph.

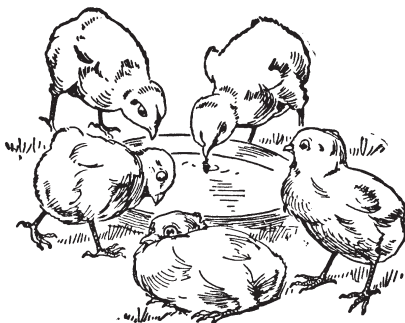
Kristine Hammel farms with her husband and 3 kids (aged 4 to 11) on the Saugeen Peninsula. The farm includes a 1.5 acre market garden, plus small flocks of sheep, geese and chickens. Kristine also holds a M.Sc. in Organic Food Chain Management, and has played a major role in the Eat Local Grey Bruce local food co-operative.

Chickens in the Garden: Integrating Poultry and Vegetable Operations

Lynden



How can poultry fit into a crop rotation and what are some of the benefits of designing systems to maximize the positive impact poultry can have on the farm? Poultry can be used effectively to cycle nutrients, control pests and weeds, and fortify on-farm compost while simultaneously producing high quality, nutritious meat and eggs. The economics of pastured poultry deserve careful consideration from anyone looking for dynamic options to improve their vegetable crop rotation. Shiying and Brendan will speak about their own experiences integrating poultry with vegetable production and offer ideas and considerations for doing so in your own unique context.



Brendan Grant owns and runs Sleepy G Farm with his wife Marcelle Paulin. The farm is located outside of Thunder Bay, and produces Certified Organic vegetables, eggs, and beef from a herd of Shorthorn cattle. An on-farm storage facility enables Sleepy G Farm to market to local grocery stores and a 250+ member CSA for 10 months of the year.

Shiying Lu runs Brilliant Meadows, a 48-acre diversified farm in Mono, Ontario. The farm has been in operation since 2022 and currently focuses on raising pastured chickens, ducks and pigs with plans to expand. She aims to grow ethical and sustainable food options for the underserved Chinese community.

Seed Saving is For Everyone: Harvesting and Processing Seed From Wild and Cultivated Crops Manchester

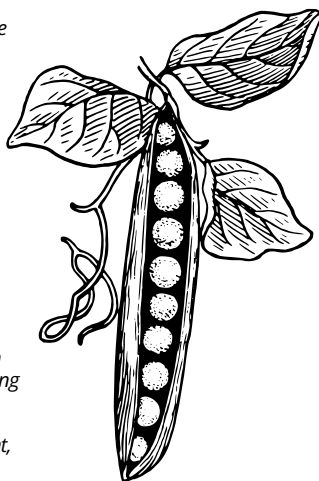


Join us for Seed Saving 201! This workshop will cover a handful of basic and effective seed-saving and breeding techniques for Ontario's bio-region, as well as the harvesting and processing of annual and biennial seed crops that fit within farms and gardens of all sizes. Speakers will go a bit beyond the introductory to offer knowledge for several scales, making this a great learning experience for both new seed savers and those looking to expand their knowledge beyond the basics. A demo of some small to medium scale seed cleaning equipment will be offered as well.

Aaron Varadi works for High Mowing Organic Seeds where he helps commercial vegetable growers get the seeds and knowledge they need to thrive. Previously, he spent a decade managing organic farms, where he grew diversified vegetables, pastured livestock, and seed crops on contract for High Mowing and other seed companies, participated in variety trials, developed and collaborated on breeding projects.

Stephen Sergenese is a seed farmer at Hawthorn Farm Organic Seeds in Mount Forest. He has farmed in Wellington County since 2015. At Hawthorn Farm, he has turned his focus towards seed stewardship and scalable cleaning techniques as they produce, select, and improve over 500 varieties of open-pollinated vegetables, herbs, and flowers.

Aaron Lyons caught the seed bug in 2012 after spending a full season with mentor and founder Kim Delaney of Hawthorn Farm Organic Seeds. Today Aaron helps seeds tell their stories by working closely with colleagues to maneuver most aspects of production and processing for the seed company: from planning/ growing/ cleaning seed crops, to testing, packaging, inventory management, website/IT, and shipping/logistics.



To see the bio for **Tiffany Traverse**, refer to page 6

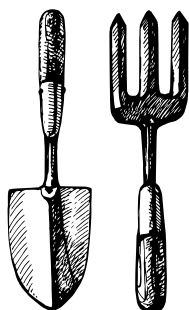
It All Starts With Water: Permaculture and The Order of Design London B



Jessica Robertson of United Designers International and Wild Craft Permaculture always begins her work by thinking about water in an ecosystem. Learn about what happens when we focus on water before designing for access and structure, with several examples from different properties. Mary Simpson and Ross Snider of Old River Farm will also share about how they prioritize water in land stewardship, including work they have done with Jessica as their designer. Bring your questions from your own land directly to a permaculture designer during the discussion!

Jessica Robertson is the Owner, Designer, and Head Grunt at Wild Craft Permaculture and a Lead Designer at United Designers International. Jessica has designed holistic permaculture systems for spaces from 200 sq. ft. to 200-acres and works on residential, commercial, and public projects. She brings a background in biology, education, silviculture and urban planning to her work.

Mary Simpson and Ross Snider manage Old River Farm, a 200 acre property near the mouth of the Newbiggin Creek, with 90 acres of eroding ravines and flats that flood regularly. Their mission is to care for the water cycle, soil web, pollinators, and wildlife by practicing agriculture in a way that mimics nature.



Balancing Nutrients in Your Soil Balmoral A



Balancing nutrients in your soil is a critical aspect of managing soil and environmental conditions for vigorous, healthful crops. Join celebrated author Bryan O'Hara as he discusses topics such as recognizing the signs of various soil nutrient imbalances, managing nutrients for balance at different plant growth stages, and adapting cultural techniques to better achieve nutrient balance.

To see the bio for **Bryan O'Hara**, refer to page 8

Ag Policy Roundtable: What's Happening and How to Get Involved Balmoral B



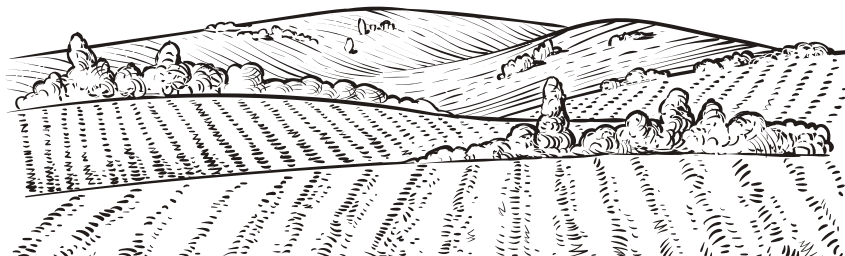
This panel will be a valuable opportunity to get details on the projects, policies, and advocacy work being done by the Organic Council of Ontario (OCO), Farmers for Climate Solutions (FCS), the National Farmers Union of Ontario (NFU-O), and the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN). Come to this session if you want to be involved and informed on topics like farmland protection, food regulation, genetically modified organisms in food and farming, land access, climate policy, environmental protections projects and bills, and more.

Brent Preston and his wife Gillian Flies own and operate *The New Farm*, an organic vegetable operation near Creemore, Ontario. He is the President of both EFAO and Farmers for Climate Solutions, a pan-Canadian coalition of farm organizations that advocates for better climate policy in agriculture.

Max Hangsen works with his wife Shelagh in their market garden called *Earth's Mirth* just outside of Lanark Village in eastern Ontario. He is the current president of the National Farmers Union - Ontario, where his goal is to focus on grass-roots approaches to solving problems that face the local farming community.

Carolyn Young has led the work of the Organic Council of Ontario since 2016 and is now its Executive Director. Prior to this, Carolyn was the Director of Sustain Ontario, the alliance for healthy food and farming. Carolyn has extensive experience in food security, farming and environmental policy issues.

Lucy Sharratt works in Halifax as the Coordinator of the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN). CBAN brings together 15 groups to research, monitor and raise awareness about issues relating to genetic engineering in food and farming. CBAN members include farmer associations, environmental and social justice organizations, and regional groups.



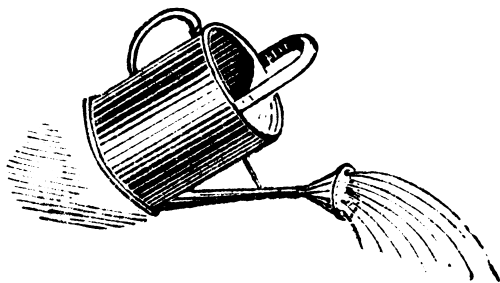
Irrigation: Things I Wish I Knew When I Started, A Speaker Panel Balmoral B



Farmers know better than most that water is life! Without water, it is impossible to bring forth life from the earth. At Shade of Miti farm, Rav Singh has an irrigation set-up that includes a solar panel-powered connection to a pond. She will describe how she developed her system, and will also discuss considerations for irrigating using natural bodies of water. From a different vantage point on his farm, 2022 winner of the Carrot Cache Innovation Prize Scott Sigurdson will share his experience of investing in automation technology for irrigation, and how doing so has positively impacted his farm and relationship to water. Scott will also discuss what he has learned over the years about use of sprinklers, drip tape, and using well versus natural water sources for irrigation.

Scott Sigurdson is the founder and co-owner of Indian Creek Orchard Gardens, a diversified certified organic fruit and vegetable operation in Pakenham that he has operated with his wife since 2015. They run a 200 member vegetable CSA, an apple orchard, and a large garlic operation.

To see the bio for **Rav Singh**, refer to page 13



Scaling Up Your Vegetable Production: Economics, Equipment and More London A



The tools and tactics used to grow vegetables depend entirely on the scale of production. Whether you are just starting a farm business, or are about to take it to the next level, the key to economic viability is choosing the right equipment, infrastructure, systems, and labour for your farm. Brendan Grant from Sleepy G Farm and Heather Coffey from Fiddlehead Farm will share their experiences and tips for sound decision making when it comes to scaling up production. Topics such as crop selection, equipment, irrigation, agronomic challenges, labour, management, online marketing, and CSA software will help illustrate things to consider when scaling up your vegetable production.

Heather Coffey and **Stephanie Laing** run Fiddlehead Farm, a year round 250 member customizable CSA, growing all veggies ecologically (non-certified organic), since 2012 in Prince Edward County, Ontario.

To see the bio for **Brendan Grant**, refer to page 19



Pig-Proof Infrastructure for Pastured Pork Production Manchester



Among livestock, pigs are notoriously hard on feeders, waterers and shelters! Which means finding ways to keep them healthy and safe on pasture — and away from the neighbours' tantalizing compost pile — without creating infrastructure that is too heavy or permanent to move regularly can be a challenge. Join Shiying Lu of Brilliant Meadows, and Katrina McQuail of Meeting Place Organic Farm, to discuss some techniques for keeping those little... soon to be big... weaner pigs where you want them!

Having grown up on the farm, **Katrina McQuail** returned in 2014 and took over running Meeting Place Organic Farm in 2016. She has a degree in Business and Not For Profit Management, and has worked in the culinary industry as well as for government, corporate agencies, and non-profits. She currently serves on the EFAO board and is the assistant clerk for Friends General Conference.

To see the bio for **Shiying Lu**, refer to page 19.

Growing Hazelnuts and Other Nut Crops in Ontario London B



If you have ever dreamed of growing nuts, this is the session for you! We will begin with a brief "Hazelnuts 101" presentation from Martin, touching on the highlights of production potential growers should know about. These will include planning an orchard, planting an orchard, irrigation concerns, orchard management, harvesting preparations and methods, expected yields and marketing tips. Linda will then discuss other types of edible nuts that can be grown in Ontario, which ones are native to this bioregion, how to process and store nut crops, nutrition (nut-rition?), as well as marketing and sales for other nut crops.

Linda Grimo was born and raised in Niagara and pursued her BA and MA in Education in Iowa and Arizona, before returning to Niagara to work with her father Ernie at Grimo Nut Nursery. Linda helps manage both the farm business and the fields, and is actively involved in research and breeding work. She is President of the Society of Ontario Nut Growers and a board member of the Ontario Hazelnut Association.

Martin Hodgson and his wife Patricia have been cultivating hazel trees since they settled onto their 100 acre farm near Tillsonburg in 1989. A self-proclaimed nut enthusiast, Martin has been with the Ontario Hazelnut Association since before its inception around 2012 and a member of the Society of Ontario Nut Growers (SONG) for over 30 years. He is always willing to lend advice.



Soil Health Panel:

Soil Health Indicators for Farmers and the Future of Soil Health in Ontario

Balmoral A



Soil analysis, predictive digital soil mapping, soil classification, data interpretation, nitrogen, crop yields, field sampling ... whewf, soil is a key element to farming, but it can also be a lot to wrap our heads around! Dr Laura Van Eerd of the University of Guelph, Dr Jenny Bower of the Soil Health Institute, and PhD candidate Daniel Saurette of OMAFRA will offer a status snapshot of Ontario's soil health and visions for its future.

Angela Straathof (moderator) is the Director of Research and Knowledge Transfer at the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA). She oversees delivery of OSCIA's on-farm research initiatives, connecting farmers with researchers and resources to test best management practices and support knowledge mobilization of those findings among the industry.

Dr. Jenny Bower is a pedologist at the Soil Health Institute. She uses her background in field sampling and spatial analysis to quantify, analyze, and predict soil health under agricultural management. She is currently working to measure soil health in grain and oilseed systems of the Golden Horseshoe region of Ontario, and in small-scale vegetable systems in the US.

Dr. Laura Van Eerd and her internationally-recognized research program pursue the advancement of our understanding of biogeochemical cycling of nitrogen and carbon in various agroecosystems. Dr. Van Eerd has published over 75 peer-reviewed papers, and was recognized as one of six Influential Women of Canadian Agriculture in 2020.

Daniel Saurette is a Land Resource Specialist with OMAFRA. Daniel specializes in soil classification, soil mapping, and landscape interpretation. His current focus is on developing predictive digital soil mapping techniques to expedite delivery of updated soil maps for agricultural areas of Ontario through the use of big data and machine learning.

TRADE SHOW EXHIBITORS

Take time to visit the Trade Show. These exhibitors are all invested members of Ontario's ecological agriculture community: supplies of equipment of inputs, consultants and educators, and community and industry organizations.

- Ecocert
- Neudorff North America
- Multi Shelter Solutions
- DuBois Agrinovation
- ORISHA
- E&F Sauder
- High Mowing Seeds
- Wild Craft Permaculture
- National Capital Commission
- Growers and Co.
- CBAN
- Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority
- Ignatius Farm New Farmer Training Program
- Harvest Impact by 10C
- Fleming College - Sustainable Ag Tech
- Local Line
- Fiddlehead Farm
- Ontario Farmland Trust
- Farmers for Climate Solutions
- NFU-O
- Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research
- Acti-Sol
- Carolinian Canada
- Silver Creek Nursery

MEALTIME ACCOMMODATIONS

EFAO has reserved the **Kent Room** for use during conference meals (does not include breakfast) with the purpose of offering a space with a HEPA filter to attendees who need to take extra precautions against viral illnesses. This room has a capacity limit of 15 people. Therefore, EFAO asks that folks accessing this space only use the room for time needed to eat, in order to allow more space and time for others to use the room. Please visit the registration desk if you have any questions.

CHILDCARE AND FAMILY ROOM

Run by dedicated volunteers, childcare is available on both Wednesday and Thursday, from 8:30AM -12:00PM and 1:30-5:15PM in the Derby Room. Please come to the registration desk if you have not already registered for childcare. You will only need to pay for your child's lunches and Wednesday dinner. Payment can be made at the registration desk.

Parents, please be sure to send your children to the childcare room with snacks, diapers and anything else they may need for the duration of their stay.

Families can feel free to access the childcare/family room even if they choose not to use the conference childcare option.

CARROT CACHE INNOVATION PRIZE

Carrot Cache is offering their annual \$1,000 prize for innovative, low-cost solutions to planting, harvesting and managing food grown on an Ontario urban or rural organic farm. Ideas submitted by conference participants will be displayed by the registration desk starting Wednesday morning and winners will be selected by conference attendees. Don't forget to come and vote for your favourite!



CALL FOR CURIOSITY

Engage your curiosities with on-farm research!
Become a farmer-led researcher in 2024.

Attend the drop-in virtual office hours in January and discuss your research questions with EFAO staff! Visit efao.ca/events to register.

Application deadline: Jan.14, 2024, 11:59pm.
Visit efao.ca/funding to apply.

ABOUT EFAO



What We Do

Established in 1979 by farmers for farmers, the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario (EFAO) is a membership organization that focuses on farmer-led education, research and community building. EFAO brings farmers together so they can learn from each other and improve the health of their soils, crops, livestock and the environment, to steward resilient ecological farms.

Vision

We envision an Ontario where thriving ecological farms are the foundation of our food system, and where agriculture protects our resources, increases biodiversity, mitigates climate change, and cultivates resilient, diverse, equitable communities.

Mission

EFAO support farmers to build resilient ecological farms and grow a strong knowledge sharing community.

Board Members

Anan Lololi
Annette Peltier-Flamand
Brent Klassen
Brent Preston
Brett Israel
Celeste Lopreiato
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Jennifer Forde
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PROMOTION VALID UNTIL JAN. 31, 2024. SHOW PROMO CODE: ECOSAVINGS2023
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Your Local Hub

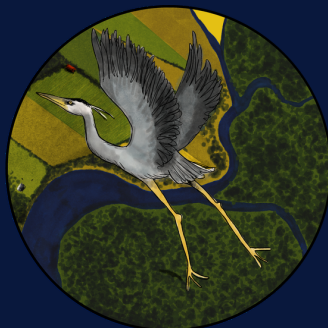
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