AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD STRATEGY

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD ADVISORY COMMITTEE

York Region Planning and Economic Development

- Meena Hassanali, Agriculture and Agri-Food Business Specialist
- Jennifer Best, Senior Planner
- Tony Corkovic, Marketing & Communications Specialist

January 27, 2021



STAFF UPDATE

OVERVIEW

- Provide an update of Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy actions for 2021
 - Provide an overview on upcoming actions
 - Update on activities since last meeting
 - Get your input and feedback

STRATEGY UPDATE: 2021 ACTIONS

2021 WORKPLAN

#	2021 New Projects	Timelines
1	Always in Season Toolkit Pilot in York Region – Ontario Federation of Agriculture and Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance (GHFFA)	Q2 2021
2	2021 Agri-Food Forum - October	Q3 2021
3	Farm and Food Virtual Spotlight (video) to raise awareness of diversity of production and processing found in the Region	Q3 2021
4	Agri-food tech innovation – Competition *tentative	Q3 2021
5	 Explore 2-3 education virtual workshops/webinars in topics such as: Opportunities to increase world crops within the Region Urban Agriculture/vertical farming Restaurant Pivot to consumer product goods (CPG) / Food-Start up companies 	On-going 2021
6	Fulsome Producers Directory working with industry associations	On-going 2021
7	 COVID-19 Agri-Food Business Recovery Project ideas from Agri-Food Sub Working Group 	On-going 2021
8	2021 Regional Official Plan Review and Update	On-going 2021

STRATEGIC GOAL #1: COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

ALWAYS IN SEASON TOOLKIT — PILOT IN YORK REGION

- Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) and Wilton Consulting Group
- Pilot in York Region with Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance (GHFFA)
- Meeting January 18, 2021
 - Video to showcase York Region's Agriculture sector
 - Carrot production in Holland Marsh
 - Target audience: Youth
 - Timing Project: January to August 2021
 - Agri-Food Forum 2021





AGRI-FOOD FORUM 2021 — YORK REGION

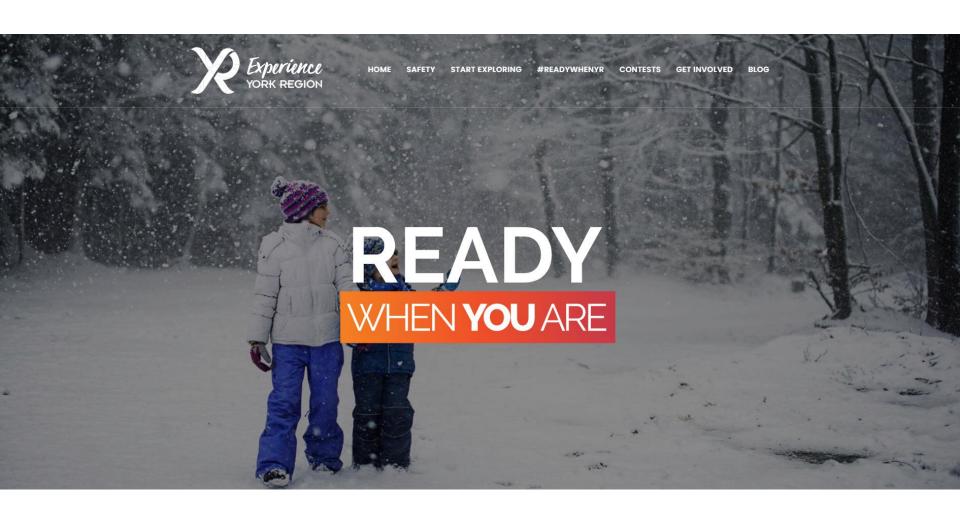
- Planning for 13th Municipal Agriculture Economic Development and Planning Forum – 2021
 - York Region as host for 2021
 - Planning meeting with OMAFRA on January 18, 2021
 - Virtual Event; Timing Mid-October
 - Structure of Planning Committee:
 - Planning Committee with OMAFRA + York Region + stakeholders (theme, agenda layout)
 - Working group: OMAFRA, York Region and Municipal partners (speakers, logistics)
 - Advisory Committee: Input and feedback

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD COMMUNICATIONS

- Video: agriculture and agrifood sector
- Local food promotion
- Increasing social media promotion
- Revamping york.ca/agrifood
- Exploring newsletter update
- Business support and other COVID-19 resources



#READYWHENYR



AGRI-FOOD SUB-GROUP OUTCOMES - 2020



Developed a PPE supplier directory



Enabled mobile COVID-19 testing at 17 farm locations throughout York Region 36

COVID-19 farm spot-check inspections completed by York Region Public Health



Completed a business recovery accelerator webinar series for food processors



Provided COVID-19 guidance and information for safe farm and food operations



Shared health and safety protocols and best industry practices between group members and industry stakeholders



Completed a temporary foreign worker campaign to raise awareness and support workers in the sector



Developed a COVID-19 health and safety webinar for farm operations

STRATEGIC GOAL #2: INTEGRATED LAND USE PLANNING

REGIONAL OFFICIAL PLAN PROGRESSION

- March Policy Directions Report has strong agriculture focus
 - New and existing non-agricultural uses policies
 - Non-food related agricultural crops in the Holland Marsh Specialty Crop Area policies
 - Preliminary implementation of the Provincial Agricultural land base mapping
- First draft of policies produced for management review
- Continuation of refinement of policies and mapping









STRATEGIC GOAL #3:
VALUE ADDED PROCESSING & CAPACITY
BUILDING

YORK REGION FOOD & BEVERAGE ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

- Delivery partner: YSpace,
 York University
- Showcase event on January 19, 2021
 - Cohort #1 8 Companies
 - 65+ participants
- Remarks: The Honourable Ernie Hardeman, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs



YORK REGION FOOD & BEVERAGE ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

Cohort #1 – August 11, 2020 to January 19, 2021

- 8 Companies key metrics being compiled
- # Workshops/Fireside Chats: 18
- Total Revenue: \$361,481
- # New store presence: 113 (revised)
- # Jobs: 8 (revised)
- Spotlight Video https://youtu.be/2Eu22h3Nnx8

Cohort #2 – Starts May 2021

Applications open: https://yspace.yorku.ca/food-accelerator/



CHECK-IN

- Any Questions?
- Input and Feedback?



STRATEGIC GOAL #4: LOCAL FOOD EDUCATION & PROMOTION

LOCAL FOOD PARTNERSHIP

Continued partnership with York Farm Fresh

- Annual York Farm Fresh Guide Map
- York Farm Fresh App
- Translation of the map in new languages
- Explore virtual tours / video clips
- Member Webinar Guest Speaker, Feb 3, 2021



STRATEGIC GOAL #5: BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION

ALL ABOUT SPECIALITY CROPS - WEBINAR SERIES

- Partnership: OMAFRA, Durham Region, Durham Farm Fresh, York
 Region and York Farm Fresh
- Targeted for farmers / primary producers
- January 14, noon to 1 pm: Overview of Specialty Crop Production (completed; 87 attendees)
- January 21, noon to 1 pm: <u>Lavender, Hops, Cannabis & Industrial Hemp</u> (completed; 83 attendees)
- January 28, noon to 1 pm: Specialty Fruit & Nuts
- February 4, noon to 1 pm: <u>Specialty Vegetables</u>
- Workshops led by OMAFRA staff (Evan Elford, New Crop Development Specialist and colleagues)



This workshop series is brought to you by OMAFRA, Invest Durham, Durham Farm Fresh, York Region and York Farm Fresh.











AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD UPDATE

70+
events, webinars
and meetings held

350,000+
social media impressions

2.3% average engagement rate

3,800+ stakeholders engaged

7,300+

social media engagements (likes, comments, shares)

2,500+
visits to york.ca
agriculture/agri-food



York Farm Fresh distributed 60,000+ guide maps



supported first Food & Beverage
Accelerator Program with
York University

50+
partners engaged and collaborated

OTHER BUSINESS

Ontario Environmental Registry of Ontario (EBR)

(www.ero.ontario.ca/notice/019-2814)

- Drainage Act Regulatory Proposal: seeking your input on regulatory proposal that would implement recent amendments to the Drainage Act.
- The new regulation would reduce burden, streamline approvals, address stakeholder concerns while maintaining environmental standards
- Deadline : February 7, 2021

Rural Economic Development (RED) Funding

- Economic Diversification and Competitiveness 50% of cost share
- Strategic Economic Infrastructure 30% cost share for capital projects
- Deadline: February 1, 2021

MEET OUR STUDENT

- Agriculture and Agri-Food Project Assistant (part-time)
 - Student part-time position until end of April 2021
 - Assist with Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy project execution
 - Eleonora Gagliardi, M.E.S
 Candidate at York University



ADVISORY COMMITTEE — FARM 911 THE EMILY PROJECT

- Farm 911 The Emily Project
 - Brought forward by Kim Empringham
 - Farm accidents can occur in remote locations
 - Many rural and farm properties lack civic address signage
 - Project in response to an on-farm accident involving a child
 - Partnership with local Federation of Agriculture
- Action from Dec 2, 2020: Referred to staff for further investigation and report back at future meeting.

FARM 911 THE EMILY PROJECT — STAFF UPDATE

Conducting research and fact finding

- Durham Region Meeting December 10, 2020
- King Township Meeting January 8, 2021
- Town of East Gwillimbury Meeting January 19, 2021
- Town of Georgina Meeting January 20, 2021

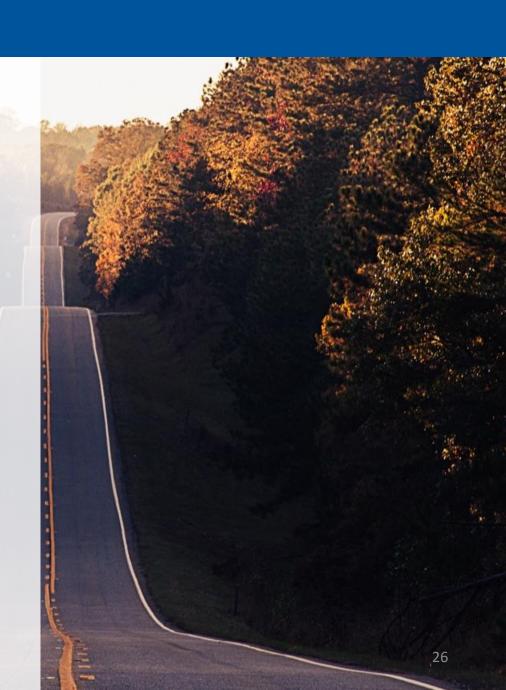
Next Steps

- Continue research and fact finding
 - 911 Regional EMS Staff
 - Other Regions & Municipalities
- Invite guest speakers: Emily Project, King Township etc.
- Share findings with Advisory Committee

NEXT STEPS

 Gather input and feedback from committee

 Execution of ongoing and new actions/project initiatives



QUESTIONS / INPUT AND FEEDBACK

Planning and Economic Development

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