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# **Ecological Farmers of Ontario Conference**

**Rebuilding Rural Economies from the Ground Up**

November 29 - December 1, 2017 at The Blue Mountain Resort, Blue Mountains

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# WELCOME

## Welcome to the 4th Annual Ecological Farmers of Ontario Conference!

We are so pleased to be hosting our 4th annual conference at the Blue Mountain Resort this year. The annual Ecological Farmers of Ontario Conference connects farmers from across the province to share ideas, learn from experts, get inspiration and celebrate with great food and friends.

The theme of this year's conference, ***Rebuilding Rural Economies from the Ground Up***, addresses issues that face rural ecological farmers in Ontario and will explore ways to overcome these challenges and strengthen our farming communities. From soil health to innovative marketing strategies, livestock viability and collaborative farming, this theme will be explored throughout conference sessions and highlighted in the keynote presentation by Shannon Hayes – farmer and author of several books including *The Radical Homemaker* and *The Grassfed Gourmet*.

This conference is the result of collaboration and contributions from incredible farmers, dedicated staff and volunteers, community-minded organizations, and generous local businesses and sponsors. Our supporting conference partners include the National Farmers Union Ontario, the Organic Council of Ontario, The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security, USC Canada, Seeds of Diversity, Local Food and Farm Co-ops, and the Ontario Soil Network.

More than 20 farmers who participated in the Program Advisory Committee helped put together this exciting program with EFAO staff. From the high-calibre workshops to the incredible conference food and the member recognition ceremony at Thursday night's Banquet Dinner, this conference once again reflects EFAO's spirit and strength as a member-driven organization.

We would like to extend heartfelt thanks to everyone who helped make this conference possible - including all of you attending - and we hope that you all have a wonderful conference experience!

Sincerely,  
The EFAO Conference Organizing Team



From left to right: Allison Muckle, Naomi Krucker, Katie Baikie, Ali English, Sarah Hargreaves and Martina Schaefer

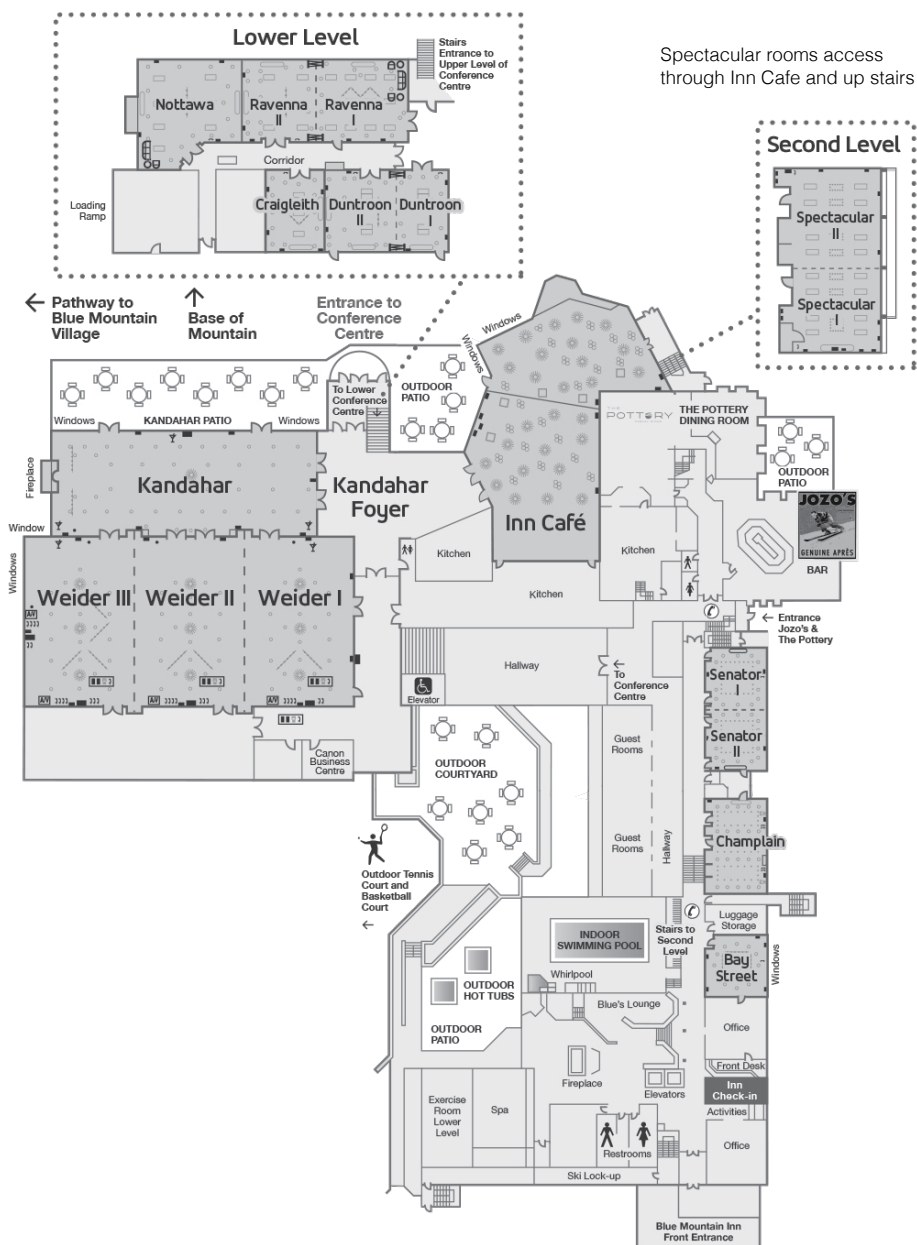
# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Wednesday, November 29						
1:00pm - 2:00pm	Conference Check-in (Kandahar Foyer)					
2:00pm - 5:00pm	Nottawa	Duntroon	Ravenna	Spectacular	Senator	
	Intensive Pasture Management to Regenerate Farmland	Collaborative Farming in the U.S. and Canada	CSAs: Marching Forward	The Natural Medicine Chest for Livestock Health and Wellness	On-farm Vegetable Variety Trials	
2:00pm - 5:00pm	Tours: The New Farm (Creemore), Eat Local Grey Bruce Warehouse (Owen Sound)					
2:00pm - 6:30pm	Conference Check-in (Kandahar)					
6:30pm	Winter Harvest Dinner: 6:00pm Doors, 6:30pm Dinner (Inn Cafe)					
7:30pm - 8:30pm	New and Young Farmers Meeting followed by New and Young Farmers Mixer (Nottawa Room)					
8:00pm - 9:00pm	Film Screening (Duntroon Room)					
Thursday, November 30						
6:45am - 7:30am	Yoga (Spectacular II)					
7:00am - 8:00am	Breakfast for Overnight Guests (Inn Cafe)					
7:30am - 8:30am	Conference Check-in (Kandahar Foyer)					
8:30am - 10:00am	Nottawa	Duntroon	Ravenna	Champlain	Senator	Spectacular I
	Managing Soil Health on Organic Vegetable Farms	Telling Your Farm Story: The Creative Process Behind Farm Newsletters	Selling to Restaurants	Pastured Rabbit for Profit	The Future of Local Food: Using Customer Insights to Drive Growth	Open Forum
10:30am - 11:30am	Keynote Session: Rebuilding Sustainable Economies and Meaningful Communities (Weider Room)					
11:30am - 12:30pm	Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario Annual General Meeting (Weider Room)					
12:30pm - 1:30pm	Lunch (Weider Room)					

# CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

1:30pm - 3:00pm	<b>Nottawa</b> Soil Health: enhancing the soil and water on your farm, learning from peers, and measuring the results	<b>Duntroon</b> A Holistic Approach to Parasite Management in Small Ruminants	<b>Ravenna</b> Pastured Poultry on a Diversified Farm	<b>Champlain</b> Natural Beekeeping	<b>Senator</b> Intercropping for Multiple Goals in a Vegetable System	<b>Spectacular I</b> Open Forum
3:30pm - 5:00pm	Soil Leaders: Communicating for the Good of the Soil	How Cost of Production Became our #1 Tool	Innovations and Profitability in Grass-fed Beef Production	Developing New Potato Varieties for Ontario Climates	Making the Most of Your High Tunnels	Open Forum
5:00pm - 6:00pm	Reception and Tasting in Trade Show (Kandahar)					
6:30pm	Banquet Dinner and Daisy Award Ceremony: 6:00pm Doors, 6:30pm Dinner, 8:00pm Live Music and Dancing (Inn Cafe)					
Friday, December 1						
6:45am - 7:30am	Yoga (Spectacular II)					
7:00am - 8:00am	Breakfast for Overnight Guests (Inn Cafe)					
7:30am - 8:30am	Conference check-in (Kandahar Foyer)					
8:30am - 10:00am	Innovative Watering Systems for Grass-based Farms	Future Marketing of Livestock	Diverse Strategies to Market Your Products	System Innovations and Labour Management Tools	The Global Importance of Organic Weed Control	Open Forum
10:30am - 11:30am	Keynote Session: Organics in Ontario: Consumer Demand and the Changing Landscape (Weider Room)					
11:30am - 1:30pm	Lunch (Weider Room)					
12:00pm - 1:15pm	Community Meetings: Northeast Committee Meeting (lunchroom), Transitioning to Organic Certification (Ravenna), Get the Dirt on Your Value Proposition (Nottawa), Building a Network of Local Food Advocates (Duntroon), Seed Growers Meeting (Champlain), Consulting on Bill 153: The Ontario Organic Act (Senator), Farmer Led App Development (Spectacular I)					
1:30pm - 3:00pm	Case Study: Agro-Ecology in Practice at Plan B Organic Farms	Across the Certifier's Desk: An overview of organic certification and interesting certifying oddities	Organic Orchard Management	Small-scale Dried Beans Production: From seed to table	Isolation and Pollination Techniques for On-Farm Seed Production	Open Forum

## CONFERENCE FLOORPLAN





# PRE-CONFERENCE FARMER-LED RESEARCH PROGRAM SYMPOSIUM AND WORKSHOP

This year 13 EFAO member-farmers conducted 14 trials and presented their findings at 4 farmer-led research field days. Before the conference, farmer-researchers shared their findings and proposed new research ideas at the Farmer-led Research Symposium and Workshop. For highlights of their findings, please see the Farmer-led Research Program insert.

- Check out results from this year's research projects on the Research Posters posted around the registration desk
- Curious about something on your farm or have a specific research question to trial? Submit a research idea online at **[efao.ca/research-application](http://efao.ca/research-application)**, due January 15, 2018
- Peruse Research Protocols and Reports online at **[efao.ca/research-library](http://efao.ca/research-library)**

**Program funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation and George Weston Limited and Loblaw Companies Limited.**

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# KEYNOTE SESSIONS

## Rebuilding Sustainable Economies and Meaningful Communities

Thursday 10:30-11:30am

### Weider Room

Shannon Hayes examines the foundational role of small, direct-marketing farms in creating sustainable economies and meaningful communities. Drawing from lessons at Sap Bush Hollow, she then looks at what needs to change on the family farm so this can happen.

This session is sponsored by:



**Shannon Hayes** is a writer and co-owner of Sap Bush Hollow, a grass-fed livestock farm in upstate New York. She is the author of several books, including *The Radical Homemaker* and *The Grassfed Gourmet*, and hosts the popular blog: *TheRadicalHomemaker.net*. Her work has been featured in the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, on NPR and many other national and international venues. Shannon holds a Bachelor's degree in creative writing and a Master's and Ph.D. in sustainable agriculture and community development from Cornell University.

## Organics in Ontario: Consumer Demand and the Changing Landscape

Friday 10:30-11:30am

### Weider Room

This presentation will explore the latest market and consumer trends data for organics in Canada, with a specific focus on the Ontario market. An overview of Ontario's regulatory landscape will be provided as background. Lauren Martin will speak to organic's potential to be an economic powerhouse in Ontario agriculture, and what is needed to achieve such success.



**Lauren Martin** is the Manager of Government Relations and Regulatory Affairs for the Canada Organic Trade Association (COTA). New to her role, she joins COTA after having spent a few years practicing municipal law. Having grown up on a farm in southwestern Ontario, Lauren has always been passionate about sustainable food and agriculture. In her work at COTA, she applies her knowledge of the food system and her legal training to monitoring organic regulations and advancing the goals of the Canadian organic industry.



# TOURS

**Wednesday, November 29, 2:00-5:00pm**

**The New Farm**

**9783 Sideroad 6 & 7 Nottawasaga, Creemore ON**

The New Farm is a certified organic family farm near the village of Creemore. Farmers Gillian Flies and Brent Preston grow salads/greens, beets, cucumbers and potatoes for restaurants and retail stores in southern Ontario on 20 acres of land. The tour will include a detailed overview of their growing systems, labour, marketing and sales strategies, financial details, new on-farm event space, as well as a discussion of the farm's ongoing partnership with The Stop Community Food Centre and Community Food Centres Canada. The New Farm is a profitable, mid-size, wholesale-focused farm – come see how it works.

**Eat Local Grey Bruce Warehouse**

**396 - 14th Street West, Owen Sound ON**

Eat Local Grey Bruce is a farmer-driven cooperative that sells a diverse range of food products from farmers in the Grey Bruce area using an online platform. Products are then aggregated to a warehouse and delivered to homes and pickup locations. Through this cooperative, farmers take distribution into their own hands, save on marketing time, benefit from an off-season marketing venue, and are able to market in small volumes. A panel of Eat Local Grey Bruce directors and the instigator Thorsten Arnold will lay out how the co-op was started, initial successes, experiences of farmer members, and challenges faced by the Board of Directors.



# WORKSHOPS

WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 29

2:00-5:00pm

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## On-Farm Vegetable Variety Trials

### Senator Room

This workshop will present efficient ways to run on-farm variety trials for both market gardeners and seed growers. Participants will learn how variety trials can help farmers with variety selection and also help seed producers run successful variety improvement and new variety development projects.

This session is sponsored by:



**Julie Dawson** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Horticulture at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where her research topics include season extension methods, organic and participatory variety trials and variety selection for small-acreage farms and gardens.

## Intensive Pasture Management for Farmland Regeneration

### Nottawa Room

Learn how grass-fed ruminants and intensive pasture management can restore fertility, diversity as well as drought and flood resistance to poor land while feeding the livestock, building soil and growing nutrient-dense chemical-free food.

**Shawn and Beth Dougherty**, authors of *The Independent Farmstead* (2016), have been farming together since the 1980s in eastern Ohio, where they manage 24 acres using intensive grazing to raise dairy and beef cows, sheep, farm-fed hogs, and a variety of poultry. Their research has led them to identify grass conversion and integrated nutrient feedbacks as the keys to whole-farm sustainability.

## The Natural Medicine Chest for Livestock Health and Wellness

### Spectacular Room

In this interactive workshop we'll cover some practical options for livestock health care – drawn from the realms of husbandry, homeopathic medicine, herbal options, kitchens and gardens – and common sense. This session is appropriate for all animal species, two and four legged, feathered and furred.

**Susan Beal** comes from a long background of holistic veterinary practice and is dedicated to providing holistic care for animals, humans and the environment. Susan is particularly interested in whole farm/whole system pasture-based ecology and provides educational programs, consulting and coaching for her clients as well as farmers, producers and consumer groups.

# WORKSHOPS

## CSAs: Marching Forward

### Ravenna Room

In this session, farmers and industry experts discuss member growth and retention, marketing strategies, web support systems and a variety of different CSA models from across North America.

**Isabelle Spence-Legault** and **Ryan Spence** are co-owners/operators of *Field Good Farms/La ferme j'me champ bien*, a small-scale organic vegetable farm in Northeastern Ontario where they have been farming for seven years. *Field Good Farms* operates a 150-member summer CSA program, a 40-member fall CSA program and attends 26 weeks of the North Bay Farmers' Market.

While farming, **Simon Huntley** took advantage of his education in information technology to develop a highly interactive website for CSAs. In the fall of 2006, Simon started *Small Farm Central* with a core group of 10 farmers, and in four years, it has grown to serve more than 1000 farmers across the U.S. and Canada.

**Mike Smith** has been growing organic vegetables for the better part of the last 14 years, the last eight at the Ignatius Jesuit Centre in Guelph. Mike has trained more than fifty apprentices and has coordinated the CRAFT network in SW Ontario.

## Collaborative Farming in the U.S. and Canada

### Duntroon Room

Sharing land? Sharing the work responsibility? Sharing the investment? Sharing equipment? This session will explore the world of farm co-ops in Canada and the U.S., look at the various options, and provide information for attendees to make decisions about structure, governance, membership and financing.

**Heather Pritchard** is the Farm Program Manager at Farm Folk/City Folk in B.C., Foodland Trust Developer, and Chair of Slow Food Canada. She is a long-time food activist and co-founder/farmer with *Glorious Organics Co-op* in the Fraser Valley.

For almost twenty-five years, **Sally Miller** has been working with a range of co-ops in Canada and in the U.S., including the *Ontario Natural Food Co-op*, *Organic Meadow*, *Fourth Pig Worker Co-op*, and *West End Food Co-op*. She currently works as Project Manager for Ontario's Local Food and Farm Co-ops Network.

**Nichki Carangelo** is a member of Letterbox Farm Collective in Hudson, N.Y., where she manages livestock and direct marketing for their diversified farm. She is also the author of the guide "Pastured Rabbit for Profit", which is available as a free download at [www.letterboxfarm.com/rabbits](http://www.letterboxfarm.com/rabbits).

**Jeremy Colbeck** is a founder of *BeetBox Co-operative Farm* in Ottawa. This co-op is a market garden which will be selling vegetables through CSA shares and farmers' markets in 2018, with plans to offer vegetable seeds and pastured beef.

This session is sponsored by:



# WORKSHOPS

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 30

8:30-10:00am

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## Pastured Rabbit for Profit

### Champlain Room

In a 2010 article in *Salon* magazine, locavore kingpin Michael Pollan claims that raising rabbits makes more sense than raising chickens. Join the Letterbox Collective's livestock manager, who has put this claim to the test, as she gives you an overview of what's involved in starting up a pastured rabbit operation and the scoop on the economics behind best practices of rabbit production.

See page 9 for **Nicki Carangelo's** bio

## Telling Your Farm Story: The Creative Process Behind Farm Newsletters

### Duntroon Room

Newsletters and blogs are more than a handy tool for customer communications and marketing. They are a way to help us process our farming journey, they open us up to the community that supports us, and they can be a deeply rewarding creative outlet that fuels our fire to keep growing. Come explore the writing process as it applies to farm-to-consumer communication and talk about ways to make it work for the heart, soul and bottom line.

This session is sponsored by:



See page 6 for **Shannon Hayes'** bio

## Managing Soil Health on Organic Vegetable Farms

### Nottawa Room

Vegetable farmers use different approaches to measuring and managing crop nutrients, maintaining organic matter, reducing tillage, and rotating cash crops and cover crops. This workshop will show slides of diverse practices that are used in the Northeast U.S. to address these issues.

**Vern Grubinger** is the vegetable and berry specialist and Extension Professor with the University of Vermont. He also serves as coordinator of USDA's Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program (SARE), and is the author of many fact sheets and several books.

# WORKSHOPS

## The Future of Local Food: Using Customer Insights to Drive Growth Senator Room

Where is the overall local food market going? How can you talk to your customers to drive sales? This session shows examples of successful small-scale farmers and will help you plot a path to marketing success for your own farm.

This session is sponsored by:



Possibility grows here.

See page 9 for **Simon Huntley's** bio

## Selling to Restaurants Ravenna Room

Is selling to restaurants a good fit for your farm? Hear from farmers, a chef and a local-food distributor about what you need to consider before getting started, strategies to keep the relationship working, and pitfalls you can avoid along the way.

**Seb Ramirez**, co-owner and farmer at Zócalo Organics and his wife Bethany grow and sell ecologically produced vegetables on 2 acres through a CSA program, farmers' market and restaurant sales in the Guelph and Kitchener-Waterloo area.

See page 7 for **Gillian Flies's** bio (The New Farm)

**Carl Heinrich** graduated from Stratford Chef's School in 2005. Working under many talented chefs and running reputable restaurants have earned him the title of Food Network's "Top Chef Canada" in 2012 as well as the Pinnacle Award for Chef of the Year in 2015.

**Paul Sawtell** is the co-owner of 100km Foods Inc., an award-winning local-food distribution company that gives chefs access to the best and freshest ingredients and farmers access to dedicated markets for the sale, marketing and distribution of their products at a fair price.

## THURSDAY NOVEMBER 30 1:30-3:00pm

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## A Holistic Approach to Parasite Management in Small Ruminants Duntroon Room

This workshop will discuss techniques and tactics for enhancing parasite resistance and resilience in small ruminants. Attendees will learn how to assess sheep and goats for parasite resilience, discuss possible treatment approaches and explore management options, enabling them to take their small ruminant management to the next levels.

See page 8 for **Susan Beal's** bio

# WORKSHOPS

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 30

1:30-3:00pm

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## **Pastured Poultry on a Diversified Farm** **Ravenna Room**

In this session, two farmers share their stories, journeys and learnings about their pastured poultry businesses. The discussion will include finances, labour, production, marketing, information about the Artisanal Chicken Program as well as key decisions and points of transitions in developing their poultry operations over the years.

**Patrick Kitchen** co-owns and operates Sideroad Farm in Walter's Falls, Ontario, with his wife Amy. In 2016 the farm was licensed through Chicken Farmers of Ontario's Artisanal Chicken Program to grow 1500 meat chickens on pasture with plans of increasing to 2400 birds in 2017 and 3000 birds in 2018.

See page 12 for **Nichki Carangelo's** bio

## **Natural Beekeeping** **Champlain Room**

This session will explore elements of natural, sustainable beekeeping from honeybee biology to colony behaviour and hive maintenance, and discuss the benefits and challenges associated with natural beekeeping.

**Jolanta Dabrowski** is the owner of Natural Instincts Beekeeping and offers beekeeping classes at The Living Centre where her primary focus is on promoting natural, sustainable beekeeping where bees are adapted to the local environment.

## **Intercropping for Multiple Goals in a Vegetable System** **Senator Room**

Do you believe that plant diversity promotes health in a vegetable growing system? If so, how do you balance diversity with operation efficiency? Can you expect similar yields if you intercrop? This session will focus on the results, good and bad, for one diversified operation that uses extensive intercropping.

**Rob Faux** and his partner, Tammy, operate the Genuine Faux Farm, a small-scale, diversified farm featuring vegetables and poultry near Tripoli, Iowa, U.S. With 8 years experience with on-farm research in cooperation with Practical Farmers of Iowa and SARE, Rob also gave the first Farmer-led Research Keynote about the impact of research on his farm.

# WORKSHOPS

## **Soil Health: Enhancing the Soil and Water on Your Farm, Learning from Peers, and Measuring the Results**

### **Nottawa Room**

Facilitated by the Soil Carbon Challenge Group, this is a space for you to share what you have learned and to learn from others. Learn how to measure soil carbon and water infiltration, and why these measurements can help you answer the question “Is what I’m doing making a difference?”

*For the last 25 years, **Elin Gwyn** has used her background in sustainable agriculture and rural community development to support governments, researchers and community organizations to implement strategic, long-term solutions to make things better.*

***Ruth Knight** is passionate about soil regeneration. Since 2005, Ruth has provided coaching and consulting services to a diversity of farms, helping to develop farming systems that regenerate soil, provide farm profits, steward the landscape and grow healthy abundant food.*

**THURSDAY NOVEMBER 30**

**3:30-5:00pm**

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## **Developing New Potato Varieties for Ontario Climates**

### **Champlain Room**

Since 2013, The Bauta Family Seed Initiative in collaboration with the University of Manitoba has been running a participatory plant breeding program on potatoes with more than 20 farmers from across the country. Come learn best practices on how to grow potatoes in Ontario, and how to select and develop new potato varieties on your farm.

This session is sponsored by:



***Dr. Duane E. Falk** has been breeding cereal at the University of Guelph for 27 years where he established a successful barley and oat breeding program for Ontario. Duane currently works as the potato plant breeder for The Bauta Family Seed Initiative.*



# WORKSHOPS

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 30

3:30-5:00pm

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## **Making the Most of Your High Tunnels**

### **Senator Room**

This session will show pictures of some “best practices” being used in organic/sustainable high tunnels and greenhouses in the Northeast U.S. The practices address: tunnel design, nutrient management, soil health, pests, environmental controls, and materials handling. Bring your innovative ideas to share with the group.

*See page 10 for **Vern Grubinger’s** bio*

## **How Cost of Production Became Our #1 Tool**

### **Duntroon Room**

This session will explore why cost of production analysis may be your most valuable farm tool, as well as how to effectively capture and analyze data in the off-season and how to use the resulting information to improve all aspects of the farm.

*See page 9 for **Isabelle** and **Ryan’s** bio*

## **Soil Leaders: Communicating for the Good of the Soil**

### **Nottawa Room**

The Ontario Soil Network is a program connecting all types of farmers, challenging them to be stronger leaders and more effective communicators, with soil health as the goal. This session will highlight “conventional” cash croppers and “ecological” market gardeners as they break down these labels and tackle the important questions that Ontario agriculture so desperately needs to address.

**Joanne Feddes** *is a mixed-crop farmer who has incorporated specialty cut flowers and grass-fed cattle into the rotation, as well as a wide selection of cover crops, which has allowed more opportunity for diversity and soil preservation.*

**Kristine Hammel** *runs Persephone Market Garden, a 1.5-acre market garden along with a flock of 20 sheep. Her degrees in Environmental Studies and Organic Food Chain Management provide the big-picture perspective to complement the daily tasks of farming.*

# WORKSHOPS

## Innovations and Profitability in Grass-fed Beef Production

### Ravenna Room

Looking to fine-tune your grass-fed beef operation? These two farmers will share insights and experiences from their own grass-fed beef businesses, focusing on topics such as production, marketing, feed and grazing management to show how raising grass-fed beef can improve your soil and promote sustainability.

**David Banbury** owns and operates Banbury Grasslands just outside of Kitchener-Waterloo, where he produces top-quality 100% grass-fed beef that is direct marketed to customers. David practices high-density planned grazing where he moves his herd of 90 purebred Shorthorns daily and is constantly making improvements to his farm.

**Farmer Jim** (James Thoman), Grassland Manager and Order Processor, is responsible for producing the forage for all the grass-fed beef, lamb, pastured pork and chicken at Farmer Jim's Farm.

## FRIDAY DECEMBER 1

8:30-10:00am

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## Future Marketing of Livestock

### Dunroon Room

The meat game is changing and not just for farmers. In the near future, ordering all of your fresh food to your door will be just a few quick cellphone clicks away. Join a discussion on what decisions the butchers of today need to make to be competitive in the meat game of tomorrow.

**Andrew Sedlak** has worked in Gastown, the Kensington Market of Toronto, Kitsilano and has helped open one of the biggest restaurants in Vancouver as Head Butcher. He now runs his own consulting company with the goal of helping sustainably-minded farmers sell their meat with the flare, efficiency and recognition that their hard work deserves.



# WORKSHOPS

FRIDAY DECEMBER 1

8:30-10:00am

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## Diverse Strategies for Marketing Your Products

### Ravenna Room

Presented by the Local Food and Farm Co-ops Network, this workshop will cover an array of marketing strategies for local food producers looking to combine direct, retail and/or wholesale customers. The workshop will offer templates and a new how-to guide on local food marketing for farms and stores, and a tour of the free Canva application for creating excellent graphics.

**Susanna Redekop** works with the Local Food and Farm Co-ops Network as their Marketing Consultant. She brings her expertise as a Communications Coordinator for the West End Food Co-op (WEFC), where she leads the majority of their marketing, design, and communications.

**Peggy Baillie** works as a consultant for the Local Food and Farm Co-ops (LFFC) and operates a mixed organic farm with her partner Éric Blondin in Warren, Ontario. Before joining the LFFC, Peggy was instrumental in the growth of the Eat Local Sudbury Co-operative.

## System Innovations and Labour Management Tools

### Champlain Room

Drawing on ideas gleaned from the LEAN Farm (Ben Hartman) and Chris Blanchard, blended with 10 years of farm experience managing a combination of staff, interns and volunteers, Angie will explore practical strategies for task clarity and accountability, engaging workers in system improvements and problem-solving, and field system innovations to improve efficiency without needing new tools.

**Angie Koch** has been Farm Manager of Fertile Ground Farm for 10 years, beginning solo with only volunteer support and growing to an operation that employs 6 staff and interns each season. Fertile Ground is an organic vegetable farm with a 250-member CSA, as well as pastured laying hens.

## Innovative Watering Systems for Grass-based Farms

### Nottawa Room

This workshop will explore low-cost, simple methods for using captured water sources (rain, surface and groundwater) and low- or no-energy-input systems for the homesteader and small-scale intensive grazier.

See page 8 for **Shawn** and **Beth Dougherty's** bio.

# WORKSHOPS

## The Global Importance of Organic Weed Control

### Senator Room

As world farmers run out of chemical options, the skills and shared knowledge of organic weed control methods from traditional methods to GPS, camera-guided systems will become increasingly important. Learn about the mounting concerns about herbicides and share techniques for effective organic weed control.

This session is sponsored by:



**Simon Jacques** farms 120 acres of organic field crops, and owns an organic mushroom compost business. Simon is deeply knowledgeable about Canada's Organic Standards, and has a particular interest in the Organic Standards as they relate to crop inputs.

## FRIDAY DECEMBER 1

1:30-3:30pm

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## Case Study: Agro-Ecology in Practice at Plan B Organic Farms

### Nottawa Room

Learn how we fertilize and protect our crops using homemade inputs incorporating native plants and other low-cost materials to help us move towards a more closed-loop organic cycle.

**Alvaro Venturelli** with his wife Melanie and his brother Rodrigo operate Plan B Organic Farms, a 50-acre certified organic vegetable farm in Flamborough, Ontario, which direct markets to 1000 CSA members year round. In 2015 he became the lead farmer for Hamilton's new 2-acre Urban Farm.

## Isolation and Pollination Techniques for On-Farm Seed Production

### Senator Room

Learn about different types of isolation and pollination techniques to ensure that your seed crops grow true-to-type and how you can eliminate chances of cross-pollination. This is an essential workshop for market gardeners seeking to grow seed on their farm, or for seed producers looking to refine their techniques.

This session is sponsored by:



**Kim Delaney** runs Hawthorn Farm Organic Seeds, a certified organic seed farm producing open-pollinated vegetable, herb and flower seeds. She has started a range of on-farm vegetable breeding projects with other farmers in Ontario and is a founding member of the Eastern Canadian Organic Seed Grower's Network.

# WORKSHOPS

**FRIDAY DECEMBER 1**

**1:30-3:30pm**

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## **Small-scale Dried Bean Production: From Seed to Table**

### **Champlain Room**

Come learn from Ahren's 15 years of experience growing dried beans on a small scale, including equipment requirements and production innovations to soil health considerations, seed saving, marketing and the finances of the operation.

***Ahren Hughes** farms 1 acre of asparagus, 20 acres of dried beans, and a 2000-log shiitake mushroom operation. Most of the production is sold wholesale to other farms that sell his products at farmers' markets and to their CSA members, a few health food stores, a few restaurants and some online food-delivery businesses.*

## **Across the Certifier's Desk: An Overview of Organic Certification and Interesting Certifying Oddities**

### **Duntroon Room**

If you are interested in converting your operation to organic, this is a workshop you will not want to miss. A panel of Ontario organic certification experts will discuss the high-level federal organic regulation, the new organic legislation being proposed in Ontario, as well as some real-life examples of what you can expect from a certifier and certified farmer.

See page 6 for **Lauren Martin's** bio. See page 11 for **Seb Ramirez's** bio

***Carolyn Young** is the new Executive Director of the Organic Council of Ontario (OCO) where she has been campaigning for organic regulation in Ontario. Prior to joining OCO, Carolyn worked as the Director of Sustain Ontario, the alliance for healthy food and farming.*

***Joel Aitken** is Inspection Coordinator with Ecocert Canada, managing the English inspection team in the Maritime provinces, Ontario and the Western provinces. He also works as a certification consultant helping start-ups and established businesses develop their organic system plans and record-keeping systems.*

## **Organic Orchard Management**

### **Ravenna Room**

Learn the ins and outs of running a viable organic orchard. Hear how Appletop Farm runs their biodynamic and organic apple business from managing pests and disease to making use of imperfect fruit.

***Pat Johnson** purchased Appletop Farm in 1986 where he and his wife Helena started their organic apple orchard business. Appletop Farm has been certified organic since 1994 and Pat has been farming using biodynamic practices for the last 5 years.*

## OPEN FORUM SESSIONS

**Thursday 8:30-10:00am, 1:30-3:00pm and 3:30-5:00pm; Friday 8:30-10:00am and 1:30-3:00pm**  
**Spectacular I**

Open forum sessions are an opportunity for you to host a workshop at the conference, free-school style or moderate a conversation you're interested in, Kitchen Table Meeting style. Is there a gap in the program that you think you can fill? Is there a special skill or innovation that you can share with the group? Is there a discussion topic you'd like to facilitate? Sign up at registration to host a session or stop by to vote for a session you would like to attend.



### **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 **[www.efao.ca](http://www.efao.ca)** or ask at the conference registration desk.



# TRADE SHOW

**Thursday, November 30, 8:00am-6:00pm** (reception in Trade Show 5:00-6:00pm)

**Friday, December 1, 8:00am-3:00pm**

**Kandahar**

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

## Exhibitors

The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security

Brussels Agri Services Ltd.

Dubois Agrinovation

Earth Haven Learning Centre

Ecocert

Frontlink

Guelph Organic Conference

Highland Supply

Homestead Organics

Innovative Bio-Logics

Local Food and Farm Co-ops

Multi Shelter Solutions

National Farmers Union – Canada

Ontario Soil Network

Organic Council of Ontario

Seeds of Diversity

Tek-Mac Enterprises

Chicken Farmers of Ontario

USC Canada





# MEALS

We have been working with the chef and her team at the Blue Mountain Inn to feature a variety of local and ecological foods for our conference meals. Thank you to our food contributors for helping to make this possible.

Beau's All Natural Brewing Company

Blackshire Gardens

Burdock Grove Farm

Dags & Willow Fine Cheese & Gourmet Shop

Fertile Ground Farm

Fiddle Foot Farm

Good Family Farms

Harmony Organic

Kolapore Gardens

Manorun Organic Farm

Pfenning's Organic Farm

River's Edge Goat Dairy

Southbrook Vineyards

The New Farm

Whole Circle Farm

Yorkshire Valley Farms



# SPECIAL FEATURES

## **EFAO Annual General Meeting**

**Thursday 11:30am, Weider Room**

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Agenda:

1. Approve Agenda
2. Approve Minutes from 2016 AGM
3. President's Address
4. Presentation of Annual Report
5. Presentation of Audited Financial Statements (Appointment of Auditors for 2017)
6. Board Elections
7. Adjourn

## **Trade Show Reception and Heritage Grain Tasting**

**Trade Show Lobby, Thursday 5:00-6:00pm**

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Join us for a casual reception in the Trade Show before the Banquet Dinner to celebrate local grain and cheese producers, while taking time to peruse and chat with Trade Show exhibitors. Walk through the Trade Show booths, bid on silent auction items, and chat with other conference-goers, while enjoying fresh baked bread and an assortment of cheeses and preserves. The bread tasting will feature organic heritage varieties of grain. Taste and explore the flavours of specialized varieties of wheat, rye and oats! There will be a cash bar.



## **Thursday Banquet Dinner and Daisy Award Ceremony**

**Thursday 6:30pm**

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Enjoy an organic banquet dinner followed by the EFAO Member Recognition Ceremony and an evening of dancing with the Grand River Ramblers!

For this year's Daisy Award Ceremony, we've invited members to nominate EFAO members who they feel should be recognized in some way, any way. Drawing inspiration from Stuart McLean and the Vinyl Cafe's Arthur Awards, we asked EFAO members to help design the awards and recognition handed out at this ceremony. Are there people in your life who have offered help, inspiration, friendship, or education who you think should be thanked or acknowledged? We want to hear about them! Visit us at the registration desk to submit your nomination.

Doors and bar open at 6:00pm.

Dinner served at 6:30pm.

Band at 8:00pm!

# SPECIAL FEATURES

## Silent Auction Kandahar

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EFAO members, sponsors and other supporters have generously shared their talents, products and specialty items for our Silent Auction. Proceeds will go toward supporting EFAO's educational programs and services. The Silent Auction will open at 6:00pm on Wednesday evening and close at 12:00pm on Friday. Cash, cheque and credit card payments will be accepted.



## Childcare/Family Room Bay Street Room

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Childcare is available Thursday and Friday from 8:15am until the end of the day (with the exception of lunchtime). Please come to the registration desk if you have not already registered for childcare. You will only need to pay for your child's meals – those under 6 are free and those 6 to 12 will be \$12.00 + HST.

Parents, please be sure to send your children to the childcare room with snacks, diapers and anything else they may need for their stay. We will gladly accept donations to EFAO in lieu of payment.



## Carrot Cache \$1,000 Innovation Prize!

Carrot Cache is offering a \$1,000 prize for innovative, low-cost solutions to planting, harvesting and managing food grown on an Ontario urban or rural organic farm. Farmers can share proven, creative ways already in use on-farm to build financial and environmental sustainability.

Know someone who is too humble to nominate their own innovations? You can nominate a fellow farmer-innovator. Ideas will be displayed by the registration desk and winners will be selected by conference attendees. The winner will be posted after lunch on Friday, December 1. Don't forget to come and vote for your favourite!

# COMMUNITY MEETINGS

**FRIDAY, 12:00PM-1:15PM**

## **Producer Focus Group: Transitioning to Organic Production**

Canadian Organic Growers

**Ravenna Room**

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Canadian Organic Growers has spent the last few months working with farmers like you to identify the main costs and barriers involved in transitioning to organic production. Now it's time to validate our findings – so we need to hear your story! You should attend our focus group if you are interested in transitioning to organic; have started to transition but stopped; have successfully completed the transition; have been organic from the start; or are a producer that wants to tell us how we can support transition.

Outcomes of this work will benefit organic and transitioning farmers across the country. Save your spot at the table – RSVP at the registration desk.

## **Get the Dirt on your Value Proposition**

South Georgian Bay Small Business Enterprise Centre

**Nottawa Room**

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An informal yet interactive “Community-style Meeting” in which you will meet like-minded entrepreneurs and have authentic conversations about things that matter to you and your business. This session will explore, using the customer discovery model, a view of your business from the perspective of “the jobs the customers want to be done.” From here, we'll guide the discussion toward identification of your value proposition and making sure you are delivering the right message to your customers. This session is ideally suited to new farm businesses.

## **Building a Network of Local Food Advocates**

National Farmers Union

**Duntroon Room**

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Come learn about the NFU's new Local Food Advocates Influencer Network! We want to bring together Local Food Advocates in fields like healthcare, education, the arts, and faith communities, which have special influence over the decisions made by eaters and institutions. By working together, we can support local food and help make our communities healthier, fairer and more connected.

## **Northeast Committee Meet and Greet**

**Weider Room**

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Calling all northerners! Join the EFAO Northeast Committee for an informal lunch meeting to get to know other northern Ontario farmers and make plans for workshops, field days and kitchen table meetings in the north for the coming year.

# COMMUNITY MEETINGS

## **Vegetable Farmer and Seed Grower Consultation: Variety Needs Assessment and Consultation**

The Bauta Family Seed Initiative

**Champlain Room**

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Every year more and more vegetable farmers are integrating seeds onto their farms. The next step towards building a resilient regional seed system is to create new varieties that are adapted to local farming conditions. The Bauta Family Seed Initiative is planning to launch Canada's first participatory plant breeding program on vegetables in 2018. The first step towards creating new vegetable varieties is to talk to farmers about the varieties they would like to see! This session is a consultation that is open to all vegetable farmers – whether you grow seed or not – to discuss the qualities of your favourite varieties, the characteristics you would like to see for new vegetable varieties, and how you would like to save seed from them, or improve them to create new varieties on your farm.

## **Consulting on Bill 153: The Ontario Organic Act**

Organic Council of Ontario

**Senator Room**

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Ontario currently does not regulate the use of the term “organic” on products that are traded within the province and that do not bear the Canada Organic Logo. The Organic Council of Ontario partnered to introduce Bill 153, the Organic Products Act, with two MPPs from the NDP and PC parties this September. The bill will be going to second reading in November. This session will outline legislation currently being considered by the Ontario government and engage participants in a consultation on how best to ensure fair and transparent labelling while assuring small-scale farmers are not overly penalized or burdened. Come share your feedback on a made-in-Ontario and small-scale appropriate solution!

## **Farmer-led App Development for Sustainable Farmers**

University of British Columbia

**Spectacular Room I**

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Do you have difficulty balancing environmental, social, and economic outcomes of your farming business? Do you see a need for new digital technologies in ecological farming? In two special workshops the EFAO and researchers at the University of British Columbia have teamed up to hash out the landscape of digital technology use and needs in the EFAO network. So grab your lunch and pop into one of our quick 30 minute workshops on Friday afternoon:

- 12:00-12:30pm
- 12:40-1:10pm



## Supporting Ecological & Organic Growers for Nearly 45 Years



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**Ecocert Canada is proud to support the EFAO once again this year! Happy growing for 2018!**

Did you know we offer \$175 off organic certification if you also become certified biodynamic? Or, that our regular fees are to scale based on size?

For more information, visit our booth at the Conference trade show or contact: Eric Payseur at 226-314-0748, ext. 141 or [eric.payseur@ecocert.com](mailto:eric.payseur@ecocert.com).

# THANK YOU!

This conference would not have been possible without the hard work and generosity of our Supporting Partners, Sponsors (see inside front cover) and the following individuals:

**Conference Organizing EFAO Staff:** Allison Muckle (Acting Executive Director), Naomi Krucker (Membership Service Coordinator), Martina Schaefer (Office Coordinator), Sarah Hargreaves (Farmer-led Research Program Manager), Katie Baikie (Membership Services Program Manager)

**Conference Program Advisory Committee:** Ken Laing, Brent Preston, Nicola Inglefield, Aabir Dey, Angie Koch, Harris Ivens, Ayla Fenton, Jen Seilern, Heather Coffey, Peggy Baillie, Tarrah Young, Cindy Phillips, Jeff Boesch & Leslie Moskovits, Jessica Gale, Paul DeJong, Mike Reid, Ann Slater, Shelley Spruit

**Conference Volunteers:** Sebastian Ramirez, Dan Naccarato, Aabir Dey, Peggy Baillie, Sally Miller, Heather Coffey, Shannon Lee Stirling, Rebecca Pearce, Michael Pavan, Fan-Ling Suen, Tori Waugh, Mel Luymes, Carolyn Young

**Photographer:** Mike Smith

**About the Artwork:** “This year I had the opportunity to create a piece for the 2017 EFAO conference. The theme of the conference is “Rebuilding Rural Economies from the Ground Up,” so the words resilience, vitality and collaboration were at the centre of my thoughts while I was sketching up ideas. I wanted to showcase a vibrant community, working side by side in order to bring something to life. I thought that using the central image of a woman being woken from a deep sleep was an interesting



way of depicting the idea of bolstering social and economic vitality. I wanted this painting to illustrate some of the elements that build rural economies: tender care for the land we inhabit and make our living off of, tender care for our hardworking bodies and for each other, collaboration with our neighbours, and the rebuilding of culture and intentional ceremony in our rural communities. I know there are so many pieces to the puzzle, but I hope this painting gives you some ideas in starting this conversation.” – Jenna Kessler, artist and farmer. [www.jennakessler.com](http://www.jennakessler.com) Look for the original artwork available for bidding at the Silent Auction.

**JOIN US in LONDON in  
2018 for the 5th ANNUAL  
ECOLOGICAL FARMERS OF  
ONTARIO CONFERENCE!**

**CONTACT US**  
[efao.ca](http://efao.ca) | 1-877-822-8606



**Ecological Farmers**  
ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO



