Ontario’s Food Security and Sustainable Agricultural System: A Case Study of the Impacts Planning Policies Have on Anabaptist and other Small-Scale Farmers

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Eating is an Agricultural Act

- Wendell Berry
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Abstract

Ontario’s agricultural industry is constantly evolving. What was once an industry made of small-scale family farmers, is now becoming more industrialized to meet the demands of factors such as globalization and trade agreements. While the vast majority of these farms are still family owned, they are simply becoming bigger in size than they used to be. This raises the point that for Ontario to have a sustainable agricultural industry, and better food security, attention must not focus solely on large-scale farming. Rather, attention must also be given to small-scale farmers. While large-scale farmers have the ability to provide large amounts of food to large populations of people, small-scale farmers have the ability to provide quality, local food to their surrounding communities. With this, it is important to ensure a balanced approach to policy planning is enacted to better promote the cooperation of local food initiatives and large-scale cropping in addressing food security issues across Ontario.

This paper sets out to spark a discussion around how three Ontario Provincial level planning policies have an impact on small-scale farming operations. To do so, many methods are implemented to provide a solid foundation on the topic. The researcher utilizes a literature review of food security and agricultural sustainability, a document review of the three planning policies, semi structured interviews with sixteen Anabaptist farmers from two rural communities in Ontario, and an Official Plan review of these two communities. Together these methods serve to discuss how the current planning policies affect these farmers.
Chapter 1: Introduction

The Province of Ontario currently produces an abundance of diverse foods that contribute to a buoyant agricultural sector. However, with the expected population boom over the next twenty years, ensuring the province maintains its food production is a continuously evolving challenge that needs immediate attention. The current state of agriculture in Ontario is geared towards bigger farms with high yields that export the food out of the local communities. It is important to indicate that economies of scale and trade agreements play a major role in the creation of these bigger farms as they have the ability to efficiently handle such agreements. These large-scale farms do have a significant impact on the agricultural industry and Ontario’s economy and therefore, it is important to ensure their survival. This research, however, is intended to bring attention to small farms and highlight their capability of producing high quality yields for the local communities surrounding them. To do so, the research is expected to highlight how Ontario’s policy driven planning system has an impact on small-scale farmers’ abilities to produce locally grown food for surrounding communities. The research is not intended to bring about recommendations on how to change or modify the current planning system, rather it serves to spark a discussion on the topic. It is believed the current agricultural system is not the only way to develop a food secure province, instead the research paper will discuss how local food and food security can be addressed through the promotion of a sustainable agricultural system for small-scale farmers. While the research focuses on small-scale farmers, the researcher does appreciate the fact that an overall more balanced approach to provincial planning
decisions must be established as small-scale and large-scale producers must work together to build a sustainable agricultural system and a food secure Ontario.

**Problem Statement**

As Ontario’s planning policies continue to evolve, a greater emphasis has been placed on farm consolidations and creating larger farming parcels. Provincial policy makers and other subject matter experts believe that Ontario’s agricultural sector will thrive by promoting larger farming operations to, among other reasons, ensure less fragmentation throughout the system. These policies are beneficial to large-scale farmers and industrial type farming operations; however, an argument can be made that such policies, coupled with factors such as continuously increasing land prices, have negative implication for the survival of small-scale farmers who are governed by such policies. This research identifies three planning policies that influence small-scale farmers’ abilities to compete in the agri-food industry across the Province of Ontario. The research offers a discussion on how these policies can either positively or negatively influence such farmers in their promotion of local food initiatives and overall food security.

**Goals and Objectives**

The goal of this research is to discuss the potential of small-scale farming as a viable and sustainable option to address food security and increase food production across Ontario. Small-scale farmers have the capabilities of providing fresh, healthy, and affordable food to their surrounding local populations. From a planning perspective, it is important that policy makers ensure policies are in place that will foster the growth
and development of such small-scale farmers. The objectives of this research are to provide:

1. An assessment of the literature pertaining to the capabilities of small-scale farmers in providing local food and ensuring food security.
2. A description and analysis of the following three planning policies and their relations to small-scale farmers.
   a. Lot creation and severance policies in agricultural areas;
   b. Minimum farm size policies; and
   c. On-farm diversification policies
3. Two case studies on how such policies effect two different Anabaptist communities across Ontario.
4. A discussion on how the above noted policies impact small-scale farmers’ ability to successfully provide local food to communities across Ontario.

Methodology

This major research paper explores the impacts planning policies can have on addressing food security and the promotion of local food initiatives across Ontario. The analysis was completed with two case studies in the District of Algoma and County of Huron. Data required for this study includes academic and professional knowledge on local food policies, farmland preservation methods, food security strategies, and sustainable agricultural systems. Four methods have been chosen to acquire the type of data required:
1. A detailed literature review on the current research surrounding local food strategies and sustainable agricultural systems.

2. A thorough document review on the current planning documents as previously outlined in this paper.

3. Other qualitative techniques such as key informant semi-structured interviews with small-scale farmers with a particular focus on Anabaptist farmers.

4. Extensive reviews of the local Municipal Official Plans pertaining to the locations of the interviewees.

Prior to field work in the District of Algoma and the County of Huron, the researcher utilized electronic databases and physical libraries to develop a literature review. The literature review was conducted to provide an overview and background to the issues, while serving to define the context of the topic of sustainable agricultural systems and food security. Literature on both topics is plentiful, therefore having to review other topics was unnecessary.

The researcher provides more background analysis to the issue through a document review. The document review utilized electronic databases to focus on the Province of Ontario's planning system. An overview of the Planning Act, the Provincial Policy Statement and provincial planning documents are outlined. A detailed breakdown of the following specific policies follows: farm size policies, lot creation and severance policies, and on-farm diversification policies. An analysis of Ontario's population projections through the next fifteen to twenty years is also included.

Grounded in the context from the literature review and document review, this research utilizes a case study approach to gather primary data surrounding issues
small-scale farmers face with Ontario’s current planning policies. While the research takes a mixed methods approach, the researcher utilizes semi-structured interviews during in-field data collection. The case studies are then built off these interviews with the aim of providing the basis for promoting the creation of planning policies that aid small-scale farmers rather than hinder their production abilities.

To further strengthen the research, the researcher provides an analysis of the current Municipal Official Plans that govern the regions in which the farmers operate. This review is meant to demonstrate the types of policies in effect surrounding agriculturally designated lands, and examines any potential variations in such policies between the regions. This methodology is utilized to better understand the effects planning policies have on small-scale farming operations.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

This literature review will examine the relationship between food security and sustainable agricultural practices through various research papers, articles and books published by North American-based Authors, and accredited scholars and researchers. Within each policy section of this review, an examination of how the relevant polices affect Anabaptist farm operations across Ontario will be illustrated.

Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture

Defining Food Security

An analysis of Ontario’s planning documents revealed that although the province has set out numerous policies throughout their many documents, not one has a definition for food security. It would seem difficult to plan to be food secure when the province has not indicated how it defines the term. This paper will utilize the definition of food security from the 1996 World Food Summit Declaration, as it has become the most generally accepted definition of the term worldwide:

“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”

This definition includes four components that have a direct impact on food security. The first is the availability of sufficient quantities of food of appropriate quality, supplied through domestic production or imports. The second is access by individuals to adequate resources for acquiring appropriate foods for a nutritious diet. The third is the utilization of food through adequate diet, clean water, sanitation and health care to
reach a state of nutritional well-being where all physiological needs are met. The final dimension is the stability in the availability of and access to food, regardless of sudden shocks or cyclical events. While this research paper focuses on promoting local food production through small-scale farmers, the concept of food security does not exclusively pertain to local food production. Small-scale and large-scale farmers must work together to provide greater access to food across Ontario, thus building food security together.

**Climate Change Impacts**

The creation of both healthy food systems and sustainable agricultural practices are complex because there is no single solution which planners and policy makers can be expected to create to ensure unlimited food security across the province. What they should be expected to do is their part in ensuring Ontario's planning system is promoting healthy food systems and sustainable agricultural practices. For example, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) contends that climate change and food security are highly interconnected. The rationale is that as the climate changes, temperature and precipitation variability significantly increases, while the predictability of seasonal weather patterns is reduced and replaced with increasing amounts of intense severe weather related events (FAO, 2016, p. 22).

Lengnick (2015) contributes to the knowledge of climate change by outlining expected changes to weather patterns, increased rainfall, and the increase in the number of frost free days in the USA. Lengnick addresses measures to ensure a resilient agricultural and food system in a changing climate (Lengnick, 2015, pp. 46-53).
These changes in weather patterns could significantly impact the success of agricultural activities, which in turn would impact food security around the world.

The reality is that planners in Ontario can only do their part within the context of Ontario. While the effects of climate change are expected to negatively impact the yields of major crops across North America, the FAO expects that crops in the Great Lakes region will see an increase in crop yields due to the changing climate (FAO, 2016, p. 24). If these expectations happen, Ontario can then expect to see a large increase in productivity among existing farming operations. The potential for higher crop productivity in southwestern Ontario is a reality which planners and policy makers must take into consideration to ensure the additional production can be handled.

*Food Systems of Today*

Globalization has played a key role in shaping agricultural and food systems around the world, and many authors and researchers, whose careers are spent analyzing food systems, are becoming critical of the food system which has been shaped because of this. In his article, Dr. William Heffernan, refers to the food system as having the shape of an hour glass. The top is populated with many farmers producing the food, while the bottom is populated with a larger number of customers who consume the food. The middle of the system is occupied by a small number of companies who control the movement of food from the producers to the consumers (Heffernan, Hendrickson, & Gronski, 1999, p. 1). Essentially, they argue that globalization has created a concentrated food system in which a small number of capitalistic companies retain power over the producers and consumers.
Further research seems to support this statement, as a 2016 study conducted by Howard found that just forty companies in the entire world control the vast majority of the global food system. These multinational corporations are some of the largest in the world and each compete for market share over various industries that make up the food system. These industries, and examples of companies that control them are: 1) packaged foods and beverages (Coca-Cola); 2) retail (Walmart); 3) agricultural inputs (Monsanto); 4) commodity processing (Archer Daniels Midland) and 5) distribution (Sysco). Howard notes that the production of the crops, the basic and arguably most important segment of the entire system, does not have concentrated control over it by any one sizable firm (p. 13), it is however, becoming more concentrated in fewer, bigger family farms.

Ultimately, small-scale farms simply cannot supply these large companies with the amount of produce or food they would constantly require and are forced to compete against the large-scale farms which often have contracts with these companies to ensure a constant supply and competitive income. If profit maximization is the top priority of these controlling companies, potential food security issues could arise in the future as they will not be as focused on the real issue at hand - ensuring people are properly fed. From this, the industrial concentration in the agri-food industry erodes fundamental food system.

In addition to a more concentrated and industrialized food system, governmental policies and laws tend to have a greater focus on supporting larger-scale food production in the agricultural industry. Small-scale farmers are not only bound to the various policies when attempting to diversify, but are also regulated by the same
policies as large-scale farmers. While many small-scale farmers are able to find ways to cope with these policies, it is almost getting to the point where it is disadvantageous to operate a small-scale operation. Linnekin (2016) critically analyzed current laws governing today’s food systems. These laws include 1) food safety rules that needlessly harm sustainable food producers and their customers, 2) rules that encourage less sustainable food practices and discourage more sustainable ones, 3) rules that promote food waste, and 4) rules that prevent people from using traditional practices to make, obtain, and provide food outside the commercial mainstream (176). Linnekin further argues there is room for ‘good’ rules that consider and embrace sustainable food practices. A shift in laws to allow for more sustainable agricultural activities, aligned with corresponding policies that allow for easy application of these laws is an initial step forward to ensuring food security.

**Food Systems of Tomorrow**

After critically analyzing the current state of today’s food system, it is clear that researchers are critical of an industrialized food system and are prepared to offer methods or suggestions on how to alter the system to ensure food security. The issue of industrialization is not a new concept yet has, according to *From Land to Mouth - Understanding the Food System* author Kneen (1995), “the most visible and violent consequences… on [North American] rural communities, including both infrastructure and population” (p. 121). Kneen elaborates and argues that evidence of this has been demonstrated through the closure of rail branch lines, grain elevators, milk routes, machinery dealers, schools, and community services, to name a few, and that these closures have “destroyed the viability of rural communities across the nation” (p. 121).
Another criticism is that Ontario’s food system is broken from an affordability point of view. Researchers at *The Stop: Community Food Centre* have indicated that low-income levels among some Ontarians leave many struggling to purchase healthy food as they are unable to afford basic necessities. They further suggest that of all household expenses clothing, or heating-related costs tend to be less negotiable whereas food costs are more flexible (Scharf, Levkoe, & Saul, 2010, p. 12-13) and consistently rising. Thus, these lower income families rely more heavily on coupons, food vouchers, or food banks, or consume cheaper, more calorie-dense processed foods. This criticism is further argued by researchers Darryl Benjamin and Lyndon Virkler in their acknowledgement of the remarkable achievement that the industrial food system has created an abundance of diverse foods for consumers. However, their research indicates that these foods are only available to those who can afford it (Benjamin & Virkler, 2016, p. 23). With cheaper foods being the most widely available and convenient (as ready-to-eat or on-the-go meals), they tend to be most often consumed. This indication suggests there is a greater need for more access to affordable, healthy local food.

To combat industrial agriculture and increasing food costs, the concept of self-reliant food economies has begun to surface. These self-reliant food economies are food systems that are organically, bio-regionally, and community based – something that Kneen claims is a direct opposite of the current industrial system because “Instead of following the centralizing and destructive logic of industrial capitalist food, this food system will follow the decentralizing and integrating logic of diversity and interaction and the nurturing of biological and human communities” (Kneen, 1995, p. 124). Kneen
argues in order to achieve such a system, these systems must be sustainable. Sustainability would not only require greater amounts of smaller production units, but nutrient and organic matter must be utilized more over commercial fertilizer, and the need for transnational corporations\(^1\) within the system must be reduced. In short, a shift from industrial food systems to local, smaller scale farming practices can help contribute to a more sustainable agricultural system.

The creation of these sustainable, self-reliant food systems has not been without its challenges:

“As the sustainable agriculture movement gained momentum through the 1980s and 90s, an increasingly global, concentrated and corporate US food system presented formidable barriers to the widespread adoption of sustainable production systems, and local food emerged as a sustainable solution” (Lengnick, 2015, p. 317).

With the North American economy based heavily on capitalism, international trade and free market ventures, it can be difficult for governments to regulate the amount of competition and concentration within the food system. Although new, potentially more sustainable practices have been introduced into the food system, government policies combined with competition from existing companies create a large barrier to entry for these smaller operations. Despite the writing that denounces the current food system, there is no simple way to modify or regulate the system to ensure

\(^1\) As mentioned by Philip H. Howard in his book ‘Concentration and Power in the Food System’, these transnational corporations have concentrated power over the following industries within the food system: packaged foods and beverages, retail, agricultural inputs, commodities, and distribution (Howard, 2016).
total food security. That said, the promotion of local food and policies to support local food in niche markets is a viable step towards food security.

The creation of a local food system provides many opportunities for rural community economic expansion across Ontario, and Canada. There has been a recent shift in attitude for the desire of greater food accountability, and fresh and high quality foods in urban centres (Scharf, Levkoe, & Saul, 2010, p. 14). Strategies to move towards a network of community food centres across Ontario would not only improve community and regional level food security, but would help satisfy the change in attitude for healthy, high quality local food across Ontario.

Although the creation of a local food system is an avenue that can aid in addressing food security, farmers are faced with yet another immense challenge – climate change. Farmers in general need to learn, plan and adapt to changing climate conditions to ensure a local food system can be maintained. There is a need to create policies that support farmers by managing risks associated with climate change (Lengnick, 2015). Only when farmers are supported by communities and government polices for the long-term success of local food initiatives, will agriculture then be one step closer to being resilient and sustainable.

Successful food systems require the support from all levels of government. “Government mechanisms in the context of local or alternative food systems offer an alternative to the dominant, industrial, and increasingly problematic global food system”

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2 As mentioned earlier in the paper, food security issues will not inherently be solved exclusively through the establishment of local food systems. Other avenues include but are not limited to sustainable large-scale farming operations, and the utilization of trade agreements between neighbouring communities, regions, provinces, or even countries.
While Ontario is governed by a policy-driven planning system, it is expected the province will issue policies to support local food systems. However, other government initiatives, such as education on the importance of fresh food or financial support for local food initiatives (i.e. farmers’ markets) are ways to accelerate the success of local food systems. Overall, the literature illustrates the need for many changes from many stakeholders to promote local food. Sustainable local food systems across Ontario aid in ensuring food security at the micro level, while an overall sustainable and resilient agricultural system across Ontario will aid in ensuring food security at the macro level.

Anabaptist Communities and Local Food

As modern farming continues to grow into a competitive, industrialized agricultural system, the Anabaptist communities of Ontario continue with the farming practices that they were entrenched with hundreds of years ago. While modern agriculture is arguably becoming unsustainable through its industrialized nature, a look at agricultural practices of the Anabaptist communities reveals a way to potentially increase the level of sustainability through a blend between small-scale and large-scale producers. The argument behind this stems to the fact that Anabaptist and other small-scale farmers need to utilize all possible aspects to ensure survival. This level of diversification and care required allows these farmers to produce high quality crops for niche markets and local communities. The most visible indicator is that the traditional Anabaptist farming practices have not changed greatly since the beginning of their culture, and today they still maintain a large presence in many communities across Europe and North America. Although this small-scale, horse-drawn way of farming does
not have as high of a potential at making large financial gains as compared to large scale industrial farming, it does provide the Mennonite and Amish families with a modest level of income. In addition, there are fewer expenses and financial risks as compared to modern farms (Stinner, Paolett, & Stinner, 1989, p. 85). These financial risks, difficulties, and expenses are some of the key factors forcing modern farmers to sell their farms. While modern farmers may face these factors, many Anabaptist communities do not as heavily face them, or have diversified potential risks away.

There are substantial differences between large-scale and small-scale farming, such as the tendency to be less reliant on outside sources of energy, employing mixed cropping and livestock systems that help replenish soil organic matter and nutrients, generating higher levels of on-farm biodiversity, higher levels of engagement and trust with customers, and lower levels of risk due to diversified sources of on-farm income (Andrée, 2009, p. 16). These are all elements that are commonly found in Anabaptist communities and farms and contribute to higher levels of agricultural sustainability and food security.

The Anabaptist communities are both sustainable and promote food security across Ontario. If policy makers are to promote local food initiatives and small-scale farming across the province, Mennonite and Amish farming practices should be consulted to ensure practical and applicable policies are created to promote these initiatives. “Many of the basic principles of Amish agriculture such as diversification, crop rotations, use of animal and green manures are feasible for small-scale non-Amish farmers seeking to farm with lower chemical inputs than conventional systems require” (Stinner, Paolett, & Stinner, 1989, p. 86). Overall, increasing the promotion of viable
small-scale farms through policy framework will greatly aid the Mennonite and Amish farmers in the expansion of their local food networks across Ontario. These local food expansions, together with other established farming and trading methods will work together in the creation of a sustainable agricultural industry. A sustainable agricultural system is the foundation to a food secure province.

**Conclusion**

The need for Ontario to secure a local food system that is not only sustainable but affordable and healthy is an overarching argument of this paper. To promote a resilient food system, all the previously mentioned topics need to be properly utilized and understood to ensure a local food system functions efficiently. This literature review set out to understand what the current literature is surrounding food security, and local food systems. Connections are also made to examine how small-scale farmers, such as Anabaptist farmers can add value to Ontario’s food system by enhancing local food initiatives and filling niche markets where large-scale farmers may be unable to do so.
Chapter 3: Document Review

This document review will first begin by examining population projections, published by three different organizations: 1) The United Nations, 2) Statistics Canada, and 3) The Ontario Ministry of Finance, throughout Ontario, Canada and the World for the remainder of the 21st century. It is important to understand these projections as the projected addition of billions of people could become a burden on global agricultural systems to ensure there is an adequate food supply. Next, Ontario’s provincial planning documents will be reviewed and analyzed to showcase the existing framework to support local food initiatives and food security across the province. Individual policies pertaining to minimum farm size, lot creation and severances, and permitted diversified uses in prime agricultural areas will be examined and critiqued. Within each policy section of this review, an examination of how the relevant polices affect Anabaptist farm operations across Ontario will be illustrated. The semi-structured interviews in this research were conducted with Anabaptist farmers in Ontario. While Anabaptist farmers have their own traditions and unique approach to agriculture, their labour-intensive way of life limits them to operating as small-scale farmers. For this reason, this research paper examines Anabaptist farmers as small-scale farmers, making it important to establish connections between Ontario’s current planning policies and those Anabaptist communities. Mennonites are self-sufficient and small-scale farmers who are capable of aiding in local food initiatives through their labour-intensive farming techniques. As planners, it is our job to establish supportive planning policies that do not conflict or hinder their ability to support local food initiatives and build food security within their regions. The correct implementation of realistic planning policies across Ontario is vital
to promoting local food initiatives as it is these policies that establish the foundation for what is permitted and what is not. Overall, the promotion of small-scale farms, as seen through the success of the Anabaptist communities, is a necessary component to successful local food strategies across Ontario.

Population Projections

As the world population continues to rapidly increase, planning professionals and policy developers alike are faced with the task of ensuring there will be enough agricultural land, supported by a thriving agricultural system, to produce the necessary food supply to sustain this rapidly growing population. According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the world population in 2015 was estimated to be approximately 7.5 billion people. This number is expected to increase to 8.5 billion people by 2030, 9.7 billion by 2050, and 11.2 billion by 2100. In comparison, Canada’s population was approximately 36 million in 2015 and is expected to grow to 40 million by 2030, 44 million by 2050, and 50 million by 2100 (United Nations, 2015, p. 18). The projected Canadian population increases may not be as extenuating as the global projections, but they are still significant when considering the fact that the amount of acreage of productive agricultural soils cannot be easily increased. Canadian policy makers across the provinces and territories recognize the impracticable nature of a country attempting to create food security policies which ensure global food security. The rationale here is that focusing on Canadian growth pressures allows policy makers

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3 Although forest covered land can be cleared and re-claimed as farmland, it takes many years to build up the organic soil content before the land is truly productive enough to get yields required to make it sustainable.
to better ensure food security only on a national level and, in turn, better direct local food initiatives.

When examining Canadian population projections as calculated by Statistics Canada, the estimated population in 2038 ranges between 39.4 million (using a low growth scenario model) and 47.8 million (using a high growth scenario). Ontario's population growth within the same time period, and using the same metrics, is projected to range between 14.8 million and 18.3 million (Statistics Canada, 2015). In addition to these Canadian wide projections, the Ontario Ministry of Finance calculated its own projections at the provincial level. These calculations estimate the province will grow from 13.8 million in 2015 to between 15.9 million (using a low growth scenario) and 19.3 million (using a high growth scenario) in 2038. Under a high growth scenario, the Ministry expects the Province to grow to 17.5 million in 2031 and 20 million people by 2041 (Ministry of Finance, 2016).

It is worth noting that the three agencies above that conducted the analysis produced significantly different numbers. These numbers are just projections and are not necessarily guaranteed to reflect the exact population in the future – they merely serve to aid professionals in making educated decisions in their attempts to ensure future food security. However, when policy makers are tasked with creating relevant and applicable food security policies, it can be challenging to create such policies when they are presented with three disparate population projections. For instance, the 2038 high growth scenarios between Statistics Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Finance differ by one million people. When considering Ontario’s population in 2015 was less than
fourteen million in 2015, the potential one million people difference is a large number of people that would hypothetically need to be fed.

**The Planning Act and Provincial Policy Statement**

Ontario is governed by a top-down policy-led planning system\(^4\) which gives the Provincial Government power over all planning matters within the Province of Ontario through the utilization of applicable policies. One such policy is The Planning Act\(^5\), Ontario’s overarching piece of legislation that determines planning framework across the Province and sets the foundation for which all upper, lower and single tier municipalities must adhere to (Government of Ontario, 2015). Section 3 of the Planning Act gave legislative authority for the issuance of The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), a governing provincial policy document that provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. (MMAH, 2014, p. 1). The policies within the PPS outline the minimum standards the Ontario Government has established to regulate land use planning across the province. To ensure policies such as the PPS are followed, Section 3 of the Planning Act states all municipalities within Ontario must *be consistent with* policy statements issued under the Act.

**Other Provincial Planning Documents**

Other policy documents issued under the Planning Act include 1) Places to Grow\(^6\) - which has issued a Growth Plan for Northern Ontario and a Growth Plan for the

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\(^4\) It is important to note that while Ontario is governed by a top-down policy-led planning system, many of the provincial policies existing today initially started as municipal level policies. These policies have since been implemented across the province. Thus, indicating municipal is valued to better the system as a whole.

\(^5\) To read Ontario’s Planning Act in its entirety, go to: https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p13

\(^6\) Places to Grow is not a policy document in of itself. Rather it is a legislative Act that lead to the issuance of two regional growth management policies in Ontario.
Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH); 2) the Niagara Escarpment Plan; 3) the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan; and 4) the Greenbelt Plan. These documents are intended to supplement the direction set out by the PPS. While the PPS is a provincial-wide document, these other plans instead focus on specific geographical regions within Ontario. While some of these more concentrated plans follow political boundaries, others may follow geographical features.

2006 and Proposed 2016 Growth Plans for the GGH

As of spring 2015, the provincial government had initiated a four-plan review with the intention of ensuring consistency and better coordination among the four plans that govern the Greater Golden Horseshoe region. When looking specifically at the Growth Plan for the GGH, the current 2006 version outlines the need to ensure easy access to food for Ontarians: “Residents will have easy access to shelter, food, education and health-care facilities, arts and recreation and information technology” (Ministry of Infrastructure, 2013, p. 9). One major criticism is that this Growth Plan does not dive deeper to outline how these residents will be provided with the easy access to such food, along with the lack of indications of food systems or food security in the 2006 Growth Plan. If provincially elected officials wish to ensure food security and access to local food across Ontario, governing documents such as the Growth Plan need to clearly outline how such strategies would be implemented.

To address this visible omission, the proposed 2016 Growth Plan for the GGH incorporates suggestions which aim to promote local food initiatives, establish food systems, and ensure food security. One claims that “Unique and high quality agricultural
lands will be protected for the provision of healthy, local food for future generations,” (MMAH, 2016, p. 5) while another reads that “Complete communities support quality of life and human health by encouraging the use of active transportation and providing high quality public open space, adequate parkland, opportunities for recreation, and access to local and healthy food (p. 10). Another notable change in the 2016 Growth Plan is the increased usage of key terms such as ‘healthy’, 'secure', 'local', and 'affordable' when referring to food and food systems. This is another positive step towards showing the provinces’ interest in ensuring a sustainable food system for future generations as it shows initiative from the province to implement policies which would require municipalities to establish local food systems and hubs where they would be able to.

The concept of complete communities, also supports food security initiatives because it indirectly keeps residential development away from prime agricultural areas by encouraging development to occur within existing settlement area boundaries. It also directly stimulates the need for local food systems to ensure livable communities because, based on the definition, these communities are not considered ‘complete’ if they do not have a wide range of necessary amenities, such as access to local and healthy food, to support the opportunities for those living within them.

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7 Complete Communities is defined as: Places such as mixed-use neighbourhoods or other areas within cities, towns and settlement areas that offer and support opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to conveniently access most of the necessities for daily living, including an appropriate mix of jobs, local stores and services, a full range of housing and public service facilities. Complete communities may take different shapes and forms appropriate to their contexts (MMAH, 2016, p. 68)
The 2011 *Growth Plan for Northern Ontario* was issued featuring a series of policies to help strengthen Northern Ontario’s economy, as Government officials at the provincial level understand there is a continuously widening economical gap differentiating northern Ontario from southern Ontario. The reality is that policies which are centred around ensuring orderly growth within southern Ontario’s urban areas are not easily transferable to the typically large rural regions in northern Ontario. The needs of one are remarkably different from the other economically and geographically, so to ensure professionals in northern Ontario have a common goal to work towards, the province issued a separate *Growth Plan for Northern Ontario* which is better tailored to its unique needs.

This plan has established many policies surrounding agriculture and food production and distribution to ensure a continuously growing and diverse economy. Under *section 2.3.3: Agriculture, Aquaculture and Food Processing*, the plan states the province, and other applicable partners, shall promote continuous growth in the agriculture, aquaculture and food processing sectors by: “d) Expanding production in the north to contribute to a sustainable local food source for northern Ontario residents” and “f) Supporting buy-local initiatives that increase consumer awareness of Ontario-produced foods and encourage Ontarians to buy locally, including northern Ontario products” (MMAH, 2013, p. 11-12). These two policies establish idealistic goals for food security and local food initiatives within northern Ontario as they give the northern municipalities the ability to implement food strategies across the region. If such policies did not exist, it is possible, such food strategies would not be as high of a priority as the
province considers them to be today. Provincial policy makers understand the need for local food initiatives within northern Ontario in order to provide healthy and local food options and keep the price of food at an affordable rate for the residents. However, with the nature of policy implementation it is a considerably slower process than other possibilities as policies can take years to implement and fully materialize. Although this Growth Plan for Northern Ontario was initiated in 2011, it will take many years before the true benefits of the policies are realized. This is because after the policies are created at the provincial level, similar policies need to be created at the local level. Once all policies are in place, only then can organizations and individuals finally put plans into motion.

Permitted Uses in Agricultural Areas

In the fall of 2016, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) released a guideline document entitled Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas. The goal of this document is to aid and assist municipal planners in interpreting and implementing the provincial policies in the PPS which surround permitted uses in prime agricultural areas and, in turn, more easily interpret a broad policy that effectively governs a large land base in Ontario. Before this document was released, there were great amounts of variation in determining what agricultural, agriculture-related and on-farm diversified uses were which meant that

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8 Policy 2.3.3.1 in the PPS outlines the permitted uses in Agriculture. It states:

In prime agricultural areas, permitted uses and activities are: agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses. Proposed agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses shall be compatible with, and shall not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations. Criteria for these uses may be based on guidelines developed by the Province or municipal approaches, as set out in municipal planning documents, which achieve the same objectives. (MMAH, 2014, p. 24).
farmers were not able to get a consistent answer from different municipalities across the province. This can be frustrating when attempting to create a thriving agricultural system across the province.

The issuance of this document will aid in bringing conformity for development across the agricultural landscape of Ontario. While each geographic region has its own unique features and needs, it is imperative to ensure consistent permitted uses to not disfavour on any region. Although the document does not focus directly on food security policies, it does focus on providing guidance for development within agricultural sectors so local food strategies and initiatives can prevail. OMAFRA claims that the protection of agricultural soils and orderly development within agricultural areas is the foundation for food and successful local food economies and without the benefit of guiding documents such as these, such food initiatives may not have been permitted due to the variation in interpretation of the agricultural policies within the PPS as organizers would not have understood what activities they would be permitted to conduct on agricultural soils.

*Anabaptist Communities of Ontario*

Canada is home to many Anabaptist communities. Anabaptism differs from other religious sects as Anabaptists are not baptized until they themselves can confess their faith to Christ. Anabaptists believe it should be an individual's own decision to be baptized, as it was considered that parents could not make a faith commitment for their new born children. The baptism usually occurs when one is in his or her late teens or early twenties (Fretz, 1989, p. 9). Two such Anabaptist communities which currently
reside in Ontario are the Mennonites and the Amish. Both have origins in European countries like Switzerland and The Netherlands dating back to the 16\textsuperscript{th} Century.

Considered by some to be radical reformers, the Mennonite and Amish lifestyle was the result of long served disagreements in religious beliefs among Christians. Displeased with the current state of societal and cultural circumstances in the early 16\textsuperscript{th} Century, those now known as Mennonites and Amish diverged from these norms and chose to strictly follow their own interpretations of the New Testament (Ogilvie, 1992). This newly formed group of followers wished for total separation from the outside world. This, combined with the differences in religious practices – mainly the denial of infant baptism – and cultural beliefs, resulted in continuous harassment and oppression of the Anabaptist from other societal groups (Fretz, 1989, p. 10). Due to these issues, this Anabaptist community sought out new areas to settle – the United States of America, and later Canada being two of those locations. With new opportunities being heard of in the USA, the Mennonites of Switzerland began migrating to the USA in the 18\textsuperscript{th} Century based on the hope of finding new religious freedoms from their prosecutors in Europe. Less than a century later, after the American Revolution, the Mennonites began migrating to Canada (5). Aside from the desire of continued religious freedom, the move north this time was driven more predominately by the attraction of more quantities of reasonably priced land in Canada (Shipley, Kovacs, & Fitzpatrick, 2010, p. 26). Although the Region of Waterloo was one of the first areas in Ontario settled by Anabaptist communities, these communities have since spread across southwestern, eastern, and northern Ontario.
The Mennonite and Amish lifestyle is one of simplistic nature. These communities choose not to partake in many of the conveniences readily accessible in the 21st Century. The use of technologies such as computers or phones, along with the use of electricity is typically forbidden, although some communities may make some exceptions. Individual colonies dress in simple clothing and reject the extravagant attire found in modern day culture. Mennonite men generally dress in black pants and a blue shirt, while the women would wear a full-length dress or gown. The native language is of German dialect, and typically not spoken outside of their communities. The use of automobiles as a mode of transportation is typically foregone and replaced with a horse and buggy. Finally, Mennonites and Amish communities are self-reliant and do not accept, or wish to participate in government assistance programs (Stinner, Paolett, & Stinner, 1989, p. 78). Although the Anabaptist history is filled with violence – between the years of prosecution and discrimination in Europe, and the conflicts in the American Revolution – their culture is known to promote peace through the following of the Bible (Shipley, Kovacs, & Fitzpatrick, 2010).

While some Anabaptist communities will allow for the utilization of modern day conveniences – such as the use of electricity, or tractors for field work – all communities are centered around an agrarian lifestyle. For many centuries, Mennonites and Amish alike have worked soils around the world and have therefore acquired vast amounts of knowledge on how to live an agricultural lifestyle. Be it raising livestock or growing crops, the Anabaptist communities across Ontario have learned to adapt to the demands associated to operating a farm.
Farm Size Policies

Southern Ontario is, and has been under extreme growth pressures for decades due to the large amount of growing urban areas including and surrounding the City of Toronto. With easy access to waterways, services, and a close proximity to the United State of America, many people are choosing to live in this area of the province. This puts a strain on farmland as the smaller parcels are sometimes purchased and used for non-agriculturally related uses. The rise of popularity in supermarkets and large chain corporations have allowed these conglomerates to control what farmers grow and how much they are paid for their products, effectively squeezing small-scale producers out of the picture (Andrée, 2009, p. 16). Provincial Government officials have expressed a provincial interest in preventing this agricultural land conversion. This has lead to a creation of policies which favour bigger farms and farm consolidation in an attempt to preserve its prime provincial farmland and the economics surrounding the food system. While this may be the case, many new farmers and small farm operators still continue to advocate for policies which allow for the creation of smaller farms as many current obstacles, such as the high cost of farmland and competition in southern Ontario, prevent new farmers from operating a larger farm (Miller, 2013, p. 33). The provincial policy makers continue to struggle to find a suitable balance between protecting available farmland and allowing for innovative ways of economic growth in the form of small, niche farms.
Minimum Farm Size Policies in the PPS

Minimum farm parcel sizes are not explicitly determined in the PPS and can be difficult to determine as different geographical regions across Ontario are dominated by different forms of agricultural operations that require different sizes of farms. However, the PPS does outline a strict policy for minimum farm sizes:

“Agricultural uses, provided that the lots are of a size appropriate for the type of agricultural use(s) common in the area and are sufficiently large to maintain flexibility for future changes in the type or size of agricultural operations” (MMAH, 2014, p. 25).

Size of farm parcels cannot be determined at the provincial level as there are large varieties of farms across the province. Large cash crop farms dominate southwestern Ontario, while smaller livestock farms exist further north, whereas a large quantity of dairy operations are in eastern Ontario. There are two specialty crop areas in Ontario located in the Holland Marsh and the Niagara Region that are typically of smaller size and produce most of Ontario’s vegetables and tender fruit production, respectively. Although minimum farm sizes are not stated, the province is ensuring the farm sizes are ‘appropriate for the type of use common in the area’ to attempt to ensure a level of consistency and guidance as the municipalities create their own farm size policies. Researchers Darryl Benjamin and Lyndon Virkler are critical of standardized farm sizes as they suggest “Being small [or large] does not necessarily make a farm sustainable. Sustainability is about harmony among all dimensions of a farming system” (Benjamin & Virkler, 2016, p. 88). Their argument points to the social, ecological, and economic factors of farms. If these factors are not in balance for small-scale farms,
these small-scale farms are less likely to be as sustainable as large-scale farms that have a higher level of balance. They further suggest farm size should be related to market size. This is an important concept municipalities should consider when determining their own minimum farm size. For example, if farms in southwestern Ontario are supplying food to a larger, perhaps international, market, it would make more sense to see larger farm size policies. Whereas in areas that serve regional or local communities, the market is much smaller in size, and therefore it would be beneficial for minimum farm size policies to reflect that.

A 2010 study analyzed minimum farm size policies of five municipalities across the GGH and the results showed a variation in minimum farm size policies across the region. Tender fruit regions in St. Catharines, for instance, permit farms as small as 16.2 hectares (40 acres) while the majority of other regions require a minimum of 40 hectares (100 acres) (Dickinson, et al., 2010, pp. 23 - 24). Generally, minimum farm sizes across regions in North America were set at 40 hectares. Although there are some special circumstances where smaller parcels are permitted, these areas are far and few between (Pease, 1991, p. 338).

**Determining an Appropriate Minimum Farm Size Policy**

It is difficult for policy makers, both at the provincial and municipal levels, to justify creating more relaxed minimum farm size policies when historical analysis has shown a rapid decline in the number of active farms in Ontario, while at the same time showing an increase in the average farm size, and the number of larger farms (National Farmers Union, 2011, pp. 2 - 4). On the other hand, the number of smaller farms of 130
acres or less populate the clear majority of Ontario’s agricultural landscape. In 2006, it was estimated there was over 26,000 farms across Ontario less than 130 acres in size compared to less than 300 farms greater than 2,240 acres (National Farmers Union, 2011, p. 4). This large gap indicates the need for smaller farm size policies would be relevant and highly applicable to Ontario as policies begin to tailor towards fewer, bigger farms. It is just as important to protect the small-scale farms as it is clear they make up the vast majority of farmers in Ontario.

As a result of these instances, multiple suggestions have been made for determining what an appropriate minimum farm size might be. Bryant and Russwurm (1979) argue that arbitrarily choosing a set minimum acreage does not induce viability in agricultural areas as they believe viability cannot be measured only in terms of acreage. Instead, they believe minimum farm sizes need to be based on a series of tests that include social and economic criteria for a ‘viable farm unit’. These criteria would include proof that the farm would be of sufficient size to provide acceptable farm related income, and cover operating costs (p. 135). These tests would disallow applications for non-farm developments such as residential communities or commercial shopping centers as those applications would not meet the requirements. Although this argument was made nearing forty years ago, implementing measures, such as those proposed by Bryant and Russwurm, could allow greater flexibility to today’s farm size policies so new and small farmers can thrive, while at the same time preserving the agricultural areas from non-agricultural development.
Applicable farm size policies are just one of the elements required to ensure a healthy and sustainable agricultural system across Ontario. Yet, as Sharpe suggests, what is considered to be an ideal farm size can be debateable. Sharpe claims, “nowhere is the division between small-scale and industrial agricultural production more obvious than on North America’s Mennonite and Amish farms” (2005) because the Anabaptist communities of Ontario are farm operators that are capable of contributing to a sustainable agricultural system regardless of size of their operations. It has been argued that with their rejection of modern conveniences, these families simply cannot manage large swaths of land the way other modern farmers can, yet they are still capable of providing local communities with fresh and healthy food options through niche markets. Through his extensive work with the Mennonites of Southern Ontario, Psychologist Dr. Edward Bennett (2003) also explores the potentially conflicting policies and Anabaptist ways of life, as he suggests:

“It is rare to see an Amish farm with more than 80–100 tillable acres. They farm family-style, on a human scale. If the family size increases, Amish farmers try to increase the diversification of the farm, rather than its size” (158).

Bennett's argument is that, contrary to the province’s vision for agriculture, bigger is not always better. He describes how they utilize every acre they own to the best of their abilities and attempt to minimize their wasted areas, something which is easier to do on a smaller farm. Larger-scale farmers can leave larger amounts of room between the edge of their crops and edge of the fields because of the sizable amount of cropland in use, whereas smaller farmers, like the Mennonites, need to be more
creative and willing to diversify to ensure their own survival. Overall, these minimum farm size policies have an impact on the ability of Anabaptist farmers to divide their property in ways that would benefit their operation. For example, if a farmer required less acreage than the minimum farm size in his municipality, he is bound by those policies and may not be permitted to sever his parcel into pieces.

**Lot Creation and Severance Policies**

Lot creation policies are closely related to minimum farm size policies. However, a main difference between the two is the severance policies surrounding non-agricultural development in agricultural areas. Much like the issue of creating realistic farm size policies, striking a balance between protecting farmland and allowing sustainable non-agricultural development is critical when creating severance and lot creation policies for agricultural areas as it gives small-scale farmers greater flexibility in diversifying to support the agricultural system as a whole.

Policy makers in Ontario have significantly increased the stringency of severance policies in recent years. Before the 2005 PPS came into effect, farmers could sever off a retirement lot from their farm, but when this was disallowed, it hindered many farmers’ retirement plans to sever small lots at the corner of their farms, sell the farm to their children, and live the remainder of their lives on their retirement lots. This was an issue from a policy standpoint as the severed lots permanently took farmland out of production and fragmented the land base, yet proof of the effectiveness in strict severance policies can be seen in research conducted by Dr. Wayne Caldwell (2011) on the amount of severances in agricultural areas. The results of this research indicated 15,505 new residential lots were created in agricultural areas across southern Ontario.
between 1990 and 2009. There was an average of 1,184 residential lots created per year from 1990 to 1996, 679 lots per year from 1997 to 2005, and 275 lots per year from 2006 to 2009 (Caldwell, Churchyard, Dodds-Weir, Eckert, & Procter, 2011, p. 14).

The 2014 PPS further restricted its severance policies to the point that the only severances permitted for non-farm related activities in agricultural designations are for a residential surplus to a farming operation as a result of farm consolidation. These severances are further required to ensure that:

1. the new lot will be limited to a minimum size needed to accommodate the use and appropriate sewage and water services; and

2. the planning authority ensures that new residential dwellings are prohibited on any remnant parcel of farmland created by the severance. The approach used to ensure that no new residential dwellings are permitted on the remnant parcel may be recommended by the Province, or based on municipal approaches which achieve the same objective” (MMAH, 2014).

Farm consolidation is the merging of two or more separate farming operations into one. Although the consolidated farms do not need to be adjacent to one another, it is expected they would be within a reasonable proximity to be considered as a single operation. Due to the fact that this policy further restricts land division in agricultural areas it drives the province’s vision of larger farm parcels forward.

To further restrict fragmentation, counties and municipalities have set maximum lot sizes for these surplus dwellings. For instance, the County of Simcoe, in its Official
Plan, allows parcels of up to one hectare to be created in agriculturally designated areas (2016, p. 39).

Anabaptist Communities and Lot Creation Policies

While it is important to ensure the protection of agricultural soils and decrease inappropriate development within the agricultural areas in Ontario, it is equally important to support farmers in the success of their operations. The Mennonite and Amish populations in Ontario typically have large families whose livelihood revolves predominantly around the agricultural sector. Due to their inability to travel great distances in short periods of time, their essential amenities need to be within a close proximity of their residence. In his article, Emancipatory Responses to Oppression: The Template of Land-Use Planning and the Old Order Amish of Ontario, Dr. Edward Bennett describes situations in Ontario where the current fragmented and synoptic approach to planning has had a direct negative impact on the local Mennonite populations. One covered a new county Official Plan that prohibited the establishment of second residential units and other development considered to be not agriculturally related such as churches, schools, and cemeteries, on agricultural lands (2003, p. 167). This directly impacted the local Anabaptist communities as these types of development are all institutions their culture requires. In what would seem like good planning – to have churches and schools in the communities and away from agricultural soils – to modern planners and policy makers was not as applicable to the Anabaptist communities in the county. Bennett argues Ontario’s planning system needs to change to one of a collaborative, integrative, and ecologically orientated model that respects human diversity within communities (p. 163).
Ultimately, the current planning framework within Ontario does not provide flexibility to culturally and religiously diverse groups. At a provincial level, generic policies are passed that serve much of the population well, but are sometimes ineffective at serving minority groups such as the Anabaptist communities. It is not until the local level does one start to see specific policies that better represent the true diversity of the local communities.

**On-Farm Diversification Policies***

The need for small-scale farmers to diversify has been a chronic issue for many years as costs for farmers have been increasing at a greater rate than revenues have. For example, it is difficult for small-scale farmers to purchase the necessary equipment, such as expensive tractors, when their farm income is just from the sale of a handful of animals. Therefore, as more small-scale farmers are unable to continue farming, larger-scale farmers purchase them. Potential reasons why small farms are being consolidated into larger farms include: 1) the farms are too small and inadequate at sustaining modern farming practices, and 2) poor financial management and large amounts of debt associated with traditional farming methods (Meert, Huylenbroeck, Vernimmen, Bourgeois, & Hecke, 2005, p. 81). To help promote the survival of small farms in Ontario, flexible policies need to be created to allow for diversified uses on these small farms, as the traditional farming methods of animal and crop production can be costly to

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9 It is important to note this section of the literature review will not be analyzing off-farm diversification strategies, such as income sources from non-agriculturally related activities or occupations. Rather, this review will strictly focus on diversification strategies which are directly related to agricultural operations, and generally located on the farmstead.
operate, do not always have high returns on investment, and can waste large amounts of valuable space, all of which significantly impact the viability of small scale farming.

_Provincial On-Farm Diversification Policies_

While the current planning policy documents in Ontario do promote diversified uses on agricultural soils, strict requirements need to be met to get approval from the local planning authorities to implement these uses. Policy 2.3.3.1 of the PPS- "Permitted Uses in Agricultural Zones" outlines the general allowance of three different activities: _agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, and on-farm diversified uses_ (MMAH, 2014, p. 24). Due to the requirement for conformity with the PPS, county, regional, municipal official plans and zoning bylaws, and the Greenbelt Plan are all required to outline the permissibility of these three activities. OMAFRA's new document, _Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario's Prime Agricultural Areas_, defines these permitted uses in agricultural zones and guides municipalities in their application of them in prime agricultural areas. This is done with the intent to ensure agriculture stays as the main use while supporting a thriving agricultural industry and rural economy.

_Agricultural uses_ are activities where agriculture predominates and include the growing of crops, raising of livestock, and associated on-farm buildings and structures (OMAFRA, 2016, p. 5). _Agriculture related uses_ are activities that are compatible with and vital to the economic viability of prime agricultural areas. These activities include farm related commercial and farm related industrial uses, however they must not hinder surrounding agricultural operations (p. 11). _On-farm diversified uses_ include a wide range of activities that are related to and can co-exist with agricultural operations but
are secondary to the principal agricultural use on the property (p. 17). Examples of on-farm diversified uses can include farm markets, sawmills, equipment repair shops, and agri-tourism spots such as corn mazes.

**Evolution of Provincial Planning Policies**

Agricultural planning policies in Ontario used to focus predominately on the protection and preservation of agricultural soils. The recent updates in the 2014 PPS, along with the proposed changes in the 2016 co-ordinated four plan review, have demonstrated a shift to further protect agricultural systems rather than just the land, as simply protecting the soils will not protect Ontario’s agricultural system as a whole. The changes to permit more uses, such as wineries, home industries and agri-tourism on agricultural lands is a response to issues with only protecting agricultural soils that ensures better protection of Ontario’s agricultural system. As farm sizes continue to grow, arguments are made that suggest the agricultural sector is becoming more industrialized. This is because, similar to large corporations, farms are becoming more commercial operations that focus on supplying large quantities of crops to large regions, instead of focusing on providing quality crops to a smaller region. Competition from large scale farms that are conducive of such industrialization of the agricultural system, along with poorly thought out policies and laws designed to counter risks\(^\text{10}\) induced by this industrial agriculture model (Andrée, 2009, p. 16) prove to be continuous challenges

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\(^{10}\) Peter Andrée, in his article Growing Right, uses the example of small scale poultry operators in Quebec to illustrate his argument. Since November 2005, poultry farmers in Quebec have been banned from selling meat and eggs raised outdoors because of worries of avian flu – a problem more commonly found in industrial farms. These new laws and policies have forced these small farmers to ‘get big or get out’ even though the policies were created because of problems found in large scale farms.
small-scale farmers regularly face. Perhaps these permitted uses will aid small-scale farmers in their quest for survival in what is becoming an industrialized agricultural system. This research paper is intended to highlight such policies that assist small-scale farmers in their abilities to produce local food options in the agricultural industry.

**Motivators to Diversify**

Literature surrounding farm diversification has indicated a variety of motivators. Papers published by both Hansson, Ferguson, Olofsson, & Rantamaki-Lahtinen (2013) and Vik & McElwee (2011) indicate multiple motivators for on-farm diversification. One motivator which is discussed in both papers is that diversification strategies are often a farmers’ creative response to changing external conditions. The authors similarly argue that these responses are opportunity driven. Where Vik & McElwee differ from Hansson et al. is that they also indicate that some motivators are necessity driven (Vik & McElwee, 2011). They explain that these two drivers – opportunity vs. necessity – are otherwise known as ‘push-pull factors’. Opportunity driven strategies (push factors) are where the farmer may capitalize on a gap in the current system, while necessity driven strategies (pull factors) are where the farmer must diversify just to survive in the system (Hansson et al. 2013, p. 242).

A second motivation for on-farm diversification, as argued by Hansson et al. is the notion that farms have two interconnected dimensions – one is the farm, that typically has financial based motivations, while the second is the farmer’s family, that typically has social satisfaction motivators (242). This argument indicates the farmer’s
family plays a big role in his or her decision making and often address situations and make decisions that are not always based strictly on financial stability.

The general consensus between all authors is that through the implementation of diversification strategies, farmers have to be entrepreneurs (Hansson et al. 2013, p. 242) and (Vik & McElwee, 2011, p. 393).

Anabaptist Communities and On-Farm Diversification Policies

The Anabaptist communities within Ontario are prime examples of entrepreneurial farmers who have diversified both out of foreseen opportunity and necessity reasons. They have diversified out of opportunity by filling gaps in niche markets as they find them, yet have also diversified out of necessity as they are usually unable to make enough income from traditional farming of crops and livestock. This diverse group should benefit from the clarifications brought by Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas because as indicated above, they are typically quite diversified farmers. Mennonite or Amish farms can have a diverse range of uses from operations as small as honey bee farming, or tapping maple trees for sap, to something as large as the operation of a sawmill, and many of these diversified uses are sold directly to customers or at farmers’ markets for a profit. Small-scale farmers, such as the Anabaptist communities, benefit from these direct transactions and have a greater chance of having closer connections with the end consumer in ways their large-scale counterparts cannot as these connections build trust and create networks of mutual aid between farmers and consumers, both key components of community resilience (Andrée, 2009, p. 16). With a growing disconnect between consumers and
farmers, it is important to promote small-scale agriculture as these farmers are sometimes better able to connect with their customers.

Anabaptist farmers can also diversify their risk through their diversification of agricultural products. Andree (2009) writes that “Small operations that produce a number of goods have more diverse sources of income, thereby providing farmers with a form of insurance in the face of changing climate patterns and fluctuating markets” (p. 16). This means that while large-scale farmers purchase and rely on crop or livestock insurance in the event of a drought or catastrophe, small-scale farmers are able to better handle risk through their on-farm diversification strategies.

It is important to ensure future policies, like the new OMAFRA Permitted Use Guidelines, do not systematically discriminate against small-scale farmers such as the Anabaptists, even if it is not done intentionally. If new provincial, regional, or municipal policies were to hinder the future sustainability of on-farm diversification strategies for the Mennonites and Amish, it would be damaging to their survival in Ontario.

Some argue Ontario’s planning system needs to adapt to include more social and behavioural aspects. Hansson et al. (2013), for instance, argues in order to formulate successful policies, policy makers need to closely consider the behaviour and social patterns (such as motivations) of the target audience (small scale farmers in this case) (p. 240). Perhaps once greater amounts of policies geared towards small-scale farms are implemented, small-scale farmers, like the Anabaptist communities, will have a better chance at the long-term viability of their on-farm diversification strategies as these policies will be aimed with the specific intent of assisting small-scale farmers.
Conclusion

This chapter provided a document review over the three main planning policies being examined. The chapter first outlined the need to understand how much Ontario’s population is expected to grow by, and where the additional people are expected to live is of great importance. Doing so assists in ensuring systems such as appropriate transportation networks and infrastructure are properly planned and in place to ensure the food can get to these people. Secondly, Ontario’s planning policies in general need to accommodate local food initiatives and promote food security across the province. Finally, specific policies surrounding minimum farm size requirements, lot creation and severances, and on-farm diversification strategies directly affect small farmers like the Anabaptist communities. It is imperative these policies do not restrict small scale farmers’ abilities in providing healthy and affordable local food to Ontarians.
Chapter 4: Case Study

This research conducts a case study investigation of the current perspectives of small-scale Anabaptist farmers in two regions of Ontario. Each interview begins by understanding the current situation of each interviewee (i.e. size of farm, size of family, type of farm operation). The interviews then further investigate how the interviewees participate in local food initiatives in their respective regions and if they have an on-farm diversification strategy. The interviews conducted in northern Ontario are a part of a larger University of Guelph based research study, Mining Local Food in Northern Ontario lead by Dr. Wayne Caldwell and therefore also contain questions asking about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the agricultural sector in northern Ontario. Figure 1 outlines the interview questions. The questions were slightly different based on if the interviewee was in southern Ontario or northern Ontario, however the general goal to collect similar data was maintained.

Case Study #1 – Algoma District

The District of Algoma is a large geographic region along the eastern shore of Lake Superior and Georgian Bay in northern Ontario, as depicted in Map 1. Sault Ste. Marie is the biggest urban area located within the district. The district is served mainly by the Trans-Canada Highway and rail lines running along the lakes. Many secondary roads serve the smaller and sometimes remote
communities in the northern portion of the district. The closest major urban area to Sault Ste. Marie is Sudbury, 300km east. Thunder Bay is 700km west of Sault Ste. Marie. While the majority of the district is bedrock and covered in forests, there are pockets of agricultural soils with high potential for productive farming operations.

Over the past 15 years, there has been a growing presence of Anabaptist communities throughout the District. This research focuses on 11 interviews conducted within a Mennonite community located in the Township of Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional and the Township of Johnson within Algoma District. Map 2 illustrates the urban areas within the District of Algoma. These townships are located to the immediate west of the Town of Bruce Mines. This community has approximately 35 families and is rapidly growing. All 11 interviewees and their families within the Algoma District originally moved from the Wingham and Gorrie area in Huron County. Each farmer has a slightly different operation from one-another, however there has been a big shift in focus to grow local produce. The majority of farmers interviewed have some amount of produce growing for retail. Figure 1 is a table summarizing the results from the interviews with the farmers in northern Ontario.
This table provides some excellent discussion points on small-scale farming operation in northern Ontario. Such discussions could be around some of the common trends found in the interviews:

**Lot Size**

Of the eleven interviews conducted, the average farm size was 177 acres with the largest farm being 300 acres and the smallest being 67 acres in size. The average workable area from the eleven farms is 78 acres. These farm sizes are considerably...
larger than farm sizes of the interviewees in southern Ontario. However, they have less workable land per farm and tend to have more woodland on the property. That said, they are ideal sizes for the Mennonite families in the area.

**Challenges**

The interviewees indicated a number of challenges associated with living in northern Ontario that they were not faced with when living in southern Ontario. The most consistently stated challenge was the issue of logistics to and from markets. They continuously commented on how difficult it has been to get their animals to an auction. Other common challenges include the high transportation costs, lack of agriculturally related infrastructure, and the shorter growing season.

**Opportunities**

According to a number of the interviewees, living in northern Ontario has its own opportunities that might not be as easily available to those who live in southern Ontario. The most consistently stated opportunities were typically environmentally related. Such opportunities included a slower paced life, fresher air to breathe and cleaner water to drink, and more forgiving fields.

**On-Farm Diversification Strategies**

All farmers interviewed, have their own strategy for diversification on their farm. These strategies are implemented to help the farmers earn enough income to cover their expenses throughout the entire year. While every farmer has diversified, the table indicates the farmers have diversified into different areas.
Case Study #2 – Huron County

The County of Huron is located along the shore of Lake Huron in southern Ontario as shown in Map 3. Goderich is the biggest urban area located within the county. The county is served by multiple regional highways connecting the urban centres. There is easy access to large metropolitan places such as London, Guelph, and Toronto. Concession and side roads form a grid pattern throughout the county, connecting all rural areas. Huron County has some of the highest classifications of agricultural soils in all of Canada. It is also one of the most agriculturally productive counties in Ontario.

There is a large presence of Anabaptist communities throughout Huron County. This research focuses on 5 interviews conducted within a Mennonite community in the Township of Howick within Huron County as seen in Map 4. This particular community has approximately 130 families. Much like the farmers in the first case study, each farmer has a slightly different operation from one-
another, however there has been a big shift in focus to grow local produce. Most farmers interviewed have some amount of produce growing for retail. Figure 2 is a table summarizing the results from the interviews with the farmers in northern Ontario.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 2: Summary Table of interviews in southern Ontario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Farm Size</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Tillable Acreage</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Number of Children</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of Farmers with an On-Farm Diversification Operation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Types of On-Farm Diversification Strategies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities noted</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges noted</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table provides some excellent discussion points on small-scale farming operation in southern Ontario. Such discussions could be around some of the common trends found in the interviews:
Lot Size

Of the five interviews conducted, the average farm size was 78 acres with the largest farm being 100 acres and the smallest being 50 acres in size. The average workable area from the eleven farms is 67 acres. These farm sizes are considerably smaller than farm sizes of the interviewees in northern Ontario. However, the farm sizes tend to vary much less in southern Ontario. There is also much more workable land per farm.

Challenges

The interviewees indicated a fewer challenges associated with living in southern Ontario in comparison to those living in northern Ontario. The most consistently stated challenges were the issues of high land prices and vast amounts of competition. Other common challenges include disease among livestock and crops, and predators (these challenges, however, are not exclusive to farmers in southern Ontario). Provincial Planning policies were brought up as challenges to these farmers as they prevent smaller farm sizes.

Opportunities

Living and farming in southern Ontario has many opportunities that might not be as easily available to those who live in northern Ontario. The most consistently stated opportunity was typically in regards to easy access to a large variety of markets. Large urban centers in southern Ontario give the farmers the ability to easily fill niche markets.
On-Farm Diversification Strategies

All farmers interviewed, have their own strategy for diversification on their farm. These strategies are implemented to help the farmers earn enough income to cover their expenses throughout the entire year. While every farmer has diversified, the table indicates the farmers have diversified into different areas.
Chapter 5: Local Official Plan Review

The District of Algoma does not oversee planning at the district level. Instead planning matters are dealt at the municipal level. The Township of Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional, and the Township of Johnson are both single tier municipalities that report to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the Ministry of Housing for approvals. An extensive review of each municipality’s Official Plans was conducted to determine what policies govern the farmers within their respective municipalities. Both municipalities contain agricultural and rural designations, however all interviewees in the Algoma District have properties located within the agricultural designation. Therefore, only the agricultural designation will be discussed. Appendix D – Township of Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional Official Plan – Agricultural Land Use Policies Section shows the Agricultural Land Use section of the Municipal Official Plan. Appendix E – Township of Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional Official Plan – Schedule A Land Use shows the Land Use map for the municipality.

Upon reviewing the Township of Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional’s Agricultural Land Use Policies in the Municipal Official Plan, as adopted in 2015, a list of standard permitted uses is outlined. In relation to the other Official Plans analyzed, these permitted uses are standard in the sense that agriculture is to be the primary use on the property and is to be protected for the long term. Any uses permitted must relate to and support agricultural operations. The document addresses two of the three main planning policies outlined in this research paper: (1) Lot creation and severance policies, (2) On-farm diversified uses. Lot creation in the agricultural designation is discouraged unless it satisfies at least one of the seven criteria permitting lot creation. A large portion of the
section focuses strictly on agriculturally related and on-farm related uses to permit farmers to diversify their operation. While there are many options to diversify, they must all demonstrate they are related to and will support the current agricultural operation. A unique part to this Official Plan is the municipality is encouraging *Agricultural Research and Training Establishments* within the township with the notion to improve the agricultural system in northern Ontario. The benefit of having a relatively new Official Plan, is it conforms with all the current provincial planning policies.

The Township of Johnson approved its current Official Plan in 2009. *Appendix F – Township of Johnson Official Plan – Agricultural Land Use Policies Section* shows the Agricultural Land Use section of the Municipal Official Plan. As seen in *Appendix G – Township of Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional Official Plan – Schedule A Land Use*, the municipality divides its agricultural resource lands into two designations: A1 and A2. The A1 designation comprises prime agricultural lands while the A2 designation comprises secondary prime agricultural lands. This shows the Township has taken extra steps to further differentiate between its most prime agricultural land, and other agricultural lands. There is also a rural designation for lands not designated as agricultural. Much of the agricultural policies section of this Official Plan focuses on land severance policies. As noted in Tarbutt Township’s Official Plan, this Official Plan also discourages lot creation or severance within any agricultural designations unless the application is within at least one of the specified situations. While this Official Plan does not indicate minimum farm sizes, section 4.14 states “Existing vacant lots of record which are large enough to be farmed shall be preserved for agricultural uses. These and smaller lots will be encouraged to be consolidated into larger farm holdings”. This
gives an example of how the municipality is following provincial direction for bigger farms. Finally, the Official Plan does not provide as much detail about diversified uses other than permitting and encouraging *Secondary Uses* provided the use is compatible with the agricultural activities on the property.

The County of Huron provides planning services for all its member municipalities. Since the County of Huron is an upper tier municipality, and the Township of Howick is a lower tier municipality, it is important to examine both Official Plans as they are the governing planning documents the interviewees in the community in southern Ontario must conform with. *Appendix H – County of Huron Official Plan – Agricultural Land Use Policies Section* shows the Agricultural Land Use section of the County Official Plan, while *Appendix I – County of Huron Official Plan – Agricultural Resources Map* outlines the agricultural resource capabilities on a map of the county. Due to the quantity of prime agricultural soils across the county, there is no ‘rural’ designation in the County Official Plan; instead the entire county is classified as a ‘Prime Agricultural Area’. Due to the large quantity of prime agricultural soils within the County of Huron, the Official Plan places extra emphasis on protecting and preserving the productive soils, along with promoting a prosperous agricultural system. A key driver indicating such passion for a strong agricultural system is outlined in the *community values* section:

“Huron’s residents wish to see regulation limited to that which is necessary to protect and enhance the community. The community noted that global competitiveness means that Huron’s farmers need to retain flexibility to respond to changing economics and management practices. This can be achieved through support for agriculture with limited and appropriate regulations which respect farm viability and environmental protection” (County of Huron, 2015, p. 6).
It is clear that public consultation played a large role in ensuring appropriate policies were produced to promote the agriculture sector within the County. The Official Plan does address lot creation and severance policies for municipalities within the county. The county discourages the creation of lots for purposes other than agriculturally related purposes and must be of appropriate size to accommodate the purpose. Regarding minimum farm sizes and severance policies, the county Official Plan addresses these sections by stating minimum lot sizes, and severance policies are to be established in the local Municipal Official Plans. The County Official Plan simply gives guidelines on how it would like to see such policies developed. This can be beneficial to the local farmers so they are able to have more flexibility at the local level rather than a standard policy directed from the county level. Finally, regarding diversified uses in the agricultural designation, the County Official Plan places a strong emphasis on permitting and promoting such agriculturally related uses and on-farm diversified uses. In addition to this, there is a section that states the Local Municipal Official Plans may permit on-farm schools and churches for communities relying on horse drawn vehicles as their primary means of transportation (County of Huron, 2015, p. 8). This policy is beneficial for the Mennonite populations within Huron County as they tend to be self-contained and self-sufficient communities of their own. It shows a recognition that the Mennonite communities are important to the county and that standard policies do not benefit entire populations.

After the County of Huron updated its Official Plan in September 2015, the Township of Howick updated its Official Plan in October of 2016 to ensure consistency with the County Official Plan. Appendix J – Township of Howick Official Plan –
Agricultural Land Use Policies Section outlines the agricultural land use designation policies within the Township of Howick’s Official Plan. Appendix K – Township of Howick Official Plan – Schedule B Land Use shows the land use map of the township. Much like the County Official Plan, the Municipal Official Plan sets out policies to promote and protect the vast agriculture sector within the township. All interviewee farms are within the agricultural designation in the Township Official Plan. The Local Municipal Official Plan addresses all three main policies as outlined in this research. Page 7 of the Official Plan establishes minimum farm sizes to be 30 hectares. This is a positive policy for smaller-scale farmers as the province recommends a minimum farm size of 40 hectares. Lot creation and severance policies are extensively covered in multiple policies throughout the document. Keeping consistent with higher levels of policies, the Local Municipal Official Plan discourages lot creation and only permits the creation of new lots if they support existing agricultural operations in the area. Severance policies are outlined beginning on page 11. Severances are permitted provided they are in accordance with a list of policies to ensure they do not hinder the long-term viability of agriculture in the township. The majority of the severance policies support severances only through farm consolidations, which, for small-scale farmers, is not ideal. Lastly, the Local Municipal Official Plan sets out policies to promote on-farm diversification strategies and agriculturally related uses.
Chapter 6: Discussion

To achieve the goals and objectives set out in this research paper, multiple methods were conducted. The methods utilized include a literature review, document review, and semi-structured interviews. This section is meant to provide a discussion and analysis on how the research methods are used together to meet the goals and objectives.

The first objective of the research is to provide an assessment of the literature pertaining to the capabilities of small-scale farmers in providing local food and ensuring food security. The extensive literature review outlines the available literature pertaining to local food initiatives and food security. As addressed in the literature review, there are many criticisms by multiple authors and researchers regarding the current industrialized agricultural system in Ontario. Farms continue to grow in size and the Provincial Government continues to promote such farm consolidations in an attempt to produce more, with less inputs on larger farms. There is a growing argument that smaller-scale farms can produce healthy and affordable food to the surrounding communities more effectively than large-scale farmers can. It is further argued these small-scale farmers have an equally as important role in the creation of a sustainable agricultural system, as large-scale farmers, by participating in local food initiatives. The research expects these increased local food initiatives would contribute to a food secure province through the diversity of the farming operations and local food options made available to communities.
The second objective states that a description and analysis of three planning policies and their relations to small-scale farmers would be provided. These policies are: 1) Lot creation and severance policies in agricultural areas; 2) Minimum farm size policies; and 3) On-farm diversification policies. To satisfy this objective, a thorough document review was conducted that specifically analyzed the above-mentioned policies. The document review found that to be beneficial to small-scale farmers, lot creation and severance policies need to be flexible in permitting severances and the creation of lots that are seen as beneficial to surrounding agricultural operations. Next, the document review found that minimum farm sizes cannot be standard across the province. Instead, they need to truly represent the agricultural operation in the area to give the farmers the ability to have more intensive farms on smaller plots of land. Finally, on-farm diversification policies are needed because of the importance of protecting Ontario’s agricultural industry as a system rather than just protecting the land from development. Development should be encouraged, providing that such development is related to the surrounding agricultural operations. Protecting the land from development is an excellent foundation to ensuring protection of Ontario’s agriculture, however it is not the solution to assisting farmers in creating a sustainable agricultural system. In addition to these policies, it was important to discuss the expected increases in the global population over the next fifteen to twenty-five years. Further to global population projections, projections for the increase in Ontario’s population were outlined. This discussion illustrates the importance of ensuring adequate and appropriate policies are established to ensure the Province of Ontario is positioned to continue to be a food secure province for the long term.
The third objective of the research is to present two case studies on how such policies effect two different Anabaptist communities across Ontario. The two case studies are in the form of semi structured interviews from two Mennonite communities in Ontario. The first case study is of eleven farmers in the District of Algoma in northern Ontario and the second case study is of five farmers in the County of Huron in southern Ontario. These locations were chosen as the two communities originated in the community in Huron County before expanding to the Algoma District. Conducting one case study in northern Ontario, and another in southern Ontario allows the researcher to clearly analyze any potential similarities and differences in agriculture across the province. The interviewees represent small-scale farming well as the largest operation in northern Ontario is 300 acres (121.5 hectares) and the smallest operation is 67 acres (27 hectares). The largest operation in southern Ontario is 100 acres (40 hectares) and the smallest is 50 acres (20 hectares). The farm sizes in northern Ontario varied much more than the ones in southern Ontario due to the fact there are many more farms in southern Ontario. With less farmers in northern Ontario, the farms occupy more land. However, the larger farm sizes do not indicate all the land is capable to be used for agricultural purposes as there are larger amounts of forested land in northern Ontario. The interviews focus heavily on ways in which the farmers diversify their operations to serve the needs of producing food on a small-scale level. The interview results indicate how the planning policies effect these small-scale farmers’ abilities to produce healthy and affordable local food for the surrounding communities.

The final objective of this research is to discuss how the above noted policies impact small-scale farmers’ abilities to successfully provide local food to communities
across Ontario. To satisfy this objective, the researcher conducted a review of four local Official Plans. The four municipalities are: The Township of Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional, The Township of Johnson, The Township of Howick, and The County of Huron. These municipalities Official Plans were reviewed because they are the municipalities in which the interviewees live and operate. All interviewees have farms in the agricultural designations of these municipalities. In the Official Plan Review section, the researcher addresses if each Official Plan addresses the three policies in question for this research. In general, newer Official Plans are more likely to address each of the three policies. This is due to new provincial planning requirements to not only protect prime agricultural soils, but to also permit and promote diversified uses on such agricultural land. This review, combined with results from the semi-structured interviews indicates planning policies surrounding on-farm diversified uses and agriculturally related uses benefit small-scale farmers as these policies provide flexibility in permitting farmers to diversify. With the release of OMAFRA’s *Permitted Use Guidelines in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas* municipalities have been able to better understand what is considered to be an *agriculturally related use* and what is an *on-farm diversified use*. Not only does this allow for more consistency in planning across the province, but it also gives planners and farmers alike the ability to build a more sustainable agricultural system through these diversified uses. As municipalities across Ontario continue to update their Official Plans, planning will become more consistent in permitting more diversified uses for small-scale farmers. In regard to lot creation and severance policies, current policies do not permit new lots in agriculturally designated areas unless the severance is clearly indicated to be for agricultural purposes. This is understandable as
provincial decision makers want to ensure the protection of agriculture by preventing fragmentation of land. Land ownership is not regulated in Ontario, so while small parcels can be created for agricultural operations, over the long term it is not guaranteed they will stay as agricultural operations. With continuous intensification occurring in existing built up areas, many people look to purchase land in rural areas to get away from the busy urban life. This puts those provincial decision makers in a tough spot as they try to balance the protection of farmland with creating appropriate policies for both small-scale and large-scale farmers. Finally, as with other policies, minimum farm size policies vary across the municipalities analyzed. While the provincial government is promoting farm consolidations, they do permit the creation of smaller farms. However, the provincial standard for minimum new farm sizes is 40 hectares. The Township of Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional and the Township of Johnson do not address minimum farm sizes in their Official Plans. The County of Huron’s Official Plan provides flexibility in permitting the lower tier municipality to decide their own minimum farm sizes. As such, the Township of Howick permits a minimum farm size of 30 hectares; smaller than the provincial standard. With the high price of land in southern Ontario, this policy is a positive step in assisting smaller-scale farmers who cannot afford to purchase large parcels of land. However, as indicated by some of the interviewees, they would like to divide their property into smaller parcels, so family members can operate their own farms, as their type of farming does not require large parcels of land. Many of the interviewees grow produce for local communities, which is a labour-intensive example of a small-scale farming operation. By permitting smaller farm sizes, farming communities such as the Anabaptist communities would be able to
expand their operations on their existing farmland, thereby intensifying the agricultural operations in the area without consuming additional, unnecessary pockets of land.

**Conclusion**

Provincial planning policies have greatly improved over the years. The recent issuance of OMAFRAs *Guidelines on Permitted Uses in Ontario’s Prime Agricultural Areas* is a prime example of this. However, there is continuous need for improvement. Minimum farm size policies and severance policies were the two continuously indicated policies that prevented the interviewees from acting on some of their ideas for their farm. Such ideas include severing the farm in half to provide their children with a farm of their own. Farm diversification policies were generally well received by the interviewees as the majority of the farmers interviewed, were already implementing diversification strategies. These policies were seen as the most beneficial to small-scale farmers out of the three policies researched. Ultimately this research looked at promoting small-scale farming as a way to establish a sustainable agricultural system throughout the Province of Ontario, which in turn would be a large proponent in ensuring a food secure province for the long-term. Provincial planning documents have indicated the promotion of local food initiatives across the province to assist in ensuring food security. As indicated in the literature review and confirmed in the results of the semi-structured interviews, small-scale farmers are capable of providing healthy and affordable local food to their surrounding communities. The creation and maintenance of appropriate policies is required to ensure small-scale farmers across Ontario are not hindered in their ability to produce local food and compete in the open market. While this research is not intended to produce a set of clear recommendations on how to ensure appropriate policies are
created and maintained, the research is expected to further the knowledge of the agricultural sector and food industry in Ontario, and create a discussion on how planning plays a role in the promotion of a food secure province.
References


Appendix A – Interview Question Guide

A.1 – Interview Guide – Northern Ontario Farmers

- How many years have you farmed at this site and can you tell me about your farm (e.g. type of farming activities, number of acres farmed (owned and rented), number of livestock, crop patterns, crop types, etc.)?
- Are there any improvements that you’ve made to your farm (e.g. drainage)?
- What was your motivation to begin farming in northern Ontario?
- If you're not from the north, where did you move from?
- What has been your experience with farming in northern Ontario?
- What challenges, if any, have you experienced as a farmer in northern Ontario?
- What challenges exist with processing/distributing your goods?
- What processing facilities do you use for your produce/livestock?
- Do you have adequate access to roads, markets, labour supply, etc.?
- Have you encountered any issues with municipal planning policies such as lot creation, severance or minimum farm size policies?
- Do you participate in any secondary on-farm activities (e.g. lumber, furniture, etc.)?
- In what ways do you think agriculture could be expanded in northern Ontario?
- What opportunities do you think exist for farmers in northern Ontario?
- In what ways has the community impacted your agricultural activities (e.g. supported through the purchase of food)?
- From what you know, are there any programs that exist to promote local food production? Do you participate in any of these programs?
- Do you feel the community supports agriculture and local food production?
- How effective have local food strategies been to support farmers?
- Do you see your children wanting to farm in the north?
A.2 – Interview Guide – Southern Ontario Farmers

- How many years have you farmed at this site and can you tell me about your farm (e.g. type of farming activities, number of acres farmed (owned and rented), number of livestock, crop patterns, crop types, etc.)?
- Are there any improvements that you’ve made to your farm (e.g. drainage)?
- What was your motivation to continue farming in southern Ontario?
- Where did you originally move from?
- What has been your experience with farming in southern Ontario?
- What challenges, if any, have you experienced as a farmer in southern Ontario?
- What challenges exist with processing/distributing your goods?
- What processing facilities do you use for your produce/livestock?
- Do you have adequate access to roads, markets, labour supply, etc.?
- Have you encountered any issues with municipal planning policies such as lot creation, severance or minimum farm size policies?
- Do you participate in any secondary on-farm activities (e.g. lumber, furniture, etc.)?
- In what ways do you think agriculture could be expanded in northern Ontario? Is there room for agricultural expansion in southern Ontario?
- What opportunities do you think exist for farmers in southern Ontario?
- In what ways has the community impacted your agricultural activities (e.g. supported through the purchase of food)?
- From what you know, are there any programs that exist to promote local food production? Do you participate in any of these programs?
- Do you feel the community supports agriculture and local food production?
- How effective have local food strategies been to support farmers?
- Do you see your children wanting to farm in the north or continue in the south?
- Would you consider moving to northern Ontario?
Appendix B – Case Study #1 Interviews – District of Algoma

For confidentiality purposes, the names of each interviewee are omitted. Each interviewee from the District of Algoma is recognized by ‘N’ for northern Ontario, and a number to identify the individual.

**Farmer N1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 3: Summary Table Farmer N1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Size – number of children</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of acres owned</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of acres workable or tile drained</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of crops grown</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Types of animals raised</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation to move to northern Ontario</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Challenges indicated** | - Logistics to Markets and suppliers  
- Fewer Heat Units available to grow crops  
- Soil inconsistencies on individual farms |
| **Opportunities noted** | Fewer insects in northern Ontario |
| **Secondary on-farm activities** | Operates an on-site produce stand |
| **Notable Quote** | When referring to getting produce or livestock to the market: “If it is not on the truck this week, too bad. You have to wait till next week” |

Farmer N1 operates a 300-acre farm just west of the Municipality of Bruce Mines within the District of Algoma. The farm business is based heavily on the seasonal sales of produce at the roadside produce stand on the property. Roughly 88 of the 300 acres is
utilized for the production of fresh produce. The remaining workable land is used for grains and summer pasture. With the farm situated on the Trans-Canada Highway, the produce stand is quite visible to passing traffic. Customers are able to drive onto the property and purchase pre-picked produce from the retail stand. Roughly three quarters of their produce is sold from this on-site produce stand. The remaining quarter is sold at the various local farmers' markets. Farmer N1 has remarked there have been a noticeable number of cottagers from both southern Ontario and the United States who stop to purchase produce.

Farmer N1 has many on farm diversifications to keep busy with through the winter and early spring. These include producing maple syrup and weaving clothing articles and rugs. Farmer N1 has also entered into a niche market by knitting using alpaca fibers for additional warmth and comfort. Some of Farmer N1’s children craft leather belts, construct wooden storage sheds and work on small engine repairs as well.

When asked what the word ‘local’ means in northern Ontario, Farmer N1 indicated local meant anywhere between Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury.

Farmer N1 also gave some suggestions on needed development in northern Ontario. There is a clear need for more infrastructure such as abattoirs, co-op stores, dealerships and repair shops, and other supply or farm retail outlets. An interesting suggestion made by Farmer N1 was that companies and other organizations that operate research stations and specialize in research pertaining to agricultural development in northern Ontario need to continue funding those research stations and projects instead of closing them or cutting funding. Farmer N1 realizes that cutting edge and relevant research needs to continue in order to see development in the area to occur.
**Figure 4: Summary Table Farmer N2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Family Size – number of children</strong></th>
<th>3 children – all 3 are boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of acres owned</strong></td>
<td>271 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of acres workable or tile drained</strong></td>
<td>92 acres workable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of crops grown</strong></td>
<td>Grains, hay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of animals raised</strong></td>
<td>Sheep, beef cattle, horses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation to move to northern Ontario</strong></td>
<td>teenager at the time, moved with parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges indicated</strong></td>
<td>- Shorter growing season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Distance to markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Transportation costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Fattening beef cows past 1000lbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Processing costs are expensive at local abattoir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities noted</strong></td>
<td>- Excellent place to raise beef cows as a cow-calf operation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Grain crops prefer the cooler weather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary on-farm activities</strong></td>
<td>Builds trusses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Farmer N2**

Farmer N2 operates a 271-acre farm just west of the Municipality of Bruce Mines within the District of Algoma. Farmer N2 originally moved with his family from southern Ontario when he was in his teens. He has since married, started a family of his own and purchased his own farm. Up until 2014, Farmer N2 raised sheep on his farm. However, the farm business is now based on the raising and selling of beef cattle. There were many factors that lead to the change of livestock. Elements such as the market price of sheep and sheep wool continued to decrease while the price of cattle increased.
Roughly 92 of the 271 acres is workable and tile drained land. The remaining land is used for summer grazing and winter log harvesting.

Farmer N2 has his own on farm diversification that helps to significantly contribute to yearly income. Farmer N2 has built a large barn used for manufacturing wooden trusses. The sales from these trusses consist of approximately fifty percent of total income for Farmer N2. At the time of the interview, Farmer N2 was in the middle of constructing a large addition onto his house for his growing family.

When asked what the word ‘local’ means in northern Ontario, Farmer N2 indicated ‘local’ was a lot bigger area compared to their thought of local in southern Ontario.
Farmer N3

Figure 5: Summary Table Farmer N3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size – number of children</th>
<th>9 children – 6 boys/3 girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres owned</td>
<td>Originally bought 102 acres, had purchased an additional 113 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of crops grown</td>
<td>Produce, grains, hay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of animals raised</td>
<td>Beef cattle, sheep, horses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Motivation to move to northern Ontario | - Land was available in northern Ontario  
|                                  |   - Land prices are too expensive in southern Ontario  
|                                  |   - Wants children to have a chance at owning their own farms close by |
| Challenges indicated             | - High property taxes  
|                                  |   - Transportation costs  
|                                  |   - Fewer local hospitals |
| Opportunities noted              | - Easier to live in northern Ontario  
|                                  |   - Less competition |
| Secondary on-farm activities     | Operates a wood working and furniture shop |

Farmer N3 operates a 215-acre farm just west of the Municipality of Bruce Mines within the District of Algoma. When Farmer N3 originally moved to the region, he purchased 102 acres. Since moving, Farmer N3 has grown his farming operation to the 215-acre farm he has today. The farm business is based heavily on the raising and selling of beef cattle and sheep. Farmer N3 usually sells his animals at the local auction house for a couple of reasons. One reason is the unreliability of the local transportation service to southern Ontario. In some weeks, he is unable to get his animals on the transport trailer due to over demand for the service. Other weeks he is able to get his animals on the
trailer, but not enough animals are sent to make the trip cost effective. In both instances, Farmer N3’s animals do not leave the farm. Due to this, Farmer N3 believes it would be beneficial to the surround area for the local auction barn to have more than three sales a year. Farmer N3 noted the majority of animals sold at this auction barn are sent to feedlots in southern Ontario to be fattened up for butchering. Farmer N3 also noted that few animals are butchered in the area for commercial selling because of the lack of infrastructure, such as abattoirs. The local abattoir is at capacity and therefore is unable to take on more clients. It is also difficult to fatten beef cattle for slaughter in northern Ontario due to the inability to grow corn and provide the animals with all the grains and nutrients they require at an affordable cost. For this reason, a majority of live animals are exported to southern Ontario while the packaged meat is imported from southern Ontario.

Farmer N3 operates a furniture mill as an on-farm diversification strategy. Items such as chairs, tables, cabinets, book shelves and bed frames are built from rough cut lumber year-round. Farmer N3 used to grow produce but has found the local community to be quite supportive of his wood working business. This on farm diversification brings in a large percentage of income for the family. Farmer N3’s older children assist him in both farming and his wood working business. Farmer N3 indicated he does not receive much business from tourists, however, the local population is supportive of his business with customers driving from as far as one hundred kilometers away to purchase furniture.

During the interview, it became quite clear that Farmer N3 was a true family man who made decisions in life to help better off his family. His main motivator for moving to northern Ontario was because he wanted to give his children the opportunities his father gave him. He felt that if his children wanted to own their own farms, he would like them to be close by. In southern Ontario, Farmer N3 felt these opportunities did not exist, and although land prices in northern Ontario still continue to increase, he feels the land can still provide viable operations at a sustainable price.
### Figure 6: Summary Table Farmer N4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size – number of children</th>
<th>8 children – 5 boys/3 girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres owned</td>
<td>175 acres originally owned, 60 acres recently purchased</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres workable or tile drained</td>
<td>95 acres workable on original parcel, 55 acres workable on recently purchased parcel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of crops grown</td>
<td>Grains, hay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of animals raised</td>
<td>Beef cows, chickens, goats, horses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Motivation to move to northern Ontario | - Did not like the competition in southern Ontario  
- Land prices are much cheaper in northern Ontario  
- Better climate in northern Ontario |
| Challenges indicated             | - Difficult to buy and sell when and what you want  
- Lack of a year-round sale barn  
- Processing costs at local abattoir are expensive  
- Logistics to markets, suppliers |
| Opportunities noted              | Making connections in the community to work together |
| Notable Quote                    | “tonnage yields for grain and hay are comparable to the Wingham area. Not corn though. Tonnage yields for grain is not hard to outperform southern Ontario yields” |

Farmer N4 operates a 175-acre farm just west of the Municipality of Bruce Mines within the District of Algoma and is in the process of purchasing an additional 60 acres. 95 of the 175 acres is workable and tile drained while 55 of the potential 60-acre farm is workable and tile drained. Farmer N4 operates a diverse farm that consists of beef cattle, sheep, and most recently, goats. All grasses and grains grown on the farm go towards feeding the livestock. The recent addition of raising goats is because of the increase in local demand for goat milk and related dairy products.
Farmer N4 does not operate a full time on farm diversification. The family farm is located on the Trans-Canada Highway and has a food stand at the edge of the driveway. The majority of the family income comes from produce sales in the summer and livestock sales in the fall. In the winter, Farmer N4 does continue to use the stand to sell items such as firewood, eggs, milk, and dairy products.

When asked what the word 'local' means in northern Ontario, Farmer N4 had a much smaller perception of the word. He indicated 'local' was roughly the distance his horse could travel one way – or roughly twenty miles. Anything further would require additional planning on where to stop for breaks and which route to take to make the journey. If the distance is significantly greater, contacting someone with a car or truck becomes necessary.

During the interview, Farmer N4 spoke of the strong connections with their Mennonite community in southern Ontario. The two communities continue to frequently interact with each other. They use their own postal service, known as the “pony express” that delivers not only mail between the two communities, but also supplies such as seed for spring planting. The pony express is an ingenious system whereby Mennonite families in southern Ontario send postage to the local schools with their children to be collected by the courier and shipped to designated individual in the northern Ontario Mennonite community. This individual then sorts the mail and delivers it to the local schools to be sent home with the children. This is an effective system because the vast majority of families in both communities have multiple children that are either finished schooling, in school, or have yet to start their formal schooling. This strong connection and creative system allows both communities to continue to support and communicate with each other even though they are large distances from one another.
**Farmer N5**

**Figure 7: Summary Table Farmer N5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size – number of children</th>
<th>12 children – 7 boys/5 girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres owned</td>
<td>121 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres workable or tile drained</td>
<td>75 workable acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of crops grown</td>
<td>Produce, grains, corn, hay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of animals raised</td>
<td>Horses, sheep, beef cows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to move to northern Ontario</td>
<td>- Land prices in southern Ontario are expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Boys want to farm but there is no room to expand in southern Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges indicated</td>
<td>- Shorter growing season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Weather is more unpredictable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- High transportation costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lack of local year-round sale barn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities noted</td>
<td>- Land is ideal for pasture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Good place to raise beef cows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Less need to apply chemicals to crops (fewer insects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary on-farm activities</td>
<td>Operates produce stand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Farmer N5 operates a 121-acre farm just west of the Municipality of Bruce Mines within the District of Algoma. 75 of the 121-acre farm is workable and tile drained. Farmer N5 raises sheep, beef cows, and horses. The main use of the land is to grow grains, corn (usually for sileage) and hay to feed to the livestock. Roughly three acres is utilized each year to grow produce for their road side stand. Along with the majority of farmers in the area, Farmer N5 sells his livestock to market. The majority of his animals
however, are sold at the Cookstown Auction Barn rather than at the local sale. Farmer N5 would like to see a more permanent auction house in the area as the transportation costs are high and logistics to get the animals to market is challenging. Being situated on the Trans-Canada Highway, Farmer N5 has been able to successfully sell his produce from his roadside stand at the end of his driveway. He finds the customers are a steady mix between local residents and tourists travelling through the region. Many of the tourists are from the United States. Local residents and tourists alike have been supportive of his agricultural operations and products.

One unique comment made by Farmer N5 is that there is a vast amount of idle land in the area that could easily be utilized for pasture. Farmer N5 indicated there are areas, even some on his own farm, that were once used for farming purposes but have since sat idle. These patches of land now have light forest and brush cover due to the inactivity. Farmer N5 recognizes with minimal work; the land could easily be used for pastures. With some work, the land could be cleared and used for cropping. This is the case across much of the region. Unlike southern Ontario, Farmer N5 knows there is plenty more land available for agricultural purposes.
Figure 8: Summary Table Farmer N6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size – number of children</th>
<th>6 children – 2 boys/4 girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres owned</td>
<td>27 acres original owned. Purchased additional 40 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of animals raised</td>
<td>Beef cattle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Motivation to move to northern Ontario | - Financial reasons  
|                                  |   - Too much competition in southern Ontario for Mennonite communities |
| Challenges indicated             | - Logistics  
|                                  |   - Lack of competition in northern Ontario  
|                                  |   - Lack of social activities |
| Opportunities noted              | - Better weather            |
| Secondary on-farm activities     | Operates a lumber kiln      |

Farmer N6 operates a 67-acre farm just west of the Municipality of Bruce Mines within the District of Algoma. When Farmer N6 originally moved to the area, he purchased 27 acres. He has since purchased an additional 40 acres. Farmer N6 has a smaller farm due to the fact that it is not his primary profession nor primary source of income. His main business is purchasing and drying lumber. The farm is used simply to raise a handful of beef cattle and horses, and to grow produce so the family will have enough food for the winter.

Farmer N6’s lumber business relies heavily on the lumber industry in southern Ontario there is not enough business in northern Ontario to make his current operation a profitable business. He must therefore purchase the product from southern Ontario and sell most of it back to southern Ontario. There are some Mennonite families in the community that purchase dried lumber from Farmer N6 to further craft it into furniture,
but more are needed if northern Ontario is to have its own lumber industry. To create a niche market for himself, Farmer N6 has specialized in drying lumber from oak trees as bigger mills tend to focus on processing maple and pine tree lumber.

Some of the challenges associated with operating a small lumber kiln in northern Ontario include the lack of consistently available transportation to southern Ontario, and the large costs associated with transporting the lumber.
Farmer N7 operates a 192-acre farm just west of the Municipality of Bruce Mines within the District of Algoma. 80 of the 192-acre farm is workable with 40 of those 80 acres’ tile drained. Farmer N7 raises sheep, beef cows, and horses. The main use of the land is to grow some produce, along with grain and hay to feed to his livestock. Along with the majority of farmers in the area, Farmer N7 sells his livestock to market. His sheep are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Figure 9: Summary Table Farmer N7</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Size – number of children</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of acres owned</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of acres workable or tile drained</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of crops grown</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of animals raised</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Motivation to move to northern Ontario** | - Land is cheaper  
- Room to expand as family grows |
| **Challenges indicated**             | - Lack of year-round sale barn  
- High transportation costs  
- Lack of competition  
- Shorter growing season  
- Expensive to purchase feed for animals |
| **Opportunities noted**              | - Location is great for farmers interested in smaller operations  
- Market gardening  
- Quiet place to live with good people to work with |
| **Notable Quote**                    | “we need to diversify and operate on smaller acreages otherwise we will soon be out of land here too” |
sold at the Cookstown Auction Barn while his beef cattle are sold at a local sale in Thessalon. Farmer N7 would like to see a year-round auction barn, but does not believe the current local economy would make such a business feasible.

Farmer N7 grows produce to be sold to various places – both local and afar. Some of the produce is sold at the local farmers’ markets, and the local Mennonite operated country produce market. While other produce is shipped to the markets in Thunder Bay for consumption further north. Farmer N7 indicated the Mennonite community has banded together once again to construct a new auction site for produce. The idea behind the auction site is to target the wholesale market (i.e.: local stores or local food initiatives that require large quantities of food) by auctioning off large quantities of produce once or twice a week. The current produce market stand that is operated by one Mennonite family and supplied by most of the Mennonite families is intended to continue targeting the retail market (i.e.: individuals looking to purchase small quantities of produce for their meals). Farmer N7, along with others anticipate there will be some challenges with this new auction site that are expected to arise after it begins operations in the summer of 2016.

Over the years of living in northern Ontario Farmer N7 noted the local population and local municipal planning authorities have been supportive of the Mennonite population as it grew. Farmer N7 did admit there have been instances where the local communities did not always agree with or support some of the choices the Mennonite community had made. For instance, the Mennonite community have in the past bypassed local shops to purchase supplies in bulk at cheaper prices. With only a handful of local suppliers in the community, these suppliers usually find out about these instances and remember them going forward. It can create hurt feelings or weaken relationships between the community and the Mennonites.

In the winter months, Farmer N7 used to cut timber to bring in more income for his family. Since growing produce, he has not needed to cut timber to supplement his income.

An interesting comment made by Farmer N7 is that provincial planning authorities, along with local farmers both believe larger scale agricultural operations are necessary
for the success of agriculture in Ontario. Farmer N7 does not believe that is the case. In fact, he believes the opposite to be true – diversification and operations on smaller acreages is important as it ensures each user is utilizing their own parcels at optimal levels. In addition, if the provincial mandate is to continue to consolidate and promote larger scale agricultural activities, northern Ontario, much like southern Ontario, will soon be out of land as well. Farmer N7 believes that with the high land prices and high capital costs associated with operating a large-scale farm, many of the next generation farmers will not be able to afford the debt. Instead, operating on a smaller parcel of land and using it to grow crops such as produce is much less cost prohibitive while still being economically sustainable.

When asked what the word 'local' means in northern Ontario, Farmer N7 indicated 'local' encompassed the District of Algoma.
## Farmer N8

*Figure 10: Summary Table Farmer N8*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size – number of children</th>
<th>9 children – 4 boys/5 girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres owned</td>
<td>220 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres workable or tile drained</td>
<td>100 workable acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of crops grown</td>
<td>Hay, corn silage, grains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of animals raised</td>
<td>Beef cattle, sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to move to northern Ontario</td>
<td>- Did not foresee a feasible future in southern Ontario for children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Land is too expensive in southern Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Too much competition in southern Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges indicated</td>
<td>- Shorter growing season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Getting grain to dry in time for harvest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Transportation costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Distance to markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Processing costs at local Abattoir are high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities noted</td>
<td>- Soil in northern Ontario is more forgiving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Easier to keep nutrients in the soil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lots of bush land that can be cleared and claimed for farmland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary on-farm activities</td>
<td>Operates a lumber mill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notable Quote</td>
<td>“We use less blankets Sunday mornings on our horses in the winter compared to down south”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Farmer N8 operates a 220-acre farm just west of the Municipality of Bruce Mines within the District of Algoma. 100 of the 220-acre farm is workable. Some of the property was tile drained before Farmer N8 purchased it, while some has been tile drained since
purchase. Farmer N8 raises sheep and beef cows. The 100 workable acres of land is utilized to grow grains, silage corn and hay to feed to the livestock. All animals are sold as live animals. The sheep are sold at the Cookstown auction barn or in private sales, while the beef cows are typically sold at a local auction in Thessalon.

Farmer N8 operates a lumber mill as a form of an on-farm diversification strategy. Whole trees are brought to the farm and are cut into various sized lumber. They are custom cuts based on customer requests. This secondary operation allows Farmer N8 to maintain a stable income year-round.
Farmer N9 operates a 120-acre farm just west of the Municipality of Bruce Mines within the District of Algoma. 70 of the 120-acre farm is workable and tile drained. Farmer N9 raises sheep, beef cows, pigs and chickens. The main use of the land is to grow grains and hay to feed to the livestock, however a large portion is also utilized for the production of produce. All animals are sold as live animals. The sheep are sold at the Cookstown auction barn or through private sales. The cattle are sold at the local auction barn in Thessalon. Farmer N9 would like to see improvements made to either the local auction barn or to the local abattoir as both are lacking in certain aspects.
Improvements made to either or both would help foster a stronger economy for the farmers in the area.

Farmer N9 has significantly diversified his farm operation as he owns the local country produce market stand that the majority of Mennonite families in the area sell their produce at. This produce stand acts as a marketing agent for the local farmers. Instead of owning any of the products it sells, the market instead serves as an intermediary, acting on consignment for the smaller, individual farmers so they can group together to sell enough produce to larger retailers. The farmers work out a price they wish to sell their produce at. The market stand then adds a small percentage on top of that selling cost as a commission. There are roughly twenty main growers and ten smaller growers in the area selling their produce at the stand. They consider themselves to be a loose co-op of farmers who are mostly striving for natural and chemical free food. This group of farmers is permitted to sell any of the produce they grow through the season. Cabbage is the largest volume seller for the stand. The majority of sales go to retail outlets in Winnipeg, Manitoba and Thunder Bay, Ontario. Some farmers also sell fresh eggs, lamb, beef, and pork cuts. Fruit is also imported from the Niagara region to attract a wider range of customers. As the main person selling the produce to the retailers, Farmer N9 is well informed of the market and its current conditions and trends. He understands the challenges the community faces when attempting to become more well-known to the local retail chains. Some challenges he sees includes having enough supply within the community to meet the potential demand of both the produce stand and the new auction barn. A second challenge is the continuous growing pains of the community. The produce stand, as it currently stands, is not big enough to gather attention from large retail chains but is big enough that they require more staff then can currently hire.
Farmer N10 operates a 100-acre farm just west of the Municipality of Bruce Mines within the District of Algoma. 35 of the 100-acre farm is workable and tile drained. Farmer N10 raises beef cattle and chickens. The unworkable land is predominately used as pasture land for the cattle. The workable land is split between growing grains and hay for the animals, and growing produce for the local produce market and various farmers’ markets. All animals are sold as live animals to either the local market in Thessalon, or to as far away as the auction barn in Brussels, Ontario. Farmer N10 gave

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size – number of children</th>
<th>10 children – 3 boys, 7 girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres owned</td>
<td>100 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres workable or tile drained</td>
<td>35 workable acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of crops grown</td>
<td>Grains, hay, produce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of animals raised</td>
<td>Beef cattle, chickens, horses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to move to northern Ontario</td>
<td>There is no room to expand and land prices are too expensive in southern Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges indicated</td>
<td>- Smaller population in northern Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Costlier to purchase supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Shorter growing season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Taxes are high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities noted</td>
<td>- Not as much competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Crops produce good yields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Produce sells at a good price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notable Quote</td>
<td>When asked if they had thought about moving back to southern Ontario: “If we had a chance to move back, I don’t think we would likely soon take it”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
two simple reasons as to why the local farmers do not keep their yearling calves to be fattened up for slaughter. Firstly, the Mennonite community does not have a simple means of communication to sell to a variety of customers. Secondly, it is difficult to grow enough grain (especially corn) in the region to successfully fatten a large quantity of livestock. The added cost of transporting the feed to the area makes the thought of doing so unrealistic. It is cheaper to transport the animals to southern Ontario where larger operations exist and are closer to grain sources.

During the interview, Farmer N10 indicated his family has become very much accustomed to their way of life in northern Ontario. So much so that he believes the younger generation will not want to move to southern Ontario. In fact, he believes they will be able to learn from their parents’ fortunes and mistakes, making it easier for them to eventually operate their own farm in northern Ontario.
Farmer N11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 13: Summary Table Farmer N11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Size – number of children</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of acres owned</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of acres workable or till drained</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of crops grown</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of animals raised</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation to move to northern Ontario</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges indicated</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities noted</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary on-farm activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notable Quote</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Farmer N11 operates a 165-acre farm just west of the Municipality of Bruce Mines within the District of Algoma. 95 of the 165-acre farm is workable and was tile drained upon purchasing the property. Farmer N11 raises beef cows and horses. The animals are sold at the local auction barn in Thessalon. Farmer N11 indicated additional sales throughout the year would benefit the region. When Farmer N11 and his family first moved to the area, he began his farm operation as a mixed farmer raising stocker cows.
A lack of locally and readily available cattle and high costs in fattening the cows for slaughter prevented him from continuing with this type of operation. He has since changed his focus to growing produce for the local produce market. Many locals and tourists are currently supportive of the produce market and continue to make many purchases. Farmer N11 believed the farmers’ markets to be of great success, however they are only weekend events and therefore do not create for a steady income stream. The current produce market and potential auction barn support immensely by allowing them to continue selling produce through the week and outside of farmers’ markets.

Farmer N11 has established his own on-farm diversification strategy by operating one of the only registered egg grading stations in the region. As of the time of the interview, he had graded over twelve thousand eggs from suppliers in the area. One third of these twelve thousand graded eggs were sold at farmers’ markets while the remaining two thirds have been sold to independent stores.

When asked what the word ‘local’ means in northern Ontario, Farmer N11 indicated ‘local’ encompassed the area between Sudbury and Wawa. He based this statement off where the majority of customers come from to purchase goods at the produce market. He believes by tapping into potential distribution networks would significantly expand the ‘local’ area.
Appendix C – Case Study #2 Interviews – County of Huron

For confidentiality purposes, the names of each interviewee are omitted. Each interviewee from the County of Huron is recognized by ‘S’ for southern Ontario, and a number to identify the individual.

Farmer S1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 14: Summary Table Farmer S1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Size – number of children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 children – 3 boys/1 girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres owned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres workable or tile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>drained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95 acres workable with some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pockets of tile drainage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of crops grown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay, corn, pasture land, produce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of animals raised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef cows, sheep, pigs, Horses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges indicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Parasites and Diseases in livestock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Predators such as coyotes and bears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities noted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Niche markets for hormone and antibiotic free meat in Toronto based restaurants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Produce and local food sales continue to grow year over year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Farmer S1 operates a 95-acre farm in the Township of Howick within the County of Huron. Farmer S1 was born and raised in the Township of Howick. Within the past 13 years, Farmer S1 has since married, started a family of his own and purchased his own farm. Farmer S1 owns approximately 40 beef cows, 160 sheep, and most recently, 5 pigs. His main annual income comes from the sale of his 30-40 yearling calves, and roughly 160 lambs. Farmer S1 recently purchased the 5 pigs because of an opportunity he saw for a high demand of organic and natural produce and meat products at Toronto
based restaurants. If the opportunity pans out, and the sale of pork generates a livable revenue, Farmer S1 plans on purchasing more pigs to fill a greater portion of the demand.

While Farmer D1 does not have any plans to move to northern Ontario, he does contribute to the local food system in southern Ontario. Over the past 4 years, Farmer S1 and his family have devoted roughly 4 acres of land to grow a large variety of fresh produce. This produce is mainly sold from his road side stand. Any extra produce is sent to the local produce market to be sold there (this market is owned and operated by another Mennonite family within the community). Due to an increasing demand in the locally grown produce, Farmer S1 plans on building a greenhouse on his property to start produce earlier in the season, and increase the amount of produce grown.

Farmer S1 would like to further diversify his farm operations by opening a machine repair or steel manufacturing shop on his property as he has a large passion for medal working. However, the growth of his other diversification strategies, such as the niche market for pork in Toronto and the produce sales, keep him from having enough time to devote to any sort of medal working activities outside of repairing his own equipment.
**Figure 15: Summary Table Farmer S2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size – number of children</th>
<th>3 children – 2 boys, 1 girl</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres owned</td>
<td>93 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres workable or tile drained</td>
<td>60 acres workable with 12 acres tile drained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of crops grown</td>
<td>Corn, hay, mixed grains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of animals raised</td>
<td>Beef cows, pigs, horses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities noted</td>
<td>Many opportunities to fill niche markets in local food and agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Farm Diversification Strategies</td>
<td>- Buggy Repair Shop for Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Manufactures wooden bee hives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Farmer S2 operates a 95-acre farm in the Township of Howick within the County of Huron. He has lived in Ontario his entire live and moved with his family from Elmira 23 years ago. Farmer S2 currently owns 7 horses and 70 stocker cows. He used to own 240 pigs before transitioning into beef farming. Farmer S2 does not have a cow-calf operation; instead he purchases yearly calves in the late fall when they weigh roughly 500 pounds, fatten them through the winter, and sell them in the spring when they are approximately 900 pounds. These purchases and sales are all completed through a private supplier and buyer, at previously agreed upon prices. Therefore, Farmer S2 does not purchase or sell any animals on the open market at auction barns. The 60 acres that are workable are split into thirds with 20 acres for corn, 20 acres for hay and grass, and 20 acres for mixed grains. Farmer S2 requires little land for pasture as the majority of animals are sold in the spring. Farmer S2 operated the buggy repair and parts shop for the community, however he has recently decided to retire from that and is selling off those assets. He also constructs wooden beehive boxes out of lumber he chops down on his property. These wooden beehive boxes are sold to many customers around Ontario.
Farmer S2 built a retirement home on his property in 2008 as his growing family needed more place to live. This retirement home is attached to the main family home due to planning regulations. Although the houses are their own individual dwelling units, the two homes are one building.

When asked what local meant to him, Farmer S2 replied with “How big is a neighbourhood? It could be 1 mile, 5 miles, or 10 miles”. He was suggesting that essentially it varies depending on where you are. This is in recognition that he believes local would include a much larger distance for those further north as compared to those living further south.
### Figure 16: Summary Table Farmer S3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size – number of children</th>
<th>7 children – 4 boys/3 girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres owned</td>
<td>100 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of acres workable or till drained</td>
<td>Tile drainage not required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of crops grown</td>
<td>Produce, pasture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of animals raised</td>
<td>Sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation to move to northern Ontario</td>
<td>Family connections in the Algoma District and sees greater opportunities for his family in northern Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges indicated</td>
<td>- Planning policies prevent him from further severing his property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities noted</td>
<td>- Greenhouse farming in southern Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Produce growing in northern Ontario</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary on-farm activities</td>
<td>Part owner in the community produce retail shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notable Quotes</td>
<td>“It seems to me that there is more opportunity to sell flowers and produce in this area (referring to southern Ontario) over that area (referring to northern Ontario)”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Will the difference in land prices make up for the challenges we will face in northern Ontario?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Farmer S3 operates a 100-acre farm in the Township of Howick within the County of Huron. When Farmer S3 first purchased the farm 11 years ago, he raised approximately 60 sheep to sell the wool and lambs. While he continues to raise sheep, he also now grows produce on 15 acres of his land. The remainder of his land is rented to other farmers for pasture. The main types of produce he grows include: cabbage, squash, potatoes, strawberries, and onions. Roughly 6 years ago, Farmer S3, along with other farmers in the community, built a produce retail shop on his property to sell his produce.
to the surrounding population. Much of his produce is sold at the produce retail shop, with some going to local co-ops. This produce retail shop is only owned and operated by a few of the farmers in the community, however many of the Mennonite farmers who grow produce in the community, sell their produce at the retail shop. To assist the community in growing healthy sized produce, Farmer S3 has three greenhouses on his property, ranging in size from 10,000 square feet to 15,000 square feet, to begin growing produce in early spring. He then sells these started plants to other farmers in the community for them to finish growing the produce in-ground. In addition to starting produce, these greenhouses are used throughout the year to grow flowers to sell at the retail shop. Farmer S3 indicated there are not many greenhouses in the area so there would be opportunities to further develop a greenhouse based produce industry without large amounts of competition.

Farmer S3 is moving to the Mennonite community in the Algoma District in June 2017. His reasons for moving focus mainly on ensuring a sustainable future for his family, his existing connections with the Mennonite community in northern Ontario, and his preference to not depend solely on the retail industry as a major source of income. With his way of life, he wants to be connected with the land and his family – he feels operating the retail store is taking away from these connections. Moving to the Algoma District will create an opportunity for him and his family to establish new roots farming how they would like to farm. Farmer S3 sees the cheaper land prices in northern Ontario as an opportunity for his children to purchase their own farms in the future. He also sees the growth in the produce industry as a potential way to expand agriculture in northern Ontario as simply raising livestock and growing grains has not been as successful as originally thought.

Farmer S3 has worked with the County of Huron Planning Department to sever his property into three pieces. These severances were more for housekeeping reasons as there is a community school on the property and a separate single family dwelling. He was able to adjust the lot lines to property divide the properties. He has since attempted to divide his 100-acre parcel into two 50 acre parcels. The reason for this is because of his produce operation. He does not require 100 acres to be able to grow all the produce
he needs as it is a smaller-scale and more intensive agricultural operation when compared to traditional farming methods. His goal would be to sell the remaining 50 acres to another farmer that could grow produce as well. Ultimately the current planning policies in place at the county and provincial level prevent such severances from occurring.

When asked what local means to him, Farmer S3 indicated anything within a 60-mile radius.
Farmer S4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 17: Summary Table Farmer S4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Size – number of children</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of acres owned</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of crops grown</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of animals raised</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges indicated</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities noted</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary on-farm activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notable Quote</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Originally born in Elmira, Ontario, Farmer S4 operates a 50-acre farm in the Township of Howick within the County of Huron. He raises 15 grass fed beef cows that are processed for buyers looking for organic, grass fed beef. Within the last 5 years, Farmer S4 has predominately marketed and sold his products to niche markets across southern Ontario. As indicated by Farmer S4, there are large niche markets within Toronto of restaurants, and consumers looking to purchase ‘organic’ and ‘pure’ products. This opportunity lead to Farmer S4 establishing his own co-op with other Mennonites within the community to produce products such as beef, chicken, eggs, maple syrup and flour that is all organic. Buyers in Toronto are willing to pay a premium for these products as they are not easily available from larger scale farmers.

Some issues Farmer S4 finds with operating in southern Ontario are that many new farmers are trying to pay for their expensive farms with side businesses. The Mennonite way of life involves a strict connection with the land. Due to their decisions to not utilize modern technologies, Mennonite farmers typically do not operate large cash crop farms.
Instead they opt for small scale livestock operations. Unfortunately, with the increased land prices in southern Ontario, these Mennonites are not able to generate enough revenue to cover their expenses. Therefore, they must venture into secondary farm businesses to cover these expenses. After being exposed to farming in northern Ontario, Farmer S4 has indicated he sees greater potential for Mennonites to get back to their roots of pasture farming with less of a need to rely on secondary farm uses just to ensure all bills are paid.

In addition to his primary activities, Farmer S4 also operates a log mill as a secondary on-farm activity. While he does not make any furniture, the logs he cuts from the wood lot on his property are sold predominantly to companies that manufacture antique furniture and wood floors. This diversification strategy allows him to supplement his income throughout the year.

In addition to the amount of work Farmer S4 is involved in in southern Ontario, he also purchases properties in the Algoma District in northern Ontario so willing families from the community in southern Ontario can move to northern Ontario. Farmer S4 is highly supportive of expanding their community in northern Ontario. While he is comfortable living in southern Ontario, he plays a major role in supporting those who wish to move to the north. He currently owns roughly 800 acres in the Algoma District, in which he coordinates with community members in the Algoma District to assist him in ensuring families have a smooth transition to their new farms in northern Ontario. This purchasing of land ensures security for the Mennonite communities to know they are able to expand their communities, and is meant to overall make for an easier moving process. Unfortunately, Farmer S4 has run into many obstacles when looking to purchase land in northern Ontario. One such obstacle includes the policies that require properties to have road frontage before any structures could be built. While these policies are set out for reasons such as ensuring an adequate right of way for emergency vehicles in the event on an emergency, the strict policies also prevented Farmer S4 from purchasing the property.

Farmer S4 is one of many farmers in the community who believes that in order for small-scale farming to survive, farm parcels need to be smaller. The growing of produce
does not require 100-acre parcels. Farmer S4 believes farmers, especially those who wish to appeal to niche markets, need to be permitted to operate on smaller farms.

When asked what local meant to him, Farmer S4 indicated it depends on what avenue he is marketing and selling his products to. For example, when he sells his lumber, buyers in Toronto are local to him. While food and produce sales have a much smaller catchment area of ‘local’ buyers.
Farmer S5 operates a 50-acre farm in the Township of Howick within the County of Huron. He currently raises roughly 25 stocker beef cows and between 60 and 80 milking goats. The beef cows are purchased in the fall when they weigh roughly 500 pounds and are sold in the spring when they weigh roughly 900 pounds. These animals are purchased and sold at the livestock auction in Brussels. Farmer S5 grows grains, corn and hay on the 50-acres he operates. Farmer S5 currently operates a wood working shop where he manufactures chairs and tables that are typically sold to stores for retail. This on-farm diversification strategy supplements his income throughout the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Figure 18: Summary Table Farmer S5</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Size – number of children</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of acres owned</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of acres workable or till drained</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of crops grown</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type of animals raised</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation to move to northern Ontario</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges indicated</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities noted</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary on-farm activities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Notable Quotes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Throughout the summer months, he also grows produce to be sold at the community produce retail store.

Farmer S5 is moving to the Mennonite community in the Algoma District in April 2017. His reasons for moving focus mainly on providing the same opportunities to his children as his father did for him. While southern Ontario offers easy access to many different markets, he feels the high land prices make it almost impossible for his children to establish their own roots within the community. Farmer S5 stressed the difficulty of operating a million-dollar farm in southern Ontario with the Mennonite’s way of life. As small, labour intensive farmers, it is difficult for their families to expand when large-scale farmers are purchasing surrounding land at higher prices. Therefore, while there may be less opportunities for easy access to markets, the move to northern Ontario is expected to provide better opportunities for his children when it is their turn to start their own families. In northern Ontario, Farmer S5 plans on raising a herd of beef cows and would like to produce goat milk and other goat dairy products. In southern Ontario, he can milk his goats and sell the milk straight to the market. However, the infrastructure is not as readily available to get the goat milk to market. As there are not as many goat milk producers, dairy inspectors or milk trucks available in northern Ontario, he faces the challenge of having to store the products on his farm for longer periods of time. As he would not produce enough milk to warrant a milk truck to drive to his farm on a daily basis, he believes he would need to make cheese out of the milk. This is a costly endeavor that has the potential of not being profitable if there is no market for goat cheese in the area.

While Farmer S5 operates a 50-acre farm, the actual farm parcel size is 150-acres. The other 100-acres is utilized by one of his brothers. Farmer S5 originally wanted to sever the 150-acres so he could have his own 50-acre parcel, however planning policies prevented him from going through with the idea. Instead, he and his brother have split ownership over the property and the county planners were accommodating by allowing him and his brother to have two single family dwellings on the property. Farmer S5 did indicate how with such high land prices, smaller parcel sizes would make for a good alternative to traditional large-scale farming methods. The growing of produce does not
require as much land, yet still has high yields. Farmer S5 noted that the price of land and the price of livestock did not increase at the same rate. It is now becoming unfeasible for livestock producers such as himself to operate in Ontario’s prime agricultural areas.

When asked what local meant to Farmer S5, he suggested anything within a 25-mile radius. To him, places like the auction barn in Brussels, Ontario and businesses he sells his furniture to are local.
Appendix D – Township of Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional Official Plan – Agricultural Land Use Policies Section

**B2 AGRICULTURAL**

**B2.1 PURPOSE**

The purpose of the *Agricultural* designation is to:

a) protect land suitable for agricultural production from development and land uses unrelated to agriculture;

b) permit uses which support the agricultural community;

c) prevent the intrusion of land uses which are incompatible with the agricultural/or resource activities of the area;

d) encourage agricultural land uses and associated activities that contribute to the economy of the Township; and,

e) ensure that the type and scale of development is compatible with land use in the agricultural area.

**B2.2 LOCATION**

The *Agricultural* land use designation applies to lands in the Township which are considered to be prime agricultural lands by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and also include other lands considered by the Township to be locally important agricultural lands.

**B2.3 PERMITTED USES**

a) agricultural and nursery uses;

b) single detached dwellings on existing lots;

c) bed and breakfast establishments;

d) on-farm diversified uses such as home occupations, home industries, or industrial, commercial and institutional uses subject to the provisions of Sections B2.5.1 and B2.5.2 of this Plan;

e) agriculture-related commercial and industrial uses such as veterinary clinics, abattoirs and uses which support agri-business subject to Section B2.5.3;

f) open space and passive recreational uses;

g) farm related exhibitions and agri-tourism subject to Section B2.5.4 of this
h) forestry and resource management uses;

i) small-scale public uses;

j) the extraction of stone, gravel, sand and other aggregates and associated operations such as crushing, screening, washing and aggregate storage subject to Section B1.6 of this Plan;

k) mineral exploration and mining activities authorized under the Mining Act subject to Section B1.7 of this Plan;

l) accessory residential uses on farm properties subject to Section B2.5.6 of this Plan; and,

m) wayside pits and quarries, portable asphalt plants and concrete plants for specific road works undertaken by a public authority in the area.

**B2.4 DEVELOPMENT POLICIES**

**B2.4.1 The Creation of New Lots in the Agricultural Designation**

In accordance with the intent of this Plan to maintain the agricultural land base in the Township. The majority of the new residential development is directed to the Rural Area and vacant building lots. However, while lot creation within the Agricultural designation is generally discouraged, a lot may be created in the Agricultural designation provided Council is satisfied of the following:

a) That the new lot is of a size appropriate for the type of agricultural uses typical in the area and are sufficiently large enough to maintain flexibility for future changes in the type or size of agricultural operations;

b) That a lot for agriculture-related uses will be limited to a minimum size needed to accommodate the use and sustain appropriate sewage and water services;

c) That the purpose of the application is to sever a residence surplus to a farming operation as a result of a farm consolidation. Council shall ensure that the new lot will be limited to a minimum size needed to accommodate the use and appropriate sewage and water services, and that a new residential dwelling will not be a permitted use on any vacant remnant parcel of farmland created by such a severance.

d) That an infrastructure facility or corridor cannot be accommodated through the use of easements or rights-of-way.

e) The boundary of the severed lot complies with the minimum distance required by the Minimum Distance Separation I Formulae;

f) The purpose of the application is to separate original lots of record that have inadvertently merged in title, subject to confirmation of criteria (a); and,
g) The proposed lot complies with the criteria set out in Section D4 (General Consent Policies) of this Plan.

**B2.4.2 Farm Consolidations and Boundary Adjustments**

Boundary adjustments or farm consolidations may be considered where the effect of the boundary adjustment or consolidation is to improve the viability of the farm operation provided:

a) no new lot is created; and,

b) the viability of using the lands affected by the application for agricultural uses is not adversely impacted if the application is approved.

**B2.4.3 Minimum Distance Separation Formulae**

New agricultural livestock buildings as well as non-farm development shall comply with the Minimum Distance Separation Formulae I and II.

**B2.5 AGRICULTURAL RELATED AND ON-FARM DIVERSIFIED USES**

**B2.5.1 Home Occupations and Home Industries**

Home occupations are typically professional work and service activities that are carried out within the residential dwelling or accessory building that typically do not involve the retail sale of goods and services. In addition, such uses generally occupy a limited portion of the gross floor area of the dwelling and shall not change the character of the dwelling or its surroundings. Home occupations will be defined and regulated through provisions in the Township’s Zoning By-law.

Home industries are small-scale industrial uses that are accessory to rural uses and/or a single detached dwelling. Such uses may also support the agricultural industry in the area. These uses should not detract from the primary use of the property for rural or residential purposes. Home industries may include welding, carpentry or machine shops, or agriculturally related uses that involve the processing or transportation of regionally produced agricultural crops or other products. The accessory retail sales of products produced in the home industry is also permitted. The repair, storage or sale of motor vehicles is not considered to be a home industry. Home industries will be defined and regulated through provisions in the Township’s Zoning By-law.

**B2.5.2 On-Farm Diversified Uses on Farm Properties**

The development of a commercial, industrial or institutional use as an accessory or secondary use on a farm property is permitted, provided:

a) the use is located on the farm property and is associated with and secondary to a farm operation;

b) any retail component is limited in floor area;
c) the majority of the products offered for sale are locally produced or are derived from local produce or are manufactured on the farm property; and,

d) any building housing an institutional use is located amongst or proximate to the cluster of farm buildings and only serves the needs of the surrounding agricultural and rural community.

The development of a new commercial use or industrial on a farm property shall be subject to a Zoning By-law Amendment and may be subject to Site Plan Control.

**B2.5.3 Agricultural-Related Uses**

The development of an agricultural-related commercial or industrial land use as an independent, primary use in the Agricultural designation may be permitted, provided:

a) the use serves and supports the needs of the rural and agricultural community as a primary business activity;

b) the use is compatible with agricultural land use;

c) the use is directly related to local agri-business; and, d) any retail or office component is limited in floor area;

The development of a new agricultural-related commercial or industrial use shall be subject to a Zoning By-law Amendment and may be subject to Site Plan Control.

**B2.5.4 Agricultural Research and Training Establishments**

The development of agricultural research and training establishments is encouraged in the Township. Such uses may be permitted subject to rezoning, provided Council is satisfied that:

a) the use is related to and will benefit the agricultural industry;

b) the use will assist in the furthering of knowledge in the agricultural sector of the economy; and,

c) the use will assist the farm community through training and the identification of new methods and procedures.

**B2.5.5 Farm Related Exhibitions**

This Plan supports the development of uses that promote the importance of the agricultural and rural community. On this basis, uses such as artist studios, pancake houses, farm machinery and equipment exhibitions, farm tours, holiday- related exhibitions and small-scale educational or interpretive establishments that focus on
farming instruction or agri-tourism are permitted in the Agricultural designation. Such uses shall be encouraged to locate within existing farm buildings, where possible.

**B2.5.6 Accessory Residential Uses**

Accessory apartments located within an existing dwelling shall be permitted subject to zone regulations with respect to such uses. In addition, the establishment of one additional dwelling unit on a farm property for farm help is permitted, provided the lands are appropriately zoned to permit such a second dwelling. Prior to considering an application for rezoning, Council shall be satisfied that the second dwelling unit:

a) is required for farm help;
b) will be located within the existing farm-building cluster;
c) can be connected to the existing private sewage and water supply;
d) will be designed and/or located to be compatible or otherwise blend in with the farm operation.

Council may require that the development of an accessory residential use to a farm property to be subject to Site Plan Control. In no case, shall any residential use established in accordance with this policy be subdivided or severed from the original parcel on which it was constructed. Furthermore, a trailer, camper or mobile home shall not be utilized for a second dwelling.

**B2.6 IMPLEMENTING ZONING BY-LAW**

All lands in the Agricultural designation shall be placed in an Agricultural (A) Zone in the implementing zoning by-law. Agricultural related uses and secondary uses will be zoned in an appropriate Agricultural Exception Zone.

(Township of Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional, 2015, pp. 20-25)
Appendix E – Township of Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional Official Plan – Schedule A Land Use

TOWNSHIP OF TARBUTT & TARBUTT ADDITIONAL
Official Plan
SCHEDULE ‘A’
Land Use

Legend

- Abandoned Mine Sites
- Park
- Closed Waste Disposal Site
- Railway
- Roads
- Watercourse
- Township Boundary

(Township of Tarbutt and Tarbutt Additional, 2015)
4.0 Agricultural Resource Lands

GOAL

4.1 To preserve and protect the best capability soils for foodland production and to protect and encourage intensive farming operations.

4.2 To recognize that in the Township there are two separate Agricultural Resource Land designations: A1 and A2.

OBJECTIVES

4.3 To sustain farming and farm related activities as a significant component of the economic base of the municipality.

4.4 To discourage incompatible uses.

POLICIES

4.5 Lands designated Agricultural Resource Lands (A-1) on Schedule „A“ comprise prime agricultural lands and will be preserved as the principal areas for foodland production. Other lands which are actively farmed will also be protected.

4.6 Agricultural uses and related activities are permitted as the predominant land uses. Forestry is also permitted land use activity.

1. Secondary Uses

Secondary uses on agricultural lands are encouraged as a means to strengthen and diversify the agricultural industry and to supplement farm income. The Township shall ensure that such uses are compatible with agricultural uses and shall not hinder surrounding agricultural operations. Criteria used to evaluate the compatibility include: the type and scale of use; that the use, where it is located on a farm, is clearly secondary to the main farm operation.

4.7 Agriculture-related uses are also permitted provided they are compatible with agricultural activities, are directly related to agriculture and necessary in close proximity to farm operations and provided that alternative locations outside of Agricultural Resource Lands are not available and there are no reasonable alternative locations in
prime agricultural areas to locate such uses upon lower priority agricultural soil capability lands. Such uses must be compatible with agricultural activities and shall comply with the Minimum Distance Separation Formulae I and 11 and wherever possible, should be encouraged to locate on lands with lower soil capability (see also Section 2.8.15).

4.8 A1 – Land Severances

1. Removal of Land from Prime Agricultural Areas for Limited Non-Residential Uses

The exclusion of prime agricultural land (Canada Land Inventory Class 1, 2 and 3 soils) from the Agricultural Resource Lands A-1 designation, for limited non-residential uses, may only be permitted provided that the following criteria and procedures are met:

a) An Official Plan Amendment will be required to exclude any land from the Agricultural Resource Lands A-1 designation as shown on Schedule A and to re-designate the land for the proposed limited non-residential use;

b) A zoning by-law amendment will be required to rezone the lands for the proposed limited non-residential use;

c) The proponent must pre-consult with the Municipality on the proposed limited non-residential use;

d) The applicant must submit a Land Use Justification Report that addresses but is not limited to the following matters:

   i. The type of limited non-residential land use proposed, the land area, the location and lot dimensions and building envelope required for the use as well as a description of the surrounding land uses and distance separation of the proposed limited non-residential land use to any livestock facilities and manure storage facilities;

   ii. Existing and past uses of the land;

   iii. The type and quality of the soil for agricultural production and soil conditions (i.e., stoney, wet etc.), topographic relief and vegetative cover if other than agricultural crop on the lands proposed for the limited non-residential use;

   iv. There is a demonstrated need within the planning horizon of the Official Plan for additional land to be made available to accommodate the proposed limited non-residential land use;
v. There are no reasonable alternative locations for the proposed use which avoid designated Agricultural Resource Lands A-1 lands as shown on Schedule A;

vi. There are no reasonable alternative locations on lower priority agricultural lands (Canada Land Inventory Class 4, 5, 6 and 7 soils) within the Agricultural Resource Lands A-1 designation shown on Schedule A;

vii. The lot and land area required will be minimized to an area only necessary for the proposed limited non-residential land use; and

viii. Compliance with the Minimum Distance Separation Formula I;

e) The Municipality may require a peer review of the Land Use Justification Report;

f) The cost of the Land Use Justification Report and any peer review which the Municipality may require will be borne by the applicant.

2. Lot adjustments in prime agricultural areas may be permitted for legal or technical reasons; and

3. Lot creation in prime agricultural areas is discouraged and may only be permitted for:

a) Agricultural uses, provided that the lost are of a size appropriate for the type of agricultural use(s) common in the area and are sufficiently large to maintain flexibility for future changes in the type of agricultural operations;

b) Agricultural-related uses, provided that any new lot will be limited to a minimum size needed to accommodate the use and appropriate sewage and water services;

c) A residence surplus to a farming operation as a result of farm consolidation, provided that the planning authority ensures that new residential dwellings are prohibited on any vacant remnant parcel of farmland created by the severance. The approach used to ensure that no new residential dwellings are permitted on the remnant parcel may be recommended by the Province, or based on municipal approaches which achieve the same objective; and

d) Infrastructure, where the facility or corridor cannot be accommodated through the use of easements or rights-of-way.
4.9 A2 – Land Severances

1. Lot creation in secondary prime agricultural areas (A2) is generally discouraged and will be permitted only in the following situations:
   a) New lots for agricultural uses may be permitted provided that they are of a size appropriate for the type of agricultural use(s) common in the area and are sufficiently large to maintain flexibility for future changes in the type or size of agricultural operation;
   b) New lots may be permitted for agriculture-related uses; and
   c) New lots for residential uses may be permitted for:
      i. A farm retirement lot;
      ii. A residence surplus to a farming operation; and
      iii. Residential infilling.

Any new lot for residential uses will be limited to a minimum size needed to accommodate the residence and an appropriate sewage and water system.

2. New land uses, including the creation of lots, and new or expanding livestock facilities will comply with the minimum distance separation formulae; and

3. In Agricultural Resource Lands “A2” designated areas, agricultural uses and normal farm practices will be promoted and protected.

4.10 The requirements for minimum distance separation of the Minimum Distance Separation Formulæ I and II shall apply to all farm and non-farm development in order to minimize conflicts between livestock facilities and development (see also Section 2.8.15).

4.11 As an alternative to creating a separate lot, a second lodging unit in an existing dwelling may be permitted for the extended family of for farm help.

4.12 In considering applications for severance, Council will ensure that the physical or efficient operation or machinery or production of a farm or adjacent farms are not adversely affected wherever possible, new residential lots shall be located on poorer quality farm land.

4.13 The designation of agricultural lands for agricultural activities shall not prevent other existing uses within this policy area to continue. However, none of these existing
uses shall be permitted to expand if Council should determine that there will be an adverse impact on agricultural activities.

Aggregate extraction is permitted in the Agricultural Resource Lands and shall be subject to the policies of Section 6.0 of this Plan. A minimum distance separation may be required to avoid conflict with adjacent land uses. A rehabilitation plan for the aggregate operation for new sites will be required to ensure the re-establishment of an agricultural use of similar acreage and quality of soil.

4.14 Existing vacant lots of record which are large enough to be farmed shall be preserved for agricultural uses. These and smaller lots will be encouraged to be consolidated into larger farm holdings.

4.15 Agricultural Resource Lands are proposed Site Plan Control Areas pursuant to Section 41 of the Planning Act, specifically farm-related commercial and industrial uses are subject to site plan control.

4.16 New municipal drains as well as the ongoing maintenance of existing drains will be actively encouraged and financially supported.

4.17 IMPLEMENTATION

The Program for implementing policies in the Agricultural Resource Lands consists of the following actions.

1. Review of severance applications circulated by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs for conformity to severance policies;

2. Processing requests for municipal drains under the Drainage Act and the Tile Drainage Act;

3. Adhering to the Minimum Distance Separation formula I and II. Having regard to the Nutrient Management Act, 2002 and by promoting and protecting normal farm practices;

4. Processing site plan applications;

5. Consulting with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food to determine if severances in the Agricultural Resource Lands will jeopardize the protection of agricultural lands;


7. Amending the Zoning By-law to provide for the range of permitted uses and appropriate standards for their development; and
8. Consultation with the Ministry of the Environment and Energy and/or its designate on the adequacy of water and/or sewage services (see also Section 2.8-11).

(Township of Johnson, 2009, pp. 44-49)
Appendix G – Township of Johnson Official Plan – Schedule A Land Use

(Township of Johnson, 2009)
Appendix H – County of Huron Official Plan – Agricultural Land Use Policies

Section

2. AGRICULTURE

Agriculture in Huron is of national significance. Huron leads all counties and regions in Ontario in total value of production; and it also exceeds the production totals of several provinces. Huron has the advantage of an informed and progressive farm community, a supportive service sector, high capability soils, a diversified agricultural industry, a favourable climate, and limited non-farm intrusion. Agriculture has a significant positive economic impact in the County that goes beyond the farm gate and rural areas into Huron’s towns and villages. The continued health of agriculture is important not only from an agricultural perspective, but also from a broader community and economic perspective.

2.1 Community Values

The community’s involvement identified two main values for agriculture.

Huron’s residents are committed to agriculture and keeping it strong. The community established a direction of encouraging activities in agricultural areas that are supportive of agriculture and limiting those which are not.

Huron’s residents wish to see regulation limited to that which is necessary to protect and enhance the community. The community noted that global competitiveness means that Huron’s farmers need to retain flexibility to respond to changing economics and management practices. This can be achieved through support for agriculture with limited and appropriate regulations which respect farm viability and environmental protection.

2.2 Community Directions

Extensive public consultation identified a number of key directions for agriculture.

Vision of Agriculture
In developing a vision of agriculture, the goal of the community is to protect agriculture, the farmers’ ability to farm, prime agricultural land and the quality of life for future generations. A healthy agricultural and rural economy in Huron County is dependent upon activities and businesses which support agriculture. Food security and the availability of a variety of local foods have been identified as important. Production of food for local consumption will be encouraged.

Agriculture and the Environment
The farm community will be supported in their continued use of farm management practices that protect and enhance the environment.
Changing Farm Practices
In recognizing that change is inevitable, the goal of the community is to support changing farm practices that contribute to agricultural diversification, opportunity and security. To achieve this, the following are supported: flexibility for farmers to pursue alternative forms of agriculture; fair and equitable standards for the establishment of large and intensive livestock operations; on-farm business activities that are compatible with neighbouring uses; and monitoring of future revisions to the Farming and Food Production Protection Act.

Urban & Rural Relationships
The goal of the community is to give agriculture priority over other uses in agricultural areas. Development should be directed to urban areas, unless it is an agricultural related use. (Minister’s Modification 1)

2.3 Community Policies and Actions
The community has established the following:

1) Huron County is a prime agricultural area as shown on the Agricultural Resource Map.

2) The continued diversification of Huron’s agricultural industry will be encouraged. Local Official Plans will support all types, sizes and intensities of agriculture.

3) Prime agricultural areas consist of prime agricultural lands (Class 1-3 soils) and associated non-prime agricultural lands (Class 4-7 soils). The Agricultural Resource Map identifies prime and non-prime agricultural lands. In prime agricultural areas, farming, agricultural uses, agricultural-related uses, on-farm diversified uses, and normal farm practices as defined in the Farming and Food Production Protection Act will be promoted, protected and given priority over other land uses. Farm and accessory farm residences will be permitted on existing lots subject to local plan policy. (Amended by OPA 4 – Formerly Minister’s Modification 2)

4) Municipalities may only exclude land from prime agricultural areas for (Minister’s Modification 3):

   a) Expansion of a settlement area boundary through a supportive comprehensive review and subject to the policies in Section 7 of this Plan; (Minister’s Modification 4)

   b) Creation of a new settlement area through a supportive comprehensive review and subject to the policies in Section 7 of this Plan; (Minister’s Modification 5)

   c) Extraction of aggregate resources as an interim use, provided progressive and final rehabilitation is undertaken where feasible, subject to policies in Section 5 of this Plan; and
d) Limited non-residential uses, provided:

1) There is a demonstrated need for the proposed use;

2) Reasonable alternative locations are not available which avoid prime agricultural areas;

3) Reasonable alternative locations are not available in prime agricultural areas with lower priority agricultural lands; and

4) The land does not comprise a specialty crop area.

5) On-farm diversified uses and agriculture-related uses are recognized for their positive contribution to the farm economy. Local Official Plans will encourage:

a) on-farm diversified uses related to agriculture that are compatible with and do not hinder neighbouring uses, are secondary to the farm and are limited in area.

b) farm-related commercial and farm-related industrial uses that are compatible with and do not hinder surrounding agricultural operations, are directly related to farm operations in the area, are required in close proximity to farm operations and provide products and/or services directly to farm operations as a primary activity. (Amended by OPA 4)

6) Non-farm related development will be directed to settlement areas. Local Official Plans may permit on-farm schools and churches for communities relying on horse drawn vehicles as their primary means of transportation, but shall not permit the severance of land for these uses. (Minister’s Modification 6)

7) Lot creation in prime agricultural areas is discouraged and will only be permitted for: agricultural uses; agriculture-related uses provided that the area of the new lot is kept to the minimum size needed to support the use and appropriate servicing; a residence surplus to a farming operation; minor lot adjustments; and, infrastructure or public service utilities which cannot be accommodated through easements or rights-of-ways; subject to the policies of local Plans. (Amended by OPA 4 - formerly Minister’s Modification 7)

The creation of any lot for agricultural purposes must be of a size appropriate for the type of agricultural uses common in the area and sufficiently large to maintain flexibility for future changes in the type or size of agricultural operations. Lot sizes in agricultural areas will be set out in local Plans.

8) Local municipalities may choose to develop policies which permit the severance of existing residences surplus to a farming operation as a result of the acquisition of an additional farm property.

Local Official Plans shall meet or exceed the following criteria:
a) The residence must be a minimum of 15 years old or has immediately replaced one of a series of habitable residences which were built a minimum of 15 years ago or replaces a house accidently destroyed by fire or natural disaster.

b) The residence is habitable, as determined by the Chief Building Official, and is intended to be used as a primary residence.

c) A new residence is prohibited (through zoning) on any remnant parcel of farmland created by a surplus residence severance.

d) The area of farmland attached to the surplus house is kept to a minimum size needed for residential purposes, taking into consideration water and sewage services and environmental and topographic features.

e) Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) formula requirements are met to the surplus house if barn(s) exist on the retained farmlands. MDS does not apply to existing barns on separately titled lots. (Amended by OPA 4)

f) There has been no previous separation of land for residential purposes from the farm property as it existed on June 28, 1973, other than in a settlement area.

g) The retained lands are a minimum of 19 hectares unless merged with an abutting farm.

h) Where the residence is within 300 metres of an existing aggregate operation or aggregate deposit, an assessment of potential impacts may be required (See Section 5.3.10).

i) For the purposes of this section

- a) corporation may be an eligible farming operation provided the same corporation owns at least two farms, each containing a residence, one of which may be severed in accordance with this section; and
- b) an unincorporated group of one or more person(s) may be an eligible farming operation provided a majority of the owners, together or individually each own another farm containing a residence, one of which may be severed in accordance with this section; where owners normally reside in the same household, they may be considered as one individual within the group of owners.

9) All severances will recognize the protection of farmers’ ability to farm.

10) All development, including lot creation in agricultural areas and new or expanding livestock facilities, will be subject to the Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) formula. MDS will apply to surplus residence severances in accordance with Section 2.3.8.e. All development in agricultural areas will be compatible with neighbouring rural uses, be of a scale compatible with the rural character, and have adequate services available.

(Amended by OPA 4)
11) Lot creation in prime agricultural areas may be permitted for infrastructure uses where the facility or corridor cannot be accommodated through the use of easements or a right-of-way. Lot creation for renewable energy systems is not permitted.

12) Stewardship by local landowners is encouraged to support the wise management of the agricultural and water resources and contribute to the protection, restoration and management of natural areas and the health and integrity of the environment. Farming activity shall abide by “normal farm practices” and respect provincial laws. Proper nutrient management, including the appropriate storage, application and use of the manure resource is required to comply with the Nutrient Management Act.

13) In the interest of protecting, improving and restoring the quality and quantity of water, uses within the agricultural area will be required to comply with Municipal and Provincial plans. Municipal Official Plans and Zoning By-laws, as directed by the Clean Water Act, will identify areas of vulnerable surface and groundwater, sensitive surface water features and sensitive groundwater features, and their hydrologic functions. Land uses with a potential to impact water quality or quantity may be restricted or prohibited in these areas. New and expanding livestock facilities will comply with Nutrient Management legislation.

In accordance with the Natural Environment policies of this plan, landowners have an important role in protecting the quality and quantity of water through good stewardship and the adoption of best management practices.

14) Extractive resource uses may be permitted in agricultural areas subject to the Extractive Resources and Natural Environment sections of this plan.

15) The County recognizes that, under the Green Energy and Green Economy Act, 2009, the Official Plan does not affect renewable energy facilities. Renewable energy systems such as wind, solar and biomass facilities may be permitted by the province in agricultural areas, in accordance with provincial legislation and regulations. The following considerations shall guide the County and local municipalities when reviewing and commenting on proposals for renewable energy facilities in agricultural areas:

- Effects on the economic, social and environmental well-being of the community, and the health, safety and well-being of persons
- The proximity of facilities to Settlement Areas
- The suitability of the road network to accommodate construction and ongoing maintenance and emergency access
- The loss of prime agricultural lands and adverse impacts on agricultural operations
- Adverse impacts on natural features and functions
- Adverse impacts on wildlife, including bats and migratory birds
- Adverse impacts on archaeological and cultural heritage resources, and
- The proximity and cumulative effect of existing or planned renewable energy facilities.

Local municipalities may include policies in their Official Plan outlining local considerations for renewable energy facilities. *(Section 2.3 15) was modified and approved by the Ontario Municipal Board on April 17, 2015, File PL 120175)*

16) Commercial scale, ground mounted solar energy generation systems are prohibited on prime agricultural lands, in accordance with provincial legislation.

*(County of Huron, 2015, pp. 6-10)*
Appendix I – County of Huron Official Plan – Agricultural Resources Map

Huron County Official Plan
Agricultural Resources Map

NOTE: Features Do Not Represent Land Use Designations

Produced by the County of Huron Planning and Development Department (ODS) Services with data supplied under License for Members of the Ontario's OpenData Data Exchange. MyONI, ArcGIS and Microsoft. This map is illustrative only. Do not rely on this as a precise cadastral representation. Use this map as a guide to navigation. Copyright ©GeoEye 2013. May 2013.

(County of Huron, 2015)
Appendix J – Township of Howick Official Plan – Agricultural Land Use Policies Section

3. AGRICULTURE

A. INTRODUCTION
The fundamental principle of this Plan for Howick Township, as set out in Section 2, is to promote the long term future of agriculture. The research clearly indicates that in excess of 85% of the land in the Township is rated Class 1, 2 & 3 in the Canada Land Inventory of agricultural capability and the basic indicators of successful agriculture are strong. Also, and most important, the community has developed a high degree of skill, innovation and leadership to practice farming. In essence farming is the "way of life" in Howick and the desire to continue this way of life was expressed strongly and positively. Accordingly, this section of the Plan evolves policies to protect the land base and promote the creation of an environment conducive to an integrated agricultural community and economy. To achieve this, the majority of the Township has been designated for agricultural use.

B. DEFINITION
The agricultural designation of land shall mean that the predominant use of land in the areas so designated will be farming of all types, industrial and commercial activities which are primarily related to agriculture, residential uses directly related to agriculture and natural physical features which by their presence enhance the physiography of the area for agriculture.

All cleared lands regardless of their Class rating shall be protected and preserved for agriculture.

C. GOALS
The following directions for agriculture are adopted.

1. To ensure maximum flexibility for farm operators to engage in differing types and sizes of agricultural operations.

2. To encourage farm operators to use sound managerial practices that protect and enhance the environment.

3. To relate development in agricultural areas to the needs of agriculture and respect the farmer's ability to farm.

4. To prevent class 1, 2 and 3 soils from being used for non-agricultural purposes.

5. To encourage and promote practices which sustain a productive land base and environmental health without compromising the functioning of the ecosystem.
6. To encourage the retention of remaining woodlots and wetlands in order to enhance the physiographic quality of the landscape for agriculture.

7. To prohibit uses which are not primarily related to agriculture from establishing in agriculture areas.

D. POLICIES AND ACTIONS

1. Farm Unit
In areas designated Agriculture, the predominant use of land will be farming and the predominant type of development will be the “farm unit”. The farm unit consists of the farm residence, accessory buildings required for additional labourers, barns and other buildings that support the farm operation. The structures which make up the farm unit will be part of the farm and not on separately titled lots.

Farm operations of varying types and sizes will be allowed, and residences may be built in conjunction with them where agriculture comprises the main use. Mobile home units (single wide) will be permitted as a residential unit accessory to an agricultural use on the basis of one mobile home unit per holding. A single-wide mobile home may be used as part of the farm unit for the purposes of providing a residence for hired labour, a son or daughter involved in the farming operation, or for a retiring farmer. All existing lots greater than 30 hectares shall be entitled a residence.

Conversion of the principal farm residence to contain one additional dwelling unit may be permitted subject to the following criteria:
   a) The principal dwelling is adequate in size and structurally suitable to accommodate two dwelling units;
   b) If Municipal water and sewage services are available, the property shall connect to municipal services.
   c) If Municipal water and sewage services are not available, on-site servicing (e.g. water, sewage) shall have sufficient capacity for the additional dwelling unit.

Garden suites, ancillary to an existing dwelling, may be permitted subject to the policies outlined in Section 5.D.10.1. (Amended by OPA 9-2014)

2. Well Head Protection Areas
A Groundwater Management Study is being completed for Huron County and will affect lands in Howick. This study will identify Howick’s existing groundwater supply. The primary land use surrounding municipal water supplies is agriculture. Based on the recommendation of the Groundwater Management Study, policies will be developed for groundwater source protection.

In the interim, new or expanding agricultural development will proceed according to the recommendations of the Conservation Authority.
3. **Farming Practices**
Normal farm practices as defined in the Farming and Food Production and Protection Act, as amended, will be promoted, protected and given priority over other land uses. Council may through the zoning by-law, give consideration to different means by which to regulate agricultural operations, on the basis of the impact of such operations on the environment.

4. **Lot Size**
Lot sizes shall be based on the long term needs of agriculture. Lot sizes shall ensure lands remain flexible for all forms of agriculture as promoted by this plan. Lands must be used for the production of food, fibre or breeding stock. All severances will respect the farmer’s ability to farm. A minimum lot size of 30 hectares shall apply to all new lots being created and is based on the long term needs of agriculture.

5. **Nutrient Management**
Nutrient Management Plans shall be completed in accordance with local Nutrient Management requirements or the Province’s Nutrient Management Act, 2002, whichever applies. The local Nutrient Management By-law affects expanding farm operators who are required to complete a plan prior to the issuance of a building permit. The Provincial Nutrient Management Act affects most operators who generate or receive nutrients. Implementation of the Provincial Regulations will be phased in based on the size and type of operator. Greenhouses, nurseries and farmers applying commercial fertilizer will also be subject to the Provincial Act and Regulations. Where provincial legislation permits, the Municipality may pass a by-law to address farm operations not regulated by the Nutrient Management Act.

6. **Land Class**
Agricultural lands as designated on Schedule B shall be protected. The agricultural designation includes lands classified by the Canada Land Inventory (CLI) as Class 1, 2 & 3 for agricultural production as well as some lands classified as Class 4, 5, 6 and organic by the Canada Land Inventory. All agricultural lands regardless of their CLI classification shall be protected and promoted for agricultural purposes. As a general rule, non-agricultural development shall be encouraged to locate in the settlement areas.

7. **Commercial and Industrial Uses**
Commercial and industrial uses will be encouraged to locate in existing settlement areas, but may be permitted in agricultural areas by rezoning provided:
- the majority of the operation is directly related to the processing of agricultural products or the servicing of farms and not to goods or services that are normally required by the general public,
- the operation is required in proximity to farms,
- the agricultural-related commercial and/or industrial use are small-scale,
- applicable Provincial requirements are met (e.g. certificate of approval), and
- additional requirements are addressed through site plan control.
Where proximity to farming operations is not critical, such uses should locate in a nearby settlement area. Permitted uses should be encouraged to locate in groups to provide better service and should avoid areas of improved class 1 or 2 lands except where natural features or parcel shape renders the parcel unsuitable for agricultural production. In considering the conformity of a proposed agricultural commercial or agricultural industrial use, that portion of the business relating to agriculture must relate to commercial scale agriculture. Prior to the granting of a severance or the issuance of a building permit, these uses will be zoned for an agricultural-commercial-industrial use. In addition to conforming with the above policies, any zoning by-law passed under this section will ensure that provisions have been made for adequate waste disposal. An accessory dwelling to an active agricultural commercial or agricultural industrial use is permitted.

8. Home Occupations & Home Industries
On-farm business activities that are compatible with neighbouring uses and secondary to the farm will be encouraged. Home occupations and small-scale home industries are permitted in the agricultural designation. These are small businesses carried out as a secondary use to the main permitted use on the same property. These uses are allowed provided they do not conflict with the surrounding uses, do not remove large amounts of farmland from production, and do not cause a traffic or safety concern. The details for each of these uses shall be further clarified in the Township Zoning By-law.

9. Non-Farm Commercial and Industrial Uses
Non-farm commercial and industrial uses, other than those listed in 7., or 8. above shall be directed to urban areas.

10. Existing Residences
Agricultural land designated on Schedule “B” shall be protected. Non-agricultural development shall be directed to settlement areas. Farm residences that become surplus to a farm operator may be severed according to the consent policies of Sections 3.G. and 15 of this Plan. (Amended by OPA 9-2014)

11. Natural Environment
Farm operators will be required to protect areas of provincially significant wetland and will be encouraged to protect remaining natural areas and natural features by using wise stewardship practices. Existing farm woodlots will remain as part of the agricultural area and as such, part of the farm holding. Clearing of forested areas will not be permitted with the exception of minor clearing for convenience purposes, as permitted by the Huron County Tree Cutting By-law and approved by Huron County Council. Huron County Council may require as a condition of approval, reforestation of an equivalent area of land or planting of a fence line windbreak.

12. Minimum Distance Separation I & II
All farm operations and buildings as well as all other non-farm uses and structures permitted by the agricultural policies of this plan will comply with the Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) provisions and recognize the protection of the farmer's
ability to farm. The MDS is a tool to determine a recommended distance between a livestock facility and another land use. The objective of applying MDS is to present land use conflicts and minimize nuisance complaints from odour. The MDS varies according to a number of variables including: type of livestock, size of the farm operation, type of manure system and the form of development present or proposed. MDS I provides minimum distance separation for new development from existing livestock facilities. MDS II provides minimum distance separation for new or expanding livestock facilities from existing or approved development.

These calculations also create an area of increased separation distance around the towns, villages and hamlets and other selected areas including recreation and rural residential. Within these areas there are enhanced separation distances which vary according to the size and type of livestock operation.

13. **Lots of Record**

The agricultural goals of this Plan were drawn in recognition that there are numerous small land holdings scattered throughout the township, some of which are sizeable but do not comprise flexible agricultural parcels. These "lots of record" contain a variety of uses but are mostly of a non-farm rural residential nature. Many of these lots of record have no structures on them. It is the general intent of this Plan that these lots will be utilized for a use permitted by the Plan and implementing by-law. However, the Plan recognizes that this may not be practical. In these cases, the lots may be rezoned to a special agricultural zone permitting a single family residence and accessory building(s). Prior to such rezoning Council will be satisfied that:

(i) the lots cannot be used for a use permitted in the agricultural zones;

(ii) the proposed use conforms with the goals of the Agricultural designation;

(iii) any proposed residence complies with minimum distance separation requirements as incorporated into the zoning by-law;

(iv) the soil is suitable for sewage disposal and that an adequate supply of potable water is available. The suitability of the soils and the adequacy of the water supply shall be in accordance with Section 8 of the Ontario Building Code, as amended;

(v) the site is suitable for residential construction;

(vi) the site is serviced with a fully maintained municipally or provincially owned road.

14. **Extractive Resources**

Extractive Resource uses will be permitted to establish in the agricultural designation subject to the provisions of Section 6. E.1. & 2.
15. Community Facilities
Existing community facilities are recognized and may be permitted to expand subject to rezoning. New community facilities will be located in or adjacent to urban settlement areas subject to policies in Section 9 of this Plan.

Communities relying on horse-drawn transportation may require localized schools or churches in rural areas. These uses may be permitted by rezoning without amendment to this Plan. These uses will locate on existing lots, will not be permitted to be severed and will avoid prime agricultural land where possible. The MDS formula may be tailored to accommodate these uses on the host farm.

16. Renewable Energy Generation Facilities
Renewable energy generation facilities may be permitted in the Agricultural designation in accordance with provincial legislation.

17. Greenhouses
Greenhouses are an evolving agricultural industry. The Township shall establish development standards in their Zoning By-law to address maximum lot coverage, minimum lot size, and minimum distance to neighbouring residences. New large development as defined in the Zoning By-law shall be compatible with the surrounding area and shall ensure minimal impact on ground and surface water quality and quantity.

The location of greenhouses within the agricultural area shall take into consideration the proximity of adjacent residential and non-farm uses. Greenhouses may be subject to site plan control. Greenhouses will be subject to the regulations of the Nutrient Management Act. Additional dwellings for seasonal labour are considered an accessory use for greenhouse operations.

18. Site Plan Requirements
Pursuant to Section 41(2) of the Planning Act (RSO 1990), any lands within the Agricultural designation are hereby established as a proposed site plan control area. A standard of site plan and building design will be followed in accordance with the policies in Section 16.J. of this Plan.

E. LOCATION
The location of lands designated Agriculture to which the above policies apply is shown on the Land Use Map (Schedule "B").

F. IMPLEMENTATION
1. Assistance and advice on agricultural operations by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

2. Assistance and advice on conservation practices by the local Conservation Authorities.
3. By the adoption of a zoning by-law by the Township Council.

4. By the provisions of the consent policy of this Plan.

5. By the implementation of by-laws and policies protecting the quality of ground and surface water including nutrient management planning.

6. By the stewardship practices of farmers and other initiatives of the public.

7. Through the application of all applicable provincial policies and legislation.

G. CONSENT POLICY
In areas designated "Agriculture" on the Land Use Plan, consents for conveyance will be in accordance with the following policies:

1. Where the land being conveyed or retained is for agricultural purposes a consent may be granted where both the severed and retained parcels respect the need for long term agricultural flexibility. In determining if the land is to be used for agricultural purposes the following criteria will be met:

   (i) the proposed operation must be an agricultural operation either by itself or in conjunction with other lands owned by the operator;

   (ii) agriculture must be the intended use of the lands being conveyed; and

   (iii) a minimum lot size of 30 hectares.

2. Where the land being conveyed or retained is for a commercial or industrial use which is primarily related to the processing of agricultural products or servicing farms. These uses, in so far as possible, should avoid areas of Class 1 or 2 land.

3. Where the land being conveyed is to be added to the holding of an existing farm operation and will be used for agricultural purposes.

4. Where the land being conveyed is to be added to an abutting, existing non-farm use, consents will be allowed only if productive agricultural land is not involved and the conveyance is for convenience purposes.

5. For mortgage or charge purposes in connection with the discharge of mortgages or the establishment of residences required for additional labour.

6. Conveyances for agricultural purposes will be subject to the applicable minimum distance separation requirements and where intensive animal operations are involved a Nutrient Management Plan or other municipal or provincial approvals will be required as a condition of severance approval.
7. Consents will not be allowed which have the effect of creating lots the use of which is not directly related to agriculture. Non-farm rural residential lots will not be allowed.

8. For title correction purposes.

9. Where a dwelling is surplus to a farming operation as the result of the acquisition of an additional farm property, it may be severed subject to the following criteria:

   a) The residence must be a minimum of 15 years old or has immediately replaced one of a series of habitable residences which were built a minimum of 15 years ago or replaces a house accidently destroyed by fire or natural disaster.
   b) The residence is habitable, as determined by the Chief Building Official, and is intended to be used as a primary residence.
   c) A new residence is prohibited (through zoning) on any remnant parcel of farmland created by a surplus residence severance.
   d) The area of farmland attached to the surplus house is kept to a minimum size needed for residential purposes, taking into consideration water and sewage services and environmental and topographic features.
   e) Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) formula requirements are met where barn(s) on a neighbouring farm have the ability to contain 100 or more nutrient units.
   f) There has been no previous separation of land for residential purposes from the farm property as it existed on June 28, 1973, other than in a settlement area.
   g) The retained lands are a minimum of 19 hectares unless merged with an abutting farm.
   h) Where the residence is within 300 metres of an existing aggregate operation or aggregate deposit, an assessment of potential impacts may be required

The surplus farm dwelling policies apply in the Mineral Aggregate Resource Designation provided that:
   a) The dwelling is located within a secondary deposit;
   b) The severed dwelling sterilizes a minimal amount of the aggregate deposit;
   c) An Aggregate Impact Assessment is completed to the satisfaction of the Township and County.

For the purposes of this section a corporation may be an eligible farming operation provided the same corporation owns at least two farms, each containing a residence, one of which may be severed in accordance with this section; and an unincorporated group of one or more person(s) may be an eligible farming operation provided a majority of the owners, together or individually each own another farm containing a residence, one of which may be severed in accordance with this section; where owners normally reside in the same household, they may be considered as one individual within the group of owners. (Amended by OPA 9-2014)

(Township of Howick, 2016, pp. 5-12)
Appendix K – Township of Howick Official Plan – Schedule B Land Use

(Township of Howick, 2016, p. 82)