

## MAJOR FARM GROUP SAYS YES TO OUR AGRICULTURAL STUDY

As support for our agricultural study grows we are pleased to report we now have the backing of the Durham Region Federation of Agriculture (DRFA), representing some 1000+ farm families.

Susan Reesor, ninth generation of the well-known farm family, and Ron Tapscott, the only full-time Ontario Federation of Agriculture farmer still living and working on the remaining “airport site,” joined us to meet the executive of the DRFA to explain our plans for a study and to seek their support. We are indebted to DRFA president Mitch Morawetz, a municipal planner as well as a farmer, for helping to articulate our message so clearly.

We now have an answer for those politicians who ask: “What do the local farmers think?” Clearly, they think the land should remain farmland. With agriculture and agri-business such huge economic drivers in Durham and Ontario, this message is of prime importance. We’ve said it before but it bears repeating: In Pickering, *when we talk agriculture we mean business!*

## ONTARIO FARMLAND TRUST FORUM, 2016



Land Over Landings was represented by Jim Miller, Gabrielle Untermann, Heather Rigby, Joe Bezubiak, Mary Delaney, and Reid Williamson.

For AGvocates who have worked for years – even decades – to protect the farmlands of North Pickering, the annual OFT Forum is like a day at the spa. The six of us who spent April 8 in Kitchener were energized and rejuvenated by the shared energy of so many smart, committed, knowledgeable people of like mind. By day’s end, we felt we could move mountains – or at least move the last 9,600 acres of Federal Lands from “airport lands” to “farmland forever”!

### MORE SUPPORT!

- Gary Anandasangaree, Liberal MP, Scarborough–Rouge Park
- Celina Caesar-Chavannes, Liberal MP, Whitby; Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister
- William G. Davis, former Premier of Ontario
- Joanne Dies, Councillor, Town of Ajax
- Bill Hodgson, former mayor of Lincoln; now Regional Councillor; Chair, Agricultural Policy & Action Committee; Vice-Chair, Greater Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance
- Rick Johnson, Ward 3 Pickering City Councillor
- Rob Keffer, Mayor, Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury
- Peter Kent, Conservative MP, Thornhill; former Minister of the Environment
- Rick Kerr, Oshawa City Councillor

### WE’VE MET WITH THE HONOURABLE JEFF LEAL

The Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), was a receptive listener at a meeting in Toronto on April 12. Minister Leal acknowledged that farmland is “a precious nonrenewable resource” and that although these are *Federal* Lands they are also *Ontario* farmland and worthy of protection. The very amiable discussion ended with the minister offering his office’s help to arrange meetings with our area MPPs, some of whom have been reluctant over the years to become involved in what they perceived to be a federal matter. We hope warm relations between Ottawa and Queen’s Park will provide for renewed dialogue.

Keith Currie, of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, noted that the Crombie Commission report had “agriculture” as a constant thread, an indication that farming is finally being recognized as critical, and that agriculture is big industry. He urged us all to be **BOLD** in demanding farmland protection. Mayor Bill French, heading a newly elected council in Springwater, where developers are trying to grow houses on farmland, was one of many who said that electing politicians with vision is key, that the only predictable growth industry is agriculture, and that governments should stop building new roads on farmland and concentrate on improving the roads we’ve got. Of course, we extended that argument to airports.

We shared ideas with those we met, strengthened alliances, and added to our list more supporters for an agricultural study. #FarmlandForever

### Mark Your Calendars: Annual General Meeting Coming Up!

Join us for an informative and fun evening. Renew ties with old friends – and make new ones. Together we’ve managed to save half the Federal Lands from an airport and development! But the work isn’t over yet. The hardest 9,600 acres are still at risk.

Our special guest speaker will be **Toronto Deputy Mayor Glenn de Baeremaeker**, on “Cancelling the Pickering airport and creating a 30,000-acre Rouge National Park.” Yes, you read that right. He will describe how a 30,000-acre Rouge National Urban Park could not only permanently remove any plans for a Pickering airport but would also create one of the largest protected agricultural and natural areas in the world, located next to the most heavily populated and urbanized region in Canada. A game-changer, right here!!

Our second guest speaker will be Whitby supporter **Jayden Rae**, just back from two years of studies in India with a fresh perspective on why it’s so vitally important to keep the Federal Lands in agriculture.

We’ll be introducing our slate of candidates for the 2016-2017 executive board. All those who attend and are signed-up supporters/members will be eligible to vote. If you’d like to be part of our dynamic team, contact us at [landoverlanding@gmail.com](mailto:landoverlanding@gmail.com) to add your name to the slate.

So mark your calendars. Everyone welcome. Free admission, but your donations help keep us able to fight this fight.

**June 15, 2016      7:30–9:30 p.m.**  
**Historic Brougham Hall**  
**3545 Mowbray Street (formerly Brock Road) in Brougham**  
**Lots of parking everywhere!**

### INTRODUCING OUR AGM’S GUEST SPEAKERS



Glenn de Baeremaeker,  
Toronto Deputy Mayor



Jayden Rae,  
founder of the  
Whitby Youth  
Environmental  
Alliance

Alexis Edghill Whalen

### Food for Thought

**We can't treat food like it's steel or softwood lumber from an international trade perspective. It's essential to life and as such is a strategic resource, along with the farmland that produces it. All people deserve to have the means to feed themselves. That's what food security means. We should not be taking that away from others, nor should we be denied it. Do we understand to what degree we can feed ourselves? Do we know what it would take to feed ourselves? Do we have policies in place that ensure food security for Ontario?**

– Pat Learmonth, Director,  
Farms at Work, April 2016

### Land Over Landings Because food is a **GROWING** concern!

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