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[The Future of Peterborough Food & Farming \[1\]](#)

The following is taken from the Executive Summary of a discussion paper recently released by Peterborough Social Planning Council and Farms at Work, entitled "The Future of Peterborough Food & Farming: A Call for Reflection & Discussion". The paper was presented to County Council in October 2011, and can be found at http://www.pspc.on.ca/pdf/final_report_oct_6_the_future_of_food.pdf [2]

"The purpose of this discussion paper is to raise awareness about our changing farm community within the context of local food production. It serves to pose questions about change in the Peterborough area, as well as provide a picture of the evolution that has occurred in the past decades. Further, we hope that by asking questions, we increase the interest of the public about the important role that agriculture plays in our economic and social fabric. Finally, this paper is intended as an awareness raising document that will support the intent of the upcoming "Bring Food Home" conference scheduled in Peterborough for October 27 to 29, 2011.

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Questions to Guide our Future Planning

The following questions should be considered by local, provincial and federal decision makers as well as community change agents, as we look at the planning of Peterborough county and city:

1. How will the loss of farm families impact the social fabric of the farm community?
What impact will this have on small community service centres and schools?
2. What would we need to do to produce enough food to feed Peterborough County/City?
What is Peterborough's role in providing food to Ontario?
3. What is the role of public education in ensuring food literacy among all age groups and sectors of our community?
4. What role can land use planning take in protecting the future of farming in our County? How are the recommendations in Menu 20/20 reflected in other important documents affecting Peterborough such as the Places to Grow legislation?
5. As a community, how does Peterborough increase awareness of the link between good food and good health?
6. Can encouraging new farmers to establish businesses in Peterborough help support a strong agricultural community for the future and keep farmland in production?
7. Are there areas of production where the County could increase local production to better satisfy local demand?
8. How are we planning to ensure that our local primary processing infrastructure will be sufficient into the future? (Eg. abattoirs, mills, freezing and canning facilities).
9. Are our local regulatory decisions keeping pace with the needs of farm businesses to eg diversify into small on-farm processing activities, or host farm help on the farm?
10. What is the impact of the increasing price of farmland and the costs of land, machinery, buildings and quota as barriers to new entrants?
11. How will we enable our farm community to recover the value of their environmental contributions/ecological goods and services (eg. protection of water and habitat) from agriculture?
12. What role will urban agriculture play in our future?"

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[Bring Food Home Conference in Peterborough](#) [3]



Do you see some familiar faces in the crowd at the Bring Food Home Conference?

Farms at Work was the regional partner for the province-wide Bring Food Home Conference, held in Peterborough from Oct 27-29, 2011. Along with partner Sustain Ontario and others across the province, FAW was involved in many aspects of the conference planning. Most important, however, was ensuring that farmers and agriculture and food organizations in the Kawarthas had every opportunity to attend and to fully participate in the proceedings.

The Conference attracted more than 500 attendees, and included a farmer training day, more than 50 workshops and a trade show. The Bring Food Home Conference is held every 18 months to 2 years, in a different location each time. Some of the conference's informative workshops included: Local Food in the Broader Public Sector; Profitable Winter Vegetable Production; Grazing - From the Ground Up; Farming in the City - An Introduction to Urban Agriculture; The Role of Co-ops in Ontario's Food Sector; and Food as a Public Good - Local Organizations, Local Processing.

The turnout from within the region was impressive. Mayor Daryl Bennett and Deputy Warden Barry Rand, as well as FAW Director Pat Learmonth, were all afforded an opportunity to speak. Many compliments were received regarding the impressive level of awareness of our elected officials on issues surrounding food and farming in the area.



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Links

[1] <http://www.farmsatwork.ca/news/future-peterborough-food-farming> [2]

http://www.pspc.on.ca/pdf/final_report_oct_6_the_future_of_food.pdf [3]

<http://www.farmsatwork.ca/news/bring-food-home-conference-peterborough>