



**AGRICULTURAL FOOD  
PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION  
FOR HALIBURTON COUNTY**

**COMMUNITY FOOD  
ASSESSMENT PARTNERS**

**FEBRUARY 2016**



**HALIBURTON COUNTY COMMUNITY FOOD ASSESSMENT**

**AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND  
CONSUMPTION**

**Food Production and Consumption Subcommittee**

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# AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

## ABSTRACT

Haliburton County consumers and food outlets are eager to access locally grown food. In growing numbers, they are approaching farmers for product and patronizing farm gates, the Farmers' Market and Garlic Fest. However, the demand well exceeds the amount currently being produced. Although at one time small-scale farming was widespread in the county, the convergence of complex social and geographical factors has contributed to its decline over the last century.

The good news is that Haliburton production appears to be turning a corner. The county is experiencing an increase in homesteads, market gardens, CSAs<sup>1</sup>, and new membership in the Farmers' Market, Garlic Growers' Association and Farmers' Association. Over the last few years, several new producers have started farming in the county. While some are engaged in mid-sized animal farming (lambs, pigs and goats), more are focusing on vegetables, chickens, eggs, garlic, maple syrup and niche products such as herbs and baby greens. They are working with the environmental conditions by exploring season-extending green houses, aquaponics and permaculture. The availability of successful local venues like the Garlic Fest and Farmers' Market to sell their agricultural products has functioned as an economic driver to both initiating and expanding production.

This report offers both an overview of farming historically as well as an 'up close and personal' glimpse into farming in Haliburton today. Included are the first-hand stories of several growers and producers who share their experiences, plans and dreams through a series of interviews.

The story of farming in Haliburton County is about to begin a new chapter.

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<sup>1</sup>A CSA, (community supported agriculture), is an economic arrangement wherein members of the local community invest as shareholders in a farmer's anticipated harvest thereby sharing with the farmer both the risks and benefits of production.

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## BACKGROUND

This report explores agricultural production and consumption in Haliburton County as part of a Community Food Assessment initiated by Harvest Haliburton in January 2014. A community food assessment (CFA) is a collaborative process undertaken to examine and evaluate a local food system. A food system includes all the links in the food chain from production to consumption. Community food assessments can be conducted for a variety of reasons that, in turn, influence their focus. The purpose of the Haliburton County CFA was to deepen public understanding of the community food system and to inform and make recommendations to organizations and governments regarding local planning, decision-making, and policy development. The CFA Steering Committee<sup>2</sup> that oversaw the project defined three focal areas for investigation: agricultural production and consumption, food access, and municipal planning. They then formed subcommittees to research and prepare a report on each focal area.

The Agricultural Production and Consumption Subcommittee, which is responsible for this report was comprised of 4 members: Bryan Barlow (Haliburton County Farmers' Association), Heather Reid (Abbey Gardens), Angel Taylor (Haliburton County Farmers' Market Association), and Andrew von Zuben (Bedrock & Brambles).

Angel Taylor conducted the individual interviews and wrote the report, which was edited by Heather Reid and Andrew von Zuben. Bryan Barlow facilitated the group interviews of several currently active and retired farmers who are descendants of generations of local farmers.

The substance of the group interviews, along with Bryan Barlow's commentary, is included in Appendix 4 of this report.

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<sup>2</sup> CFA Steering Committee members and their affiliations are as follows:

Bryan Barlow - President, Haliburton County Farmers' Association  
Lisa Barry - Councillor, Municipality of Algonquin Highlands  
Heather Candler, Agriculture and Rural Economic Development Advisor, OMAFRA  
Brigitte Gall, Councillor, Township of Minden Hills (to Jan. 2015) and local resident  
Rosie Kadwell - Public Health Dietitian, HKPR District Health Unit, member of Haliburton County Food Net & Harvest Haliburton  
Pat Martin - Director of Planning and Development, Dysart et al (to Jan. 2015)  
Angela McGreevy - member of Harvest Haliburton (to Oct. 2014)  
Heather Reid - Director of Operations, Abbey Gardens  
Megan Stong - Community Garden Network and HKPR District Health Unit  
Angel Taylor - Chair, Haliburton County Farmers' Market Association  
Lisa Tolentino - Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition, HC Link  
Andrew von Zuben - owner/operator of Bedrock & Brambles

# AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

## INTRODUCTION

Agricultural food production can occur in many modalities from traditional farms to backyard gardens. Indeed the definition of a farm for census purposes is highly inclusive.<sup>3</sup>

Because Haliburton is a rural county, heavily forested with low population density on the edge of the Canadian Shield, the few traditional farms are scattered, small and not readily located.<sup>4</sup> Small scale agricultural activities that occur in the county such as maple syrup, garlic, and backyard egg production, can be difficult to identify and assess. In light of this, individual and facilitated group interviews of some local producers were conducted to assemble a picture of agriculture in the county. Local producers generously provided accounts<sup>5</sup> in their own words about past and present farming and were a rich and illuminating source of information. Their narratives bring to life the day-to-day experiences of farming and are a centrepiece of the report.

To help contextualize this inquiry, an overview of the history of agricultural in Haliburton County introduces the report followed by a synopsis of how farming has changed over the last century in Ontario and Canada. After the stories of the food producers, a brief description of the geographical and sociological characteristics of Haliburton and their impact on local agriculture is provided. Trends and characteristics of national and local food consumption are briefly explored. The report concludes with recommendations for the future.

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<sup>3</sup> A census farm is defined as “A farm, ranch or other agricultural operation producing agricultural products for sale. Also includes: feedlots, greenhouses, mushroom houses and nurseries; farms producing Christmas trees, fur, game, sod, maple syrup or fruit and berries; beekeeping and poultry hatchery operations; operations with alternative livestock (bison, deer, elk, llamas, alpacas, wild boars, etc.) or alternative poultry (ostriches, emus, etc.), when the animal or derived products are intended for sale; backyard gardens if agricultural products are intended for sale; operations involved in boarding horses, riding stables and stables for housing and/or training horses even if no agriculture products are sold. Sales in the previous 12 months are not required, but there must be the intention to sell” (Statistics Canada, 2012).

<sup>4</sup>In 2001, a background document prepared by the University of Guelph for the Walkerton Inquiry assessing domestic animal production across Ontario stated that Haliburton County had only 24 farms with livestock (beef, hogs, dairy, eggs/poultry). This is the lowest number of farms, the average being 754, in any of the reported municipalities and counties, which encompassed all of Ontario except the North. The evidence is that production has dropped even further since then (Gross, 2001).

<sup>5</sup> Some interviews are included in the body of the paper under “CFA Individual Interviews”. Others, are summarized in Appendix 4.



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## METHODOLOGY

An ethnographic approach was used to gather information about agricultural food production in the county. Key informant interviews of individuals and groups engaged in farming became the primary data-collecting tool. Most of the interviews were recorded and transcribed; a few were written by the producers themselves. Once transcribed, interviewees were sent an unedited and an edited version for their formal approval and consent for inclusion in the report.

The seven interviews in the body of this project were conducted with individuals or couples; the subjects varied widely in age and life stage, length of experience with farming, and the kinds of farm products they raised and sold. All appeared to enjoy the interview process and so stated. Some sold at farm gate, some participated in the farmers' market, and one was involved in operating a local food hub. The individual interviews were deliberately open-ended, asking the subjects to talk about themselves and their farm, what prompted them to take up farming and where they saw themselves heading in the future. They were encouraged to let their stories flow freely.

What little data could be garnered about the extent and scope of farming in the region is included and is drawn primarily from Statistics Canada censuses and OMAFRA<sup>6</sup>. The data should be seen as providing a rough sketch rather than a sharp picture and is not highly reliable. In some instances, these sources themselves relied on 'probabilistic estimates'.

Fourteen persons associated with managing locations selling or distributing food such as grocery stores, restaurants, camps and food banks were interviewed from across the county and offered some insight into local consumption patterns. These were short informal interviews asking the individuals to share their observations about trends they had observed regarding food consumption in their organizations and whether they ever accessed or utilized any locally grown products. In-county associations that support growers and farmers and offer venues to sell locally grown food also helped define production and consumption. Examples are the Haliburton County Farmers' Market, the Haliburton County Garlic Growers' Association, the Haliburton Grain CSA and Abbey Gardens. A tabular summary of the findings is included in the report.

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<sup>6</sup> Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs

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## HISTORY OF FOOD PRODUCTION IN HALIBURTON COUNTY

### First Nations

The Huron-Wendot tribes (Iroquoian-speaking tribes) and the Mississauga, Ojibwa and Algonquin tribes (Algonquian-speaking tribes) used the land in and around what is now Haliburton County primarily for hunting, trapping and fishing. They harvested an abundance of food produced by the natural environment, but the heavily forested and rocky area was not suited to traditional agriculture. The Algonquins viewed the region as their ancestral hunting grounds. Some archeological evidence of early habitation by indigenous people, e.g., burial sites, petroglyphs and artifacts (Reynolds, 1973, pp. 13-15), has been found. The Huron-Wendot, able farmers, grew corn, squash and beans further south where the land and climate were more congenial to growing crops.

### Early Settlement

Early exploration of the region by Europeans goes back to the 1600s, but it was in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that European settlement significantly increased. At the time, approximately 80% of the population in Ontario lived in rural areas. It was the norm of the day for virtually all homesteaders to have a few domestic animals for food, transportation and labour. Indeed, “[i]n the days of early settlement the farmer and his family supplied nearly all their own wants. The farmer produced all his own food; he killed his own stock, salted his pork, and smoked his hams” (James, 1914). Settlers in the Haliburton area were no different.

The selling off of all available farmland in Southern Ontario, the need to attract immigrants who would stay and raise their families rather than emigrate to the United States in pursuit of its rich arable land, and the need for sufficient population to support economic growth and stability prompted the government to encourage settlement further north in the Ottawa-Huron Territory. The Territory stretched from the Ottawa Valley to Georgian Bay and included what is now Haliburton County. Despite lack of agreement among surveyors about its suitability for agriculture, the land was touted by the government as good for farming (Dobrzensky, 1992, pp. 15 - 17).

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In 1861, seven British developers under the leadership of the Hon. T.C. Haliburton, formerly chief justice in Nova Scotia but at the time resident in England, formed the Canadian Land and Emigration Company (C.L. & E. Co.) and purchased sight unseen a large portion of what is now central and eastern Haliburton for development. The C.L. & E. Co., in the sincere belief that they would “turn...the area into a reproduction of their own English countryside....[and] reap rich financial returns”, targeted would-be settlers seeking farms, promoting the area as “possessing a fertile soil...and all the elements of rapid progress and permanent prosperity” and promised to provide infrastructure such as roads, churches, schools, etc. (Barker, 2003, pp. 80-81). Immigrants, mostly from the British Isles, and adult children of farmers in Southern Ontario who were unlikely to inherit a portion of their parents’ farmland were among those attracted by the lure of cheap land.<sup>7</sup>

All land purchasers were obligated by the government to perform settlement duties - a requirement to clear a specified amount of land within a few years of purchase (Assembly, 1963, pp. 238-239). However, homesteaders had great difficulty meeting this requirement for “[t]he land was uneven, rocky and hilly, and in some cases, swampy. An almost impenetrable hardpan lay under the sandy loam which varied in depth from about 6 inches to 2 feet...” (Dobrzensky, 1992, p. 126). Much of the land was forested and the large trees more than daunting to remove. As awareness dawned that their land would not live up to its farm-use billing, many departed after a few years residence.

However, other homesteaders had much better experiences with their farms. Some parts of Haliburton had productive farmland; areas south of Minden and along Gull Lake as well as south of Haliburton Village and along the south-west shore of Head Lake, today an upscale residential neighbourhood along Halbiem Crescent, were among those reportedly good for farming (Dobrzensky, 1992, pp. 98-99). Flood plains along rivers like the Gull and Irondale Rivers tended to have richer and deeper soil.

In 1884, Minden was said to be the most prosperous and agriculturally developed area in Haliburton and “that anyone who visited the village in the month of July, in the present year, could not fail to be struck by the great quantities of butter which were being daily exported to Toronto - a fact showing that the farmers of the district had extensively adopted stock raising and dairying as a remunerative pursuit” (Mulvaney, 1884). Mulvaney documents the number of farm animals in the district the year before the formation of the Provisional County including 1538 cattle and 896 sheep of

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<sup>7</sup> Farm families were often large, and unless the farmer owned a substantial tract of land, dividing it among his several offspring meant breaking it into parcels too small to be profitably farmed. Hence not all inherited farm property.

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unspecified breed. The number of ratepayers that same year is 627. (This is 4 to 5 times the cattle and sheep that are currently in the county, according to OMAFRA, and a small fraction of present-day ratepayers.)

Between 1877 and 1883, "...1,284,014 pounds of milk were processed at Minden alone into 125,793 pounds of cheese which sold for \$11,364.43" (Reynolds, 1973). In today's dollars, adjusted for inflation, that would amount to slightly under \$300,000. In 1894, one general store-keeper's ledger shows he received "\$729.20 for 4,862 pounds of butter and \$83.02 for 12 extra tubs" (Reynolds, 1973). In the 1890s, dairy production was sufficient to support the 5 cheese factories that operated in the county (Reynolds, 1973, p. 252). Because of the high perishability of milk and cream, it was not unusual to have several dairies or small cheese factories scattered throughout communities to shorten the distance farmers would have to travel.

The early agricultural successes were owed in part to two factors. As land was first cleared for farming, the residual very deep humus that had been built up over centuries on the forest floor produced bumper crops. Settlers also discovered that grasses from thousands of acres of 'beaver meadows' - silt-rich areas formerly flooded by beaver ponds and subsequently abandoned - made passable hay for all their grazing livestock but horses. However, these resources were eventually depleted "as a result of continuous cropping, erosions and bush fires" (Dobrzensky, 1992, p. 126).

With growing demand for timbers for ships' masts and other purposes, and dwindling and over-logged forests in the south, Haliburton attracted logging companies. The companies, who hired large numbers of local workers and thus needed reliable sources of preferably local farm products such as beans, oats, hay and salt pork, constituted a ready market for homesteaders. Even in good times though, the companies were not able to obtain from producers sufficient amounts to meet their needs. Mossom Boyd, a very successful timber entrepreneur, purchased land for a large farm in Havelock, hiring a number of his lumberers to clear the land and plant crops hoping to increase the supply. The farm did well for a short while producing hay, potatoes and oats, but quickly deteriorated "...an example of the futility of trying to farm rocky land" (Barker, 2003, pp. 89-90).

Land sales did not progress at the rate expected for either the government or the Land Company (C.L. & E. Co.). In 1868, the government offered free grant land to settlers in the Ottawa-Huron Territory some of which abutted the C.L. & E. Co.'s development property. Many prospective settlers, often naively unaware that the government retained timbering and mineral rights to the grant lands - a practice not adopted by the C.L. & E. Co. - opted for the allegedly 'free' land over that with a

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price tag. An effect of the government's less than transparent marketing was to create a revolving door as settlers initially lured by the promise of free land soon joined the exodus from the county, disenchanted and discouraged by the many challenges to wresting sufficient production and income from their land.

In an attempt to recover from the crushing competition presented by the free grant lands, the C.L. & E. Co. looked for other revenue sources. They negotiated timbering contracts on their land with several lumber companies, most importantly that of Mossom Boyd (Dobrzensky, 1992, p. 163). Additionally, to attract purchasers by making the area more accessible - the colonization roads were appallingly bad (Reynolds, 1973) - and to facilitate shipment of goods, the C.L. & E. Co. along with local residents sought an extension of the Victoria Railway which went no further north than Lindsay (Ontario, 1963b). However, the Victoria Railway demanded a significant bonus for the extension which the Peterborough government, whose jurisdiction included the Haliburton region, was unwilling to raise.

Steadfast in their conviction that the Victoria Railway would bring prosperity and increased settlement, Haliburton landowners, among them the Land Company (C.L. & E. Co.), petitioned for separation from the County of Peterborough, and in 1874, the 'Provisional County of Haliburton' was created (Ontario, 1963a). Having a local government gave them autonomy and the right of taxation and thus the ability to pay the Victoria Railway the bonus it sought. The first Haliburton County Council duly voted to pay \$55,000, and another \$49,000 was promised by the C.L. & E. Co. (Dobrzensky, 1992, p. 240). The optimistic expectations for the future of the county are captured in a contemporaneous writer's effusive claim that not only would tourists be attracted from all over the continent to this beautiful location, "...the County of Haliburton [is] one of the most favourable districts in the Province for the raising of cattle and the establishment of dairy farms" (Mulvaney, 1884).

Their dream did not unfold as hoped. Within a few years, the county and the C.L. & E. Co. found themselves in dire financial straits, unable to pay the bonus money they had promised the railway. Timber revenues expected by the C.L. & E. Co. were not forthcoming due in part to the shrinking availability of white pine. Furthermore, the departure of ratepayers in large numbers to the newly opened 'Northwest' resulted in decreased tax revenue. Indeed, no fewer than 1000 people emigrated from the county in 1881. So highly motivated were they by word of excellent quality and cleared farmland that wealthy farmers "failing to find purchasers for their farms...abandoned them" (Mulvaney, 1884), and traveled west.

The exodus of farmers from rural Ontario to the Northwest and the United States provoked alarm from some observers who saw it as nothing less than calamitous.

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In a speech to the Canadian Club in 1910, Gordon Waldron, writer for the *Weekly Sun* of Toronto, declared that international protectionist tariffs, poor prices for agricultural products and imbalanced political attention and policies to urban issues at the expense of rural ones were creating economic hardships resulting in rural “depopulation and impoverishment” and ultimately threatening the country itself (Waldron, 1910).

Eventually, when the obstacles to bringing in the railway were overcome, it proved not to be the boon the landowners and business people expected. Indeed, it facilitated travel away from the county and opened the door to an influx of cheaper goods from the more productive south with which the local farmers and businesses could not compete.

*As soon as the railway was operating on a regular schedule, pork, flour and other supplies for the lumbermen arrived by carloads. Before that, goods had been hauled from Lindsay by oxen, and on account of the long trip, sold at high prices. Salt, which used to go for \$6 a barrel, now sold for \$1.50. The change affected local markets as well: oats, hay and other crops fetched only half of the former price and, if necessary, were purchased more cheaply elsewhere and shipped in by rail (Dobrzensky, 1992, pp. 250-251).*

Thus, by 1914, agriculture was in decline in Haliburton County. A trend toward urbanization in Ontario had begun in the second half of the 1800s. World Wars I and II drew young men away from the county and family farms, impelled by patriotic duty, the promise of a new woollen uniform, a small but steady wage and three meals a day - not to mention the adventure of traveling to far-away lands. The Great Depression added incentive to make a living elsewhere. Both World Wars stimulated industrialization and manufacturing in urban centres in Canada creating growing prosperity for the country and employment opportunities for returning soldiers. Oshawa was one such location. A producer of thousands of military vehicles during WW II, the city returned to automotive production in peacetime and became a major area employer. With the departure of young men from the county, the lumber shanties closed and timbering diminished, thus reducing the traditional fallback employment that carried farmers through the long Haliburton winters. Agriculture was declining as a viable option for much of the population in Haliburton.

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At the same time, improved agricultural mechanization and the swelling urban population energized production for the greenbelt farms that found a hungry market in the nearby cities. The small, distant and challenged farms in Haliburton simply couldn't compete. The derelict and crumbling cedar and barbed wire fences, abandoned barns and the omnipresent piles of rocks arduously cleared from the fields are monuments to those farmers who worked hard to make a go of it years ago.

The few traditional farms that remain today, struggle with some of the same issues faced by their predecessors. Furthermore, as farming ebbed in the county, it faded from the radar of local and provincial politicians as a matter requiring policy and planning attention.

### TWENTIETH CENTURY CHANGES: ONTARIO

While some of the causes for the reduction of farms in Haliburton arise out of characteristics of the county, a similar trend has been evident since the late 19<sup>th</sup> and well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century in North America. Small farms have significantly decreased in number, and “[t]he amount of land being farmed in Ontario has decreased 42% since 1921...In addition, Ontario has lost over 9 million acres of farmland since then” (National Farmers Union, 2011, p. 2).

Several factors have contributed to these developments:

- the enormous population shift from rural to urban settings thanks to the industrial and agricultural revolutions,
- the increasing cost and small profit margin for operating a small farm,
- the increase in the size of farms<sup>8</sup> and the growth of intensive industrial farming as science and technology made it possible for fewer farms to feed many more people,
- the aging of farmers, with 54+ being the average age in Ontario<sup>9</sup>, and
- the decrease in the number of young people remaining on the family farm or making it a career choice.

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<sup>8</sup> The largest farms are 6 times more numerous while the smaller farms have declined by about 50% (National Farmers Union, 2011, pp. 3-4).

<sup>9</sup> This is not unusual for workers in self-employed businesses.

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The supply management system warrants examination as an influential player affecting small farms. In Ontario, marketing boards regulate some agricultural commodities (hatching of broiler chick eggs, broiler chickens, eggs, dairy and turkeys) through a quota system, thereby controlling production volume and keeping prices profitable. It was initially intended as a remedy to restore control and stability over pricing of some agricultural products to farmers. Previously price had rested with the middle-person buyers who played one farmer against the other to drive prices lower.

As time has gone on, however, and despite claims to the contrary, supply management favours concentration of production in large farms with hefty financial resources and has further threatened medium and small family farms<sup>10</sup> and the growing number of entrepreneurial organic farms responding to the surging demand for naturally produced local food.<sup>11</sup> This arrangement benefits farmers with deep pockets who can afford to purchase quota.

The cost of quota for agricultural commodities is very high. Using dairy quota as an example, in Ontario it costs \$28,300.00 per kg of butterfat/day with a minimum of 10 kg/day required for quota.<sup>12</sup> This translates into \$283,000.00 for a mini herd of 10 dairy animals and is the price for the quota alone. It does not include the cost of purchasing, feeding or housing the cows. The price of quota, however, is beyond the reach of many farmers and is arguably a reason young would-be farmers are discouraged from pursuing farming as a career choice.

The marketing boards permit a small amount of production outside of quota. For example, 300 ‘meat’ chickens may be raised in a year, and 99 lay hens at any given time may be on the farm. The Chicken Farmers of Ontario’s limit on broiler chickens for small flocks, very recently renamed the “Family Food” program, is stringently low in comparison to some other provinces such as Alberta which permits up to 2000 outside of quota and Saskatchewan up to 999. (Note: while 300 broilers is the maximum allowed out of quota, a minimum of 14,000 units must be purchased to obtain quota which works out to approximately 91,000 birds) (Farm Start, 2010). Additionally, small flock producers are restricted from advertising their chickens and

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<sup>10</sup>For example, “since 1971, the number of Canadian dairy farms has dropped by a staggering 91 percent” (Findlay, 2012).

<sup>11</sup>Organic animal production is oriented to smaller numbers that are pastured and not crowded or confined to batteries or feed lots. Many of these producers are constrained to raise only the number of animals permitted outside of quota but could handle more without compromising their methods.

<sup>12</sup> Quota for dairy cows is tied to the kilograms of butterfat production over a specified period of time. Butterfat is a component of cow’s milk. One dairy cow produces about 1 kg of butterfat a day.



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may sell them only at farm gate for the customer's personal use. They may not be sold to a restaurateur or grocer, even if the chickens are purchased at the farm.<sup>13</sup>

Indeed the entire system has flaws that may lead to its undoing, such as when the Canadian Wheat Board's regulatory powers were stripped away by the federal government in 2012. "Canada is an outlier among developed countries, which have all phased out their agricultural supply management", says Ian Lee, a professor of management at Carleton University's Sprott School of Business. "...Supply management is anti-entrepreneurial. You can't start up if you see an opportunity" (Oved, 2013).

Supply management was a major setback to local agriculture and the small dairy industry that once existed in Haliburton. As small farms closed down because the farmers were unable to afford or maintain quota and the population of cattle decreased, the agricultural infrastructure waned apace.

### TWENTIETH CENTURY CHANGES: HALIBURTON

It is inevitable that farming in Haliburton has been and is being influenced by larger economic and sociological forces affecting agriculture. Nevertheless, it is fruitful to take a closer look at how some of these trends play out in Haliburton County.

Although slightly over 80% of Ontario's population now resides in urban centres, a small but steady trend toward out-migration from urban centres into rural areas beyond commuting distance has been observed in Canada and internationally for several decades (Mylott, n.d.). Statistics Canada data for Minden Hills supports this observation showing small population increases over the last censuses, 2001, 2006 and 2011. This may well be attributable to the county's desirability as a retirement and recreational location. Indeed more than half of the population is over 50 and more than a quarter are 65 or older. The median age is 54 - fourteen years older than the provincial median. However, not all of them are relocating to the family cottage for retirement. Interestingly, a few have taken up small-scale farming, typically motivated by principles of sustainability and healthful living.

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<sup>13</sup> In late July 2015, the Chicken Farmers' of Ontario announced a new 'artisanal chicken' program permitting from 600 - 3000 broilers to be raised by approved applicants under a production license. This program is for small producers targeting niche markets and is distinct from the 'family food' limit of 300 birds (Chicken Farmers of Ontario, 2015).

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

The trend of the younger generation departing from the family farm occurs in Haliburton as it does elsewhere even though some of their parents are third, fourth, and even fifth generation farmers. It may be that the economic barriers to farming are powerful disincentives to continuing in their parents' footsteps. Nevertheless, some young people in their 20s and 30s have decided to embark on homesteading in the county moved by the same ideals of sustainability and healthy living as their older counterparts. Today, the 'era of the conscious consumer' is shaping career and lifestyle choices and sometimes translates into the era of the conscious food producer. All across North America, including in urban and suburban locations, people are experimenting with homesteads and urban agriculture to produce their own food and to care for the environment, and some are raising animals and setting up market gardens in Haliburton County. This past spring, 6 new growers have applied to join the farmers' market, and others have declared their intention to expand their gardens and production to join next year. As well, two couples have initiated CSAs.

The increased costs associated with operating small farms are compounded for Haliburton farmers by the distance they need to travel to abattoirs and auction barns, to well-equipped feed and farm stores and to obtain good quality hay. Like many other Ontario small farms, virtually all in-county farmers have to subsidize their income, and often their farms, with a 'day-job' or part time employment. Within recent years, two Haliburton farmers did attempt to support themselves full-time from their farms, but neither of them continues to do so today.

# AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

## FOOD PRODUCTION IN HALIBURTON COUNTY TODAY

According to OMAFRA reports, Haliburton's leading agricultural product as a percent of provincial production is maple syrup. Raising livestock - beef, lambs, pigs or poultry - for meat contributes together a slightly higher percentage to Ontario production than does growing vegetables.<sup>14</sup>

A comparison of county beef production figures in 2011 with those in 2002 shows a steep decline (see Figure 1). In 2002, according to probability estimates, the county had 700 cattle across all categories (McGee, 2005). In 2011, the number dropped to 444, a 37% reduction (see Appendix 1). The Haliburton production numbers in most categories are the lowest of any of the province's 47 counties and districts.

### Number of Cattle in County

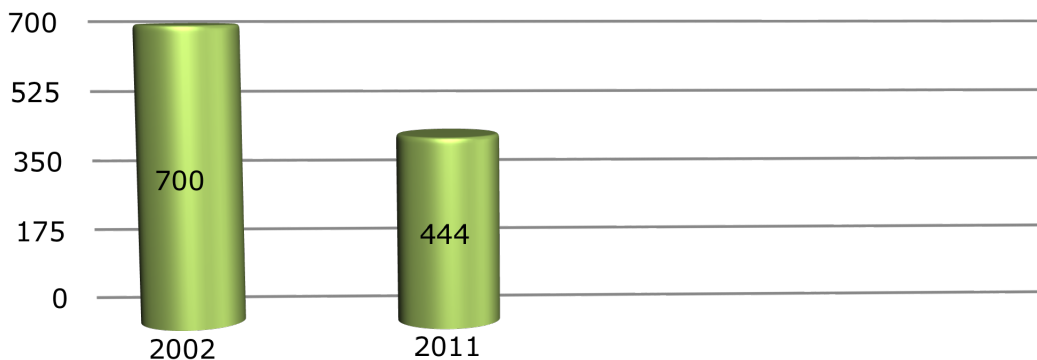


Figure 1. Number of Cattle in Haliburton, 2002 & 2011

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/stats/livestock/ctycattle11.htm>

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

In both 2006 and 2011, Haliburton had the lowest number of census farms (see definition on p. 6, footnote 1) reported across the province in those years. In 2006, 84 census farms were recorded, 72 of which made less than \$24,000 and 56 less than \$10,000 (McGee, 2007) (see Figure 2).

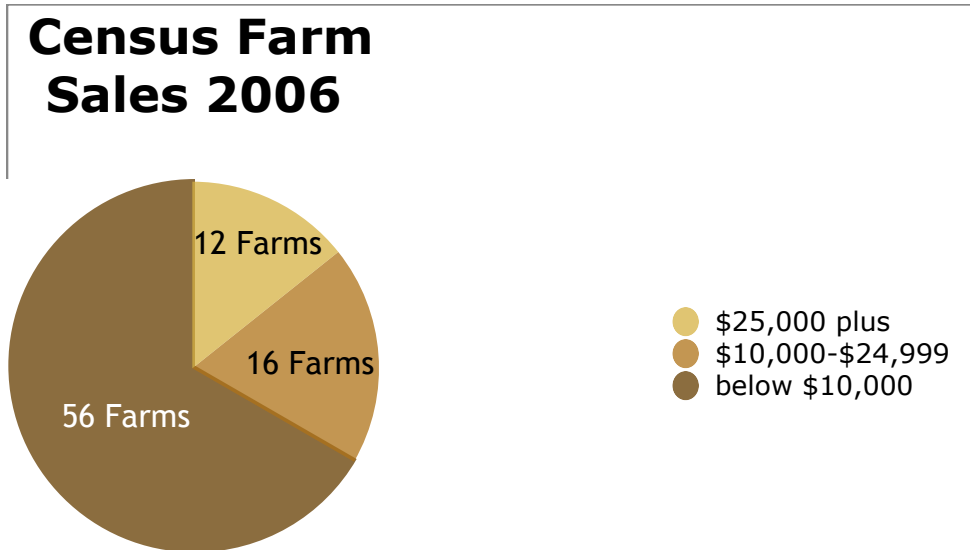


Figure 2. Haliburton County Census Farm Sales, 2006

In 2011, 58 of the 66 census farms made less than \$24,000 of which 41 made less than \$10,000 (see Figure 3). This is a precipitous contraction in just 5 years and is anecdotally corroborated by many current and retired long-term Haliburton farmers describing the demise of small farms.

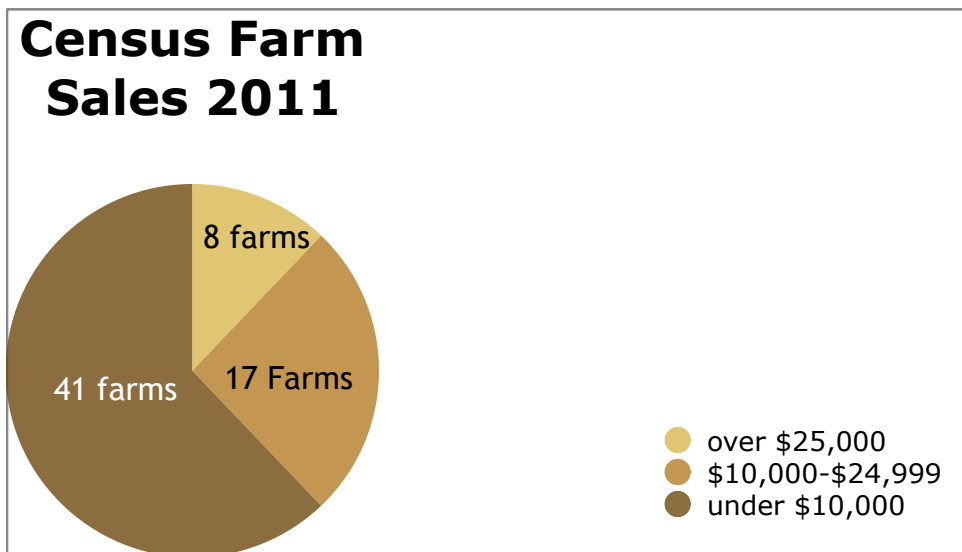


Figure 3. Haliburton County Census Farm Sales, 2011

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

### Local Agricultural Associations

A number of residents are active members of the Haliburton County Garlic Growers' Association, the Haliburton County Grain CSA, The Haliburton County Farmers' Market Association and the Haliburton County Farmers' Association. Very small-scale agriculture is not always picked up by the OMAFRA and census reports. Nevertheless it contributes to the local food and agricultural landscape and economy. Some of these associations maintain research and other data regarding their activities and can supply some production numbers not otherwise available.

### Haliburton County Garlic Growers' Association

The HCGGA has 24 members including several who have just joined - most of them in their 20s and 30s. Since 2008, the HCGGA has offered workshops introducing prospective growers to various aspects of garlic growing. Backyard garlic production within the county has since become commonplace. The HCGGA helps promote member sales through its website and referrals, and its annual very successful Garlic Fest brings a throng of buyers from both within and outside the county. Growers produce and sell value-added garlic products such as spreads, dips and garlic powder as well as garlic bulbs and scapes.

Commanding a robust price of approximately \$12 for a pound of garlic and more for braids, sales have approached 6 figures collectively for member-growers. (The HCGGA cannot determine how many non-members residents sell their garlic but understand that some do.)

For 5 years or so, growers have experienced setbacks due to leek moth and bulb and stem nematode plant damage and resultant reduced production. These issues are not unique to local producers. The HCGGA has distinguished itself by collaborating, along with the Farmers' Market Association and several OMAFRA scientists, in two U-Links<sup>15</sup> led, grant-funded, in-county research projects to develop remedies for these pests. Several Haliburton growers participated as citizen scientists in the projects. The research is being followed with interest by the Ontario Garlic Growers' Association who supports it and looks forward to the results. It is likely that once remedies are identified, production will increase in the county. Indeed, one new young farmer and Association member in Haliburton plans to grow more than 20,000 plants.

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<sup>15</sup> U-Links, born of a partnership among Haliburton community organizations, local government, and Trent University, draws on students and other research resources to conduct community-based research.

# AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

## Haliburton Grain CSA

Founded in 2010, with 40 shareholders, the Grain CSA [definition of a CSA can be found in footnote 1] has a loyal and growing subscriber base, now 60 shareholders. Efforts are currently underway to acquire infrastructure to assist with cleaning and packaging the grains that heretofore have been handled by shareholder volunteers. Using organic growing methods to improve and enrich the soil and producing heritage grains such as Red Fife wheat, the Grain CSA offers local farmers an opportunity to experiment with new-to-Haliburton agricultural production that has a guaranteed market. Although yields are much lower than the industry standard, they are improving every year as the soil is improved (Bathe, 2015). The potential for growth is hinted at by the surge of lucrative organic grain production in New England induced by the escalating demand for wholesome local food. “The Northern Grain Growers in Vermont have developed a complete thriving industry...which previously did not exist,” says Bathe.<sup>16</sup>

## Haliburton County Farmers’ Market

When the first market location opened in 2009 with 24 vendors for 10 weeks in the summer, and an approximate gross vendor income of \$44,000, no one anticipated that by 2013, the market would have increased to operating in two locations, Carnarvon and Haliburton, for 17 weeks with 34 vendors, and a reported gross vendor income of \$200,000. By 2014, the vendors numbered 38; the market length was 17 weeks in Carnarvon and 21 weeks in Haliburton, and the reported gross vendor income was \$131,286 and \$154,761 respectively - an increase over the previous year of 43% (see Figure 4).

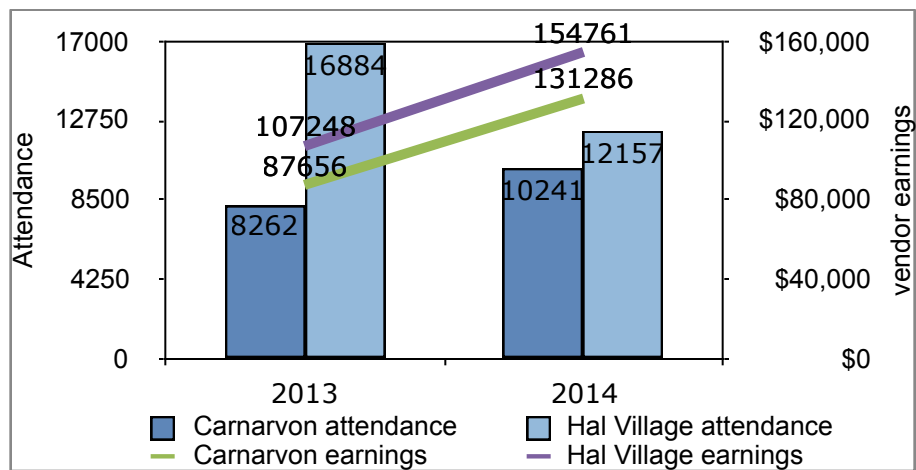


Figure 4. Patron Attendance and Vendor Earnings, Martin 2015

<sup>16</sup>Bathe shared this link to an interesting conference on grain production he attended in New England: <http://northerngraingrowers.org/>

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

In late March 2015, a third market location in the village of Minden was approved by the Township of Minden Hills Municipal Council and operated successfully for 11 weeks. Only 11.5% of the 169 markets affiliated with Farmers' Markets Ontario have two locations and only 6.5% have three or more. Recently compiled vendor earnings<sup>17</sup> from all three Haliburton market locations in 2015 total \$450,000 - a 57% increase over 2014.

The explosive growth of the Haliburton County Farmers' Market in 6 years<sup>18</sup> testifies to a consumer base strongly committed to accessing local produce, supporting local farmers, and wanting to know where and how their food is grown. Many consumers are uneasy about the increased adoption of GMOs in agriculture, animal farming and its ethical implications, the widespread use of synthetic chemicals and non-therapeutic antibiotics and consequent growing antibiotic resistance, and the environmental implications of importing farm produce from thousands of miles away. In other words, they seek transparency and environmental sustainability in the production of their farm-raised food.

Shopping for food in large urban grocery stores fosters a 'disconnect' between food production and the consumer. Not only is the producer often nameless and faceless, some farm produce is modified in appearance to bear little resemblance to its natural state. Apples and peppers glazed with paraffin to look shiny, ripe oranges dyed to look orange and tomatoes and meats treated with agents to look red are on display. Even the names are misleading - for example, calling miniature cocktail carrots 'baby carrots' when, in fact, they are pared down from large deformed carrots and treated with chlorine. The 'cosmeticizing' of farm food products to meet some imagined ideal has in turn shaped public expectations and beliefs. Several grocers interviewed for this report, stated that they couldn't carry local or organic products from market gardens because they didn't meet customer expectations of what the products should look like.

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<sup>17</sup> HCFM vendors are asked to report their market earnings weekly as this information is important to measure market performance. Earnings are written on a piece of paper by each vendor without a name attached and dropped into a box to maintain anonymity.

<sup>18</sup> This is particularly remarkable given that a study in Oregon reported that nearly 50% of farmers' markets fail in their first 5 years (Some Insights into Why Farmers' Markets Close, 2006).

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

In Haliburton County, the farmers' market creates a civic space where the community and agriculture are reintegrated. The historically local nature of agriculture is reanimated. On a sunny summer afternoon, the market with its tables of freshly harvested 'real' vegetables, berries and other farm products becomes a quasi village square. Residents, seasonal visitors, municipal councillors, reporters from the local papers and business people talk with their farmers whose names they know, ask about recipes and the harvest, rub elbows and catch up on local news.

The growing number of agricultural vendors at the farmers' market reflects the need and interest of local producers to have a cost-effective venue that facilitates direct-to-consumer sales. It is prohibitively expensive for most local farmers to sell their products wholesale or to absorb the cost of promoting their products individually. Farm gate stands may be on less traveled roads or perceived as too far to drive. Most growers do not produce enough quantity to reliably supply a buyer such as a grocery store or a restaurant even if they could get a profitable price. However, filling their vendor table at the local farmers' market two or three times a week in market season plus selling at farm gate over the summer and fall are doable and help the farmer recover the cost of production and put a little in her pocket.

This year over two thirds of the market's agricultural vendors are Haliburton farmers with more on the horizon for the 2016 season.<sup>19</sup> One young local farmer who shared a table at 2 market locations last summer increased production this year and had 2 tables at each of 3 market locations; six others who didn't participate in the market last year did so this year. The Farmers' Market has already received word from 2 more potential agricultural vendors who are starting or increasing production for summer 2016. In short, the market has functioned as an incubator for agriculture (and other fledgling food and artisan businesses), sparking an increase in agricultural production among some vendors, the development of value-added farm products and an increase in the number of local vendors.

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<sup>19</sup>The small number of in-county producers necessitates reaching into adjoining counties to source more.



# AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

## LOCAL FACTORS AFFECTING AGRICULTURE: THE CHALLENGES

Both the natural and the social environment contribute to the challenges to farming in Haliburton County.

Nature has contributed a geography and climate that can adversely impact farming. Haliburton County is in plant hardiness zone 4; this means that the span between the average latest frost date in the spring and earliest in the fall comprises a significantly shorter growing season than further south. The county, located on the Canadian Shield, is riddled with exposed bedrock and stones. Bedrock just beneath the soil makes its presence known after a very few hot dry days. Shallow soil<sup>20</sup> over bedrock quickly becomes depleted of moisture, overheated and parched. The stones and rocks interfere with plowing, tilling, fencing and planting and they can damage machinery. In many areas, the thin soil is sandy and lacks organic material and clay to hold moisture and retain nutrients.

Haliburton's beautiful rolling 'highlands' (Haliburton is the highest point on the Canadian Shield) and abundance of lakes<sup>21</sup> can present problems for farming. It is not uncommon in the early spring during snowmelt to have rivulets or flooding in pastures, fields and gardens causing erosion and heightening the need to manage nutrients so they don't contaminate waterways. It should be noted, however, that these conditions also exist in some other counties and districts in Ontario, which have been more successful at farming and are not sufficient alone to account for Haliburton's low production.

Examination of county demographics may offer some answers. A comparison of key statistical population data with the District of Muskoka and Hastings County which abut the county on the west and the east respectively, and which share some similar geographical characteristics, underscores the unique social challenges faced by Haliburton. Haliburton has a significantly older, poorer, smaller and more highly fluctuating population than either of the other counties and indeed of the overwhelming majority of counties in the province (see Figure 5).

Haliburton demographics have multiple effects. The small tax base produces less revenue to provide services (e.g., no local public transportation system exists). The small and varying population can act to dissuade businesses - including those providing

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<sup>20</sup> "Limestone and granite barrens characterize the area which holds predominantly shallow soils that are estimated on average to be less than 15cm deep." (The Land Between, 2010)

<sup>21</sup> The Land Between, of which Haliburton is a part, has the highest ratio of shoreline to area in all of Ontario (The Land Between, 2010).

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

agricultural infrastructure - from establishing themselves in the area. In turn, this reduces stable employment opportunities, the pool of skilled prospective employees for businesses to draw on and income-earning potential, all of which affect production of, and potential markets for, locally grown food.

Farmers suffer from the same waxing and waning of the patron base that hits most local businesses hard. Cottagers and ‘snow birds’ arrive in the spring and summer and depart in the fall and winter creating an annual ebb and flow of customers. For example, a producer who keeps a flock of lay hens may not be able to meet the demand for eggs in the summer, but come winter the eggs go unsold. The cost of caring for the chickens and other domestic animals over the winter when few customers are on the horizon can make a producer think twice about what she is doing. It also is an inducement to sell one’s livestock at the auction barn rather than directly to an unreliable customer base.

County/District	Population	Population Density per Km	Median After-tax Family Income	Median Age	Senior Dependency Ratio (Bollman, 2013)
Haliburton (Statistics Canada. 2011 Census of Population, 2012)	17,026 permanent residents (seasonal residents increase population by a factor of 3 to approx. 61,000 total)	4.2	\$55,881	54	78
Hastings (Statistics Canada. 2011 Census of Population, 2012)	134,934 permanent residents (seasonal figures not found)	22.1	\$59,587	44.9	48
District of Muskoka (Statistics Canada. 2011 Census of Population, 2012)	58,047 permanent residents (seasonal residents increase population by approx. 65,000 to 123,000 total)	14.7	\$64,808	48	59

Figure 5. Demographic Comparison of Haliburton County with Hastings County and Muskoka District

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

Casey Cox, descendant of generations of local farmers and operator of one of the largest farms in the county, identified some of the issues that he thinks have prevented people from taking up or continuing farming in the area. His observations tie together some of the natural and social factors previously discussed. He observed that throughout the county, much of the soil is badly depleted. While it is possible to produce good quality hay and pasture or raise some crops in Haliburton, the cost and time to improve the soil and the difficulty in producing crops in sufficient quantity to generate a meaningful profit discourage many farmers.

According to Cox, because shops that carry farm machinery or parts do not exist in the county, a farmer must take a day away from the farm to drive down south to obtain even a small needed part or arrange to have it shipped. Added together the obstacles may induce one to pursue other professions or farm elsewhere.

### LOCAL FACTORS AFFECTING AGRICULTURE: THE OPPORTUNITIES

Many of the issues associated with the natural environment are not insurmountable. Greenhouses can extend seasons, soil can be amended, and permaculture techniques, among others, can help remedy run-off and erosion, assist with nutrient management and offer guidance in adapting farming to the conditions of the environment. Good land management practices can prevent and repair the damage caused by soil degradation. Microclimates, some of which are sunny and warm, can be exploited.

Recent mapping for agricultural soil types has identified areas along the Irondale River in the south of the county and in parts of the Minden, Guilford, Dysart and Stanhope townships as being suited to agriculture. A few other areas scattered to the far west, to the north and to the east have also been identified (GIS Institute at Sir Sanford Fleming College, 2010, p. 42).

Farming in Haliburton County will never resemble farming in the greenbelt, but there is no question that small-scale sustainable food production can increase. Garlic does well, maple syrup production has not begun to reach its potential (Thomson, 2014), small flock poultry and egg production has room for market expansion and does not require large amounts of pastureland, to mention only a few possibilities.

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

A possible solution to the costs of getting into farming might be addressed by partnerships. Although this may not suit all experienced farmers, Casey Cox suggested that sharing the cost and profits of production with an aspiring farmer, might be mutually beneficial. More hands would be available to do the work, valuable knowledge passed on and steps taken toward being an independent producer.

The 100 acre Magnificent Hill homestead in northeastern Haliburton County is an example of a successful present-day Haliburton farm. This diverse farm demonstrates what can be done in the right location with ample help and resources, dedication and hard work. Magnificent Hill has attracted WWOOFers<sup>22</sup> from all over the world who provide assistance with the intensive input the farm demands. A chemical-free farm, Magnificent Hill produces a wide array of vegetables, raises heritage cattle, pigs, goats and chickens (but not large numbers of any livestock), sells eggs at farm gate, makes their own butter, produces maple syrup and honey, grows 300 feet of grapes, has an orchard, grows berries and makes value added products including goat milk soap.

The farm has a CSA, hosts tours for visitors from near and far, holds educational and other experiential events and collects, saves and plants heirloom seeds.

The Magnificent Hill farmers have set a sustainability goal to be completely self-sufficient with a “zero mile diet”. Even the buildings are made by the farmers themselves out of materials from their own property and include a permanent greenhouse, outdoor kitchen, clay oven, workshop and dormitory for visitors.

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<sup>22</sup>“World wide opportunities on organic farms” attracts people who volunteer on farms in exchange for accommodation, food and agricultural education.

# AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

## CFA INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Several local farmers and growers have shared in their own words their personal experiences and reflections regarding agricultural food production in the region and offer a range of perspectives. Some of these accounts were written by the individuals, and others were sourced from recorded interviews. Questions asked of the interview subjects are included in the appendix. Transcripts of recorded interviews were edited with the permission and approval of the interview subjects, so that the report would not be overly long. Every effort was made to preserve the essence and flavour of each interview subject's story.

Most interview subjects either grew up in Haliburton or had a longstanding connection through relatives or summer cottages to the county. Some are in their 20s and 30s, others middle-aged and yet others are seniors. All share a passion for growing their own food.

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### **Interview #1: Bedrock & Brambles; Gooderham, Ontario**

Kira and Andrew von Zuben, with three young children.

It was never our original intention to get involved in agriculture. We bought our home (2004) and property because it was secluded, tucked deeply into a natural environment, and was affordable. Only after two years did we begin some modest vegetable gardens. It was, in fact, the land itself that encouraged us to grow, coupled with some old self-sufficiency books. We recognized an opportunity to build something that would give us more independence and self-determination.

When we began, our home was a three-season cottage with minimal facilities, and the land was almost fully treed. In 2006 we started to push the tree line back in order to begin planting more gardens. In 2009 we bought our first chickens, which was really the beginning of our current path.

Our land is unsuitable for conventional agriculture, so we sought promise in the many alternative ways that food can be grown. We found that we could set an example of what can be done on marginal land, even though our ability to produce surplus food is still in its beginnings. The challenge presents a tremendous opportunity to learn and to be innovative. Both of us are creative people and find forging our own way deeply rewarding.

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

Chickens were the first surplus product that we could sell. That includes eggs, chicks, and mature birds. We began our flock with forty birds, and hatched our own the following year. A year later we added another sixty chickens from outside our farm so that we could have enough genetic diversity to perpetuate our flock independently. We now hatch out over 300 chicks each year. We currently sell eggs, hatching eggs, day old chicks, feathered pullets, mature hens and breeding males. To date, we have yet to sell chicken as meat, because of the long distance and additional cost involved in processing the birds. We are able to provide meat for our own table as we are quite adept at processing our own birds. It is my hope to one day market our heritage purebred chickens as a premium organic meat bird, raised on woodland. Our breeding flock usually consists of about 80 birds in total, including a minimum of seven males.

On our grounds, we have been planting fruit trees and fruit bushes to help determine which cultivars thrive here. We have successfully grown apple trees, grapes, currants, and blueberries, among others. Thus far, we do not have enough stock in the ground to produce a surplus. We are now entering a stage where we have enough knowledge to choose stock that can be used commercially. This will include blueberries, elderberry, grapes, and currants.

Our gardens are stocked with fairly typical heirloom purebred cultivars. Garlic does well, and we are able to produce a surplus. Infrastructure challenges have diminished our ability to sell vegetables in any quantity, but these obstacles are surmountable. This is primarily fencing, and further tree removal around our main growing areas.

A wide variety of herbs grow well here and we are in the process of expanding our stock to provide more sales opportunities. Herbs can also enhance our ability to produce value added products like balms, tinctures, soaps, and other natural health products.

This year, we began our goat herd. We have purchased registered, purebred stock of Nigerian Dwarf goats. As registered breeders, we will be selling quality stock as milking and breeding goats. We will also be growing our own herd with the intention of one day being able to sell, legally, milk and cheese products. Currently, we are in discussion with OMAFRA regarding setting up a home dairy.

Hogs are part of many diverse farms, and ours is no different. We normally raise four to six hogs to provide for our own table as well as for sale. Our own pork is processed on site. Pork for sale must be processed elsewhere.

As most of our property is natural hardwood forest, there are many other forest products that we are able to cultivate and steward. Wild mushrooms and nettles are typical examples.

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

In addition to farm products that we grow, we also mix and grind our own premium livestock feeds, using organic grains from Douro, Ontario. In the future, we plan on producing feeds made with products from our own land, including lambs quarters, fish meal, cultivated insects, and nettles.

One of our lofty goals for the future is to build an aquaponics facility where we can efficiently grow fish and vegetables year-round. This form of intensive agriculture will significantly decrease the outside inputs needed for producing surplus food on our type of land.

Thus far, the bulk of our sales are to local families, looking for premium organic foods, as well as to cottagers looking for local savour. Our chief obstacle is producing enough surplus to satisfy our market.

In order to produce more, we simply need more time to develop our property. As our knowledge matures, we see great possibility for our farm. It's simply a matter of having enough time to develop the infrastructure. There is some frustration at the regulatory system regarding the production control and processing of meat and dairy. We do not oppose regulating meat and dairy to produce safe products. But more targeted and discretionary regulation would benefit a region that has little to no agricultural infrastructure. We are hopeful that we will one day have a home dairy operation, and perhaps a small abattoir for poultry, as both of these projects require a reasonable amount of capital to build. Production controls, however, are altogether unwelcome, as they discourage small-scale operations and regional agricultural development.

Our overarching goals are to provide for our family and to encourage other people to take up small-scale agriculture. The land on the Canadian Shield has typically been viewed as unsuitable for agriculture. But that is a narrow view in the context of widely shared information, renewed interest in pre-industrial farming techniques, and innovative systems aimed at producing more food, more efficiently. We hope to help foster a new era in agriculture, one that supports healthy communities as well as sustainable food production (von Zuben, 2015).

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

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### Interview #2: Ross Daniels

...I was born and raised in the Caledon area, which is rich in farming. I was raised by my grandparents, and my grandfather ran a rabbitry. So we had hundreds of rabbits at any given time, plus a market garden...So he taught me a lot of things from small engine repair to woodworking to everything a farmer really needs to know ...

[I] got a job working for Bell Canada in Toronto. Did my dues down there and just got to the point that I had to get out, and I had to just be in nature, and my grandparents always owned this cottage on Beach Lake where I'm currently residing...So, came up and started a landscape business, and I was cutting lawns and doing things like that and so, outdoor work and planting flowers and working that way, but really not rewarding...[B]ut the whole time I was doing that, I was gardening for myself at home, and I was having certain ideas and things. And then I guess about three years ago I had a bit of an epiphany, and a light bulb went off in my head that health was more important than really anything at my age at that time... And part of this whole lifestyle change, and part of the reason why it happened was I saw a documentary, and I saw some person...taunt a pig for close to 5 minutes before it was killed for slaughter, and it actually made me cry... and at that point, I made a decision that that was that, and I needed to either become vegetarian, vegan, or I needed to find a better way, a different way.

And so, back to the family cottage - it's not a lot of property, it's 0.86 of an acre. So cattle was out of the question. Sheep, pigs, things like that, but one thing that I could do is chickens. So, that's where we started. So I started to research chicken, and we went down to Brechin three years ago, and we got our first dozen chickens, and it took me a second to get used to the feel and the touch, and the farmer kinda laughed at me and said to my wife, "Boy, he is determined." And it took me 45 minutes to catch 12 chickens. Since then, they've been nothing but an education for me. I've learned so much from them, from teaching people about them. They've given so much to me, and my life is so much richer now because of these chickens and because of this lifestyle and because of the community I've run into here in Haliburton County, HinT (Haliburton in Transition), the various different groups, the Garlic Association, the Haliburton Farmers' Association. I've really run into some really great people that put fire in your belly when you need it, and they can give that little bit of inspiration, or that little bit of spur, whatever it may be, and it just keeps you motivated, and it keeps you going...So, we decided at that point, that we had the egg production chickens, but that still didn't handle meat. So how would we get that



## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

protein? So I thought, again, 0.86 of an acre: there's no way we're tying a cow out back, so I can sure trade chicken to a cow farmer for beef. And I can trade my chicken to a pig farmer for some pork. And so, through that way, and a barter/share system, let's say, I was able to eliminate the system that in my opinion, abuses animals - that battery system abuses animals... So, that's where I'm coming from. And that's a little bit of who I am as a person and my fundamental feelings of what needs to happen...

[W]e look at it as a society as "Oh...this is the system, this is the only way," when really it's not...We know it's broken... [Y]ou can ask people about their medical conditions, about their gastritis, about their Crohn's... irritable bowel syndrome, and all these things. They'll tell you, it's the food... prior to the government really kind of getting their hands into it, and food becoming a commodity...I think we have a lot to learn, and I think we are more than capable of making it better.

...To me the fix would be...You will never hear a parent say, "Oh, Tommy's gonna grow up and be a farmer," with pride. It's "Oh, Tommy needs to grow up ...and be a lawyer." Or "Sally needs to grow and be a doctor."... Rather than, you know, "Tommy's gonna be a farmer. And Tommy's gonna be down-to-earth. And Tommy's gonna produce food. And he's going to be a caring, sharing individual." Not to say that the professional doctors and things aren't. But what Tommy's doing shouldn't be viewed as "lesser than", because fundamentally it's what we all need at the end of the day more than anything, is sustenance and food to survive and to live. ... We've got all these people, and we're in this huge melting pot right now where the government doesn't know how to employ people. They don't know where the jobs are going to come from... It's "Action Plan" and money's being thrown at it, and they're trying to find apprentices, and they're trying to find this, and they're trying to find that. Well, an amazing thing would be farms, and enough farms that distribution becomes almost a thing of the past.

...So that now we're not depending on the romaine lettuce from California. We're depending on the romaine lettuce that's within a 25 kilometre radius of our house. And if you think about it in that sense, you go, "Well, 25 kilometres, 25 kilometres, 25 kilometres"...that's a lot of little farms that start to pop up on the landscape. Those are jobs. Because each of those farmers, that's a job, and he's going to be collecting income he's going to [be] paying tax on, which is really what they're after in the end. As they grow, they're going to need to hire people, and those people will learn a skill. So food becomes less about the distribution of it, which right now, that's what it's focused around. It's focused around distribution, it's not focused around people's health. It's not focused around people's access to the food... So it's, in my opinion, not a matter of more food. It's a matter of "where food?" So how can we get

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this food distributed in a different way? Closer ... - that's the way I see our system healing itself...And I think that's where Haliburton County comes into play, where we have been living a mono-crop existence since the victory garden, since farming basically came onto the stock market. It's been more Green Giant wondering "How many peas can we produce?"... so Haliburton County comes into it in the sense of, we don't have those large, flat, expansive fields...what we do have is we have peaks, and we have valleys. We have biomass... we have access to tons of water too...[T]here's a permaculturist called Geoff Lawton, and he's an Australian fellow. And he teaches a lot about drought-resistant farming, about swales, about using your landscape to your advantage...

And as I say, with our topography and our geography here, we've been telling ourselves the same story in Haliburton County for a hundred years.... And we're a bit martyred - a bit ..."It's Haliburton" you know, and it's, "Well, we can't really...because it's Haliburton" and things like that. And I think the opposite, and I think we need to change our story. I think we need to change it from the kind of befuddled Englishman who made a spontaneous buy of a little place in Canada called Haliburton...that the only way to recoup it was to come in and clear cut it at one point. I think we need to change that story, because it's not that way... Let's change our story. And I think we're doing that. I think these groups are doing that. And we're starting to outnumber a lot of the martyrs.

...And really, we've grown generations of people who don't recognize and don't realize the reward of a hard day's work, the reward of going out there, saying to themselves, "I'm going to plant this," or "I'm going to achieve this." And going out there and just knuckles-down doing it, and getting the dirt under their fingernails and standing back afterwards and going "Holy...I can't believe I just did that." That's an amazing reward.

... Like I said to myself, "How am I going to get this garlic in?" You know, but I was bound and determined. Yes, it was late. You know, yes there was snow on the ground. Yes, people were going like, "Well, good luck!" But I was determined that I was going to get it down, and you know, hell or high water, cold hands or not, I did it, and I stand back, and now I know it's there. I feel good inside that it's there, and I know that I've got something that through my hard work, I'm going to benefit from. And you just can't get that anywhere else, you just can't.

... But size-wise, farm-wise, and things like that, production-wise, as well, up is where I see us going. So, right now it's been more of a litmus test to this point. The meat chickens that we grew, that was a litmus test of: Will we be able to sell them in this community? Will this community accept it? Will we be able to distribute them...you know...

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...And recoup what we've put in, because everything I've done thus far has been strictly out of pocket. No credit or no loans or anything like that. So it's definitely - I paint it very positive and very happy and whatever, but there's been a part of it that's been a real struggle and a real hardship almost. But it's been worth that struggle, and it's been worth that hardship, because I want to ...invest my time, my energy, my effort, my money, everything into this and grow this. Because I believe it's that important. And I believe that it's going to give back to me if I do it. And if I put in that hard work, I will get it back. So, that's where I see us going. I see us moving to a different location, hopefully within the next couple of years..Just to a larger property that will allow us to do more volume and experiment with different things and see what works here in Haliburton, and what doesn't work in Haliburton. I wasn't looking for anything specific. I kinda went with vegetables, I kinda went with protein, I kinda went with eggs, I kinda went with garlic, and I've found personally that they found me, that I like protein, and I love animals...I love that bond and that connection that I have with an animal. So I think that's where I'll focus my effort as well as the garlic and as well as the egg production. But we also are going to have crops, and things like that. So, moving on in the future, the big 5-8 year plan is to actually move on from where we are to a larger location... I'm not really interested in having a large barn that requires a concrete pad and requires plumbing and requires electricity, and things like that. I think there are ways that our forefathers were able to do this without those types of heavy infrastructure. When I step back and take a look at the monoculture farming approach, I'm sad for those farmers. Those farmers don't have a choice other than to farm and to farm almost 24 hours a day because the tractors that they are operating - one of the tractors that they are operating is worth two and a half times what I paid for my house. And they don't have a choice. They have to make those payments. They have to - kilometre after kilometre after kilometre of beans, you know? Whereas, I'm looking at it as, "How can we scale down our overhead and up our production so that it's not running us, we're running it?"

...And so, if I can make enough to support my family, to satisfy my bills, and to feed myself, I mean, that to me is riches. And talking to people like yourself, and getting to know you better, that's to me, that's riches... And it's very valuable to me, you know? And I've met so many people like that, so I'm coming at it from a standpoint of - my grandparents taught me, I guess from their Depression values, about not wasting things, and to really cherish what you've got, and if something breaks you fix it. You don't throw it away. You don't go to the store and buy a new one. You try and figure out how to do it with what you have first, before you go to your bank account, and you go out to Wal-Mart and give the Waltons all your money, so that they can destroy the planet. So, a lot of those things were instilled in me, and I feel lucky beyond words ...I look at my peers ...yeah sure they've got great cars and living in a great

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neighbourhood and have a great job and all this stuff, but they're miserable, they're full of debt. They don't really know much more than what they do for a living. And it's an empty life, and they come, and they visit me, and they have a blast, and they don't want to live their life, and they tell me that...

And there's a lot of people out there who want to make the change, and I mean, we need those people...I see it happening. And this food "thing"... I mean there's been a heck of a lot of "movements" in my 37 years, that I've seen. I've seen the Thigh-Master by Suzanne Somers, I've seen Pilates come and go, I've seen Richard Simmons dance to the oldies, and Ronco's "set it and forget it" and all these fads, let's call them, trends. This is not a trend. It's a movement. And it is a real movement that started due to sickness and as people are being educated and as people are learning things and as the wool is being lifted off of their eyes, it's only becoming stronger and stronger and gaining momentum and momentum and...And I don't see how we can go back because once you know fire's hot, we stop burning ourselves. Once we learned that cigarettes cause cancer, it ceased to be the cool thing, right? So, and that is a great comparison: smoking. If you compare smoking in 1994 to now, 2014, whoa! I mean, could you imagine walking into a restaurant now and them saying, "Smoking or non-smoking?"

...We're very capable of change, and we're very capable of doing something. So this whole answer...change truly does start with one. And from there, it's infinite where it can really go. And that's what gives me the hope and the fire to keep on going, and that passion... (Daniels, 2015).

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### Interview #3: The Nest Egg: Taylors' Small Farm

Our story starts when we bought a small home with a little acreage in Haliburton County in January 1997 for summer use where we could grow veg and raise some chickens for ourselves. It mattered to us how our food was raised. Within months of making the Haliburton purchase, we decided to make a lifestyle change; I quit my full-time job, and we moved there year round. We purchased a small laying flock and 100 chicks to raise for meat. Almost immediately we attracted customers - far more than we could supply - and expanded our production. (As an aside, it is noteworthy that if the Chicken Farmers and the Egg Farmers of Ontario raised the small-flock limit outside of quota, we would benefit from the added volume. The demand is high for roasting chickens and eggs in the county.) Before long, we added lambs, ducks, geese and turkeys, though we no longer produce the latter three. As our summer

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cottage morphed into a smallholding farm we found ourselves making what was for us large and growing capital outlay. Fence-building, constructing outbuildings, purchasing a truck, a trailer, rota-tiller, feeding equipment, not to mention expanding our water pumping and storage capability, running hydro to out buildings and improving pasture were tasks we fought a mostly losing battle to finance and still make a profit.

The costs were compounded by the distance we have had to travel to purchase feed and hay for the animals, and to bring them to the abattoir - over 90 to 100 km each way. We have insufficient productive pasture to reliably feed our animals for more than 2-3 months without supplementing them with out-of-county hay. (The quality and cost of what little hay we were able to access in-county were unacceptable.) Our property had once been pasture though this is puzzling given that it is riddled with bedrock; part had grown back heavily with scrub bush and young maple thickets. It has exceeded our resources to clear and reclaim that land.

Feed purchased in-county has been too expensive to buy in any quantity; when one needs a ton or more feed at a go, it makes sense to head down south and load up. Feed purchases in volume come with a small discount. We learned to make 'multi-task' trips down south - combining as many objectives as possible to offset the cost of the drive. A trip to an abattoir, one in Lindsay and the other in Omemee, always entails going to the feed store after dropping off the lambs or poultry. A doctor's appointment or shopping trip in Peterborough is also a feed-purchase trip. (Building an abattoir here would not help us particularly as we still need to make those trips down south for the feed - might as well use the southern abattoir if you have to go down anyway.)

We have suffered significant losses from predators from time to time - poultry but no sheep -- to skunks, coons, foxes, weasels, a bear and the occasional raptor. These losses have prompted us to improve our fencing but those efforts are not always successful. We have been aware from the get-go that we are trying to farm in a wilderness and have preferred not to set up a humans against nature polarity. Still, these conditions do compound the already fraught situation of farming in Haliburton County.

Vegetable pests have also hit us hard. We were up to a high of 10,000 garlic bulbs annually but have been decimated by the leek moth and root and bulb nematodes. We are down to 3000 this year. Winter squash often has a small hole eaten right through the wall so the critter can get at the seeds; beets, carrots and potatoes have their shoulders eaten away by some kind of rodent, and groundhogs burrow under the fence to eat the cabbages. A mystery animal snacks on the ripest tomatoes taking a

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bite out of each one. It is safe to say that we have had far more success raising animals for meat or eggs than raising veg in any abundance, garlic excepted. We annually raise several dozen market lambs as well as non-quota small flock roasting chickens most of which we sell to customers or use in our pot pies. The rest we keep for ourselves. Most of the garlic goes to customers; the rest we use for seed. We sell eggs year round, producing a high of 7 dozen a day in peak season but drop down to 5 dozen or fewer in winter. Despite the veg garden struggles, we do grow enough produce to preserve, freeze or store for the winter, and to keep us in salad and veg for the summer. Indeed, our freezer is always full of our own and locally sourced meat. It is vanishingly rare that we buy meat at grocery stores.

We grapple with the issue of determining a fair price to charge for our products. We find ourselves between the rock of mounting -at times crushing - costs and the hard place of consumer expectations about what to pay, not to mention that we live in a poor county where we don't want healthy food to be beyond ordinary people's means. The farmers' market has helped by giving us an opportunity to sell in greater volume and more readily access a consumer population; it has also stimulated us to develop a value-added farm product - pot-pies made with our own meat which have proven popular. For most of the time we have had our farm we have had to subsidize it with a 'day job'. If we want to take a trip, we have to hire a live-in care-taker. Not infrequently we ask ourselves why we are doing this. Despite the challenges, it still gives us enough satisfaction to continue. Many customers, fellow growers and local food enthusiasts have become valued friends. We are totally won over by the persons at the door or phone calls from people ordering the delicious lamb, chickens or garlic. We smile and assure them that, yes, we'll have them again next year! (Taylor, 2014).

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### Interview #4: Beef, Garlic and Maple Syrup: Ron Reid

My wife and I moved to this area in 1976. Previous to that I had worked with the federal government doing some scientific research in the Kenora area and then both of us decided that wasn't our life, and so we both quit our jobs and moved to Madoc. My parents had retired and moved to a farm in the Madoc area and Dad had bought a hundred acre farm. He was going into beef production and he grew corn, hay, and he had... registered polled Hereford cattle... When we moved to the farm in the fall of '75, I tried to buy the farm next door and have 200 acres and go farming. I'd had some limited experience at that point in time. I enjoyed the outdoors and different things, but I had been involved with...research, water quality, water aquatic research...[S]o I tried to buy the farm next door and Farm Credit Corporation would not loan me the

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\$100,000 to buy the farm. And so, we had to make a decision, and one of the decisions for not staying on the farm, there were two of them: one of them was a) I was offered a job, but b) my dad took steers to the market in the fall of 1975 and got 32 cents a pound for his steers and he said "Son, if you stay on the farm you're going to starve to death."

...That was my life at that point in time, so I got the job in Haliburton, working with the Dorset Environmental Science Centre and got the job here and when Dad retired he said "Why don't you take, if you want to get into the cattle business, why don't you take a few of my cows and find a place to rent them up there and figure it out."

Which I did! And we met Angelo Misco in Carnarvon who had a hundred acre farm there that he'd farmed since 1931. ... but he couldn't make a living on the farm and he commuted to work in the steel mill in Hamilton for 30 years while his wife and kids lived in Carnarvon, on the West Road. I used that farm for a couple years but it was pretty well worn out and... so I moved on. But what I did was, I took five I think, of the purebred cows that my father had raised and they were in calf, so I had five to ten head of cattle and when we left Angelo's place in '77 I had about 15 to 18 cows and I moved those to West Guilford. I moved them to the Irish Line. And so I sort of got into small-time hobby Hereford production. Toos and I were always gardeners but we'd never raised vegetables to sell at that time, but we were mostly in the Hereford business and I was focusing on a purebred Hereford cow-calf operation, looking at breeding stocks, so we sold a number of yearling bulls and a lot of bred cows and a lot of yearling heifers. And so that was my focus and... [I], was trying to get involved with United Breeders and artificial insemination and most of my breeding program was using AI in the '70s and '80s and even the early '90s... I got out of cattle in about 2008.

It was about 2005 or 2006 that I met Charlie and Sheila [Robb] and - there's three parts to this story: first there's beef cattle, secondly is garlic and the third is maple syrup and I'll continue with the garlic story. I met Charlie and he said "You know, this is up and coming and they've just started a Garlic Association and you should grow some garlic!" So I stopped in and we got 30 or 40 Red Russian bulbs and we grew garlic the next year and so we've gone from 200 bulbs a year to 12,000, so I don't know what that means, but we're in it, you know, and we're partnered with that. Toos and I enjoyed that, and since I've lost my wife it's a little more difficult to figure out where my farming or pseudo-farming, hobby-farming is going, but ...I think there's a real future for garlic in this county.

And so, I got into the garlic and the garlic seems to grow well in this part of the country and I seem to be isolated from a lot of challenges that the garlic people have and so it's been, for the last 7 or 8 years it's been interesting, and it's grown. Like I mean, both our quantity of garlic has grown, but also our income... [I]t could be a

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fairly lucrative income... You could take it as far as you want in terms of what kind of income you want to do as long as you've got a market. And that's one of the questions ..how do we develop a market in this county in terms of... making the whole thing sustainable... There's the farmers' market, and there's maybe other ways. For me, the third part of this is maple syrup and... I'm a pretty small producer. I produce anywhere from 300-600 litres depending on the year, so my average is about 450 litres. But to sell 450 litres is so easy in this county...I have yet to have to go beyond the end of the driveway.

...[M]y bush isn't great, but I have about 800-900 taps and I have... soft maple and some are hard maple, but it's a one or two person operation and it can be done fairly easily, and I think the potential for growth for maple syrup in Haliburton county is unbelievable.

I got into maple syrup 25 years ago...but just as home use, and now that I've bought some land and I have now the ability to increase the productivity, it is just a product - both garlic and maple syrup are two products that are really easy to sell...And there's a market for them.

...Most of our customers are cottagers and people from the city who either know us from the Garlic Festival or know us - or go by the end of our driveway on Kushog and Boshkung Lakes. But I do have a lot of repeat local customers as well, for maple syrup and garlic as well. And I see the whole use of agriculture products changing over the last 10 or 15 year because there is a real influx of retired cottagers who are building their homes on ...lakes... I see a greater financial base in that whole group today than I did 10, 15, 20 years ago...

I backed out of beef cattle for a number of reasons. One, I had a really good career. I enjoyed my career and it took a lot of time. I was raising a family, and I had a wife who didn't have a farm background. And that was all part of it. And the winter I got out of cattle, she said "If you're going back to India, don't leave me with cows to look after in January and February and March." So anyway, it was that, but I also think that...if I could go back and do it again, I would really struggle with doing it in Haliburton County. For two reasons... pasture is just, it doesn't exist. It doesn't exist, but also, it's really, really tough for hay, for winter-feed. I did not have a land base... my property is forested for the maple syrup...but you know...It's tough in Haliburton County. There isn't a lot of pasture, you know?

..[H]ave you ever seen the picture of the cattle drives out west of Brady Lake? There, apparently, was a huge cattle drive. What they did was, the area west of Brady Lake... I think it's in the museum over in Stanhope. But there were cattle. They pastured the cattle over in thousands of acres over there and they just had to turn them loose in



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the forest over there. And they drove them up the Bobcaygeon Road and let 'em go. And this is horses coming down that whole area with hundreds of cows.

Back in the, I'm going to say in the '30s, '40s. Back in the '30s and '40s, '50s, one of the first men that I met up here was a guy by the name of Mason, Wilfred Mason. And Wilfred Mason had a hundred acre farm up the road here, on Buckslide Road, and he had dairy cattle. And he had cattle right up until - he probably got out of cattle around '82 or '83, just when I started into it. But he ran a cattle business and he's got pictures of him in that museum as well, haying back in the '20s and '30s in this area.

But I think what happened in Haliburton County, and there are a number of issues for this, and one is that because of our shallow soils, that the soil got depleted very quickly. And so it's not - because of being on the Canadian Shield, we don't have a lot of soil depth, and we don't have a lot of soil nutrients, and we don't have a lot open land either but the open land was done, was basically used, the nutrients were used up in it...Like this was a farm at one time. This was a huge farm at one time...I found parts of the old barn down there. But when I dug up my garden here, when Toos and I started our first garden, I found a 1901 penny.

And one of the guys who was born in this house, a house that burned down on this property, he came over one day when I was in the garden working and he says, "Man, I can still see Mom going down there with the ducks." And there's a lake on the other side of 118. "She took the ducks down there every morning." And that would be in the, well 1901, so mid...I'm gonna say early 1900s. But this was probably, from 1870 to 1930, this was a very productive farm.

But after that, the dirty '30s and everything else, the soil was totally depleted. And so, now we're trying to change that and bring it back, but it's gotta be niche-type farming as opposed to...having 100 cows or whatever (Reid, 2015).

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### Interview #5: Andrew and Shannon - Graham's Farm Market

...[T]ogether we operate Graham's Farm Market, which is a small produce garden in the town of Minden...We hope to expand beyond that but right now we're focusing on vegetables. All chemical-free, we're trying to do that as well. So, you know the challenges that come with that...and ...learning off the land..... I've been gardening my whole life. I think it's something I've always wanted to do. I just didn't want to be rooted in one spot and now I'[m] kind of...going for a lifestyle change and I want to settle down, marriage type deal I guess.

...I think we'll expand slightly. I mean we don't have a lot of land, and so... to make a

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go of it these days I feel like you have to be able to grow your own food or grow your food for your animals if you're going make a go of it...So there's a balance somewhere. I don't know how big a meat production we'll be in for selling, but definitely for ourselves...Just more of a sustainable lifestyle right.

And, like, even just for us to even get into it...the land that we have isn't fenced or anything like that... I mean we got over the big hurdle of, we have the land which... is stopping everyone else that wants to farm from farming, I mean if I had to buy the land I'd be sunk before I started, so I've got over the first hurdle, now it's just getting over the next one.

It's everything from housing, a spot to sell your vegetables from, buildings that you need to keep stuff dry, fencing, building the soil that hasn't been worked in ages...Slowly... we're piecing it together, I mean, it's not like we went out and bought everything brand new. We're getting what we can and doing what we can.

I never met even my grandparents, but...they settled Minden the way a farm was supposed to be settled, you know they came and they were homesteaders. And so all they did was what they needed to do to survive.

[B]eing the first year, I think we set our sights high and then that was probably the worst summer to ever try to get into gardening, the way the weather was, and I mean...It was May 5th, my field was still sitting as a fallow hay field, like it looked for the last hundred and something years, and then it finally got turned over and I was able to start working, but by that time it was so far behind we couldn't catch up. But we focused in leafy greens, a lot of cucurbits. I think we probably did two and half, three acres of cucurbits.

[T]he cantaloupe went really well, I think that kind of - I wouldn't say saved us, but it definitely gave us a boost that we needed...Lots of pumpkins, squash, cantaloupe, cucumbers, zucchinis, watermelon, tomatoes...Peas and beans...And dill, hot peppers, sweet peppers...lots of lettuces, spinaches, kales...

As far as selling meat, uh...I don't know. That's a long way away. I think egg production might be one of them. That's more easily attainable than say like, cattle or something. I don't think we'll ever go that route. Maybe the odd pig, just because we have so much garden waste. I mean it makes sense to feed it to pigs. Pigs, and meat birds and some turkeys possibly.

I have a real issue with the buildings and by-laws, I mean my grandparents and great-grandparents when they settled the land, they were allowed to cut down trees and build whatever buildings they needed to house everything. Like if all I had to do is walk into the woods with my chainsaw and I could build some barns to house

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chickens, I'd be laughing. But now I gotta go get building permits and it has to be graded lumber...which is a huge headache and a huge cost I can't afford, I mean I've got trees right there. Just let me build my building and be done with it, you know, like everyone else has done in the past, but all of a sudden we're not allowed to do that anymore.

...That's the big one that holds me back right now and it's very frustrating. It's so frustrating, man, I could build that for free. You know, give me two weeks and I'd have a great building to house...and I could start pulling profit, but no. Instead I gotta dump 5-10 thousand dollars into a building and go through the headaches of building permits and engineered prints and all this, like...how do you even make a living?... You can't pay that off...I look at my buildings and ok, my great-grandpa built that, in 1885, and it is still standing, and he cut the trees down - right there - and he built it, and it's still standing, you know? And if I was to exactly replicate that building right now and duplicate it, it wouldn't pass code, by-law would say no, and I'd have to tear it down, because it's unsafe. Yet, that building has stood there for over a hundred years quite fine, you know? Like, I understand why someone that has a residential home can't do it, because you'd have just ugly buildings everywhere, right? But it's a farm. I'm not asking for a 40 foot by 80 foot building, but...Like right now it's 10 x 10 or 103 or 108 or 107 square feet that you're allowed to build without a building permit. I wish they'd extend that for agriculture, so you're allowed to build up to like, 500 or 1000 square feet without a building permit. As long as you're deemed agriculture, it would be a huge help. And all of a sudden you've got something to house your animals in and it gives you a head start, you know?

If I have to build...if every building I need to build is going to cost me 5 to 10 grand, I'm sunk before I start, it's not gonna happen. How do you get ahead?

[I]t's the same with the greenhouses I guess too, right?...[T]o extend our seasons, right?...[B]ut you need the engineered prints...you can't just make a homemade greenhouse. Because by-law's going to come along and tell you to tear it down, because it's not up to building code. There isn't engineered prints and all that, right? And that's what we need up here, with the climate and, you know...we don't know what's going to happen next, right? Are we going to have snow in May? Like, right now, on Christmas day we could have been out - well, we were in the garden pretty much, right? So...and yeah, just that whole sustainable, living off the land and making it all-encompassing, right?

Well there's other expenses too that I was thinking about, like, you know if you are chemical-free, well, are you pest-free? No. Right, so, our learning curve too, like the insect netting and what we're going to do with that, because we didn't really have

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that this year, right? So we have to figure that out. [W]e put in like, 3000 garlic. So hopefully expand that next year. We just panicked and got that in at the end, but as long as that goes good we'll expand next year. As long as I can handle the picking it. It wasn't the planting that ever scared me away from garlic, it was the picking time. July is extremely busy for me as it is and then, trying to figure out how I'm going to have time to harvest all those garlic in the middle of my busiest season? It's difficult. I'm a little scared, but I'm just going to wing it like I do with everything else and I'm sure it'll fall together.

[W]e have had a lot of help from other farmers in the area, which is great. I love that networking. Everyone's very helpful for sure. Everyone wants to see everyone else succeed as opposed to, you get into some business that's cut-throat and people would try to, you know, get you out of there and push you out, whereas I don't feel that with agriculture, which is nice.

...At-risk youth that need hours for high school, so they come and help us out, which is great. They're fun to work with...Yeah, they were helping us with the garlic, and the beds and...they like coming out and doing that as opposed to going to a job, let's say, like for some sort of commercial something or other with everyone running around barking orders. I mean, they're outside. They're learning how to grow things. I mean they might throw the odd rotten tomato at each other as a joke.

[W]e definitely have a new appreciation for canning. It is quite more labour intensive than we expected. But yeah, we enjoyed doing it. You gotta make use of all that food that's not exactly A-grade vegetables, right?

[W]e needed to prove ... that we were able to grow before we went and started building infrastructure, buildings...So we wanted to make sure that we could grow first, and yeah we want to do it and yeah we still love it, yeah we're in it for the long haul. Ok, let's go join everyone and...so we emailed the Farmers' Association and everything, so we'll go to the general meeting coming up and get involved there and, you know?

Baby steps. Just had to get through the first year (Graham, 2014).

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### Interview #6: Matt & Karra Wesley: Owl Farm

[W]e moved up here 2010. ...So producing our own food and at least some kind of partial food security has always been high on our list. When we got here to Haliburton, we started small. Mainly we had some goats, and we got some pigs. The goats didn't really go anywhere so they "went". The pigs, we sort of started thinking, well, we'll raise three, put two in the freezer, sell one and that'll pay for the other two that we eat - Self-sufficiency.

But then...we did start to establish a bit of a clientele with a market garden we were doing for the two years...[I]t made sense to do a little bit more and little bit more and now...we breed our own animals, so we produce all the young on the farm...And we know our stock is good. ..[W]e do fall and spring farrows. [O]ur main thing is pigs and then the market garden. ..[T]he eggs seem to bring people in, and we'll get more hens in the spring. But we've found that we've had to take a hard look at things, as it seems a little more idyllic in the beginning, but then you have to look at anything that doesn't make dollars, doesn't make sense. So, we're focusing more on the pigs and the vegetables, and we have some... ideas about expanding in the future. Most of it has to do with trying to make the operations we have a little more streamlined. Like, I've toyed with the idea of getting a house cow that would keep us in milk, but it would also supplement the feed for the pigs. So we'd save a little bit of money while putting milk in our fridge and maybe a steer in the freezer every couple of years...maybe.

So yeah, see, you come from the city, right, and you have all these ideas of what you want in life, and then you think, "Why should we wait until we're retired? We can give it a go, and we can always go back to the city that will be there if it doesn't work".

And then, you start looking for farm properties, and unless you have at least...a million dollars...if you want to be within driving distance of anywhere even close to the GTA, that's what you would need. So you find a property that you could afford and that can become what your vision is, right, and you work with it. But then, as a young couple, and then if you have children as well, you don't realize the concept of time and the fact that you both have to still work, because you're not at a stage where it can even support one income. So you're both working *and* doing the farm *and* not at the point where it's actually making you money. It's possibly costing you money. So that's why it's not very lucrative, two young people, to do it. So there has to definitely be a passion there, to even give it a go. And then you can see it all come together and start to happen, but it's a lot of hard work and dedication for sure.

Yeah, we thought we were lucky finding the property we did. We were attracted to

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the area because...there was a cottage in the family and my grandmother grew up on a farm in Carnarvon so I actually have ties to the area that go back a hundred and fifty years. So we were happy to be here and if I could figure out a way or have the time or the, I don't know, just the money to play with to try to develop ventures that could earn a living, I definitely would like to and the plan is eventually I would just like to work on the property, because when I'm doing it, I feel a very strong tie to the land...Like when I'm in the back on the tractor turning the soil, I feel like that's what I should be doing. When we're in the garden...it's what I want to do. I really enjoy it. It's a lot of hard work, it's not necessarily a difficult lifestyle, it's just hard work.

[T]here's a lot of sweat equity in it. But it's very rewarding when you start the seeds and then you see them grow and, you know, when you're there and you bring some new animals into the world, and you watch them grow and...they're healthy.

We're fairly pragmatic about what the purpose of them is...I was actually vegetarian for 8 years before I started doing this. But, one of the main reasons that I didn't eat meat at the time was basically compassion issues. I don't feel that what they call agriculture on a large scale is... compassionate at all when you're dealing with living creatures. So, we really feel that we're creating a better product. It's better for our kids, and we really believe that our animals have a really good, happy life, and one very bad day, you know? ... I would rather eat a creature that I knew personally and knew how it was raised and I can look it in the eye and say "This is why you're here and I've come to terms with it".

...[U]ltimately we would like it if Matt could farm full-time, but today's society actually makes that very difficult. And like I said, it's not very lucrative to say "I want to go and be a farmer." And unless you're doing it on the large mass scale, which does not allow for very humane treatment, really. To make the dollars and cents...that's our big issue. The ethics and being able to afford to do it and have a comfortable lifestyle.

...[S]mall farms are dying. This farm that we bought was dead, and we're still restoring it...still bringing it back. And I think that that's something also that local and national government levels really, *really* need to be looking at and putting programs and incentives in place because you know, just for the health of Canadians and to keep it alive, really.

I find that's the biggest problem too is that all the regulations, whether they're national or provincial, they're only scalable one way. You can scale them up, but they don't really have a model to scale it down. And I'm sure you understand that there's a - like the road-blocks are huge and I mean, I think that small farmers and young farmers and there's a lot of people that really have a passion for... sustainable living,

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which could lead into something else, or cottage industries. I think there's a lot of creativity and innovation there potentially, but it can't be tapped because anytime you say "Ok well, I want to do this" then CFIA or whoever says "You can't do that"... [W]e don't really know how to deal with that... And even with the pigs, actually, there's a whole lot of new regulations that we had to come up to speed on very quickly this summer, because any time any pigs move anywhere, we have to report it to Canadian Food Inspection Agency. Like, all our animals have to be tattooed now...So we had to buy the whole tattoo kit...the abattoirs won't accept them now if they're not tattooed and every premise has their own tattoo and again, we're not reporting to OMAF. We're not reporting to a provincial agency. It's the federal...just for pigs. And I think it's because PED is the disease that's been really bad...It's a disease and the real problem is the stocking numbers in these facilities. Which brings up another point, why we're doing it, is because we think environmentally it's also more responsible and more sustainable the way that we're doing this.

We're really lucky. We seem to have a pocket [of land] that doesn't have a lot of exposed bedrock. There's at least a couple feet of topsoil where we do the truck garden, there's almost five feet of topsoil there. And the fields that we try to crop in, the soil is fairly good there too. So we're pretty lucky that we seem to have a good pocket. But I know from stories that my grandmother told, you know, like they put the railroad in here and they thought that the farmers would export their produce and it just exported the farmers.

Oh, the stories I have about them moving rocks out of the fields and stuff like that... the family farm was up at Lake Boshkung...My grandma's one of twelve....I'm a Cowen. So they had twelve kids, my great-grandfather, and then his brother was right next-door and he had ten. ...They did some of everything. I know my great-grandfather, he did a little bit of blacksmithing for people on the side to help out...They had cows. They had sheep. They had pigs. They had chickens. They had pigeons...They did have dairy cows. I mean a lot of it was for the family, but they would also...go down to Clayton Rogers' store with a pound of butter and they'd trade that for sugar or something like that. .. Well it's a way of life that's lost too. And I mean, they - my grandmother said, when they were growing up during the Depression, they didn't have any money, but they were never hungry. And in the winter, once the boys were old enough, they'd go with their dad into the lumber camps and that was just kind of the way of life too. But they produced a lot, and I think my great-grampa, he also helped people slaughter their animals too, because he knew a little bit about that. And then they also had - I think in Blairhampton they had a hundred acres where they would bring the cattle in the summer. They called it "the ranch" and they'd run them there...

One other thing, in terms of farming in Haliburton County. Because tourism is such a

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big draw in our area, and ...there is definitely an interest and an inclination towards farm tourism that's happening in many parts of the world. And that's something for the area to really look at and possibly invest in...and to try to hit that while...the momentum's there and not to lose that. Because this area could in fact combine those two things really well. But there's a lot of planning that has to happen with that, and interested parties on both sides. But that's not possible without the support either.

And we get a lot of food traffic in the summer. Like, we have regular hours on a Saturday and people walk down to the farm...And they bring their kids, and they buy things and we'll show them around, because we also want to...educate..."This is what we have, we also sell this. If you're interested in buying half a pig in the fall, or in the spring, we can offer that. And this is how they're raised and this is where they are and there they are." And the people looking at them, they're like "They're not pink!" I'm like, "No, no they're not." "But I thought all pigs were pink!" And I'm like "No, no, they're not. These ones are..." And then you get into what a heritage breed is, what an endangered livestock breed is. You know, we run Tamworths and Berkshires and they do great outside year round and they're perfect - the grass makes up a huge portion of their diet in the summer time. They're hearty, they're healthy, they can raise their young outside. They don't need to be pampered. But they don't do well in confinement. That's why they're endangered, but they work great for our model. (Wesley and Wesley, 2015).

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### Interview #7: Heather Reid and Jim Angus; Abbey Gardens

Abbey Gardens started in 2009 and the concept was inspired by the Eden Project in Cornwall that looked at an exhausted pit mine and created bio-domes to highlight different climate-zones of the planet. So we're obviously not at that scope of things, but the idea here is to take an exhausted aggregate pit in Haliburton, which is fairly typical for our area, and explore how to make that into a productive resource for the community. Growing local food evolved as part of that dream, and how to do that sustainably in our zone and with the soil limitations that you can imagine are present in a gravel pit...The first year of production was possibly 2010, definitely 2011, where they sold strictly as farm-gate, off the property. Then they started going to the farmers' market in Carnarvon and continued there....[S]o that was a CSA/ farmers' market kind of model, and all kinds of experimentation around soil and what to grow. There's also been a focus here on the aesthetics with the garden and growing flowers and...[l]ast season being my first season here, I came to understand the importance



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of that when it's a public space, which has been interesting.

...I think that the concept and the dream is that this will evolve to be a place where community can come together and enjoy the property, learn the things that we're learning, which may or may not be new to people or unique, but we're learning, that's for sure, and be a gathering place for that to happen. Whether it's specific to producers bringing things and other people being able to get them here, which is the concept of a food hub. Or whether it's to come and recreate and enjoy the land, learn about ecology, learn about heritage breeds. I think that's the dream...that it will again evolve into that community gathering place that has value for the broader population.

So, 2013 was fairly pivotal, because this building that we're sitting in was built... [M]y sense is that that really created a focus, just based on immediate need. When you build a building it becomes intense very quickly, and has also changed the dynamics of the garden somewhat because the garden is now intended to supply the food hub, so that's put a different set of expectations and parameters on the production that we're trying to do.

...Yeah...once the building came up, we leaned away from a CSA-type atmosphere to make sure the food hub had vegetables. That's still my mandate, to produce enough out there that I can supply the store. I firmly believe in the concept of, yes, bringing other farmers in, local produce, because we're working with soil that is totally depleted. So the volume of produce I produce is less than anybody down the road that's been farming for years and years and has better soil. And so, yeah, I'm having to remediate the soil at the same time as creating produce. Through trial and error and adding different components, I think we're on the right track....[B]eing that this is going to be my first year as head-gardener, I'm back into a year of transition... So...I'm going to start pulling soil to test first thing in the spring. I'm changing some of the layout of what we had previously. And I want to experiment with some new techniques. We are sitting on the same latitude as a lot of Europe...they've had year-round gardens for years. Yes, they have a different temperate-zone. We have the same sun hours. There's no reason why we can't grow year-round. I'm going to double hoop some of the beds, so there'll be a greenhouse within a greenhouse, or a hoop-bed within a hoop-bed. So, I'm going to experiment with a few more things, and in partnering with some of the local farmers, I don't have to grow hordes and hordes of tomatoes. I can bring tomatoes in from a local gardener, but I want to produce enough that shows the public, "Yeah, we can grow tomatoes on crappy soil." They may not be as big as somebody down the road, who's been growing tomatoes on that soil and improving that soil for the last ten, fifteen years, but we can get there.

... And I think...the garden really started with someone who had an ecology background, so this is Cara [Steele] I'm speaking about, and had sort of a pretty broad mandate, and I would guess, and I'm guessing here, but a bit more freedom and a bit

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less pressure to produce. And then, as the model evolved, Herb [Titze] came on board and he was very much coming from a permaculture perspective. And it's interesting when you look at ecological restoration and ecology principles and permaculture, there's a bit of different language, but the concepts are the same. It's about working with nature. It's about recognizing nature's cycles, and how to get involved in those cycles as opposed to mould them to what is going to produce the juiciest tomato with not all the right ingredients. So...I think that theme of working with nature and the bigger, or the higher-level principles of permaculture, ecological restoration, and ecological sustainability are what guides the garden, and then you add the person. And that's where you get to that detailed approach.

The other evolution here, are the hoop houses ...and I think those are a real area for experimentation. So we've done some seeding in the fall to see how early things come. And we're experimenting with...what could we keep later, start earlier, those types of things, without adding a whole bunch of inputs that create an unsustainable way forward.

At the moment, we still are partnered with Rare Breeds of Canada. We have a small flock of Chantecler chickens, which are a dual-purpose bird. I haven't convinced anyone yet that we should use the other side of the bird. We've got three roosters that, yeah - to me they should be meat birds about now. So we're just using the one side of the bird at the moment. We have sold eggs, farm-gate sales. We can't sell them through the food hub, for logistic reasons. But we do have some of our friends and volunteers who have purchased farm-gate chicken eggs... And we do have the one Lac Lacroix pony at the moment, which is a rare breed from the Haliburton area. It's a cross between the Mustang and probably the Morgan, or Canadian, out of Quebec. So, in 2004, there was only about half a dozen of them left in the world...So, we fostered a breeding pair for a season. I came on board with my equine background and I've convinced the board, we're not set up for a breeding operation. So we kept the first offspring and we have since re-fostered the mare and stallion, and she's dropped another baby that looks exactly like the one we have. So I would like to see us get into a draught-team, and do light logging with a draught-team, showing that we can go back to logging a bush, being a little more careful than going in with a timber jack and skidding logs out.

...But I think the animal-related discussion is more about demonstration and rare breeds than it is about production...[F]rom my point of view, I think there are enough people doing that, so how can we support that, rather than compete with it?

And the other problem we have, obviously in Haliburton County with meat production, whether chicken or beef or pig, is a licensed abattoir, where we're allowed to sell it.

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The closest meat abattoir would be Peterborough/Lindsay. Chicken I believe is Omemee, which is even further than Peterborough. So yeah, we've got an hour and a half, just to get the animal down there to process it. So it's a logistics - can we justify all that fossil fuel and time to bring it back? Because I don't want to sell meat that hasn't gone through a licensed abattoir.... So the further north we go out of the GTA, the harder it is, because the government keeps closing these facilities down.

...The only things I would add are just, as we put together our site plan for the whole property - so there are 230 acres here - there are some folks interested in looking at the feasibility of a small maple syrup...We don't have a huge portion of bush that's suitable, but we may have enough. So that's sort of being explored a little bit. We're hoping to go learn about honey from the Haliburton Forest. And we had some bees on the property that did quite well in terms of production. They weren't our bees, but we hosted some hives. So thinking about both from the demonstration and education and sales perspective. But I think as we start thinking about the new pieces of the puzzle and how do we actually expand on the property, it's kind of those three things together. So what's the role of this move? Is it going to be financially viable for us?

Does it have an educational component and does it showcase something that would be of benefit for people to be able to come and look at and see? Because I think that's one of the things that is a benefit to having it be more of a public space, is there are things that, as a private farm owner, you may not want people walking through your backyard all the time or taking a peek at this or...But that's sort of part of inherently what we're about, and so some of the development and...even the design of the garden has to reflect that and start reflecting that better (Reid and Angus, 2015).

### Themes Emerging from the Interviews

Some common themes and values emerge from the above interviews. Among them are embracing self-sufficiency, adapting to and working with the local environment, focusing on farm production that is compatible with the Canadian Shield and climate, producing food that is chemical-free and wholesome and raising farm animals ethically.

All found the challenges of farming in the Haliburton environment a circumstance they were willing to work with that even offered opportunities to innovate and be creative.

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SHARED VALUES	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Self-sufficiency & sustainability	7
Adapting production to local environment	7
Chemical-free production	6
Raising animals ethically	3

Figure 6. Shared Values, CFA Interviewees

Several agricultural products were identified as being potentially successful in the county, among them maple syrup, garlic, meat chickens (broilers), eggs and pigs. It is interesting that none of the interviewees intend to pursue beef production, which has been a mainstay for most long term area farmers. One interview subject who had raised beef gave it up in part because of the poor quality of his pasture and the cost of supplying hay over the winter.

SUGGESTED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Maple syrup	2
Garlic	4
Chickens for meat and eggs	6
Variety of veg	4
Pigs	3
Herbs/berries/orchard	1
Aquaponics	1
Lambs/goats	2

Figure 7. Suggested Agricultural Products, CFA Interviewees

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The multiplicity of regulations and rules imposed on farmers including the lumber grading requirements and engineer scrutiny associated with construction of farm outbuildings increase costs and obstruct aspiring farmers. Production limits imposed by market boards and absence of processing infrastructure are also impediments. The amount of arable land available to the producer, pasture size and quality, and the need to source and haul hay and feed over the winter were identified as limitations to production and factors contributing to cost.

BARRIERS TO AGRICULTURE	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
Oppressive rules regarding farming	4
Costly construction and engineering requirements for farm buildings	5
Production limits (imposed by marketing boards and/or environment)	7
Absence of agricultural infrastructure	4

Figure 8. Barriers to Agriculture, CFA interviewee

## AGRICULTURAL CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

### Canada

Canadians are eating more fruits and vegetables, an increase of over 10% in the last 20 years. Driven by increased health awareness associated with a better educated populace and an aging demographic, Canadians are showing a growing preference for whole grains and fibre, low trans-fat, sugar and sodium content, and are paying attention to the method and location of production (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2010, p. 12). Many consumers care about sustainability and the environment and flock to farmers' markets for farm-fresh food that typically has a smaller carbon footprint. They want to know their farmer and how their food is produced. The marketability of the term 'local' is not lost on grocery stores and restaurants who actively seek products raised and grown in the area to feature on their shelves and menus.

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Organic and ‘naturally grown,’ chemical free (no pesticides, herbicides, added hormones or antibiotics) production of non-GMO foods has become a multi-billion dollar industry. “The global organic food and beverages industry, with value sales predicted to rise 33% by 2015, is expected to reach combined sales of US \$36.1 billion due to increased consumer health awareness and broader distribution” (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2011).

### Haliburton

Evidence of these changing consumption patterns is reflected in Haliburton. However, it must be recognized that not all residents have the financial and/or transportation resources to access fresh local agricultural products. With its high number of pensioners, rural nature, and scarcity of employment opportunities which tend to be low paying and seasonal, Haliburton has a comparatively large low-income population and a high poverty rate. The median after-tax family income in 2011 was \$55,885 compared with the provincial median of \$71,100 - a difference of over \$15,000 or 27% (Government of Canada, 2013). The rate of unemployment is 17% higher than the provincial average (7.5% Haliburton/6.4% Ontario). The participation rate in the labour force is considerably lower than the provincial average and dependency on government transfers higher.

Local agencies serving this population, such as food banks and SIRCH<sup>23</sup>, do receive donations of fresh agricultural products from time to time. As a result of these donations, more Haliburton-grown food is available through the Minden Food Bank and SIRCH than at county grocery stores, which have little to none. Because of the high perishability rate of fresh agricultural products, they are usually incorporated into some of the many meals these agencies prepare, freeze and provide for their clients. While the agencies report careful attention to balance and nutrition in the meals they prepare, it is *very* important not to misconstrue the occasional use of local agricultural products to mean that low income individuals have regular access to balanced meals with local produce. In a Haliburton study conducted by Kayla MacDonald in 2014 in association with Trent University and U-Links regarding food security for seniors and adults with disabilities, she found that only 1% of the study subjects were meeting the recommended daily dietary requirement for fruits and

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<sup>23</sup> SIRCH (Supportive Initiative for Residents of the County of Haliburton) is a not-for-profit organization with charitable status that works to meet social and health needs not otherwise covered by existing services.

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

vegetables. Consumer research conducted by the farmers’ market board also reported that persons who described their economic circumstance as “struggling” were only 3% of shoppers in 2013 and 5% in 2014 (see Figure 4), and those self-identified as unemployed, not surprisingly, are also 3% and 5% of shoppers in 2013 and 2014 respectively (see Figure 5).

Even when farm-fresh products are available to low income individuals and families, lack of familiarity with the products and/or how to prepare them is an additional barrier to consuming them. For example, some clients at one local food bank were uncomfortable with taking home fresh carrots because they didn’t know how to cook them; they usually purchase canned carrots.

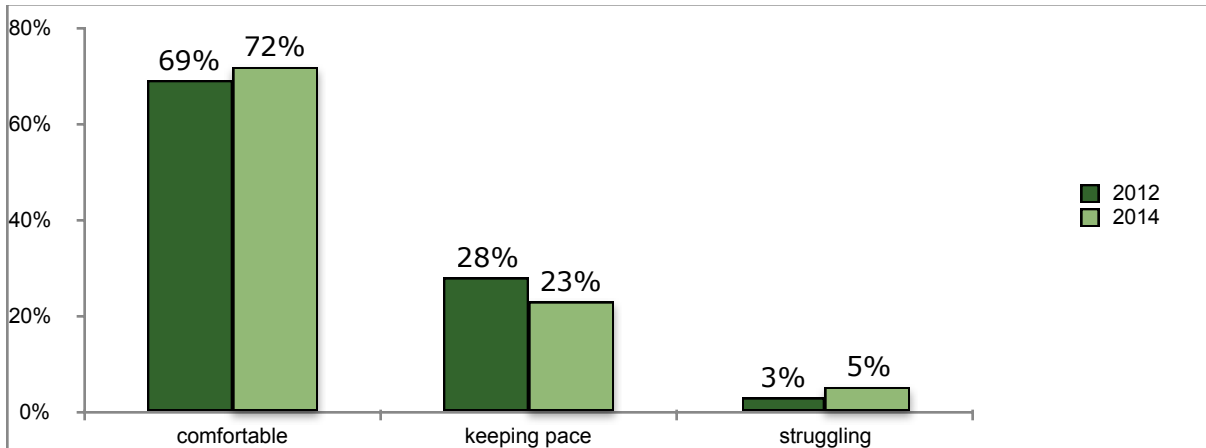


Figure 9, Self-described Economic Circumstance of Patrons, Haliburton County Farmers’ Market, Carnarvon, (Martin, 2014)

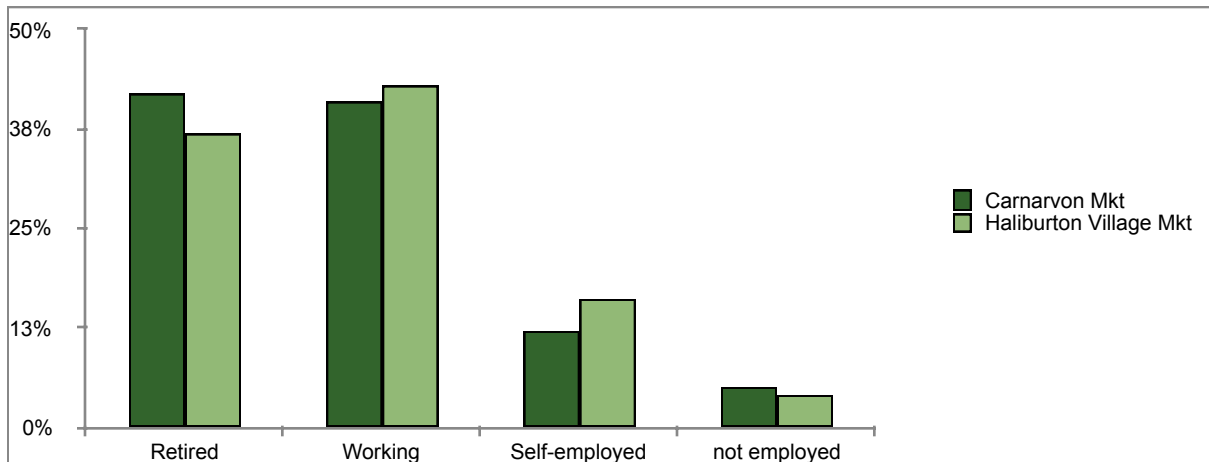


Figure 10. Self-described Employment Status, Haliburton County Farmers’ Market, Carnarvon, (Martin, 2014)

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Grocery stores, restaurants, general stores that carried some groceries, fruit and vegetable marts, nursing homes, camps, food banks and other organizations that provide food to low income groups, and the farmers' market were sampled. Interviewees were asked to describe trends in agricultural food consumption they had observed in their establishments over the last 5 or so years. A list of the interview questions is included in Appendix 4.

The food-organization subjects selected were widely dispersed across the county to reflect the experiences of as many areas as possible. A synopsis of the findings is presented in Figure 11.

Venue	Meat	Fresh Veg/ fruit	Organic Meat & veg	Local	Additional Comments
Grocery	Less beef; more chicken, pork	Increased demand	Organic meat and frozen veg sell well if not too expensive	Desired but not available	
Grocery	Less beef, more chicken, pork	Increased demand	Increased demand	Seeks Ontario products	'Exotic' fruits & veg now common (e.g., radicchio, pak choi, kale)
Grocery	Less beef, more chicken, pork	Increased demand	Demand for anything organic or 'naturally grown'		People shopping more frequently so food is fresh
Grocery	All meat decreasing	No change	Too expensive	Requests but unavailable	Local garlic much too expensive to carry
Grocery	All meat decreasing; many low income shoppers	No increase	People won't buy organic; not 'pretty'	Has carried pork, tomatoes, squash	Local not consistent; shoppers come back but none available
Grocery	Less beef; more chicken, turkey big increase (seasonal residents)	No change	Sells some organic but it's slow because pricey	Some local organic but moves slowly	Poor county; affects what store carries

Figure 11. Agricultural Consumption Report, Haliburton Food Sales and Distribution Centres



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Fresh produce store	N/A	Increased demand	Not marketable (appearance)	Infrequently (e.g., garlic scapes/rhubarb)	More fruit/veg to lose weight and promote health
Restaurant	All meats popular;	Exotic fruits, less common veg (e.g., kale, chard) and quinoa in demand		Local beer now outsells all other brands; anything local a hit	Requests for local game/fish but not permitted
Restaurant		Increased demand		Only Ont. produce infrequently local	
Restaurant	Non-chemical	Increased demand		Uses Ont. produce; infrequently local from farmers' market	Vegetarianism increased 6X
General store	No change	No increase			Seasonal visitors buy at home and bring groceries
General store	No change	No change	N/A		Don't carry large amount of fresh products
Food store	Increased demand		Some demand	Local more important than organic	
Camp	Increased demand	Increase		Not permitted because of insurance	All products must be HACCP certified
Farmers' mkt	Increased demand	Increased demand	Want non-chemical/natural	Local most important	Knowing producer very important
Nursing home	No change except for rising cost (beef more expensive)	Increased usage		Infrequently receive local products like rhubarb or buy from farmers' market	Fresh veg

Figure 11. Agricultural Consumption Report, Haliburton Food Sales and Distribution Centres

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Interviewees offered additional observations about consumers. One grocer reports that over the last 5 years the store has experienced an increase in fruit and vegetable purchases including organics. Fresh product is preferred unless there is a sale on frozen vegetables. Regarding meats, beef does not move well. This may be attributable to a confluence of factors including an older demographic who eats less red meat, a perception that red meat in one's diet is unhealthy, the sharp rise in beef prices and the lower and/or fixed income status of some county residents. Chicken sells quite well as does pork. From time to time because of consumer interest, the store brings in organic chicken even though it is expensive. Organic products now permeate the store; frozen vegetables now often offer nonorganic and organic alternatives (e.g., 'regular' broccoli and organic broccoli).

Another grocer said that fresh fruits and vegetables and especially organic products are a good sell, and people are looking for Ontario-produced items if a choice is possible. (Buying from Ontario farms is understood as local.) Indeed on the day the researcher came to interview the manager, the store vestibule prominently displayed an A-frame sign listing 7 or 8 organic vegetables 'now available'.

Ontario garlic is in high demand. Beef doesn't move as well as chicken and pork. A drop in beef consumption occurred several years ago and hasn't changed much since then. Consciousness of healthy eating is very important in governing choices; purchase of heretofore 'exotic' or non-mainstream vegetables has become commonplace. People ask for pak choi or radicchio and are disappointed if it isn't available. Packaged kale salad, once a virtual unknown, out-sells packaged lettuce salad.

One chef says he sees a definite increase in consumption of fruit and vegetables and gluten-free products. Exotic fruits such as pomegranates and papayas and non-mainstream vegetables and grains such as kale, Swiss chard and quinoa are in demand. Requests for local food tend to mean local game (not legal to sell and not available) and fish although frequent inquiries for local beer are also made. Both beef and chicken continue to be popular meats. The restaurant has begun carrying beer from a local micro brewery, Highland Brewing Company. It has superseded Coor's Light, the previous best seller. It now comprises about 20% of beer sales. This chef attributes its success to its local nature and its excellent quality. If local agricultural products were available, he expects they would be a hit.

A restaurateur states that vegetable consumption has been steadily growing since she opened her business 5 years ago. Indeed requests for vegetarian meals have increased by a factor of 6. She does use some local products in her meals; she takes pains to buy Ontario produce including vegetables from the local farmers' market.

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

Customers are also interested to know the source of the meat, which she carefully selects with regard to the reputation of the producer.

The owner of a produce store reports that interest in vegetables seems to have grown. She attributes this to customers seeking diet change in pursuit of weight loss and for health. People ask for organic, but the store operators find the appearance of the organic products they can obtain is often not attractive, and thus they wouldn't sell well. From time to time they are able to obtain fresh local vegetables such as rhubarb or garlic scapes, but this is infrequent.

Organic fruit and vegetables are “huge”, says the manager of a local grocery store, but obtaining sufficient quantity can sometimes be difficult. He has observed a trend similar to that reported by other grocery store managers of increased demand for fresh local produce and a decline in demand for beef while chicken and pork move well. Anything identified as ‘natural’, such as cereals with fewer additives and less processing is a draw. An interesting new pattern is that shoppers are sometimes making more frequent trips to get fresh produce instead of the once a week shopping expedition especially around holidays.

A nursing home spokesperson said that fresh fruit is more likely to be included in clients' meals than fresh vegetables given the prevalence of dental issues. They have occasionally received local rhubarb and made it into pies and sometimes shop at the farmers' market for the facility's kitchen.

The Haliburton County Farmers' Market reports continued growing patronage. Attendance at the Carnarvon location rose by over 13% to 10,441 in 2014 compared with 9095 in 2013; the overall increase in attendance at the 2 market locations rose 12.5% to over 23,000 in 2014, and each year the ratio of local resident patrons to visitors has increased (see Figure 4).

Food safety and traceability regulations and laws specify under what conditions locally raised food can be utilized by area restaurants and food outlets. Of the myriad federal acts and regulations under the CFIA (Canadian Food Inspection Agency), two prominent examples are the Meat Inspection Act, and Egg Regulations. Meat animals, particularly beef, sheep, bison and pigs must be tagged or tattooed for traceability, are subject to an ante mortem inspection, must be slaughtered in a licensed facility and the meat must be transported under specified refrigerated conditions. Eggs must be graded in licensed grading stations.

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Some local organizations, e.g., Wanakita Camp and local schools, are prohibited by insurance requirements from utilizing food unless it is HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) certified. This would exclude locally grown food unless the producer adopted HACCP procedures. HACCP is an internationally recognized food safety monitoring procedure.<sup>24</sup>

### CONCLUSION

Two apparently conflicting themes emerge from this investigation. On the one hand, it is clear that traditional farms are in serious decline in Haliburton County and that there is a scarcity of local agricultural food production.

On the other hand, food production is on the upswing. Some farmers are investigating alternative methods of production and niche products. The county also has a consumer base willing and eager to access locally grown food. In the last few months, 2 new CSAs have been introduced, a third farmers' market location added, and several new producers have joined local farm-related organizations after years of stagnant or waning membership. This is occurring in the context of a ground swell of international interest in sustainable local food production.

Stay tuned; the story is not over.

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<sup>24</sup>HACCP entails a methodical audit and analysis of critical points in food production and manufacture where hazards can occur, with specified preventive steps to be taken or remedial action should it be needed. Each critical point in food handling is documented. It promotes safe procedures and can help track causes of problems if a food recall due to illness occurs.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

These calls to action are directed variously to local governments and staff, local organizations and associations supporting growers and producers, funding and counselling bodies such as the Haliburton County Development Corporation, and owners of vacant land with farming potential and experienced producers.

We recommend that county and municipal governments:

1. Demonstrate support of sustainable agricultural food production in its various modalities including traditional farms, homesteads, urban settings, micro-farms, backyards and woodlots by its prominent inclusion in municipal planning and accommodation through favourable legislation, by-laws, policies and practices.
2. Permit agricultural producers in all of the above settings to legally sell their own locally raised food at farm gate or doorstep.
3. Protect our limited agricultural land from being designated for purposes that exclude agriculture.
4. Support farmers' markets, agricultural fairs, festivals and other local food venues by providing space, amenities and/or other assistance.
5. Provide for representation of local agricultural and food production interests on committees of Council including economic development committees and other relevant municipal governance bodies and associations.
6. Pursue local development policies and activities that build agricultural infrastructure.

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7. Adjust regulations and fees to encourage and make it easier to erect greenhouses and agriculture-related outbuildings.
8. Promote agricultural activities and local food products in county tourism campaigns as part of what the county has to offer.

We recommend that local organizations and associations supporting growers and producers, as well as funding and counselling bodies such as the Haliburton County Development Corporation:

1. Sponsor education for permanent and seasonal residents to value and support local food production.
2. Sponsor education for aspiring and current growers about how to sustainably manage their land and produce food including niche agricultural products in the local environment.
3. Offer financial support and/or other assistance to agricultural and related local food projects and endeavours including research.
4. Where feasible, function as incubators for new agricultural and local enterprises.

We recommend that willing experienced producers and/or owners of vacant land with farming potential:

1. Make vacant farmland available to aspiring producers who are willing to work land but are unable to access or purchase it themselves.
2. Function as mentors to new producers.

# AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

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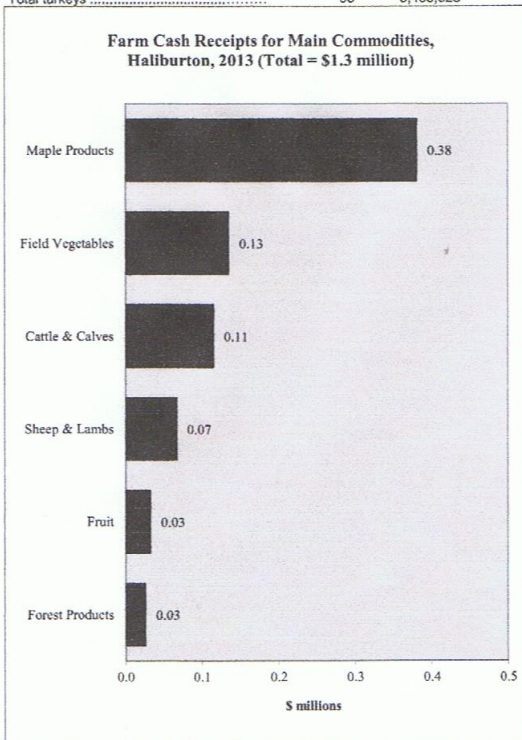
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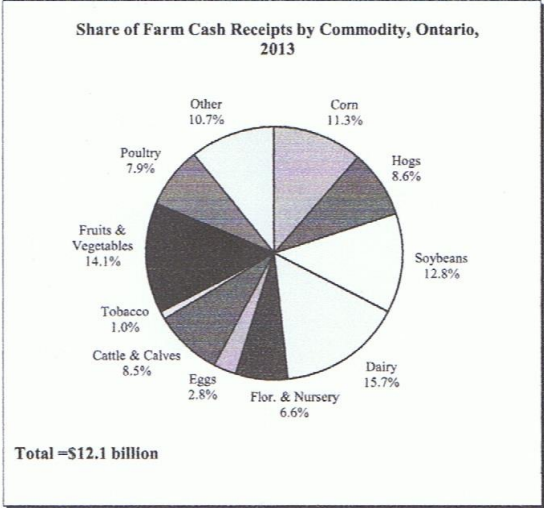
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# AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

## APPENDIX 1: OMAFRA Agricultural Statistics for Haliburton County

### Haliburton County at a Glance

Item	Haliburton	Province	Percent of province	Item	Haliburton	Province	Percent of province
<b>Farms, 2011 Census (number)</b>				<b>Major Field Crops, 2011 Census (hectares)</b>			
Total .....	67	51,950	0.13	Winter wheat .....	X	445,155	-
Reporting under 53 hectares .....	38	27,201	0.14	Oats for grain .....	9	28,749	0.03
Reporting 53 to 161 hectares .....	23	16,230	0.14	Barley for grain .....	0	51,347	0.00
Reporting 162 hectares and over .....	6	8,519	0.07	Mixed grains .....	X	42,962	-
<b>Land Use, 2011 Census (hectares)</b>				Corn for grain .....	0	822,465	0.00
Land in crops .....	767	3,613,821	0.02	Corn for silage .....	X	109,953	-
Summerfallow land .....	6	9,490	0.06	Hay .....	600	840,901	0.07
Tame or seeded pasture .....	290	262,543	0.11	Soybeans .....	X	997,497	-
Natural land for pasture .....	1,480	398,538	0.37	Dry white beans .....	0	16,283	0.00
Christmas trees, woodland & wetland .....	2,220	652,533	0.34	Other dry beans .....	0	21,194	0.00
All other land .....	395	189,728	0.21	Potatoes .....	X	15,129	-
Total area of farms .....	5,159	5,126,653	0.10	<b>Major Fruit Crops, 2011 Census (hectares)</b>			
<b>Greenhouse Area, 2011 Census (square metres)</b>				Apples .....	X	6,406	-
Total area under glass or plastic .....	0	12,549,007	0.00	Peaches .....	0	2,612	0.00
<b>Hired Farm Labour, 2011 Census (weeks)</b>				Sour Cherries .....	X	948	-
Year round .....	X	1,405,252	-	Raspberries .....	X	365	-
Seasonal .....	X	812,057	-	Strawberries .....	X	1,329	-
Total .....	202	2,217,309	0.01	Grapes .....	X	7,439	-
<b>Farm Capital Value, 2011 Census (farms reporting)</b>				Total fruit crops .....	3	21,343	0.01
Under \$200,000 .....	13	2,562	0.51	<b>Major Vegetable Crops, 2011 Census (hectares)</b>			
\$200,000 to \$499,999 .....	31	12,994	0.24	Sweet corn .....	4	10,336	0.04
\$500,000 to \$999,999 .....	18	15,276	0.12	Tomatoes .....	1	6,701	0.01
\$1,000,000 and over .....	5	21,118	0.02	Green peas .....	0	6,119	0.00
<b>Total Gross Farm Receipts, 2011 Census (farms reporting)</b>				Green or wax beans .....	1	3,717	0.03
Under \$10,000 .....	41	12,263	0.33	Total vegetables .....	13	52,445	0.02
\$10,000 to \$24,999 .....	17	9,098	0.19	<b>Livestock Inventories, 2011 Census (number)</b>			
\$25,000 to \$49,999 .....	5	6,720	0.07	Dairy cows .....	X	318,158	-
\$50,000 to \$99,999 .....	3	6,189	0.05	Beef cows .....	X	282,062	-
\$100,000 to \$249,999 .....	1	6,985	0.01	Steers .....	12	291,263	-
\$250,000 to \$499,999 .....	0	5,086	0.00	Total cattle and calves .....	444	1,741,381	0.03
\$500,000 to \$999,999 .....	0	3,248	0.00	Total pigs .....	X	3,088,646	-
\$1,000,000 to \$1,999,999 .....	0	1,558	0.00	Total sheep and lambs .....	467	352,807	0.13
\$2,000,000 and over .....	0	803	0.00	<b>Poultry Inventories, 2011 Census (number)</b>			
<b>Farms by Industry Group, 2011 Census (number of farms)</b>				Total hens and chickens .....	786	46,902,316	-
Dairy cattle and milk production .....	0	4,036	0.00	Total turkeys .....	93	3,483,828	-
Beef cattle ranching and farming .....	8	7,105	0.11	<b>Farm Cash Receipts for Main Commodities, Haliburton, 2013 (Total = \$1.3 million)</b>			
Hog and pig farming .....	0	1,235	0.00				
Sheep and goat farming .....	5	1,446	0.35				
Poultry and egg production .....	0	1,619	0.00				
Other animal production .....	18	6,966	0.26				
Oilseed and grain farming .....	1	15,818	0.01				
Vegetable and melon farming .....	4	1,531	0.26				
Fruit and tree nut farming .....	3	1,548	0.19				
Greenhouse, nursery and floriculture .....	4	2,372	0.17				
Other crop farming .....	24	8,274	0.29				



x Suppressed data  
Sources: 2011 Census of Agriculture and Strategic Policy Branch, OMAFRA  
15/09/2014

# AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

## APPENDIX 2: Questions Asked of Interview Subjects

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### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS\*

\*The interview questions were not adhered to rigidly. Occasionally the interviewer would ask a question for clarification or to encourage the subject to delve more deeply into the topic.

**This is the central question. If the person being interviewed can take it and run, the other questions don't need to be asked.**

1. Tell us about yourself and your farm, e.g., what attracted you to farming, how long you've been doing it, and where do you see yourself heading in the future.

**These questions are prompts to help keep the story flowing. Use any or all that seem relevant and helpful.**

2. What do you grow or produce on your property/farm and in what volume?
  3. Over the years have you increased or decreased the kinds and amount of produce or livestock on your farm?
  4. Where do you sell your product, e.g., farm gate, sale barn, other? Why?
  5. Do you encounter obstacles to production and/or marketing your product(s)? Explain.
  6. Are there any other comments you'd like to add?
-

# AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

## APPENDIX 3: Consumption Patterns Interview Questions

### LOCAL FOOD PROVIDER ORGANIZATIONS: CONSUMER TRENDS

#### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Have you observed a change in the consumption patterns of customers with respect to the demand for and/or purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables? Explain.
2. Have you observed a change in the consumption patterns of customers with respect to the demand for and/or purchase of meats? Explain.
3. Is there a demand for, and do you carry organic products? If so, how do they move?
4. Is there demand for natural/chemical free agricultural products? If so, how do they move?
5. Do you ever carry fresh local agricultural products?

# AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

## APPENDIX 4: Haliburton County Farmers' Association Interviews

### FARMING HISTORY OVERVIEW, prepared by Bryan Barlow

The document reflecting the interviews with members of the Haliburton farming community was put together by myself, Bryan Barlow. I attended all the formal taped interviews plus other informal interviews that were not recorded - not everyone was comfortable with the recording process. I have tried to blend in themes that resonated across all the discussions. In doing so, I have included specific quotes from participants. The verbiage around the quotes is my attempt at weaving together the subjects that were covered. For each interview/discussion, I did introduce some common subjects, the railroad for instance, but I tried to keep the discussion 'free-wheeling'. If the group wasn't particularly interested in a subject, we moved on quickly.

The document I put together could have been longer. The issue wasn't lack of material, but time - my time. I found it very fascinating. The opinions expressed, the way the topics were covered, and the conclusions drawn are not mine - they reflect the groups involved. The number of farms that used to exist here in Haliburton is astonishing and, frankly, I had next to no knowledge of the people or places that the groups covered.

However, the compilation of the discussions, while providing a fascinating insight into farming in the past, does have relevance and meaning for farming today in Haliburton. While I made the point above that the opinions, etc. were not mine, I am now introducing my own opinion(s). I don't believe anyone can argue against the premise that agriculture/farming is in serious decline here in Haliburton. What I learned from the interviews is that farming here has been declining for quite a long period - what we are seeing now is not a new trend - just accelerated. The almost exponential increase in the decline is also explainable - there are fewer left than before, and with no one to take over as they stop, the rate of decline becomes far greater. Much has been made about getting "younger people" involved - they are the solution. They are not. The common factors that have contributed to the decline in farming here in Haliburton had little to do with the age of the farmer. Most of the participants made the point (and I agree), any young person wanting to farm today has to come from a farming background to succeed. And, farming in Haliburton is not where I would recommend they start. As Dwain Wruth said in the interview that if he had a son interested in farming here, he would not encourage or pressure him to be a farmer today and I would agree with him.

Haliburton County has many wonderful attributes that make living here a joy. Many of these attributes are what draw in the great influx of seasonal residents and tourists to our County. However, it is not prime agricultural land and never will be. Let's enjoy it for what it is!

### FARMING INTERVIEWS OVERVIEW, Conducted and assembled by Bryan Barlow

"It was a matter of making a home for yourself" - that's a quote from Carmen Lee describing his grandfather's answer as to why he moved to Haliburton. "it wasn't a matter of making money". Of all the comments expressed from the group interviews, that comment resonated the most.

## AGRICULTURAL FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION REPORT

Right from the beginning, farming was a tough, tough go here in Haliburton. Clearing the land was brutal work and keeping it clear wasn't easy either. From all the interviews there was a common theme lamenting the loss of all the cleared land given the effort it took to clear it in the first place. It was commented on far more than once or twice after looking at pictures of various locations throughout Haliburton with hardly a tree showing. Ross Walker talked about "I can remember going up the Bobcaygeon Road to the west for the length of a hundred acres, there'd just be a bit of a stone pile and a big old maple tree or something, but the rest was all clear." It is very interesting to note this present day contradiction in viewpoint - the extolling of the trees and forests in Haliburton yet wanting to promote the virtues of farming in Haliburton versus the old-time farmers who remember the cleared pastures. Thus acknowledging the efforts of generations before them and shaking their collective heads at government programs and individual efforts to plant trees on land that took so much effort to clear in the first place.

Duane Wruth is the only fifth generation farmer we have - now retired, although Matt Wesley pointed out he would also be 5<sup>th</sup> generation as well if his family hadn't "taken a generation off". Duane said "They went from the 1800s - they were here for the timber. When the timber run out, then the people started to - the farming up here then is basically what their talking back-to-the-land. When you try to scratch a living off the land, subsistence farming, as you say, self-sufficient, or whatever. Where you're not - they weren't really selling the product, other than enough to survive". John Francis said "my understanding is, the first house that was on our property was built up on top of the hill back in the fields and I can see why, because you can see all of Gelert, all the way around. And I used to be able to see, like right down into Gelert, like the town of Gelert. But now it's grown up. But Gene Newell was telling me, he's got a picture of being able to see our barn from their place down on Francis Road. That whole area was cleared - clear-cut". If you look at some old pictures of Haliburton Village when it was young, there is hardly a tree to be seen. As Dwayne said "Yeah, any of the old pictures, there wasn't a tree in town anyplace". While it's hard to imagine our current Haliburton without tree cover, the lumber business was what kept most families going. Typically the men went off to the lumber camps for the winter months to earn money. Grant Macrae said "My grandfather homesteaded where I am and some of his stories when he was - my dad told me he worked in the pine lumber camps, and in the fall when they'd be cutting, you got \$12 a month and your board. And if you worked the wet weather, you got \$15. So, he worked the wet weather to get the \$15, and said at noon, if it was a rainy day in November or something, it was cold, he said you just ate your lunch backed up to one of them big pine trees, that's the only shelter he had".

"The land is so light in most places, that it was subsistence farming almost when they first settled here," said Earl Cooper. "The reality was, many of the families that migrated back to Haliburton County were actually pretty near destitute starving" was from Godfrey Tyler talking about the 1930's. Two quotes that perhaps frame the stark hardship many in Haliburton faced - yet in most cases they survived! There were many reminisce of earlier generations who had to leave the cities for various reasons - health, economic, or whatever that came to Haliburton and stayed. They could at least eat. The 'cow' in many cases was the only thing between them and starvation. That's not to say the others pieces weren't important - most every 'farm' grew a garden for vegetables, had a root cellar, had a hog or two, some chickens, etc. - pretty much what they call home-steading today, but the 'cow'

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was the difference. As Earl commented, the land here is generally not suited to growing crops, but cows could be pastured here. Over time, it seemed most every farm had 8 - 10 cows. In general, that was all the farm could support. Not only did the cows provide direct food, but some could be sold in the fall for money - a scarce commodity in Haliburton for many years. It was common for the cattle buyers to come up to Haliburton and purchase the cattle directly off the farms. Ingram Wessel said that "When my dad and his brother had all these farms, you know, they had quite a few hundred acres of land, because you could buy a farm for practically nothing then, you see? They had beef cattle. They shipped their beef cows, sold their beef cattle ". One point to note is that in the early days, few fenced their properties. Therefore, the cattle could really roam - it was a job for younger family members who would be sent out to find and help keep track of where the cattle were. While the focus here was on beef cattle, it is also worth noting that for dairy cows, again the younger family members would be sent out - but in this case with a milk pail to milk the cows - they weren't brought back to a barn or whatever, just milked in the field and the children knew what stream or wherever they were to deposit the milk container. In most instances, the milk wagon would come along and the driver knew where to look for the milk containers. There seemed to be general agreement that around eight cows milked each day per individual was what was the norm - more than that and people's hands couldn't handle it on a continual basis.

For a while up until the mid to late 50's, milk or specifically cream was very important in Haliburton. It was for many the only source of cash. People were very self-sufficient and would trade items with others, but there were items needed that required cash. Unfortunately, the dairy business came to an end almost abruptly. While officially it was cited some cream failed the testing done at that time (which turned out not to be true), the real reason (s) seemed to be that it was getting uneconomical for the small farms in Haliburton to compete (a theme repeated over and over). As Godfrey Tyler said "And then in the mid-50s they wanted to get away and go to the big herds, and of course Haliburton County, the land that we have, and as you name the farms, most of the farms could support eight, ten cows, ok? But they wanted to go to the big herds of twenty and thirty cows, and in our community, our landscape isn't such ". Earl Cooper added to that saying "Well, (we) sold milk and that was the best time in farming here, as far as we were concerned, when we could sell milk to the dairy. It didn't last very long, because they come in with this bulk cooling, and you had to have about double the herd to be able to afford to put in the bulk cooling ".

Over the period the interviews covered, one subject not covered yet here is the railroad and its impact. In one group when the railroad impact was discussed, Ingram Wessel made an interesting comment - "Yeah, and encouragement. We'd hear the train going at whatever, however many times week it would come up... ". Just hearing the train made a difference! There were actually two railroad lines involved. The first was the Victoria Railway, which originated in Lindsay (1874) and eventually made it to Haliburton (1878). There was 56 miles of track. The last passenger train was in 1961 and all freight service was discontinued by the late '70's. The other railway was called the Irondale, Bancroft and Ottawa (I.B.&O.) Railway (1884). The latter planned a town at Irondale and was built to ship out iron ore from mines around the town. However, the quality and quantity of ore were disappointing and the greatest value were the many sawmills that sprung up along the route. Most goods going either in or out of Haliburton travelled along the Victoria Railway. Gelert (formerly called

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Minden Station since it was the closest point on the railway to the town of Minden) with two sidings became somewhat of a hub for the surrounding area. John Francis pointed out, ``They took everything across by stage coach and sleighs and teams and wagons. A lot of the supplies came by rail before the transports started hauling into Minden. And the merchandise would come by rail and it would be taken across. And then Hewitt's transport, it was where Ron Gamble - the house that Ron Gamble has, where the restaurant is now, that was the Hewitt residence and then they had a big warehouse right on that corner and they hauled all the merchandise from Gelert to Minden and other areas that needed it, they would haul it``. John added ``All these - like Laughlin, Gelert, and that, they all had sidings where they'd bring the boxcars in, leave them, and then you'd bring your merchandise in and load it on the boxcars, and they'd pick it up. But most of the stuff that really originated in Minden came to Gelert, and there was three general stores in Gelert at one time, and the town hall and dance hall and the boarding house and the - I think it was the first Ford dealership was, Anderson's had it, right, where the young lad has his snowmobile and repair shop now``.

Over the course of all the interviews, there were many different viewpoints as to what caused the 'death of farming' here in Haliburton. There were also many common themes. Probably the most common point was that the Haliburton landscape just doesn't lend itself to anything but small farms. Some farms had larger acreages but that was mostly misleading as only a small percentage could be used for farming and, again, mostly as pasture. And small just can't compete - they saw it with the dairy cattle and they again see it with the beef cattle. The soil and climate just wasn't suitable for cultivating crops. Even the pasture land required continual fertilizer to keep it going. The climate is a big challenge - as Casey Cox related: ``: The climate's not right to grow - like we've tried growing beans or Francis's grow beans - they don't make enough money to pay their fuel bill. We tried growing beans last year, we're going to try it again this year with different beans. We didn't - you need 30 bushel to the acre to break even. We got 22 and we grew it here. And I mean, this land here is well-fertilized. The season is not - you know yourself - the 24th of May here, you can have a frost. And you have to have soybeans planted by at least the 15th of May to have a long enough season to get 'em to - this year we got lucky, 'cause it kind of had a mild spell in November and we got the beans off``. Most agreed that as the supply of lumber waned here in Haliburton, the camps ceased to exist and therefore the winter work and wages ended and the farms could not sustain themselves without the extra income. As an aside, it is generally acknowledged that Duane Wruth is the only person known to have just farmed here in Haliburton. Some think the Second World War was the end of farming here. As Carmen Lee put it ``And everybody - war broke out in '39 - and everybody flocked to the army because it was a hell of a lot easier than a cross-cut saw or a pick and shovel on the highway. It was an easier way to make a dollar``. And if it wasn't the war, then there was general agreement it was General Motors that finished farming in Haliburton. Obviously it wasn't just GM but the wage differential between staying in Haliburton where there were and still are few well-paying jobs versus leaving to work at GM was huge and, while estimates varied, roughly 70 - 80% of the younger men left. Duane said ``I would say, roughly, between 10 and 15 per cent of the guys that I graduated with stayed in Haliburton County to make a living``. With fewer and fewer remaining to farm, Mother Nature has stepped in - much acreage once cleared is now entirely grown back and it is hard to imagine it ever having been farmed. Matt Wesley (who is in his late 30's) commented, "Even in my lifetime, like I remember the Mason farm on the back side of Boshkung Lake. I remember there being sheep in that pasture. Matt added, "Trees are



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almost thirty feet tall there now.” In all probability, looking back, land was cleared that never should have been cleared. While it made sense a hundred plus years ago to clear the land (25 acres was a big deal then), the consensus was it makes little economic sense to do so now here. While the land here is still cheaper to buy than places south of here, the land itself cannot compete. As Casey said, “No matter what you do up here, you can't put enough into it to make it grow.” There was a discussion around growing grain - some think you can grow grain in Haliburton, but people need to understand it isn't just about growing grain - it's also about the characteristics of the grain you end up with. The standard today is 36 - 38 pounds to the bushel - a recent crop in Haliburton was 22 - a big difference and not obvious to the non-farmer.

There are not many operating farms left in Haliburton. Casey Cox would be the largest farming operation left in Haliburton, but he is, in effect, being “squeezed out”. Casey rents quite a bit of land here in Haliburton. One of the benefits to the many landowners is that for the land remaining in agricultural use, their property taxes are significantly reduced. However, as a group, they aren't interested in putting any of that savings toward upkeep of the land or the fences. The fences have deteriorated to the point that they can't be repaired anymore and that land is lost as pasture because the cows keep getting out. Casey is now pasturing many cattle outside of Haliburton.

It has been stated that we can grow hay here. However, again referencing Casey he would say the general rule is if the hay grown is north of Bobcaygeon, then it is for bedding - if it is south then it's for feed. To add to that, it costs \$10 per round bale to transport it from around Bobcaygeon to Haliburton - given our pasture season is so short, the cost of getting hay and storing it is significant. Casey recently estimated there might be as much as 600 acres extra available as pasture here in Haliburton. If you assume magic happens - good fences, gates, water, etc, you could maybe pasture 60 more cows for the summer months. However, it was pointed out that the costs for the other 8 - 9 months plus needing facilities would render it unfeasible economically. Again, referencing land quality, even an hour south of here, the number of cows per acre would be double to triple what we can do.

Earlier it was mentioned that the number of farms and farmers are dwindling. Similar to the rest of Ontario, the vast majority of farmers here are well over 50 years of age. In many cases, they don't really ‘farm’ anymore and their son(s) aren't interested in continuing farming. Duane Wruth said “But see it's the same as this place here. I sold it because I have no kids coming on. But even if I'd had a couple of boys, if they'd come to me and said, “Dad, I want to take over the farm. Will you let me?” “Yes.” But there's no way I would ask a younger generation right now to try to make a living farming”. Few knew of any younger people interested in farming. Given the costs of land and equipment, the general viewpoint was that it isn't financially easy to get started unless you have family already involved - no matter where you are. Most newcomers here are more likely to be homesteaders, not farmers. At least one individual will have to work elsewhere, but they can still produce enough for themselves with maybe a little left over to sell. They will fit in well with the philosophy expressed by Carmen Lee's grandfather in the opening paragraph. However, there was universal agreement that agricultural production will continue to drop significantly here in Haliburton County. There was little optimism for any future in farming here.