



**Report 2019-031**

### **Committee Information Report**

**To:** Chair and Members of the Community Development Advisory Committee

**From:** Alison Vandervelde, Community Development Officer

**Date of meeting:** November 14, 2019

**Re:** **Community Development Advisory Committee – Open Farms in Frontenac 2019**

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#### **Recommendation**

**Be It Resolved That** the County of Frontenac maintain its commitment to Open Farms on an annual basis.

#### **Background**

The inaugural Open Farms in Frontenac took place on September 9, 2018. CDAC Received [Report 2018-122](#) at its regular meeting on October 11, 2018 and passed the following motion, later endorsed by County Council:

##### **2018-122**

##### **Community Development Advisory Committee Open Farms in Frontenac 2018**

Moved By: Ms. John

Seconded By: Ms. Kenny

**Be It Resolved That** the County of Frontenac continue to coordinate the “Open Farms in Frontenac” event in 2019;

**And Further That** \$4,000 be included in the 2019 Economic Development budget to address costs associated with coordinating and marketing the Open Farms event.

**And further that** given the success and projected growth of the open farms and its alignments with the Economic Development Charter, that Open Farms be considered a priority in the 2019-2022 Economic Development Work plan

**Carried**

At its July 2019 meeting, CDAC received Report [2019-079](#), which outlined the implementation plan for Open Farms 2019 and the second annual [Open Farms in Frontenac](#) took place on September 8, 2019. The event included 10 locations and attracted thousands of visitors.

## Comment

### Goals

Open Farms is well aligned with the [Economic Development Charter for the Frontenacs](#), and specifically the theme of promoting Local Food and Beverage. As determined by the participating farmers in 2018, the main goals of Open Farms 2019 were as follows:

1. Create the opportunity for more direct connections between producers and consumers.

**Result:** The estimated total visitor count neared 10,000 (see chart below). Several farms indicated the percentage of visitors they had existing relationships with, and that average came in at 11%. The combination of these two figures indicates that thousands of new potential customers visited farms during the event.

2. Create the opportunity for consumer education about local food production.

**Result:** Every participating location prepared educational activities for Open Farms. Many farmers indicated that visitors were very engaged during the event. Not only did they want to explore each location, but they wanted to learn about small scale farming practices and better understand local food production.

3. Increase awareness of farm operations in Frontenac.

**Result:** The total visitor count vs percentage of existing relationships indicates that people with no previous connection to farms in Frontenac participated in Open Farms.

4. Increase awareness of Frontenac as a region that produces good food.

**Result:** The comment overheard most often during Open Farms by farmers and Frontenac staff was “I had no idea this was here”. There was an overwhelming sense that the event shifted the perspective of farming and local food in Frontenac.

Secondary goals included:

1. Spark interest among potential farmers who might consider relocating or starting their own agribusiness in Frontenac.

**Result:** Staff at Frontenac Community Futures Development Corporation have reported they met with someone who is interested in starting a farm following her visitor experience during Open Farms.

2. Build a sense of unity and collaboration among the agricultural community.

**Result:** Participating farmers have cited that Open Farms, and other ongoing initiatives, are bringing a renewed sense of validity to farming in Frontenac. They feel supported by the County, their community, and each other by being involved in the event. Open Farms has also laid the groundwork for collaborations between producers outside of the event.

3. Instill a sense of pride among Frontenac residents.

**Result:** Not only has Open Farms helped Frontenac residents better understand what is right here in their own community, but the caliber and scale of the event has also created a sense of pride across the region. There have been reports that the success of Open Farms has got people excited about the possibilities for other events and initiatives in Frontenac.

## Event Growth

In 2018, Open Farms included seven farm locations and each welcomed hundreds of participants. In 2019, ten locations participated, several of which again welcomed hundreds of visitors, while at least five locations welcomed over a thousand visitors each.

Farm	Attendance 2018	Attendance 2019	Existing Relationships
Fat Chance Farmstead	300	500-1,000	10%
Long Road Ecological Farm	300	1,000	20%
Five Star Farm	400	747	--
Maple Ridge Farm	550	1,200 – 1,300	5%
Food Less Travelled	600	1,000+	--
Sonset Farm	300	700-800	--
Loughborough Heritage Orchard	--	800	--
Sun Harvest Greenhouses	--	1,200	20%
Otter Creek Farms	--	1,000+	2%
Frontenac County Plowing Match	--	500-700	5-10%
Birds & Bees Produce	500	NA – moved to Saskatchewan	
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,950</b>	<b>9,097</b>	<b>Avg 11%</b>

Growth of the event is attributed to two key factors:

1. Word of mouth: The success of the 2018 event legitimized Open Farms as a valuable local food attraction in Frontenac. Visitors, farmers, and businesses that were involved in the inaugural event became champions of the event in 2019, spreading our messages through their networks.

2. Advertising Campaign: With support from the Digital Marketing Summer Student, staff focused on elevating the online marketing activities for Open Farms. With the additional expertise and capacity, efforts were coordinated across all social media platforms, ensuring messaging was consistent and impactful, creating and maintaining momentum. The Digital Marketing Summer Student also created additional capacity for the Community Development Officer to focus on event coordination and traditional marketing opportunities. Similar support will be critical for the success of Open Farms in future years.

**See Appendix A** for the 2019 Open Farms marketing activities.

## **Achievements**

### 1. The Frontenac County Plowing Match

Following suggestions during the 2018 Open Farms debriefing meeting, staff reached out to the Frontenac County Plowmen's Association (FCPA) to discuss a possible collaboration. With years of declining attendance, Martin Oomen, the President of the FCPA was excited about the idea in hopes that it would bring some new attention and energy to the match. The collaboration resulted in a spike in plow competitors (37, up from 12 in 2018), an entirely new group of vendors, and attracted 500 – 700 visitors, an increase from an estimated 100 in 2018. **See Appendix B** for a letter from the Plowmen's Association outlining this year's success and their support for a continued partnership.

### 2. Recognition

## **2019 Marketing Canada Award**

Open Farms in Frontenac received the Economic Developers Association of Canada's (EDAC) 2019 Marketing Canada Award for Best Event. EDAC is Canada's national organization of economic developers pursuing excellence in the field since 1968. The association offers its members professional development, networking opportunities and a comprehensive offering of resources, both on and offline.

The EDAC Marketing Awards acknowledge and praise communities of all sizes across Canada who have succeeded in their marketing efforts. Multiple awards are presented in each category each year, based on overall operational budget to ensure outstanding work at all levels is recognized.

## **Tourism Industry Association of Ontario Speaking Engagement**

As a direct result of Frontenac's role in coordinating Open Farms, staff were invited to participate in a main stage panel discussion about marketing partnerships during the 2019 Tourism Industry Association of Ontario's annual summit. This opportunity increased awareness about Frontenac County and our economic development initiatives among a group of more than 400 tourism professionals from across the province of Ontario.

### 3. Farmer Satisfaction

All participating farms reported that their sales during the event were worth their time and effort invested in preparing their sites for visitors. Several locations sold out of products completely, were able to start relationships with new customers, and have a better understanding of their own capacity to develop their own agri-tourism products or events.

They have all indicated they were pleased with the coordination and marketing of the event. In addition to sales, operators also found the event valuable as an opportunity to:

- Educate visitors on sustainable farm practices and local food choices
- Cultivate enthusiasm for local food through chats with visitors
- Allow children to experience animals up close (some for the first time!)
- Connect people with a local food source
- Create awareness for their farm/business
- Network and feel connected to a group
- Learn things about their own businesses

### **Looking forward**

A debriefing meeting was held on October 24. Most of the participating farms came together to discuss successes and opportunities for improvement. See **Appendix C** for detailed notes and suggestions for evolving the event in 2020 and beyond. The main takeaways for next year's event are:

- Maintain the single-day format of the event.
- Recruit more farms and do less marketing. This will result in a similar number of visitors, spread over more locations.
- Involve more vendors or farms who can offer ready-to-eat food options at more locations.

In 2019, the Community Development Officer committed approximately 198 hours to coordinating Open Farms, and this does not include the Communications Officer's time or the Digital Marketing Summer Student's time.

Given the direction to market less and add more farms next year, it is anticipated that less time will be required to market the event. It is likely that event coordination will require more time in future years to recruit additional farms and bring them up to speed. It has also been identified that continued development of Open Farms as a tourism product would be valuable. This would include activities like working with participating

farms to improve their visitor experience, recruit and train additional volunteers, develop more revenue streams, and create opportunities to capture visitor information for future marketing activities.

## **Financial Implications**

The funds for this project are budgeted as part of the annual Economic Development budget. The 2019 Open Farms event expenses remained within the assigned budget envelope.

## **Strategic Priorities**

At its meeting on June 19, 2019, County Council approved [Frontenac County Strategic Plan 2019-2022](#). This project is aligned with the intent of the priorities listed below.

Priority 1.2: Refine and invest in efforts to accelerate economic development — to grow businesses, attract more visits and expand the tax base.

Priority 3: Champion and coordinate collaborative efforts

## **Organizations, Departments and Individuals Consulted and/or Affected**

Community Development Advisory Committee  
Frontenac County Council & Staff  
South Frontenac Township Councillors and staff  
City of Kingston  
Frontenac County Plowmen's Association  
KFLA Public Health  
Frontenac County residents  
Kingston residents  
Local farms and businesses

## Appendix A

### Open Farms Marketing Activities

#### Target Audience

The target audience for this year's event included two main groups:

1. **"Foodies"** – adults without children or with adult children who are interested in sourcing more of their food locally, have existing knowledge about the value of local food, like to be seen as connected to trends, and who have the disposable income to afford high quality, high value products. Generally living in urban areas like Kingston, Gananoque, Perth, Carleton Place, and Ottawa.
2. **Families with young children** – parents of children under the age of 10 who are seeking educational, experiential outings to enjoy with their children. Generally have less disposable income, but are concerned with making good nutritional decisions for their children, and with the sustainability of their food sources. Bring a sense of adventure and energy to the event. Generally living in South Frontenac Township and Kingston.

#### Marketing Messages

Stemming directly from the main goal of the event – creating more direct connections between producers and consumers – staff created the 2019 Open Farms catchphrase: *Real Food. Real Farms. Real People.* This phrase was simple, easy to understand and captured the essence of the event. It was incorporated in all marketing materials.

In addition to this phrase, marketing efforts also included a few other key messages:

- **"Get a behind-the-scenes look at real working farms."** Many consumers, especially those who live in urban areas, are not connected to farmers. They do not have – and may never have had – an opportunity to visit a farm. This message spoke to the educational and experiential component of the event, and also gave it a feeling of exclusivity, or specialness. These are not areas or activities that are normally available to the visiting public.
- **"Plan your route"** The participating farms offered a wide variety of products and activities this year. We encouraged people to learn what each farm was offering and then make decisions about which farms to visit based on their specific interests. This increased visitor satisfaction and the likelihood that visitors would make purchases and become long-term customers. Visitors were directed to <http://www.openfarms.ca> for detailed lists of what to expect at each farm.
- **"Bring cash and a cooler"** This message was to put visitors to be in a purchasing frame of mind when they decided to participate in Open Farms. This message prepared them to expect products for sale at each location and be well equipped for purchases.

## Promotional Strategies

The marketing messages were communicated to the target audience through several touch-points:

### 1. Social Media was the main avenue for telling people about Open Farms.

- Facebook
  - Staff created a Facebook event on May 16 and all 10 participating farm locations were invited to “co-host”. Most social media posts directed people to this event for more information and asked people to indicate they were going or interested. Over the course of the marketing campaign, the Facebook event reached 20,800 people, and there were 3,900 event page views. Approximately 1,400 people responded to the event: 281 “going” and 1,100 “interested”. Of those who responded, 90% were women, and 59% were between the ages of 25 and 44, 56% were from Kingston, 8% were from South Frontenac Township, and 2% were from Ottawa.
  - All Open Farms videos were posted to social media, and many of them were boosted toward the target audience. \$62.50 was spent boosting posts on Facebook.
  - Participating farm locations were encouraged to post in the Facebook event discussion, which created a conversational atmosphere and opportunity for connection between producers and consumers.
- Instagram
  - Over the course of seven months, 17 Instagram posts about Open Farms reached a total audience of 9,194 people, resulted in 117 profile visits, gained 742 likes, and 27 comments.
  - The temporary nature of Instagram stories lent really well to sharing “behind the scenes” filming footage, which created energy early in the campaign. The Open Farms story has been pinned as an Instagram highlight, so viewers can easily find it throughout the year and we can add new content to it next year.
- Twitter
  - While Twitter was not a priority channel for Open Farms messaging, it was certainly used as well. In total, 26 Open Farms tweets garnered 23,684 impressions and 796 engagements.

### 2. Videos

As referenced above, videos became the main content shared through social media. Videos were produced for each farm location, plus three general videos: The Faces of Open Farms, Dogs of Open Farms, and the Blooper Reel. All videos were produced by Frontenac County’s Communications Officer with assistance from the Community Development Officer and the Digital Marketing Summer Student using Frontenac County

equipment and software. While this project was labour intensive, completing it in house kept the budget low, and it contributed significantly to the overall success of the campaign. The videos were viewed by a huge audience, and they contributed to each farmer's sense of belonging to the group. The blooper reel is especially interesting – while at first glance it seems frivolous, the blooper reel helps viewers feel more connected to the farmers and creates a sense of comradery around the event.

### 3. Roadside Signage

As in 2018, the marketing campaign included roadside “mini billboards” rented from Curbex Media. Two signs were erected on July 15 – one at Sun Harvest Greenhouses on Division Street and one at Otter Creek Farms on Highway 38. These locations were chosen because of their proximity to the City of Kingston and the high volumes of regular traffic.

New this year, the City of Kingston's Communications and Public Engagement team secured space to use two mini billboard locations within the urban area of the City. These two additional signs were erected on Monday, August 12. Given that Open Farms is such a geography-specific event, these signs are highly effective at generating awareness.

### 4. Print advertising

Print ads were placed in three publications:

- The first ever Frontenac Visitor Guide – 12,500 copies of the guide were printed and distribution began in in early spring throughout and beyond Frontenac.
- Edible Ottawa – Staff secured a [¼ page ad](#) in the July issue of Edible Ottawa (page 17), a free publication distributed at quality grocery stores, specialty food stores, farmers' markets, and retail venues. Published every other month, the magazine celebrates local food of the National Capital Region, Prince Edward County and Eastern Ontario. The ad package included digital coverage as well:
  - Facebook – Impressions: 1, 309, Shares: 10, Link Clicks: 14
  - Instagram – Impressions: 3,001, Shares: 5, Saves: 3
  - Email Newsletter – Impressions: 1,091, Open rate 50%, Click rate 8% (86 people), Click per unique opens 16.1% (total clicks 110)
- The Frontenac News – a half page ad appeared in the August 29 issue of the Frontenac News on the same page as a story about the Plowing Match / Open Farms collaboration.

### 5. Printed Poster / Map

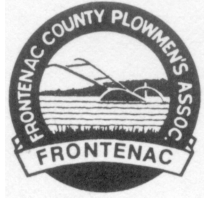
The two-sided, 8.5” x 14”, full colour [Open Farms poster](#) included a map indicating all the participating locations and four suggested routes, along with details about what to expect at each farm during the event. Participating farms distributed poster maps through their networks – directly to their own customers, at partner retailers, restaurants, and through farmers markets. The Poster Maps were also readily available during the

event and used by visitors to make decisions about which farms to visit and aid in navigation throughout the day.

## 6. Earned Media

All of this exposure led to three major earned media opportunities:

- Global Kingston: On August 29, Xiaobing Shen and Jonathan Davies from Long Road Ecological Farm along with Ms. Vandervelde were on the Morning Show with Julie Brown. The segment: [Learn more about Open Farms 2019](#) highlighted the event and the experiential aspects of visiting small scale farm operations.
- The Kingston Whig Standard: In early September, the Whig Standard visited Sun Harvest Greenhouses and published this story on the front page of the September 5 issue: [Hydroponic tomatoes one of many sights during Open Farms](#)
- Station 14: In the first week of September Station 14 visited Fat Chance Farmstead and posted this story: [Organic fruit and veggie farming on display at 2019 Open Farms](#).



Dear Council Members,

The members of the Frontenac County Plowmen's Association would like to update you on the success that our partnership with Frontenac County's Open Farms created for our annual plowing match this year.

In the fall of 2018, our organization was approached by Frontenac County Community Development Officer, Alison Vandervelde, about partnering our match with Open Farms for 2019. With dwindling attendance in recent years and a desire to breathe new life into it, Alison had a solution that we readily accepted.

Open Farms created numerous possibilities for both our Association and our match. Some of the highlights of this partnership were: growth of our current network, new sponsorships, new vendors, and new competitors.

Our match was a resounding success this year largely in part to our partnership with Open Farms. The partnership created new channels for promotion via social media networks of the participating locations and the County, which led to huge growth.

This growth, mainly due to our partnership with Open Farms, resulted in an increase from 12 competitors and 100 guests in 2018, to 37 competitors and over 500 guests in 2019. The numbers for our match this year were more than we had ever expected. Our local 4-H club, who provided the food, sold out. As well, all our other vendors have asked to come back again next year due to the amount of product(s) sold.

We are thrilled to share the part we play in the local agricultural community both on our own and as a partner with Open Farms. Increased funding for Open Farms in 2020 will ensure the event continues to be a success and will allow our organization to continue to help educate the community and share the role we play in promoting local agriculture and local businesses with the residents of Frontenac County next year as we continue our partnership.

Thank you,

The members of the Frontenac County Plowmen's Association

# Open Farms Debrief

Loughborough Heritage Orchard - October 24 2019

## In Attendance

- Dave Perry
- Tracey Moore
- Rebecca Cook
- Xiaobing Shen
- Rebecca Pemberton
- Kim Perry
- Curtis Moore
- Andrea Cumpson
- Becky Williams
- Alison Vandervelde
- Stella Hiemstra
- Sheila Deane
- Orrie Cumpson
- Mark McCrady
- Marc Hiemstra
- DJ Cook
- Martin Oomen

## 2019 Success

**Martin Oomen, Frontenac County Plowmen's Association (FCPA)** – Had a fantastic day. The Plowing Match was much different from all the other farms, and they did not know what to expect. The exposure from collaborating with Open Farms facilitated many new partnerships for the FCPA, and in turn those partner associations got lots of great exposure because the match was so well attended. Martin has been involved with the FCPA for 10-12 years, and it's been a downhill slide, farmers just are not plowing anymore, and attendance at the match has declined in the past few years. He estimates that this year there were approximately 500-600 people attend the match, maybe even close to 700 visitors. They had set aside a good portion of a field for parking and at one point there were over 200 cars parked there. The 4H club did a BBQ and decorated cupcakes and they ran out of everything. The match was full of kids. The wagon rides went all day, and the condensed set up of the match allowed visitors to see everything within close proximity. They had very positive feedback. The vendor village had 16 or 17 vendors and all want to return again next year.

**Andrea Cumpson, Sonset Farm** – Estimates 700-800 people visited over the course of the day. People started showing up and then they were just coming in hordes. It was overwhelming. A new baby calf was born about 10 minutes before Open Farms started. People seemed to be there to just relax. They didn't seem to be in a hurry to go. Andrea spent most of the day in the farm store handling product sales. At the end of the day, she got to go outside with about 25 people who were still there. A little girl in a big pink poufy Cinderella dress followed Andrea into the field and was right in there, down on the ground, petting the pigs. Even a couple of vegans were there and they said to Andrea "if everyone could get meat from a farm like this, I think it would be okay".

**Stella Heimstra, Loughborough Heritage Orchard** – Lots of people talked about, or asked for guidance about where to go next. The maps were really good for helping direct people to their next destination.

**Kim Perry, Food Less Travelled** – It was the biggest day they have ever had at the store. There were approximately 1,100-1,200 people there, and sales were up 68% over the 2018 event.

**DJ Cook, Otter Creek Farm** – The farm was set up loosely in three areas – there was the "food" section where they sold (out of) frozen beef and the food truck was operating (which also sold out). There was an "educational" area where they set up a series of pens and DJ spoke about all the ways they make calves, and the third area was the equipment display. They also ran a contest – visitors submitted a suggestion for naming a new calf. The winner received an Otter Creek t-shirt. All the visitors were really engaged, really there to learn.

## Engagement

- Visitors at Maple Ridge Farm stayed a lot longer than they did in 2018. Some families arrived around 10am and stayed until 3pm. They were quite comfortable too. Some even brought a picnic. It was almost like being at their grandparent's house.
- Other farms experienced this as well, and felt that it was different from 2018. Visitors were not in a hurry to move to the next location. They were relaxed, engaged and comfortable.
- At Five Star Farm, they offered a wagon ride to educate visitors about the haying process. The ride took them past haying equipment set up on display and there was a guide on the wagon explaining how it all worked. People were very interested. There were lots of questions.
- There was a demographic pattern again this year: young families with little kids came from 10am until about 1pm and then went home, families with older kids started arriving around 1pm, and older people came later in the day.

## Dealing with demand

- Loughborough Heritage Orchard limited purchases per visitor to ensure product lasted throughout the day. Even with those limitations, they sold out of cider by noon.
- Maple Ridge Farm struggled with that balance as well – they need to fill their regular customer orders in addition to having product available for Open Farms. If it is just about economics, you should just sell it to whomever. But you have these loyal customers you don't want to short-change just because you had a huge influx of sales on one day.
- Part of the education is that you can't just restock the shelf if the supply is not there. Products do not just magically appear.
- There seemed to be an increased demand for ready to eat food. At Food Less Travelled they sold the same number of pies as in 2018, but Kim made sandwiches for 6 hours straight to keep up with demand. The food truck at Otter Creek sold out, as did the barbeque at the Plowing Match.
- The only complaint Tracey at Five Star Farm had was that people wanted to buy stuff, but they did not have anything to sell. They only had one vendor, who completely sold out of frozen beef.
- The demand for products to purchase was different from last year. It felt like people were coming with the intention to buy this year, more so than in 2018. It seemed like people were saying "okay, this is all great, now how can I support you while I'm here?"

## Non-monetary Value

- The entire group agreed that Open Farms presents great value, beyond product sales and securing new customer. The main reason this started was to promote agriculture throughout Frontenac County. And Open Farms is doing that. It gives validity to what they do as farmers.
- There are Open Farms visitors who will never again visit our farms or become long-term customers. And that is okay. This is the only chance some people will ever have to visit a farm.
- There are so many things that happen during Open Farms that instill things in people. They may not come back to buy things from us, but it might help them make better decisions at the grocery store. Food insecure people have no understanding of where food comes from, and Open Farms allows us to help educate them.

## Event Format

- It was overwhelming to see 200 cars all at once, or see wall-to-wall people on your farm. The more visitors who participate in Open Farms, the more chance that something could go wrong.
- The group discussed possibilities for evolving the format to lessen the huge impact of the single day event, but farmers would not be able to handle a two-day event. And there is concern that making it two days and splitting the locations between two dates would result in confusion.
- There was a suggestion that next year the focus should be on recruiting more farms and less marketing. The goal would be a similar number of visitors spread over more locations. This would also force consumers to be more selective about which farms they visit creating a more engaged audience at each farm and increasing the likelihood that they will become customers.

## Trails

- The question was asked: “for those of you who offered trails, did you feel comfortable allowing people to walk around your property unsupervised?”
- They were totally comfortable at Loughborough Heritage Orchard. Their trail is a loop, so visitors cannot get lost. Plus they erected signs and created a map that directed people to look for particular things along the trail. They had positive feedback from people who enjoyed the trail.
- At Long Road they posted a schedule of their greenhouse tours and offered a trail walk as well. The trail was great because it gave people an activity to do while they waited for the next greenhouse tour. There was directional signage posted along the trail, and they were quite comfortable letting people go out on their own.

## Event Disruption and Risk Management

- There was discussion that this is something to be prepared for eventually and that Frontenac County should have a plan in place if a group of activists all target one or more farm location during the event. Similar events in Frontenac have had incidents with individuals who intended to disrupt the day and create a platform for their own message that may be counter to the purpose of Open Farms.
- There was an in-depth discussion around risk mitigation and the insurance requirements. Some participants had to pay as much as \$250 to secure the endorsement naming Frontenac County as Additionally Insured. Although that kind of fee is not ideal, sufficient insurance coverage will remain a requirement for participating in Open Farms in the future.

## Expanding on Open Farms

- Building off the success of Open Farms, there is potential to create and market new experiential farm events throughout the year. Loughborough Heritage Orchard is interested in hosting an Apple Blossom Festival in the spring, there could be a shearing event, flower festivals, winter events, more farm-to-table meals (could host one in the summer as a forerunner to Open Farms), and there’s room for a “Back to the Farm” (Mackinnon Brother’s Brewery) style event in Frontenac as well.
- There is great potential for developing agri-tourism products in Frontenac. The County does not have the capacity to coordinate these products or events, but would be thrilled to market them as reasons to visit our region.

## Suggestions for 2020

- Date
  - Tentatively scheduled for Sunday, September 13
  - Tentative only because that seems really late, but it is the second Sunday of the month
- Event Format
  - Maintain single day event
  - Recruit more farms, do less marketing
- Poster Map
  - Could better highlight the products available at each farm
  - Consider an alternative brochure style format
- Event passport
  - There is interest in this, but it could be difficult to manage. Could explore a self-serve (stickers) or digital (app or social media) solution.
  - Could be used to capture contact information with a prize draw.
  - Might encourage people to move to the next location more quickly and detract from the relaxing atmosphere of the event.
- Volunteers
  - Many farms expressed need for more volunteers during the event.
  - County suggestion: It is difficult to find volunteers at the last minute to step into a new situation and undefined role. Call your best customers and ask them to help you succeed during the event. Cultivate a relationship well in advance of the event so they can become familiar with your operation. This will make them happier and more helpful volunteers. Give them some free product to show your appreciation.
- Ready to eat food
  - We could involve a community group or service club to offer ready to eat food as a fundraiser (like the 4H Club did at the Plowing Match).
  - Could recruit more local food providers (i.e., Cota's Mobile Catering, Barb's Handmade Perogies, Cheesecake Bakery, etc) to set up at Open Farms locations.
- T-shirts
  - There was demand to purchase Open Farms t-shirt. While selling the green shirts is not the best idea, we could create an Open Farms consumer t-shirt to sell at each farm.