

Attention: Mayor Salonen, Members of Council  
Re: Creation of an Agricultural Advisory Committee

“Shovel-ready” land assembly has put Wilmot’s agricultural sector at the forefront of discussion across our Township, Waterloo Region, and throughout Ontario. Rural and Urban stakeholders have come together to raise awareness of a plan to expropriate 770 acres of *Prime Agricultural* land for industrial rezoning. This recent issue further highlights a growing discussion around sustainable growth and development that our Township is currently undertaking. Citizens across a broad-spectrum are asking questions around the future protection of our agricultural assets, and how as a community we achieve future growth, while continuing to support our valued agricultural sectors continued success.

Referencing the Region of Waterloo’s 2020 Bulletin of Census for Agriculture, revenue in Wilmot **grew** from \$139.7 million dollars in 2011 to \$181.90 million in 2020. And yet given its growth, a significant contribution to our local economy, it is my belief that we are undervaluing the sector, which requires a seat at the table to help shape its future.

Therefore, I call on Council to establish a **“Agricultural Advisory Committee”** in Wilmot. This advisory committee would report to Council and consist of community stakeholders across the Township to provide advice and guidance, with a focus on the enhancement and delivery of local agricultural initiatives.

Example of Building an Agricultural Advisory Committee:



Source: OMAFRA

Establishing this local advisory committee provides the agricultural sector in Wilmot the most direct and transparent connection between policy decision making and our farming community. It elevates the voice of our farming community, while presenting an opportunity to minimize the impacts to farmers and the farming sector in the future. It is an opportunity for education and awareness to both Council, staff, and more broadly the community.

To conclude, the creation of an **Agricultural Advisory Committee** in Wilmot will:

- Visibly demonstrate to the public the importance of the agricultural sector in Wilmot.
- Help build networks and capacity for future sustainable farming in the Township.
- Accurately assess the dynamically changing needs of our local farming community.
- Reinforce the Township's understanding that rural agriculture and urban growth is about the long game.

It is my hope that Council will swiftly adopt a motion to create this committee. I thank you in advance for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Rory Farnan  
Wilmot Township Resident