

FARMER  
WELLNESS  
INITIATIVE



## FARMER WELLNESS INITIATIVE

### Mental Health Summit Report

March 30, 2023





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## Introduction

The Farmer Wellness Initiative (FWI) offers mental health and wellness support to farmers and farm families across Ontario. This program is accessed through a telehealth line that is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week, every day. The program is paid for in part by the governments of Canada and Ontario through the Canadian Agricultural partnership, a five-year federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

The Farmer Wellness Initiative is guided by an Advisory Committee made up of representatives from the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, National Farmers Ontario, Union des Cultivateurs Franco-Ontariens, Rural Ontario Institute, Canadian Mental Health Association, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario and the University of Guelph.

On March 30, 2023, the Farmer Wellness Initiative held a Mental Health Summit in partnership with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, National Farmers Ontario, Western Ontario Wardens Caucus and Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus.

This report provides a summary of the Mental Health Summit proceedings and the results of the facilitated workshop that concluded the Summit.

## Overview

The Farmer Wellness Initiative Mental Health Summit was held in Guelph, Ontario from 9:30 am to 3:00 pm on Thursday, March 30, 2023. A total of 57 people attended the event including individuals and organizations representing farmers, agriculture associations, primary care first responders the Canadian Centre for Agriculture Wellbeing, municipal and regional staff and elected officials, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Farmer Wellness Advisory Committee, researchers, academics and health care providers along with the provincial and federal funders.

The purpose of the day long summit was to identify steps to address mental health wellness in agriculture and rural Ontario with the following objectives:

- Learn about the mental health needs and challenges facing farmers and others in the agriculture community
- Learn about existing mental health resources in agriculture and rural Ontario
- Identify gaps in supporting mental wellness
- Discuss opportunities to work collaboratively
- Identify actions to support mental health wellness

The summit began with a series of presentations by the following individuals:

- Bruce Buttar, Chair Farmer Wellness Initiative Advisory Committee
- Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (video greetings)
- Susan-Belle Ferguson, Senior Policy Analyst, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada



- Peggy Brekveld, President, Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA)
- Ed Scharinga, President, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO) (video greetings)
- Max Hansgen, President/Region 3 Coordinator, National Farmers Union - Ontario (NFU-O)
- Dr. Leith Deacon, Associate Professor, Rural Planning & Development, University of Guelph
- Chair Glen McNeil, Warden of Huron County, Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus
- Vice Chair Bonnie Clark, Warden of Peterborough County, Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus
- Mike Robinson, District Chief of Emergency Services, Township of Hamilton
- Randy Mellow, Senior Director of Emergency & Shared Services/Deputy CAO/Paramedic Chief, Peterborough County
- Janine Lunn, OFA, Farmer Wellness Initiative and Agriculture Wellness Ontario and Canadian Centre for Agriculture Wellness
- Diane Bergsma, Three Oaks Respite Cabin
- Lauren Van Ewyk, Psychotherapist/Ag Mental Health Advocate/Sheep Farmer, National Farmer Mental Health Alliance

Detailed biographies for the speakers are included in Appendix A. The Summit Agenda is included in Appendix B. Following the presentations participants engaged in facilitated discussions guided by a series of questions (see Appendix C Facilitated Discussion Questions).

This report was written by Aileen Murray of Mellor Murray Consulting. It provides a summary of the facilitated workshop. This report is not intended to provide a verbatim transcript of the meeting but instead provides a summary of the perspectives and insights provided by workshop participants.





## Workshop Themes

### Interactive polls

The participant feedback began with the use of an online interactive and anonymous polling system. Summit participants were asked to consider what was working, what could be changed and what were the biggest challenges related to mental health support in agriculture and rural Ontario. The following key themes emerged:

- Growing awareness
- Funding
- Collaboration
- Attitudes surrounding mental health
- Unique challenges in agriculture

### Growing awareness

Participants indicated that the Farmer Wellness Initiative and other agencies have made real progress in elevating the general awareness of the issue of mental health for farmers and rural Ontario. They recognized however that there is still a need to expand awareness of both the issue and the supports available. They specifically referenced the Farmer Wellness Initiative as an important contributor to the discussion and its role in providing services that meet the unique needs of the agriculture community. They identified the need for more data on mental health needs in rural Ontario.

### Funding

The participants acknowledged the government funding to support mental health wellness programs and the growth in the free services that are now available to farmers and rural Ontario. They also called for more funding to provide additional services and ensure consistency of the existing services.

### Collaboration

The participants were encouraged by the collaborative efforts of the organizations participating in the Farmers Wellness Initiative. They did note a need to encourage even greater collaboration and engage other aligned organizations.

### Attitudes surrounding mental health

The participants all agreed that there is a stigma regarding mental health issues. This stigma has resulted in a reluctance by some to admit they need help, to access needed services or to have open conversations about mental health issues.

### Unique challenges in agriculture

Farmers and others working in rural Ontario face isolation and long hours that can exacerbate mental health issues and limit their ability to access to mental health supports. These challenges are

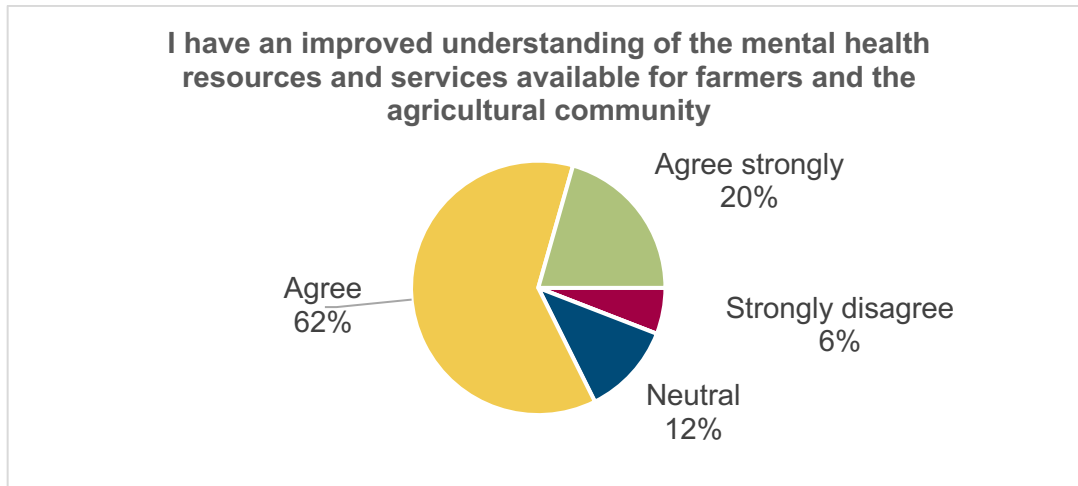


further compounded by the complications of establishing a work life balance when they live where they work and by the dynamics of a family owned and operated business.

The participants said that it is important for therapists to understand the farming culture and the unique challenges and issues in agriculture to best support farmers and rural Ontario. Finding local supports can be difficult and limited internet capacity in many parts of rural Ontario means that online services may not be easy to access.

### Understanding available resources and services

The participants were then asked about their understanding of the mental health resources and services available for farmers and the agricultural community based on their participation in the Summit. The majority of participants agreed (62%) or agreed strongly (20%) that they now had an improved understanding. Just 6% indicated that they strongly disagreed and 12% were neutral.





## Facilitated Small Group Discussions

The participants then moved into small groups to discuss existing and missing mental health tools and resources, the role of municipalities and farm/commodity associations, their vision and priorities supporting mental health for farmers and rural Ontario. The following section provides a summary of those discussions.

### Tools and resources available to support mental health wellness in agriculture and rural Ontario

The participants created a long list of available supports available to farmers and rural Ontario:

- Toll free and online services (e.g., distress centres, libraries providing access to online services, Ontario government website)
- Community organizations (e.g. Legions, schools, recreation programs)
- Local health services (Local doctor, family health teams, walk in clinics, hospital, therapists)
- Training for health care providers on agriculture industry
- Local CMHA programs
- Scheduled meetups, check ins, chats and buddy check programs
- Municipalities (funding and promotion of existing resources, hosting national/regional programs)
- Addiction services (AA, Al Anon)
- S.H.E.D. Talks (Huron, Perth, Bruce and Grey counties)
- Ontario Federation of Agriculture, county federations
- Agriculture Wellness Ontario programs
  - Famer Wellness Initiative
  - Guardian Network
  - In the Know workshops
- Three Oaks retreat
- Mobile crisis response
- Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)





## Mental health tools and resources that are missing and needed for farmers and rural Ontario

The participants also identified some gaps in services and tools that are needed to support mental wellness:

- More funding
- Greater/improved access to mental health services
  - More rural mental health professionals and health care practitioners
  - Client choice of therapist
  - Shorter wait times
  - Broadened criteria for access (e.g., those without health insurance)
  - Increased services for peak stress times
  - Streamlined access, clear pathways to services
  - Targeted support programs (e.g., women, rural kids, men, migrant workers, different age groups, family members, community members, etc.)
  - Online addition programs
  - Peer to peer support
  - Local feel to online programs (alternative to 1-800)
- Greater awareness of existing programs/services:
  - By farmers, the agriculture community and the general public
  - By service providers (health, municipality, United Way, faith groups, front line EMS, etc.)
- Additional research, real time data access
- Connectivity to access services (cell coverage, high speed internet access)
- Succession planning/relationship management
- Change of culture
  - Addressing superman/woman syndrome)
  - Incorporating mental health into education system
  - Community meeting spaces



## The municipal role in supporting mental health wellness

Half the participants were asked to list what municipalities could do to support mental health. They identified the following:

- Representing their community, identifying needs, communicating and advocating for funding and other supports
- Attracting and retaining health professionals, providing education on agriculture community needs
- Accessing funding for rural mental health and health professionals
- Sponsoring and promoting local chapters of regional programs (e.g. Guardian and Lonely no More programs)
- Participating in research
- Providing information resources for community
- Community building (supporting community organizations, spaces and events)
- Relationships with farmers and agriculture community

## The farm/commodity association role in supporting mental health wellness

Half of the participants were asked to identify the efforts that farm and commodity associations could do to support mental health. The roles for these groups included the following:

- Providing information including:
  - Available mental health resources
  - Referrals and assistance navigating/accessing health care services
  - Links to mental health businesses
  - Targeted awareness programs
  - Examples of programs that could be adopted in ag sector (e.g., Legion programs)
- Advocate for additional resources including:
  - Long term sustainable core funding
  - Targeting mental health programs
  - Crisis response plans
- Build knowledge on mental health needs
  - Mental health support training for staff such as In the Know program
  - Creating roles for mental health expertise
- Normalizing conversations about mental health, reducing stigma



## Future vision of successfully addressing mental wellness in agriculture and rural Ontario

All participants were then asked to envision the successful delivery of the Farmer Wellness Initiative. They were asked to describe the future state in five years time if the Farmer Wellness Initiative and its many partners were successful in addressing mental health wellness for farmers and rural Ontario. Their descriptions of the future and the desired outcomes are listed below:

- Asking for help no longer perceived as a weakness. There is less stigma around mental health and people are comfortable talking about mental health issues
- Access to funding is not a barrier to service
- It is easy to access services and the response rate is faster for those needing services (48 hours or shorter)
- Farmer Wellness contact number is well known
- The Farmer Wellness Initiative program is evolving based on strategic learning and the changing needs of the agriculture community and informed by
- Increased number of rural mental health practices/professionals, and the mental health services available in rural Ontario is comparable to those available in more urban areas
- Mental health statistics are on par with the general population. There is a drop in the numbers of suicides, divorces, substance abuse, emotional abuse, etc.
- Cellular and internet connectivity is improved so that phone and internet services can be easily accessed in rural Ontario
- Mental health is included in the definition of health and are accessed through a cohesive health system in rural Ontario.
- Mental health education is available in elementary and secondary schools. The population in general is more aware of mental health issues and how to access support.
- Succession plans are in place for farmers and agriculture businesses



## Priorities for supporting mental health wellness in agriculture and rural Ontario

When asked to identify those areas that must be addressed to best support mental health wellness, the participants identified the following:

- **Addressing stigma:** Tackling the stigma associated with mental health issues and normalizing conversations on mental health
- **Awareness:** Providing education on mental health issues facing rural Ontario and growing awareness of how to get help
- **Resources:** Consistent and sufficient funding and medical professionals to deliver the needed services
- **Accessibility:** Bringing fully funded mental health supports and services to rural Ontario and ensuring there are multiple, flexible ways to access services
- **Agriculture focused:** Addressing the unique needs and challenges facing farmers and rural Ontario
- **Data and research:** Tracking the data and trends in rural Ontario to assist in evidence-based decision making
- **Prevention:** Providing programs and supports to avert mental health crises
- **Collaboration:** Engaging with the province and rural representatives to identify and deliver on the needs of rural Ontario





## Final thoughts

The participants were then asked to provide individual feedback on the day's event. The key themes are summarized below:

**Growing momentum through collaboration:** The participants were energized and encouraged by this first Mental Health Summit. They recognized the great benefits of working collaboratively, growing their connections and keeping the momentum going.

*“When communities work together mental health wellness can become a priority and services and supports will be available.”*

*“It was encouraging to acknowledge and recognize the need for creating a network of safeguards for people in our community – collaboration is key.”*

**Foundations:** The participants said they want to establish a shared understanding of mental health, the programs and resources available for farmers and the agricultural community and how to access the services.

**Personal mental health:** Several participants referenced the metaphor shared by one of the speakers who compared an individual holding on to stress to that of a tractor carrying heavy rocks and the need to find ways to lighten the load to operate effectively.

**Learning from others:** The participants appreciated the similar mental health challenges faced by first responders and the agricultural community and recognized that the agriculture sector can learn from and collaborate with first responders and others to effectively address mental health in rural Ontario.

*“Mental health in ag can sometimes feel new and different and like nothing before has been done like what we're doing. But there are other services we can learn from like fire, paramedics and police.”*

**Research and data:** Several participants advocated for ongoing research and data to better understand the challenges and trends in rural Ontario and to advocate for funding.



## Appendix A: Speaker Bios

### **Bruce Buttar, Chair, Farmer Wellness Initiative Advisory Committee**

Bruce and his wife Cindy and their son Leighton live near Gores Landing in Northumberland County cropping 300 acres. They grow grains and oilseeds and raise beef. Bruce attended Plainville public school, Cobourg Collegiate Institute and then graduated from Kemptville Agricultural College with a diploma in Agriculture. Bruce is very active within his community serving on several local organizations including:

- President of the Port Hope Agricultural society
- Northumberland Soil and Crop improvement Association,
- County Milk Committee chair
- County Holstein committee director
- Hamilton Township Mutual Insurance Company
- Northumberland County Federation of Agriculture
- Provincial Director on the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and Chair of the Farmer Wellness Initiative Advisory Committee
- Agricultural sector Director on the Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority
- Municipal Councillor for Township of Hamilton

Bruce is also a member of Plainville United Church where he is a trustee, Member of the board of Stewards and Chair of the Plainville United Church Cemetery.

### **Susan-Belle Ferguson, Senior Policy Analyst with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada**

Susan-Belle Ferguson has spent the last three years working with the Labour Policy team and is the department's lead analyst on the Mental Health in Agriculture file.

Previously she spent 12 years at Global Affairs Canada working in various aspects of trade policy and negotiations, including food safety, softwood lumber exports from Canada to the United States, and Canada's participation as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). She has been living in Ottawa for nearly 20 years, but has also lived in cities across the country - Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Trenton (ON), and Halifax. She has a great appreciation for Canadian farmers and producers and the challenges they face, both at home and in exporting their products.

### **Peggy Brekveld, President, Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA)**

Peggy Brekveld is President of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. She has been on the board for the last 12 years, first as the Northern Director and later as an at-large representative. She is known for advocating on behalf of farmers at municipal, provincial and federal level, and enjoys engaging with the farm membership whenever possible.

Peggy is also the chair of President's Council in Ontario, and vice chair of both Canadian Agriculture Human Resource Council and Agricultural Adaptation Council. She and her husband Gert are dairy farmers near Thunder Bay. They have 5 children. In her spare time, Peggy likes walk and to sing. She feels very blessed in life.



### **Max Hansgen, President/Region 3 Coordinator, NFU-O**

Max Hansgen is President of National Farmers – Ontario. Max works with his wife Shelagh in their market garden called Earth's Mirth just outside of Lanark Village in eastern Ontario. Earth's Mirth grows vegetables to sell at the Almonte Farmers' Market and for a food box program. He began his career in agriculture as a youth harvesting and processing organic garlic at a local NFU farm. For two years he worked as a paid intern/apprentice on a local NFU bio-dynamic farm where he found a lifetime interest in sustainable farm practices by helping tend to pigs, goats, diverse vegetable crops, and on occasion, working with horses. Since 2004 Max has worked at Kiwi Gardens where he currently manages production of ornamental perennials, maintenance of display gardens and retail sales at the nursery and the Ottawa Farmers Market.

### **Dr. Leith Deacon, Associate Professor, Rural Planning & Development, University of Guelph**

Leith Deacon is an Associate Professor in the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development at the University of Guelph with a research program examining rural resiliency at national and international scales. His research focuses on small and rural community development, governance, and inclusionary planning. Leith argues that local data collection is critical to development appropriate and impactful policy. His research aims to build the capacity of small and rural communities and improve their long-term resilience.

### **Chair Glen McNeil, Warden of Huron County, Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus**

Glen is serving his second term as Huron County Warden and is the Mayor of the Township of Ashfield -Colborne-Wawanosh.

Glen is Chair of the Western Ontario Warden's Caucus, and Chair of the Board of Directors of the Alexandra Marine and General Hospital. He is past President of the Huron County 4-H Club Leaders Association, the Huron County Dairy Producers, the Huron County Holstein Club, Ontario Holsteins, Holstein Canada, and the recipient of the inaugural Dairy Farmers of Ontario Lifetime Achievement Award.

Outside of Council, Glen, Vanda & Curtis McNeil own and operate Heather Holme Holsteins, a 3rd generation family dairy business that has been awarded three Master Breeder shields from Holstein Canada. Heather Holme continues to actively support the 4-H program.

### **Vice Chair Bonnie Clark, Warden of Peterborough County, Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus**

Warden Bonnie Clark took office for Peterborough County in December 2022. Her career in public service began over twenty years ago as a Township Councillor for then Otonabee Township. She has served as Deputy Mayor of the amalgamated Otonabee-South Monaghan Township and as a member of County Council since 2018. She is the third woman to lead Peterborough County as Warden. In 2023, she was acclaimed Vice-Chair of the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus. She has previously served as Chair of the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority and Peterborough Housing Corporation. Warden Clark is part of a proud farming family where presently the sixth generation lives and works on the family poultry farm. She made her career in the healthcare industry as a registered nurse for 28 years. Warden Clark seeks to encourage collaboration with public, private, and community organizations for the benefit of all people who call Peterborough County home.





### **Mike Robinson, District Chief of Emergency Services, Township of Hamilton**

Michael Robinson is the Acting Fire Chief for the Township of Hamilton in Northumberland County. He was born and raised there having returned after graduating with a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Wilfrid Laurier University. With over 22 years in fire service, Mike has further demonstrated his commitment to personal development and education by attaining a Certificate in Fire Service Leadership from Dalhousie University and many courses through the Office of the Fire Marshal under the NFPA curriculum.

Chief Robinson leads a dynamic department, responsible for 60 volunteer firefighters, 3 stations, 16 apparatus with approximately 400 emergency calls annually. In addition, he is the Community Emergency Management Coordinator where he has supported a train derailment and several weather-related emergencies.

Mike's career may be primarily focussed on fire service currently, but is deeply rooted in agriculture. His family owned a feed and farm supply business with mobile grinders until 1994 when they were purchased by Hunco Farms Ltd, a farm he continued to be part of throughout university as part of a team supplying crop inputs to farmers, as well as part of a fresh pea and lima bean crew. After university, he continued to manage the grain elevator there until 2007, all the while training and volunteering as a firefighter. In 2007 he moved on to work for a Canadian Safety Equipment Inc. where he managed a team that supplied safety equipment industry. He travelled throughout Canada and into the furthest northern parts of the Country with his expertise.

The tie between fire service and agriculture is deeply ingrained in Chief Robinson, having dedicated his career to the rural communities within Northumberland County. His passion for the well-being of the residents and visitors alike in Hamilton Township can be seen in his lifelong commitment to the area.

### **Randy Mellow, Senior Director of Emergency & Shared Services/Deputy CAO/Paramedic Chief, Peterborough County**

As Chief of Peterborough County/City Paramedics, Randy brings over 30 years' experience in Emergency Services. He began his EMS career in 1986 in south-western Ontario as a paramedic. Before assuming his current position, Randy progressed through various roles including Supervisor of Quality Assurance and Human Resources, Deputy Chief of Peterborough County/City Paramedics and Chief of Essex-Windsor EMS.

Randy currently promotes the priorities of Canadian Paramedic leadership by serving as the President of The Paramedic Chiefs of Canada and as a member of the Canadian Institute for Public Safety Research and Treatment – Public Safety Steering Committee. Randy is a contributing member of the Ontario Paramedic Chiefs Association and the Global Paramedic Leadership Alliance.

Randy is a graduate of St. Clair College Windsor and was awarded the Alumni of Distinction as a graduate of the Ambulance and Emergency Care Program. He holds a Master's Certificate in Municipal Leadership and has achieved accreditation as a Certified Municipal Manager Level III (CMM III) with EMS Executive and Emergency Management Professional Designation.





### **Janine Lunn, OFA, Farmer Wellness Initiative and Agriculture Wellness Ontario and Canadian Centre for Agriculture Wellness**

Janine joined the OFA in 2007 as Member Service Representative for Oxford & Elgin Counties. She then took on a new role as Capacity Development Coordinator in 2017 until stepping into the Field Manager role for Eastern and Northern September.

Janine has Eastern Ontario roots, where she was raised on a farm in The Valley and many of her family still resides there. She has a degree in International Development, specializing in ag & rural issues from Guelph and recently completed certificates in non-profit management and leadership through Western University.

Within her role at OFA she is a strong supporter of the strength of rural community, Janine has supported the Policy Advisory Council, participated in developing programs to promote the outreach efforts of local Federations, bursary programs and was a key player in OFA's COVID Emergency Response Team. long standing champion for mental health and diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives both inside and outside of the OFA.

She and her spouse have three teenagers, and they reside on their family farm in Elgin County. The Lunn's enjoy downhill skiing, 4-H and family trips to Eastern Ontario.

### **Diane Bergsma, Three Oaks Respite Cabin**

Diane is married to Al and they have a hog and cash crop operation with their family near Shetland, Ontario. They have recently started a charity called Three Oaks Cabin which aims to come alongside farmers and first responders who are facing high levels of stress. The charity and the project has deep personal meaning for her and the family is passionate and committed to helping those who contribute so much to the safety and wellbeing of our families and our communities.

### **Lauren Van Ewyk, Psychotherapist/Ag Mental Health Advocate/Sheep Farmer, National Farmer Mental Health Alliance**

Lauren Van Ewyk is an engaging speaker, registered social worker, foster mom and agricultural mental health advocate. She has appeared in numerous radio, television and print articles concerning the issues of adoption, foster care, mental wellness and mental health in the agriculture sector. She and her husband raise sheep in southwestern Ontario. She is a doctorate student, founding member, and CEO of the National Farmer Mental Health Alliance; Lauren seeks to meet the needs of farmers and their families across Canada and the US.



## Appendix B: Mental Health Summit Agenda

**FARMER WELLNESS INITIATIVE**      **INITIATIVE POUR LE BIEN-ÊTRE DES AGRICULTEURS**

**Healthy, Vibrant Communities**  
*A Mental Health Summit for Agriculture and Rural Communities*

**OFA** Ontario Federation of Agriculture      **CHRISTIAN FARMERS FEDERATION OF ONTARIO** CFFO      **OUF**      **WESTERN ONTARIO WARDENS CAUCUS** WOWC      **EOWC** Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus

### Agenda

**Moderator: Aileen Murray**

**9:30 a.m. – Opening Remarks:**

- Bruce Buttar, Chair, Farmer Wellness Initiative Advisory Committee
- Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food (invited)
- Hon. Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (invited)
- Peggy Brekveld, President, Ontario Federation of Agriculture
- Ed Scharringa, President, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario
- Max Hansgen, President/Region 3 Coordinator, National Farmers Union – Ontario

**Guest Speakers:**

- Dr. Leith Deacon, Associate Professor, Rural Planning & Development, University of Guelph
- Glen McNeil, Chair of Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus and Warden of Huron County
- Bonnie Clark, Vice Chair of Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus and Warden of Peterborough County
- Mike Robinson, District Chief of Emergency Services, Township of Hamilton

**Health Break**

- Randy Mellow, Senior Director of Emergency & Shared Services/Deputy CAO/ Paramedic Chief, Peterborough County
- Janine Lunn, Manager Eastern Team, Ontario Federation of Agriculture
- Diane Bergsma, Three Oaks Respite Cabin
- Lauren Van Ewyk, Psychotherapist/Ag Mental Health Advocate/Sheep Farmer, National Farmer Mental Health Alliance

**12:30 p.m. – Lunch**

**1:30 p.m. – Facilitated Roundtable Discussion by Aileen Murray, Mellor Murray Consulting**

**3:00 p.m. – Adjournment**

**Let's break the silence together!**

Paid for in part by the governments of Canada and Ontario through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (the Partnership), a five-year, federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

**CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL PARTNERSHIP**      **Ontario**      **Canada**



## Appendix C: Facilitated Discussion Questions

### Mentimeter Questions

1. When you think about mental health support in agriculture and rural Ontario, what is one thing that is working well? What would you like to save/protect?
2. When you think about mental health support in agriculture and rural Ontario what is one thing you would like to change?
3. What is the biggest challenge in supporting mental health wellness in agriculture and rural Ontario?
4. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I have an improved understanding of the mental health resources and services available for farmers and others in the agriculture community.

### Small Group Discussion

1. What tools and resources are available to support mental health wellness in agriculture and rural Ontario?
2. What tools and resources are missing and needed to support mental health wellness?
3. What is the municipal role in supporting mental health wellness in agriculture and rural Ontario?
4. What is the role of the farm/commodity associations in supporting mental health wellness?
5. Imagine that it's 5 years from today and we have been wildly successful with addressing mental wellness in agriculture and rural Ontario. What will have changed? What are your desired outcomes?
6. What are the top 3 priorities that must be addressed to best support mental health wellness in agriculture and rural Ontario?