

Specific Actions Requiring GTA Region/City of Toronto Leadership

#	Action	Progress Made
9	Provide for dedicated agricultural economic development capability at the GTA municipalities and overall GTA coordination to promote local agriculture, connect producers with local markets including retailers and restaurants, and provide business support	City of Toronto & most GTA Regions or Towns have dedicated economic development capability; the Region/City Working Group ensures overall GTA coordination; farm directories promote local agriculture (e.g. Simply Local); business support provided
11	Municipal governments should explore options for reducing farmland tax assessment	Various options have been explored and implemented including reduction in Farmland tax assessment and changing tax payment dates that are more compatible with farm cash flow cycles; in Halton, Farmland Tax has been reduced to 20% of the Residential rate
19	Develop a GTA population profile to identify the emerging consumer groups	In progress by Regions/City Working Group
22	Promote and conduct workshops and other educational opportunities to address unique GTA financial and farm business management needs. OMAFRA and business development offices may be able to tailor existing business management courses to be more GTA specific	"Growing Your Opportunities" workshops have been held in all Regions (2005-06); OMAFRA is running business management programs directed at agri-food businesses; local/regional business development offices provide business support to all types of businesses
25	Continue to promote urban development policies that encourage compact urban development, give priority to infill and re-development (including brownfields), prohibit extension of hard services like municipal water and wastewater infrastructure within agricultural areas, and retain firm urban/agricultural area boundaries. This should be done via Official Plan policies consistent with the provincial growth strategy	This action is supported by "Places to Grow Plan" and legislation and is reflected in Regional/Local growth management initiatives, including the "Durable Halton Plan"
28	Recognizing the evolving needs of farmers and reality of non-farm uses in the agriculture area, ensure Minimum Distance Separation requirements are	GTA Regions all require adherence to Minimum Distance Separation (MDS) Guidelines via their Official Plans. Local municipalities implement this via

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	included in zoning by-laws and implemented by Building Officials, and ensure there is public, staff and Council awareness of Normal Farm Practices, as represented in the Farming and Food Production Protection Act and MOE regulations governing pesticide use, Nutrient Management, etc.	their zoning by-laws. OMAFRA has provided training to Committees of Adjustment, staff and others on new Minimum Distance Separation Guidelines; in Halton two workshops were held in 2005-06 on MDS & Nutrient Management Act with OMAFRA for local building officials and other staff; "Rural Rules forum held by Halton Region Federation of Agriculture in 2006 to increase farming community, municipal staff and Councillors' understanding of regulations related to agriculture
35	Councils should consider adopting policies to permit secondary uses on the farm to enable the farm entity to improve economic viability. To ensure compatibility with existing farm and non-farm uses, secondary uses must be subject to tests that must be met based on local circumstances	Each GTA Region has policies permitting secondary uses on farms. Staff reports on the Action Plan have been presented to Councils; Halton's new Regional Official Plan contains progressive policies on on-farm businesses and will be developing Guidelines to help guide implementation
36	Adopt policies to permit value-added and agri-tainment operations that are compatible with surrounding agriculture, as these uses can increase farm income and provide an excellent opportunity to improve public appreciation of and support for GTA agriculture	Each GTA Region has policies permitting value-added and agri-tainment operations; Halton's new Regional Official Plan contains progressive policies
37	Adopt consistent transportation policies and programs for regional and local roads to ensure safe movement of farm vehicles e.g. efficient public transit to keep commuters off rural roads, slow-moving vehicle signage, consultation with farmers during transportation master planning, Class Environmental Assessments and during capital and operating budget deliberations. Farmers need to be consulted on rural road designs and upgrades (e.g. road type, alignments, shoulders, cross-sections, and sign placement)	Each GTA Region has policies promoting the safe movement of farm vehicles and equipment; Halton staff undertake annual reviews of road issues with Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee (HAAC); implements slow-moving vehicle signage and consults with farmers on transportation studies and Class EAs