

## WOMAN OF *Excellence* IN AGRICULTURE AWARD

On November 6, 2013, the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario presented Mary Ann Found of Courtice, Ontario with the 2013 Woman of Excellence in Agriculture Award. This award recognizes the contributions Mary Ann has made to the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair and to her local community through promoting agriculture.

At the Royal, Mary Ann has contributed many hours promoting agriculture as an important industry in Ontario and in our daily lives. She can be found in the Ontario Pork Producers' booth, the Ontario Cattlemen's booth or the Ontario Farm Animal Council area. No matter where she is, she is always interacting with the public.

Back home in Durham Region, Mary Ann has been described as having a passion for sharing the agriculture

story. She is one of the founding members of Farm Connections, an agriculture awareness program for Grade 3 students held in early April. Each year, there is a waiting list of teachers eager to bring their students to this experience. Mary Ann has been instrumental in helping the program grow from an annual 3 day event to adding a High School Education Day and forming an ag strategy committee to work with the agriculture community to develop plans to place agriculture education front and centre in Durham Region.

Mary Ann is the leader in ensuring that local Agriculture Fairs have a visit from the "Why Farming Matters" trailer and its programs. Currently, she is training volunteers to operate Ággie: the interactive robot - a hit with the younger fairgoers. Mary Ann is also a 4-H leader in a variety of topic areas and has served on both the local 4-H council and at the Regional level. As a retired teacher, she has realized a long held dream of building an agriculture awareness barn on the family farm where she can host school tours throughout the year.

Mary Ann is also an active Member in the Women's Institute, both in her local Branch (Maple Grove WI) and at the District level (Durham West). She is also active in her church and the Baseline Community Centre.

It was an honour to present this award to Mary Ann Found.

Submitted by Barbara Weese,

Board Director and Award Representative for FWIO



*Pictured: FWIO President-Elect, Margaret Byl (L), and Award Representative, Barbara Weese (R), present Mary Ann with her award at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair's Agriculture Luncheon of Excellence on November 6, 2013.*

**HAPPY NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK**

April 6 - 12, 2014

**"There is nothing as strong as a volunteer's heart,  
for it is where it wants to be."**

*~ Anonymous*