

# Diversity of farming in Halton Hills showcased

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT  
The Herald

From pumpkin patches to green fields, town, region and school

board councillors and staff saw the diversity of farming in Halton Hills on the Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee's (HAAC) annual farm

tour Thursday.

Over 50 people representing the Town of Halton Hills, Halton Region, the Halton Board of

Education and HAAC travelled to five farms in Halton Hills learning about sod, fruit, market gardening, cash crop, cattle export and dairy farming.

"Our aim is to get people out to the farm to gain a better perspective on what is involved in a farm operation," said HAAC president, Linda Cullingham of Acton.

"We want to give them a perspective of the investment and dollars involved in farms," she said, such as the investment in a cattle export operation like Valcor Export Ltd. owned by Albert Cormier, one of the stops on the farm tour.

Valcor Exports is one of four operations Mr. Cormier owns and operates in Halton Hills. He also has Cormdale Farms 2000, a dairy farm; Cormex Genetic Services, a consulting service to farmers by contract on health, breeding and promotion and sales and Modern Sires, an international sire program based in France.

Valcor, which was established in 1980, exported approximately 200 head of cattle and 500 embryos last year to France, Germany, Holland and the United Kingdom. The business also does all the contracting, exporting and sale of embryos, breeding females and bulls for co-operatives.

Rash Mohammed, the region's Commissioner of Planning and Development, was on the tour and said he was also impressed with the way some farmers have gone after new markets to make a profit.

"We're talking about niche agriculture here," he said. "They're using their land to produce a product for the larger urban market."

He also referred to another farm on the tour, a cash-cropping and market gardening operation owned by Dave and Claudette Taylor of RR 3, Georgetown.

"Instead of relying on traditional cash-cropping, these people have found a market for pumpkins and squash," he said. "Agricultural land can be preserved if farmers adjust to the circumstances of the market."

"I realize there are many problems in the agriculture industry but I believe agriculture will continue to be a valuable industry in Halton Region," Mr. Mohammed concluded.

But Claudette Taylor said she isn't so sure.

"I don't think we'll be seeing a new generation of farmers," she said. "It used to be the son took over from the father and the farm was passed down but nowadays, young kids can't afford to start up. With the price of land and equipment, they won't get any return for their product."

She admits she and her husband faced the same problem and that's

why several years ago, they decided to get into market gardening to supplement earnings from their cash-cropping operation. The couple has 24 acres of sweet corn, one acre of cherry tomatoes and fields of pumpkins, squash and gourds. The produce is wholesaled through the Ontario Food Terminal. Their cash-cropping operation involves 200 acres of hay which is sold to horse farms both locally and in the United States and 170 acres of grain corn, 100 acres of seed oats and 400 acres of soybeans.

"We realized we couldn't put all our eggs into one basket so we decided to diversify," she said.

Another Halton Hills couple decided to try a completely different type of farming when they realized raising Angus beef cattle wasn't profitable.

Nelson and Linda Shaw of RR, 5 Milton decided to go into sod farming.

"We wanted to try and find something in agriculture that might possibly make some money," said Mrs. Shaw. The couple has 180 acres in sod and they're now in their fourth year of business.

Since sod has a 20-month cycle, the couple are only in their second year of cutting but say the business is going well.

"The first year was really good, we thought we were on a roll but business has been off this year. It's just starting to pick up again," said Mrs. Shaw. They supply sod to companies and also lay sod for new homes, construction companies and the Ministry of transport.

Other farms on the tour, such as Andrews Scenic Acres at RR 5, Milton use marketing techniques to try and raise profit levels while Birdholm Holsteins at RR 2, Georgetown strives to have an above-average producing herd. The farm, owned by George and Verna Bird and sons, already has cows producing well above provincial average.

During the tour, town and regional councillors also learned about farmers concerns said Ms. Cullingham.

"Many farmers are concerned about severances. The potential for problems is so great. We want to keep development away from the farms," she said.

Connected to development is water usage.

"Without water, farmers can't do anything. If 20 wells start taking water from the same aquifer the farmer gets his water from, in a dry season he could have no water which means no crops."

But she said she's confident the region will listen to the concerns of HAAC when considering development and praised the region for having such a committee to work with councillors on farm-related issues.



Town of Halton Hills councillors Joe Hewitt (left) and Robert Heaton (right) who represent the rural residents of Halton Hills chatted with the Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee (HAAC) president Linda Cullingham (centre) at a market gardening farm Thursday owned by Dave and

Claudette Taylor. The councillors, Ms. Cullingham and several other Halton residents were at the farm which was one stop on HAAC's five-farm tour of different farm operations in Halton Hills. (Herald Photo)

## New youth director named at Christian Reformed Church

By Lisa Boonstoppel-Pot  
The Herald

Youth and youth education is something Tim Luimes is, has and knows a lot about. It's only natural he was chosen as the Georgetown Christian Reformed Church new youth and education director.

He's 25-years-old, holds a teaching certificate, a Master of Arts in church education and has led several youth groups.

No wonder when church leaders were searching for a candidate to share the pastoral duties of this burgeoning church with resident pastor Rev. Paul Stadt, they chose Mr. Luimes.

"Mr. Luimes has the kind of training and gifts we were looking for," said the church's main pastor, Rev. Stadt who has been the sole pastor of the church since the church's second pastor, Rev. Bert Slofstra, left in September of last year to go out west.

Much of Mr. Luimes experience with youth came from growing up with six siblings in Williamsburg, near Ottawa.

There he attended Christian grade school, went on to public high school and decided to earn a teaching degree at Calvin College (a Christian college) in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Almost four years later, he had his teaching degree and decided to immediately enter a seminary to train in youth ministry.

"I'd always enjoyed working with young people," said Mr. Luime. "While I was in Ottawa, I heard about this course in youth ministry from a pastor there and I knew it was what I wanted to get into."

He had already been leading youth groups at the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) he attended at Williamsburg.

He admits he never really wanted to be a minister.

"It scared me to think I would have to come up with wonderful sermons week after week. I also think it's an incredible burden to be a minister because you are the person everyone comes to with their problems and you're also considered the administrator of the entire church," he said.

For him, working with youth and

education is the perfect opportunity.

His position at the Georgetown CRC involves teaching six youth elders how to relate and educate youth along with teaching two church school classes and being an advisor to all youth groups and education programs.

In the little while he's been in the Georgetown community and the church, he's found the many youth's he's dealt with have a strong commitment to the Christian belief.

"This church has been most wonderful and very encouraging in the sense that a lot of young people here have not lost their faith. They still have a solid commitment to the Christian way of life," he said.

But he said there needs to be changes in youth ministry.

"Youth ministry needs to become highly relational," he said. "People within the church should realize young people need to build a relationship with them on a personal level to understand that being a Christian isn't phony. Once that relationship is established, youth

will feel free to go to that person without doubt.

"Youth are more receptive to that kind of approach than what the previous church approach, which I term the brainwash approach," he continued. "Young people today don't accept that type of approach anymore."

He believes the same changes need to be made at the adult level.

"Adults need to share their concerns to get help through their struggles and to grow in faith. But people are too embarrassed to talk about problems in their life other than things like medical problems.

Things like alcoholism and family strife aren't often brought out into the public but really, that is what the church is there for—people who are hurting, people who need a sense of Christian love."

For now, Mr. Luimes is evaluating the present youth programs at the church which involve approximately 250 (age 1-25).

Mr. Luimes said anyone who wants to talk to him about anything should feel free to call him at 877-9389.



Tim Luimes, 25, is Georgetown Christian Reformed Church's new Director of Youth and Education, a position he's well-trained for given he has a Masters of Arts degree in Church Education, has a teaching license and has worked with youths his entire life. (Herald Photo)

## Hydro introduces milk reclaimer

Ontario Hydro has introduced a milk heat reclaimer rebate program to help dairy farmers reduce their water heating costs by up to 50 per cent.

"If farmers start adding up the amount of hot water they use in the dairy barn, they'll be quite surprised at how much they'll save by using a reclaimer," says Graham Henderson, Ontario Hydro's Senior Supervisor for Agriculture.

Available commercially for the past 12 years, a milk heat reclaimer costs between \$1,500 and \$3,500 depending on make and size.

Currently 10 to 20 per cent of Ontario's 9,000 dairy farmers own reclaimers. To encourage energy savings, Ontario Hydro will pay a \$600 rebate to any Ontario dairy farmer who buys and installs an eligible model between July 1, 1991 and June 30, 1992.

After every milking, dairy farmers must heat a large amount of cold well water to 165F to clean their milking equipment. This water heating accounts for 26 per cent of all electricity used in the dairy barn, and it adds up to a lot of money. For instance, it costs \$1.50 at current electrical rates, to heat 60 gallons of cold well water to 165F for a single cleaning. If cleaning occurs twice a day, the farmer pays \$3.00 a day in hot water heating costs or over \$1,000 a year.

Normally, milk is piped from cows directly to a milk cooler, which cools the milk from cow body temperature and expels the milk's natural heat into the air. A milk heat reclaimer captures, in an outer shell, the milk's heat as it is expelled by the milk cooler. This heat is used to heat water, in an inner tank, to 120F. This warm water is then supplied to the existing water heater to be heated to 165F.