

Farm aid

If ever there was an argument to be made to buy local, the sad tale of Halton's vanishing farmland provides a pretty good case study.

According to a recent report to Halton's planning and public works committee, farming in the GTA in general—and more specifically in Halton—is a dying profession.

The cost of land in Halton is prohibitive and more than half of the prime land actively used for agricultural purposes is being rented out by land speculators hoping to cash in on future development.

The problem is, many of these rented parcels of prime agricultural land are tied up in short-term rental arrangements, making it impossible for growers to make long-term commitments to, for example, an orchard.

Another pressure on Halton farms is the necessity to get bigger or perish, since stagnating commodity prices demand higher production in order for farms to survive.

Further complicating the problem is the disconnect between agriculture and young people in Halton.

According to one member of regional council, the Province's failure to protect prime agricultural land with its greenbelt legislation—combined with Places to Grow population targets for Halton communities like Halton Hills and Milton—has opened up agricultural lands to development.

"The issue here is the Province is talking out of both sides of its mouth about Places to Grow and supporting agriculture," said Milton Councillor Barry Lee.

Consultant Margaret Walton also agrees with Lee's assessment that agricultural lands were missed when the provincially-protected greenbelt was created.

"We have to get through to the Province that in order for agriculture to continue in the area, it has to be profitable and sustainable," she said.

Meanwhile, for consumers who believe buying foods grown close-to-home is best from an environmental and economic point of view, this report should sound an alarm that, without provincial intervention, the term "grown in Halton" could—like the Region's prime agricultural land—disappear forever.

Letters to the editor policy

Letters must include an address and daytime telephone number. Anonymous letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 150 words and may be edited for content and/or length. Publication is not guaranteed.

E-mail: jmcghie@independentfreepress.com
Mail or drop off: Independent & Free Press, 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown, ON., L7G 4B1.

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Steve Nease

905-873-0301
Publisher: Ken Nugent
General manager: Steve Foreman
 (sforeman@independentfreepress.com)
Retail advertising manager: Cindi Campbell
 (ccampbell@independentfreepress.com)
Managing editor: John McGhie
 (jmcghie@independentfreepress.com)
Distribution manager: Nancy Geissler
 (ngeissler@independentfreepress.com)
Classifieds
 Kristie Pells
 (classified@independentfreepress.com)
Accounting
 Rose Marie Gauthier
Editorial
 Cynthia Gamble: News editor
 (cgamble@independentfreepress.com)
 Ted Brown: Photography
 (tbrown@independentfreepress.com)
 Lisa Tallyn: Staff writer
 (ltallyn@independentfreepress.com)
 Eamonn Maher: Staff writer/sports
 (emaher@independentfreepress.com)

WEB POLL RESULTS

Will new restrictions preventing drivers under 21 years of age from having any alcohol in their system make Ontario's roads safer?

- Yes (50%)
- No (42%)
- Not sure (8%)

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Letters to the editor

Bylaw needed to curb 'hog' noise

Dear Mayor Bonnette and councillors,

For some time now we have been enduring excessive noise on our street (Adamson) in Norval. Our rights to civil peace and quiet are knowingly and deliberately being violated.

The main source of this irritation comes from motorcycles on their weekend trek to and from the Forks of the Credit. Sometimes there are hordes of them.

The main source of this irritation comes from "hogs" or Harley-Davidson bikes—twin cylinder machines in which the owners have removed the muffler systems and installed straight pipes so as to make as much noise as possible.

When these bikes are driven past our home and accelerate as they climb the hill out of the village, the very ground shakes and all conversation in the backyard ceases till they fade out of sound.

I have owned many motorcycles in the past, and they are an enjoyable form of recreation. But there is absolutely no need to make as much racket as possible to enjoy the many

fine qualities these machines have to offer. As usual, it is a case of the few causing problems for all.

Bylaws have been implemented in some municipalities to try and curb this annoying problem, but it has been somewhat of a problem to catch these offenders on the road and make the charges stick.

It seems Edmonton has a test that checks the bikes at idle, and another when revving, and if they exceed 96 decibels, a \$250 ticket is issued with fines up to \$10,000 for repeat offenders.

The argument might be that they are being discriminated against, as there are many other noisy types of machines, but when one deliberately removes the manufacturer's sound suppressors to create as much noise as possible, this argument is moot.

A bylaw aimed at enforcing a little peace and quiet, similar to how other municipalities are treating this problem, would be much appreciated.

William Pomeroy, Norval

Please justify arena cost

Dear editor,
 Could someone from our Town council justify (in this paper) how and why \$40,000 will be spent on finding the best site for arenas?

Marjorie Thomson, Acton

Party Cinemas thanked

Dear editor,

The Georgetown Bread Basket would like to thank Frank and Anthony from Party Cinemas (Movies in the park- Glen Williams) as well as all the movie-goers who attended the evening movies and who will do so next time.

You gave generously so that Frank and Anthony could bring us 451 lbs. of food recently.

This time of year is a critical time as our major food drives from the spring and fall are quickly depleting, so any assistance over the summer is greatly appreciated.

We would also like to thank the young people who accepted food in lieu of birthday presents and for those of you who generously share the produce from your garden with those in need. Every little bit helps take a bite out of hunger this summer.

Here is the website for Party Cinemas so that your readers can check when the next movie will be shown in the park in Glen Williams: www.partycinemas.com

*Maryse Mallet-Sinnis,
 Georgetown Bread Basket
 Media co-ordinator*