

# All about change!

Brandalea Farm, along with other operations across the county, is currently realizing the impact of the Nutrient Management Act on conventional agriculture. Legislation regarding waste management is now indicating the current acceptable storage structures for waste management. Farming operations must now be able to adequately store 365 days worth of liquid waste and 200 days worth of solid waste. Fortunately for the Branders their farm has always been 'one step ahead' of their neighbors and the changes in the Farm Environmental Plans are not causing too much grief for them but Mr. Brander noted that for many farmers these regulations may prove to be overwhelming.

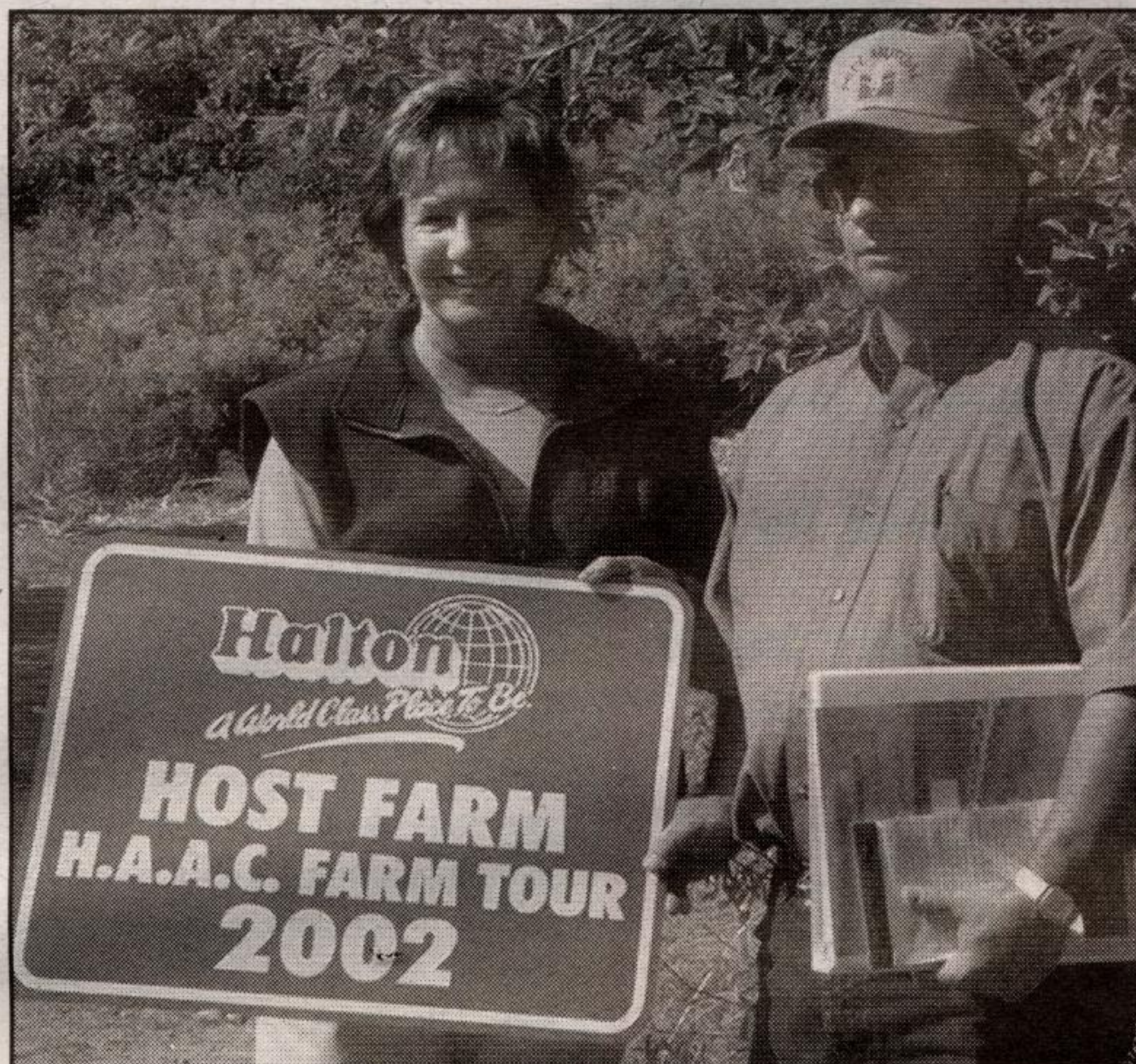
In 1980, Bert and Lauraine Andrews purchased a "run down" 100-acre farm on 10th Sideroad with the plans of operating a pick your own berry farm. Mr. Andrews realized however, that his pick your own farm had to diversify into an entertainment/education spot in order to continue its appeal. Therefore, that small berry farm has grown over the last twenty-two years to include 184 acres of fruits and vegetables and an additional 600 acres of cash crops (winter wheat, soybeans and hay). Along with the pick-your-own crops (including rhubarb, asparagus, strawberries, gourds, pumpkins, flowers, and much more), the Andrew's farm also offers a play area, wagon rides and a farm market. Sold on-site are ready picked fruit and vegetables, jams, jellies, pies and tarts, honey,

maple syrup, gift baskets and gift items, juices and frozen fruit. Branching off from Andrew's Scenic Acres is Scotch Block Winery.

In 1999 a winery license was granted to Scotch Block making it the first licensed winery in Halton Region. Over the last two years this young winery has earned 10 national awards of excellence, including a gold medal for Cassis Black Current dessert wine. Currently 28 different wine varieties are available (ranging from dry fruit and grape wines to ice and dessert wines).

Andrew's Scenic Acres & Scotch Block Winery have now become a popular tourist spot in Halton.

The Halton Farm Tour is intended as a forum for Regional and local elected representatives, advisory committee members and staff members to learn about Halton's agricultural industry and some of the issues facing our farmers. The 2002 HAAC Farm Tour helped the attendees understand the impacts of industrialization of farmland, new legislature on farming operational practices and agri-tourism.



## Brandalea Farm Hosts 2002 HAAC Farm Tour

Regional Chairman, Joyce Savoline, presents Harry Brander with a gate sign to show appreciation for his involvement in this year's 2002 HAAC Farm Tour. Harry Brander's farm, Brandalea Farm, was the second stop on this year's very successful tour.



## Givin' you the dirt

By SEAN JAMES



## Fall Clean-up

It's not that the season is over. I refuse to accept that until the snow flies. However, now is the time to discuss putting the garden to bed.

There's some debate, but my feeling is to leave as many perennials standing until spring. This adds winter interest from all the seed heads and dried leaves. It protects the plant from cold winter winds and holds the snow. Remember your garden is an ecosystem. Leaving plants standing gives a winter home to all the insects that are beneficial to your garden.

Like all hard and fast rules, there are exceptions. Plants that suffer from leaf diseases are the examples. If you have a peony, cut it to the ground and clean up the leaves after frost has turned them brown to prevent the fungal disease, botrytis. Tall bearded iris should be cut to a six

inch fan and clean away all the yellow and brown leaves. Foliage and perennials which suffer from fungi such as powdery mildew and black spot should also be cleaned away. Don't put these wastes into the compost since pathogens may survive to re-infect next year.

Many folks, usually the guys, think about fall pruning. QUIT IT. The only reason to prune in the fall is to reduce the vigor of a particular plant. Trouble is, unless you're an expert, you don't know how or how much to prune. You can do a great deal of damage with fall pruning.

The neat freaks out there run out with a rake every time a leaf hits the ground. Heaven forbid nature's great plan should be allowed to unfold! If you're really concerned, rake or blow the leaves onto the grass and use the mower to chop them up and squirt them back into the bed.

We all need to think less about fertilizing and more about adding leaves and compost. Putting an inch

of well broken down compost on the exposed soil is a wonderful thing for your garden.

Having done all this, sit back and enjoy the incoming garden catalogues. Then get out there in the early spring, just as the bulbs are coming up and clean up the old perennial growth.

### Tip (or at least thought!) of the month

There's a lot of talk about how evil pesticides are. I think that fertilizers are a greater problem. Fertilizers do not break down after application. They leach into groundwater and into our streams and lakes.

Remember, composting is a friendlier alternative. Perhaps we also need to think about lowering our standards a smidge. Put up with a slightly less green lawn and flowers the size Mother Nature intended.

Enough preaching. Go enjoy the garden.

## Rabies Clinic

On Saturday, October 26 brought to you by the Upper Credit Humane Society, 10 am to 2 pm. Lions Hall, 43 Mill St. (beside Memorial Arena), Georgetown. \$15. For more info call 905-873-7086.



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