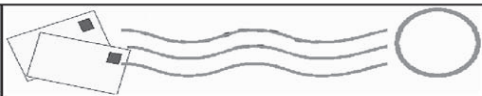


Letters



Food crisis not a simple issue

To the editor

Re: *Food Crisis here before Bio-fuels*
In the Feb. 11 article "State of Their Union", Mike O'Leary refers to the US Government's support of bio-fuels - "Even though they have caused a food crisis world-wide." Like many others, I had the initial reaction of how foolish, if not immoral it is, to divert food from starving people, in order to fuel our North American automobiles.

If only it were so simple!

I believe that the World Food Crisis, O'Leary is referring to is the dramatic (but also short lived) run-up in corn, soybean and wheat futures, which occurred, in early 2008. The phenomenal increase in commodity prices had farmers dreaming of riches, but in fact had very little to do with what farmers received or what end users were willing to pay for crops. At that time the number of futures contracts held by investors outside of Agriculture skyrocketed. Enormous sums of money now betrayed by hi-tech stocks and then fearful of the housing market, moved to buy commodity contracts such as gold, oil, corn, wheat and soybean. At the same time world wheat reserves reached record lows due to drought in Australia and a crop failure in much of central Europe. While the nightly newscast reported the dramatic increase in the cost of wheat, the simplistic view emerged that ethanol made from grain must be the villain. In fact, in North America our ethanol plants are fuelled primarily by corn, not food grade wheat.

In my view the real crisis is the disparity of income throughout the world, not a lack of grains. We Canadian taxpayers recognise the need to provide aid when needed, be it a refuge camp in Ethiopia or to an unemployed family in our own community. In doing so, let us recognise that the root of the problem is the lack of the ability to earn an adequate income, rather than imagining a world food shortage because we are using crops to make fuels. I don't pretend to know how to solve starvation in much of our world. We, as North American farmers would like to be part of the solution. However, we cannot continue to produce surplus

commodities, be it corn, wheat, beef or pork, only to dump it onto a world market, with returns less than our costs of production.

While crop shortages may make news they are short lived, while grain surpluses last for years. Our productive capacity in North and South America and most of Europe is enormous. The wheat shortage of 18 months ago is gone. At present the North American year-ending stocks for wheat is projected to be a whopping 40 per cent of annual usage. Today, Ontario produces three times the amount of soft wheats, which we can use. The rest has to find a market somewhere else in the world (ie. Egypt) where we must match the lowest price in the world.

In other industries if there is a surplus, industry reacts by closing factories and reducing supply. In Agriculture when we, as individual farmers, see a decline in prices we react by saying, "Well in order to pay our bills we must produce more." Rather than asking Government (taxpayers) to subsidize Agricultural exports, only to compete against the primary producers in impoverished nations, we are actively seeking new industrial markets for our products. The soy house now being completed here in Acton is an example of the innovative work being done. We are manufacturing superior, environmentally friendly products made from agricultural crops.

Only through such innovation and diversification can North American farmers continue to be economically viable. The truth is, producing food alone does not pay very well! The use of agricultural land to produce non-food crops is not new. In the southern United States cotton has always been a major crop grown on nearly ten million acres. I'm told that prior to 1950 over 15 percent of all cropland was used to grow "fuel" for horses just to power farm implements.

We read so many articles, which find fault with whatever new energy source is proposed. Let us recognise the positive impact of renewable, clean, affordable, made in Canada bio-fuels.

Keith Aitken
Acton

'Sad' situation with MSB surplus land

To the Editor,

It is sad that this situation has gotten this far. My question is why the Ontario Liberal Minister of Education will not intervene? The new minister is Leona Dombrowsky. I would suggest that the residents in Acton who are upset about this should email her and ask her why?

She was just sworn in

January so let's welcome her to her new position, and don't forget to cc Dalton McGuinty. We are now in an election year, so please remember to bring this issue up to the Liberal candidate when they come knocking on doors in Acton as well as all of their other indiscretions. I would also suggest to town council that during the course

of negotiations that they include a clause that the money they spend on purchasing this land stay in Acton so that the greedy school trustees, particularly Gillian Tuck Kutarna, in Georgetown, don't benefit from their unneighbourly vote to sell off Acton parkland for their own benefit.

Steve Attwell
Acton

Cancer volunteers needed now

Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills provides options for all cancer patients throughout all of Halton Hills. The patient list has increased dramatically since December 2009; the number of drives to and from treatment centres has almost doubled. We have almost 50 drivers, including 4 drivers who live in Acton, and only on the odd occasion will a driver have more than one patient in the car at the same time. Their compassion and selflessness is unequalled.

The list goes on with regard to what is provided free of charge, for example food supplements, wheelchairs, walkers, bathroom equipment, beds, wigs and hats, palliative care assistance, Nia, Reiki & Yoga, just to mention a few.

Cancer Assistance Services has its very roots in Halton Hills. This organization has and always will treat all cancer patients with respect and dignity. When you call the office between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday to Friday, you

will talk to a real person. We have no answering machine to maneuver through to talk to someone. You'll be embraced with kindness and empathy; and the knowledge that all your concerns will be addressed.

Our major fundraiser is the April Residential

Campaign. Volunteers are needed to deliver the request for donation to every household in Acton and surrounding area. Please help! Call 905-702-8886 and say "Yes, I can help". You won't regret it.

Anna Mae Moore
Residential Campaign
Manager

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him."
St. John 4:23 KJV

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Pastor Andrew Paton
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Sunday at 11:00am • Counseling available
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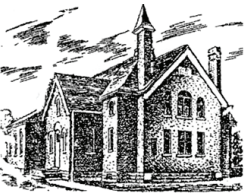
Our Church is located at the Ballinacra Community Center, Downstairs
For more information call
519-853-5657

LOOK WHO IS TURNING
5
MILL STREET CROSSING
Celebrate With Us
MARCH 14th Thru 21st
SPECIALS ALL WEEK
With this ad buy 1
FISH AND CHIPS
Receive the 2nd one for
5 Bucks

Happy 13th Birthday
Ashley

Love from
Mom, Dad
Jessica, Buddy,
& Grandma Raimie

Knox Presbyterian Church

 44 Main St. N P.O. Box 342
Acton, Ontario L7J 2M4
(519)853-2360

Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

In a world of change, come and worship the unchanging God.

March 7 SENSE (Luke 13:1-9)
March 14 Communion Sunday - STUFF
March 21 MAIN THING (I Philippians 3:4b-14)
March 28 Palm Sunday
NOT DESERVING DEATH (Luke 23:1-49)