

## Local Farmers Named County Sustainability Group Bursary Winners

Two South Marysburgh farmers have been acknowledged for their commitment to sustainability and awarded bursaries from the Prince Edward County Sustainability Group.

David Prinzen of Walkerdale Farm near Milford and Neil Usher and Rebecca Sweetman of Hawkridge Homestead on Morrison Point Road each received \$1,000 bursaries.

This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year that County Sustainability Group has granted an award of \$1000 to a farmer in Prince Edward County who best demonstrates the values of ecologically sound, sustainable farm practices which regenerate soil health, protect vital resources such as water and biodiversity, reduce the need for synthetic inputs and prioritizes renewable energy sources.

“Our group recognizes the importance of farmers and agriculture to the rural community and province. In particular, we are grateful for sustainable farmers who are doing their utmost to protect the health of the land and all living creatures by implementing best practices. We want this award to demonstrate our gratitude and help their long term success in the very challeng-

ing occupation of farming,” noted a news release from the County Sustainability Group.

We especially acknowledge, with this bursary, the challenges faced by young farmers just starting out in organic farming or trying to maintain or expand an existing operation. This is an expensive undertaking and not for the faint of heart. Every little bit can help, perhaps going towards new seeds, greenhouses, equipment, soil revitalization, irrigation, livestock, land leases, renewable energy or any number of important aspects of modern organic farming.

The funding is raised through the ongoing fundraiser sales of rain barrel each spring.

David is a 24-year-old, third generation dairy farmer in Prince Edward County who has pursued his lifelong passion of starting his own farm in Cherry Valley in April of 2020. He grows cover crops to feed his 25 milking cows to

reduce land usage and improve soil health as well as use minimal tillage. He's installed a wind turbine in the nearby pond to improve water quality and decrease algae blooms during the summer. He's done soil samples and submitted a nutrient management plan as well as a soil health plan with the local farm centre. With these sustainable systems in place, he plans to continue reducing the ecological impact of the dairy operation in order to make

the farm a resilient and ecologically sustainable operation.

Neil & Rebecca continue to farm using organic, permaculture, and regenerative principles while also working toward publishing more on their research and experiments in anti-capitalist farming. They'll be adding permanent beds in their greenhouse which was their second full winter growing year-round in the unheated high poly tunnel. What they

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David Prinzen of Walkerdale Farm, near Milford receives the bursary from County Sustainability Group representative, Don Ross.

—County Sustainability Group Photo

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**T: 613.471.1816 E: themirror@kos.net W: www.southmarysburghmirror.com**

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