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# York farmer sees dwindling membership

BY JOAN RANSBERRY  
Staff Writer

The face of farming in York Region is changing, but not necessarily for the better, says the new president of the York Federation of Agriculture.

Markham's Brian Reynolds replaces Carl Wierenga, a Holland Landing vegetable and flower grower, atop the organization, which represents about 800 farms.

While planning controls have attempted to protect the land base over the past 20 years, Reynolds said the

number of farms in York is shrinking in the face of endless urban growth. And few people know how to stop the bleeding.

"Our numbers are dwindling. What really can be done? It's difficult to deal with," he said.

Reynolds is no stranger to the federation's executive, having served as a director for the past six years. In his new position, Reynolds is working in a volunteer capacity with the three levels of government. His task is to push for improving the eco-

nomic and social well being of farmers and their communities.

Raised on a farm in Prince Edward County (south of Trenton), his father owned a mixed agriculture operation.

Reynolds has been a farmer for 36 years. He graduated from the University of Guelph in 1965 with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture.

Since graduation, he's been active in agriculture through farming, agrifood or agricultural supply businesses. However, 23 of the past 36 years have been spent directly in farming with experience in cash crop, beef, hog, and dairy operations.

He's currently involved in a shared cash crop operation in Mount Albert while also running his own a cash crop operation on rented land near Stouffville Road.

Reynolds shares the views of fellow federation mem-

bers: agriculture is a resource worth protecting. Indeed, farming is a significant part

of the region's economy and supports thousands of jobs. Reynolds knows agriculture enhances the quality of life for residents of York Region through the products it markets and by preserving a rural countryside.

Reynolds, 58, is an optimist by nature and when it comes to farming, he keeps his eye on the future.

"The federation will keep the wheels turning," he vowed. "It's a worthwhile organization. I'll look out for the interest of our farmers."

On a personal note, family is important. Reynolds is married to Christine and has three children — Jennifer, Jacqueline and Scott. On top of that he enjoys showing grandchildren Connor, 5, and three-year-old Chad around the region's farms.



**BRIAN REYNOLDS:** New president of the York Federation of Agriculture.

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Thursday, November 29  
Dylan Wickens Band 9:00 pm

Friday, November 30  
Karaoke with Liza 9:00 pm

Saturday, December 1  
The Grace Trio Band 9:30 pm

Coming December 9: Open Jam with Pierre  
Watch for details on our New Year's Eve Bash

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**THURSDAY MORNINGS**

8:00 a.m. Hwy. 7 & Woodbine  
8:05 a.m. Markville Main Entrance  
8:15 a.m. Markham Railroad Station  
8:25 a.m. Stouffville Legion  
8:45 a.m. Uxbridge-Toronto St. & Main St.

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