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17 Tales of the unexplained
alive across York Region

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Wet weather didn't dampen food drive

500 acres planted to aid Third World

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
Staff Writer

York Region farmers didn't let this summer's wet weather discourage them from extending a helping hand to the hungry.

Wheat, soy bean and corn being grown in York Region to combat world hunger is expected to translate into more than \$400,000 through the York Foodgrains Project.

Money from the bumper crop will soon be on its way to the hunger-stricken areas of the world.

Participation in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank has never been better, project coordinator Dr. Terry O'Connor said. "We just keep gaining more interest as the years pass," Dr. O'Connor said.

HARVESTING UNDER WAY

Launched by the York Soil and Crop Improvement Association, the local project is producing a healthy yield. The harvest on some of the crops is under way now.

"York Region farmers have collectively planted about 500 acres," Dr. O'Connor said.

The participating farm plots in York Region are marked by a sign letting people know the crop is the farmer's ammunition in the war against world hunger.



STAFF PHOTOS/JOERD WITTEVEN

Richard Reesor (left) and Jeff Steiner help fill the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, a program that raises funds for developing countries, at a Whitchurch-Stouffville farm.

City may get more of York's money

Region may have to send \$8 million more to Toronto

BY ROY GREEN
Staff Writer

York Region politicians are complaining the Greater Toronto Area pooling scheme is getting deeper and wider, with local taxpayers likely on the hook for more than \$85 million next year.

The region's share of the GTA pool in 2005 will be \$7 million to \$8 million more than the \$79.3 million sent to Toronto this year, finance commissioner Sandra Cartwright said in a report this week.

15 CENTS OF TAX DOLLAR

That will bring the total transferred from York to Toronto to more than \$650 million since the province legislated the pooling program in 1997 to ease Toronto's costs for social housing and welfare.

The region's 2004 contribution amounts to 15 cents of the regional tax dollar, the second-largest item in the operating budget. According to chairperson Bill Fisch, York Region pays more than any other GTA municipality.

YORK PAYS FOR GROWTH

"An increase of \$8 million means 1.75 per cent more (in taxes) we have to find before we can even begin to think about providing services for our own residents," Mr. Fisch said. "In the GTA, we pay the most because of our growth pattern. Peel is bigger than York but pays about 30 per cent less."

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