

Grain Farmers of Ontario

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



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Annual Report 2024



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Mission

Our mission is to build, defend, and promote an inclusive, innovative, and sustainable business environment that enables grain farmer-members the opportunity to prosper.

Vision

Thriving farms. Responsible production. Trusted grain farmers.

Core Values

We are committed to:

OUR FARMER-MEMBERS

We believe in working together to deliver excellent services that create real value for our farmer-members.

OUR TEAM

We believe in providing an environment where people are respected and passionate about their work and are able to reach their full potential.

OUR COMMUNITY

We believe in equity, diversity, and inclusion. All people and their ideas are welcome in our community.

OUR RESULTS

We believe in having a winning attitude that drives the achievement of our goals efficiently and effectively.

OUR INNOVATION

We believe in innovation and having a collaborative, flexible, and adaptive approach.

OUR HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

We believe in leading by example, demonstrating ethics, trust, transparency, and teamwork in all we do.



Focus areas

Five key focus areas provide for the growth of our organization and its farmer-members. Each area has specific objectives that the Board of Directors, leadership team, and staff work toward.



ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC TRUST

Advocating for a positive policy environment to ensure a sustainable future for farmer-members. Building confidence, trust, and support for modern grain farming among consumers.

PROTECTING AND GROWING MARKETS

Increasing the usage and value of Ontario grains in domestic and export markets.

FARM SUSTAINABILITY

Providing farmer-members with the tools and knowledge to be economically sustainable while meeting their commitments to the environment and society.

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Investing in research, supporting innovation and knowledge transfer to enhance farmer-member profitability and sector competitiveness.

GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

Representing our farmer-member interests in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Ensuring open and effective communications. Living the core values of the organization.

Messages



JEFF HARRISON
Chair



CROSBY DEVITT
CEO

The theme of the 2024 March Classic was “Advancing our Strong Roots” - honouring the foundation of the agriculture industry in Ontario and looking ahead to its bright future. Leading Grain Farmers of Ontario towards that future is both a privilege and an honour, as is working with a dedicated and supportive Executive, Board of Directors, and staff.

My foundation is rooted in Quinte Region, where I farm with my wife, Janie, and our four children. I learned the value of hard work and love of farming from my parents; they inspired me to pursue my farming career and sparked my commitment to working with and for farmers as a leader. My leadership journey started as a delegate with the Ontario Soybean Growers before joining District 12 (Durham, Northumberland, Kawartha, Peterborough, Hastings) when Grain Farmers of Ontario formed in 2010; chairing the District, serving as director, and then as vice chair of the Board, I was proud to take on the role of chair in 2024 with the support of the Grain Farmers of Ontario Board.

Over my long history with Grain Farmers of Ontario, I have worked to advance our organization's long legacy of steadfast advocacy for our farmer-members. Many of the issues that we discussed at the Board table over the past year are issues that have been on our agendas for many years - but we have never stopped fighting for farmer-members. This year, we continued to advocate for the passage of Bill C-234 to remove carbon taxes from grain drying; other issues, like the Seaway Strike, cropped up suddenly, and the Board and staff jumped into action to mitigate its impact on the agriculture sector. And, we have seen some success; this year, Ontario's grain farmers received their first payout from the revised Ontario Risk Management Program. The program responded to the market conditions of 2023. However, we know that increased government funding is still necessary and will continue to advocate on your behalf.

Grain Farmers of Ontario's roots are strong because of the leaders who came before me; I'd like to thank past chair Brendan Byrne for his dedication, leadership, and support. Brendan continued as director of District 1 (Essex) until June of 2024 before resigning to take on a role as a member of the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission. We look forward to working with Brendan in his new role.

Grain Farmers of Ontario is always looking to the future and working to advance the grains and oilseed industry; however, sometimes, it's nice to sit back and reflect on our successes and achievements. In this year's annual report, we are celebrating those successes.

In October, 2023, the release of a report by MNP underscored just how successful we've been: the report showed that the Ontario grain and oilseed industry is an economic powerhouse, generating \$27 billion in direct and indirect economic impact and employing more than 90,000 Ontarians - that's a 60 per cent economic growth since 2010. The growth of the industry is a testament to the hard work, resiliency, and dedication of Ontario's grain and oilseed farmers and the broader agriculture industry that supports them.

While we can celebrate our successes, we recognize that there is still much to be done to ensure that our winning streak continues into the future. Farming is a risky business, and there are many issues that Grain Farmers of Ontario continues to advocate for on behalf of farmer-members. Fertilizer supply and tariffs, carbon tax, risk management programs, environmental policies, trade, and transportation stoppages were among the many issues that were at the top of our agenda over the past year, and will continue to be top priorities. There is vital research on weeds, diseases, pests, and environmental issues, as well as ongoing extension work to ensure farmers have the tools and resources they need to be successful. And we continue to reach out to the non-farming public to help them learn about grains and grain farming and where their food comes from.

While we haven't solved all the issues, there have been incremental gains that we can point to as 'wins' for our farmer-members - and we will continue to work on your behalf to advance the industry.

All of this would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of the Board of Directors, delegates, and staff. I am always amazed at how much we can accomplish when we all work together for the good of the industry, and I express my sincerest thanks for the contributions of our dedicated team.

Crop Representation

Grain Farmers of Ontario represents 28,000 farmer-members who grow barley, corn, oats, soybeans, and wheat. Most grow a rotation of these crops.

Production numbers are harvested acres and harvested tonnes based on 2023 Statistics Canada data. Farmer-member numbers are derived from Grain Farmers of Ontario's database.



BARLEY

Production: 78,000 tonnes
Harvested acres: 51,900 acres
Members: 1,273



CORN

Production: 9.63 million tonnes
Harvested acres: 2.22 million acres
Members: 16,833



OATS

Production: 72,500 tonnes
Harvested acres: 54,300 acres
Members: 1,002



SOYBEANS

Production: 4.04 million tonnes
Harvested acres: 2.88 million acres
Members: 22,399



WHEAT

Production: 2.81 million tonnes
Harvested acres: 1.13 million acres
Members: 16,038

Board of Directors

Grain Farmers of Ontario is divided into 15 districts.

A total of 150 delegates are elected across the province. Delegate representation within each district is based on production levels. Each district is represented by one director on the Board of Directors.

DISTRICT 1 - ESSEX

Brendan Byrne (to June, 2024)
Grace Pearson (from July, 2024)
Comber, ON
grace.mullen0@gmail.com

DISTRICT 4 - MIDDLESEX

Steve Twynstra
Ailsa Craig, ON
steve@twilightacrefarms.ca

DISTRICT 7 - WATERLOO, OXFORD

Angela Zilke
Embros, ON
angzilke@gmail.com

DISTRICT 9 - PERTH

Josh Boersen
Sebringville, ON
jboersen@gmail.com

DISTRICT 2 - KENT

Gus Ternoey
Tilbury, ON
gus@dashwheelfarms.ca

DISTRICT 5 - ELGIN, NORFOLK

Scott Persall
Waterford, ON
spersall.sp@gmail.com

DISTRICT 8 - HURON

Keith Black
Belgrave, ON
bkblack@hurontel.on.ca

DISTRICT 10 - GREY, BRUCE, WELLINGTON

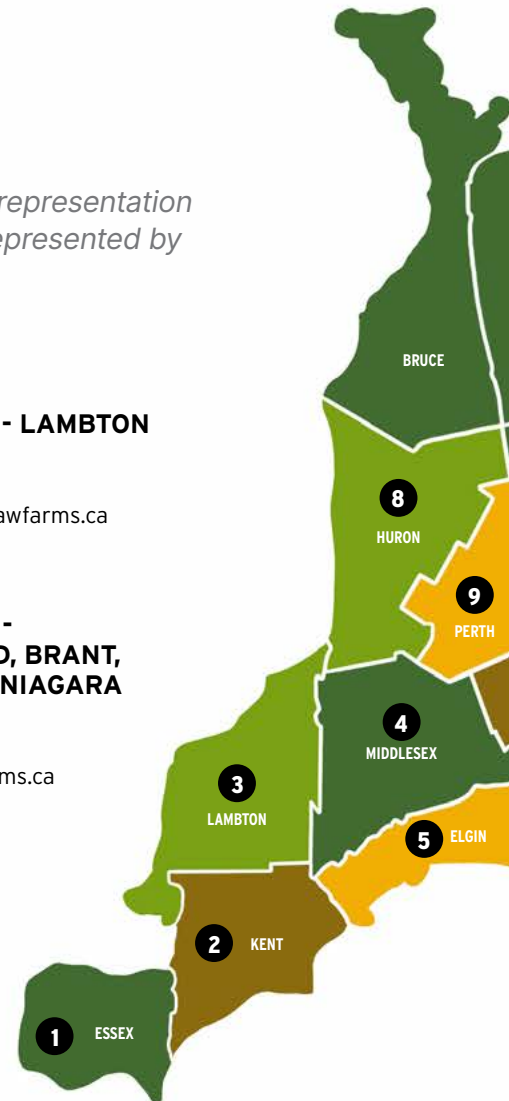
Steve Lake
Elora, ON
lake.steve@gmail.com

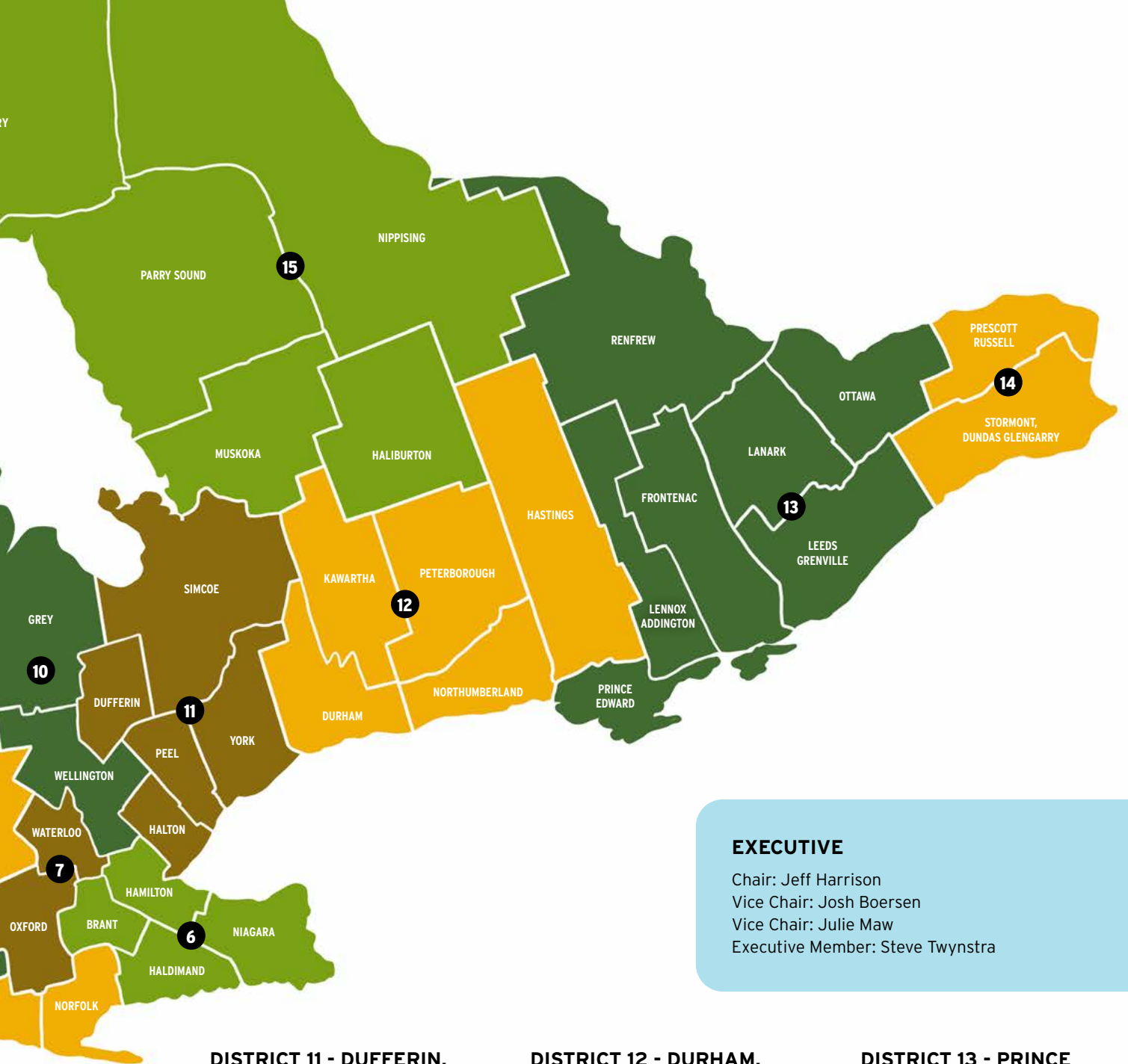
DISTRICT 3 - LAMBTON

Julie Maw
Courtright, ON
julie@mooremawfarms.ca

DISTRICT 6 - HALDIMAND, BRANT, HAMILTON, NIAGARA

Jeff Barlow
Hannon, ON
jeff@barlowfarms.ca





EXECUTIVE
 Chair: Jeff Harrison
 Vice Chair: Josh Boersen
 Vice Chair: Julie Maw
 Executive Member: Steve Twynstra

DISTRICT 11 - DUFFERIN, SIMCOE, HALTON, PEEL, YORK
 Leo Blydorp
 Amaranth, ON
 leo.blydorp@gmail.com

DISTRICT 12 - DURHAM, NORTHUMBERLAND, KAWARTHA, PETERBOROUGH, HASTINGS
 Jeff Harrison
 Quinte West, ON
 jeffh.gfo@gmail.com

DISTRICT 13 - PRINCE EDWARD, LENNOX, ADDINGTON, FRONTENAC, LANARK, LEEDS, GRENVILLE, RENFREW, OTTAWA
 Lloyd Crowe
 Picton, ON
 gfolloyd@gmail.com

DISTRICT 14 - PRESCOTT, RUSSELL, STORMONT, DUNDAS, GLENGARRY
 Scott Fife
 Finch, ON
 scott.fife@outlook.com

DISTRICT 15 - NORTHERN ONTARIO
 Chuck Amyot
 New Liskeard, ON
 charlesamyot@gmail.com

Our farmer-members

A core values commitment

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Grain Farmers of Ontario strives to build strong relationships with federal and provincial elected officials to ensure that farmer-members' voices are heard.

Ontario's premier, Doug Ford, made a surprise appearance at the Grain Farmers of Ontario 2024 March Classic - the annual event that brings together more than 800 Grain Farmers of Ontario farmer-members and industry and government representatives.

While it was the premier's first visit to the March Classic, it was just one of the many opportunities that Grain Farmers of Ontario had to get the issues that affect farmer-members in front of legislators - the Board of Directors and staff regularly connect with MPs and MPPs to make sure that the grain and oilseed industry is at the top of their agenda. At the top of the list in 2024 was the carbon tax, with Grain Farmers of Ontario taking the lead in lobbying for the passage of Bill C-234, an Act to amend the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act that would see exemptions from the federal carbon tax on fuel for on-farm uses such as grain drying. Partnering with colleagues from the Atlantic Grains Council and the Grain Growers of Québec, Grain Farmers of Ontario hosted its annual reception in Ottawa in June 2023, providing Board members and staff with the opportunity to connect with decision-makers on Parliament Hill, including the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, shadow minister of agriculture, senators, MPs, and Parliament Hill staff. Regular visits to Ottawa to meet directly with legislators throughout the year - maintaining Grain Farmers of Ontario's reputation as one of the top lobbyists on the Hill and as a trusted voice for Ontario farmers - kept the issues relevant

to Ontario's grain and oilseed producers front and centre. While Bill C-234 stalled after the Senate made amendments, sending the bill back to the House of Commons, Grain Farmers of Ontario continues to make the case for carbon tax relief.

RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM SUCCESS

In May 2024, grain farmers who participated in the Ontario Risk Management Program (RMP) received post-harvest payments under the newly revised RMP. The 2023 growing season was the first time that the enhanced design of the Ontario RMP, put in place by the Ontario government in 2020, was put to the test for Ontario grain and oilseed farmers. Results show that the program worked well to respond to market conditions faced by farmers, which saw market prices fall below the cost of production.

Grain Farmers of Ontario extended their appreciation for the provincial government's support of grain and oilseed farmers across the province with the Risk Management Program by awarding Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Minister Lisa Thompson and the Ontario government with the Grain Farmers of Ontario Gloves of Gratitude. The award features a set of work gloves representing the hard work and dedication of Ontario farmers and the government to ensure that Ontario has a thriving grain and oilseed sector.

"The program's improved design responded to the market conditions of the 2023 growing season, allowing grain farmers to focus on growing crops that people in Ontario, Canada and around the world rely on," says Jeff Harrison, Grain Farmers of Ontario Chair.

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“We wanted to thank Minister Lisa Thompson and Premier Doug Ford for designing the RMP so that it can work for grains and oilseed farmers in Ontario.”

Premier Ford
at the 2024 March classic



RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

INVESTMENT IN RESEARCH

The Sustainable Canadian Agriculture Program, a federal-provincial-territorial program, invested in research projects that benefit the grain and oilseed industry.

- \$5.7 million, matched by an additional \$4.8 million from industry for a total investment of up to \$10.5 million over five years to support the national Cropping Systems Cluster in support of research advancements in corn, soybeans, and oats.
- \$11.2 million, with an additional \$9.3 million from producer groups and industry, to support the National Wheat Cluster's nationwide research.
- \$5.25 million to support a new National Barley Cluster, matched by \$4.3 million from industry and producer groups.

CLEAN FUEL REGULATIONS

Biofuels are a critical market for Ontario corn, representing 33 per cent of end-use market utilization. Across North America, demand for low-carbon biofuels is expected to grow. Canada's Clean Fuel Regulations were introduced in 2022 as a tool to help reduce the greenhouse gas emissions associated with transportation fuel produced and used in Canada. Grain Farmers of Ontario has advocated on behalf of farmer-members throughout the process of developing and implementing the regulations.

In November 2023, Canadian agricultural feedstocks were approved for legislative recognition for the land use and biodiversity (LUB) criteria under the Clean Fuel Regulations.

Legislative recognition means that crops grown in Canada for biofuel use are pre-determined to comply with the regulations' LUB criteria. Without this recognition, farmers selling crops into biofuel markets would have been obligated to prove compliance on an individual basis. Instead, grain farmers' compliance will be simplified to an annual declaration that their crops were grown in Canada and, therefore, meet the criteria due to legislative recognition.

PROTECTING AND GROWING MARKETS

FARM SUSTAINABILITY

SEAWAY STRIKE

When the St. Lawrence Seaway workers announced a strike in October 2023 at the height of corn harvest, Grain Farmers of Ontario jumped into action to 'keep Ontario grain moving.' The Seaway serves as a critical shipping corridor for Ontario grain exports, and the strike threatened to impact harvest by slowing down or stopping grain shipments as elevators stopped accepting deliveries.

An industry-wide response brought the impact on the safety and security of global food supply and the Ontario grain industry front and centre in the crisis, with Grain Farmers of Ontario Board members featured on local, provincial, and national news, including CTV and the Globe and Mail.

The strike was resolved after eight days, and grain started flowing again from farms to elevators to shipping vessels.

Our team

A core values commitment

Grain Farmers of Ontario delegates, Board members, and staff are widely respected subject matter experts and industry leaders who are passionate about making a difference in the agricultural sector.

AT THE TOP OF THE AGENDA

AgScape is leading a movement to bring agriculture and food education into all Ontario classrooms. Inspiring youth to see their role within the food system that is a vehicle for social, economic, and environmental impact - and Grain Farmers of Ontario's manager of communications, Victoria Berry, is leading the charge as chair of its Board of Directors.

Berry first joined the AgScape Board in 2019 as a corporate director - Grain Farmers of Ontario is a partner of AgScape and supports their initiatives - and brought with her more than 20 years of experience in influencer relations, social media, strategic communications, brand management, storytelling and team leadership. As chair, she has taken on the leadership role of the organization that, in 2023, provided more than 540,000 agricultural educational experiences for students across the province.

Berry is just one of Grain Farmers of Ontario's exceptional leaders who used their skills, talents, and expertise to advance the agriculture industry in 2023-24.

Grain Farmers of Ontario directors, delegates, and staff are leading the charge, taking on leadership roles in rural and agricultural organizations across the province and supporting their local communities.



IN MEMORIAM

In November 2023, Grain Farmers of Ontario lost a colleague, friend, and Ontario grain industry champion, Kim Ratz.

Kim was a valued Communications team member who had worked as a brand specialist since Grain Farmers of Ontario's inception and for five years as a staff member of the Ontario Corn Producers' Association (OCPA). Kim's award-winning graphic design and brand development projects at Grain Farmers of Ontario include developing the Grain Farmers of Ontario and Good in Every Grain logos, designing and producing materials for flagship Grain Farmers of Ontario programs, including the Ontario Grain Farmer Magazine, the Grains on the Go and Grain Discovery Zone trailers, and the Grain Farmers of Ontario website.



**RESEARCH
AND KNOWLEDGE
TRANSFER**

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Grain Farmers of Ontario's CEO, Crosby Devitt, was featured in a May 2024 Globe and Mail special feature, focusing on the importance of research and collaboration. The Q&A highlighted the importance of Grain Farmers of Ontario's ongoing collaboration with the University of Guelph.



**ADVOCACY AND
PUBLIC TRUST**

GROWING A STRONG AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

Grain Farmers of Ontario's staff and Board of Directors work closely with industry partners to help advance the agricultural sector and provide meaningful services and advocacy on behalf of its farmer-members.



**FARM
SUSTAINABILITY**

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS

Farmer mental health has been at the top of the agenda of farm meetings ever since a landmark study by the University of Guelph found that Canadian farmers were at high risk for experiencing high stress and developing anxiety or depression. The study also indicated that farmers were likely to feel 'uneasy' about seeking professional help.

Grain Farmers of Ontario is committed to reducing the stigma around mental health and wellness.



Promoting the work of industry mental health programs.



Partnering with Syngenta, the Canadian Mental Health Association, and the Ontario Hockey League to present Talk Today, a mental health awareness and suicide prevention program.

Our community

A core value commitment

A GLOBAL COMMUNITY

It's a big world, and we have a lot to learn from and share with the agricultural community in countries near and far.

Eric Watson is a two-time Guinness World record for wheat yields - and the New Zealand farmer was eager to share his tips for success with participants in the Great Lakes Yield Enhancement Network (YEN) at their first cross-border networking tour in June 2023.

The networking tour, held in Michigan, furthered the Great Lake's YEN goal to help farmers better understand how to grow great wheat. Bringing together farmers, extension specialists, agronomists, and researchers from both sides of the border - and from the other side of the world - gave participants the opportunity to learn from one another. While Watson shared the keys to success in growing bin-busting yields of 258.7 bushels per acre, participants also visited research sites and end-use facilities and heard from researchers at Michigan State University.

THE NUFFIELD EXPERIENCE

For more than 60 years, Nuffield Canada Scholars have been travelling the globe, learning from international colleagues in the agriculture industry about topics ranging from Zero Tillage (Art Westlund, 1979) to Risk Management Strategies (Amy Cronin, 2021). Aimed at mid-career professionals, the Nuffield Scholarship allows individuals to take a deep dive into a relevant agricultural topic of interest, bringing together information and expertise gathered from an intensive cross-cultural and international experience that includes travel, networking, and learning.



Agronomist Peter Johnson and world record wheat grower Eric Watson. (Photo: RealAgriculture).

Nuffield Canada is part of a larger Nuffield International community, which includes Scholars from Australia, Ireland, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Zimbabwe. Since 1950, Nuffield Canada has awarded 107 scholarships, with a further six scholarships announced in 2023. The international Nuffield alumni community now stands at more than 1700 Scholars.

Lauren Benoit, a market development agronomist for Bayer and Grain Farmers of Ontario delegate in District 8 (Huron), was awarded the 2024 Grain Farmers of Ontario Nuffield Scholarship. Benoit is studying international research programs and investments to develop better working relationships within the sector, improve research processes that engage all industry stakeholders, and create a more attractive environment for private research investment at the provincial and national levels.

“

YEN participants in Ontario and the U.S. were excited to get the chance to ask questions about the different growing conditions and cropping practices Eric was using for his record yields.

PROTECTING AND GROWING MARKETS

PROMOTING ONTARIO'S GRAINS AND OILSEEDS WORLDWIDE

Ontario-grown grains and oilseeds have an international reputation for quality and sustainability – a message that Grain Farmers of Ontario carries on trade missions around the world and here at home when international visitors come to see the industry first-hand.

- In June 2023, Grain Farmers of Ontario hosted Mexico's largest flour miller, Grupo Trimex, as part of a Cereals Canada inbound mission.
- Grain Farmers of Ontario welcomed a delegation of African millers in August 2023.
- Josh Boersen, director of District 9 (Perth) and Dana Dickerson, manager of market development and sustainability, participated in the Cereals Canada New Crop mission to Latin America in December 2023.
- Brendan Byrne, Grain Farmers of Ontario director of District 1 (Essex) and CEO Crosby Devitt participated in a trade mission to Mexico led by Minister Lisa Thompson of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs in February 2024.
- Grain Farmers of Ontario's partner, Soy Canada, led a delegation to South Korea in May 2024.

GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

GRAIN FARMERS OF ONTARIO LEGACY FUND SCHOLARSHIP

The Grain Farmers of Ontario Legacy Fund provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the organization to reimagine and reinvest in the sector.

In its second year, the Grain Farmers of Ontario Legacy Fund Scholarship awarded nine scholarships of \$5,000 to Ontario post-secondary students:

- Caleb Fretz, University of Guelph, Biological Engineering (Co-op)
- Scott Moore, University of Guelph, Master of Science in Plant Agriculture, Plant Breeding and Genetics
- Julianna Tindall, University of Guelph, Bachelor in Ag Science, Major in Crop Science
- Isabelle Aicklen, University of Guelph, Doctorate in Plant Agriculture
- Lorraine Vandermyden, University of Guelph, Master of Science in Environmental Science
- Matthew Whittemore, University of Guelph, Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, Major Crop Science
- Lauren Miller, University of Guelph, Master of Science in Rural Planning and Development
- Evan Dowd, Wilfred Laurier University, Honours Economics
- Ryan Miller, University of Ottawa, Juris Doctor

Our results

A core value commitment

BY THE NUMBERS

The numbers are in, and they tell an exciting story about Ontario's grain and oilseed industry: it is an economic juggernaut, with \$27 billion in total economic output – representing a

60%
INCREASE
SINCE 2010.



That impressive statistic – and a whole lot more – detailed in the MNP report, Economic Impact Analysis of Grain Farming in Ontario, released in October of 2023, underscores just how important the grain and oilseed industry is to the Ontario economy.

The MNP report shows significant growth in the economic impact of the grain and oil seed industry since 2010, including:

- \$10.4 billion in total gross domestic product (GDP) – a 46 per cent increase
- \$2.3 billion in total government revenue – a 64 per cent increase
- Providing more than 90,000 jobs in the province

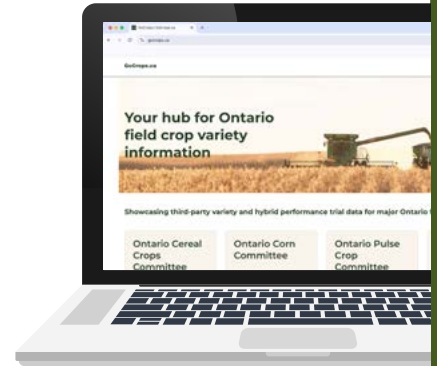
Soybean production, the province's largest crop by seeded acres, leads in direct economic output, with almost \$3 billion, followed by corn, the province's largest crop by volume, at \$2.7 billion. Wheat follows with \$883 million, and barley and oats a combined \$47 million in economic output. However, the impacts along the value chain tell an even greater story: grain and oilseed milling provide \$5.7 billion in direct economic output, with 'basic chemical manufacturing' representing \$2.6 billion in economic output.

The transportation and wholesaling industry adds another \$2.5 billion. Direct output refers to the direct expenditures on goods and services made by grain and oilseed producers – such as machinery, fuel, and seed expenses, the employment of support staff and the generation of tax revenues for local, provincial, and federal governments. When indirect and induced impacts arising from the linkages that exist with suppliers and other industries are added to the total – soybean production's total impact grows to \$5.1 billion, corn \$4.8 billion, wheat \$1.5 billion, and barley and oats \$81 million. The total economic impact along the value chain includes the milling industry, which represents nearly \$7 billion, \$3.6 billion in the 'basic chemical manufacturing' industry, and \$4.6 billion in the transportation and wholesale industries. Total direct, indirect, and induced full-time equivalent (FTE) jobs in Ontario created by the grain and oilseed industry include nearly 57,000 in the production of barley, corn, oats, soybeans, and wheat, more than 12,000 in manufacturing, and 22,650 in the transportation and wholesale industry. These numbers speak for themselves: Ontario grain and oilseed farming drives the Ontario economy.

RESEARCH
AND KNOWLEDGE
TRANSFER

A NEW HUB FOR ONTARIO FIELD CROP
VARIETY INFORMATION

GoCrops.ca is your new website for finding third-party variety and hybrid performance trial data for major Ontario field crops. In 2024, the Ontario Cereal Crops Committee, Ontario Corn Committee, Ontario Pulse Crop Committee, and Ontario Soybean and Canola Committee joined forces to bring this valuable resource under one easy-to-use, streamlined website.



RESEARCH
AND KNOWLEDGE
TRANSFER

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Investment in research is a long-term strategic initiative of the Grain Farmers of Ontario. Our goal is to invest in research and support innovation and knowledge transfer that will enhance farmer-member profitability and sector competitiveness.

49 ACTIVE
RESEARCH
PROJECTS

focusing on agronomy and production, weeds, diseases and insect pests, breeding and genetics, and crop utilization and quality.

\$1.85
MILLION INVESTED
ANNUALLY

Research summaries available
at www.gfo.ca/research

ADVOCACY AND
PUBLIC TRUST

ONTARIO'S FORGOTTEN WAR HEROES

As part of Grain Farmers of Ontario's Good in Every Grain program, students across the province learned about the Farmerettes, young women who served Canada by working on farms during World War II.

Inspired by the book "Onion Skins and Peach Fuzz" by Bonnie Sitter, students got the opportunity to take part in a live virtual presentation and question and answer session with Sitter and a Farmerette, learning more about their incredible contributions to the war effort.

Additional resources, including videos, a discussion guide, a STEM challenge, literacy activities, and more, allowed Ontario educators to further the discussion in their classrooms.

42 **1165**
CLASSROOMS STUDENTS

100%
OF EDUCATORS
SAID THEY WOULD
PARTICIPATE AGAIN!



Our innovation

A core value commitment

“

“We did a Google Meet where a farmer came into our classroom, and that was amazing.”

FARMING STEMTERPRISE - CONNECTING STUDENTS TO AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is not an Ontario curriculum subject, but it can be integrated into many other subjects. However, teachers have told us, through ongoing surveys, that they don't feel familiar enough or comfortable with agriculture topics to teach them.

That is where Grain Farmers of Ontario's Farming STEMterprise comes in - a brand-new project launched in 2023 that makes teaching about agriculture easy by supporting curriculum-based teaching in science, technology, engineering, and math subjects (STEM).

Throughout the multi-week program, students become 'plant experts' as they learn about the ingredients for food products that they develop and sell. They apply their STEM skills to engineer innovative farming equipment, design packaging, and learn skills to build their own business. Along the way, students incorporate learning about grain growing, farmers' stewardship of the land, the overarching importance of agriculture to food production, how farmers are fighting climate change and preserving soil for the future, employment and the economy. The topics and resources link to science and technology, health and physical education, engineering, language arts, and math curriculum.

Teachers can easily access the materials they need—all the resources, including videos, PowerPoint presentations, and worksheets, are available online. They can also easily request the delivery of physical assets like the 'What's Growing ON?' seed kits. Classrooms can also get a virtual visit from a farmer!

YEAR ONE OUTCOMES

In its first year, STEMterprise reached 466 classrooms and 12,988 students! Educator feedback has been incredibly positive.

“I found STEMterprise, and it was activities that are hands-on and activities that I knew that kids would love,” says Meghan Button, a teacher at Guardian Angels Catholic School in Stittsville, Ontario. “We did a Google Meet where a farmer came into our classroom, and that was amazing.”

“My students loved it, watching the process going right from the beginning from a seed all the way through to making our own granola bars and selling them in a bake sale,” says Crystal Dillon, a Maple Ridge Public School teacher in Orleans, Ontario.

Teacher feedback will help inform the project as it continues to grow - including translating program materials into French to reach even more classrooms and students.



RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

ONTARIO FARM RESEARCH FORUM

Grain Farmers of Ontario hosted an Ontario Farm Research Forum in February, 2024, in London Ontario. The Forum brought together farmers, agronomists, government, industry, and research partners from across the province to engage in discussions about how to address issues facing Ontario farmers through novel research approaches. Specific topics covered included nutrient management with a focus on nitrogen, precision field management, and systems approaches to crop management.

With sessions that focused on on-farm trials, collaborative project design, knowledge transfer best practices, and research case studies, attendees had the opportunity to learn from colleagues, brainstorm ways to advance research initiatives, and discuss ways to work together to build a collaborative approach to agronomic research in Ontario.

GRAIN DISCOVERY ZONE

The Grain Discovery Zone has a new look! Updated graphics and new displays complement the brand new Grain Farmers of Ontario-branded truck that visit fairs, festivals, and events across Ontario to help consumers learn more about grains and grain farming.



ADVOCACY AND PUBLIC TRUST

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

BE DRIFT AWARE



In partnership with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, and CropLife Canada, Grain Farmers of Ontario launched the Be Drift Aware campaign.

Anytime someone sprays, there is a possibility of unintended drift. With best practices in place, there is an opportunity to reduce the risk. Growers and spray operators can now access resources at a new central resource hub www.BeDriftAware.ca. The website includes an online quiz and resources organized around three key best practices - "be size aware," "be height aware," and "be wind aware."

Our honesty and integrity

A core value commitment

A 'thumbs up' emoji in a text message in response to a grain contract proposal cost a Saskatchewan farmer \$82,000 after a Saskatchewan judge ruled in June 2023 that replying with the commonly used emoji constituted a legal contract.

In this particular case, the farmer had a longstanding relationship with the buyer and regularly used text messages to agree to contract terms. When the grain was not delivered as per the contract, the buyer took the issue to court.

This story caught the attention of news media, farmers, and the agriculture and legal community around the world, including Rachel Telford, Grain Farmers of Ontario's manager of member relations.

Telford had already been developing a Grain Contracts Guide, a document designed to help Ontario's grain farmers better understand the grain contracting process and the rights and responsibilities of both sellers and buyers. The Saskatchewan judgment drove home how necessary it was for everyone to be on the same page when contracting grain.

“

“Verbal agreements are standard practice in Ontario, but just like a brief text message, they can leave room for ambiguity. A phone call should always be followed by written confirmation of what you have agreed to deliver.”

WHAT IS IN THE GUIDE?

Released in October 2023, the Grain Farmers of Ontario Grain Contracts Guide is a comprehensive document that helps farmers understand grain contracts and specific issues, including:

- Variations in grain quality
- Canada's grain integrity
- Delivery terms
- Access to land
- Defaults and contract cancellation
- Set-offs and security
- Farmer compensation
- Financial protection for farmers
- Contract disputes

The guide also includes information on additional resources, including the Grain Financial Protection Program Producer Guide and the Canadian Grain Commission's Declaration of eligibility for delivery of grain. Grain Farmers of Ontario has also worked with the Ontario Agri Business Association and the Ontario Canola Growers to develop the Code of Practice for the trade in barley, corn, canola, oats, and wheat in Ontario to help farmers understand the process for dealing with any quality disputes. The sale of soybeans is governed by the 2016 Soybean Marketing Agreement established under the authority of the Farm Products Marketing Act.

“The bottom line is – read your entire contract,” says Telford. “If you don't read your contract, there may be terms and conditions you aren't aware of until there is a problem at delivery. Knowing your obligations and responsibilities, as well as your rights, can help maintain a good relationship and foster open communication with your grain buyer.”





KEEPING FARMER-MEMBERS UP-TO-DATE ON ASSOCIATION AND INDUSTRY NEWS AND EVENTS.

District Meetings webinar

farmer-member social media
email updates AGM website

Farmer Forum
Agronomy Alert



GrainTALK e-news Member Relations
podcast events phone calls direct contact



ENHANCING TECHNOLOGY AND EFFICIENCY



Modernized and improved the finance and accounting systems to streamline and improve workflow



Implementing a road map to complete digital transformation and continue to address security and cyber threats





Financial Statements

For the year ended May 31, 2024

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Independent Auditor's Report



To the Members of: Grain Farmers of Ontario

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Grain Farmers of Ontario, which comprise the statement of financial position as at May 31, 2024 and the statements of unrestricted and internally-restricted operations and net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Grain Farmers of Ontario as at May 31, 2024 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not for profit organizations.

Basis of Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Grain Farmers of Ontario in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not for profit organizations and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the organization's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to a going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the organization or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the organization's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements, as a whole, are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the organization's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the organization's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Guelph, Ontario
August 14, 2024

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'RLB LLP'.

Chartered Professional Accountants
Licensed Public Accountants

Statement of Financial Position

As at May 31, 2024


	2024	2023
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cash	\$1,869,583	\$1,446,368
Investments (note 9)	28,084,197	27,026,521
Accounts receivable	849,727	564,200
Government remittances receivable	0	6,449
Prepaid expenses	708,609	559,910
	<u>31,512,116</u>	<u>29,603,448</u>
Capital assets (note 4)	4,187,429	4,163,621
	<u>\$35,699,545</u>	<u>\$33,767,069</u>

LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$2,445,394	\$800,359
Government remittances payable	40,272	0
Deferred revenue (note 4)	65,203	67,869
	<u>2,550,869</u>	<u>868,228</u>

NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted net assets (note 8)	12,689,461	12,594,135
Unrestricted net assets invested in capital assets (note 8)	4,187,429	4,163,621
Internally restricted research fund (statement 2)	1,583,755	1,734,769
Internally restricted market development (statement 2)	181,010	118,565
Internally restricted legacy fund (statement 2)	14,507,021	14,287,751
	<u>33,148,676</u>	<u>32,898,841</u>
	<u>\$35,699,545</u>	<u>\$33,767,069</u>

APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD:
See notes to the financial statements.

 Director

 Director

Statement of Unrestricted and Internally-Restricted Operations and Net Assets

For the year ended May 31, 2024

	BUDGET 2024 (note 6)	General (note 8) (Unrestricted)	Research Fund (Internally restricted)	Market Development Fund (Internally restricted)	Legacy Fund (Internally restricted)	ACTUAL 2024	ACTUAL 2023
REVENUES							
License fees	\$10,625,547	\$9,059,577	\$1,850,00	\$250,000	\$0	\$11,159,577	\$9,824,381
Investment income	1,015,000	619,445	0	0	583,814	1,203,259	927,827
Grain Financial Protection	532,422	530,778	0	0	0	530,778	482,442
Advertising	320,000	289,139	0	0	0	289,139	313,752
Rental income	258,968	259,948	0	0	0	259,948	249,307
March annual conference	222,000	248,189	0	0	0	248,189	210,651
Grant and partner funding	147,325	104,055	134,442	0	0	238,497	411,584
Other income	155,750	171,297	0	0	0	171,297	99,042
Gain on disposal of capital assets	0	50,714	0	0	0	50,714	0
	<u>13,277,012</u>	<u>11,333,142</u>	<u>1,984,442</u>	<u>250,000</u>	<u>583,814</u>	<u>14,151,398</u>	<u>12,518,986</u>
EXPENSES							
Salaries and wages	3,248,445	3,261,227	0	0	0	3,261,227	3,035,813
Communication and public awareness	2,855,877	2,501,320	0	0	0	2,501,320	2,587,613
Research and market development	2,738,618	107,500	2,135,456	187,555	0	2,430,511	2,379,483
Employee benefits (note 5)	723,085	772,839	0	0	0	772,839	679,867
Director per diem and expenses	683,100	679,860	0	0	0	679,860	670,369
Consulting and subcontracting services	734,100	609,559	0	0	33,830	643,389	509,814
Grain Financial Protection	532,422	530,781	0	0	0	530,781	482,442
March annual conference and events	520,300	446,839	0	0	0	446,839	423,917
Office	435,403	418,922	0	0	0	418,922	310,349
Memberships	399,953	416,675	0	0	0	416,675	372,387
Employee expenses	435,200	369,171	0	0	0	369,171	299,868
Amortization	372,885	368,296	0	0	0	368,296	378,757
Legacy fund disbursements	335,714	0	0	0	330,714	330,714	335,714
Delegate per diem and expenses	258,500	310,509	0	0	0	310,509	219,770
District expenses	150,000	177,858	0	0	0	177,858	69,944
Facility expenses	215,500	176,203	0	0	0	176,203	173,337
Legal and audit	37,000	39,234	0	0	0	39,234	42,217
Equipment rental and maintenance	20,950	27,215	0	0	0	27,215	23,597
	<u>14,697,052</u>	<u>11,214,008</u>	<u>2,135,456</u>	<u>187,555</u>	<u>364,544</u>	<u>13,901,563</u>	<u>12,995,258</u>
(DEFICIENCY) EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES for the year	(1,420,040)	119,134	(151,014)	62,445	219,270	249,835	(476,272)
BALANCE, beginning of year	32,898,841	16,757,756	1,734,769	118,565	14,287,751	32,898,841	33,375,113
BALANCE, end of year	<u>\$31,478,801</u>	<u>\$16,876,890</u>	<u>\$1,583,755</u>	<u>\$181,010</u>	<u>\$14,507,021</u>	<u>\$33,148,676</u>	<u>\$32,898,841</u>

See notes to the financial statements.

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended May 31, 2024

	2024	2023
ASSETS		
Operating Activities		
Excess (deficiency) of revenues over expenses	\$249,835	\$(476,272)
Items not requiring an outlay of cash		
Amortization of capital assets	368,296	378,757
Unrealized gain on investments	(335,837)	(236,995)
Gain on disposal of capital assets	(50,714)	0
	<u>231,580</u>	<u>(334,510)</u>
Changes in non-cash working capital		
Accounts receivable	(285,527)	9,305
Government remittances receivable (payable)	46,721	(1,008)
Prepaid expenses	(148,699)	178,471
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	1,645,035	(210,428)
Deferred revenue	(2,666)	(14,662)
	<u>1,254,864</u>	<u>(38,322)</u>
	1,486,444	(372,832)
Investing Activities		
Purchases of capital assets	(392,104)	(47,384)
Net purchase of investments	(721,839)	(945,539)
Proceeds on disposal of capital assets	50,714	0
	<u>(1,063,229)</u>	<u>(992,923)</u>
NET CHANGE IN CASH	423,215	(1,365,755)
CASH, beginning of year	<u>1,446,368</u>	<u>2,812,123</u>
CASH, end of year	\$1,869,583	\$1,446,368

See notes to the financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended May 31, 2024

1. ACT OF INCORPORATION AND MANDATE

Grain Farmers of Ontario is incorporated under the regulations of the Farm Products Marketing Act. The organization was formed to represent producers of corn, soybeans and wheat in the Province of Ontario. On July 1, 2015, the regulations were amended to include producers of barley and oats. The organization is a non-profit organization under the Income Tax Act and, accordingly, is exempt from income taxes under Section 149 (1)(e) of the Income Tax Act.

2. OPERATIONS AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not for profit organizations. Summarized below are the policies considered significant for Grain Farmers of Ontario.

Revenue

License fee revenue is recognized on the date of sale.

Grant and partner funding revenue is recognized when the corresponding research expense has been incurred.

Investment income is recognized as revenue when earned.

Restricted contributions are recognized upon receipt in the appropriate fund corresponding to the purpose for which they were contributed. Unrestricted contributions are recognized in the general fund when received or receivable and collection is reasonably assured.

Capital Assets

Capital assets are recorded at cost. Amortization is calculated using the following rates and methods:

Building	- 4% declining balance
Office furniture and fixtures	- 5 year straight-line
Computer equipment	- 3 year straight-line
Equipment	- 3 year straight-line
Lab equipment	- 8 year straight-line
Passenger vehicle and trailers	- 4 year straight-line

Impairment of long lived assets

Long lived assets are tested for recoverability whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that their carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognized when the carrying value exceeds the total undiscounted cash flows expected from their use and eventual disposition. The amount of the impairment loss is determined as the excess of the carrying value of the asset over its fair value.

Deferred Revenue

Deferred revenue represents research grants received in advance relating to expenses for a future year. The revenue has been deferred and will be recognized in the appropriate fiscal year as the related expenses are incurred.

Financial Instruments

Measurement of financial instruments

The organization initially measures its financial assets and liabilities at fair value. The organization subsequently measures all its financial assets and financial liabilities at amortized cost, except for investments, which are measured at fair value. Changes in fair value are recognized in net surplus.

Impairment

For financial assets measured at amortized cost, the organization determines whether there are indications of possible impairment. When there are, and the organization determines that a significant adverse change has occurred during the period in the expected timing or amount of future cash flows, a write-down is recognized in net surplus. If the indicators of impairment have decreased or no longer exist, the previously recognized impairment loss may be reversed to the extent of the improvement. The carrying amount of the financial asset may be no greater than the amount that would have been reported at the date of the reversal had the impairment not been recognized previously. The amount of the reversal is recognized in net surplus.

Transaction costs

Transaction costs attributable to financial instruments subsequently measured at fair value are recognized in income in the period incurred. When the instrument is measured at amortized cost, transaction costs are recognized in income over the life of the instrument using the straight-line method.

Investments

In accordance with the Farm Products Marketing Act, the organization has deposited funds in low risk investments. The organization accounts for its investments at fair value without any adjustment for transaction costs it may incur on the sale or other disposal.

General and Administrative Expenses

License fees were set to cover administration, research and market development activities, and other producer programs to the benefit of all producers.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not for profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the amounts of revenues and expenses for the reporting year. Significant estimates include the useful lives of capital assets. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

Fund Accounting

Grain Farmers of Ontario follows the restricted fund method of accounting for contributions.

Unrestricted net assets

The unrestricted fund reports resources available for the organization's general operating activities. The purpose of the unrestricted net assets is to fund future general operations.

Research fund

This internally restricted fund reports resources set aside for future expenditures for ongoing research projects. The purpose of the internally restricted research fund is to segregate research activity to more accurately reflect the funds raised externally, the costs incurred, and the use of unrestricted revenue in research.

Market development fund

This internally restricted fund reports resources set aside for future expenditures for ongoing market development activities. The purpose of the internally restricted market development fund is to segregate market development activity to more accurately reflect the projects and partnerships that Grain Farmers of Ontario is developing.

Legacy fund

This internally restricted fund reports resources set aside for future expenditures for strategic initiatives that will add value to the Ontario grain industry. The purpose of the internally restricted legacy fund is to provide financial resources to support initiatives above and beyond current Grain Farmers of Ontario programs.

3. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Unless otherwise noted, it is management's opinion that the organization is not exposed to significant interest, credit, currency, liquidity, or other price risks arising from its financial instruments.

The extent of the organization's exposure to these risks did not change in 2024 compared to the previous period.

The organization does not have a significant exposure to any individual customer or counterpart.

Credit risk

The major concentration of credit risk arises from the organization's accounts receivable. The majority of the accounts receivable are from organizations in the agricultural and food processing industry. The organization manages the risk through evaluation and monitoring processes.

Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of the company's financial instruments will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Some of the company's financial instruments expose it to this risk, which comprises currency risk, interest rate risk and other price risk.

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. The organization is exposed to interest rate risk as a result of the fixed coupon rates on its bonds. Should market interest rates fluctuate significantly from these fixed coupon rates, the fair value of the bonds will be correspondingly affected.

4. CAPITAL ASSETS

	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net 2024	Net 2023
Land	\$208,000	\$0	\$208,000	\$208,000
Building	5,315,857	1,586,393	3,729,464	3,700,462
Office furniture and fixtures	313,402	284,133	29,269	16,569
Computer equipment	682,096	632,201	49,895	45,996
Lab equipment	599,999	599,999	0	75,000
Passenger vehicle and trailers	329,551	158,750	170,801	117,594
	\$7,448,905	\$3,261,476	\$4,187,429	\$4,163,621

5. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The organization offers a defined contribution post retirement benefit plan to its employees. The total expense for the organization's defined contribution plan is \$188,755 (2023 - \$177,490).

6. BUDGET FIGURES

The budgeted figures are presented for comparison purposes as prepared and approved by the Board. They have not been audited or reviewed by the auditor.

7. CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS

The minimum amounts payable under long term operating leases and contracts, exclusive of certain operating costs, including the net research project and market development commitments for which the organization is responsible to fund, are as follows:

2025	\$2,564,209
2026	1,095,964
2027	764,270
2028	645,188
2029	285,716
	\$5,355,347

8. GENERAL FUND BALANCES

The general fund is comprised of the following asset balances at year end.

	2024	2023
Unrestricted net assets	\$12,689,461	\$12,594,135
Net assets invested in capital assets	4,187,429	4,163,621
Total General Fund net assets	\$16,876,890	\$16,757,756

9. INVESTMENTS

Investments are comprised of a number of individual portfolios all holding low risk investments in accordance with the Farm Products Marketing Act. Investments held in these portfolios include investment savings accounts and guaranteed investment certificates, with maturities ranging from November 2024 to May 2029, and interest rates ranging from 1.48% to 5.55%.

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