

FarmSmart Agricultural Conference 2019

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The FarmSmart Agricultural Conference celebrated its 19th Anniversary on Sat. Jan. 19th, 2019. The conference which began at Redeemer College Ancaster in 1999 and moved to the University of Guelph main campus in 2003 continues to build to offer participants, speakers and sponsors more opportunity to learn and network. FarmSmart wishes to thank the many participants, organizers, speakers and sponsors who have supported this conference over the past years. Attendance again surpassed expectations with over 1000 people participating in the 2 days of the event. In an effort to expand the value of the FarmSmart franchise, the organizers continue to offer a full day single stream event. 2019 saw the return of Ken Ferrie from Illinois to headline CropSmart, and repeat his presence at the first FarmSmart Friday, CornSmart, held in 2013. Friday brought over 300+ producers and Ag business people together at RIM Park in Waterloo to learn from the always highly anticipated Ken Ferrie.

The Saturday program celebrated its 20th Anniversary this year. Despite slightly lower numbers attending because of the “questionable” winter weather, those in attendance found the event excellent as always. Our feature speakers this year included 1. John Phipps, Columnist, Farm Journal - Good News - We’re Going to Need Some New Tools. Instead of trying to predict the future, suppose farmers had more confidence they could manage any surprise. That calls for adding some skills, knowledge, and attitudes - new tools for 2019. Our second feature speaker was Dr. Robin White of Virginia Tech, speaking about A World Without Livestock.

In celebration of 20 years of FarmSmart Ag Conference we gave recognition to the following who have been long serving contributors to the events success:

- Carolyn Prieur, OMAFRA, lead administrator for every FarmSmart event and leaving us for a well-deserved retirement, Thank you Carolyn!
- Donna Speranzini, AAFC, the originator of the event along with members of the Golden Horseshoe Soil and Crop Improvement Association (GHSCIA)
- John Shepherd, former GHSCIA Regional Communication Coordinator who was instrumental in the events start and early days
- Karen Dallimore for her media coverage of the event and contributions to event article writing and promoting
- John and Pat Hussack, members of GHSCIA who have always stepped up to help the events
- Peter Johnson and Greg Stewart, formerly OMAFRA who have the most speaking engagements of any presenters in the FarmSmart history.

The FarmSmart Agricultural Conference is produced in partnership between OMAFRA, Golden Horseshoe and Heartland Regional Soil and Crop Improvement Associations, The University of Guelph and is supported broadly by Ontario’s Agricultural Industry.

Crop Advance: Field Crop Reports

The conference mandate is to provide an opportunity for farmers, extension, academics and industry to interact and learn from a series of approximately 50 sessions and workshops held in up to 8 concurrent formats throughout the day. Topics included crop and livestock production sessions along with nutrient management, alternative energy, business management, general interest and others. A series of computer workshops in the OAC multimedia laboratory including various financial and precision agriculture will software tools. Participants chose their own program from the diverse slate of topics allowing each participant to tailor the day to their interests and requirements. The FarmSmart Committee is pleased to see that the attendance at the conference continues to spread itself across the wide range of diverse sessions. We are always intrigued by the mix of people who show up at some of less agricultural topics. This diversity of program is what makes FarmSmart unique among the wide range of conferences held each year and based on the success of the format will continue to be the focus of the program committee in the future.



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The Youth Program was again a great success with close to 60 participating. We continue to emphasize this aspect of the conference. Kids, come out and have a fun and interesting day exploring the University of Guelph and all it has to offer. For the first time this year we were able to arrange a tour of the OVC Vet College which was well received by the kids and we returned to the School of Environmental Sciences Space Lab, always a perennial hit.

FarmSmart 2019 was an outstanding success and all the partners are looking forward to bringing you FarmSmart 2020 on January 18-19th , 2020. Mark your calendars today, so as not to miss the exciting and informative chance to join fellow producers, industry, extension and academics at next year's event.

Stay current with FarmSmart Ag Conference news by monitoring our website at: www.farmsmartconference.com

Event Contact

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