



Funding Supports Work to Reduce Phosphorus Loss to Waterways

Guelph, ON, December 9, 2016 – Efforts to reduce phosphorus loss into Ontario waterways and the Great Lakes will progress thanks to the funding announcement of \$203,000 from Growing Forward 2, a Canada-Ontario agricultural funding program administered through the Agricultural Adaptation Council. These funds will be matched with \$100,000 from participating organizations, including the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) to launch a joint ‘Strategy to Reduce Phosphorus Loss into the Thames River’.

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and OFA, have been working to build and implement the joint strategy.

“Together, OFA and the Cities Initiative have developed a workable strategy to improve water quality and reduce phosphorus entering Lake Erie,” says Keith Currie, OFA President. “It’s never been more important to work together, water quality is a serious issue and we are grateful for the support of the Federal government and participation of agricultural organizations, municipalities, conservation authorities, and the drainage industry in the Thames-Sydenham region.”

The five-year ‘Strategy to Reduce Phosphorus Loss into the Thames River’ is designed to improve water quality in the Thames River and contribute to Ontario’s commitment to reduce phosphorus entering Lake Erie by 40% by 2025. The strategy will reduce the transportation of phosphorus off agricultural land, by improving water management to retain water on the land during the non-growing season, and installing cost-effective treatment technologies in drainage channels before the water reaches the Thames and its tributaries.

“It is through this type of collaboration that we are going to improve water quality and promote a healthy and thriving agricultural sector in south-western Ontario,” says Huron-Kinloss Mayor Mitch Twolan, past Chair of the Cities Initiative. “With this partnership, the OFA and local governments are collaborating with drainage professionals, conservation authorities, First Nations, researchers, water technology companies, and NGOs to find new and innovative ways to keep phosphorus on the field and out of our waterways”.

Participating organizations and financial contributions to support the strategy have been made by the municipality of Chatham-Kent, Grain Farmers of Ontario and its Chatham chapter, the



City of London, the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority, Blue Water Pipe Inc., and the local chapters of the OFA in Kent, Lambton and Middlesex. The strategy has also received \$20,000 from the founding partners, OFA and the cities initiative, respectively.

The strategy will complement and collaborate with other initiatives to reduce phosphorus entering waterways, including the Fertilizer Institute's 4Rs program, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs' Great Lakes Agricultural Stewardship Initiative (GLASI) program, the Upper and Lower Thames Conservation Authorities' Clean Water Program, and the 'Growing Ontario Together' initiative led by the Grain Farmers of Ontario.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture is Canada's largest voluntary farm organization representing the interest of over 36,000 Ontario farm families. For more information, please visit www.ofa.on.ca.

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative is a binational coalition of 125 mayors representing over 17 million people, that works to advance the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. For more information, please visit www.glslcities.org.

This project was funded in part through Growing Forward 2 (GF2), a federal-provincial-territorial initiative. The Agricultural Adaptation Council assists in the delivery of GF2 in Ontario.

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For more information contact:

Keith Currie
President
Ontario Federation of Agriculture
(705) 441-3362
keith.currie@ofa.on.ca

Nicola Crawhall
Deputy Director
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities
Initiative
(416) 407-5880
Nicola.crawhall@rogers.com