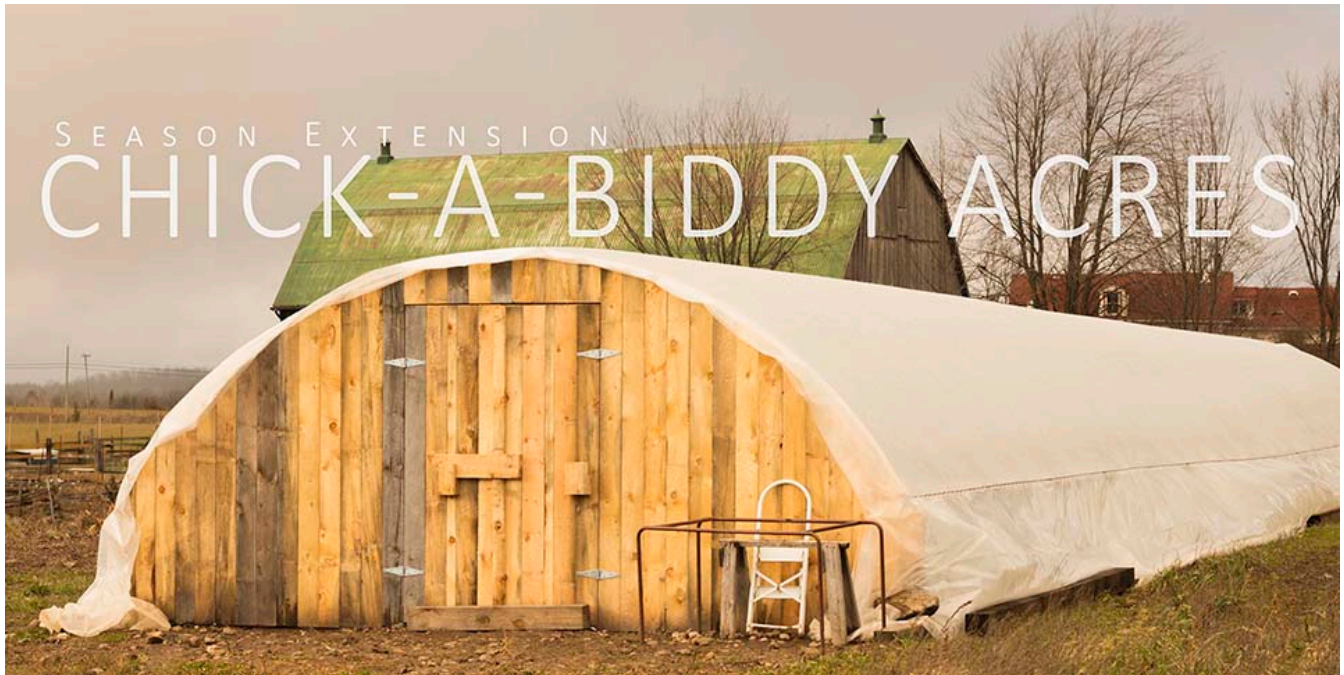


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## [Season Extension Farm Tour @ Chick-a-biddy Acres](#) [1]



[2]

Last Sunday, Farms at Work and 26 of our closest friends were invited to tour the hoop houses of [Chick-a-biddy Acres](#) [3] and learn all about the world of season extension. Folks on the tour included current and aspiring vegetable farmers, and avid home-scale gardeners, who, when gathered in a room together, made up an inspiring cross-section of the entrepreneurs and producers in our region.

The group was not fazed at all by the threat of cold weather. In fact, the north wind and sleety conditions served as a great accent to the day's take home message: that with some modest investments and a bit of craftiness, it's more than possible to remain productive and profitable in the vegetable business well into the colder parts of the year.

Sherry Patterson, owner and operator of Chick-a-Biddy Acres, has been farming vegetables for well over a decade. Her new business partner, Josh Blank, started occasionally working and volunteering for Sherry several years ago. On the recommendation of friends, Josh found his way into a [full-season internship](#) [4] under Sherry. Since then, the two have worked so well together that Josh has been made a full partner in the business.

As we made our way through each of the farm's four hundred-foot hoop houses, Sherry and Josh happily fielded all manner of questions, from construction to maintenance, cold-hardy varieties to production techniques, and marketing to capital investments. It was certainly an informative few hours, and we're quite certain that many growers left inspired to try their hands at lengthening their own seasons next year.

We'd like to thank Sherry and Josh for welcoming such a large crew to their farm on a Sunday afternoon, and for sharing their knowledge and experiences so openly with the group. We'd also like to thank everyone who made the trek out to Hastings on such a blustery fall day, and for their help in strengthening the agricultural community across our region.

Stay tuned for the next one!



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### [Free Workshop: A Landowner's Guide to Ponds \[5\]](#)

Partners in the [Kawartha Farm Stewardship Collaborative](#) [6] are hosting a free workshop for landowners on November 26, 2013. Presented by [Ducks Unlimited](#) [7], the [Community Streams Steward Program](#) [8], and the [Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority](#) [9], A Landowner's Guide to Ponds will teach you about pond construction and maintenance, as well as outline the funding sources available to landowners for such projects.

For more details, check out the [event poster](#) [10]. Pre-registration is required. Contact [stream\\_steward@ofah.org](mailto:stream_steward@ofah.org) [11] to reserve your spots today!

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### [Updated PMRA Report on 2013 Bee Mortality Rates \[12\]](#)

The [Pest Management Regulatory Agency](#) [13] (PMRA) have released an updated report on their findings regarding the impact of neonicotinoid treated corn and soybean seed on bees. The report clearly states that "Current agricultural practices related to the use of neonicotinoid treated corn and soybean seed are not sustainable."

The PMRA has issued a Notice of Intent that outlines additional protective actions to protect bee populations from exposure to neonicotinoid pesticides.

Consultation on the Notice of Intent is open for 90 days (closing on December 12, 2013). Stakeholders and the public are encouraged to submit written comments in relation to the intended measures to mitigate risks to pollinators related to the use of neonicotinoid treated corn and soybean seed.

[Click here](#) [14] to read the full report.

If you'd like to submit your written comments to the PMRA, [click here](#) [15].

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### [Great News for Farmers and Food Banks \[16\]](#)

Farms at Work has been closely following the progress of [Bill 36](#) [17] (the [Local Food Act bill](#) [18]) and we've participated with several partners across the province in crafting proposals for an amendment that will benefit local farmers growing food for our regional and provincial marketplace.



## **News/Events - November 2013**

Published on Farms at Work (<http://farmsatwork.org>)

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Recently a new amendment to the bill was passed that will create a tax credit for farmers who donate parts of their harvest to food banks, which will increase access to fresh food across the province. Have a look at the media release below for more details.

SARNIA-LAMBTON

**BOB BAILEY, MPP**  
NEWS RELEASEFor Immediate Release  
October 30, 2013**PC AMENDMENT TO CREATE TAX CREDIT FOR FARMERS DONATING TO FOOD  
BANKS PASSES**

**QUEEN'S PARK** – Late Tuesday, the PC amendment to the *Local Food Act* that would create a tax credit for farmers who donate agricultural products to Ontario food banks and community food programs was passed at committee. The amendment was put forward by Bob Bailey, Sarnia-Lambton MPP, who had first introduced the proposal as a private members bill.

"I am thrilled that the committee amended the *Local Food Act* to create a tax credit for farmers who donate to local food banks and community food programs" said MPP Bailey. "This will help get more fresh local food to those who need it the most and ensure that the *Local Food Act* actually has an impact."

The PC amendment creates a non-refundable tax credit worth 25% of the current market value of the donated agricultural product to farmers who donate to a community food program, including a food bank. In order to be eligible the program must be run by a registered charity and must provide the food free of charge.

Reaction to the news of the committee amending the *Local Food Act* to include MPP Bailey's food bank donation initiative was high-spirited. "The adoption of Bob's farm credit bill into the local food act is a great day for food banks, food programs and especially those they serve," said Myles Vanni, Executive Director, of Sarnia's Inn of the Good Shepherd. "People living in poverty have a lower level of health and this is a direct result of lack of access to food, especially healthy food. Bob's bill corrects an imbalance and provides a tax credit to farmers for food they donate to food banks. Nobody knows better than a farmer how important healthy food is and farmers want to help but they can't always afford to donate. This tax credit will provide the means to help them donate. So much food is wasted in our system – this bill will help redistribute this food so it can reach those who need it most!"

Bill Laidlaw, Executive Director, of the Ontario Association of Food Banks added his organizations support for the measure, "Ontario needs a tax credit for Ontario farmers who donate to food banks. When farmers donate fresh, nutritious, local product to food banks, they do so out of generosity and a commitment to hunger relief. A tax credit would provide some compensation for the work that goes in to bringing this product to the tables of thousands of food bank clients. It is time to support farmers, and support food banks".

The *Local Food Act*, Premier Wynne's signature piece of legislation as acting Minister of Agriculture, will now return to the Legislative Assembly for a third and final vote by legislators.

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**For more information, contact:**Anthony Rizzetto | 416-325-1715 | [bob.bailey@pc.ola.org](mailto:bob.bailey@pc.ola.org) | [www.bobbaileympp.com](http://www.bobbaileympp.com)



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**Source URL:**<http://farmsatwork.org/news/201311>

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