



Dear Members and Friends,

In 2019 we have had the honour of celebrating EFAO's 40th anniversary. This has been an opportunity to dig through the archives, reconnect with our founding and early members, and reflect upon our rich and inspiring history. At this year's conference we presented a short film that tells the powerful story of how a small group of innovative and forward-looking farmers sparked an organization and a movement.

This year, EFAO's Farmer-Led Research Program was the recipient of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture's inaugural Excellence in Agriculture Award, which recognized the hard work and innovation of EFAO farmer-researchers. Launched in 2015, the program has supported more than 50 members to conduct over 60 research trials for their farms which continues to advance our collective knowledge and understanding of ecological agriculture. Other 2019 highlights include running our most well attended conference in London, piloting a soil health benchmarking study that has been received with great enthusiasm, developing Lifetime and Student/New Farmer membership categories, and launching a new website as well as three short videos about the organization and its members.

In the office, we've enjoyed a full team of amazing staff. Continuing staff include Executive Director Ali English, Education Director Katie Baikie, Research Director Sarah Hargreaves, and Administrative Manager Martina Schaefer. Rebecca Ivanoff joined EFAO early this year as Research and Seed Coordinator, working to deliver the Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security in Ontario, which is a position that we are delighted to now be hosting at EFAO. Allison Muckle returned this fall to oversee a 3-year project to offer new farmer programming in northern Ontario. Ami Dehne came on as Special Events and Newsletter Coordinator, and Naomi Krucker returned to support conference organizing.

As we look to the year ahead, we are excited to announce an important new funding source for our organization. The Brian and Joannah Lawson Family Foundation will provide \$150,000 a year for the next five years in core funding for the EFAO. This grant will provide financial stability, the ability to retain our fantastic staff members, and a chance to plan strategically for the long term.

With this in mind, the EFAO Board of Directors and senior staff gathered recently for a two-day retreat to begin the process of creating a new five-year strategic plan for the organization. The retreat gave us an opportunity to think big, to imagine new ways to realize the vision of our organization: an Ontario where thriving ecological farms are the foundation of our food system.

The board members and staff who attended the retreat all agreed that we are at a crucial turning point, both as an organization and society. The urgent reality of climate change poses huge challenges, but also an opportunity for a radical and long overdue restructuring of our food system. It seems that the time has come for bold action. Our new strategic plan still needs much work and refinement, but it will include not only continued support of our members, but also new efforts to spread ecological practice in the wider farming community, and collaborations with like-minded organizations to influence public policy.

With your continued engagement, it promises to be a dynamic year of farmer-led education, research and community building.

Brent Preston, Board President and Ali English, Executive Director

## PROVINCIAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brent Preston, President  
 Éric Blondin, Vice President  
 Mike MacGillivray, Treasurer  
 Crista Thor, Secretary  
 Jessica Gale\*  
 Denis Heraud\*  
 Brent Klassen  
 Katrina McQuail  
 Eric Payseur  
 Ricardo Ramírez  
 Annie Richard  
 Jennifer Seilern  
 Melissa Watkins  
 \*Outgoing Directors

## 2019 STAFF

Ali English, Executive Director  
 Katie Baikie, Education Director  
 Sarah Hargreaves, Research Director  
 Allison Muckle, Northern Program Director  
 Martina Schaefer, Administrative Manager  
 Rebecca Ivanoff, Research and Seed Program Coordinator  
 Ami Dehne, Special Events and Newsletter Coordinator  
 Naomi Krucker, Training and Resources Coordinator  
 Fiona Campbell, Editor in Chief



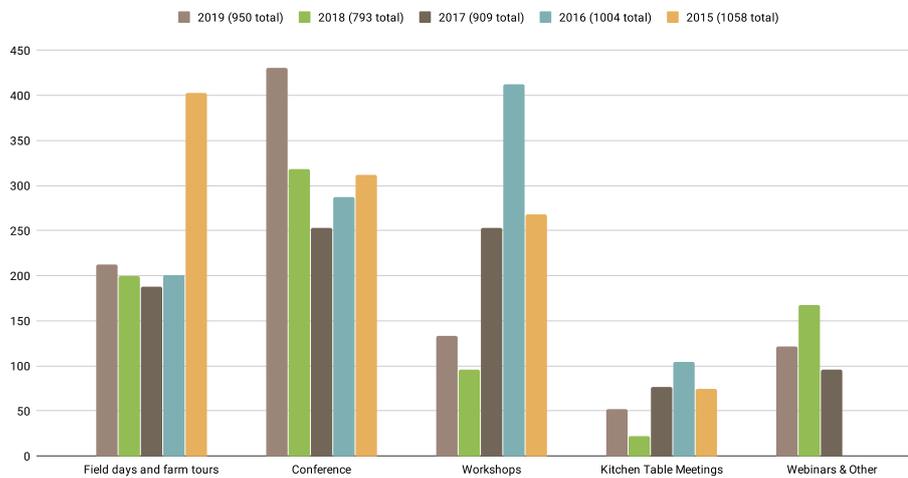
## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

**950** people attended **31** events:  
**9** workshops  
**10** field days and farm tours  
**3** kitchen table meetings (KTMs)  
**3** research roundtables  
**4** webinars  
**1** conference  
**1** Appetite for Change dinner

**15** Advisory Service consultations took place between members.  
**17** members wrote articles for EFAO's bi-monthly **Ecological Farming in Ontario** newsletter.

EFAO's **Online Forum** engaged **420** individuals in **231** farming discussions.

Event Attendance by Type of Event



## 2019 FUNDRAISING DINNER AT HEARTWOOD FARM & CIDERY



## 5TH ANNUAL ECOLOGICAL FARMERS OF ONTARIO CONFERENCE

Dec 3 - 6, 2018 in London, ON

EFAO's 5th annual conference brought together **431** people to participate in **40** workshops, keynote presentations, farm tours, community meetings, and much more, centered on the theme of **Regeneration: Seeds, Soil and Community Connection**.



## FARMER-LED RESEARCH

This year, over **30** members received support to conduct research for their farms.

View results online at [efao.ca/research-library](http://efao.ca/research-library)

Thank you to the **Research Committee**: Eric Barnhorst, Jason Hayes, Matt Jones, Ken Laing, Annie Richard, Darrell Roes, Steven Wolgram and Dr. Ralph Martin.



### *Alternative Livestock Feed:*

- Heather Newman - reduced protein for heritage chickens

### *Disease and Pest Control:*

- Joseph Imre and Jazmin Bansagi - disease control for black walnut

### *Cover Crops:*

- Ryan Spence and Isabelle Spence-Legault - reduced tillage for fall brassicas
- Ken Laing - no-till planted spring cereals

### *Soil Health:*

- Derick Greenly - methods for nutrient application for nut and fruit production
- Shelley and Tony Spruit - basalt for heritage grain
- Brad Wright - basalt for organic carrots
- Pat Kozowyk and Ivan Chan - comfrey as a companion for Saskatoon and currants
- Val Steinmann - biochar in apple orchards

### *Weed Control:*

- Matt Jones, Chris Bosz, Jon Gagnon, Brent Preston and Gillian Flies - minimum tillage for salad greens

### *Seed Production, Selection and Breeding:*

- Eric Barnhorst, Jenny Cook, Sarah Judd and Nathan Klassen - tomato grafting in high tunnels
- Kim Delaney - cut flower isolation distance
- Duane Falk - evaluation of winter-hardy field peas for use as a winter cover crop
- Kate Garvie - sweet potatoes adapted to southern Ontario
- Nathan Klassen - seedless English cucumber breeding
- Angie Koch, Joanna Kowalczyk, Lise-Anne Léveillé, David Mazur-Goulet, Hilary Moore, Leslie Moskovits, Harold Saunders and Ann Slater - fall field lettuce variety trial
- Greta Kryger - broccoli landrace breeding
- Duane Falk - breeding an early, winter hardy pea
- Annie Richard, Kim Delaney, Rebecca Ivanoff, Greta Kryger and Kathy Rothermel - Southern Ontario Pepper Breeding Project

Funding for the Farmer-Led Research Program was provided by a Grow Grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the government of Ontario; and the Robert and Moira Sansom Ideas Foundation, a fund within the London Community Foundation.

Dubois Agrinovation, Johnny's Selected Seeds, High Mowing Organic Seeds and Fedco Seeds generously donated supplies.



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1) EFAO Board Presidents over the years. Left to right: Lawrence Andres (1983-1993), Ann Slater (2003-2008), Ken Laing (2002), Fran McQuail (2000-2001), Brent Preston (2019), Angie Koch (2015-2018), Tony McQuail (1994-1997), Chris Lister (2009-2013). Missing: Thomas Herb Eldridge (1979-1983), Hubert Earl (1997-1999), Dave Smith (2013-2014).



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2), 4) Eric Barnhorst is an EFAO farmer-researcher. Along with three other farmers, he is comparing yield and economic viability of grafted and ungrafted tomatoes in unheated hoopouses.



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3) Lawrence Andres giving a tour of Anbros Farm as part of EFAO's 40th Anniversary field day and celebration.

5) EFAO Board members (and a few staff) working on a strategic plan for EFAO's future. Left to right: Jennifer Seilern, Brent Preston, Katrina McQuail, Jessica Gale, Crista Thor, Brent Klassen, Eric Payseur, Ali English, Ricardo Ramirez, Katie Baikie, and Melissa Watkins.

Missing: Eric Blondin, Mike MacGillivray, and Annie Richard (and Sarah Hargreaves, not pictured).



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6) New EFAO hats, available along with t-shirts and farm signs at the annual EFAO Conference.

7) Jeff Boesch and Leslie Moscovits of Cedar Down Farm talk about hoop house growing at a kitchen table meeting in early spring.



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8) Ken Laing demonstrates his no-till seed drill for farmers at a gathering of founding and longtime EFAO members.

9) Vegetable variety tasting at the 2019 conference, in partnership with the Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security

10) Taking in a keynote presentation at the 2019 conference.

# 527 MEMBERS ACROSS ONTARIO

495 Family/Farm Members

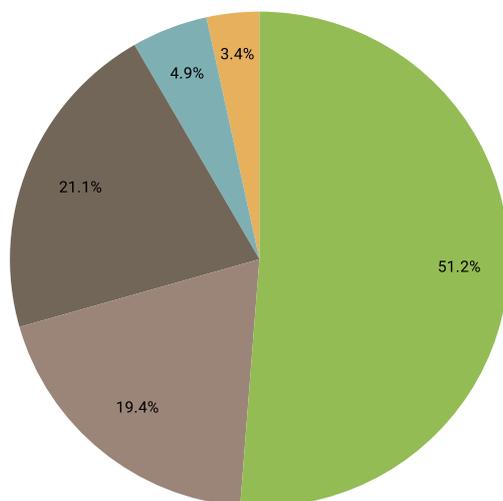
9 Sustaining Members

2 Lifetime Members

21 Student/New Farmer Members

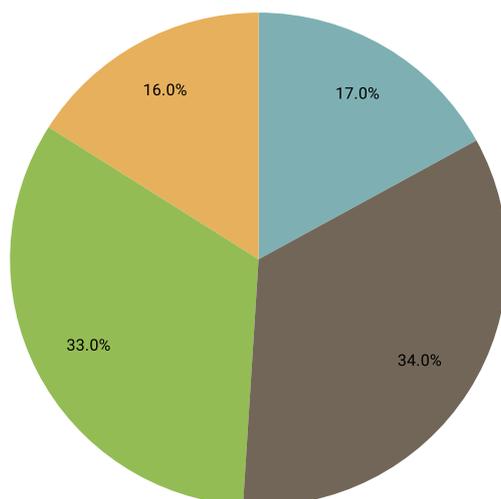
## 2019 Regional Distribution of Membership

- West (270 members)
- Central (102 members)
- East (111 members)
- North (26 members)
- Other (18 members)



## Membership by Type of Production

- Other
- Produce
- Meat & Dairy
- Field Crops & Grain



## PUBLICATIONS

Hargreaves, S.K., DeJong, P., Laing, K., McQuail, T. and L.L. Van Eerd. 2019. *Management sensitivity, repeatability, and consistency of interpretation of soil health indicators on organic farms in southwestern Ontario*. Canadian Journal of Soil Science. <https://doi.org/10.1139/cjss-2019-0062>  
Open Access, available to all!

## THANK YOU

There are many ways that members and supporters contribute financially beyond membership fees. This provides invaluable support to the organization as it builds towards a diversified and stable funding model.

Big thanks to: **Donors, Sustaining Members, Lifetime Members, Silent Auction contributors, and conference bursary and food donors.**



## AWARDS

### Excellence in Agriculture Award

EFAO was the first recipient of this new award, which recognized the curious and innovative work done by farmer-researchers in cooperation with EFAO's Farmer-Led Research Program.

### Ontario's Agricultural Soil Health and Conservation Strategy

cited EFAO's Farmer-Led Research Program as a "triple win" combining scientific rigour, practical applications and soil health.



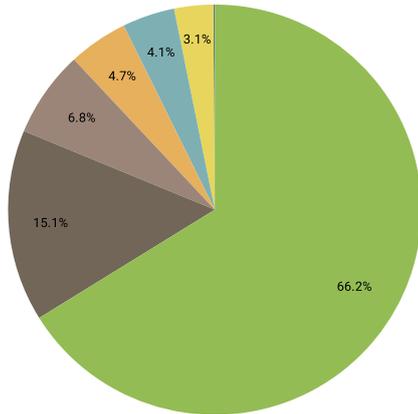
**EXCELLENCE  
IN AGRICULTURE**  
Award Recipient



# 2019 FINANCIAL REPORT

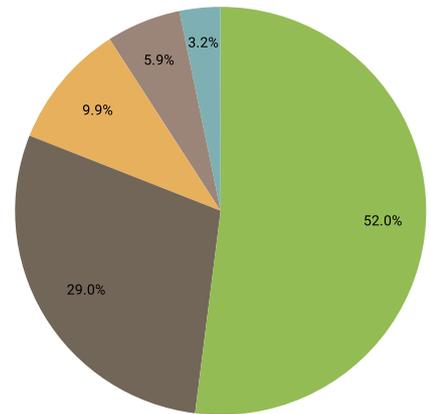
## Revenue (\$ 438,459)

- Grants (\$290,054)
- Conference (\$66,240)
- Membership (\$29,850)
- Goods and Services (\$20,454)
- Gifts (\$17,977)
- Sponsorship (\$13,381)
- Other (\$503)



## Expenses (\$ 431,441)

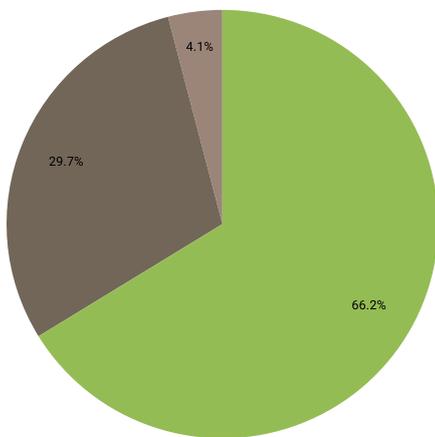
- Salaries (\$224,285)
- Programs and Services (\$125,212)
- Operating (\$42,762)
- Communications and promotion (\$25,267)
- Travel and Hospitality (\$13,714)
- Other (\$201)



**2019 Net Revenue: \$7,018**  
**General Operating Fund Balance: \$61,877**

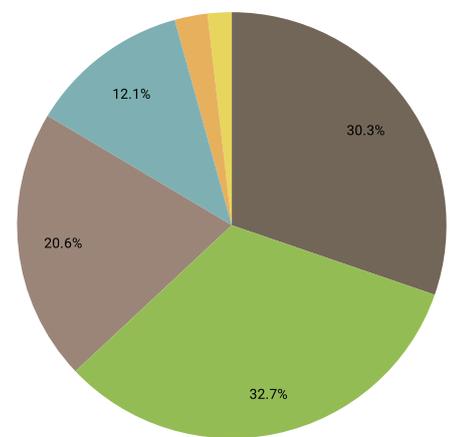
## Membership Revenue Spending (\$29,850)

- Newsletter (\$19,769)
- Education (\$8,870)
- Operations (\$1,211)



## Grant Revenue Spending (\$290,054)

- Research (\$87,861)
- Operations (\$94,814)
- Conference (\$59,774)
- Education (\$35,167)
- Board (\$7,189)
- Newsletter (\$5,249)



Thank you to our funding partners for making it possible for EFAO to continue offering innovative farmer-led education and research opportunities in ecological agriculture.



## SPECIAL THANKS TO

**The Robert and Moira Sansom Ideas Foundation**  
 a fund within



and

**The Brian and Joannah Lawson Family Foundation**

for their generous and vital support.

## ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

We are grateful to have worked in close partnership with numerous organizations and individuals across the province, particularly:

- National Farmers Union - Ontario
- Organic Council of Ontario
- Local Food and Farm Co-ops
- The Bauta Family Initiative on Canadian Seed Security
- SeedChange
- Arrell Food Institute at the University of Guelph
- Ontario Soil Network
- Canadian Organic Growers
- Practical Farmers of Iowa



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