

EFAO

Membership Handbook

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1. Introduction and organizational information

1.1 EFAO mission

To support and promote a vibrant community of ecological farmers through education, training, and knowledge sharing.

1.2 EFAO values

- 1) To create a community of farmers, from beginner to advanced, to share training, knowledge, and experience to help make farming a viable way to make a living.
- 2) To develop and provide programs on ecological agricultural methods, such as soil tillage, green manures, cover crops, composting, crop rotation, soil erosion control, conservation practices, etc.
- 3) To educate and increase knowledge of, and support for, ecological agriculture via courses, seminars, farm tours, meetings, newsletters, and other educational materials.

1.3 History

The Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario (EFAO) is a registered educational charity that has been committed to ecological and organic farming since 1979. Established to promote the advancement and understanding of ecological agricultural methods, we're run by farmers, for farmers. We focus on farmer-to-farmer training and support, to help each other make a better living growing real food while improving our soils, crops, livestock, and the environment.

2. Membership

The EFAO is a membership based organization. There are three categories of membership each with their own list of benefits: individual/family farm, business, and sustaining. In addition to the benefits specific to each category of membership, all members are entitled to vote at the Annual General Meeting, be nominated to the Board of Directors, and join member committees.

Members share common values and are committed to furthering the mission and vision of the EFAO. Any member who actively works against the values of the EFAO will not have their application for membership renewal approved by the Board of Directors.

Current membership rates and benefits can be found in Appendix A. It is very important to keep your profile and contact information up to date so you don't miss out on the latest newsletter. You can update your contact information and profile by logging into the website or by contacting the office.

2.1 Membership logo

The membership logo is available to all current members. Use the logo on your website and general promotional materials to let customers and other farmers know that you support ecological agriculture in the province. The logo is not to be used on labels for products that are for sale, and does not imply EFAO endorsement of a farm or product. The logo is available for download on the EFAO website. Contact the office for the current download location.

2.2 Membership committees

Committees meet on a schedule determined by its members (monthly, bi-monthly, seasonally) and are made up of EFAO members. There is no set number of committee members. Committees are open to new members joining from the committee's general region (ex: Eastern Ontario). Any member who is interested in starting a committee for their region or on a specific topic needs to seek approval of the Board of Directors. Committees will work closely with EFAO staff and report their activities to the Board of Directors on a regular basis.

3. Governance and decision-making in the EFAO

3.1 Role of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors oversees the affairs of the organization in a manner deemed beneficial to the organization as a whole. They are responsible for hiring an executive director to manage the day-to-day operations of the organization, providing fiscal oversight, and ensuring bylaws are being followed and that the future of the organization is secure.

3.2 Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting occurs during the annual Ecological Farmers of Ontario Conference. Any member in good standing 30 days prior to the Annual General Meeting will be allowed one vote. The membership will review the annual audited statements, review any changes to the bylaws, elect members to the Board of Directors, and appoint the auditor for the coming year.

3.3 Notice of changes to the constitution, bylaws, and membership fees

The membership will vote on all changes to the constitution and bylaws. The Board of Directors sets the membership fees each year. The membership will receive 30 days notice in writing of any changes to the membership fees. A copy of the constitution and bylaws can be found in Appendix C.

4. Volunteering

4.1 Hosting kitchen table meetings or field days

The EFAO has always thrived on a sense of community, networking with peers, creating opportunities for mentorship, and peer to peer learning. One of the ways this is cultivated is through member hosted events. Often, they are organized and run by regional committees, with support from EFAO staff when requested and where staffing capacity allows, but anyone who is interested and willing can host one of these events.

4.1.1 Kitchen table meetings (KTMs)

- Run seasonally (usually January to April)
- Informal information-sharing events, open to member and non-members
- Experts are not necessarily in attendance, conversation/sharing-style typically
- They are focused on a specific topic (topics vary widely) that has been decided on and publicized in advance
- Pre-registration occurs through the EFAO website
- Host (or co-host) is responsible for facilitating discussion, introducing EFAO, promoting membership, taking attendance, and collecting any unpaid fees
- A second member co-host is sometimes present to help
- Time length is set by the host in advance and can vary from meeting to meeting
- Often includes some sort of food sharing (potluck, food sharing theme, tea/coffee, food prep demonstration/participation)
- The list of pre-registered participants is sent to the host 2 days before the event. Hosts are welcome to check-in with the office at any point for an idea of the number of registrations
- Hosts can set a minimum or maximum number of participants, as desired

4.1.2 Field days (member-organized)

- Similar structure and format to Kitchen Table Meetings but held during the growing season (usually May to November)
- Also, generally involves a tour of the farm and may or may not involve a food sharing component

4.1.3 Submitting articles or events to the E-news, blog, or newsletter

- To make it into the monthly E-news, event descriptions should be sent to the office (admin@efao.ca) by the last Monday of the month
- To make it into the print newsletter, event descriptions should be sent to the office by the 5th of the following months: December, February, April, June, August, October
- Any event of interest to the membership will be considered. EFAO staff have the right to refuse to promote an event if they feel it does not align with EFAO values

- Members are welcome and encouraged to write short articles or summaries on events attended (not just EFAO events) or topics that would be of interest to the membership. Contact the office or the editor for more information

4.2 Volunteer expense policy

EFAO is committed to reimbursing member volunteers for reasonable out of pocket costs whenever financially feasible. Please contact the office for current expense claim forms and to get approval in advance for any expenses incurred. Members also have the option of donating the amount of the expenses and will receive a charitable receipt for any expense over \$25. Anyone hosting an event such as a kitchen table meeting or field day can invoice EFAO for expenses (refreshments, materials, travel, guest speaker, etc) up to \$75. Invoices should be sent to admin@efao.ca within 3 weeks of the event.

4.3. Representing the EFAO to the public or media

When speaking to the public or the media regarding the EFAO or ecological farming in general, please remember to make sure it is understood that the opinions expressed are your own. EFAO Board Members and staff are the only ones authorized to speak on behalf of the organization.

5.0 Privacy policy

EFAO is committed to safeguarding the online privacy of our members and supporters, giving individuals and organizations the opportunity to control and monitor their personal information online. The policy states how your personal information will be collected and used by EFAO staff and volunteers. See Appendix B to review the privacy policy.

6.0 Refunds

72 hours (3 days) notice is required for refunds for courses, workshops, farm tours and other events that are less than one full day in duration; a 20% administration fee will be applied to all requests for refunds. We cannot issue refunds for requests received within 72 hours of the scheduled training event. Requests for refunds for EFAO's conferences and other multi-day events must be received at least 7 days in advance of the scheduled event and a \$35 administration fee will be applied to all requests for refunds. This policy is still applicable even if the participant was only registered for one day of the multi-day event.

EFAO makes every effort to run all of the courses and workshops that we plan, however we require a minimum number of participants to offer a course. In the event of low registration we may have cancel an event. In the event of a cancellation registered participants will be given 48 hours notice and a full refund for their course or workshop registration fees will be issued. EFAO will not compensate participants for pre-arranged travel expense associated with the course or workshop.

Appendix A: 2016 Membership Rates

Newsletter Subscription Only: \$50/year

- Newsletter and E-new bulletin only

Individual / Farm Membership: \$75/year or \$130 / 2 years

- Full membership (all above benefits)

Business Membership: \$250/year

- Full membership as listed above
- 30% discount on large format display advertising in our print newsletter (6 issues/year and over 400 subscribers)
- 30% discount on advertising in our annual conference program (over 300 participants)
- Additional copies of our newsletter at cost
- Business profile in a welcome email to mailing list (1000 subscribers)
- Logo included on scrolling business member feature, visible on each website page
- Business name, description and link on Business Members web page
- \$150 discount on trade show booth at annual conference

Sustaining Membership: \$250/year

- Full 1 yr membership (all above Individual / Farm Membership benefits) plus acknowledgement in our newsletter
- By purchasing a sustaining membership you will provide EFAO with vital resources to build capacity, develop programming and continue offering services to our members across the province

Registration Information:

To become an member or renew your existing membership sign into your online account or download the printable form here: <https://efao.ca/membership/>

If you are already and EFAO member and do not wish to make any changes to your information, do not fill out the Membership Form again. Either Log into your account and renew or send a cheque to the EFAO office.

Send completed Membership forms by email to: admin@efao.ca

Send cheques or completed Membership forms to:

Ecological Farmers of Ontario
5420 Hwy 6 North
Guelph, Ontario
N1H 6J2

Appendix B: EFAO Privacy Policy

EFAO is committed to safeguarding the privacy of our members and supporters, giving individuals and organizations the opportunity to control and monitor their personal information. The following policy states how your personal information will be collected and used by EFAO staff and volunteers.

Visiting our website

You can visit our website, read the blog, and check event information without revealing any personal information. Our online forms including membership sign up, course registration, and e-news sign up do require personal information to be collected. EFAO does not claim responsibility for the online privacy policies of organizations linked to from our website.

Becoming a member

When becoming an EFAO member you will be asked to provide some personal details about your farming enterprise via our online forms. This information will be used by EFAO for grant reporting and internal assessment and will not be publicly accessible unless approved by the account user.

Information provided for events, stock ads, and producer member list will appear as is on our public site. Membership details approved to appear in the internal member directory will only be accessible by anyone who is an EFAO member.

EFAO does not share, trade, or sell our membership lists with any other groups. All personal information submitted to EFAO online is protected by industry standard security measures to ensure no loss, misuse, or alteration of information under our control.

Course and event registration

If you are not an EFAO member with an online account you will be asked to create an account providing your name and contact information to register for courses and events through our website, no other information will be collected from you at this point.

Payment information

Online payments will be accepted through our website using PayPal. Information on privacy policies and security of information entered through PayPal can be found on their official website.

Keeping your personal financial information private is vitally important to us. EFAO will no longer manually process credit card payments and will not be storing credit card information as a part of user account profiles. Credit card and financial information will be collected and processed by PayPal only. EFAO will continue to collect payment by cheque and commits to process these in an appropriate and timely manner.

Photo Sharing Information

EFAO reserves the right to use photographs taken at EFAO events on the EFAO website, in newsletters, and various social media outlets. Photographs may be shared with newspapers, magazines, and other media. Please alert EFAO event staff if you do not wish to have your photograph taken at an EFAO event.

Policy revisions

The development of the EFAO's policies for the protection of personal information is an ongoing process. Due to changes in technology and legal requirements, we may revise this policy from time to time. Please ensure that you refer to the current version of the EFAO Privacy Policy.

If you have any questions about this privacy statement or the privacy practices of the site, you can send an email to info@efao.ca.

Appendix C: Constitution and Bylaws

See the following pages

Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario — Constitution and By-laws

1. Name: The corporation shall be known as the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario.

2. Purpose: The establishment and operation of a Ecological Farmers organization.

3. Objectives:

i. To create an "ecological agriculture" which maintains and enhances the health of the soil, crops, livestock, environment, farmers, consumers, and communities, and the connections between these, through the understanding and application of ecological principles.

ii. To provide opportunities to study practical applications of ecological farming methods like soil tillage, greenmanures, covercrops, composting, crop rotations, soil erosion control and conservation practices, windbreaks, livestock management and farm marketing.

iii. To educate farmers regarding ecological farming methods, including training, sharing knowledge and experience, and providing opportunities to observe practical applications.

4. Business of the Constitution

i. The head office shall be located at 93 Marietta Street, Wroxeter, ON, N0G 2X0 in the county of Huron.

ii. The corporate seal shall be in the form impressed hereon.

iii. The Association shall be carried on without the purpose of gain for its members, and any profits or other accretions to the corporation shall be used in promoting its objects.

iv. The Directors of the Association shall serve as such without remuneration and no Director shall directly or indirectly receive any profit from his or her position as such, provided that Directors may be paid reasonable expenses incurred by them in the performance of their duties.

v. The association shall be subject to the Charities Accounting Act and the Charitable Gifts Act.

vi. The borrowing power of the Association pursuant to any by-law passed and confirmed in accordance with section 59 of the Corporations Act shall be limited to borrowing money for current operating expenses, provided that the borrowing power of the Association shall not be so limited if it borrows on the security of real or personal property.

vii. Upon the dissolution of the Association and after payment of all debts and liabilities, its remaining property shall be distributed or disposed of to charitable organizations which carry on their work solely in Canada.

viii. If it is made to appear to the satisfaction of the Minister, upon report of the Public Guardian and Trustee, that the Association has failed to comply with any of the provisions of the Charities Accounting Act or the Charitable Gifts Act, the Minister may authorize an inquiry for the purpose of determining whether or not there is sufficient cause for the Lieutenant Governor to make an order under subsection 317(1) of the Corporations Act to cancel the Letters Patent of the Association and declare them to be dissolved.

Special Provisions in the Supplementary Letters Patent STANDARD ADDITIONAL POWERS TO BE ADDED:

ix. To do all such things as are incidental and ancillary to the attainment of the above objects and, in particular, but subject to the Charitable Gifts Act, the Charities Accounting Act, other statutes that affect charities and the common law as it applies to charities:

(a) to accumulate from time to time part of the fund or funds of the Association and income therefrom subject to any statutes or laws from time to time applicable;

- (b) to invest and re-invest the funds of the Association in such manner as determined by the Directors, and in making such investments, the Directors shall not be subject to the Trustee Act, but provided such investments are reasonable, prudent and sagacious under the circumstances and do not constitute, either directly or indirectly, a conflict of interest;
- (c) to solicit and receive donations, bequests, legacies and grants, and to enter into agreements, contracts and undertakings incidental thereto;
- (d) to acquire, by purchase, contract, donation, legacy, gift, grant, bequest or otherwise, any personal property and to enter into and carry out any agreements contracts or undertakings incidental thereto, and to sell, dispose of and convey the same, or any part thereof, as may be considered advisable;
- (e) to acquire by purchase, lease, devise, gift, or otherwise, real property, and to hold such real property or interest therein necessary for the actual use and occupation of the Association or for carrying on its charitable undertaking, and, when no longer so necessary to sell, dispose of and convey the same or any part thereof;
- (f) to employ and pay such assistants, clerks, agents, representatives and employees, and to procure, equip and maintain such offices and other facilities and to incur such reasonable expenses, as may be necessary, provided that the Association shall not pay any remuneration to a Director in any capacity whatsoever;
- (g) to take up proportions of any increased capital of a company or corporation in which the Association may at any time hold shares or obligations, to purchase any additional shares or obligations in such company or corporations; to join in any plan for the reconstruction or re-organization or for the sale of assets of any company or corporation, or part thereof; to enter into any pooling or other agreement in connection with the shares or obligations of a company or corporation held by the Association; and to give consent to the creation of any mortgage, lien or indebtedness of any company or corporation whose shares or obligations are held by the corporation; provided, however, that all of the foregoing is subject to the provisions of the Charitable Gifts Act;
- (h) to demand and compel payment of all sums of money and claims to any real or personal property in which the Association may have an interest and to compromise any such claims, and generally to sue and be sued in its corporate name;
- (i) to draw, make, accept, endorse, execute and issue cheques and other negotiable or transferable instruments; and
- (j) to pay all costs and expenses of, or incidental to, the incorporation.

Bylaws

1. Membership:

Membership in the corporation shall be limited to persons interested in furthering the objects of the corporation and shall consist of anyone whose application for admission as a member has received the approval of the board of directors of the corporation. An application for admission as a member submitted thirty (30) or fewer days before an annual or special general meeting shall not become operative until after, nor entitle the applicant to vote at, the said annual or special general meeting.

2. Membership fees and application:

Membership fees shall be set by the board following notification of the membership and a minimum of 30 days for feedback.

3. Responsibilities and composition of board:

- i. The affairs of the corporation shall be administered by a Board of Directors who may exercise all powers and do all such acts and things as may be exercised and done by the corporation not otherwise expressly provided for by the by-laws, or as required to be done for the operation and betterment of the Corporation.
- ii. The applicants for incorporation shall become the first directors for the association whose term of office on the board shall continue until their successors are determined. At the first annual meeting of the association, the board then determined shall replace the provisional directors named in the letters Patent of the Association.
- iii. Every director and officer of the Corporation shall exercise the powers and discharge the duties of ^{their} his office honestly, in good faith, and in the best interests of the Corporation, and in connection therewith shall exercise the degree of care, diligence, and skill that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances.
- iv. At least 8 directors shall be elected at the AGM for 1 to 3 year terms. Directors are eligible to renew their terms for a period not exceeding six consecutive years and it is preferable that not all directors be replaced in any given year.

v. Except for the applicants for incorporation, each Director shall be a member of the Association or become a member within ten (10) days of appointment or election.

vi. If a directors seat is vacated, members of the board of directors are authorized to select a replacement director from the membership to fill that position until the next Annual General Meeting.

4. Quorum and Meetings:

A majority of the directors shall form a quorum for the transaction of business. Except as otherwise required by by-law, the Board of Directors may hold its meeting at such place or places as it may from time to time determine. A special meeting may be called at the request of three members of the Board of Directors.

5. Officers:

There shall be four officers as follows: President, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. The directors shall elect officers from among themselves at the first meeting.

The president shall chair the meetings, and in his/her absence his/her duties may be performed by any such other director as the board may from time to time appoint for the purpose.

The secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings, and the Treasurer shall be the custodian of the funds of the Corporation, shall receive all monies, shall make payments in accordance with the budget, keep full and accurate accounts, present financial statements at the regular meetings, and such other financial statements as required from year to year, and perform such other duties as prescribed by the Board of Directors, as need be.

6. Signing Authority:

Two signatures are required on all checks; one being the Treasurer and the other being an appointed board member.

7. Committees:

The Board of Directors shall determine the standing and special committees which are necessary to the functioning of the organization.

8. Annual General Meeting

Business at the Annual General Meeting shall include (but not be limited to):

- Reviewing the annual audited financial statement
- Reviewing any changes to the constitution or bylaws
- Election of members to the board of directors.
- Appointment of auditors.

9. Operating Year.

Fiscal year end will be August 31.

*Approved at the Board of Directors meeting of the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario, on January 26, 2002 at Guelph, ON.

Officer M. Piguet (M. Piguet) date May 16/2002
Officer _____ date _____

MC