



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**ROI welcomes Ferguson as new Leadership Programs Director**

**Guelph, Ontario, Aug. 2, 2018** – The Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is pleased to welcome Gabrielle Ferguson as the new Leadership Programs Director.

In this new position, Ferguson will be directly responsible for managing ROI's long-running [Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program](#), and continuing to develop the organization's other leadership program offerings. Ferguson will also be instrumental in maintaining and creating sponsor relationships for current and future programs.

Ferguson comes to ROI with over 25 years' experience in both industry and government, having worked with organizations such as the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Cargill, Pioneer Hi-Bred, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the University of Guelph. She is also a graduate of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (Class 15). Ferguson lives on a cash-crop farm in Lambton County and is passionate about promoting a greater understanding between agriculture and the public.

Chief Executive Officer Norm Ragetlie is delighted that Ferguson has joined the team and says, "Gabe's arrival will give us a chance to take a fresh look at our leadership programming offerings. Gabe brings a wealth of ag sector relationships to this job which we will build upon to ensure the needs of the sector are being met."

Ferguson is expected to begin her position with the organization in September. "I'm excited to support leadership development in the ag sector and rural communities," Ferguson says. "I'm looking forward to this new role and engaging with industry stakeholders to explore existing and new opportunities for leadership programming."

The Rural Ontario Institute is a non-profit organization committed to developing leaders and facilitating collaboration on issues and opportunities facing rural and northern Ontario. More information is available at [www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca/](http://www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca/).

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