



ADVANCED AGRICULTURAL
LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



2023-2025 | Class 20 Directory

The **Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP)** is an experiential executive leadership program for those who want to shape the future of the agriculture and food industry and make a positive difference in rural communities across Ontario.



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Program Overview

AALP Class 20 will participate in seven seminars, two study tours and issues analysis group projects.

Webinar A - August 2023

Zoom ConferenceWhat to Expect

Seminar 1 - September 2023

Niagara-on-the-lake Vineland..... Leadership – Theory & Application

Webinar B - October 2023

Zoom ConferenceConnect Review, Practice, Explore Issues

Seminar 2 - November 2023

SarniaEffective Dialogue, Creating Team Synergy

Webinar C - December 2023

Zoom ConferenceConnect with other ag-sector leadership programs globally

Seminar 3 - January 2023

Toronto Change Leadership, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Awareness of Self and Others

North American Study Tour - February 2024

TBD Understanding Canadian/American Relations

Seminar 4 - August 2024

Thunder Bay..... Situational Analysis and Conflict Management

Seminar 5 - September 2024

LondonCommunication - Media, written and verbal

Webinar D - October 2024

Zoom ConferenceConnect, Review, Practice, Explore Issues

Seminar 6 - November 2024

OttawaFederal Government; Globalization & Trade; Problem Solving

Webinar E - December 2024

Zoom Conference Connect Review, Practice, Explore Issues

International Study Tour - February 2025

The Baltics.....Intercultural Communication and Cultural Intelligence

Webinar F - March 2025

Zoom ConferencePrepare for Final Seminar and Stewart Gala

Seminar 7 - March 2025

Guelph..... A Look Ahead

Fundraiser Dates

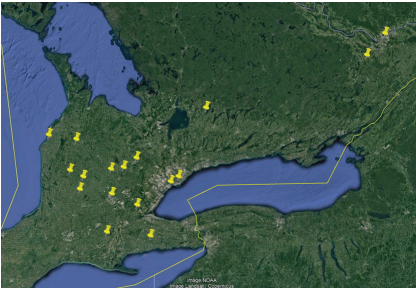
April 13th, 2024
Guelph AALP Dream Gala

September 2024
Woodstock OAC Dean Rob McLaughlin award
supplementary support for participants

March 2025
Guelph Wm. A. Stewart Public Lecture and Reception

AALP Class 20 (2023-2025)

The 18 participants of Class 20 bring a range of backgrounds and educational experience to the class. Class members are livestock, horticulture, cannabis, grain and oilseed producers and/or involved in agri-business and agri-food, financial sectors, non-government and commodity associations and small business. The Class ranges in age from 25 to 54. Participants come from as far east as Ottawa and as far west at Thedford. Delhi is the southern limit and Oakwood the northern limit in Ontario.



Back row from left to right: Jeff McAllister, Daniel Vander Hout, Harry Stoddart, Greg Dietrich, Cory Wozniak, John Taves, Ryan Trim. Middle row from left to right: Lauren Kennedy, Brandon Fakelman, Tina Beirnes, Kayla Veldman, Andrew Nunez-Alvarez, Samantha Klaver, Tyler Denham. Front row from left to right: Nilesh Kumar, Janelle Cardiff, Margaret Pendleton, Renee Bronkhorst, Cassandra Van Engelen, Ellen Edney,

Participant Bios

Tina Beirnes

Tina is a Nutrient Management Consultant and Maize and Quality Seeds dealer. She has been involved in many different areas of the agriculture business throughout her career and is a graduate of both Ridgetown College (Diploma in Agriculture) and Olds College (Bachelor of Applied Science Agri-Business Major). She has an interest in learning more agriculture business strategies and building more industry contacts. Tina enjoys being involved in her community and her children's activities. She sits on both industry and community boards as well as serving as a co-chair on a local fundraising committee. Tina resides in Atwood with her husband Jesse, their 4 boys and the family dog.



Renee Bronkhorst

Renee is Senior Manager of Farming Operations at the Chicken Farmers of Ontario. This involves managing a diverse team of 15 auditors across the province. Renee is a graduate of the University of Guelph in Animal Science and has enjoyed a very successful career in various agriculture organizations, including working in Zambia for 12 years in both crop and animal production. Throughout her career as a manager in agriculture production, Renee has worked with employees to improve their leadership skills and achieve high quality outcomes with resilience and agility. Her passion is innovation and she has a proven track record of supporting team adaptation and advancement to meet the needs of an ever-changing agriculture sector. Renee resides in Kincardine with her husband Hannes and their three teenagers. She enjoys walks along the lake with their dogs.



Janelle Cardiff

Janelle found her love for agriculture and poultry while attending the University of Guelph where she graduated in 2014 from the Animal Science in Agriculture program. Since graduating, she has been working as a Producer Representative for Gray Ridge Eggs and enjoys her constantly expanding role visiting egg farms across southern Ontario and ensuring all farm to grading station business and communication runs smoothly. She is also involved in the industry as a zone 7 delegate for EFO, on the production management committee for EFC and she sits as vice chair for Farm & Food Care Ontario. Janelle recently became a first-generation grain farmer. She and husband Matt purchased a farm near Brussels where they live along with their horses, two cats and black lab named Phoebe.



Tyler Denham

Tyler is the Merchandising Manager at Snobelen Farms Ltd. He grew up on cash crop farm near St. Marys and moved in 2023 to Lucknow. He graduated from the University of Guelph in 2009 and has been involved in multiple areas of agriculture working for soybean processors, feed mills, grain elevators & trading companies. Tyler enjoys learning about history, cultures, and agriculture in different parts of the world. He has lived and worked in Minnesota and Alberta, and has travelled to many countries overseas. He looks forward to learning and growing within the Ontario grain industry.



Greg Dietrich

Greg is the owner and operator of Character Dairy Genetics (CDG) – a family dairy business – alongside his sister and brother-in-law. CDG consists of two dairies in Mildmay, Ontario, and is also a custom calving and calf raising operation. From an early age, agriculture and dairy have been Greg's primary interest, which led him to pursue an Animal Science degree at the University of Guelph, followed by working with Holstein Canada and Semex. These experiences gave him valuable industry experience on both the national and international levels. Greg enjoys industry events and is currently the chair of the Genetic Evaluation Board for the Canada Dairy Network (Lactanet). With his passion for continuous learning, he likes debating and seeking solutions to understand new technologies and their potential integration on personal and business fronts.



Ellen Edney

Ellen is the founder and operator of Mariposa Wool Mill and Farm Market in Oakwood, Ontario. After growing up on the farm, she ventured into different areas of work in the health care field only to find herself accidentally back in agriculture just years later. Ellen is currently living on the second-generation family farm running a community minded wool processing facility and an agri-tourism business while raising four children with husband Dave. She has a keen interest in seeing innovation begin with Canadian wool and is excited for future opportunities within the industry.



Brandon Fakelman

Brandon is a Senior Relationship Manager with Farm Credit Canada. He has been involved in agriculture his entire life and is a graduate of the University of Guelph. He prioritizes mentoring teammates and building strong relationships with clients to offer valued guidance. Brandon enjoys taking time to promote the opportunities within agriculture to individuals inside and outside of the industry. Brandon resides in Norwich with his wife Anna, their two dogs and cat.



Lauren Kennedy

Lauren has been with Chicken Farmers of Canada since 2015, serving as the Director of Public Affairs and Communications, bringing years of political and public policy experience to the organization. With a degree in Political Science from Brock University and a post-graduate in International Business from Niagara College, Lauren moved to Ottawa in 2008 where she interned at the United States Embassy. She then worked for an MPP and eventually in the Ottawa Office of the Premier of Ontario. Lauren currently serves on the board of the Government Relations Institute of Canada. In her spare time, she plays a lot of golf and enjoys travelling.



Samantha Klaver

Samantha is a Territory Sales Representative with Syngenta Canada, representing the NK Seeds brand, where she covers the London to Niagara region. She grew up on a farm in Huron County, along with her four younger sisters. She is a graduate of the University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus and Olds College in Alberta. Sam likes to stay active and makes the most out of every opportunity a motto engrained in her from her 4-H days. Sam is a retired member of the Junior Farmer's Association of Ontario and past ambassador for her local fair and plowmen's association. Sam is a CrossFit Coach and enjoys playing several sports throughout the year.



Jeffrey McAllister

Jeff is an agriculture and agri-business investor as a Partner at Bonnefield. Jeff grew up in Northern Ontario and has been involved in agriculture his entire life. A graduate of Western University, Jeff is also a CPA and CFA Charterholder. He has a strong interest in working with agri-business owners and solving challenges within the agriculture sector. Jeff and his wife Alessia reside in Toronto with their son.



Andrew Nunez-Alvarez

Andrew Nunez-Alvarez is the Alternate Master Grower/ Quality Assurance Associate at a Health Canada licensed cannabis production facility situated in Simcoe, Ontario. Andrew was born and raised in Toronto, Ontario, and is currently living with his best friend - a one-year-old Miniature Australian Shepherd named Chewbacca. Andrew's deep passion for agriculture, leadership, design technology, and business development drives his professional pursuits and community projects. Andrew's credentials include a certificate in Horticulture Sciences, a diploma in Horticulture studies, and a post-graduate certificate in Commercial Cannabis Production. As the founder of The Growers Discord, an exclusive online community for cannabis cultivation leaders across Canada, Andrew proudly fosters knowledge sharing, professional development, and community collaboration within the cannabis industry.



Margaret Pendleton

Maggie is a Plant Manager/Grain Originator for FS Partners/Great Lakes Grain. She grew up on a cow/calf beef farm and has a BSc in Agriculture from the University of Guelph. Maggie enjoys working directly with farmers to ensure they make the best marketing decisions to achieve their goals. She also has an interest in sustainability and its importance for the future of agriculture. In her spare time, she can be found camping, hiking and snowboarding.



Harry Stoddart

Harry has held a variety of roles in his 35-year career in the Ontario agricultural sector, including 25 years as a primary producer. Harry has both an undergraduate and Masters degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Guelph. He has been a business strategy consultant with PricewaterhouseCoopers and IBM as well as his own consulting practice. More recently, he has held senior staff and board leadership positions with a number of not-for-profit organizations including Agricorp, Kawartha Credit Union, Lindsay Agricultural Society, Community Foundation of Kawartha Lakes and OSCIA. He is passionate about long-term sustainability of the agri-food system and society and has written a number of articles and a book on the subject. Harry currently resides in Elmira and has five adult children.



John Taves

John grew up on a cash crop farm in Chatham-Kent, and is a graduate of University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus. Since 2006, he has worked with Libro Credit Union in various business banking roles – always maintaining a connection and focus on agriculture. He is currently Senior Manager, Agricultural Markets at Libro, leading and growing Libro's Agricultural strategy as well as a team of Agriculture Specialists. John is a strong believer in serving others and has been involved in various boards and community roles over the years. He and his wife Julie and their four children reside in Norfolk County.



Cassandra Van Engelen

Cassandra is a 2nd generation pig farmer, overseeing a 375 sow, farrow to finish barn in Lambton County. She works as the manager of Hog-Ties Farms Ltd, alongside her father and brother who is set to take over the farm with her. Cassandra enjoys taking care of her pigs and working with her family. She follows in her father's footsteps by continuing to innovate and make the farm more sustainable and efficient while also maintaining a high quality of care for her animals. Cassandra is a member of her local pork board and enjoys playing baseball and hockey. She lives in Arkona with her husband Kayle, two sons and beloved dog.



Daniel Vander Hout

Daniel has lived his whole life at Beverly Greenhouses in Hamilton, a family farm growing 27 acres of English cucumbers. He is a graduate from Redeemer University with a degree in business with a minor in political science. Off the farm, Daniel serves on the board of the Hamilton-Wentworth Federation of Agriculture, actively participates with other farm associations, and volunteers with several organizations outside of agriculture. As a fourth-generation farmer, Daniel is proud to work in such a dynamic and exciting industry and eager to play a role in shaping the future of Ontario agriculture.



Kayla Veldman

Kayla grew up on an egg, pullet, and grain farm in Embro, Ontario. She followed her love of agriculture to the University of Guelph, graduating in 2017 with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture and a lot of great memories. After graduation, Kayla worked for three years as a private agronomist and seed sales representative, before seizing the opportunity to return home and farm full-time with her family. Kayla's second passion is traveling and the chance to connect with new people, take in different cultures and learn about agriculture and food in different parts of the world. She is currently involved with an on-going initiative with female poultry and egg farmers in Nepal, working to strengthen their operations. Locally she commits her time to the zone 6 egg farmers of Ontario as a counselor. Kayla hopes to use the leadership skills developed through AALP to make a positive difference in communities, locally and globally.



Cory Wozniak

Cory is an Agricultural Specialist with Libro Credit Union. He has been involved in agriculture his entire life. Cory attended college and received his diploma in Business Administration. He has a great interest in new innovations in agriculture and how they can be used to meet the future challenges for agriculture in Ontario. Cory is an advocate in agriculture in the form of educating the public about where their food comes from. Cory resides in Belwood with his wife Karen, four sons and the family dog.



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AALP Advisory Teams

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Helma Geerts

Curriculum

Captain: Cathy Lennon

Recruitment

Captain: Geoff Innes

Interview Lead: Evelyn Chambers

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