



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ROI Announces AALP Class 20 Participants

GUELPH, ON, July 12, 2023 - The Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is excited to announce the twenty-two current and emerging leaders from across the province selected to be a part of Class 20 of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP). Participants will start their AALP leadership journey in August 2023.

“AALP consistently develops leaders, making them better prepared to identify and overcome challenges and to capitalize on emerging opportunities across the agriculture, agri-food and rural sectors,” says Dan Borowec, ROI Board Chair. *“Congratulations to the participants of Class 20 who have committed to this unique professional development opportunity. These leaders will shape the future of the agriculture and food industry as transitional change makes its way through rural communities across Ontario.”*

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.

Each AALP Class is chosen with attention to the diversity of participants so that peer-to-peer mentorship, interrelationships, and a broad network are developed. *“It’s exciting and affirming to see the high caliber of talent and enthusiasm in Class 20,”* says Gabrielle Ferguson, Leadership Programs Director. *“Class participants will learn from each other, offering unique viewpoints and enabling thought-provoking, balanced discussion of critical issues and new ideas about the future of the agri-food industry.”*

During the experiential program, AALP participants will come together for in-person seminars, online webinars, study tours – North American and international – and small group issues analysis projects for agriculture, food, and rural community clients. The program’s focus is on building foundational skills and providing the context for practicing them in a safe but challenging environment. Curriculum adapts with relevant topics for each class to promote new multi-stakeholder approaches while developing critical self-analysis.

AALP, funded in part by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and ag-sector organizations/industry, is delivered by the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) a non-profit organization committed to developing leaders and facilitating collaboration on issues and opportunities facing rural and northern Ontario communities. Established in 1984, the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) has graduated over 500 leaders who are making a positive difference across Ontario and beyond.

Participants in AALP Class 20:

- Tina Beirnes, North Perth, Nutrient Management Consultant, Maizex and Quality Seeds Dealer
- Lora Bender, Wellington, Progressive Publishing Editor and Advertising Sales
- Renee Bronkhorst, Bruce County, Senior Manager Operations, Chicken Farmers of Ontario
- Janelle Cardiff, Huron County, Gray Ridge Eggs - Producer Representative
- Tyler Denham, Lucknow, Bruce County, Snobelen Farms Ltd. - Merchandising Manager
- Greg Dietrich, Bruce, Primary Producer - Character Dairy Genetics
- Ellen Edney, Kawartha Lakes, Mariposa Woolen Mill and Farm Market - Founder and Operator
- Brandon Fakelman, Oxford County, Farm Credit Canada - Senior Relationship Manager
- Lauren Kennedy, Ottawa, Chicken Farmers of Canada - Director of Public Affairs and Communications
- Samantha Klaver, Huron County, Syngenta Canada - Territory Sales Representative
- Nilesh Kumar, Ottawa, Quality Assurance professional
- Jeffery McAllister – University-Rosedale, Agriculture and Ari-Business Investor/Partner at Bonnefield
- Phyllis MacCallum, Lanark County, Canadian Agriculture Human Resource Council - Program Manager of AgriLMI and AgriDiversity
- Andrew Nunez-Alvarez, Toronto, 2854133 Ontario Inc. - Alternate Master Grower/Quality Assurance Associate
- Harry Stoddart, Waterloo, Sustainable Agri-Food Advocate and Consultant
- Margaret Pendleton, Dufferin County, FS Partners/Great Lakes Grain – Plant Manager and Grain Originator
- John Taves, Norfolk County, Libro Credit Union – Analyst Manager
- Ryan Trim, Waterloo, Egg Farmers of Ontario - Director of Operations
- Cassandra, Van Engelen, Arkona, Lambton County, Manager of Hog-Tied Farms Ltd.
- Daniel Vander Hout, Waterdown, Primary Producer - Beverly Greenhouses Ltd.
- Kayla Veldman, Oxford County, Primary Producer - Veldman Poultry Farm Limited
- Cory Wozniak, Wellington, Libro Credit Union - Agricultural Specialist

ABOUT ROI

The Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is a non-profit organization committed to developing leaders, informing decision makers, and connecting communities. ROI delivers the renowned Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) entering its 40th year of operation, and the Rural Change Maker program, a youth leadership initiative for young rural, emerging leaders to address local priorities. We provide data research and analysis on rural trends and demographics. Information is disseminated in our Rural Ontario Facts products - factsheets and accompanying dashboards. Currently, ROI is engaged in a rural housing initiative that will help communities to address the housing and homelessness crisis being faced by thousands of Canadians.



ASSOCIATED LINKS

- [RURAL ONTARIO INSTITUTE](#)
- [ADVANCED AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAM](#)

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