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# The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

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To: Planning and Economic Development Committee  
From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development  
Report: #2024-EDT-6  
Date: April 2, 2024

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**Subject:**

Gather at the Farm 2023 Agri-Food Marketing Campaign

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**Recommendation:**

That the Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends:

That this report be received for information.

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**Report:**

**1. Purpose**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee with a brief overview of the Region's Economic Development and Tourism Division October 2023 marketing campaign, "Gather at the Farm".

**2. Background**

2.1 The Economic Development and Tourism Division collaborates with Durham Farm Fresh (DFF) to promote local agri-food producers and visiting local farms to residents and visitors.

2.2 In previous years, Economic Development and Tourism staff delivered an event called Gates Open in collaboration with DFF and participating members, which involved hosting residents and tourism at multiple farms across the Region and enabling agri-tourism and culinary activations on farm. In 2023, an alternate

approach was undertaken that entailed the delivery of a digital marketing campaign to support local agri-food producers.

- 2.3 The Gather at the Farm campaign celebrated DFF's 30th anniversary during the month of October and encouraged residents and visitors to Gather at the Farm and experience on-farm events, purchase fresh local food, and participate in lively fall-themed events.

### **3. Campaign Details and Results**

- 3.1 The Gather at the Farm campaign relied on in-house staff resources for campaign development and management, graphic design, social media programming, creating e-newsletter lists, and deploying communications strategies across a beautiful and compelling campaign to more than 1,000,000 viewers.

- 3.2 The Gather campaign included:

- a. Half page ads in the Toronto Star, Peterborough Examiner, Orono Weekly Times, Scugog Standard, and Uxbridge Cosmos;
- b. Digital ads run through the Metroland network, including a home page takeover, and digital ads within articles;
- c. Social media posts in organic and paid formats on Meta and LinkedIn networks;
- d. E-news distribution in various channels;
- e. News release hosted at durham.ca and investdurham.ca;
- f. A digital message from Durham Regional Chair John Henry;
- g. A campaign landing page with a map to farms and information about activities, events, and on-farm stores.

- 3.3 The Gather campaign achieved the following results:

- a. 1,034,629 digital impressions;
- b. 14,376 landing page views;
- c. More than 10,000 clicks.

### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The total cost of the Gather campaign was \$7,500 which was sourced from the approved 2023 Economic Development and Tourism division budget.

## 5. Relationship to Strategic Plan

5.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham Region Strategic Plan:

- a. Goal 3.2: Leverage Durham's prime geography, social infrastructure, and strong partnerships to foster economic growth;
- b. Goal 3.4: Capitalize on Durham's strengths in key economic sectors to attract high-quality jobs;
- c. Goal 3.5: Provide a supportive environment for agriculture and agri-food industries.

## 6. Conclusion

6.1 Gather at the Farm used digital media to reach a wide audience of potential visitors, promoting opportunities to visit farms with local food or agri-tourism experiences in Durham Region in the fall season, building awareness of Durham as a place with a strong local food offering while supporting economic vitality for agri-food producers.

6.2 Economic Development and Tourism Division staff will continue to collaborate with DFF to create strategies and campaigns that promote agri-food and on-farm experiences to residents and visitors.

## 7. Attachments

Attachment #1: Gather at the Farm Campaign marketing materials.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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Brian Bridgeman, MCIP, RPP, PLE  
Commissioner of Planning and  
Economic Development

Recommended for Presentation to Committee


Original signed by


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Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair  
Chief Administrative Officer

# Gather at the Farm Landing Page

GATHER AT THE FARM
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### GATHER at the FARM

**Durham Region Fall Farm Events and Activities**













1. Applewood Farm Winery Corn Maze
2. Brooks Farms Fall Fun Festival and Spooky Festival
3. Buzzing Bees Adventure Farm Corn Maze and Fall Activities
4. Castle Creek Farm Pick Your Own Pumpkins
5. Cooper's CSA and Corn Maze
6. Forsythe Family Farms October Harvest Festival
7. Knox's Pumpkin Farm Pick Your Own Pumpkins
8. Linton's Farm Market Kids Fall Activities
9. Nature's Bounty Farm Fall Activities
10. Pingle's Farm Fall Harvest Festival
11. Watson Farms Fall Festival
12. Willowtree Farm Pumpkin Palooza



## Gather at the farm in Durham Region this fall!

From pumpkin patches and wagon rides to gathering farm-fresh ingredients for your fall feast, join in as Durham Tourism celebrates Durham Farm Fresh's 30th anniversary this October.

### Durham Region fall farm events and activities

 <b>Applewood Farm Winery Corn Maze</b>	 <b>Brooks Farms Fall Fun Festival and Spooky Festival</b>	 <b>Buzzing Bees Adventure Farm Corn Maze and Fall Activities</b>	 <b>Castle Creek Farm Pick Your Own Pumpkins</b>
 <b>Cooper's CSA Farm and Maze</b>	 <b>Forsythe Family Farms October Harvest Festival</b>	 <b>Knox's Pumpkin Farm Pick Your Own Pumpkins</b>	 <b>Linton's Farm Market Kids Fall Activities</b>
 <b>Nature's Bounty Farm Fall Activities</b>	 <b>Pingle's Farm Fall Harvest Festival</b>	 <b>Watson Farms Fall Festival</b>	 <b>Willowtree Farm Pumpkin Palooza</b>

### More fall fun

Farm stores open in October

About Durham Farm Fresh (DFF) Marketing Association

Plan more adventures in Durham Region

# Sample Social Media

