

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 2564



The Regional Municipality of Durham Report

To: Planning and Economic Development Committee
From: Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development
Report: #2024-EDT-15
Date: November 5, 2024

Subject:

Apple Value Chain Video Series and Educational Campaign

Recommendation:

That the Planning and Economic Development Committee recommends:

That this report be received for information.

Report:

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee with an overview of the Region's Apple Value Chain Video Series and Educational Campaign – "From Farm to Plate: Journey of the Durham Region Apple."
- 1.2 This report will be accompanied by a staff presentation at the Planning and Economic Development Committee Meeting of November 5, 2024.

2. Background

- 2.1 Newcastle, within the Municipality of Clarington, is the Apple Capital of Canada. Durham Region produces 13 per cent of the province's apples and has an ideal microclimate for apple farming given its proximity to Lake Ontario and the Oak Ridges Moraine. Apples are Durham's largest fruit crop, with approximately 2,400 acres in production.

- 2.2 Durham Region is home to 3,360 local agri-food businesses, including 1,200 farms. Approximately 27,105 people are employed by Durham's local agri-food value chain. Durham Region farms generated \$354 million in farm cash receipts and supported over \$775 million in GDP (2021 census).
- 2.3 The Agriculture and Rural Economic Development team collaborated with Durham Farm Connections and the Region's Communications and Engagement Division to create and share videos showcasing the apple value chain in Durham Region. The video series and subsequent campaign was developed with the goal of increasing public awareness of the food supply chains in Durham Region – from farm to plate. Apples were selected as the focus for this project because apples are an area of strength for the region.
- 2.4 Raising awareness about the value of Durham's local food supply chains and the many outstanding businesses who supply high quality, fresh, local food, for the region's communities and beyond, is an important component of this campaign. The videos will also be used to educate and generate student interest in agri-food career opportunities, in support of efforts to address labour shortages in the sector.

3. Previous Reports and Decisions

- 3.1 [#2022-EDT-10](#) – Growing Agri-Food Durham – A Five-Year Plan to Grow the Agri-Food Industry. The apple value chain videos and educational campaign directly address the following actions in the [plan](#):
- a. Goal 1: Retain and expand local food businesses.
Action (d): Support 'buy local' campaigns such as Durham Farm Fresh activities to promote agri-food in Durham.
 - b. Goal 6: Identify opportunities and solutions for the workforce and labour shortages in the agri-food industry.
Action (a): Educate youth in the region about the diverse career opportunities available in agriculture through videos, presentations, resource sharing and agricultural programming.
 - c. Goal 8: Partner with organizations and agricultural organizations to deliver and expand agricultural literacy in the Region.
Action (d): Have an active role in educating non-farm communities about agriculture in partnership with Durham Farm Connections.

4. Video Details

- 4.1 Five videos were filmed at local businesses in Durham Region, each highlighting an important step in the journey of the Durham Region apple, from farm to plate.
- i. [Apple Picking](#): See firsthand the hard work that goes into growing and harvesting apples at Wilmot Orchards and Algoma Orchards in Newcastle – the apple capital of Canada.
 - ii. [Apple Sorting and Packaging](#): Learn what happens to an apple once it's harvested. Go behind the scenes and see the technology in action as the apples are cleaned, sorted, graded and packed at Algoma Orchards in Newcastle – the largest privately owned apple grower and packer in the country.
 - iii. [Apple Distribution and Warehousing](#): Distribution is an important part of making sure each apple reaches you fresh and crisp. Learn about the logistics, technology and teamwork needed as the apple makes its way through Gordon Food Service, a food distribution centre in Ajax.
 - iv. [Apple Retail](#): Dive into the world of apple retail at the award-winning Fisher's Independent Grocer in Beaverton. See the hard work that goes into making fresh local apples available to you.
 - v. [Apple Bakery](#): Visit the bakery to see how the apples are transformed into delicious baked goods at Tyrone Mills in Clarington.

5. Campaign Details

- 5.1 The Apple Value Chain campaign is an educational public awareness campaign that helps viewers learn more about where their food comes from. There are many businesses in the Region that play a critical role in getting food from Durham's farms to consumers' plates. Creating awareness of the diverse business network necessary to support the local food supply chain helps to create community support and involvement.
- 5.2 The Apple Value Chain videos are hosted on the Region of Durham and Durham Farm Connections YouTube channels. Promotional activities include:
- a. Social Media posts on the Invest Durham Ag and Rural X account, Region of Durham X, Facebook and LinkedIn accounts.
 - b. Development of an Invest Durham [landing page](#) to provide an overview of the apple value chain and link to the YouTube videos.
 - c. Sharing through the following e-newsletters:

- This Week in Durham
 - Corporate Newsletter
 - Invest Durham Newsletter
- d. Sharing with the following school boards and teachers' federations:
- Durham District School Board
 - Peterborough Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic School Board
 - Durham Catholic District School Board
 - Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board
 - Trillium Lakelands District School Board
 - Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario
 - Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation
- 5.3 The videos will continue to be used as a resource and for future public awareness campaigns including Local Food Week, Ontario Agriculture Week, and more. The videos will also be used by partners, including Durham Farm Connections, at agriculture education events.
- 6. Financial Implications**
- 6.1 The total cost of the project, including video development and paid promotions, was \$7,000, which was sourced from the 2024 Economic Development and Tourism Division annual business plan and budget.
- 7. Relationship to Strategic Plan**
- 7.1 This report aligns with/addresses the following strategic goals and priorities in the Durham region Strategic Plan:
- a. Goal 3: Economic Prosperity.
- 3.5 Provide a supportive environment for agriculture and agri-food industries.
- 8. Conclusion**
- 8.1 The Apple Value Chain: From Farm to Plate campaign uses digital media to reach a wide audience of viewers, to share information about the region's thriving apple value chain and important local businesses. Economic Development and Tourism Division staff will continue efforts to strengthen the economic vitality of the agri-food sector by creating a supportive business environment and generating increased community awareness and support, including building interest in agri-food career opportunities to address labour shortages in the sector.

8.2 Economic Development and Tourism Division staff will continue to collaborate with Durham Farm Connections to create strategies and campaigns to raise public awareness in agri-food in Durham Region.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

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

Recommended for Presentation to Committee

Original signed by

Elaine C. Baxter-Trahair
Chief Administrative Officer