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The Regional Municipality of Durham Information Report

From: Commissioner of Community Growth and Economic Development
Report: #2025-INFO-72
Date: September 19, 2025

Subject:

Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee 2025 Farm Tour, File: A01-38-02

Recommendation:

Receive for Information.

Report:

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the 23rd annual Durham Agricultural Advisory Committee (DAAC) Farm Tour event, which was held at the Kubota Canada Headquarters in the City of Pickering on September 4, 2025.

2. Background

2.1 Since its inaugural tour in 2003, DAAC has showcased more than 40 farms and other agricultural facilities across Durham Region to more than 2,000 participants.

3. Event Overview

3.1 Approximately 130 participants representing municipal and provincial governments, public agencies including conservation authorities, school boards, post-secondary institutions, municipal advisory and economic development committees, the financial and insurance industry, the agricultural community and media attended the event. The tour highlighted: the importance of Durham's agricultural sector; the supportive industries involved in agriculture; equipment manufacturing; and some of the issues and challenges faced by the industry.

3.2 The theme for this year's tour was "Agriculture Supportive Industries in Durham Region". A variety of topics were covered including:

- The history of Kubota Canada and a tour of their headquarters and warehouse;
- The economic importance of agriculture supportive industries;
- Technological innovations in agriculture and how they are helping local farmers;
- How farm vehicles are developed, tested and utilized;
- The challenges related to farm equipment manufacturing and sales;
- How tariffs are affecting Canadian agriculture; and
- The evolving nature of agriculture in Durham.

3.3 At the event, there were several displays for attendees to visit and learn from, staffed by a variety of organizations, including:

- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Agribusiness;
- Durham Agricultural Collective;
- District 12 Grain Farmers of Ontario;
- Durham West 4-H;
- Invest Durham;
- Greenbelt Foundation;
- Durham Region Federation of Agriculture;
- Durham Workforce Authority; and
- Agriculture Wellness Ontario.

3.4 At the event lunch, DAAC Chair Zac Cahoon welcomed attendees to the event and introduced the themes of the tour.

3.5 Regional Chair and CEO John Henry then spoke about:

- The success of the food products grown in Durham;
- The important contributions of farming and agriculture in Durham;
- How farmers feed our community and economy; and
- Progressive and innovative farms in the Region.

3.6 Ian Affleck from CropLife Canada provided the keynote address on plant science innovations, plant breeding technology and their benefits to agriculture and the food system in Durham.

4. Event Feedback

4.1 Each year, participants are asked to complete a survey that is used by DAAC to evaluate the success of the tour and to help plan for future events. This year, an electronic survey was circulated to attendees following the event, along with paper surveys available at the tour. From the responses received, almost all agreed that the tour met or exceeded their expectations. Some general comments were:

- On top of a well-organized event, delicious catering and educational presentation the Kubota location was beautiful, and the staff were so hospitable;
- Very well organized and attended tour. Definitely beneficial for our organization to be in attendance, tons of networking opportunities with other organizations and individuals; and
- It was very informative and interesting.

4.2 Participants were asked what the “Take Home” message was for them. Responses included:

- That agricultural, and agriculture-supporting businesses, are the backbone of Durham Region and we need to protect it and support it;
- Kubota is an important part of the supply chain for the agriculture industry in Canada, and we are fortunate to have this company in Durham Region and Kubota's support and interest in serving Canadian farmers; and
- We are fortunate to have the agricultural production that we do. Farmers are so very important. We are fortunate to have Kubota in Durham Region.

5. Previous Repots and Decisions

5.1 In January 2025, Council considered DAAC's 2025 Workplan through Commissioner's Report [#2025-CG-1](#). The Farm Tour is a major component of the DAAC Workplan.

5.2 In October 2024, [#2024-INFO-62](#) was released, summarizing last year's 2024 DAAC Farm Tour.

6. Relationship to the Strategic Plan

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

- Resilient Local Economies
 - R4. Protect and strengthen the local agriculture sector and food supply chains.

6.2 This report aligns with the following Foundations in Durham Region's 2025-2035 Strategic Plan:

- People: Making the Region of Durham a great place to work, attracting, and retaining talent.
- Technology: Keeping pace with technological change to ensure efficient and effective service delivery.

7. Conclusion

7.1 DAAC is once again commended for its continued efforts in advancing the knowledge of the agricultural industry in Durham. The annual farm tour continues to be a valuable element of the Regional Council approved work plan for the Committee.

7.2 A copy of this report will be forwarded to the Area Municipalities, the Durham Federation of Agriculture, Durham Farm Fresh, the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance and DAAC.

Respectfully submitted,

Original signed by

Sandra Austin
Commissioner of Community Growth and
Economic Development