



NEWS RELEASE

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FIVE INDUSTRY LEADERS SELECTED FOR INDUCTION INTO THE ONTARIO AGRICULTURAL HALL OF FAME

Guelph, February 19, 2019. In 2019, five industry leaders will be inducted into Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame. Marie Pick, John Maaskant, Kenneth Porteous, Wilfred Schneller and Peter Twynstra have all been selected by the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame Association as worthy candidates based on their life-long commitments to Ontario's agriculture.

To qualify for this prestigious recognition, inductees must have demonstrated visionary leadership, innovation, and entrepreneurship in the advancement of agriculture in Ontario.

"We had an incredible roster of candidates to choose from this year, said Carolyn Fuerth, President of the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame Association. "The five inductees for 2019 are indicative of this. They have all had a profound impact on the sectors of agriculture that they worked within and championed."

Inductees for 2019 and their nominators include:

Marie Elizabeth Pick, (1913 to 1986). After immigrating to Canada from Czechoslovakia in 1938, Marie and her husband Otto established Otto Pick Agricultural Service in 1947 to promote advanced pasturing systems to Ontario farmers based on seed mixtures of varying legumes and grasses. Otto's experience farming in Bohemia and Marie's agricultural school education gave them a clear vision of the opportunities available to them. When her husband died suddenly in 1959, Marie assumed operation of the business with the help of her young sons Tom and Martin. The company grew to expand across Canada and the USA, becoming the largest of its type in Canada and among the top five globally. It was purchased in 2013 by DFL Trifolium, a Danish seed company. Marie's hard work in those early years gave the company the solid roots needed to be successful.

Nominated by Martin Pick, Retired Executive of the Pickseed Group of Companies.

John Maaskant, (1948 -). John Maaskant began his farming career at the age of 16 and since then, has been extensively involved in many agricultural organizations, known for his strategic leadership and consensus building skills. He served as chair of Chicken Farmers of Ontario (1992 to 1995), the Ontario Farm Animal Council (2003 to 2011) and later Farm & Food Care Ontario (2012 to 2016). Under his leadership, the key segments of the agrifood supply chain all united to give consumers a factual picture of the entire industry. As co-chair of the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition, John also advocated for reasonable environmental regulations and one of the major results was the creation of the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) model.

Nominated by Chicken Farmers of Ontario

Kenneth Porteous, (1936 -)

Ken Porteous has been at the front lines of Ontario agriculture since the early 1970s. He started his farming career on Lingwood Farms, becoming an elite dairy breeder who sold bulls as far away as Cuba and Africa. When he sold his herd in 1973, the average price per animal was the highest ever paid for a herd in Canada. He then expanded his orchard acreage and today, Lingwood Farms has grown to 865 acres which Ken farms in partnership with his son, son-in-law and grandson. Ken was a co-founder of the Norfolk Cherry Company and Norfolk Growers, was president of the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, vice chair of the Ontario Tender Fruit Growers Marketing Board and president of the Canadian Horticulture Council (CHC). Under his leadership, the CHC developed the Canada Gap program which is internationally recognized and used as a model in other countries.

Nominated by the Norfolk Fruit Growers' Association

Wilfred John Schneller (1902-1987)

Wilf Schneller owned Spruce Grove Farm at Baden, recognized for its excellent herd of high producing Ayrshires. But it was his drive to learn about new practices, test them with extension and academic partners and then to inspire other farmers to adopt new technology and management solutions which set him apart as a key agricultural leader of his time. As a devoted conservationist, he began to implement new soil and water conservation methods on his farm to inhibit soil erosion. Through farm tours, demonstration plots and presentations, he showed others how to employ these practices. He became president of the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association in 1954 and in 1959 was made an Honourary Member of the Soil Conservation Society of America. He planted over 56 varieties of trees on his own farm and helped to develop an Arboretum near New Hamburg which opened in 1964.

Nominated by the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

Peter Twynstra (1939 -)

Peter Twynstra is widely recognized as an agricultural innovator, a proven marketer and for his leadership in a number of agriculture and commodity organizations. He purchased his father's farm in 1962, incorporating it in 1967 as Twilight Acre Farms. A key part of his business was the production of edible beans. In 1978, he founded The Great Canadian Bean Company. The business grew to provide markets for more than 400 contract growers across Canada and the USA. Later, Peter travelled to many parts of the globe, developing diversified markets for edible beans. He was a director and president of the Ontario Bean Dealers Association

and a director and founding member of Pulse Canada. He also served other organizations including the Ontario Farm Safety Board and as chair of the 2002 International Plowing Match in Middlesex County.

Nominated by the Ontario Bean Growers

The 2019 induction ceremony will take place at 2 p.m. on Sunday, June 9, 2019 at Country Heritage Park in Milton. Details on how to purchase tickets are available on the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame's website at www.oahf.on.ca

It is the mission of the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame Association to acknowledge, record, and preserve the contributions made by leaders to the growth and development of Ontario's agriculture and agri-food industry. Currently 224 individuals have been inducted into the Hall of Fame gallery. The gallery is located in the Ontario AgriCentre, 100 Stone Road West, Guelph.

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For more information contact:

Carolyn Fuerth, President
Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame Association
Phone: 519-723-4456
Email: carolynfuerth@gosfieldtel.com

Reg Cressman, Secretary/Treasurer
Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame Association
Phone: 519-632-7347
Email: rcressman@megawire.ca