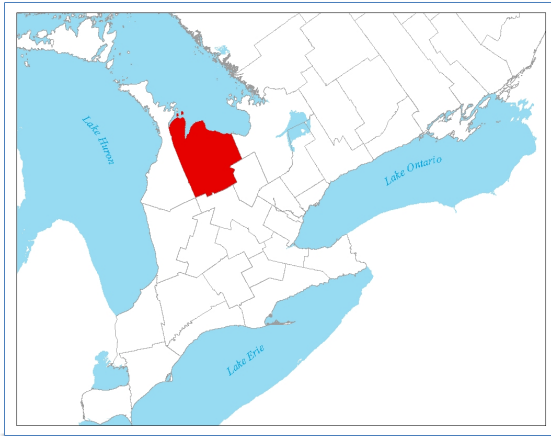


GREY COUNTY



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 451,350 ha
Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 240,027 ha
Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 200,514 ha
Area of Region in the Greenbelt⁶: 64,187.88 ha
Percent of Region in the Greenbelt: 14.22%
Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$463.7 Million
Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$2,312.56
Population (2016)¹: 93,830
Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 0.2%
Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 1.4%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	0 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	107.2 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	28.6 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	135.8 ha
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per 2001 Census Farm Area)	0.06%

Purpose of the Summary

This county summary is part of a wider study on farmland availability in Ontario. The study quantifies the conversion of prime agricultural areas based on Official Plan Amendments in upper and single-tier municipalities across the province over a 17-year study period from 2000–2017. This summary is meant to provide detail of the findings in Grey County. In conjunction with similar case studies from other counties/regions in Ontario, these findings will form the basis of the University of Guelph’s *Measuring Farmland Conversion* research project.

Methods in Brief

The study involved the examination of Official Plan Amendments (OPAs) approved by Grey County, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for Grey County during the years 2000–2017. The first Official Plan (OP) for Grey County and Owen Sound was approved in 1981, and later updated and replaced by the County of Grey Official Plan in 2000. These plans were

prepared for the entire County including the nine lower-tier municipalities that comprise the County. The lower-tier municipalities within Grey County are the Township of Chatsworth, Township of Georgian Bluffs, Municipality of Grey Highlands, Town of Hanover, Municipality of Meaford, City of Owen Sound, Township of Southgate, Town of The Blue Mountains, and the Municipality of West Grey. Access to data for the County provided by staff at Grey County's Planning Department. Their assistance is appreciated in making this research possible.

Changes in farmland availability have been captured in three categories:

- 1) Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a development designation (including but not limited to urban, residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational designations);
- 2) Prime agricultural areas redesignated to a rural designation;
- 3) Land designated as a prime agricultural area with a site-specific amendment to allow additional uses.

Housekeeping type amendments have not been tallied as contributing to farmland conversion. Housekeeping type amendments arise as OP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

Agricultural Land Use Designations in Grey County

Grey County designates prime agricultural under the three agricultural designations. *Agricultural* areas denote prime farmland, *Special Agricultural* denotes microclimates and speciality crop areas, and *Rural areas* are where farming is permitted but may not be the primary land use. In addition to prime agricultural soils, the *Agricultural* designation also includes large swaths of land that have been in long-term production but may not be considered prime under the Canadian Land Inventory. Grey County identified its *Agricultural* land through mapping exercises in the mid-1990's and early 2000's that combine Provincial mapping layers with local knowledge.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Zero OPAs were captured in Grey County that moved agricultural land to a development designation. This is reflected in category 1 of Table 1.

Rural Designation: Three OPAs were captured that moved prime agricultural land from an *Agricultural* designation to a *Rural* designation in Grey County. The first was OPA 4, which redesignated 22 hectares in order to facilitate the development of a golf course. The second, OPA 48, redesignated 9.4 hectares in the historic settlement area of Plumeville in order to reorganize existing lots into a configuration that was more developable, resulting in an overall decrease in the number of lots. OPA 66 redesignated 75.8 hectares in the Township of Southgate, however, not included in this study is the corresponding amount of land that was moved from *Rural* to *Agriculture* as a part of OPA 80. The result

of the two OPAs, which took place as a result of a 5-Year OP review, was a net increase of land designated Agricultural. These OPAs are captured under category 2 of Table 1.

Site-Specific Amendments: The majority of OPAs captured in Grey County used site-specific special policies to add additional uses onto agricultural land. There were twelve in total, which were used to permit a range of additional uses primarily involving lot creation, as well as to support agricultural related industrial uses such as establishing an abattoir, machine repair, and garden nursery. The size of these amendments vary but average at 2.38 hectares. These OPAs are captured under category 3 of Table 1.

Table 1. Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Grey County By Adoption Date (2000-2017)

Year of OPA Adoption or Approval by the OMB	Number of OPAs Related to the Conversion of Prime Agricultural Area	CATEGORY 1 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To a Development Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 2 Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated to a Rural Designation (ha)	CATEGORY 3 Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With Additional Site-Specific Permitted Uses (ha)
2000	1	0	22	0
2001	0	0	0	0
2002	1	0	0	3
2003	1	0	0	2.5
2004	0	0	0	0
2005	1	0	9.4	0
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	2	0	75.8*	0.5
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	1	0	0	3.3
2010	2	0	0	3
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	2	0	0	2.9
2013	1	0	0	1
2014	0	0	0	0
2015	2	0	0	3
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	1	0	0	9.4
Grand Total	15	0	107.2	28.7

*Does not include OPA 80 which resulted in an overall net increase of Agricultural land designated in Grey County's OP **Totals may not add due to rounding.

Provincial Land Use Plans:

Within Grey County, the Niagara Escarpment covers 64,187.88 ha or 14.22% of the County's land area⁶. This land is protected under the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP), which was established in 1985. The NEP is further situated within the Greenbelt however NEP lands are governed by the requirements of NEP and are not subject to the polices of the Greenbelt Plan⁷. That being said, the two policies underwent a coordinated review in 2015. Development applications within this defined region are processed by the Niagara Escarpment Commission. No amendments relevant to this study were approved within the NEP during this study's timeframe.

1 Statistics Canada. 2017. *Grey, CTY [Census division], Ontario and Northwest Territories [Territory] (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017.*

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed April 26, 2020).

2 OMAFRA (adopted). 2017. Area of Census Farms (Acres) by County, Ontario: 1991, 1996,2001, 2006, 2011 and 2016. With data from Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture.

3. Statistics Canada. Table 004-0233 –Census of Agriculture, farms classified by total gross farm receipts in the year prior to the census, every 5 years (number of farms reporting unless otherwise noted), CANSIM (database).

4 Statistics Canada. 2012. *Grey, Ontario (Code 3531) and Canada (Code 01) (table). Census 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-XWE. Ottawa. Released October 24, 2012.*

5. Statistics Canada. 2012. *Grey, Ontario (Code 3506008) and Grey, Ontario (Code 3506) (table). Census Profile. 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-XWE. Ottawa. Released October 24, 2012.*
<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed April 26, 2020).

6. Natural Resource Solutions Inc. 2017. *Grey County Natural Heritage System Study "Green in Grey",*
<https://www.grey.ca/programs-initiatives/green-grey-natural-environment-study>

7. Niagara Escarpment Commission. 2017. *Niagara Escarpment Plan*, Office Consolidation December 21, 2018.
http://files.ontario.ca/appendixappendix_-_niagara_escarpment_plan2017