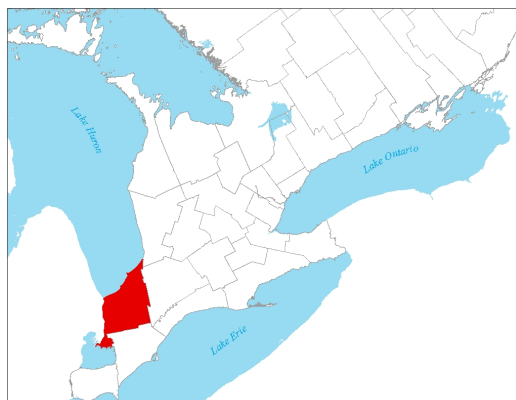


# LAMBTON COUNTY



**Total Land Area (Census 2016)<sup>1</sup>:** 300,225 ha  
**Area of Census Farms (2001)<sup>2</sup>:** 244,654 ha  
**Area of Census Farms (2016)<sup>2</sup>:** 239,408 ha  
**Gross Farm Receipts (2016)<sup>4</sup>:** \$570.6 Million  
**Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm:** \$2,383.28  
**Population (2016)<sup>1</sup>:** 126,638  
**Growth Rate 2006-2011<sup>5</sup>:** -1.6%  
**Growth Rate 2011-2016<sup>1</sup>:** 0.3%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	<b>284.94 ha</b>
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	<b>0 ha</b>
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	<b>254.74 ha</b>
<b>Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017</b>	<b>539.09 ha</b>
<b>Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)</b>	<b>0.22%</b>

## 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 Lambton 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 Lambton County, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, and Housing and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for Lambton County during the years 2000–2017. The first Official Plan (OP) for Lambton County was first approved in 1982 and has since provided overarching land use plans for the eleven lower-tier municipalities that make up the county, although each may have their own respective Official Plans that provide further detail.

The lower-tier municipalities within Lambton County are the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston, Township of Dawn-Euphemia, Township of Enniskillen, Municipality of Lambton Shores, Village of Oil Springs, Town of Petrolia, Town of Plympton-Wyoming, Village of Point Edward, City of Sarnia, Township of St. Clair, Township of Warwick. Access to data for each of the lower-tier municipalities was provided by staff at each of the individual planning departments.

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 ROP schedules are updated to align land use designations with more accurate parcel lines, or to reflect existing physical features.

### **Agricultural Land Use Designations in Lambton County**

In Lambton County, most rural land in Lambton is comprised of prime agricultural lands (Classes 1–3), which is recognized under the *Agricultural Area* or *Rural* designation. There are also specialty crop areas that are suitable for the production of fruits and vegetables. Including the Thedford Marsh, a Provincially significant specialty crop area with organic soils. Agricultural Areas are further designated within lower-tier OPs where policies for their protection, maintenance, and improvement and established. Designations at the lower tier were generally consistent with the upper tier, though under the *Restricted Agricultural* designation.

### **Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion**

**Development Designations:** The great majority of OPAs captured were used to move agricultural land to a development designation. Twenty-seven OPAs were captured in this category, and of those twenty-one moved agricultural land to a residential designation, affecting a total of 184.72 hectares. These OPAs were generally are on a small scale with a median site size of 4.01 hectares. They permitted a range of residential types including subdivisions, serviced hamlets, and the creation of 2 or more lots. There were an additional two OPAs that moved agricultural land to an *Open Space* designation to permit the expansion of a golf course. These OPAs are captured in category 1 of Table 1.

**Rural Designation:** Zero OPAs were captured in Lambton County that pertain to a rural designation where agriculture is the primary land use. This is reflected in category 2 of Table 1.

**Site-Specific Amendments:** Four OPAs were captured in Lambton County that place site-specific policies on agricultural land. Two of these OPAs are placed on larger sites (222.58 ha and 26.28 ha respectively) to allow for industrial uses, specifically to allow for solar power generation facilities. The remaining two OPAs are small in size and extend the diversified commercial uses permitted on agricultural land, including a brining facility and a non-agricultural commercial use. These OPAs are captured under category 3 of Table 1.

**Table 1. Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through ROPAs In Lambton 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	0	0	0	0
2001	1	32.37	0	0
2002	2	8.10	0	0
2003	4	77.42	0	0
2004	3	51.44	0	0
2005	3	9.08	0	0
2006	1	0	0	0.32
2007	3	14.89	0	0
2008	3	43.20	0	222.58
2009	1	0	0	26.28
2010	2	15.73	0	0
2011	1	19.42	0	0
2012	2	3.24	0	5.56
2013	2	3.36	0	0
2014	1	2.41	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0
2016	2	3.71	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>284.35</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>254.74</b>

\*\*Totals may not add due to rounding.

## Provincial Land Use Plans:

Lambton County's Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement, however Lambton County does not fall under the Greenbelt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, the Niagara Escarpment Plan, or the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

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1. Statistics Canada. 2017. *Lambton, CTY [Census division], Ontario and Ontario [Province] (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. Statistics Canada. Table 004-0204 –Census of Agriculture, tenure of land owned, leased, rented, crop-shared, used through other arrangements or used by others, every 5 years, CANSIM (database).
  3. MMAH. 2005. “Greenbelt Outer Boundary” and MMAH, 2012 “Municipal Boundary –Upper Tier and District” data projected in UTM 17N.
  4. 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).
  5. Statistics Canada. 2012. *Lambton, Ontario (Code 3538) and Ontario (Code 35) (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).*