

# LANARK COUNTY



**Total Land Area (Census 2016)<sup>1</sup>:** 303,564 ha  
**Area of Census Farms (2001)<sup>2</sup>:** 97,922 ha  
**Area of Census Farms (2016)<sup>2</sup>:** 75,597 ha  
**Gross Farm Receipts (2016)<sup>4</sup>:** \$55,231,957  
**Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm:** \$730.6  
**Population (2016)<sup>1</sup>:** 68,698  
**Growth Rate 2006-2011<sup>5</sup>:** 3.0%  
**Growth Rate 2011-2016<sup>1</sup>:** 4.6%

## 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 Lanark 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 Lanark County, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and/or the Ontario Municipal Board during the years 2000–2017. Lanark County is an upper-tier municipality that adopted its first Official Plan (OP) on June 27, 2012. Lanark's OP recognizes and emphasizes lower-tier municipal land use priorities and places them within a broader framework with a particular focus on long-term sustainability. Though lower-tier municipalities must now conform to Lanark County's OP, land use such as *Settlement Areas* are first established within lower-tier Official Plans.

The lower-tier municipalities that comprise Lanark County include the Municipality of Mississippi Mills, the Town of Carleton Place, the Town of Perth, the Township of Beckwith, the Township of Drummond-North Elmsley, the Township of Lanark Highlands, the Township of Montague, and the Township of Tay Valley. During data collection, planners from Lanark County confirmed that zero OPAs relevant to prime agricultural soils have been approved within the County during the timeframe of this study. The assistance of planning staff is greatly appreciated in making this research possible.

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

*Agricultural Resource Lands* are determined in lower-tier OPs and are protected through local and County level policies. These areas were identified based on the presence of prime agricultural soils according to the Canada Land Inventory system (Classes 1–3), or in recognition of a concentration of farms that have been in long-term production that may also include Class 4–7 lands. Land fragmentation and conflicting land uses in the area were also taken into account when identifying *Agricultural Resource Lands*. Agricultural uses and prime agricultural soils may also be present and permitted in the *Rural* designation in lower-tier Official Plans. When development is proposed on said *Rural* lands, the Township of Drummond-North Elmsley’s OP, for example, states that the policies of the Agriculture designation will be considered and may instead be applied by Council.

## **Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion**

Zero approved OPAs affecting prime agricultural land from 2000–2017 in Lanark County were captured in this study. Both Lanark County’s and the lower-tier’s OPs have included some flexibility that may help to serve as an explanation. Farm related residential severances and additional uses that may result in a dwelling being made surplus are permitted in circumstances of farm consolidation. There is also an ability to reduce the minimum lot area in instances where specific specialized agricultural operations do not require large lot areas such as garlic farms, apiaries or aquaculture. Lanark County’s OP does however report a decline in the number of farms and increasing challenges to the agricultural sector, as identified by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs<sup>6</sup>. The OP has included strategic objectives to address this decline such as building supports for the agricultural tourism sector, rehabilitating and enhancing agricultural land, and preparing for technological changes in agricultural food production.

## **Provincial Land Use Plans:**

Lanark County’s Official Plan is subject to the Provincial Policy Statement, however Lanark 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. Lanark County, CV [Census subdivision], Ontario and Canada [Country] (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. Lanark County, 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. Lanark County , *Ontario (Code 3506008) and Ottawa, 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. Lanark County. 2012. Sustainable Communities Official Plan: Local Priorities for a Sustainable County, McIntosh Perry. Released 2013.

[www.lanarkcounty.ca/Assets/New/Planning+Department/SCOP+Approved+2013.pdf](http://www.lanarkcounty.ca/Assets/New/Planning+Department/SCOP+Approved+2013.pdf)