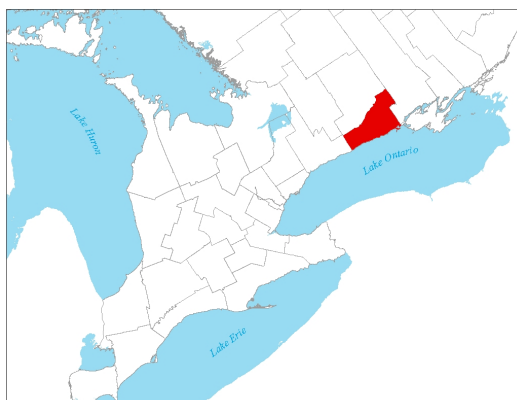


NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY



Total Land Area (Census 2016)¹: 190,515 ha
Area of Census Farms (2001)²: 102,654 ha
Area of Census Farms (2016)²: 93,727.62 ha
Area of County in the Greenbelt³: 35,238 ha
Percent of County in the Greenbelt: 18.50%
Gross Farm Receipts (2016)⁴: \$152.04 Million
Gross Farm Receipts per Hectare of Census Farm: \$1,622.18
Population (2016)¹: 85,598
Growth Rate 2006-2011⁵: 1.4%
Growth Rate 2011-2016¹: 4.2%

Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Development Designation (Including Urban, Residential, And Employment) 2000–2017	1.6 ha
Prime Agricultural Area Redesignated To A Rural Designation 2000–2017	59.4 ha
Land Designated As A Prime Agricultural Area With A Site-Specific Amendment To Allow Additional Uses 2000–2017	1.5 ha
Total Amount of Prime Agricultural Land Loss 2000–2017	62.5
Total Prime Agricultural Land Loss as a Percentage (Per Census Farm Area 2001)	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 Northumberland. 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 Northumberland County and/or the Ontario Municipal Board for Northumberland County during the years 2000–2017. The first Official Plan (OP) for Northumberland County was approved in 2016, and as such, data for the County was collected from the seven lower-tier municipalities within the County, each with their own respective OP. The lower-tier municipalities in Northumberland County are the Townships of Alnwick/Haldimand, Cramahe and Hamilton, the Municipalities of Brighton, Port Hope and Trent Hills,

and the Town of Cobourg. Access to data for each of the lower-tier municipalities was given by staff at each of the individual planning departments. The assistance of planning staff 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 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 Northumberland County

There are several land use designations that currently exist between the lower-tiers of Northumberland County that reflect agricultural land use. In Alnwick/Haldimand, Brighton, Cobourg, Cramahe and Hamilton, *Agricultural* and *Rural* land use designations are used. The *Agricultural* designation reflects areas with Class 1, 2 and 3 soils of high capability for agricultural production, while the *Rural* designation is used in area with lower capability soils and less agricultural production. Similar designations are used in Trent Hills, which has a *Prime Agricultural Lands* designation for Class 1, 2, 3, and 4 soil lands, and a *Rural Policy Area* for those areas that contain mostly soils not of prime importance to agriculture. Port Hope has a different set of agricultural land use designations. Under a broad *Agricultural* designation, Port Hope uses a *Prime Agriculture* designation for areas with high capability soils for agriculture and a *General Agricultural* designation for areas which have lower capability soils but on which agricultural uses may still exist.

Land use designations in the lower tiers of Northumberland County previously included *Agricultural Area*, *Permanent Agriculture*, *Marginal Agriculture*, and *Agricultural Priority Area*. For the purposes of this study, these historical land use designations as well as the current designations that reflected prime agricultural lands, including *Agricultural*, *Prime Agricultural Lands*, and *Prime Agriculture*, were used to capture prime agricultural land loss.

Trends in Agricultural Land Conversion

Development Designations: Over the course of the study period, there were a limited number of redesignations of prime agricultural lands for development purposes. Only two amendments occurred that redesignated a total of 1.6 ha of prime agricultural lands. These amendments permitted

recreational vehicle sales and the development of a shoreline subdivision. These amendments are captured in category 1 of Table 1.

Rural Designation: Two amendments were adopted in Northumberland County that redesignated agricultural lands to a rural-type designation. One of these amendments was combined with a special policy for the rural lands that permitted a church camp. The second amendment redesignated the lands to a rural designation to permit residential development. These amendments are shown in category 2 of Table 1.

Site-Specific Amendments: Only one site-specific amendment occurred in Northumberland County during the study period. This amendment applied to a relatively small parcel of land, approximately 1.5 ha, and allowed commercial uses. Category 3 of Table 1 reflects this.

Table. 1 Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Northumberland 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	0	0	1.5
2002	0	0	0	0
2003	0	0	0	0
2004	1	0	7.4	0
2005	1	0.8	0	0
2006	0	0	0	0
2007	1	0	40	0
2008	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0
2011	0	0	0	0
2012	0	0	0	0
2013	0	0	0	0
2014	1	0.4	12	0
2015	1	0.4	0	0
2016	0	0	0	0
2017	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	6	1.6	59.4	1.5

* Totals may not add due to rounding.

Provincial Land Use Plans: Nearly 19%, or 35,238 ha, of Northumberland County is covered by the *Greenbelt Plan*; however, no amendments occurred in the study period that redesignated prime agricultural lands to a development, rural or site-specific designation within the Greenbelt. Table 2 captures redesignations in the county by application date relative to the implementation of the Greenbelt.

Table 2 .Prime Agricultural Area Converted Through OPAs In Northumberland County By Application Date And Location Relative To The Greenbelt Plan

	Outside the Greenbelt		Within the Greenbelt		Total
	Application date		Application Date		
	Pre 2005	2005-2014	Pre 2005	2005- 2014	
Prime Agriculture Area Redesignated To A Development Or Rural Designation (Ha)	47.4	13.6	0	0	97.44
Prime Agricultural Area With Site-Specific Policies Allowing Additional Uses (Ha)	1.5	0	0	0	1.5
Total	48.9	13.6	0	0	62.5

*Table 1 includes files based on their approval date within the 2000—2017 study time frame. Table 2 is organized based on application date so that we can determine what policy regime the approved amendments were evaluated under, and may include files that were initiated prior to the 2000—2017 study time frame.

Prime Agricultural Land Gain: In 2011, an amendment in Hamilton Township in Northumberland County produced a gain of prime agricultural land³. This amendment corrected the location of a provincially significant wetland and associated floodplains, changing the designation on the 67 hectare property from *Environmentally Sensitive – Floodplains* and *Natural Heritage – Provincially Significant Wetlands* to *Permanent Agriculture*.

¹ Statistics Canada. 2017. *Northumberland, CTY [Census division], Ontario and Ontario [Province]* (table). *Census Profile*. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released May 3, 2017.

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 MMAH. 2005. “Greenbelt Outer Boundary” and MMAH, 2012. “Municipal Boundary – Upper Tier and District” data projected in UTM 17N.

- ⁴ Statistics Canada. 2017. *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. *Northumberland, Ontario (Code 3514) and Canada (Code 01) (table). Census Profile. 2011 Census*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-WXE. Ottawa. Released October 24, 2012.