

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026

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SESSIONS DAY 1 MORNING






BALLROOM A	BALLROOM B	BALLROOM C	BALLROOM D	ROOMS 201 & 202	ROOM 203	ROOMS 204	ROOM 205	ROOM 206	ROOMS 207 & 208
FARMERS' MARKETS ONTARIO	BERRIES	DECISION SUPPORT TOOLS FOR SOIL FERTILITY MANAGEMENT	AGRITOURISM ONTARIO	MANAGING DISEASES IN TOMATOES AND PEPPERS	LEGUME VEGETABLES	LOCAL SCHOOL FOOD PROCUREMENT IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR	LAVENDER-BUSINESS PLANNING AND EXPANSION	TENDER FRUIT	OENOLOGY & CIDER
<p>Session Chair(s): Elmer Buchanan, Havelock Farmers' Market</p> <p>9:30 2025 Market of the Year Award Winner to be announced at this session</p> <p>10:00 Supporting Rural and Agriculture Communities Through Farmers' Markets Honourable Rob Black, Senator, Ottawa</p> <p>11:00 Support Local Ontario OFA-FMO Partnership Catherine Clark, Elmer Buchanan, FMO</p> <p>11:30 FMO Annual General Meeting Lisa Cooper, Uxbridge Farmers' Market</p> <p>12:00 Destination Ontario and Tourism Marketing Opportunities for Farmers' Markets Justin Lafontaine, Destination Ontario</p>	<p>Session Chair(s): Bernie Solymar, Berry Growers of Ontario</p> <p>9:30 From the Field to the Tunnel: Challenges and Opportunities Sébastien Couture, Les Entreprises Pitre, Québec</p> <p>10:00 A Review of Plant Growth Regulator Use in Blueberry Production Dr. Josh VanderWeide, Michigan State University, USA</p> <p>10:30 2026 Crop Protection Regulatory Update Chris Duyvelshoff, OFVGA</p> <p>11:00 Crop Protection Update Philip Northover, Gowan; Jordan Kotewicz, CoHort Wholesale; Claude Dubois, AEF Global</p> <p>SPONSORED BY: </p>	<p>Session Chair(s): Tejendra Chapagain, OMAFA</p> <p>9:30 4Rs on Vegetables: Insights from Onion and Carrots Charlie Lalonde, The Holland Marsh Growers' Association</p> <p>9:45 Decision Support Tools for Soil Fertility Management: An Overview Tejendra Chapagain, OMAFA</p> <p>10:00 Picketa Systems for Making Nutrient Management Decision on Horticultural Crops Domenic Blass, University of Guelph</p> <p>10:30 Soil Data for Making Nutrient Management Decisions on Horticultural Crops Sarah Lepp, Soil Optix Inc.</p> <p>11:00 Decision Support Tools for Soil Fertility Management Bryan Stennet, NutriAG</p> <p>SPONSORED BY: </p>	<p>Session Chair(s): Kevin Vallier, Agritourism Ontario</p> <p>9:30 The Pursuit of Excellence: How to Cultivate Unstoppable Excellence in Yourself and Your Organization Sarah Wells, Olympian</p> <p>10:30 From the Farm to City Hall and Queen's Park: A Playbook for Agritourism Tim Hudak, Counsel Public Affairs</p> <p>11:30 AO AGM Kevin Vallier, Darlene Downey, Agritourism Ontario</p> <p>SPONSORED BY: </p>	<p>Session Chair(s): Amanda Tracey, OMAFA</p> <p>9:30 Tobamoviruses and Plant Resistance Jonathan Griffiths, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada</p> <p>10:00 Bye Bye Bravo? Foliar Disease Management in Tomatoes without Chlorothalonil Katie Goldenhar, OMAFA</p> <p>10:45 Buried Battles: The War Against Soil-borne Diseases Amanda Tracey, OMAFA</p> <p>SPONSORED BY: </p>	<p>Session Chair(s): Elaine Roddy, Evan Elford, OMAFA</p> <p>9:30 Exploring Specialty Legumes for Diversifying Small-Scale Production Evan Elford, OMAFA</p> <p>10:00 Can Edamame Transcend a Niche Crop Status to Mainstream? Martin Williams, University of Illinois, USA</p> <p>10:30 Root to Shoot - Troubleshooting Production Issues in Snap Beans Elaine Roddy, OMAFA</p> <p>11:00 Decoding the Legume Root Zone: Driving Agronomic Innovation with Genomics Rebecca Doyle, McMaster University</p> <p>SPONSORED BY: </p>	<p>Session Chair(s): Jeff O'Donnell, OMAFA; Dan Tukendorf, OFVGA</p> <p>9:30 Growing Opportunities in Public Sector Local Food Procurement Steven Roberts, Vineland Growers Co-Operative/Norfolk Fruit Growers Association; Daniel Overbeek, Produce Express; Wendy Smith, Mohawk Medbuy Corporation</p> <p>10:30 Speed Networking: Buyers and Sellers for School Food Programs Student Nutrition Program, Lead Agencies, Food and Logistics Coordinators</p> <p>SPONSORED BY: </p>	<p>Session Chair(s): Sean Westerveld, OMAFA</p> <p>9:30 Financial Advice for Growing your Farm Business Christine Arezzi, Bluewater Lavender Farm</p> <p>10:00 It All Starts with a Plan: The Journey of Lavender from Field to Future Zion Hilliker, B&B Family Farm, USA</p> <p>11:00 Managing a Commercial Lavender Farm Anita Buehner, retired lavender farmer</p> <p>11:30 Q&A Period</p>	<p>Session Chair(s): Wendy McFadden-Smith, OMAFA</p> <p>9:30 Curculio Chronicles: Adventures in Keeping Fruit on the Branch Hannah Fraser, OMAFA</p> <p>10:00 The Hidden Threat to Nectarine Beauty: Thrips and Their Control Dr. Justin Renkema, AAFC; Dr. Rose Buitenhuis, Vineland Research and Innovation Centre</p> <p>10:30 Bacterial Spot of Peach and Tree Health: Management Perspectives from Down South Dr. Hehe Wang, Clemson University, USA</p> <p>11:00 Precision Pollination: A Novel Approach for Improving Yield Security Dr. Matt Whiting, Washington State University, USA</p> <p>SPONSORED BY: </p>	<p>Session Chair(s): Jennifer Kelly, Brock University; Erin Panek, OMAFA</p> <p>9:30 Aromatic Enhancement of Vidal Table Wine through Increased Volatile Thiol Production Dr. Jennifer Kelly, Brock University/CCOVI</p> <p>10:00 Considerations When Canning Cider and Wine Rachel Allison, Penn State, USA</p> <p>10:30 Evaluating Cider Apple Cultivars to Support a Developing Industry Dr. Andréanne Hébert-Haché, Centre de recherche agroalimentaire de Mirabel, Québec</p> <p>11:00 Hard Cider Consumer Trends: Landscape of Change Dr. Shanthanu Krishna Kumar, Penn State University State College, USA</p>

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SESSIONS DAY 1 AFTERNOON



BALLROOM A	BALLROOM B	BALLROOM C	BALLROOM D	ROOMS 201 & 202	ROOM 203	ROOM 204	ROOM 205	ROOM 206	ROOMS 207 & 208
FARMERS' MARKETS ONTARIO	BERRIES	APPLES	AGRITOURISM ONTARIO	GARLIC	CIDER BUSINESS AND MARKETING	STARTING A VEGETABLE FARM	LAVENDER-TAKING YOUR FARM TO THE NEXT LEVEL	TENDER FRUIT	GRAPES
Session Chair(s): Erin Rowe, Sudbury Market	Session Chair(s): Andrew Phillips, Avonmore Berry Farm	Session Chair(s): Erika DeBrouwer, Kristy Grigg-McGuffin, OMAFA	Session Chair(s): Kevin Vallier, Agritourism Ontario	Session Chair(s): Travis Cranmer, OMAFA	Session Chair(s): Kevin Montgomery, OMAFA; Janice Ruddock, OCCA	Session Chair(s): Katie Baikie, Ecological Farmers Association of Ont.	Session Chair(s): Sean Westerveld, OMAFA	Session Chair(s): Kathryn Carter, OMAFA	Session Chair(s): Wendy McFadden-Smith, OMAFA
2:00 Cultivating Community Online- How to Grow on Social Media (Workshop; 2 hours) Emma Chapman, Emilie Quinn, Nuage Agency Facilitators: Jenny Groenhide, Thunder Bay Country; Erin Rowe, The Sudbury Market	2:00 Viruses of Strawberries, Blackberries, and Raspberries Dr. Jonathan Griffiths, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 2:30 Best Approaches for Strawberry Disease Management in the Field and Glasshouse Dr. Kerik Cox, Cornell University, USA 3:00 The Dirt on Blueberry Nutrition Cheyenne Sloan, Michigan State University, USA 3:30 Water Wisely: Practical Irrigation Decisions for Berry Growers Philippe-Michael Caron, Dubois Agrinovation; David Klyn-Hesselink, Fenwick Berry Farm; Dalton Cooper, Strawberry Tyme Farms SPONSORED BY:  SPONSORED BY: 	2:00 Increasing Premium Quality Fruit by Choosing the Right Rootstock Dr. Lee Kalcsits, Washington State University, USA 2:45 Replant Disease Tolerance, Nutrient Uptake and Other Unique Ways Geneva® Apple Rootstocks Interact with Soils Dr. Gennaro Fazio, US Department of Agriculture (Pre-recorded) 3:30 Physiological Links Between Rootstock Cold Hardiness and Tree Decline in Apple Dr. Jason Londo, Cornell University, USA SPONSORED BY: 	2:00 Making Group Tours Magical Sara Oliveira, White Meadows Farm; Christy Hiemstra, Clovermead; Mark Saunders, Saunders Farm 3:00 ON Farm Fun Agritourism App Unveiling Wes Worsfold, BitBakery Software	2:00 When is the Best Time to Plant Garlic and Potential Inter cropping Options Travis Cranmer, Stephanie Vickers, OMAFA 2:15 Garlic Pests and Diseases in 2025 Travis Cranmer, OMAFA 2:30 Shifting Alliance: The Complex Relationship Between Fusarium and Garlic and Its Implications for Management of Dry Rot Christel Leyronas INRAE Centre PACA, France 3:30 The Yield Advantages of Clean Seed Travis Cranmer, OMAFA	2:00 Get Your Cider ON - An Overview of the Drink ON Apples Marketing Program Janice Ruddock, OCCA; Lynn Sullivan, Drink ON Apples; Renee Sferrazza, Wine by Renee 2:30 LCBO - The Changing Landscape of Beverage Alcohol in Ontario and How You Can Get Involved Chris Robertson, Mark Wilson, Katelyn Guilleman, LCBO 3:00 What are You Missing in your Cider Business - We May Have an Answer! Chris Gillis, Durham College Centre for Craft Beverage Innovation; Derek Cartlidge, Thornbury Craft Cider 3:30 Ontario Craft Cider: Rooted in Our Orchards, Growing for the Future & Presentation of Ontario Craft Cider Awards Renee Sferrazza, Wine by Renee	2:00 Considerations for Starting-up Angie Koch, Fertile Ground Farm 2:30 Enterprise and Markets Overview Angie Koch, Fertile Ground Farm 3:00 Considering the Soil Ken Laing, Orchard Hill Farm 3:30 Next Steps, Q&A and Resource Sharing Angie Koch, Fertile Ground Farm; Ken Laing, Orchard Hill Farm	2:00 Finding Your Niche Steve & Anita Buehner, retired lavender farmers 2:30 Beyond the Basics: Building a Farm That Thrives, Adapts, and Stands Out Zion Hilliker, B&B Family Farm, USA 3:30 Ontario Lavender Association AGM	2:00 Thinning Peaches with ACC (Accede) Dr. Shan Krishna Kumar, Penn State, USA 2:30 Irrigation in Peach Orchards Dr. Srijana Thapa Magar, University of Georgia, USA (Live stream) 3:00 Tree Fruit Hardiness and Tools for Reducing Cold Damage Dr Matt Whiting, Washington State University, USA 3:30 Soil Health Testing - What We've Learned from Ontario Orchards and Vineyards Heather White, University of Guelph SPONSORED BY: 	2:00 Preparing for the Arrival of Spotted Lanternfly Carla Cassone, Julie Holmes, Diana Mooij (virtual), Cdn Food Inspection Agency; Dr. Wendy McFadden-Smith, OMAFA 2:30 The Impact of GRBV on Grape and Wine Composition and Mitigation Strategies Dr. Raul Cauduro Girardello, UC Davis, USA 3:00 Beetlemania 2025: Why Japanese Beetles Bomed and Options for Management Dr. Kyle Wickings, Cornell University, USA; Dr. Wendy McFadden-Smith, OMAFA 3:30 Size Matters: The Benefits of Virtuous Pruning on Grapevine Trunk Disease Dr. Mark Sosnowski, South Australian Research & Development Institute; With special support from 



THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2026

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SESSIONS DAY 2 MORNING



BALLROOM A	BALLROOM B	BALLROOM C	BALLROOM D	ROOMS 201 & 202	ROOM 203	ROOM 204	ROOM 205	ROOM 206	ROOMS 207 & 208
FARMERS' MARKETS ONTARIO	CROP PROTECTION	APPLES	AGRITOURISM ONTARIO	SWEET CORN AND CUCURBITS	SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE CROP PROTECTION HUB & CROPIPM	LABOUR	TREE NUTS	GROWER EXPERIENCES WITH ROBOTICS & TECHNOLOGY	GRAPES
Session Chair(s): Melanie Anderson, ByWard Market District Authority	Session Chair(s): Josh Mosiondz, OMAFA; Chris Duyvelshoff, OFVGA	Session Chair(s): Erika DeBrouwer, Kristy Grigg-McGuffin, OMAFA	Session Chair(s): Kevin Vallier, Agritourism Ontario	Session Chair(s): Elaine Roddy, OMAFA	Session Chair(s): Nicole Berardi, Cora Loucks, OMAFA	Session Chair(s): Stefan Larrass, OFVGA	Session Chair(s): John Steele, Melanie Filotas, OMAFA	Session Chair(s): Chevonne Dayboll, Kelley Knight, OMAFA	Session Chair(s): Kathryn Carter, OMAFA
9:30 Governance Made Simple: Strengthening Farmers' Market Boards Workshop (workshop; 1 ½ hours) Quintin Fox, Q Fox & Associates	9:30 Behind the Spray: What It Takes to Bring Products to Market Pamela Livingston, Syngenta Canada 10:00 PMRA Risk Assessment Overview PMRA Speaker TBD 10:30 Minor Use 101 Josh Mosiondz, OMAFA 11:00 Health Canada's Pesticide Compliance and Enforcement Update Ann-Marie Cooper, Health Canada SPONSORED BY: 	9:30 Integration of On-site Weather Data with Decision Support Systems (DSS's) Jon Clements, University of Massachusetts, USA 10:00 Best Antibiotic Alternatives for Fire Blight Management in Apples Dr. Kerik Cox, Cornell University, USA 10:30 The Effect of Crop Load in Relation to Hard Cider Juice Quality Dr. Shanthanu Krishna Kumar, Pennsylvania State University, USA 11:00 From Orchard to Market: Climate Impacts on Apple Quality in Long Cold Chains Dr. Carolina Torres, Washington State University, USA SPONSORED BY: 	9:30 Leading the Way with Next Level Service Angela Grant Saunders, Saunders Farm 10:30 Crafting a Beautiful Brand – Capturing Content That Connects Hollis English, Content Creation Coach for Entrepreneurs 11:00 Watermelon Production: Cultural Practices and Cultivar Selection Wenjing Guan, Purdue University, USA SPONSORED BY: 	9:30 Where do Fungicides Fit for Sweet Corn? Kris McNaughton, OMAFA 10:00 Surprises from Studying Sweet Corn Production Over the Last Quarter Century Martin Williams, University of Illinois, USA 10:30 Insect Vected Diseases in Vine Crops – A Primer Elizabeth Buck, Cornell Cooperative Extension, USA	9:30 Crop Hub & CropIPM: A Year in Review Ian Williams, Zengenti; Nicole Berardi, OMAFA 10:00 Building Better Tools Together: Help Improve Crop Hub & CropIPM (1.5 hours) Ian Williams, Zengenti; Nicole Berardi, OMAFA	9:30 Ergonomics and Return to Work Strategies Shawn Chadwick, Workplace Safety and Prevention Services 10:00 Farm Injuries and WSIB Administration Shawn McGowan, Agri-Business HR Solutions 10:30 Practical Health and Safety Resources for Employers of TFWs Eduardo Huesca, Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers Inc. 11:00 60 Years of the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Programme (SAWP) Althea Riley, Jamaica Liaison Service; Eric Poliah, Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Labour SPONSORED BY: 	9:30 Knowing all Your Costs of Production for Tree Nuts John Molenhuis, OMAFA 10:00 Irrigation Strategies for Nut Crops Dr. Luigi Manfrini, University of Bologna, Italy 10:30 Irrigation Strategies for Nut Crops: Insights from Walnut and Chestnut Case Study Dr. Luigi Manfrini, University of Bologna, Italy 11:00 Efficient Irrigation during Dry Years and Water-Permit Basics for Nut Growers Badrul Masud, OMAFA	9:30 Robotic Apple Thinning – Early Results & Path to Robotic Harvesting Matt Stevens, Finite Robotics; Gerbe Botden, Blue Mountain Fruit Company 10:00 Robots, Research and Results: Ontario Crops Research Centre-Simcoe Squash Trial Torin Boyle, University of Guelph; Kaya Moore, Haggerty Robotics 10:30 agroTRAX – Robotics Platform for Tabletop, Vine Grown and Greenhouse Crops Konrad Konerth, Konexio; Kevin Howe, Howe Family Farms 11:00 Grower Experiences with Robotics & Technology Cole Jones, Local Line SPONSORED BY: 	9:30 Soil Health Testing – What we've Learned from Ontario Orchards and Vineyards Heather White, University of Guelph 10:00 Impact of Cluster Thinning on Wine Grape Yield and Fruit Composition Dr. Josh VanderWeide, Michigan State University, USA 10:30 Behind the Vine: Production Costs Uncorked John Molenhuis, OMAFA 11:00 Tissue Nutrient Concentrations in Cabernet Franc Vineyards in Pennsylvania Dr Cain Hickey, Penn State Extension, USA (Live stream)

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FARMERS' MARKETS ONTARIO		APPLES	AGRITOURISM ONTARIO	ORGANIC AND MARKET-GARDEN POTATOES		CREATING RESEARCH IMPACT	OUTDOOR CUT FLOWERS	COST OF PRODUCTION	GRAPES

Session Chair(s):
Jenny Groenhede,
Thunder Bay Country
Market

2:00 Selling Food in Ontario

Scott Fisher, OMAFA

3:00 Public Health Guidelines Question Period

Catherine Clark,
Farmers' Markets
Ontario

Facilitators:

Steve Smith,
Meaford Farmers'
Market; Deanna
Chakarova, St.
Catharines Farmers'
Market; Lisa Cooper,
Uxbridge Farmers'
Market

Session Chair(s):
Erika DeBrouwer,
Kristy Grigg-McGuffin,
OMAFA

2:00 Tree and Fruit Physiology as a Basis for Precision Management

Dr. Luigi Manfrini,
University of Bologna,
Italy

2:30 Apple Physiology as a Basis for Precision Management: Case Study

Dr. Luigi Manfrini,
University of Bologna,
Italy

3:00 PACMAN: No, It's Not a Video Game!

Jon Clements,
University of
Massachusetts, USA

3:30 The Core of the Problem: Plum Curculio Basics for Apple Growers

Hannah Fraser,
OMAFA

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Session Chair(s):
Kevin Vallier,
Agritourism Ontario

2:00 Premiumize Your Destination

Maureen Ballatori,
Agency 29

3:00 Real Human Connection for the Experience Economy

Tim Jennings, Shaw
Festival Theatre

Session Chair(s):
Dennis Van Dyk,
OMAFA

2:00 Organic No-till Potatoes

Ken Laing, Orchard Hill
Farm

2:30 Growing Organic Potatoes Commercially

Isaiah Swidersky,
Wider Sky Farms

3:00 Varieties and Seeds for Small-Scale and Organic Potato

Hugo Martorell,
SeedChange

3:30 Vegetable Variety Workshop: Share, Learn, Discuss

Moderators:
Hugo Martorell,
SeedChange; Dennis
Van Dyk, OMAFA

Session Chair(s):
Amy Bowen, Vineland
Research and
Innovation Centre

2:00 Driving Value in Horticulture: Aligning Research Priorities with Investment

Dr. Amy Bowen,
Vineland Research and
Innovation Centre

2:30 Farmer-led Research as a Tool to Support Farmer Innovation and Ecological Farming Practices

Ali English, Ecological
Farmers Association
of Ontario

3:00 Collaborative Research for Processing Vegetables

Dan Oliver, Nortera
Foods

3:30 Brock University's Clean Agriculture Sustainable Production (CASP) Research Farm

Dr. Jim Willwerth,
CCOVI

Session Chair(s):
Cary Gates, Flowers
Canada Growers

2:00 Floriculture Agritourism: What Really Works, What Doesn't, and Why Feeling Drives Everything

(45 minutes)
Alexis Szarek, Bloom
Flower Festivals

2:50 – 3:10 Impressions on the Outdoor Cut Flower Industry in 2026

(20 minutes)
Janis Harris, Harris
Flower Farm /
Association for
Specialty Cut Flower
Growers

3:15 – 4:00 From Field to Flower: Growing Outdoor Floriculture Crops for New Growers

(45 minutes)
Ashley Vandermaarl,
La Primavera Farms

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Session Chair(s):
John Molenhuis, OMAFA

2:00 Know Your Cost to Grow: Record Keeping, Calculating, and Analyzing your COP

(2 hours)
Dr. Nathan Stacey,
Oregon State University,
USA

2:00 Water Stress in Grapevine: Impact on Grape and Wine Quality

Dr. Simone Castellarin,
UBC (Live stream)
2:30 Evaluating Abiotic Resilience of Native Riparia Rootstocks in Ontario

Dr. Alireza Rahemi,
Morehead State
University, USA
(Live stream); Dr. Jim
Willwerth, CCOVI

3:00 Nitrogen Additions, Yields, and Fruit Composition: Insights from Recent Projects

Dr. Drew Harner,
Virginia Tech, USA
(Live stream)

3:30 Don't let er rip! Shoot Thinning Can Impact Grapevine Trunk Disease Infection

Dr. Mark Sosnowski,
South Australian
Research and
Development Institute;
With special support
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