



## ABOUT QUEBEC FARMERS' ASSOCIATION

### QFA Mission

To defend the rights, provide information and advocate for the English-speaking agricultural community in Quebec

#### OUR VISION

The QFA's actions contribute to a sustainable future for both agriculture and the environment while providing a decent quality of life and financial return for the individuals and their families who have made agriculture and food production their chosen professions.



#### OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President & Warren Grapes Trustee: John McCard  
 Vice-President and Treasurer: Gib Drury  
 Past President & Executive member: Chris Judd  
 Executive member: Ken Brooks  
 Executive member: Wendall Conner  
 Executive member: Armin Ruf  
 Warren Grapes Trustee: Ben Nichols  
 Warren Grapes Trustee: Andrew Hickey  
 Chair Warren Grapes Trustees: Mark Boyd  
 Quebec 4-H representative: Sarah Enright  
 Andrew Simms  
 Philip Lavoie  
 Jennifer Hayes

#### OUR VALUES

- ✓ Maintaining family-owned and operated farms
- ✓ Food sovereignty and self-determination by individuals and nations
- ✓ Intergenerational involvement
- ✓ Lifelong learning
- ✓ Protection of the physical environment
- ✓ Preserving land for agricultural production
- ✓ Minimum government interference
- ✓ Working alone and in partnership with others

#### OUR STAFF AND TEAM

Executive Director & Editor-in-Chief: Dougal Rattray  
 Director of Communications & Managing Editor:  
 Andrew McClelland  
 Book keeper: Nathalie Peloquin  
 Accounts assistant: Joanne Druz  
 Accountant: Vincent Belanger  
 Director of Translations: Scott Irving  
 Advocate Contributions Coordinator: Richelle Fortin  
 Advocate National Sales Director: Daniel Lamoureux  
 Advocate Editing Services: Allegra McKenzie &  
 Chrissy Shannon



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The past year could be characterised as one of transition. With senior management changes happening in 2014 – 2015, and significant funding realignments of both the Union de producteurs agricole and La Terre de chez nous, our new Executive Director, Dougal Rattray, has had his hands full adjusting to a new role.



Such ripples can have a tidal wave affect for a small organization and I am very pleased that, with Directorial nurturing and hard work by the staff, QFA is in a strong position to enter its 60<sup>th</sup> year in 2017. Farm Safety and community engagement initiatives such as the Farm Fair visits remain an integral part of who we are. The Farm Food Forums endure and the QFA's lead in creating its own Health Insurance Plan has now been recognised by the UPA. Talks are on-going and QFA has played a supporting role in helping its most significant partner charter this unfamiliar territory. New content now appears in the flagship communications tool, the Advocate, and a stronger emphasis on social media has seen measured success in the universal migration towards an electronic world.

The QFA had numerous activities throughout the year. The on-going level of acceptance, approval and trust consumers feel regarding how their food is produced was addressed in February when QFA featured on Montreal television channel MAtv.



Host Richard Dagenais interviewed the Executive Director who directed light on Quebec's farming and rural community commenting on such issues as food waste and rural senior's isolation. The Agricultural Ministers Mandate Letter from Prime Minister Trudeau was printed in its entirety in two parts over February and March. I attended the Canadian Federation of Agriculture AGM held in Ottawa in February, together with UPA President, Marcel Grouleau, and the rest of the UPA executive and staff members. This is not the same industry that my grandfather was familiar with and to contend with this perception-haze, April saw a strong community contingent come out for the lobby day 'Breakfast on the Hill' which QFA helped to coordinate.

In June, we attended the AGM of the Quebec Community Groups Network (QCGN) held in Montreal, where numerous workshops were held aimed at developing organizational capacity. Meetings were kicked off by a very interesting and informative Panel discussion called 'Governments Working for Quebec's English-Speaking Communities', which included Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages, Graham Fraser.

June also saw the Fair season begin and QFA was in attendance this year at Ormstown, Lachute, Shawville and Richmond. Leading a fresh new project focussing on Farm Safety, we were witness to over 60 young people participate in a 'Farm Safety Treasure Hunt' at Expo Lachute Fair. The Fair season also offers QFA the vital chance to canvass

and listen to the community on matters of particular concern and it is of no surprise that paperwork volumes and market uncertainty remain high on farmers' distress-list. Coverage of all Fairs that were attended appeared in the Advocate.



Looking after our rural areas is something that has been in QFA's orbit for quite some time now. As our demographic becomes progressively older we must not forget the contributions and sacrifices our elders have made in pursuit of our dreams to own farms and remain on the land. Through alliances that have been developing over the past few years, QFA is now a recognised partner with national organization Help Age Canada and supports its RISE campaign that seeks to 'Reach Isolated Seniors Everywhere' through raising awareness of signs linked to social isolation.

Fall is always a busy time for civil society, especially for not-for-profits connected with agriculture. Late in August QFA played host to the New Zealand Special Envoy on Agriculture and International Trade. This was the culmination of a series of warm-up meetings that had been building over the course of the year and saw visits from a group of

New Zealand farmers and a special visit from the New Zealand High Commissioner to the Maison UPA that included the UPA President and his economics and political advisor.

Compounding this hectic schedule was an invitation to support a project that had been initiated in 2015 between the UPA DI and a highly regarded charity group based in Montreal, the Leger Foundation. This saw our Executive Director travel to India for twelve days to help support a community of people suffering the vagaries of leprosy.

Early in November, QFA was invited to participate in a series of Dialogue Days put together by a number of different Federal Government departments seeking input on consultations. With Agriculture and Agri-food Canada among them, this gave QFA the opportunity to be heard regarding the next ag-policy.

In closing, I would like to pay tribute to all the partners and friends of the QFA - our members, Directors, the UPA, La terre de chez nous, Macdonald College, CASA, the CSA, CEDEC, The CFA, the QCGN and Canadian Heritage. Without their support, we would not be the organization that we have grown to become today.

Respectfully submitted,

Handwritten signature of John M. Court

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**WE ALL LIVE OFF THE LAND**  
**LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO FIND COMMON GROUND**

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## Working to support Quebec's English-speaking agricultural and rural community

The year 2015/2016 has been one of renewal for the QFA full of kaleidoscopic colours and new and exciting pathways; but not without its share of dead ends too. Many hurdles have been met along the way, but the future looks bright and there is reason for optimism.

### E-COMMUNICATIONS

One area that has been greatly expanding over the course of the year is QFA's on-line communication. Not-for-profit organizations ignore social media at their peril. In recognising this staff have been diligent in posting items of interest, increasing frequency significantly over the course of the year. This has had the desired effect of increasing the number of 'friends' belonging to its Facebook group from 157 at this time last year (which took approximately three years to build), to now over 325; over double in one year. This allows QFA to distribute information quickly and engage with its younger generation, preparing lines of communication for the future.



QFA remains committed to on-line communications and media monitoring – both independently and in collaboration with other organizations with a similar lens. This means continuing to receive on-line news updates from primary and secondary news sources such as the CFA's weekly consolidated circulation and the QCGN's daily news round-up.

### MEMBERSHIPS, PARTNERSHIPS AND AFFILIATIONS



- Union des producteurs agricoles (Formal Affiliate)
- Quebec Community Groups Network (Member)
- Quebec Community Newspapers Association (Member)
- Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation (Partner)
- Learn Quebec and the Community Learning Centre Initiative (Partner)
- Community Health and Social Services Network (Member)
- Canadian Federation of Agriculture (Member)
- Quebec 4-H (Partner)
- Canadian Standards Association (Committee Member)
- Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (Member)
- Macdonald Campus, McGill University Farm Management Canada (Partner)
- Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council
- Reseau agriconseils (Partner)
- Quebec Beef Federation
- Quebec Dairy Federation
- Grains Quebec
- Quebec Maple Syrup Producers Federation

## FLAGSHIP ADVOCATE

Our flagship communications tool, monthly community newspaper, the **Quebec Farmers' Advocate**, is read by over 3000 in Quebec's Anglophone farm and rural community, as well as government officials and researchers. It is the only publication of its kind in Quebec. Bringing together a stimulating and broad mix of content, regular contributors include the UPA, Macdonald College, climate hawk Mitchell Beer, the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association, New York's W.H. Miner Institute, food writer Cynthia Gunn, Quebec 4-H, North American Champion tree climber Leilak Anderson, and dairy research institution Valacta.

## ENGAGING NEW PARTNERS

Many new and interesting relationships developed over the course of the year. The old adage 'necessity is the mother of invention' came thundering home in Fall 2015 when UPA Confederation and La Terre des chez nous both withdrew funding support within a month of one another for content translation. This caused Management to take a proactive approach and channels of communication quickly ignited with UPA Specialized Federations.

Grains Quebec, the Quebec Maple Syrup Producers Federation, the Quebec Egg Producers Federation, Quebec Organic Production Roundtable, the Quebec Apple Producers, and the Quebec Strawberry and

Raspberry Producers Federation have all become regular contributors.

In addition, a new young column writer has been recruited. Shaina Hayes (Growing with the garden) writes about the Macdonald Campus Student-Run Ecological Gardens, a piece of particular interest to new farmers. Award-winning scientist and author Dr. Joe Schwarcz, famous for debunking myths about science, agreed in January, along with his publishers, that QFA be granted permission to re-print chapters from his latest book "Monkey, Myths and Molecules".

QFA Director and agronomist Phil Lavoie has been contributing strong technical content relating to soils and beef production every two months, in an exploratory relationship that seeks to educate and build relationships in the Western side of the Province. And in the October edition, after months of dialogue, the Advocate received its first submission from the Quebec Women's Institute. This solidified the already strong bond with Quebec 4-H, and both now feature content on the same page amplifying the message "Rural Community Better Together".

**QUEBEC 4-H ASSOCIATION**  
**4-H Quebec Online Auction**  
4-H Quebec is once again holding an online auction fundraiser. If you have any items that you would like to donate, please email [office@quebec4-h.com](mailto:office@quebec4-h.com). We appreciate your support! This auction is open until November 2. Don't forget to log on and bid on some cool items!  
**Show Your 4-H Colours Day**  
November 2 marks the annual Show Your 4-H Colours Day! We invite everyone to wear green for the occasion as a show of 4-H pride. We encourage you to take pictures wearing green in your community and send them to [office@quebec4-h.com](mailto:office@quebec4-h.com) for the possibility of being featured on our Facebook page!  
**Sustainability Days**  
Thanks to funding from Agrium, 4-H Quebec will coordinate Sustainability Days to help bring Society 2050 programming to clubs. This fall, staff will introduce clubs to the online game and will help members get started on their own sustainability journeys by bringing the supplies they need to complete a project chosen by the club. To find out more or to book your Sustainability Day, email Julie at [prog@quebec4-h.com](mailto:prog@quebec4-h.com).  
**Annual General Meeting**  
At this year's AGM banquet, we are excited to welcome Ann Louise Caron, the CEO of Holstein Canada, as our guest speaker. For ticket information, please call Julie at 514-398-8738.  
When: Saturday, November 26  
Where: Macdonald Campus, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue  
**Kids Helping Kids**  
Collect aluminum drink can tabs for the Ronald McDonald House as a 4-Her in your community to pass them along to a 4-H Quebec staff member any time on or before the Annual General Meeting on November 26, 2016. Tabs will go to Ronald McDonald House to sell as aluminum for recyclers, helping to fund their facilities where families can stay nearby their children while they're in the hospital.  
**4-H CANADA**  
**FCC 4-H Club Fund**  
The FCC 4-H Club Fund is back! Thanks to Farm Credit Canada, 4-H clubs across Canada can apply for grants of up to \$500 towards events, supplies and more. Full details for eligibility are available on the 4-H Canada website, along with directions on how to apply. These grants are awarded on a first-come-first-served basis, so please apply as soon as possible!  
**4-H Canada Science Fair**  
This opportunity opened September 1, 2016. This fall is an excellent opportunity for 4-H youth in grades 7 through 11 to start thinking about their science fair projects. Encourage 4-H members to explore their surroundings or use their interests to discover, create and get curious! Projects can be in the form of an experiment, innovation or study. Training opportunities are available for our leaders. New volunteers are welcomed.  
**Global 4-H Network Summit**  
The 2017 Global 4-H Network Summit, July 11-14, is an opportunity for 4-H youth, leaders and professionals from 70 countries around the world, representing 7 million youth worldwide, to gather in Canada's national capital of Ottawa at an exciting time when celebrations are underway for Canada's 150th birthday. 4-H Canada is proud to host this important event, as we come together to share experiences, learn from each other and celebrate the successes of the 4-H global movement through positive youth development. Register with the 4-H Quebec office by November 14, 2016.  
For more information about 4-H programming and events, contact 4-H Quebec at [prog@quebec4-h.com](mailto:prog@quebec4-h.com) or 514-398-8738.

## ADVERTISING SALES

Despite the tough times and uncertainties for advertising revenue in traditional newspapers, the Advocate saw sales return to 2012 levels. New content mixes and strong communication with sales staff have proven to be good investments. With advertisers still experimenting with social media models, the disappearance of daily and weekly newspapers is being felt all over the world. The *Advocate* is navigating this turbulence well. We must not become complacent, but for now, its 'steady as she goes'.

Below are the ad sales figures for the *Advocate* for the past six calendar years that show the rebound in revenues.

**2016: \$75,112.00**  
**2014: \$69,234.72**  
**2013: \$77,853.61**  
**2012: \$75,253.54**  
**2011: \$65,730.70**  
**2010: \$64,098.84**

Much of this is due to government spending. A single campaign has the power to turn advertising figures into a red-letter year or just an average one.

We realize that relying on government spending isn't an ideal situation to be in. That's why our sales staff at *La Terre de chez nous* is working to create new relationships with agricultural equipment companies and North American advertisers

who have previously been reluctant to do business in Quebec. In time, we hope to become less reliant on government budgets and have a wider base of industrial advertisers to help diversify revenue streams.

**The Quebec Farmers'  
Advocate is mailed to all  
English-speaking members  
of the UPA regardless of  
whether they are members  
of the QFA or not**

## RE-STRUCTURED, RE-ORGANIZED, RE-ENERGIZED

Re-structuring that happened late last Fall has proven to be a worthwhile endeavour. Communication around expectations has shown improvement and editions come together with relatively few hitches. The collaboration with writing and editing company '*Point*' has proven to be the right decision and QFA celebrated in the May edition, the nomination of Allegra McKenzie for the RBC Bronwen Wallace Award for Emerging Writers.

The larger team allows greater gearing and flexibility in workflow and allows time to focus on other priorities.

## WEBSITE RE-LAUNCH

The methods of communicating the message of the QFA continue to develop. Along with the heavier reliance on social media, a new QFA website was due to be launched in winter of 2016, as reported on last year. Our current website is functional, but the potential is unfulfilled.

The website design company contracted by the UPA to re-invent regional federation websites was consulted late in 2015. It was decided not to proceed with this as an option due to prohibitive costs. Instead, QFA took the decision to redesign and streamline its own website, keeping essential information, rejecting non-essentials and based on a template of its own choosing.

However, UPA felt that there would be significant benefit to QFA's website reflecting that of its own more strongly branded image and offered to subsidise the cost of the redesign. QFA agreed and worked hard through the Spring to produce drafts of design and deliver content. The project has been with UPA since June.

Due to work loads and competing priorities, this work has yet to be done and on expressing a need for a sense of urgency, UPA has decided to allow QFA to go ahead and explore another solution, on condition that the final product reflects that of the Confederation. QFA will proceed swiftly.



## MEMBERSHIPS

Recruiting and retaining members remains a challenge and is part of a national trend away from belonging to 'club' like structures. This is compounded by the slow erosion and loss of the numbers of farmers. In 2008, there were 2,507 English-speaking farmers in the Province of Quebec. In 2013, the number had dropped to 1,646. Every issue of the Advocate includes a member application form and from time to time, editorials and articles remind UPA members of the value and importance of becoming a QFA member.

### MEMBERSHIP REVENUES

2016	\$ 23 683
2015	\$ 21 995
2014	\$ 19 161
2013	\$ 23 074
2012	\$ 18 654

## QFA TRANSLATION SERVICES

Demand for QFA's *specialized agricultural translation service*, providing for members, national and provincial organizations, partners, and community stakeholders suffered a significant drop in revenue between 2014 & 2015, largely due to State cuts in structures that QFA had traditionally been relying upon for revenue – more specifically - CDAQ.

2016	\$23 942
2015	\$ 24 833
2014	\$ 71 432
2013	\$ 82 794
2012	\$ 57 603

Internal organizational restructuring resulted in the recruitment of a new *Director of Translations Services*, Scott Irving, to challenge this drop in revenues. Initiatives to amplify marketing of the services through the UPA family show early promise, but will not be fully realised until 2017 year end results data are ready. Based on 6-month results, however, figures show strong promise. At the same time last year, translations revenue was \$7 149. This year it is \$20 528.

Rates remain the same as in previous years at \$0.28 per word with discounts of up to 12% depending on UPA affiliation and word count.

## FARM SAFETY AND FARM FAIRS

Farm Safety awareness raising efforts continued through visiting Farm Fairs and other events. Learning tools were on hand at Shawville where school groups were given demonstrations to raise awareness about the importance of safety.

The Canadian Agricultural Safety Association gave in-house training, for the first time, to UPA and provincial coordinators in January. QFA Executive Director attended as an observer.

The QFA, besides consistently publishing farm safety information in the *Advocate*, continued to represent the membership on an advisory committee of the Canadian Agricultural Machinery Technical Committee. QFA representation was once again present at the UPA's conference on farm safety held in Quebec City each January. The CASA Conference was not attended for reasons of fiscal prudence.

## WARREN GRAPES AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION FUND

QFA has a registered charity called the Warren Grapes Agricultural Education Fund. Its objectives are to promote agricultural and silvicultural education and learning among the English-speaking farm and rural community of Quebec through the provision of bursaries to students enrolled in college and university programs.





Donations for 2015-16 were healthy; up almost \$500 on the previous year. Of note is a single significant donation of \$1500 from Grace United Church Cemetery in Bury, which QFA has received for the second year in a row.

Total donations received allowed over \$2500 to be dispersed. Six students applied for the 2016 bursaries. The Fund's trustees reviewed all applications and three \$700 awards were given to students.

Special thanks are extended to the trustees of the fund for their service.

### **VIDEOCONFERENCING FORUMS**

Six videoconference forums involving 7 community learning centres were held during the year and attended by over 200 people.

Communities in Low, Shawville, Lachute, Ormstown, Magog, Richmond and Bury were engaged.

Topics covered included:

- Farm Succession Planning
- Precision Agriculture
- Quebec Animal Welfare Regulations
- Forage Conservation and Nutrition



### **EMERGING PROJECTS & ADVOCACY**

QFA submitted an application to the Federal Government CANADA 150 fund to conduct a tour and hold a celebratory gala in August 2017. Unfortunately, on this occasion, QFA was unable to secure funding.

The Seniors Gardening Project undertaken in 2015 has not been forgotten and independent meetings were held with related community groups.

Through Service Canada's 'Canada Summer Jobs' Program, funding was secured to provide employment for a student over the course of the summer. Unfortunately after posting, no applications were received.

Relationships are developing well within both the UPA Family and Federal Government. The future looks good.

**RESEARCH SHOWS THAT 81 PERCENT OF CANADIANS BELIEVE THAT SUPPLY MANAGEMENT IS GOOD FOR CANADA. CANADIAN BUSINESS, 2013**

### **Quebec Farmers' Association (QFA)**

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EARNED, NURTURED AND  
MAINTAINED**