



*Markdale Chamber of Commerce*  
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July 21st, 2011

Media Release – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Grey Highlands Agricultural Business Retention Project is recruiting task force members.**

It was a busy winter for the Markdale Chamber of Commerce as they worked to conduct 40 Surveys of local farmers. The survey asked for opinions on the local business climate and current local barriers to business expansion among others things. “It’s now time to put all that data to work” said Mike Maloney the projects coordinator. The Chamber is seeking volunteers for attendance of two meetings in the coming months to make up a task force charged with creating a local agricultural action plan for the grey Highlands community. An initial Orientation meeting will take place on Wednesday August 3<sup>rd</sup> with the evening strategic planning workshop to follow on Wednesday Sept 7<sup>th</sup>. The Chamber is looking for local Stakeholder’s from the agricultural sector that are looking to make a difference in their community. Representatives from the Municipality of Grey Highlands, Grey Agricultural Services, Grey and Bruce Local Food Project, the Grey County Federation of Agriculture and OMAFRA have already come forward to help in the process.

The Task force will work to create a long term outline of tasks and action items to increase prosperity of our local agricultural sector. The Outline will set achievable community goals while determining roles of local organizations and determining measures for success. The Framework has been proven to work in communities throughout Ontario but Markdale is one of the first to use it for the agricultural sector. “It is really a great opportunity to develop a strategic plan for Grey Highlands agriculture” said Charmaine Peever Vice President of the chamber of commerce, “No one plan’s to fail but they often fail to plan”. The Markdale Chamber is hoping for representation from local agricultural producers and service providers to complement the service organization and government representatives already on board.

For information regarding the project or to inquire about participation call the Markdale chamber of commerce at 519-986-4612.