

## Award-Winning Documentary "We Lend A Hand: The Forgotten Story of Ontario Farmerettes" to Screen in Elmvale May 22, 2026

A largely forgotten chapter of Canadian history will be brought to light as the 50-min documentary film *We Lend A Hand: The Forgotten Story of Ontario Farmerettes* screens in Elmvale, Ontario. The film has been selling out theatres across Ontario and will now be screened at the Elmvale Community Hall (33 Queen St W, Elmvale, ON L0L 1P0) on May 22, 2026.

Created by Director/Producer Colin Field and Historical Producer (and Exeter resident) Bonnie Sitter, the documentary tells the extraordinary story of 40,000 teenage girls who volunteered on Canadian farms during and after World War II and helped sustain the nation's food supply when young men left to fight overseas.

Bonnie Sitter, an author, was searching through old family photographs when she found a captivating image of a group of young women taken on her late husband's family farm near Thedford with a caption on the reverse that read: "Farmerettes 1946."

This led Bonnie to research the Farmerette story, and publish an article in *The Rural Voice* asking for women who served as Farmerettes to get in touch with her. Shirleyan English, a retired London Free Press journalist, read the article and wrote a letter to the editor, explaining her own experience as a Farmerette, and how it remained the

best summer of her life. Bonnie and Shirleyan would go on to co-author the book *Onion Skins and Peach Fuzz: Memories of Ontario Farmerettes* in 2019.

"We wanted to capture the story of how the Farmerettes helped win the Second World War by volunteering to aid farmers with food production," says Bonnie. "Most of these girls had never seen a farm. They came from all over Ontario as volunteers. They weren't conscripted. They chose to roll up their sleeves and do their part for Canada, and their efforts have largely been forgotten".

Director Colin Field first met Bonnie in 2019 and was inspired by her research and desire to bring this forgotten Canadian story to life. He proposed a documentary film, and Bonnie agreed to fundraise to bring the project alive. Colin interviewed 20 Farmerettes - now in their 90s - for the documentary, and after two years of work, and with the help of sponsors and generous donors, *We Lend a Hand: The Forgotten Story of Ontario Farmerettes* is finally complete.

"It has been a privilege to travel throughout the province and hear the stories of these surviving Farmerettes," Field said. "If it wasn't for these girls, the soldiers wouldn't have had food to eat and the economy would have

ground to a halt".

After the screening there will be a Q&A with the filmmakers and a chance to acquire autographed copies of *Onion Skins and Peach Fuzz: Memories of Ontario Farmerettes*, Shirleyan English and Bonnie Sitter's amazing book.

Tickets for the May 22nd, screening at the Elmvale Community Hall can be purchased through the link below.

[https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/we-lend-a-hand-the-forgotten-story-of-ontario-farmerettes-elmvale-tickets-1982972811058?aff=oddtcreator&keep\\_tld=true](https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/we-lend-a-hand-the-forgotten-story-of-ontario-farmerettes-elmvale-tickets-1982972811058?aff=oddtcreator&keep_tld=true)

Watch the trailer here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ImJcqxZg>

This event is brought to you by the Springwater Township Public Library, Flos Agricultural Association, Elmvale Community Recreation Association, Centre Flos Women's Institute, Friends of the Springwater Township Public Library, and the Simcoe Federation of Agriculture.

For more information please visit [welendahand.ca](http://welendahand.ca)

Colin Field  
Producer/Director, Albireo Films  
519-619-7940 [albireofilms@gmail.com](mailto:albireofilms@gmail.com)  
Bonnie Sitter  
Historical Producer, 519-235-1909  
[bonnie.sitter@gmail.com](mailto:bonnie.sitter@gmail.com)



**JOIN US!**  
CENTRAL ONTARIO DISTRICT  
(Formerly Simcoe County District)  
**Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario**  
[christianfarmers.org](http://christianfarmers.org)

*Keeping Faith in Farming*



*Celebrating Life, One Legacy at a Time.*

offering...  
Simple Cremations.  
Traditional Funerals.  
Celebrations of life.  
Graveside Services.  
Pre-Arranged or At-need.



Matt and Cindy Drury/Owners  
**Tel: (705) 728-8282**  
[info@legacyfuneral.ca](mailto:info@legacyfuneral.ca) [www.legacyfuneral.ca](http://www.legacyfuneral.ca)  
55 Cedar Pointe Drive #600 Barrie, Ontario L4N 5R7



**AUCTIONS?** See page 23!




A local, full service Ag retailer providing agronomic solutions to increase productivity and profitability on your farm.

*Working to Grow With You!*

**HOLMES AGRO** ORANGEVILLE 1.800.668.3047  
REDICKVILLE 519.925.3138  
STAYNER 1.866.388.8002

**[www.holmesagro.com](http://www.holmesagro.com)**

**SWB Insurance Brokers**  
(Smith, Williams and Bateman Insurance Brokers Ltd.)  
*We have been insuring farms and agribusinesses for 76 years (So Far!)*



Farms · Commercial · Residential · Automobile  
Professional Liability · Cyber  
Life Insurance · Travel Coverage · Etc.

16700 Yonge Street Box 2005  
Newmarket, Ontario L3Y 6W4  
905-895-2591 | 905-773-6266  
1-800-263-1520  
[info@swbins.com](mailto:info@swbins.com)