

NOMINATION FORM – LAMBTON AGRICULTURAL HALL OF FAME ASSOCIATION

NAME/ORGANIZATION OF NOMINATOR:

GIVEN NAME : James SURNAME: Johnson

ADDRESS: RR#1 TOWN/CITY: Alvinston POSTAL CODE: N0N 1A0
TELEPHONE: 519-844- 2191

NAME OF NOMINEE:

GIVEN NAME: Ralph H. D. SURNAME: Ferguson

ADDRESS: 4288 Old Walnut Road TOWN: Watford_ POSTAL CODE: N0M 2S0

SELECTION CRITERIA:

40% CONTRIBUTION TO AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY –
WITHIN LAMBTON COUNTY

1. Examples of involvement

- Founding President of Brooke Township Junior Farmers
- Supporter of Lambton 4-H as an active 4-H parent
- Founding committeeman of the Lambton Pork Producers Association
- Committeeman on the Lambton Wheat, White Bean and Soybean Producer's Associations
- Lambton County delegate to the Ontario Egg Board
- Lobbied for the creation of the Ontario Pork Producers Marketing Board in the late 1950's and the Egg Producers Marketing Board in the 1960's based on the potential positive impact this would have on the Lambton agricultural community.
- President of Brooke- Alvinston Agricultural Society
- Established a pilot ethanol research facility in Brooke Township. Campaigned to pave the way for the fuel ethanol industry in Ontario and the rest of Canada Canadian Renewable Fuels Association to convince the Federal government to waive the excise tax on fuel alcohol, thereby making it possible to competitively market gasoline/alcohol blends
- In the 1960's and 1970's Ralph hosted tours for University of Western and Ridgetown college students on his farm and through the county to enhance their awareness and understanding about agriculture and farming practices.
- During Ralph's time as Minister of Agriculture and Member of Parliament he hosted top level Canadian and International officials in the Lambton Community.
- Served on the Board of Directors of McNeil Feed and Grain Limited contributing to business planning and re-establishing company success.

2. Impact of nominee on activities and success of various groups

- An active Junior Farmers organization with a strong provincial debating team. Increased the profile of Junior Farmers as a leadership and educational development organization.
- An active Lambton Pork Producers Association at a time when the industry was segmented and marketing was uncoordinated.
- Increased the potential for improved income of wheat, white bean and soybean growers by increasing producer controlled marketing opportunities.
- Like many other community minded individuals, Ralph saw the role of president of Brooke-Alvinston Agricultural as a means of personally contributing to the success of the Lambton County fair and it's important role in the community.
- Ethanol research facility demonstrated that corn could be used as an economic feedstock for ethanol which created another market for farm based products. Ralph's vision has become a reality in the current marketplace as the Ontario government now requires all gasoline sold in this

province to contain 5% ethanol facilitating another market opportunity for cash crop enterprises and developing a new industry for rural Ontario with excellent potential for growth.

- Together with local farmers (within and outside Lambton) he developed a comprehensive Agricultural Policy paper which was ultimately accepted by the Ontario government and later the Federal government becoming a cornerstone of Canada's agricultural policy during that period.
- Ralph made a specific effort to connect the grassroots agricultural community with federal agricultural agencies that were often perceived to be bureaucratic.

(Please limit the wording to 1000 words)

20% PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

State examples of personal skills and abilities demonstrated by nominee

- Debating Team of the Junior Farmer – Won the Ontario finals in Guelph preparing him for a future career defending and promoting agricultural issues
- Facilitation and motivation of local associations, provincial committees to achieve goals locally, provincially and federally.
- Writing summaries of farming issues and lobbying for these causes - Compare the Share, comprehensive agricultural policy, information papers on ethanol and other issues.
- Leadership demonstrated by Ralph's ability to represent grassroot issues as committeeman and Member of Federal Parliament and Federal Minister of Agriculture.
- Farming and farm management of Walnut Acres Farms Ltd demonstrating environmental stewardship and crop/livestock production skills – completion of the Farm Environmental plan, tree plantings, soil erosion BMPs
- Active member of Presbyterian church and resource to all local church communities on government policy (food security - Compare the Share)
- Father of 4 children, Doug, Dave, Susan, John to whom he taught the value of education and community involvement. All children have post-secondary degrees and continue to contribute to community organizations.
- Coached farm families and local businesses through financial and personal crisis.

15% HOME BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Size, quality and innovative nature of home farm, business or activities.

- Ralph managed an 800 acre cash crop, beef cow/calf and egg production farm in Brooke Township, Lambton County.
- Recipient of the Conservation Farm Award from St. Clair Region Conservation Authority 2004 - tree planting and soil erosion projects and the Ontario
- In the mid-1970's he hosted an innovative project with the Ministry of Natural Resources to mark his woodlot for tree selection that would support the woodlot's future sustainability for income, wildlife habitat, ecological diversity and tree health. This was one of the first woodlots to take this approach in Lambton County and to this date the positive effects of this decision support his farm's income and environmental sustainability.
- In the late 1950's Ralph was an early adapter of liquid fertilizer for field and sweet corn production. He supplied product to local farmers and adapted his corn planter for liquid application to be able to custom plant Green Giant sweet corn in the Lambton/Middlesex area.

10% CONTRIBUTION TO AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY – OUTSIDE LAMBTON

a) Examples of involvement

- Federal Minister of Agriculture under the John Turner government.
- Served two terms as Federal Member of Parliament for Lambton-Middlesex.

- Nominated to by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture for a position on the National Farm Products Marketing Council in 1972. He was appointed to the council and served until 1976.
- Compare the Share document published in 1990 documenting for the previous 10 year period the farm price, the wholesale price and the retail price for each of the commodity groups.
- In 1983 he re-introduced the Farm Creditor's Arrangement Act in the form a Private Member's Bill which prevented the pre-mature foreclosure of farm operations.
- Awarded the 1977 Queen's Jubilee Medal for work in agriculture and community development.
- Motivated the establishment of a Canadian Heritage Seed bank

b) Impact of nominee on activities and success of various groups

- During the time that Ralph was on the National Farm Products Marketing Council quotas were negotiated with the provincial commodity groups for orderly production and marketing, and also the foundational policies that led to the drafting of the Farm Products Marketing Legislation were written.
- Compare the Share enhanced the debate about sustainable and viable Canadian agriculture and supported the farmer's fair share. This document has been used extensively by the research and policy community and update twice since Ralph's initial document. Showed retail price food prices increased while farmer's share decreased. Ralph argued that producers must receive a fair return for their investment, management, and risk, and he also advocated for strong producer marketing boards and agencies.

10% CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITY BEYOND AGRICULTURE

a) Examples of Involvement

- Member of the Watford District High School Board of Education
- Member of the building committee for the Brooke Alvinston Arena and Community Centre
- Rotarian member in Alvinston
- Member of the St. Andrew's Society
- Cooperated with a team to create a documentary video and book that detailed the Scots pioneer heritage in Lambton-Middlesex.
- Committee member of the Alvinston Robbie Burn's evening.

b) Impact of applicant on activities and success of various groups

- Successful completion of the Brooke-Alvinston Arena and Community Centre that hosts a viable sport complex and active local community/county events.
- Maintaining the awareness of the significant impact of the Scottish heritage on current and future generations.

5% LENGTH OF SERVICE TO AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY

0-10 yr (2) 10-20 (3) 20-30 (4) 30 + (5)

Ralph's involvement in the agricultural community spanned from the late 1940's to the present time a period of well over 60 years

April 13 2013

Honourable Ralph Ferguson CP

It is with the utmost pride that I can assist in the worthy nomination of Honourable Ralph Ferguson CP to the Lambton Kent Agricultural Hall of Fame.

My association with Ralph goes back to when he was first elected to represent Lambton and Middlesex in Ottawa. His agricultural policies were about situations we wanted to follow and, as well, encourage others to follow. The common sense, grass root, approach to rural problems was appealing and his presentation nourished confidence for success.

Ralph will always be remembered for his support of organized marketing, fair trade, his tireless interests in people, and his desire to leave behind a better world than he received.

An example of Ralph's varied concerns about the welfare of rural people was his interest and eventual construction of a rural water pipeline system for West Williams Township. These people were desperate for an adequate supply of good water free from sulphur. Today this system has been expanded and many are thankful to the Honourable Ralph Ferguson CP for his endearing support.



Jack Johnson

Farmer North Middlesex

To Whom It May Concern regarding our Hon. Member of Parliament, Mr. Ralph Ferguson

I have known Ralph all my life and could always count on him for sound practical advice.

Ralph's involvement in the Ontario Junior Farmer Assoc. and winning awards as a strong debating team member, gave him a solid footing in politics to get his point across in the House of Commons.

I remember very clearly as I was President of Lambton Federation of Agriculture in the 1980's when interest rates spiked to 20% plus. This was devastating for many farmers in Lambton especially fathers that co-signed bank loans for their sons to expand the family farm and many were forced into bankruptcy. Ralph held many meetings with those farmers and the Lambton Federation. He arranged a meeting with John Turner at his Walnut Acres farm and there was a huge turnout of farmers and farm commodity leaders, the tall pines provided a very peaceful setting for a meeting but very unsettling times for the area food producers.

Ralph was a strong supporter of Canadian Citizenship and Canadian values and as our M.P. he worked tirelessly in solving individual issues that Lambton—Middlesex Constituents had. He put together two large projects showing the Price that the consumer was paying and what the farmer was getting.

Ralph was always thinking ahead and his small ethanol project in Lambton was way ahead of it's time or you might say the beginning of a huge ethanol industry in the whole world. He was the Federal Minister of Agriculture and gained the respect of farmers all across Canada. Ralph was also involved with the health of Lambton County residents with his study on cancer rates in this area.

AS a farmer he was an environmentalist in woodlot management and soil conservation. In his spare time, working with the timber he grew; very fine furniture were produced in his work shed.

It was an honour and privilege to know Ralph, Deloris and all the Ferguson family.

Respectively yours,
Mac Parker