

What is Prime Agricultural Land?

Prime agricultural areas represent large, generally adjoining blocks of land that enable current and future opportunities for agriculture. They are characterized by the presence of:

- Prime agricultural land, defined as specialty crop areas and/or areas with Canada Land Inventory (CLI) Classes 1 - 3 lands;
- Other areas associated with prime agricultural land including CLI Classes 4 - 7 lands and additional areas with a local concentration arms with characteristics of ongoing agriculture; and,
- Agricultural areas with organic soil (not part of the CLI classification system).



What is a LEAR Study?

A LEAR or a Land Evaluation and Area Review study is a tool used to inform the designation and evaluation of prime agricultural areas. It also identifies what is not considered to be prime agricultural land. The tool was developed by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. In Norfolk County, the Agriculture Advisory Committee was integral to developing the Area Review Criteria

There are two components to a LEAR study:

1. Land Evaluation

A Land Evaluation assesses the inherent soil and climatic conditions for agriculture. Mapping is used to identify and compare the agricultural capability for common field crops.

2. Area Review

This review considers other factors important to agricultural potential such as fragmentation and how the land is used.

