

From Queen's Park by Sylvia Jones MPP

As we adjust to the cooler weather, we get a front row seat to the beautiful fall colours throughout Dufferin-Caledon.

It also means Thanksgiving and the fall harvest are here.

Harvest is a time for our farmers to take off the majority of the crops they have been carefully tending through the spring and summer. Farming and the jobs it creates is very important across Ontario, and especially here in Dufferin-Caledon. We should be thankful that we have an abundance of fresh, locally-grown produce that we can enjoy from throughout Dufferin and Caledon. Whether it's potatoes in Dufferin to the apple orchards in Caledon, there are lots of producers growing a huge variety of vegetables ranging from spinach to rapini. This is a perfect time of year to visit a local farmer's market and do your Thanksgiving dinner shopping.

During the Thanksgiving weekend, there are many activities to keep the kids busy and outside. You can't miss the huge pumpkin display at Downey's Farm Market or apple-picking at one of the local orchards. You will see lots of visitors and leaf-peepers on one of the many scenic and popular drives, or riding their bikes on the Trans Canada Trail and our many quieter back roads. Remember to share the road and pack your patience as we share our beautiful countryside with visitors out for a day in the country.

During the Thanksgiving weekend, many of us will be spending time with family and friends, enjoying the abundance that comes with the fall harvest, and being thankful for our blessings. Unfortunately, the cooler weather also means budgets are stretched as heating costs increase and some in our community must rely on a food bank to make ends meet. The fall is often a time that the local food banks prepare for this added need with a campaign reminding us to donate. I want to thank my colleague, MPP Bob Bailey, for helping farmers and food banks across Ontario, through his amendment to the Local Food Act that will provide a tax credit for farmers and producers who donate their products to local food banks. This ensures that donated produce by farmers and producers will be used to help stock the shelves of our local food bank and return a tax credit worth 25 percent of the wholesale value to farmers. For more information about local food bank initiatives in Dufferin-Caledon please contact my office at 1-800-265-1603.

I want to wish everyone a safe and bountiful Thanksgiving

