

NEWS RELEASE

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Beef Farmers Support New Veterinary Scholarship Initiative *Hope Grootenboer Named as the BFO-Sponsored Scholarship Recipient*

November 25, 2025 (Guelph, Ont.) – Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO) is pleased to support a new veterinary scholarship initiative designed to help address Ontario's growing shortage of large animal veterinarians. Nine students pursuing veterinary medicine or veterinary technology were recognized today at the Ontario Federation Agriculture (OFA) Annual General Meeting in Toronto as the first-ever recipients of this farmer-funded initiative.

Each student received a \$2,000 scholarship made possible through the support of Ontario's livestock commodity groups and industry partners. The program was introduced by OFA earlier this year to complement their existing awards supporting students in agriculture-related fields.

Hope Grootenboer was awarded the BFO-sponsored scholarship. Grootenboer grew up on her family's dairy farm in Murillo near Thunder Bay. After completing her undergraduate studies at Lakehead University, she began her first year at the Ontario Veterinary College (OVC) this fall as part of the new northern cohort. Hope plans to pursue a mixed animal veterinary career in the Thunder Bay region following graduation.

"We are pleased to congratulate Hope with a veterinary scholarship in recognition of her dedication to veterinary medicine," said Craig McLaughlin, President of Beef Farmers of Ontario. "We also extend our sincere appreciation to all of this year's applicants and to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture for supporting this important initiative."

BFO, alongside Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Veal Farmers of Ontario, Ontario Sheep Farmers, and EastGen, contributed financial support to the initiative's inaugural year.

The shortage of large-animal veterinarians is a longstanding challenge for beef farmers in many parts of northern and rural Ontario. Reliable access to veterinary care is essential to the success and sustainability of the beef sector. Healthy cattle are the foundation of every farm, and veterinarians play a critical role in animal health and welfare through disease prevention, early diagnosis, herd-health planning, and effective treatment.

In addition to this new OFA-led scholarship initiative, BFO annually awards two scholarships of its own – a DVM Entrance Scholarship and DVM Convocation Award - to students enrolled in the Ontario Veterinary College at the University of Guelph who are pursuing a career in large animal health and welfare.

"Continued investment in veterinary care and services is essential to ensure the long-term health and productivity of our herds and the resilience of our sector," added McLaughlin.

Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO) advocates in the areas of sustainability, animal health and care, environment, food safety, and domestic and export market development. BFO's mission is to provide leadership that fosters a sustainable and profitable beef sector to meet producer needs, and have Ontario beef recognized as an outstanding product by consumers.

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For More Information

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