



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August 20, 2025**

**CHATHAM-KENT CHAMBER POLICY SPURS HISTORIC PROVINCIAL \$135M INVESTMENT IN WATER AND IRRIGATION INFRASTRUCTURE**

*Chatham-Kent, Ontario – August 20, 2025* — The Chatham-Kent and Leamington Chambers of Commerce proudly recognizes the Government of Ontario’s newly announced \$135 million investment to protect water systems and irrigation infrastructure in Niagara and Leamington, as reported in the official Ontario Newsroom. This provincial commitment is a direct result of coordinated, evidence-based advocacy—centered on the “Agricultural Infrastructure for Food Security and Sustainability” resolution authored by the Chatham-Kent Chamber and co-sponsored by the chambers of Windsor Essex, Leamington District, Sarnia Lambton, Wallaceburg, St. Thomas, Barrie, Orillia District, and Amherstburg. [Ontario Investing \\$135 Million to Protect Water Systems and Irrigation Infrastructure in Niagara and Leamington | Ontario Newsroom](#)

This forward-thinking resolution, formally adopted at the Ontario Chamber of Commerce’s 2025 AGM in Windsor, was developed through robust consultation with growers, local agribusinesses, municipal leaders, Ontario Greenhouse Vegetables Growers, Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Ontario government. The policy’s recommendations reflect the on-the-ground challenges faced by Ontario’s agri-food sector and the urgent need for sustainable, growth-enabling public infrastructure investment.

**Key highlights from the resolution include:**

- A call for at least \$2B over five years in co-funded provincial and municipal water, wastewater, and energy infrastructure for high-growth agricultural hubs;
- 100% funding for core rural and regional upgrades, relieving municipalities and agribusinesses of burdensome development charges and barriers to expansion;
- Targeted grants and zero-interest loans to support greenhouse efficiency, innovation, and the adoption of renewable energy—as much as 40% of project costs subsidized;
- A commitment to streamlined and accelerated government approvals and permitting for urgent infrastructure and sustainability projects.

Ontario's \$135M investment, as outlined in the government's recent announcement, demonstrates how policy collaboration and persistent, province-wide advocacy can deliver practical benefits for local growers and communities. These funds will help ensure the resilience, affordability, and sustainability of the infrastructure that enables the region's greenhouses—and the broader agri-food sector—to thrive. In Chatham-Kent alone, stronger water and irrigation systems unlock potential for business expansion, new employment, greater economic resilience, and a more competitive, innovative local food economy. Each public dollar invested multiplies opportunity, generating up to \$3.06 in regional GDP and supporting the broader value chain.

"This win is a testament to the Chamber network's collective voice and unified action in support of rural infrastructure and food security. It demonstrates what's possible when we work across sectors and regions with a focus on shared, future-ready solutions. The Chatham-Kent Chamber and our Ontario Chamber network will continue advocating for further economic-enabling investments from both provincial and federal governments—so that every Ontario region, and especially our vital agri-food industry here in Chatham-Kent, is positioned for sustained prosperity." - **Sarah Molnar, Chair, Chatham-Kent Chamber of Commerce.**

"This landmark investment by the Government of Ontario is a game-changer for our greenhouse sector. It validates years of collaborative advocacy and recognizes the essential role that water and irrigation infrastructure play in securing Ontario's food future. For growers in Leamington and across the province, this funding means greater capacity for innovation, sustainability, and economic growth. We're proud to stand with our Chamber partners in championing infrastructure that strengthens our communities and ensures the long-term viability of Ontario's agri-food industry." **Richard Lee, Executive Director, Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers**

"This investment is a significant step forward for Leamington's greenhouse and agri-food industries. It reflects the strength of our collective advocacy and ensures the infrastructure is in place to support sustainable growth, innovation, and long-term food security." - **Wendy Parsons, General Manager, Leamington District Chamber of Commerce**

"This important investment will be a huge benefit to Niagara's agri-food sector, and to the province of Ontario's future food security. Along with our partners in the agricultural sector, we have pointed out the benefits of this investment, and we are pleased to see the Government of Ontario once again responding prudently and proactively to the needs of our business community, and ensuring future growth and prosperity." - **Mishka Balsom, CEO, Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce**

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