

Year in Review

2024 was a remarkable year for Holmes Agro and the farming community as a whole! Here are some highlights:

- **Fertilizer facility completion:** The new automated facility in Orangeville started operations in February, with an open house in April attended by over 300 people. This new facility has led to improved efficiencies and quality in operations.
- **Challenging growing season:** Despite a wet spring and late planting, the summer heat helped crops catch up, leading to some of the highest yields on record for the territory.
- **Disease and insect management:** Effective scouting helped manage disease pressure, including Tar Spot in corn, contributing to a successful fall harvest.
- **Research and trials:** Continued trials on new products and technologies, such as Procote micronutrients, new corn and soybean varieties, nitrogen stabilizers, and biologicals - showing promising results for the future.
- **Soil Optix introduction:** The new soil sampling system has enhanced soil management by providing detailed soil maps and supporting variable rate applications with greater turnaround timeline. This creates an opportunity to farm every acre more profitably.
- **4R Nutrient Stewardship:** Increased awareness and adoption of practices like cover crops, fall fertilizer management, and soil health are building a strong foundation for future crop production.

Looking ahead, the Holmes Agro team is optimistic about 2025, with potential opportunities arising from market trends, interest rates, and currency fluctuations. It sounds like there's a lot to look forward to!

Grower Pesticide Renewal

We have dates set in the new year for the Grower Pesticide Safety Courses at our Orangeville and Stayner locations. Please have a look at your existing cards and make plans for renewal. The course will still be offered online with multiple dates currently listed and more dates to become available in the future based on demand. Bookings can be made online at www.opec.ca or by calling 1-800-652-8573. Payments must be made ahead of time as course instructors are no longer accepting payments at the courses. Books are available at our offices for pick up anytime. Please make sure you have this in place before the upcoming year!

- Refresh and Renew:** Friday January 31st – Holmes Agro, Orangeville
Friday February 21st – Holmes Agro, Orangeville
Wednesday February 26th – St Patrick's Parish Hall, Stayner
Friday March 21st – Holmes Agro, Orangeville
Wednesday March 26th – St Patrick's Parish Hall, Stayner

Magnesium Powers Crops with K-Mag for Balanced Nutrition

Magnesium may be classified as a minor nutrient, but its importance for crops like corn, soybeans, and potatoes is anything but small. As the central atom in chlorophyll, magnesium is vital for photosynthesis, allowing plants to convert sunlight into energy. It also supports root development, phosphorus uptake, and seed formation—factors that directly influence yield and quality. Magnesium deficiencies often arise in sandy or acidic soils, regions with heavy rainfall, or when potassium is applied excessively. These deficiencies can lead to symptoms such as yellowing on lower leaves in crops like corn, reduced protein synthesis in soybeans and poor tuber development in potatoes.

Fertilizers like K-Mag offer an effective solution. K-Mag provides a balanced mix of magnesium, potassium, and sulfur, ensuring crops receive essential nutrients without altering soil pH. Studies show significant yield benefits: a 5.6 bu/ac increase in corn, a 2.2 bu/ac boost in soybeans, and 17 additional cwt in potatoes when magnesium is adequately supplied. Magnesium also helps boost lawn health through improved nutrient absorption and seed germination.

Incorporating magnesium into crop or turf management ensures healthier plants and higher yields, underscoring its critical role in sustainable agriculture.



Spring Cereal Considerations

With spring 2025 just around the corner, rotational decisions for the upcoming crop year should be in full swing. Although spring cereals may not be as attractive to other cash crops when building production budgets, they still have some value in rotation including

- Improving soil structure
- High crop responsiveness
- Helps to spread out the workload for the harvest season
- Can have an added revenue of straw

Holmes Agro's top varieties of choice for spring cereals:

- Bornholm (2 Row barley) - early maturity, very heavy test weight, excellent yield potential
- AAC Cranbrook (6 Row barley) - (**New**) excellent yield potential and lodging score and has medium plant height.
- AAC Basil (oats) – medium plant height and great standability
- AAC Bullet (oats) – “has been a go to for years” is stable and high yielding, heavy kernel weight and good straw strength.

Check out the Ontario Cereal Crop Trials <https://cereals.gocrops.ca/> for the varieties listed and new ones added this year. Talk to your Holmes Agro representative today for more information!

Ready When Nature Strikes

Did you know that Holmes Agro is a supplier of various ice melt products? We are happy to offer the ProMelt product line for any of your ice melt needs. ProMelt products are more effective at lower temperatures and are less corrosive compared to other options. Having the product coloured helps with ease of application and to ensure efficient use. We also offer a pet friendly ice melt product called ProMelt Enhanced! Stop by any of our locations or check out www.holmesagro.com/winterproducts for more information!



We're Hiring!

Are you looking to join a dynamic and supportive team where you can learn, grow, and thrive? We're hiring for the 2025 season! Explore exciting career opportunities on our website at www.holmesagro.com/careers and submit your resume via email to WatchUsGrow@holmesagro.com or by fax to the attention of Janine Sunga at: 519-941-0931. #WatchUsGrow

2026 Calendar Submissions

It's never too early to send in pictures for next year's 2026 Holmes Agro calendar. We want to see your winter scenes! Every year we are proud to be able to provide a calendar of grower pictures, all thanks to your great submissions. Send your calendar picture submissions to calendar@holmesagro.com

Giving During the Holiday Season

We would like to thank you for your friendship and partnership over the past year. Wishing you and your family a safe and bright New Year! As a part of our gift, we donate to the following organizations to help during this time of need including 6 local foodbanks across our Holmes Agro communities, local Red Cross, and Meals on Wheels.

Upcoming Events

January 7th-8th – Southwest Agricultural Conference
January 8th to 14th – Grey Bruce Farmers Week
January 31st – Grower Pesticide Course, Holmes Agro, Orangeville
February 21st – Grower Pesticide Course, Holmes Agro, Orangeville
February 26th – Grower Pesticide Course, St Patrick's Parish Hall, Stayner
March 5th-7th – London Farm Show, Western Fair District London, ON
March 21st – Grower Pesticide Course, Holmes Agro, Orangeville
March 26th – Grower Pesticide Course, St Patrick's Parish Hall, Stayner

***** Please email emma@holmesagro.com to sign up for our e-newsletter *****

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