

# John Hill Award Fund

Dear Friends and Colleagues;

Have you ever met someone, who inspired you to be the best version of yourself, someone who challenged the way you think, and who gave 100 % all the time? We have, and it changed us.

The **John Hill Award Fund** has been created as a memorial to a man who made an impact on all the lives he touched. His dedication to agriculture and the environment was instrumental in helping to create a property that boasted a symbiotic balance between farming and the natural world around it.



His dedication and work ethic will be remembered as being attributes that set him apart from others. Always willing to lend a hand to a neighbour, help a cow during birthing anytime day or night, or support a project with his own learned knowledge in various trades. He gained immeasurable pride in his accomplishments and was known to often fall asleep at the dinner table (much to his own children's amusement). He taught himself how to do most things before it could be Googled.

"Farmer John" grew up on a farm in Branchton, ON. He attended Branchton Public School until his father passed away suddenly. John took over managing the farm. He proudly helped build a dairy herd which surpassed milking records for its time. After that, he moved to Onondaga Farms where he helped create a property that boasted a balance between agriculture and the environment. As the Farm Manager, John was instrumental in building an internationally recognized herd of Purebred Polled Hereford Cattle. Years later, that farm was transferred to **The Tim Horton Children's Foundation** to provide an opportunity for underprivileged youth to attend camp. John continued his legacy and inspired countless children to try new things, while introducing them to farm life, conservation, and many other life skills.

One of John's great sources of pride was his work with the Canadian Chestnut Council. Beginning in 2002, John helped to plant thousands of endangered American Chestnut trees. This plot at the Tim Horton Onondaga Farms was the beginning of another part of his legacy. These trees were planted by him and many volunteers as a vision to inspire anyone who visited to think further than today and tomorrow. This plot was a reminder that sometimes great things require patience. The blight that affected these trees wasn't going anywhere, but with perseverance and hard work there was a chance to restore this legendary tree back to the forest. John gave all he had to support this initiative. Over 20,000 trees were planted at Tim Horton Onondaga Farms over 20 years with John's leadership and the Canadian Chestnut Council.

John was the quintessential American Chestnut enthusiast and served on the board of the Canadian Chestnut Council for over 21 years. More than a director, John planted, managed and maintained the main Chestnut research plots at Onondaga Farms. He was an ambassador for the species and the Council with his educational outreach to the various organizations and events in the Brant region. He utilized his skills to salvage chestnut wood and produce wonderful wooden crafts and chests to promote and fund-raise for the benefit of the species and Council. John was unselfish in his contributions and a faithful navigator for the Council, keeping it focused on its mission to restore the American Chestnut.

John knew the value of hard work. His day finished when the work was done; not when the sun went down. The legacy he has left is one that will surpass his passing.

Our world needs inspiration for youth to want to go the extra mile. Not everyone is fortunate to have someone who pushes them to be the best version of themselves.

## John Hill Award Fund

To honour John, the Canadian Chestnut Council has established a memorial award fund with the **Brant Community Foundation**. We ask for your support in helping create an Award in John's name.



This award is to be given annually to a graduating grade 8 student at Glen Morris Public School, who shows passion for agriculture and/or the environment. It serves as a reminder that hard work does get noticed. Through this award, it is our hope to inspire the recipient to strive for a future in either or both two fields and in doing so, create their own legacy.

Here is how you can make a donation:

**Donate online** at [www.brantcommunityfoundation.ca](http://www.brantcommunityfoundation.ca). Click on the "Donate Now" button at the top of the page. A drop-down menu under the Fund section lets you choose the "John Hill Award Fund".

A charitable receipt will be issued for all donations.

**For further information**, contact the **Brant Community Foundation** at 519-756-2499.

Sincerely, on behalf of the Canadian Chestnut Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Casier", is positioned above the printed name. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Ron Casier

Chair – Canadian Chestnut Council