

Video released by growers' association

The sixth of seven video clips has been released by the Holland Marsh Growers' Association (HMGA).

This recent release revolves around climate, or more correctly, climate change, which has been the subject of debate for decades. What farmers know is this ? the weather has proven to be greatly unpredictable over the past few decades and the shift in conditions is unlike anything they have seen. Extremes are now the new norm ? and this is being proven year in and year out. From a warm spell in 2012 that led to shorts and t-shirts in Toronto in March (and the subsequent triple frost throughout a three-week period that led to the near eradication of Ontario apples), to a drought-like summer in some places in 2013 in parts of Canada to others that endured Hurricane Hazel like rains.

Despite Environment Canada's soothing edicts to the contrary, receiving an average monthly rainfall in three hours can no longer constitute ?normal? conditions, and farmers have been dealing with it the best they can.

While the Holland Marsh is able to absorb a punishing amount of conditions, farmers are learning to adapt to the realities of these climatic changes, utilizing new technologies and research, to the old stand-bys during droughts ? irrigation. The advantage to the Holland Marsh and area over other parts of the world is that there is a reason why this part of the province is called Ontario's Soup and Salad Bowl. More than 65,000 acres of surrounding lands drain themselves into the Holland Marsh and its canal system ? which leads to other issues, as one can image. But the farmers of the Holland Marsh and area could no more drain the canals than they could drain Lake Simcoe.

It is a competitive advantage in an era when areas such as Vancouver and parts of British Columbia set new records for lack of rainfall for an entire month (July 2013) and states like California and Texas experience drought-like conditions while others, like Colorado, are enduring punishing flooding situations (again, right now in 2013). No one can be sure what is just around the corner when it comes to weather, but farmers are preparing for both the best and worst that Mother Nature can offer.

With that in mind, the growers present ?Confronting Climate Change, a farmer's perspective and what is being done to help mitigate the impact of this situation, including the proliferation of pests and diseases that come with increasingly extreme conditions.

Visit <https://vimeo.com/channels/561393>.