

Trends in Agricultural Land Use Practices Southwest Ontario.

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Agricultural land use practices have a significant role to play in the non-point source contamination of water courses. Initiatives and adoption of management practices being adopted by Ontario farmers fit with the goals and objectives regarding reduction of non-point sources of pollution from land use practices that are expressed in the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. The scope of this paper illustrates trends in land use practices adopted by Southwestern Ontario farmers. Empirical research and census data over the last decade and a half has shown that farmers have been adopting conservation farming systems such as crop residue management, conservation tillage and improved fertilizer management practices. Recent farmer involvement in initiatives such as the Environmental Farm Plan, Best Management Practices and Nutrient Management Planning are enabling agricultural operations throughout Ontario to become more environmentally responsible. Emerging environmental challenges facing producers will also be discussed.