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Junior Farmer Clubs Provide \$50,000 for Community Projects

The numbers are in and once again, members of the Junior Farmers' Association of Ontario can proudly say they worked together to provide more than \$50,000 for local projects and charitable causes in their communities across the province.

"Not only are our members demonstrating community leadership with these donations, they're learning valuable organizational and planning skills for involvement in future community projects," says James McMillan, JFAO President. "All of these donations are the result of young adults deciding for themselves how to raise the funds and where the money should go."

From supporting a young member with cancer, to adopting families and children in need, to sending 4-H club members to provincial competitions, as well as supporting the JFAO provincial charity, Farm Safety Association, last year JF members in more than 25 clubs volunteered hundreds of hours to run dances, food booths, battery recycling drives, and even a tractor pull to help better their communities.

JFAO itself is a charitable organization that relies almost entirely on outside donations and sponsorship to operate programs. It provides leadership and coordinates the provincial activities of local JF clubs across southern Ontario.

The 2008 amount was announced this past weekend at the first meeting of the 2009-10 JFAO board of directors. It follows the more than \$50,000 dollars also donated in 2007, and includes nearly \$6300 donated to the Farm Safety Association, which was designated the provincial charity for 2008-09. This year's provincial charity is Daytrippers, a relatively new organization that provides funding for elementary school trips that otherwise would be too expensive.

JFAO is celebrating 65 years as a provincial organization in 2009. Its mission is "*To Build Future Rural Leaders Through Self-Help and Community Betterment.*" This is accomplished through providing opportunities for young people age 15-29 of all backgrounds, but especially those in rural Ontario, to take on the challenge of exploring their individual talents and potential to develop personally while being involved in bettering their communities, networking, and having fun.

Today JFAO is funded solely through the support of members, donors and sponsors, including its Diamond Level partners Dairy Farmers of Ontario, the Canadian International Farm Show, and OFA. A 65th reunion celebration and fundraising golf tournament are being held on August 15th in Orangeville.

More information can be found on the website www.jfao.on.ca or by calling 519-780-JFAO (5326).

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