



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Tickets on sale for The Leadership Lecture and Reception with Dr. Rebecca Sutherns**

GUELPH, ON, March 5, 2025 – The Rural Ontario Institute, host of the renowned Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP), is excited to announce Dr. Rebecca Sutherns, popular author, professional facilitator and coach will be the featured speaker at The Leadership Lecture and Reception. Tickets are now on sale for this premiere event.

*“Imagination isn’t just for dreamers—it’s for leaders,”* says Gabrielle Ferguson, Leadership Programs Director at ROI. *“This session will inspire and equip listeners to think differently and act boldly in shaping the future. It is the capstone element of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP).”*

The event will be held on March 27, 2025, from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM at the DoubleTree by Hilton located at 30 Fairway Rd South in Kitchener. The evening will kick off with a cocktail reception, providing an opportunity for attendees to network with community leaders, AALP alumni, current participants of AALP Class 20, program sponsors and distinguished guests.

During her talk, Dr. Sutherns will delve into how stepping into a future we desire—whether at a societal, organizational or personal level—requires us to go beyond evidence and embrace the power of imagination. While we are more likely to create real life scenarios that we have first mentally created in vivid detail, this talk is not about idealistic dreams. It’s a call to action. Dr. Sutherns will demonstrate how imagination is an underutilized tool in our strategic leadership toolkit and how we can gain a competitive advantage by leveraging multiple ways of knowing.

*“By attending this event attendees will discover why imagination is a vital skill we must grow into, not out of, and learn how to incorporate it into their leadership toolkit,”* says Dr. Sutherns. Rebecca has a PhD in Sustainable Rural Communities, and is a Certified Professional Facilitator and coach, frequent keynote speaker and has written three books on adaptable leadership. She is a skilled communicator with a gift for helping leaders and organizations reimagine their next chapter.

*“The Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program is a 16-month experiential executive leadership program for those who want to shape the future of the agriculture and food industry and make a positive difference in rural communities across Ontario, Canada, and the globe,”* shares Gabrielle Ferguson. *“AALP Class 20 includes eighteen current and emerging agriculture and food leaders from across the province with various backgrounds. The Leadership Lecture is one of the final culminating events in their life-changing journey.”*



*“We are delighted to have Rebecca Sutherns as our guest speaker inspiring us to lean into imagination and stretch our minds to discover new possibilities as leaders,”* says Ellen Sinclair, Executive Director at ROI. *“This event offers a fantastic opportunity to connect with like-minded professionals from the agricultural and leadership communities. Bring your friends and colleagues for a fun, enlightening and energizing networking experience.”*

A special thank you to our event sponsors, Farm Credit Canada and Agriculture Wellness Ontario, for their support.

All are welcome to this public event! Tickets are \$75 and are available online at <http://www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca/events>. To learn more about sponsorship opportunities available for this event, please contact Gabrielle Ferguson at [gferguson@ruralontarioinstitute.ca](mailto:gferguson@ruralontarioinstitute.ca).

## **ABOUT**

The Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is a non-profit organization committed to developing leaders, informing decision makers and connecting communities. ROI delivers the renowned Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP), which celebrated its 40th year of operation in 2024. AALP is an 18-month experiential executive leadership program for those who want to shape the future of the agriculture and food industry and make a positive difference in rural communities across Ontario. AALP has over 520 graduates who have risen to leadership positions in private industry, producer associations, public service and community organizations. AALP is funded in part by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Agribusiness and the Ontario Ministry of Rural Affairs.

## **CONTACTS**

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