

# Pine Farms Orchard

Apple picking is a quintessential fall activity for many Ontario families, and apples are the core business for the family at Pine Farms Orchard. Pam Rolph-Romeril and her daughter Chloe Thurston now head up operations, store management and events.

Pam and Chloe carry on the family business, having inherited the land from Pam's grandfather who purchased and cleared the land in the 1940s.

Conveniently located just a short drive north of Canada's Wonderland, off Highway 400, local residents have made it their family tradition to visit the picturesque rolling hills to bring home a selection of the 21 apple varieties grown on-site. Apple picking is open from late August through to Thanksgiving weekend each year. Visitors enjoy their outing to this rural retreat as a welcome respite from the urban development that has transformed so much of the Greater Toronto area. In fact, Pine Farms Orchard is a top tourist destination in King City and has welcomed up to 1,000 cars a day during peak season.

But this York Region business is much more than just a pick-your-own apple orchard. When Pam became involved in the 1990s, she augmented the fall season, already busy with apple picking and school tours, to include an on-site bakery. She travelled with mentors to European countries to study farm market operations in order to create her own farm fresh experiences that would connect with her local community. Over the years, these business extensions have grown exponentially. Today, their team operates year-round; offering pre-picked apples, as well as freshly made meals and treats from their charming cafe and gift shop.

More recently, Chloe has developed custom guest experiences. Many families make bookings to take portraits on the farm to celebrate engagements, weddings and anniversaries. Private catered functions and meetings can be booked to accommodate up to 50 guests. Apart from holidays, Pine Farms Orchard is open daily, all year

long with their team of six, plus 40 additional staff to provide excellent customer support through the autumn.

Learn more about Pine Farms Orchard on their website [pinefarmsorchard.com](http://pinefarmsorchard.com) and follow them on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).



The 16 acres of orchard and 40 acres of forest that comprise Pine Farms have been protected from development because the land is part of the Greenbelt, Oak Ridges Moraine, and Happy Valley Forest.

## York Region Agriculture and Agri-Food Strategy

York Region is committed to supporting our vibrant and thriving agriculture and agri-food sector. This work is being guided by the Agriculture and Agri-Food Sector Strategy – an action plan that was endorsed by York Regional Council in 2017.

With five strategic goal areas accompanied by 45 recommended actions, the strategy is an ambitious framework designed to achieve results and demonstrates York Region's commitment to the sector.

To learn more about York Region's agriculture and agri-food sector, visit [york.ca/agrifood](http://york.ca/agrifood)

## Adapting to the pandemic

Farming may be a traditional occupation but the team at Pine Farms has been quick to adapt to the new pandemic requirements.

Educational Farm Tours continue to be offered using a virtual tour format featuring a live Q&A segment. To augment the experience, each class booking also can collect fresh apples and locally produced cider to share with students.

The smooth drive-through process for the farm's Pick-Your-Own operations only required small adjustments to ensure safety and social distancing for guests and staff. Even contactless payment options had been introduced several years ago!

