



## *PEI ADAPT Council Agri-Newsletter*

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**\*In This Issue: \***

Where are the Bees?

Healthy Beef the Goal of Researcher Mary McNiven and the PEI Grain and Protein Council

Buy Local, Farmers Tell P.E.I.

A Guide to Serving Local Food on Your Menu

Proud to Be Different Co-op Atlantic and its Community-building Role

Oil That Fries Your Burger Can Run Your Car

2007 International Farm Succession Conference

**\*Where are the Bees?\***

From Wikipedia May 3, 2007

(for entire story and references see:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colony\\_Collapse\\_Disorder](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colony_Collapse_Disorder))

Colony Collapse Disorder (or CCD) is a poorly understood phenomenon involving the massive die-off of a beehive or bee colony. CCD is alternatively referenced as Vanishing Bee Syndrome (VBS).[citation needed] Apparently, CCD was originally found only in colonies of the Western honey bee in North America[1], but European beekeepers have recently claimed to be observing a similar phenomenon in Poland, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain, with initial reports coming in from Switzerland and Germany, albeit to a smaller degree[2]. The cause (or causes) of the syndrome is not yet well understood and even the existence of this disorder remains disputed. Theories include environmental change-related stresses[3], malnutrition, unknown pathogens (i.e., disease[4]), mites, pesticides such as neonicotinoids, emissions from cellular phones or other man made devices,[5] and genetically modified (GM) crops[6].

From 1971 to 2006 approximately half of the U.S. honey bee colonies have vanished, but this decline includes the cumulative losses from all factors such as urbanization, pesticide use, tracheal and Varroa mites and commercial beekeepers retiring and going out of business, and has been fairly gradual. Late in the year 2006 and in early 2007, however, the rate of attrition was alleged to have reached new proportions, and the term "Colony Collapse Disorder" was proposed to describe this sudden rash of disappearances[1].

Limited occurrences resembling CCD have been documented as early as 1896[4][7], and this set of symptoms has in the past several decades been given many different names (disappearing disease, spring dwindle, May disease, autumn collapse, and fall dwindle

disease). Most recently, a similar phenomenon in the winter of 2004/2005 occurred, and was attributed to Varroa mites (the "Vampire Mite" scare), though this was never ultimately confirmed. In none of the past appearances of this syndrome has anyone been able to determine its cause(s). Upon recognition that the syndrome does not seem to be seasonally-restricted, and that it may not be a "disease" in the standard sense---that there may not be a specific causative agent---the syndrome was renamed[8]..... While the exact mechanisms of CCD are unknown, malnutrition, pesticides, pathogens, immunodeficiencies, mites, fungus, genetically modified (GM) crops, bee rentals and electromagnetic radiation have all been proposed as causative agents. Whether any single factor is responsible, or a combination of factors (acting independently in different areas affected by CCD, or acting in tandem), is still unknown; it is likewise still uncertain whether this is a genuinely new phenomenon, as opposed to a known phenomenon that previously only had a minor impact.

At present, the primary source of information, and presumed "lead" group investigating the phenomenon, is the Colony Collapse Disorder Working Group, based primarily at Penn State University. Their preliminary report pointed out some patterns, but drew no strong conclusions.

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Healthy Beef the Goal of Researcher Mary McNiven and the PEI Grain and Protein Council \*

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND - Healthy eating is sweeping food market demand, and Island researcher Mary McNiven and the P.E.I. Grain and Protein Council are doing all they can to create a healthier beef animal using local feed products, that will capture a large percentage of that market.

With help from the P.E.I. ADAPT Council, which administers the Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) program, they are looking at a variety of ways to lower saturated fats in beef cattle, and increase the healthy form of trans-fat called CLA (conjugated linolic acid) that occurs naturally in ruminant animals and has cancer, diabetes, and heart disease preventative effects.

"Beef doesn't have the most healthy profile right now, and a lot of people don't want to eat fish. But with lowered saturated fats and increased CLAs, beef can be a healthy alternative," said McNiven, who is a researcher at the Atlantic Veterinary College in Charlottetown.

The project will investigate the effects on cattle of various oil seed feed products such as flax, soy, and other oil producing grains, as well as the residues from biodiesel production. The focus will also be on using locally produced feed products rather than importation.

This project will serve all the oil seed and beef producers in the region. "Our goal is to capture a larger percentage of the overall beef market using these local feeds," she said.

McNiven said the potential is there for a strong niche market in Omega beef, as an example. "And instead of having the beef going through the normal system, you could isolate it and market it as a higher value product."

This two-part project will begin soon. Part one will include looking at the oil seeds themselves and their various treatments to improve their nutritional quality. In this phase McNiven will simulate digestive processes in the lab using enzymes to determine optimal treatments.

Then she will run two feeding trials using 50 beef cattle each time. This will take place in Nappan, Nova Scotia. "This will be a big job, monitoring growth and feed intake, then slaughtering the animals to look at how much lean meat we get, and the grade of everything, because the producer has to know that," she said.

The second phase will involve the analysis of meat samples for taste, odor, and fat sampling and fatty acid measurement, to see if the beef has actually become healthier for consumption. It will also look at proxidation, or how quickly the meat goes bad. This is greatly related to different feed products.

McNiven said she is pleased with P.E.I. ADAPT Council's handling of this venture, and is happy to be working with it.

\*Buy Local, Farmers Tell P.E.I.\*

Thu Apr 19, 6:18 AM ; CBC.CA, Yahoo News

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND (CBC) - Government-run facilities such as hospitals should buy food grown close to home, said the executive director of the P.E.I. Federation of Agriculture.

"We would like to see a policy on P.E.I., and I think even more so on a Maritime or an Atlantic basis, on buying local product first, when it's available," Mike Nabuurs told CBC News Wednesday.

"Maybe in some cases that might cost a little bit more, but we need to look at that more as an investment back into the economy of the Atlantic provinces."

Nabuurs pointed out the province is investing millions of dollars into the new beef plant in Albany, but yet doesn't ensure its institutions buy the local product.

Government officials concede there is no buy-local policy. Manors and hospitals purchase the products that are the most affordable through a tendering process.

Nabuurs said the economic benefit to farmers in the province and around the region should be considered a priority.

\*A Guide to Serving Local Food on Your Menu\*

The Guide is a primer to help foodservice managers and directors, caterers, chefs, restaurateurs and others consider creative ways to incorporate local food products into almost any foodservice setting.

Topics include where to begin, identifying sources of supply, developing relationships with farmers, working through existing distributors, and things to consider about the regional food system. Chefs, institutional purchasing agents, and others share their experience in short case studies within the 32-page guide.

Click here to view the Guide in PDF form

<http://www.glynwood.org/resource/guidelocalmenu.pdf>.

Printed copies will be provided with a charge for postage and handling. For more information, please contact [info@glynwood.org](mailto:info@glynwood.org) or 845-265-3338.

**\*Proud to Be Different Co-op Atlantic and its Community-building Role\***

Co-operatives are different. And that is something to be proud of. In keeping with its unique position in Atlantic Canada's economic fabric, Co-op Atlantic is pleased to announce the appointment of Annie LaPlante as its first ever manager of The Co-operative Difference.

In this role, Ms. Laplante will be working with stakeholders across the region to increase partnerships and awareness for the integral role the Co-op system plays in our communities. There are four pillars of The Co-op Difference: Grow Atlantic, Member Focus, Community, and the Co-operative Business Model. These pillars reflect the core values that make co-operatives different from other businesses and organizations. As the communities of the region continue to face challenges to their sustainability, The Co-op Difference manager will work with local communities, food producers and co-operatives to ensure that they enjoy the benefits of co-operation

The time is now to let people know about our Co-op Difference," says John Harvie, CEO of Co-op Atlantic. "The more we can help people take advantage of this, the greater the benefits for all of us."

Examples of The Co-op Difference in action include: helping local Co-op stores increase the amount of Atlantic-produced food for sale in their stores; contributing to programs that provide unique benefits to Co-op members; improving awareness among government officials about how strong co-ops benefit the communities; and helping food producers gain the benefits of working together co-operatively.

Ms. LaPlante is a Professional Agrologist with degrees in agriculture and science. Previously, she had worked for Co-op Atlantic for six years as a Feed Sales Representative.

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## \*Oil That Fries Your Burger Can Run Your Car\*

By Jon Hurdle; Reuters, Yahoo Canada News; Mon Mar 12, 6:48 AM

After a good meal, how about asking the head waiter if you can take the waste grease from the kitchen to fuel your car?

In the search for sustainable and non-polluting alternatives to fossil fuels, a small band of ecologically minded people are turning to vegetable oil and recycled restaurant grease to run their cars, trucks and even home-heating systems.

Entrepreneurs, some backed by public funds, are proving cars can be run on low-cost materials that are a readily available alternative to environmentally damaging fossil fuels.

One driver, Scotsman Antony Berretti, is so keen on the technology that according to his Web site he spent three months driving his home-converted Fiat van all the way around Europe powered by waste vegetable oil scrounged from restaurants.

"Fancy driving across Europe for free? Fuel cost zero?" is the intriguing proposition at <http://www.macharsoft.co.uk/rmp/freefuel.html>.

In Easthampton, Massachusetts, Greasecar Vegetable Fuel Systems makes conversion kits for cars to run on vegetable oil. The company has sold about 3,500 kits during its nine years in business, and says sales have been doubling annually in the last few years.

The kits are priced between \$800 and \$2,000 and users typically get used vegetable oil from local restaurants that are happy to give it away because they usually have to pay for disposal.

With the increasing popularity of vegetable oil as a motor fuel, a small industry of conversion kit installers has grown up, and some also supply the oil for their customers.

With the cost of engine conversion typically offset in a few months, users can quickly reap the benefits of free fuel. "Beyond that, it's money in your pocket," said Justin Carven, owner of Greasecar.

### CARBON NEUTRAL

Fuel consumption for vegetable oil is similar to diesel, which gets 20 to 30 percent better mileage than gasoline. Emissions are much less toxic than those from gasoline, and it's carbon neutral because the carbon dioxide absorbed by the plant from which the oil is derived offsets CO<sub>2</sub> generated when it is used as fuel, Carven said.

In Philadelphia, a small company is finding a use for another restaurant by-product. Philadelphia Fry-O-Diesel converts the foul brown grease from restaurant sink traps into usable, clean-burning biodiesel fuel for heating and transportation.

The project promises to make a modest contribution to reducing carbon dioxide emissions and U.S. dependence on fossil fuels, highlighted by President George W. Bush's recent call for a 20 percent cut in gasoline consumption in the next 10 years.

Fry-O-Diesel and North American Biofuels, based in Long Island, New York, are believed to be the only U.S. companies making biofuels from trap grease.

In Philadelphia, the grease is trucked to the plant after being pumped out of traps that separate it from water in restaurant kitchens. After 15 months' testing, Fry-O-Diesel says it has proved the concept works.

"We know we meet the standard for biodiesel," said company president Nadia Adawi, referring to government specifications for the fuel. However, the company's output hasn't fueled any trucks or heating systems yet -- the experimental facility in an old gasket factory was never intended for commercial production.

#### RESTAURANT GREASE

That will change, said Adawi, when the company opens a new plant for which it is currently seeking investors. The company aims to provide a commercial alternative to petroleum-based diesel that can be produced and consumed close to the source of the grease without needing long-distance trucking of fuels, as with some soy-based biodiesel.

According to Fry-O-Diesel, biodiesel can be used in most diesel engines without adaptation -- unlike ethanol which requires a "flex fuel" gasoline vehicle -- and can be alternated with petroleum diesel. The new fuel cuts engine wear because it is a better lubricant than regular diesel, and is biodegradable.

Fry-O-Diesel spent \$670,000 to set up the testing plant, \$370,000 of which came from a Pennsylvania state grant to encourage alternative fuels. Most of the rest came from the Energy Cooperative, a Philadelphia nonprofit that promotes and distributes renewable fuels. Despite the zeal of Adawi and her seven mostly part-time colleagues, restaurant grease is never going to be a major energy source because there just isn't enough of it, said Steve Bantz, an engineer with the Union of Concerned Scientists, an environmental group in Washington.

If all the estimated 3.8 billion pounds of U.S. restaurant grease produced annually was used, it would make 495 million gallons of biodiesel or heating fuel, equivalent to just 1 percent of the country's diesel consumption, Bantz said, quoting figures from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory. While vegetable oil and restaurant grease may never make a big dent in overall energy needs, the existence of such enterprises underlines the urgency of the search for alternatives to fossil fuels, said Bantz.

"We have to look under every rock and down every drain for alternative energy sources," he said.

\*2007 International Farm Succession Conference\*  
August 6 to 8, 2007 . Ottawa, Ontario

Farm Succession -- Where We've Been, Where We're Going.

In 2002, the Canadian Farm Business Management Council brought together industry experts, agricultural producers and concerned stakeholders for a conference in Winnipeg to focus on the importance of farm succession for the next generation.

While much has changed throughout farming in North America, one thing has stayed the same: farm succession and transition planning are just as critical today as they were five years ago. In fact, as the years go by, it's more critical than ever. That's why we at CFBMC have expanded our focus beyond our borders to make this truly an International Farm Succession Conference.

Join us August 6 to 8, 2007 in Ottawa, Ontario for an opportunity to look back and reflect on what we discussed and learned in 2002. More importantly, this will be a time for us to explore the challenges facing producers and to find out what is being done to facilitate succession plans in Canada, the United States and Europe.

Exciting and Informative Speakers Including:

Gordon Pitts, Globe & Mail business writer, author of *In the Blood -- Battles to Succeed in Canadian Family Business*

Dr. Matt Lobley, Assistant Director of the Centre for Rural Policy Research, Department of Politics, University of Exeter, UK

International speakers, plenary sessions, breakout workshops and on-farm tours -- whether you are an agricultural producer or provide support services to producers, this is one conference you don't want to miss.

Want to know more? Visit [www.farmcentre.com](http://www.farmcentre.com) in the next few weeks for updates.

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