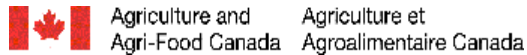




PEI ADAPT Council Agri-Newsletter



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Plotting the Future of Food:

Heasman M, Lang, T, (2006). 'Plotting the Future of Food: putting ecologically driven, community-based food policy at the heart of Canada's food economy'. *Making Waves*, 17, 2, summer, 2-17; <http://www.cedworks.com/files/pdf/free/MW170212.pdf>

Food Policy Councils - The Next Big Trend in Value Chains

One surprising beneficial outcome of agri-food value chain initiatives, throughout North American and Europe, has been the formation of citizen based Food and Agriculture Policy Councils. Typically, a policy council, enables a diverse group of farmers, entrepreneurs, researchers, health and environmental professionals to work together. These grassroots organizations work with public and private entities to support the agricultural and rural economy while also strengthening access to sufficient, high-quality food; and value-adding food.

The vision of many Food and Agriculture Policy Councils is to focus on key food and agriculture policy issues and opportunities that are affected by government and legislation. As a result of their strengthened networks among consumers and communities, Food and Agriculture Policy Councils have been successful in:

- Linking economic development and social impacts with farming and urban issues;

- Educating the public about food and agriculture;
- Supporting resources needed to maintain food production and supply;
- Optimizing access to food and nutrition education;
- Increasing processing of agriculture products;
- Promoting open space planning to ensure the viability of farming and the conservation of natural resources;
- Providing greater access for producers to markets; both rural and urban;
- Providing greater access for people in need to nutritious foods at reasonable prices; in both rural and urban communities;
- Educating farmers, processors, and consumers regarding safe food production, handling, and preparation.

The Story of Stuff Premieres to Rave Reviews

Thu, 2007-12-27 11:37 — Larry Menkes, Earth Charter Lifeboat Academy, PA, 12/25/07

The Story of Stuff is a masterpiece of low-budget film-making by Annie and Free Range Studios, it is fast becoming the latest jewel of an educational documentary on the effects of the western lifestyle on this fragile planet. Documentary industry professionals are already predicting it will win an Academy Award. The website, where you can watch and download the film, www.storyofstuff.com, had a half-million hits in the first two weeks after its release.

The Story of Stuff is a short but powerful film about the environmental and social impacts of our current production and consumption systems. The film intends to raise awareness about the often hidden impacts of production and consumption, to highlight the connections between a wide range of issues, and to spark discussion about both the systemic nature of the problem and effective strategies to address them. It exposes the connections between a huge number of environmental and social issues and calls for all of us coming together to create a more sustainable and just world. It'll teach you something. It'll make you laugh, and it just may change the way you look at all the stuff in your life forever.

"Building the Soil" Workshop Series

The Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network (ACORN) has just received approval for an organic workshop series that focuses on soil health and fertility. With funding assistance from Agriculture and Agri-food Canada and the Maritime ACAAF Councils, there will be a total of 12 workshops held at various locations across the Maritimes.

"Based on the overwhelming success of our workshop last year, we've gone the next step," said Beth McMahan, ACORN Executive Director. "These workshops are really going to appeal to anyone who wants to build their soil health—and what farmer doesn't want to do that?"

The first workshop will feature Ann Slater, speaking on crop rotations for market gardeners. Ann Slater will be coming to the Maritimes to lead this one-day workshop during the week of February 12th (see events calendar above for dates and locations).

Ms. Slater helped develop this course for the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario (EFAO), and has taught it numerous times to farmers across Ontario. As a full-time small-scale gardener, she understands the critical role that rotations play in soil health, weed/pest management, as well as yield. Slater is also the president of the Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario (EFAO), women's advisor for the National Farmers Union (Ontario), advisory board member of the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada, and a 2007 Canadian Organic Grower's "Organic Hero". To read more about Ann's production, visit www.cog.ca/documents/AnnSlater.pdf

Ann will be teaching the course along with an organic farmer from the region. At the two Nova Scotia workshops, Rupert Jannasch will provide information on his own rotations, as well as valuable information from his experiences as an agricultural researcher, farm writer, and Executive Director of R.E.A.P. (Resource Efficient Agricultural Production) Canada.

"We're really excited about these workshops and know they address a very pressing issue right now for all farmers," said Ms. McMahan. "Soil health and fertility is a major concern in all parts of the Maritimes."

Funding has enabled these workshops to remain at an affordable level and anyone is welcome to attend. Pre-registration is strongly recommended, as space is limited.

February 13 "Crop Rotations" workshop with Ann Slater, Charlottetown, PEI. Focused on specific rotations market gardeners can use for soil health, weed/pest management, as well as yield. 20 for ACORN members, \$30 for non-members, or \$40 for new members and registration. Space is limited, so please call 1-866-322-2676 or email theresa@acornorganic.org to register.

February 14 "Crop Rotations" workshop with Ann Slater, Truro, NS. Focused on specific rotations market gardeners can use for soil health, weed/pest management, as well as yield. 20 for ACORN members, \$30 for non-members, or \$40 for new members and registration. Space is limited, so please call 1-866-322-2676 or email theresa@acornorganic.org to register.

February 15 "Crop Rotations" workshop with Ann Slater, Kentville, NS. Focused on specific rotations market gardeners can use for soil health, weed/pest management, as well as yield. 20 for ACORN members, \$30 for non-members, or \$40 for new members and registration. Space is limited, so please call 1-866-322-2676 or email theresa@acornorganic.org to register.

Organic Grains and Oilseeds Forum

March 6 Organic Grains and Oilseeds Forum in Memramcook, NB. Presented by ACORN and the OACC, featuring presentations on variety selection, weed/pest management, crop rotations, market opportunities, and more. For more information, visit www.acornorganic.org/2008symposium.html (Funded in part by ACAAFF)

ACORN Organic Conference and Trade Show

March 6-8 ACORN Organic Conference and Trade Show will be held in Memramcook, NB (between Sackville and Moncton). Featuring workshops on seed production for commercial growers, pastured poultry, Maritime food miles, business planning for "going organic", equipment selection, and much more! For more information, visit www.acornorganic.org/conference.html (Funded in part by ACAAFF)

Growing Opportunities: Realizing the Benefits from the Local Food Economy

March 25-26 Growing Opportunities: Realizing the Benefits from the Local Food Economy A team of presenters will share insights to help you understand the challenges and explore the opportunities of selling locally. For more info see: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri/bde/grow.shtml>

New Book: Sacred Stewardship

Sacred Stewardship—regaining our spiritual partnership with the food we eat by Charles Hubbard & Maggie Carruthers. Text includes "easy to do" techniques of creating sustainable food from city to country dwellers and resources for returning stewardship and partnership to our lives, and a CD with 2 meditations and web-reference file related to specific topics found in the book. www.sacredstewardship.net or email info@sacredstewardship.net

Farm Forward - Launch January 22, 2008

ACC Farmers' Financial and partner Farms.com have created an on-line crop benchmarking program called "Farm Forward" for wheat and corn producers to assist in their crop marketing – the long term goal is to use this as a model for other crops and livestock.

Farm Market News based at the Ridgetown Campus, University of Guelph will be contributing to the on line tool by providing their historical price data and day to day pricing data which will result in a rich data base.

Until now, no central source of historical sales data (volume and price), regional and price reference data has been available in Ontario. Farm Forward will offer that type of information on-line and link it with producers, advisors, lenders and agri-business to create a useable, "networkable" tool.

Tuesday January 22, 2008 to preview this great tool at the Agri-Centre and remotely via webinar.

Time: 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Lunch: Complimentary at the Agri-Centre

Location: Agri-Centre Boardroom

ACC Farmers' Financial, #101-100 Stone Rd. West, Guelph, ON

Heather Ellison at hellison@accfinancial.ca or (888) 278-8807

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ACAAF Program Provides Positive Impact on Island Agriculture and Agri-Food Sectors

The following project summaries illustrate the impact of PEI ADAPT's ACAA program in the agricultural and agri-food industry.

In each case the project was conceived in response to certain issues or constraints affecting the ongoing viability or future development of a sector in Prince Edward Island.

The project participants have attempted to investigate or evaluate particular options for dealing with challenges to the viability of existing industry sectors, and/or opportunities or constraints on perceived opportunities.

Editor's Note: In the coming weeks we will be reporting on additional success stories that would not have been implemented without major financial support from ADAPT's ACAA program

Maritime Organic Grains Network

Background

A shortage of organic grains in the Maritime Region has constrained growth in the organic sector in the region as feed has not been available to support increased livestock production.

Also, the shortage of organic grains has resulted in the need to import grain to meet the needs in the region. This has had the effect of increasing prices to the consumer, further constraining growth by inhibiting demand.

Project

The Maritime provinces ACAA funding councils have jointly undertaken to fund the Maritime Organic Grains Network. The network will operate in conjunction with the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada (OACC) The network will directly benefit individual growers in the region and foster growth of the organic sector overall.

“ With more than thirty signatures from producers and processors, the interest in creating the network and increasing production was overwhelming” stated Andy Hammermeister of the OACC.

Goals

Goals of the Maritime Organic Grains Network include:

- putting in place a research coordinator,
- on farm field trials in all three provinces,
- field days
- identification of the best grains for the Maritimes,
- improve grain quality,
- increase feed grain production,
- increase food production,
- increase organic acreage,
- identification of best markets for grain producers,
- improve grain quality,
- increase grain seed grown in Maritimes,
- annual grains production and marketing workshops
- networking opportunities for producers,

- quarterly newsletter,
- technical bulletins on organic grains.

Summary

This project will generate an increase in the quantity and quality of grains produced in the Maritimes which will have benefits through the entire value chain, according to a statement by Beth MacMahon, Executive Director of the Atlantic Canada Organic Regional Network

Healthy School Snack Program

Background

In Prince Edward Island and elsewhere in North America there is increasing concern in society about the overwhelming presence of highly processed, nutritionally poor food, lunch / snack choices facing students in the schools they attend.

This concern is growing in the face of increasing reports about the high incidence of obesity among the school age population, and other related health concerns. Schools in P.E.I. face the same problems as schools elsewhere in north America despite being in the middle of a large volume agriculture producing region.

Project

The Prince Edward Island ADAPT Council has funded the Healthy School Snack Program to address the concerns noted above.

Goals

There is a need for farmers to connect to local markets in order to increase the outlets for their products.

There is also a need to retain more of the revenue from the market for the producer and give up less to the cost of transportation.

Connecting to the local market at the level of students, school-parent councils and staff will foster relationships which over time will increasingly enable the development of vibrant local value chains benefitting the local agri-food industry.

Summary

The program has been operating in the Montague Intermediate School as a pilot. The pilot project has identified the challenges in terms of logistics and has developed solutions. The project is now prepared to plan a process of expansion to other schools in the future with a base of experience, according to Joanne Driscoll of the P.E.I. Horticultural Council, project sponsor.