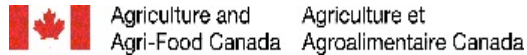




---

## *PEI ADAPT Council Agri-Newsletter*

---



Vol. VIII; No. 1;

January 6, 2009

### **In This Issue:**

PEI ADAPT Council Marketing Forum Achieving Brand Recognition:

Assess Potential Markets On-line

Natural Sciences & Social Sciences Research Symposia Web Broadcast; January 23, 2009

Growing New Ideas Good for Farming

CuiZine: The Journal of Canadian Food Cultures / Revue des cultures culinaires au Canada

### **PEI ADAPT Council Marketing Forum**

Achieving Brand Recognition:

A Workshop for Selling Outside the Commodity Market

Wednesday, January 21, 2009

8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Delta Hotel, Charlottetown, PEI

This branding workshop has been designed to assist Atlantic farmers, food and beverage processors, distributors, brokers and those who work with them to broaden their knowledge of marketing, specifically branding.

Three marketing specialists from across Canada will be on hand to share their expertise. Their presentations will focus on using branding to create loyal consumers.

What is the difference between a 'Florida Orange' and a commodity orange? Why does the 'Florida Orange' command a premium in the marketplace? Can we create this difference with Island or Maritime products? What is involved in this process?

Representatives of PEI, regional, and Canadian companies who have used branding successfully will also be presenting. They will relate their experiences in attracting a loyal consumer by using branding as part of their marketing strategy.

Opportunities will be available, during the afternoon, to talk one on one to either of the three

branding specialists. In order to prepare for this consultation please take some time to consider what you offer the marketplace with your products.

To pre- register Barb MacLeod (902 367-4410) or [valuechain@eastlink.ca](mailto:valuechain@eastlink.ca)

### **Assess Potential Markets On-line**

The Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture has developed a simple on-line tool to help farmers, agricultural organizations, public agencies and local food and economic development groups get a "first look" at potential markets.

The new tool, called the U.S. Food Market Size Estimator, is available at: [www.ctre.iastate.edu/marketsize](http://www.ctre.iastate.edu/marketsize). Users can find the approximate demand for 204 food products in every county of the United States. Products include milk, cheese and dairy foods; fresh, frozen or canned fruits and vegetables; grains; and meat, fish and nuts.

### **Natural Sciences & Social Sciences Research Symposia Web Broadcast; January 23, 2009**

The Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada (OACC) is pleased to provide live web broadcasting of select sessions from the 28th Guelph Organic Conference, Canada's premier organic industry event that combines production, research and environmental issues.

This project is developed in partnership with the Guelph Organic Conference, the Canadian Farm Business Management Council (CFBMC), and being funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's 'Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food' (ACAAF) program.

#### **Web Broadcast Schedule**

Webinar One: Friday January 23, 2009, 8:30 am- Noon EST:

6th Annual Conference for Social Research in Organic Agriculture

This event will highlight social sciences research in the area of organic agriculture and sustainable food systems.

Webinar Two: Friday January 23, 2009, 1:30-4:30 pm EST:

Natural Sciences Research Symposium in Organic Agriculture

This event will highlight organic crop, soil & livestock research from across Canada.

To register in-person for the conference, please visit <http://www.guelphorganicconf.ca>

Registration is \$30/webinar. Please visit [www.oacc.info/symposia/guelph.asp](http://www.oacc.info/symposia/guelph.asp) for more information.

## **Growing New Ideas Good for Farming**

By: Laura Rance

Wrapping your mind around some of the new vocabulary in farming these days is a bit like listening to PC and Mac people talk computers.

Both manage to accomplish pretty much the same objective; they just have different ways of getting there.

Up until a few years ago, concepts such as zero tillage, intercropping, rotational grazing, extended or winter grazing and off-site watering were considered alternatives to conventional farming systems. But these ideas have become so commonplace in recent years, it's becoming harder to determine what can be categorized as "conventional."

These new concepts represent a gradual shift in thinking as people, for either economic or philosophical reasons, challenge conventional wisdom guiding production practices. What these systems lack by way of scientific evidence, they make up for with logic.

A few years back, some salty characters in the cattle business observed cattle have legs and grass has roots. So why was it that farmers made the cattle stand still and made the grass move? Not only that, but they had to spend more time, money and fuel hauling the manure back to the grass, when cattle were perfectly capable of processing and spreading it themselves. That led into the concept of extended grazing, sometimes referred to as over-winter grazing or stockpiled grazing, in which some herds now spend most of the winter in the field.

And how did it come to be that the definition of a nice-looking field crop meant there should be only one plant species growing in it? The theory was that farmers would increase their yields of the preferred species, i.e. their wheat or canola, if they removed all the competition from weeds (plants the farmer didn't put there.)

But what if a farmer grew two or three crops at once in the same field? Conventional thinkers scoffed at the thought, arguing the competition between those crops would diminish the field's total yield. In other words, you wouldn't get a good crop of either.

In fact, the opposite proved true. Farmers who use intercropping to produce crops such as canola and peas say the two crops complement each other in such a way that the total yield from the field is higher than it would have been if those crops had been separated.

Not only do the crops combine to naturally keep weed populations down through competition, but they form a symbiotic relationship with soil micro-organisms that contribute to better fertility. We are now starting to hear about biological tillage, in which farmers use multiple species in a field to help manage water, weeds, and compaction.

Conventional cropping practices use fertilizer to feed the crops. This line of thinking uses plant species to feed and rejuvenate the soil, which in turn provides nutrition to the growing crops. Diversity is key.

Multiple species provide other benefits. A 2006 research paper by Simon Fraser University bee researcher Mark Winston found it pays for farmers to leave up to 30 per cent of their canola fields in natural vegetation as a refuge for wild bees. Attracting pollinators to the crop, which increased yield, offset the decline in production base.

Winston categorizes modern cropping systems, which follow monoculture, as disastrous for domestic honeybees, the populations of which are mysteriously crashing worldwide. The widespread practice of placing colonies in cropland where only one crop is in bloom at a time gives bees only one source of nutrition. Imagine how healthy we would be if we only ate one food.

When it comes to feeding livestock, rotational grazing demonstrates a similar notion -- how to increase the land's production capacity by farming less of it. Turn a herd of people loose at a buffet and you'll notice them going back for second and sometimes third helpings of the foods they like best. It's the same in a pasture. Cattle will keep going back to the plants they like eating the most and graze them to death.

Rotational grazing keeps cattle contained in a small paddock for a short period -- essentially until they clean up their plates before they are moved.

There are now even techniques emerging to teach cattle how to eat weeds by gradual exposure. The same approach might work with kids and broccoli.

These systems tend to be less dependent on purchased inputs, but they certainly don't eschew technology. Global positioning systems, solar-based fencing and waterers, and other innovations are an important asset to these management strategies.

Language helps define a culture. And if the language that is beginning to permeate agriculture is any indication, the industry is rapidly moving towards a new environmental ethic.

Laura Rance is editor of the Manitoba Co-operator. She can be reached at 792-4382 or by email: [laura@fbcpublishing.com](mailto:laura@fbcpublishing.com).

### **CuiZine:**

The Journal of Canadian Food Cultures / Revue des cultures culinaires au Canada

CuiZine is a new interdisciplinary journal nourishing intellectual exchanges on the subject of food in Canada from multicultural perspectives.

A peer-reviewed journal, CuiZine publishes in English or French and also serves as a creative outlet for food-themed written and visual pieces. CuiZine is available online only, in partnership with Erudit (the multi-institutional publishing consortium comprising the Université de Montréal, the Université Laval, and the Université du Québec à Montréal) and is published by McGill University Library. Please see attached media release for more information.

To view Volume I, Issue I, please visit:

<http://www.erudit.org/revue/cuizine/2008/v1/n1/index.html>