



# Breaking Ground

(in Northeastern Ontario) **WINTER 11/12**

A Publication of the North Eastern Ontario Soil & Crop Improvement Association (NEOSCIA)

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## NEOSCIA Bus Tour 2012



Normandin Research Farm (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada) 75th Anniversary 2011

Over the years, many Soil & Crop associations from southern Ontario have traveled to the North to learn about the opportunities presented by northern agriculture. Some of these bus tours originated in the south-west corner of the Province, and it was a good days trip to get here, but everyone left satisfied with the education and adventure that they took part in.

NEOSCIA has never offered this opportunity to its members, but this will change in 2012!

A 5-day tour of the Lac Saint-Jean (Saguenay) agricultural region in Quebec is being organized. The tour will run from Monday, July 23, to Friday, July 27. The tour will begin at Temiskaming Shores at 10 a.m. on Monday, and end there early on Friday evening.

Saguenay is in the center of Quebec, about 900 km from New Liskeard, and it does take a full day to get there, and another to return. However, the modern agricultural industry is comparative in many ways to agriculture in Northern Ontario. First, it is situated between the 48th and 49th parallel, about the same zone as the Temiskaming-Cochrane region. The agricultural products are similar (dairy, beef, canola, wheat, oats, barley, etc) but their management style may differ from ours. In addition, the region is isolated from the rest of the Province, just as we are in northern Ontario. However, they do have a booming agri-tourism industry, and specialty products such as blue berries, cheeses, and alcohol. There is much to learn from the experience of this agricultural community.

Yes, almost all of the folks in that area are strictly French speaking, but this tour will provide immediate English translation. This is a primary tour component, as an English speaking individual traveling in this area would not get the same luxury. Communication will be KEY!

The organization committee consists of NEOSCIA Regional Communication Coordinator Graham Gambles, OMAFRA rep Dan Tasse (Temiskaming/Cochrane),

*Continued on page 3*

### NOTE: **Sponsors/Advertisers needed for coming year. \$500 for 4 issues!**

This newsletter is published 4 times per year. Articles can be submitted in either English or French and should be submitted to the Communication Coordinator (see below). Please supply translation, if available.

Material in this newsletter is based upon factual information believed to be accurate. Action taken as a result of this information is solely the responsibility of the user. We reserve the right to edit articles.

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## Save The Date! FARMSMART Conference and Beef Symposium Announced!

(GUELPH) – Plans are well underway for the 2012 FarmSmart Conference and farmers and agri-business personnel will want to circle Sat. Jan. 21, 2012 on their calendar and be sure to attend the always popular event.

Since its inception in 1998 the leading-edge topics and dynamic speakers assembled by FarmSmart organizers have continued to draw a larger audience with each successive event and this year's conference did not disappoint, with over 900 farmers, agri-business representatives, faculty and students gathering at the University of Guelph's Rozanski Hall in January 2011 for the largest FarmSmart Conference to date.

Throughout the daylong event conference delegates will be able to custom design their agenda from the over 50 sessions topics focusing on business, livestock, field crops, energy and the environment, computer applications, global perspectives and general agricultural themes. Sessions run concurrently through the six time slots, with delegates convening for the afternoon keynote address of special guest speaker Guido Hoener, editor of top agrar, Germany's leading monthly farm magazine (circulation approximately 112,000 copies) who will headline as the conference keynote speaker.

Other international speakers confirmed include: Ken Ferrie, an independent consultant and co-founder of Crop-Tech Consulting in Illinois; and Virgil Robinson, an outstanding fundamental and technical analyst with over 35 years experiences whose analysis of commodity market activity is highly regarded on the national American speaking circuit.

Leland (Lee) Leachman of Leachman Cattle, in Colorado is the keynote speaker for the Beef Symposium, held in conjunction with the FarmSmart Conference, speaking on "The Ten Game Changers for Livestock Production in 2020." Leachman Cattle is respected worldwide as a leader in objective selection criteria and composite cattle production.

The 14th anniversary edition of FarmSmart Conference featuring the Beef Symposium will be held Saturday, January 21, 2012 at Rozanski Hall, University of Guelph. Registration begins at 8:15 am and the first session is scheduled to begin promptly at 9 am. Information and program updates for the conference will be posted online at [www.uoguelph.ca/farmsmart](http://www.uoguelph.ca/farmsmart) and on Twitter at [www.Twitter.com/GHSCIA](http://www.Twitter.com/GHSCIA). Look for the official conference brochure distributed in the Tues. Jan. 3, 2012 edition of Ontario Farmer.

The conference is a joint project of the Golden Horseshoe and Heartland Regional Soil and Crop Improvement Associations, in partnership with the Ontario Agricultural College (OAC), the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) and various agri-business partners.

## COMING EVENTS

### Grower Pesticide Safety Courses

Verner: in French: Wed., Feb, 29, 2012  
in English: Thurs., March 01, 2012

Huntsville: Fri., March 02, 2012

Little Current: Thur., March 08, 2012

Azilda: Fri., March 09, 2012

Desbarats: Sat., March 10, 2012

Earlton: in French: Fri., March 16, 2012  
in English: Sat., March 17, 2012

Cochrane: TBA

Call 1-800-652-8573 to register.

### Earlton Farm Show

After 45 years as the flagship of the NEOSCIA, the 2012 Farm Show and Agricultural Conference will be managed by a group of volunteers from the Temiskaming District!

It will run at the Earlton Arena on April 13 & 14.

Watch for more info in the March 2012 issue of Breaking Ground.

**SAVE THE DATE! NOW!**

### Temiskaming Crop Coalition & Grain Growers Annual Meeting

Thursday, January 12, 2012,  
9:30 am to 3:30 pm  
Kerns Hall (Milberta Road)

### Temiskaming District

Full Slate of Speakers!

**TCC Contact:**  
Dennis Jibb (705-563-8405)

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Kevin Runnalls (705-563-2496)

## NEOSCIA Bus Tour 2012

Continued from page 1

FCC director Dany Gingras (Kanata), and Josee Falardeau of Syn-Agri (Notre-Dame-Du-Nord, Quebec).

Here is a brief outline of the tour around the lake, starting on Tuesday morning. Visit the modern Ag Canada Research Station at Normandin, followed by tours of at least 3 area farms (including Dairy) and agri-business in the afternoon. Have supper at the "Grand Jardins de Normandin", followed by another farm visit - (possibly a ginseng grower). Spend the night in Mistassini.

On Wednesday, the blueberry and potato industry along the eastern shore of the lake will be examined in the morning, before travelling to the Alma area on the south shore for tours of leading farms in the afternoon and evening. It is planned to have speakers from the Quebec canola-crushing industry attend a late evening gathering at our hotel in Alma.

Thursday morning will find us touring the south and western edge of the lake, where canola and wheat abound. Pesticide free production practices will be a high-light. A short tour of the St-Felician Zoo will take place in the afternoon, where we will board a "train" to tour a portion of the park that is managed as a 300 year old historical interpretation of Canada as our first settlers found it. There will still be time to visit a couple more businesses in the north-west corner of the region before heading north to Chibougamau for the night.

We return to Temiskaming by early evening on Friday, but not before we have one last stop at a modern chicken farm near Malartic.

At this time, we have not determined the costs associated with the tour. However, we are looking for sponsors from the agri-business community. To them we offer the chance to provide video promotions to the "captive audience" that will be riding the bus - in both directions!

We hope to have about 40 tourists on this trip, and now is the time to sign-up, even if you are not positive that you can make the trip. Final arrangements will be made in late June. Already, there is more than a dozen people who showed interest at the 2011 Earlton Farm Show. Call Graham Gambles at 705-672-3105 (<gamblesgraham@yahoo.ca>) or Dan Tasse at 1-800-461-6132 for more info or to confirm your interest.

This tour is open to all members of local Soil and Crop Associations in the NEOSCIA District, and any farmer can join for a paltry \$20. Talk about benefits for your membership!

# A Dose of Cooperation for Northern Farmers Part 1 : The Natural Environment

By Christian Howald, Conseil de la Coopération de l'Ontario

This is the first in a series of six articles discussing the obstacles faced by farmers in Northern Ontario. It is the result of a qualitative research for which twenty agricultural producers from the Nipissing and Sudbury area were interviewed in order to gather their thoughts about the barriers their businesses face and the solutions they have to offer. We will preserve their anonymity because some of their opinions contain personal judgments. Six key factors having an effect on the region's agriculture have come out of these interviews: natural environment, clientele, competition, access to market, governmental intervention and agricultural associations. These six factors directly interplay with the region's agricultural businesses' ability to produce, process, sell their produce and thrive.

Amidst these factors, one key element arises: Farmers not only see themselves as part of the problem but most importantly as part of the solution. They are not simply victims of a poorly structured infrastructure but rather key players in a complex framework. The solutions to their woes lie in their reinvestment in cooperative values, especially mutual help and solidarity, abandoned over the years in favour of industrialization and individualism. What is needed is a return to cooperative principles which flourished in the region in the middle of the last

Continued on page 4

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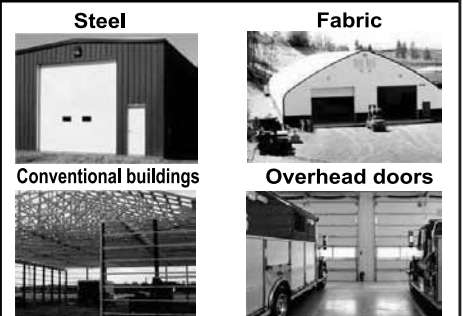
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## 4-H'ers Make Grain Bin Rescues Easier

Up until a couple of years ago, there was no tool to assist in the rescue of grain entrapment victims. However, members of the Lambton Farm Safety 4-H Club in Ontario innovated a Grain Extrication Tool (GET) and provided it to numerous local fire departments and grain facilities.

The GET is an easy-to-use structure made up of four pieces of bent aluminum sheets that are clamped together to form an octagonal shaped tube. The structure is hammered down into the grain to shield the victim, allowing grain against the body to be removed which then makes rescue possible. Getting trapped in grain is potentially fatal.

Flowing grain can behave like quicksand and as a person becomes buried in the grain, it presses against the diaphragm constricting breathing.

Without this tool, rescue workers had to find objects around the farm to stabilize the grain or cut holes in the bin.

Lambton Farm Safety 4-H Club members spent four meetings researching grain safety and developing a prototype of the GET. They then found a shop which would donate space and tools for the club to use for production. Each GET takes one day to build and is sold for \$1,000 which is just enough to cover the cost of materials.

The 4-H club was recognized in 2009 for its innovative idea by receiving a Regional Award under the Premier's Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence program. These Lambton youths are to be commended for showing how a simple device can be a lifesaver!



Lambton 4-H Farm Safety Club members: Casey McGee (pictured inside the GET); Other members from left to right include Mark Langstaff, Grant Langstaff, Deidra McGee, Michael McGee, and Jonathan McGee (Photo Courtesy of AgCanada.com)

## A Dose of Cooperation for Northern Farmers Part 1 : The Natural Environment

Continued from page 3

century when the cooperative movement was in full force in rural Ontario.

The first factor having an effect on the viability of agricultural businesses in Northern Ontario is the natural environment. According to the farmers whom we interviewed, it is a region that requires great adaptation by its inhabitants. Northern communities are small, scattered, and winters long and cold.

The farms you find in most of Northern Ontario are not the typical square or rectangular plots you would imagine a southern farm to be. They are riddled with rocks, forests and water bodies. Large cash crop culture is not as easy in the region because arable fields are small, scattered and awkwardly shaped. Equipment repair costs directly reflect this situation because machinery has to travel further and on rougher terrain. Climate in the region is harsher than in other parts of the province and it affects the variety of plants farmers can grow. For example, the Nipissing-Sudbury area historically enjoys about 59 frost free days per year while some varieties of corn need at least 70 days to mature.

Continued on page 5

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# A Dose of Cooperation for Northern Farmers

## Part 1 : The Natural Environment

*Continued from page 4*

The size of the territory and the low population density makes access to human resources, markets and clients more difficult. Niche markets in Northern Ontario are often comprised of only a few people while in large centers, their numbers can easily be in the thousands. Transport and delivery costs are much higher per capita due to low numbers and long distances.

However, farmers have the ability to adapt to the environment. They realize that they need to select crops and livestock who will thrive in the region's climate. Some say that large culture and cash crops should be left to the areas where there is flat land. The region, with its forests, hills and many waterways is ideal for pasturing and grazing. Unfortunately, due to the BSE crisis, a great number of local farmers have completely abandoned livestock production in order to grow cash crops which are not necessarily acclimatized to the area. They received government funding to tile drain their land and make it machinery accessible for a longer portion of the year. Rather than spreading manure in order to fertilize, they now use chemical fertilizers which have a negative effect on the environment, increase the cost of

production and make the operations even more reliant on financially volatile petroleum products.

Living in a region with a low population density and large open spaces can prove very profitable for the savvy farmer because there are a ton of possibilities to develop new markets. This is contrary to other areas where there may already be several farms producing a certain crop or institutional barriers put in place in a system so large that one voice will go unheard. In a region with low population, one person can achieve much more in terms of progress.

In a cooperative spirit, farmers can pool together and reduce their transportation costs. They can compliment each other by producing a variety of crops or livestock and alternating crops with one and other. There are new opportunities arising with technologies that lengthen growth periods that farmers can take advantage of and make more affordable by joining forces.

With open discussion and cooperation, regional agricultural opportunities can thrive and new ones be developed. Its up to our good farmers to put these thoughts to work.

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# L'augmentation des rendements, possible?

par Denis Lévesque, technologue, Directeur service technique sols et fertilisants, Synagri

Toute activité économique se doit d'être gérée adéquatement pour survivre, et surtout progresser. Entre autres, les dépenses non-productives doivent être éliminées et les investissements en but d'augmenter la productivité doivent être planifiés et exécutés. L'agriculture qui est avant tout une activité économique n'y échappe pas. La plupart des agriculteurs s'en aperçoivent lorsqu'ils ont à rendre des comptes à leurs créanciers.

Là où l'activité agricole diffère de la majorité des autres activités économiques, c'est dans sa dépendance à la nature qui lui confère un caractère d'évolution lente à long terme et en partie imprévisible à court terme. Pour fabriquer un biscuit, le pâtissier a besoin d'une bonne recette et il n'a qu'à la suivre. S'il rate une fournée, il la jette aux poubelles et il recommence immédiatement. Pour fabriquer une tonne de céréales, il y a des dizaines de recettes qui doivent être adaptées aux diverses conditions de sol et de climat. Et malgré un suivi scrupuleux de la recette supposée être la meilleure pour une situation donnée, la température sera toujours un atout majeur dans la réussite ou l'échec de l'application de la recette. De plus, il n'y a aucune possibilité de reprise en cultures, sauf que d'attendre l'année suivante. Le producteur doit mieux comprendre et contrôler les mécanismes de production de ses élevages et de ses cultures afin de bien comprendre et appliquer les différentes recettes qui conviennent le mieux à ses situations. Il y aura toujours le climat, l'État, etc.. Mais le producteur agricole d'affaire, qui saura prendre des décisions éclairées tant au niveau de sa gestion financière, de sa mise en marché que de sa capacité de production, sera celui qui vivra de l'agriculture.

### *Où s'en va l'agriculture à l'ère des hautes technologies?*

L'agriculture est grandement influencée par des avancées technologiques de toutes sortes : traits génétiques, équipements sophistiqués et contrôlés électroniquement, etc.. Plusieurs intervenants, dont des producteurs, pensent que ces technologies sont garantes de l'avenir de l'agriculture. En effet, la nouvelle génétique ne promet-elle des augmentations de rendements substantielles pour les dix prochaines

années ? Les machineries ne permettent-elles pas des interventions d'une telle précision (taux de semis, d'applications de fertilisants et de pesticides) qu'elles permettent des économies importantes ainsi qu'une augmentation des rendements ? Les techniques de productions améliorées (travail minimum du sol, travail du sol en bandes profondes, régie intensive, fertilisation en bande, etc.) ne favorisent-elles pas une meilleure productivité ?

La réponse est oui et non. Oui, si tous les facteurs de production sont optimums et non, si la base agronomique n'est pas là. Les nouvelles technologies en productions végétales peuvent être comparées à un tracteur équipé d'un moteur surpuissant dont la consommation en carburant et la puissance disponible sont contrôlées par une panoplie de systèmes électroniques sophistiqués. En théorie, ce tracteur sera nettement plus efficace... à condition qu'il y ait de l'air dans les pneus. Des facteurs « perturbateurs » autres que la température sont souvent responsables d'un dégonflement des pneus ou d'un maintien d'une pression inadéquate qui ne permet pas de profiter au maximum des avancées technologiques. En production végétale, les pneus sont les sols.

### *L'appauvrissement des sols : un constat désolant*

L'International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI) procède à tous les cinq ans à une étude des niveaux de richesse des sols de tous les états et provinces en Amérique du Nord. La dernière étude date de 2010 avec les résultats des analyses de sols de 2009. Elle démontre que pour le phosphore, 31% des sols ontariens et 56% des sols québécois échantillonnés sont sous le niveau critique. Le niveau critique est défini comme étant la recommandation zéro dans une approche de suffisance utilisée par le MAAARO et le MAPAQ. Plus un sol est sous le niveau critique, plus la réponse à la fertilisation augmente, mais le potentiel de rendement diminue. Pour les deux provinces, la proportion de sols sous le niveau critique augmente à chacune des études depuis 2001. De plus, pour les deux provinces, les apports totaux de phosphore provenant des engrais organiques et minéraux sont pour la première fois inférieurs aux exportations totales

par les cultures. Nous sommes résolument dans un processus d'appauvrissement des sols. La situation pour le potassium est nettement plus dramatique. En Ontario, 49% des sols sont sous le niveau critique (41% en 2001 et en 2005) et c'est 60% au Québec (47% en 2001 et 54% en 2005). Depuis longtemps les exportations par les cultures sont supérieures aux apports totaux provenant des engrais organiques et minéraux, particulièrement au Québec.

Ces données sont pour tous les sols échantillonnées en Ontario et au Québec. Qu'en est-il pour la région ? L'analyse des résultats des échantillons de la région démontre que les valeurs sont nettement inférieures aux moyennes provinciales. Les pneus du tracteur ne sont pas à plat, mais pas loin. Plus un sol est pauvre, plus il exige une fertilisation élevée pour atteindre un rendement acceptable. C'est exactement le principe des grilles de fertilisation du MAAARO et du MAPAQ. Par contre, plus un sol est pauvre plus le rendement potentiel est faible. Donc, en sol pauvre, il faut fertiliser plus pour produire moins qu'en sol riche. En sol pauvre, aucun programme de fertilisation ne peut économiquement permettre d'atteindre le même rendement qu'en sol riche, même avec les meilleures technologies. L'enrichissement des sols doit être fait par des apports venant de l'extérieur de la ferme de fumiers, lisiers, boues et cendres normées bien caractérisées et agronomiquement acceptables (les terres agricoles ne sont pas le dépotoir de tous les résidus municipaux ou industriels) et d'engrais minéraux au besoin.

### *Revenir à une vision globale de la santé des sols, pour atteindre des performances supérieures*

#### **Le calcul des exportations réelles**

Un bon programme de fertilisation d'entretien des cultures doit tenir compte des prélèvements et des exportations des cultures, selon le potentiel de rendement réel de chaque champ et la capacité du sol de fournir des éléments nutritifs. Par exemple, les besoins (prélèvements) et les exportations (par la récolte) pour un rendement de 1.25 tonnes/acre d'orge sont bien différents de ceux d'un rendement

*Continued on page 16*

# L'augmentation des rendements, possible?

Continued from page 15

de 2 tonnes/acre. En sol pauvre ayant un potentiel de rendement faible, appliquer plus de fertilisants organiques ou minéraux n'aura que peu d'influence à court terme sur l'augmentation du potentiel de rendement. Par contre, si les quantités sont suffisantes pour permettre l'augmentation de la richesse visible sur les analyses de sol, à moyen terme le potentiel de rendement augmentera de façon permanente, en autant qu'on maintienne la richesse du sol par des apports suffisants.

### L'indispensable équilibre du pH du sol

Trop de sols manquent de chaux. Un pH adéquat est obligatoire pour l'obtention de rendements et de qualité élevés, autant pour les céréales, les fourrages et le canola. Un pH faible signifie une fixation plus grande du phosphore, une désaturation en potassium, magnésium et calcium, une matière organique (réserve de l'azote, du soufre et du phosphore du sol) moins efficace, des probabilités de compaction du sol plus grande. Il faut faire une distinction entre le pH dit « critique » et le pH optimal. Le pH « critique » est celui sous lequel une baisse de rendement est probable. Il est variable selon l'espèce. Il est entre 5.6 et 5.8 pour les graminées et

entre 6.0 et 6.2 pour les légumineuses. Le pH optimal dépend beaucoup plus des caractéristiques du sol que de la culture. Plus le pH est bas, moins est grande la capacité du sol à fournir aux plantes les éléments nutritifs nécessaires. À un même pH, les sables libèrent plus facilement les éléments nutritifs que les terres argileuses bien que leurs réserves soient plus petites. Le pH optimal est ainsi entre 6.0 en sols légers sablonneux et 7.0 en sols lourds argileux. Des pH inférieurs indiquent des sols plus pauvres alors que des pH supérieurs causeront probablement des déséquilibres potentiellement nocifs pour la culture, particulièrement entre le potassium et le magnésium.

### Méfiez-vous de la compaction!

Au Témiscamingue ontarien et québécois de même qu'en Abitibi, une grande partie des sols ont des contenus en limon et en argile très élevés. Ces textures de sol ont naturellement tendance à être dense et compacte, particulièrement entre 12 et 18 pouces, ralentissant l'écoulement de l'eau en profondeur au printemps, même sur sols drainés souterrainement, limitant ainsi le développement des racines en profondeur. Ces racines profondes sont essentielles pour absorber suffisamment d'eau en été et mieux combattre

l'échaudage des céréales et le coulage des fleurs de canola. L'utilisation d'une sous-soleuse est nécessaire lorsque le sous-sol (plus de 10 pouces) laisse difficilement pénétrer l'eau et les racines. Aucune plante ne peut faire le travail adéquatement lorsqu'une couche indurée limite le passage de l'eau. Par contre, l'utilisation dans de mauvaises conditions d'une sous-soleuse est une opération très dangereuse qui détruira encore plus le sous-sol. Le bout de la dent de la sous-soleuse doit travailler dans un sol relativement sec pour le faire éclater dans tout le profil travaillé par la dent. En sol trop humide, le sol plutôt que de se soulever et éclater, il se tassera en lissant pour devenir encore plus compact.

Il est impensable de vouloir obtenir des rendements supérieurs économiques si les sols ne sont pas en conditions optimales pour la physique (compaction, drainage), la biologie (matière organique active) et la chimie (pH, niveaux de richesses de tous les éléments y compris les éléments mineurs). Le contrôle des mauvaises herbes et des insectes doivent également être bien maîtrisés. Améliorer un sol est un travail de longue haleine et dispendieux, mais c'est un investissement. Les sols non productifs ne peuvent être remplacés, comme une vache. Ils doivent être améliorés, et surtout on doit arrêter de les appauvrir!

## Une dose de coopération pour soulager les maux des agriculteurs Partie 2 : la clientèle

Par Christian Howald, Conseil de la coopération de l'Ontario

INCLUDEPICTURE "http://www.geo.fr/var/geo/storage/images/media/images/rubrique-environnement/conseils-et-astuces/alimentation/les-cooperatives-et-paniers-bio-les-amap/238773-1-fre-FR/les-cooperatives-et-paniers-bio-les-amap\_940x705.jpg" \\* MERGEFORMATINET Voici le second article d'une série de six qui traitent des obstacles rencontrés par les producteurs agricoles de la région de Nipissing-Sudbury. Il est le résultat d'une recherche à laquelle vingt agriculteurs de la région ont participé afin de partager les défis auxquels ils font face ainsi que les solutions qu'ils recommandent. Six indicateurs clés ayant un effet direct sur l'agriculture de la région ont été relevés et chacun des six articles de la série traite d'un facteur spécifique.

Le présent article cherche à brosser le portrait de la relation toujours plus ambiguë entre l'agriculture régionale et sa clientèle. Nous voulons montrer que le tableau actuel n'est pas figé dans la glace et que des solutions peuvent être apportées pour freiner l'effritement de ces relations.

Historiquement, c'est après la Seconde Guerre Mondiale que les marchés locaux et les relations de producteurs à consommateurs ont été progressivement érudés. Cette tendance, qui nous

a menés vers la société de consommation que nous connaissons aujourd'hui, est en grande partie responsable de la déliquescence des relations directes et de la captation de la clientèle par la grande distribution.

La grande distribution a des pouvoirs magiques : elle sait se servir de la publicité et des stratégies de marketing parfois agressives qui lui sont associées. Ceci a un impact psychologique crucial sur le comportement des consommateurs. Dans un même temps, la facilité qui est proposée de faire toutes ses commissions au même endroit et en peu de temps séduit ses personnes qui manquent de temps. Car voilà un aspect sur lequel on ne peut pas transiger lorsqu'on souhaite établir une relation directe : le temps. Ni les consommateurs, ni les agriculteurs n'ont le temps de se rencontrer pour réaliser ensemble l'échange d'une nourriture saine. L'agriculteur a beau avoir tous les arguments du monde en faveur des aliments qu'il produit, il n'a tout simplement pas le loisir de les promouvoir. De même, le client sait très bien que les ressources du terroir sont autrement plus saines que celles qu'il peut se procurer de par ailleurs. Tout est question de temps, dans une société où chaque journée est une course vers le lendemain.

Continued on page 17

## Une dose de coopération pour soulager les maux des agriculteurs

Continued from page 16

Dans cette relation toujours plus industrialisée, la clientèle perd graduellement la connaissance des produits disponibles dans la région parce que les agriculteurs n'ont pas le temps d'en faire la promotion et de se mettre de l'avant. Les agriculteurs deviennent de simples producteurs et cultivent des produits en vrac. Ce sont les distributeurs qui jouent le rôle de pivot commercial, un rôle essentiel dans l'établissement de relations de confiance.

Lors de nos entrevues avec les agriculteurs de la région, il a été suggéré de se mettre ensemble afin de regagner la confiance des consommateurs et les inciter à acheter local en énonçant les arguments implacables de la nourriture saine. Ensemble, les agriculteurs pourraient très bien étudier les besoins de la clientèle, tout comme le font les grands distributeurs, et revenir vers un contact direct avec les consomma-

teurs. Les agriculteurs sont prêts à tisser de nouveaux liens, à montrer avec quelle passion ils produisent et à quel point ils sont amoureux de leur ouvrage pour que leur communauté puisse avoir de bons produits. La valeur ajoutée du produit du terroir est l'énergie et la dévotion personnelle qu'un artisan y investit. Incapables de gagner sur le front de la passion, les grands distributeurs ont ici leur talon d'Achille.

Selon certains experts, les producteurs devraient s'organiser pour ouvrir leurs propres épiceries et ainsi s'approprier les canaux de distribution. Ce sont eux qui prennent les risques, ceux de voir leurs récoltes ou leurs cheptels perdus. Pourquoi alors ne devraient-ils pas aussi récolter l'essentiel des profits?

De l'éducation et de l'information pourraient être utilisées pour faciliter cette renaissance de la vente directe. Les agriculteurs pourraient par exemple s'impliquer

dans les projets de soupes populaires, ceux de jardins communautaires, d'ateliers de jardinage et autres. Alors que les services à la clientèle font une réelle différence dans le maniement des clientèles, les agriculteurs doivent être prêts à séduire afin de gagner des consommateurs.

Des exemples foisonnent : l'agriculture partagée et la vente directe à la ferme ou par livraison du producteur recueillent les faveurs des clients et démontrent l'engagement continu des agriculteurs.

Par la formule coopérative, nous sommes d'avis que les agriculteurs pourraient se mettre ensemble pour réaliser les tâches de promotion et de commercialisation de leurs produits. Ce rétablissement des contacts entre producteurs et consommateurs serait un bel exemple d'entraide et plus encore, il contribuerait à la santé et au bien-être de nos communautés en région.

## Canola Grain and Straw Yields at New Liskeard and Verner

John Rowsell and John Kobler New Liskeard Agricultural Research Station

We participate in the Ontario Oilseeds and Protein Seed Crop Committee (OOPSCC) Spring Canola Cooperative Variety Trials. These trials contain entries that are available to producers and ones that are not yet registered. There are some varieties that are included for several years; others are not at the discretion of the sponsoring company. Unlike other stations participating in these trials, we measure both grain and straw yield.

Two varieties have been designated as 'check' varieties for 2011. These were 45H28 and 72-55 RR. Check varieties are benchmarks and for registration purposes. New varieties must have acceptable yields relative to the checks before OOPSCC will recommend to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency that the variety should be registered and become available to Canadian farmers. There are other quality and disease resistance criteria that must also be met before OOPSCC will make that recommendation.

The following table presents grain and straw yield data for New Liskeard and Verner for 2011 and 2010. You will note that only 7 varieties were present in the trials for 2 years. Also, the grain yield data for Verner in 2010 was not reliable due to extensive

Continued on page 22

NLARS		% Mean of Checks							
		Grain Yields				Straw Yields			
		New Liskeard		Verner		New Liskeard		Verner	
		2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010
Bayer	5440	98	109	102	116	136	106	136	
Bayer	0CN0285	93		84	106		103		
Bayer	8CN0021	96		119	95		104		
Bayer	L130	96		90	103		94		
Bayer	L150	99		109	116		113		
Canterra	1970	76		69	103		93		
Canterra	1990	90		125	83		101		
Dow AgroSciences	1012 RR	44		74	102		104		
Dow AgroSciences	2012 CL	93		81	105		90		
Dow AgroSciences	2014 CL	71		75	83		76		
La Coop Federee	6060 RR	82		87	89		94		
Monsanto	72-55 RR	103	100	84	101	99	87	86	
Monsanto	73-15 RR	79		80	83		75		
Monsanto	73-55 RR*	112		88	95		87		
Monsanto	73-75 RR	94	98	123	88	69	103	96	
Pioneer	45H21	71	82	106	98	93	113	106	
Pioneer	45H28*	97	100	116	99	101	113	114	
Pioneer	45H29	87	104	96	81	108	109	99	
Pioneer	45H31	91		105	85		110		
Pioneer	45S52	75	63	93	119	92	112	99	
Pioneer	46H75	90		86	108		117		
Pioneer	46S53	82		99	102		103		
		kg/ha @8.5% moisture				kg/ha @15% moisture			
Mean of Checks*		2193	2454	2070	3340	5154	3480	4919	

Analyses from 2010 showed that canola straw contains approximately 0.95%N, 0.16% P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub> equivalent and 1.62% K<sub>2</sub>O equivalent.

Grain and straw yield data from New Liskeard and Verner are available for spring cereals as well. To see that data, please visit [www.gocereals.ca](http://www.gocereals.ca).

# The Northern Ontario Food Symposium, a Step towards Food Democracy in the North

By Christian Howald, Conseil de la Coopération d el'Ontario

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of September, the Northern Ontario Food Symposium was held in Sudbury where more than 80 delegates from everywhere in the province participated in order to share their knowledge, create links and find solutions to food issues they are facing.

Thanks to the help of many partners, le Conseil de la coopération de l'Ontario was able to host this event. We wish to thank L'Alliance des caisses populaires de l'Ontario for their sponsorship as well as la Coopérative Boréal, Coopérative régionale de Nipissing-Sudbury, Tourism Sudbury, LaCloche Manitoulin Business Assistance Corporation (LAMBAC) and the Rural Ontario Institute.

The aim of this symposium was to gather leaders of the many projects involved in the regional food industry and develop a common vision to move forward. With the help of five speakers (Tom Reid / Vinegar on the Rocks; Errol Caldwell / Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre (SSMIC); David Thompson/ Northern Ontario Research Development Information and Knowledge (NORDIK); Mike Milinkovich / North-Eastern Community Network (NeCN); Isabelle Legault / Field Good Farm, Ferme j'me champs bien), it was made obvious that above and beyond community specific challenges we all face, we all run into similar obstacles affecting the distribution and access to regionally produced foods

in our respective communities.

The discussions and exchanges which followed were clear and concise. There are a great number of small associations throughout Northern Ontario that are involved in access to local food and the demand for such products is constantly on the rise. However, that demand cannot be fulfilled because the processing, distribution and sales infrastructure for regionally produced food has been crippled in a system monopolized by large corporations with no ties to the region. This situation is perpetuated because our low population density and great distances separating us make it difficult to gather the critical mass needed to become financially viable and sustainable. Furthermore, the cost of developing the needed infrastructure is too restrictive for individual groups. That is why the participants of the symposium were unanimous about the necessity to join forces to develop the needed infrastructure.

The next step from here is to gather the participants who are interested in joining a steering committee to move forward with the project. We must develop a democratic network that represents the needs and visions of every part of Northern Ontario. If you are interested in getting involved or learning more about this project please feel free to contact Christian Howald in Sudbury (1-866-338-3361 / Christian.howald@cco.coop / www.cco.ccop).



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*Season's Greetings and  
Happy New Year*

*Joyeux Noël et bonne  
heureuse année*



# Breaking Ground (in Northeastern Ontario)

## Canola Grain and Straw Yields at New Liskeard and Verner

Continued from page 16

shattering losses before we could get down to Verner to harvest. Yields in 2010 were from direct-combined plots. Cutting height was the same for all varieties.

One of us (Kobler) built a swather to be used in the canola plots; therefore, the plots were swathed in 2011 and combined later when the seeds were mature and sufficiently dry. Swathing height was the same for all varieties.



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For more information on DEKALB<sup>®</sup> brand products and their performance, visit [www.DEKALB.ca](http://www.DEKALB.ca) and consult your local DEKALB<sup>®</sup> dealers.

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### Mountain Maple Syrup Products

had a colourful booth at The Royal with Sue Manchur, daughter Amy, granddaughter Megan, Don Manchur, Ches Wallace & Bob Bringleston



NOAFEM's member was included in the Northern Ontario Agri-Food Pavilion sponsored by FedNor this year. Mountain Maple Products, a St. Joseph Island maple syrup operation, is owned by a long-time Islander, Ches Wallace and Don Manchur of Laird. They tap 5000 trees on P Line on 100 acres of limestone. In recent years, they have increased their production till this year they harvested 850 gallons of syrup. The syrup is sold from Parry Sound to Thunder Bay. Most of their syrup is sold directly to people that they know. For the past five years, they have gone to the Hymers Fall Fair in September and have supplied the Maltese Store, a gourmet shop, in Thunder Bay. Mountain Maple Products sold maple butter, candy and syrup at The Royal and showed a video of the syrup making process from tapping to marketing. It is estimated that 41,000 people tasted their maple syrup, according to Don's calculations. Ches and Don were very happy with their first experience at The Royal.

### This & That at the 89<sup>th</sup> Royal

Several NOAFEM members had their own booths in the Northern Ontario Agri-Food Pavilion. **Boreal Forest Teas**, Thunder Bay and **From the Forest**, Warren enjoyed five days at the Royal this year.

NOAFEM had a booth for the 10<sup>th</sup> year and a variety of members' products were sold.

Northern Ontario Agri-Food Education & Marketing Inc.

Carol Tozer and her daughter enjoyed meeting customers in their *From the Forest* booth.



A wonderful display of knitted and felted items representing Northern Ontario wool, mohair and alpaca farms



Lambchops, puppets, little wool sheep and recycled mitts were "hot" items that sold out. Jams, jellies, pickles and honey products are always good sellers with customers coming each year to search for new items from their favorite producer.



Dignitaries at the 2011 Royal included Lieutenant Governor David Onley; the Honorable Tony Clement, Minister responsible for FedNor; Ian Miller, Canadian Olympian; and artist Robert Bateman.



Simran Sidhu of Brampton's W.G. Davis Middle School watches a spinning demonstration in NOAFEM's booth



Ken Lane explains his worm farm (vermicomposting) operation to Kenora M.P. Greg Rickford.

David Cooke, head chef at Arowhoun Pines in Algonquin Park used Northern Ontario garlic from Jonathan Gerber's farm in Warren when he prepared Milford trout on the Royal's *Home & Entertainment Stage*. Garlic was one of the products available in NOAFEM's *Boreal Harvest* booth.



NOAFEM thanks Don Poulin Potatoes Inc. of Azilda for his donation of 50 - 5 lb. bags of potatoes which were sold to help off set expenses..

# North East Community Network

Mike Milinkovich, Mayor Township of Black River-Matheson

**Floods... tsunamis... heat waves... hurricanes... earth quakes... water shortages... sound familiar?**

We are faced with daily reports of the natural disasters around the globe and even in many other parts of Canada. Considering the many problems in so many areas of the world, we are truly blessed to be living in Northeastern Ontario!

But the economies within most of the municipalities in Cochrane District are based primarily on the mining and forestry sectors. Both sectors are prone to "boom and bust" cycles. Once a mine is depleted of ore, jobs are lost and municipalities suffer. Once a forest is clear-cut it takes between 40 and 60 years for the trees to grow back. Tourism is largely a minor contributor to local economies. We looked at how could we diversify our economy and Agriculture

came up as a viable opportunity.

Agriculture is not a major contributor to the economy of Cochrane District. But in the early 1900's farming was one of the major sources of jobs within the district. There are many factors present today that suggest the growth and resurgence of agriculture within Cochrane District is not only possible but is essential to mitigate the effects on our local economies from the mining & forestry boom & bust cycles and to take advantage of the agricultural opportunities resulting from climate change.

A regional economic development organization called the North east Community Network (NeCN) was created in 2008. The NeCN coordinates regional projects that promote the integration and expansion of local economic development

into a powerful regional cooperative model to help transform the economic landscape of the Cochrane District municipalities along the Highway 11 corri-

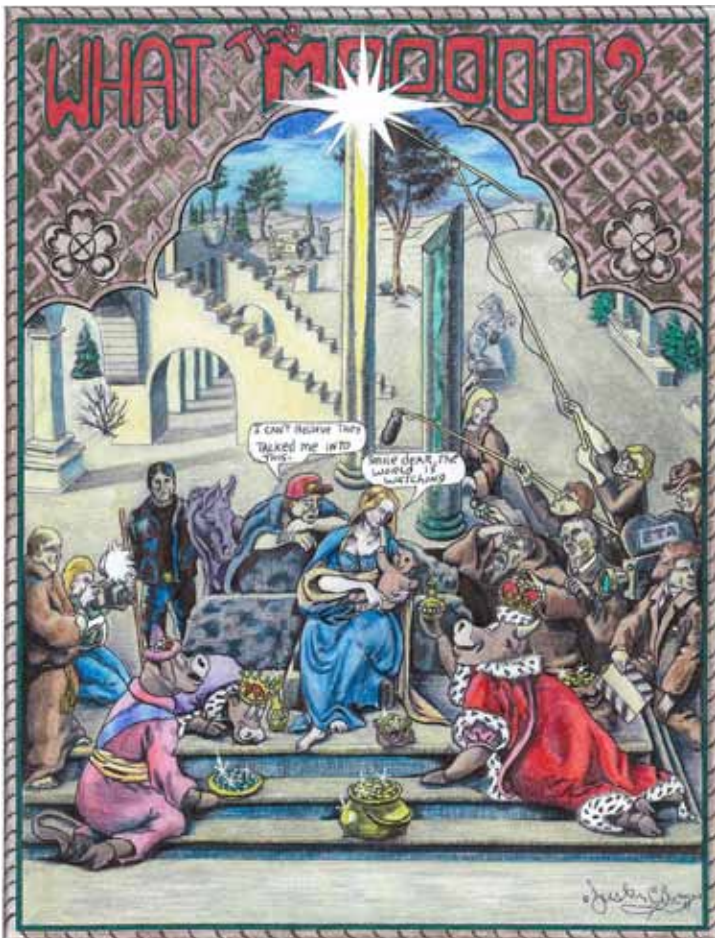
dor. In essence, the NeCN attempts to create "one voice" for regional economic development.

The NeCN is made up of twelve municipalities from Black River-Matheson to Hearst, including Timmins, two First Nations and three Community Futures Development Corporations.

A major NeCN initiative was the creation of an Agricultural Steering Committee in 2009 charged with the responsibility to develop agriculture as a significant contributor to local economies. Toward this purpose, this committee was instrumental in developing a partnership with the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development at Guelph University. Early in 2011 Guelph University launched a study of agriculture within the NeCN catchment area as part of an OMAFRA-funded project to Identify agricultural opportunities and best practices toward the creation of economic prosperity within the NeCN Agriculture sector.

You may ask, what is our target, what are we trying to achieve? For answers consider that the 2006 Canadian census reported that agricultural-based revenues from Cochrane District were \$10M; Algoma

& Manitoulin Districts together approximated \$34M; and Temiskaming at \$80M. The NeCN goals are twofold: a) Ensure that Cochrane District achieves self-sufficiency in food production by the year 2050, and b) By 2050, also increase total agricultural-based revenues 10 fold to \$100M.



This month's artwork comes from Justin Burry of Englebart. View more of his work at <http://justin-burry.tripod.com>



## 2011 Canola Challenge Winners

1st place \$2,000	<b>Don Curry</b> Agronomist: Ralph Voisin Huron Bay Co-op, Chesley	3426 lbs/acre	Owen Sound Grey County
2nd place \$1,000	<b>Nick Cressman</b> Agronomist: Quentin Hopcraft FS Partners, Drayton	3292 lbs/acre	Mount Forest Wellington County
3rd place \$750	<b>Kris Bryan</b> Agronomist: Chrissie Schneider Holmes Agro, Orangeville	3160 lbs/acre	Grand Valley Wellington County
4th place \$500	<b>Roy Schubert</b> Agronomist: Terry Phillips Co-op Regionale	3124 lbs/acre	New Liskeard
5th place \$500	<b>Jon Wiley</b> Agronomist: Randy Martin Sprucedale Agromart	3119 lbs/acre	Meaford Grey County
6th place \$500	<b>Mike Schill</b> Agronomist: Rob Hill Bayer Crop Science	3102 lbs/acre	Arthur Dufferin County

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