



## Southwest Agricultural Conference 2007

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs takes pride in presenting Eastern Canada's premiere crops conference held each year at Ridgetown Campus, University of Guelph in Ridgetown. The 14<sup>th</sup> annual Southwest Agricultural Conference was held on January 3&4, 2007 and over 1800 farmers, agri-business and government personnel attended.

The theme of this year's conference was "Celebrating Agriculture in Ontario and featured a reception at the end of the first which included a presentation of images of the history and promise of Ontario agriculture. The 2007 conference was also the first major event to be held in the Rudy Brown Rural Development Centre, the latest addition to the Ridgetown Campus. The new building provided much needed space for the conference including three classrooms, a lecture theatre and a large gymnasium. The gym provided a larger venue for the trade show and registration.

Comedian Derek Edwards had the crowd roaring with laughter the first day and Brad Gilmour, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada had many thinking about China's growth in agricultural production and implications for the world market. For the first time at the conference an Energy Forum was held with topics on Ethanol, Biodiesel & Bio-Digesters, Biofuels Workshop and Renewable Energy Case Studies.

The format of the program is seven 50 minute concurrent sessions plus the feature speaker so it is a full day of learning! The presenters are a mix of farmers, researchers, government extension staff and agriculture industry personnel. The goal of the conference is to bring in the best speaker possible for a topic, by whatever means. Once again a video conference featuring Palle Pedersen gave a great presentation on the "Top Ten Yield Limiting Factors in Soybeans" gave Ontario growers excellent access to information.

Here is a sample of the more than 40 sessions that were offered concurrently over two days at the conference:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Big Yields, Bigger Profits</li><li>• The Organic Experience – Successes and Challenges in Organic Farming</li><li>• Marketing Strategies</li><li>• More Bugs and Slugs</li><li>• Five Steps to Better Weed Control</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Healthy Soils for Healthy Crops</li><li>• Growing Your Own Nitrogen</li><li>• Hay! Think Before You Grow</li><li>• Reducing Drying Costs</li><li>• Ontario Clean Water Act</li><li>• Grow Op's and Meth Labs in Rural Ontario</li></ul>
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The conference is a cooperative effort between the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Southwest Soil and Crop Improvement Association, many agribusiness supporters and Ridgetown Campus, University of Guelph.

Visit our website [www.southwestagconference.ca](http://www.southwestagconference.ca) for conference information.

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Images from the 2007 Southwest Agricultural Conference



Moving to the next session, double digit temperatures



Growing your own nitrogen session



A session in classroom of the Rural Dev. Centre



Radio broadcast from the conference



Trade show in the Rural Dev. Centre gym



Marketing strategies for 2007

