

Southwest Agricultural Conference 2020



The 27th Southwest Agricultural Conference was held January 7th & 8th 2020 at the University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus. The conference was sold out ahead of the registration deadline for the second year in a row with over 1,350 registered for each day. The weather was exceptional once again this year making travel to the conference easier for the speakers and participants.



The theme of this year's conference was "2020 Ag Vision" and presented topics included sessions on soil health, capturing carbon, weed, insect and disease management, new technologies, labour management, nutrient management, grain marketing, new crop opportunities.

The feature speaker session on the first day was Dr. Tom Deans who shared inspirational messages on family success and provided some insights into the way we think about farm succession planning.



On day two, Michael Landsberg shared an inspirational message on mental health. He opened up about his own struggles in order to help us understand that mental health isn't a weakness and how we can beat the stigma and save lives.

The livestreaming of the sessions occurred again this year on January 8th with over 128 individuals participating from across Ontario. Various groups also organized satellite locations in Sturgeon Falls, Picton and Thornloe, Ontario as well as Kentville, Nova Scotia. The sessions were well received, and it is a great way to deliver this high-quality program to those who may not wish to travel to Ridgetown or who may not have the same access to speakers.

The format of the conference 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 each topic.

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

- Hour of Innovation
- Real Corn Growers
- Avoiding Tank Mix Errors
- New Pest Problems?
- Super Soybean Secrets
- Marketing Mayhem

- Winning with Winter Canola
- Dueling with Disease

- Soil Microbiomes Matter
- Digital Agronomy



Once again, the conference hosted a reception at the end of the first day. The Taste of Ontario reception featured meat, vegetables, fruit, beer and spirits from southwestern Ontario. The trade show once again attracted many exhibitors.

Acknowledgements

The conference is a cooperative effort between the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Southwest Soil and Crop Improvement

Associations, many agribusiness supporters and Ridgetown Campus, University of Guelph.

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Visit our website www.southwestagconference.ca for conference information. A number of the presentations were recorded this year and are posted on the website under proceedings.