



AIC: On the Move

Given the array of global issues impacting Canadian agriculture, those of us in the business of applying our scientific and professional knowledge to the sustainable development of agricultural resources are living in very interesting times. It is not surprising then that during the past year, the AIC Board of Directors has focused their attention on charting a new course for the organization in response to the demand for building bridges between the many disciplines contributing to the science and professionalism of contemporary agriculture.

To that end, **AIC's Strategic Plan for 2008** is targeted on:

- strengthening and enhancing AIC's products and services,
- deepening the current broad-based membership to facilitate a greater number of views on the science and innovation of contemporary agriculture,
- enhancing the profile of scientific and professional members, partners and supporters
- reinforcing AIC's financial and management resiliency.

At AIC, we are particularly proud of our scientific journals, international programs, accreditation program and membership services. But we know that we can, and must, do more to fulfill our mission: to support and promote Canada's professional and scientific capacity for contemporary agriculture. **We must position AIC as the national association which can pull together the various other associations, institutions and companies, and their members/staff who are engaged in advancing Canada's scientific and professional capacity in contemporary agriculture.**

AIC is meeting this challenge by focusing our efforts on the provision of information and networking and business/research opportunities

- with provocative "think pieces" on "contemporary agriculture"
- publication of briefing notes on topics impacting innovation investment in Canada
- profiling members
- assisting provincial networks organize workshops

- member based working groups on interdisciplinary topics as well as on AIC institutional activities
- assisting association members secure funding for projects in Canada and abroad
- representing the expertise of members in major government initiatives
- strengthening the impact of scientific journals
- building on the success of the International Twinning Project to participate in the new international projects
- tailoring our conference to attract diverse participants from business, academe and government involved contemporary agriculture
- expanding on-line courses and other benefits for members.

The focus of our communications is to highlight the contribution that scientific and professional communities in Canada make in response to, and anticipation of, consumer, buyer and societal demands of contemporary agriculture. The subject matter is based on Canadian experience, highlighting the work of research institutes, universities, companies, farm sectors, scientific societies, and others.

AIC is on the move. We are filling a market demand, a void in Canada: an association that supports the interdisciplinary cooperation required for a profitable sustainable agricultural base from which to derive environmentally sound and health producing goods and services.

As a member, you are part of this journey. If you have not already done so, please complete the member survey sent to you by e-mail on February 28. Together we can create a strong and dynamic AIC.

Myles Frosst, CEO

AIC Introduces New Partnership Project in Ethiopia

Agriculture is the main stay of the Ethiopian economy contributing about 50% of the GDP and employing nearly 80% of the economically active population of the country. Some 87% of the rural population depends on agriculture for their livelihood yet the growth in agriculture was only 3.1% from 1993 to 2001. This meager economic growth is

challenged by a fast growing population, which was estimated at 77 million in 2007, is increasing 2.7 percent annually and will be approaching 83 million by 2011. If this trend continues unabated and appropriate technologies are not used to offset the effects, the sustainability of the natural resource base and the country's efforts to attain national food security will be jeopardized.

Securing food and livelihood is strongly linked to the exploitation of the natural resource base in poor countries like Ethiopia. The rampant land



degradation and decline of its productivity, and the continually diminishing land holding per household are among the underlying reasons for poverty, food

and "human needs insecurity" and increased vulnerability to drought in the country. There is over half a century of results from research by various national and international organizations which could assist in alleviating these problems, but there is no mechanism for coordinating the efforts or disbursing the research results to make them available to extension agents and farmers. For many years the Ethiopian Society of Soil Science (ESSS) has been attempting to facilitate the compilation and dissemination of such information through proceedings of regular bi-annual workshops and a scientific journal.

Through his personal connections with Ethiopia, Sam Gameda, an Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada scientist, AIC member and CSSS member, began a discussion with ESSS about developing a project proposal.

In early 2007 Sam and Bob Eilers, another member of AIC and CSSS, conducted a Professional Exchange visit to Ethiopia which was followed by ESSS member Zebene Mikru traveling to Canada to participate in the International Partners' Meeting and AIC Conference in November. During these exchanges the three soil scientists, in collaboration with their scientific societies, developed a project proposal which they submitted to AIC for funding under the International Twinning Partnership Program.

The proposal was reviewed and approval has now been granted to fund a Phase One to take place from April 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009. The project, called ETCANSOL, will *support the capacity building endeavours of ESSS to play its role in facilitating the compilation and transfer of soil management technologies and contribute to the country's efforts*

towards food security and accelerated agricultural development.

Its main objectives are:

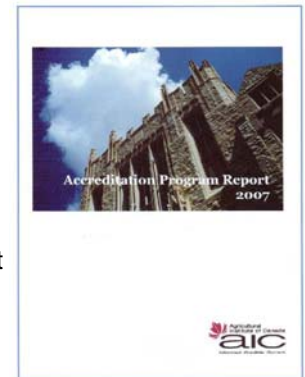
- To conduct organizational self assessment of ESSS to determine a manageable number of focus areas for organizational improvement over the next five years, which will be incorporated into the annual plans of ESSS.
- To strengthen the capacity of ESSS to carry out its mandate to members and,
- To organize a national review workshop on Soil Science and Water Management.

During Phase One, the two partners will also determine the potential for a longer term project and, if viable, they will develop and submit a longer term project proposal for continued funding.

*Tom Beach, Brenda Millar,
Sam Gameda and Zebene Mikru
AIC International Program*

2007 Accreditation Program Report

AIC's accreditation program ensures a high standard of excellence in Canadian universities and colleges that offer programs in, or related to, agriculture. It ensures graduates meet professional standards that are recognized and accepted nationally and internationally, and gives them the tools they need to be certified for the highly respected and sought after designation of Professional Agrologist (P.Ag.) or agronome (agr).



The AIC 2007 Accreditation Program Report is available on our website (www.aic.ca) or in hard copy on request to our office.

AIC Awards Reminder

A reminder that the AIC Honours and Awards Committee is seeking nominations for AIC's awards for excellence in the profession. Please see the award guidelines and nomination forms on our website (www.aic.ca) for complete details.

Nomination deadline is April 30th, 2008.