



Dear AIC Members,

March was an exciting month for AIC, as progress was made in forging alliances to enhance members' ability to be informed about and to influence the sustainable development and use of agriculture related resources. Details in this issue.

And congratulations to Kevin Sanderson of PEI who was the winner of the random draw of respondents to our member survey. Kevin wins a 2009 AIC membership.

Myles Frosst, CEO

Steps Forward

Step One: AIC-Scientific Societies Partnership

Your national association, AIC, is progressively building partnerships with other influential associations to support research that is shaping contemporary agriculture in Canada and abroad.

An important step was taken by AIC and five scientific societies in March. Recognizing the need for collective support of scientific capacity building, the Canadian Society of Animal Science, Canadian Society of Agronomy, Canadian Society for Horticultural Science, Canadian Weed Science Society, and Canadian Society of Soil Science signed a Memorandum of Understanding with AIC. The MOU ensures a strong and long term commitment and capability to attract and publish world class research - research that has a great influence on the many disciplines and professions, businesses and institutions associated with the sustainable agri-resource base.

Step Two: AIC-OIA Partnership

A stronger, more effective, working relationship between a provincial agrologists institute and your national association.

At a recent meeting of officials of the Ontario Institute of Agrologists (OIA) and AIC, agreement was reached to explore an exciting new partnership of benefit to both organizations and their members. Preliminary plans call for AIC to provide membership services that enhance the professional capacity of OIA members, such as

networking opportunities, conferences, workshops, contextual and policy briefing notes. OIA would focus its efforts on matters pertaining to certification and moving forward toward right to practice legislation.

To cover the costs of these enhanced services, it is proposed that OIA and AIC engage in an initiative that would include memberships in both organizations.

Step Three: AIC-CCA Webcast Partnership

AIC has signed an agreement with the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) to produce two webcasts on Canadian contemporary agricultural science.

The webcasts, which will be offered on both organizations' websites, are aimed at:

- linking scientists and professionals engaged in contemporary agriculture, including progressive owners of farms) with the spokespeople of major Canadian co-operatives involved in the contemporary Canadian agri-food sector;
- informing scientists and professionals of the role that Canadian co-operatives have and can play in supporting science and innovation in contemporary agriculture;
- informing Canadian co-operatives of significant breakthroughs in science and innovation that could benefit those co-operatives engaged in 21st century contemporary agriculture.

The webcasts will be broadcast this Fall. The project is the result of a partnership with the Agricultural Co-op Development Initiative (Ag-CDI), which is co-managed by CCA and the Conseil Canadien de la Coopération.

Update on AIC's Gender Equality Work

The AIC November (2007) Monthly Report featured an article introducing Gender Equality (GE) in AIC. The article stated that, "Committing to gender equality is a long term process that demands commitment to change on both the individual and organizational levels and means committing to a process of learning, analysis, reflection and action."

AIC has begun the process and, thanks to a group composed of AIC members, Board members and partners, is making progress on several fronts.

The Gender Equality Task Team (GETT) was formed initially to help select consultants and organize the GE Roundtable in November 2007. Thereafter, the team agreed to continue their work, focusing on key aspects of ensuring AIC learns about, supports and promotes Gender Equality.

As noted in the November article, there is basic understanding of Gender Equality, but it can have subtle differences within organizations and contexts. The first two steps for AIC are to define what Gender Equality means for us and to determine the scope of influence in our work.

A definition of Gender Equality for AIC will be developed by the end of March and a clear description for the scope will be completed by the end of the following month. A formal Gender Equality Policy is scheduled to be presented to the AIC Board of Directors this summer.

Gender Equality should be reflected in all that AIC does, not just in personnel policies or the goals of the International Development program. To measure our progress in Gender Equality we need a mechanism to capture the status quo and identify change that has occurred.

To that end, work is underway on a GE Strategy and Gender Sensitive Indicators (GSI). The latter looks at gender related changes over time and measures whether gender equality is being achieved. It also feeds into more effective planning and program delivery in all areas.

Both strategy and GSI are much broader, and longer term, initiatives. They will support the GE definition, the determination of scope and the development of a formal policy. Most importantly, they will assist AIC in ensuring Gender Equality in all we do.

*Tom Beach and Brenda Miller, AIC
International Program*

AIC Member Survey

Thank you to all AIC members who completed our on-line member survey, and congratulations to **Kevin Sanderson, PAg**, of PEI who was the winner of the random draw from respondents. Kevin receives a free 2009 AIC membership, a value of \$125.

The survey helps AIC provide members with the products and services they want and need.

We are very encouraged by the responses to the survey to date, which indicate that members strongly support our mission and are eager to receive more information from AIC in the form of conferences, workshops, briefing notes and think pieces.

We are especially pleased at the number of members who are prepared to spend time volunteering for AIC and/or helping us establish provincial networks.

A full report on the survey results will be sent to all AIC members in May. In the meantime, if you have not responded to the survey and would like to, please contact Frances Rodenburg at the AIC office.

AIC 2008 Conference

AIC's 2008 conference, ***Crossing the Barriers***, will take place in Toronto, November 17-18. The conference will focus on how to build bridges across scientific disciplines, across governments and their departments, and across business departments and divisions, all with the objective of leading to profitable breakthroughs for contemporary agriculture.

The first conference announcement was sent to AIC members on March 27. Watch for further details on our website, www.aic.ca.

AIC Awards Reminder

A final 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 for complete details.

Nomination deadline is April 30th, 2008.

