



ANNUAL REPORT
2016



CONTENTS

Message from the CEO	3
AIC 2016 Disseminating Agricultural Research	4
Agricultural Research Dissemination: A Collection of Best Practices	6
Board of Directors as at December 31, 2016	7
AIC Staff	11



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Serge Buy

The Agricultural Institute of Canada (AIC) continued to deliver on important projects in 2016.

Last year's annual conference, focused on the dissemination of research, led to a Best Practices Report that has gathered significant interest from scientists, commodity groups and other stakeholders. Media took interest as well with articles published by a number of commodity groups.

We were also pleased to have AIC featured in the Hill Times last year, a political weekly of influence in Ottawa, where our opinion piece was published right beside a contribution from the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

Throughout the year, we continued to raise important issues related to agricultural research – and worked with partners and stakeholders to improve our sector's visibility.

We continue to deliver on our mandate and, as a result, AIC's work is being noticed and its network is growing. Our communications and advocacy have been effective tools to increase our relevance.

As we work to ensure greater support and awareness, the question often comes up: "why support yet another organization?"

For AIC, the answer is simple: we are the only national association fully dedicated to agricultural research and innovation. Knowing this distinction, people must ask themselves whether there is a role for such an organization.

Our Board of Directors, our members, partners and stakeholders certainly believe there is such a role and that AIC plays an important role. Thanks to all of you, we have been able to deliver tangible results.

Looking ahead, much remains to be done. In order to continue to be the national voice for agricultural research and innovation in Canada, we will need to further our efforts and confirm even more support than ever before.

Thank you, once again, to everyone who has played a part in our success to date.

Serge Buy

AIC 2016

Disseminating Agricultural Research

Bridging the Gap Between Idea and Adoption

Researchers, government officials, industry representatives, and other agricultural research stakeholders came together on April 13-14 in Ottawa to help develop recommendations on research dissemination to reinforce best practices and identify concrete actions for implementation in the agriculture sector.

Over two days, conference participants attended workshops and provided advice based on their experiences and expertise in:

1. Dissemination Strategies and Participation Channels for Agricultural Research
2. Knowledge Transfer and Extension
3. Intellectual Property (IP) Protection, Cooperation and Collaboration

Several overarching themes and points of consensus emerged during discussion:

Policies are needed that clearly identify structures and conditions that will boost knowledge sharing and the dissemination of agricultural innovations in the sector. Human and financial resources to address infrastructure, staffing, training and retention issues are needed to achieve this.

Dissemination strategies need to unpack the complexity of agricultural innovations when communicating with end-users. Innovations should be explained to farmers, ranchers, and producers in an understandable manner using targeted channels including but not limited to social media, print material, and continuing education platforms.

Communication efforts must also target the consumer and public at large who are increasingly removed from understanding food production. On-farm learning opportunities such as field days and open farms, as well as public broadcasting programs could encourage a better understanding of the impacts of agricultural R&D and engage the public in informed, open, and constructive dialogue.

Agricultural extension and knowledge transfer programs are crucial to the adoption of research outputs on Canadian farms. However, structural changes and the diminishing role of provincial and federal governments have resulted in the need for a new participatory research and extension model that is based on knowledge-sharing and co-learning. This will benefit both the research and farming communities. The delivery of these programs requires increased intervention from other key actors including commodity groups, agrologists and the private sector, as well as built-in funding for knowledge transfer activities.

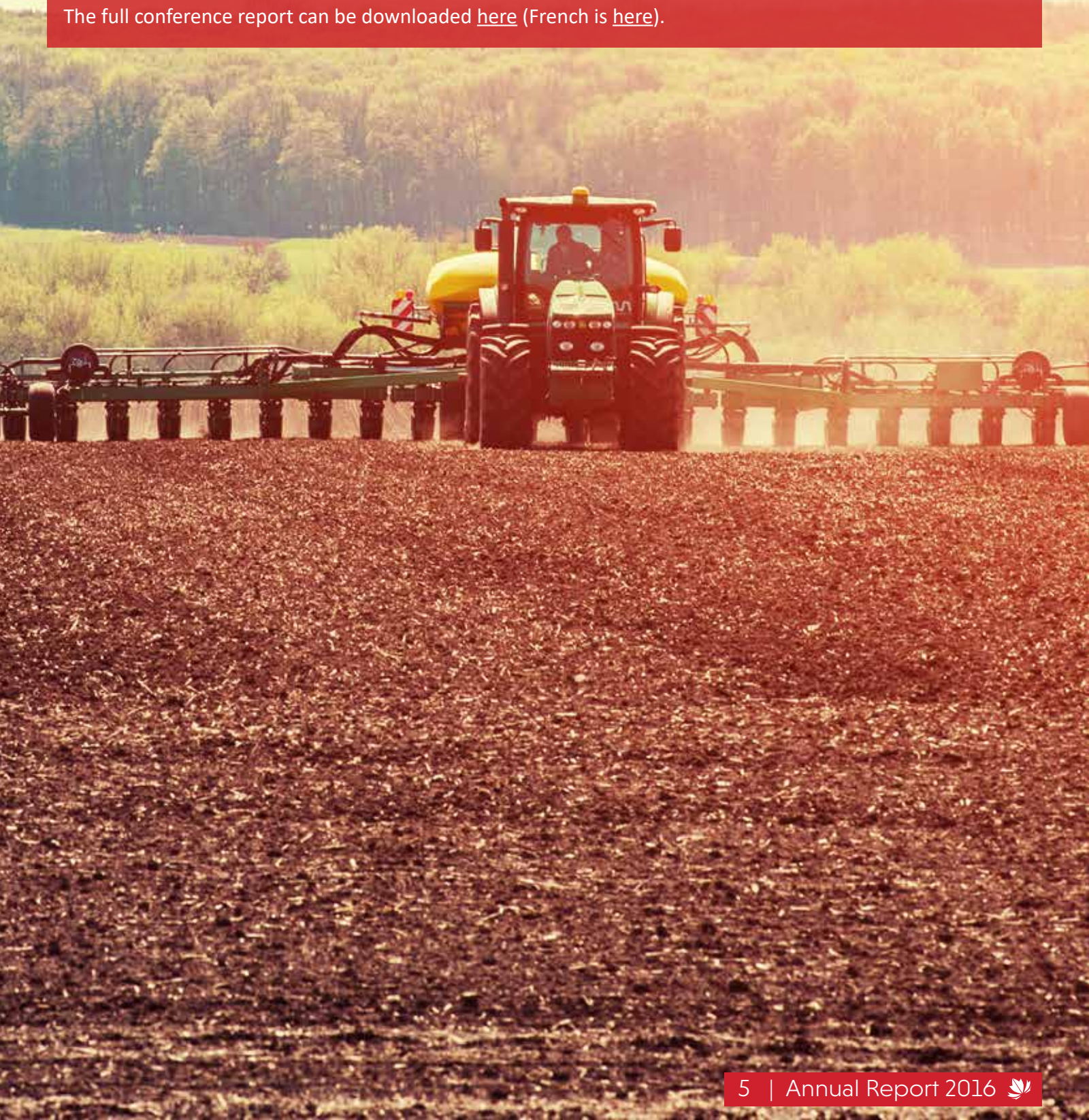
Interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral partnerships speed up the introduction of new innovations to the market, making new technologies available to consumers and producers and ensuring broader dissemination of information. However, a formal mechanism is needed for the exploitation of IP resulting from agricultural research by stakeholders involved in partnerships.



Participants called for:

- Further financial resources for capacity-building including infrastructure, staffing, training, and retention to address research dissemination, knowledge transfer and IP issues.
- Recognition of the crucial role of producers and consumers in the research value chain.
- The implementation of new participatory research and extension models that engage end-users and stakeholders throughout the research process.
- Enhanced intellectual property management structures for collaborative research to enhance the socio-economic impact of agricultural research and to accelerate knowledge transfer through commercialization opportunities.

The full conference report can be downloaded [here](#) (French is [here](#)).



Agricultural Research Dissemination

A Collection of Best Practices

The knowledge system underpinning agriculture is a crucial driver of agricultural growth and productivity in Canada. Our full agricultural potential cannot be realized without research that is informed by real problems on the ground – nor without genuine efforts to effectively disseminate research outcomes to end-users and a broader audience.

At AIC 2016, there was especially strong consensus that stakeholders in the agriculture sector would benefit from the sharing of best practices in agricultural research dissemination.

The Agricultural Institute of Canada (AIC) therefore compiled a collection of twenty best practices from across the sector, as a follow-up to our Conference Report, in order to provide concrete examples of knowledge sharing and information dissemination. Our hope is that these examples help give tangible ideas on how, among others, to deliver research results to end-users, engage stakeholders and evaluate programs.

The ultimate goal underlying all of these strategies and approaches is to unpack the complexity of agricultural research, explain new research findings, foster public trust and support commercialization of new technologies and processes.

The best practices outlined in this collection were divided into three sections, each of them comprising a set of sub-themes representing different dimensions of research dissemination, namely:

- A. Communicating Agricultural Research
- B. Transferring New Knowledge
- C. Commercializing Agricultural Innovation

While these examples represent only a small part of the remarkable efforts and work being done in the sector, AIC hopes that this document will be used by agricultural stakeholders from across the sector as a valuable reference tool to assist them in their continued efforts to better disseminate agricultural research.

The full Best Practices Report can be downloaded [here](#).



Board of Directors as at December 31, 2016



Chair

Wilf Keller, PhD, PAg
President and CEO, Ag-West Bio Inc.

Wilf Keller was elected to the AIC Board of Directors in 2016.

Originally from Melville, Saskatchewan, Wilf completed a doctoral degree with a specialization in Crop Science in 1972 at the University of Saskatchewan. He then studied as a postdoctoral scientist in the Max-Planck Institut für Biologie, in Tübingen, Germany.

Wilf worked at the Research Branch of Agriculture Canada in Ottawa from 1973-89, where he pursued research on cell genetics of selected Canadian crops and contributed to the establishment of a plant biotechnology research program, which he chaired from 1980-89. In 1990, he accepted a position with the Plant Biotechnology Institute (PBI) of the National Research Council of Canada in Saskatoon and served as Group Leader for canola biotechnology research and Head of the Transgenic Plant Centre until 1999, when he assumed the position of Research Director.

In July 2007, Wilf assumed the role of Acting Director General, PBI for a period of one year. From June 2008 to May 2012, Wilf served as president and CEO for Genome Prairie.

Wilf has been actively involved in the development and application of biotechnologies for the genetic modification of crops, particularly canola. He has collaborated with numerous government, university and industry groups and has provided training for researchers in plant biotechnology. He has led major research initiatives on the application of genomics in canola improvement, the development of industrial bioproducts from vegetable oils, and production of bioactive natural products in plants for enhanced human health and quality of life. He has given many presentations and lectures on biotechnology including public awareness and public education aspects of this emerging field.

In June, 2010, Wilf was honoured with a Lifetime Achievement Award by the Society for In Vitro Biology.



Vice Chair

Richard Heck, PhD, PAg
Associate Professor, School of Environmental Sciences, University of Guelph

Richard Heck was elected to the AIC Board of Directors in 2011, and re-elected in 2014. He was nominated by the Canadian Society of Soil Science.

He obtained his undergraduate degree in agriculture, specializing in agronomy, at the University of Saskatchewan. Both of his graduate degrees, also from the University of Saskatchewan, were in the area of soils, first focusing on soil salinity at the masters level, then on cementation processes in tropical soils at the doctoral level. As a post-doctoral fellow, within a CIDA-sponsored project, he led research initiatives within a major irrigation region of Brazil.

Dr. Heck is an associate professor (Soils and Landscape Processes) in the School of Environmental Sciences at the University of Guelph, where he has been since 2000.

Currently, he is recognized internationally for his work to adapt CAT scan technology to the characterized soil architecture, and the development of structure-related soil quality indicators. In this regard, he has collaborated widely with researchers from the Americas, Europe, Africa and Asia.

Recently, he was elected Vice-Chair of the Soil Morphology and Micromorphology Commission of the International Union of Soil Science.

Board of Directors as at December 31, 2016



Secretary Treasurer

Al Scholz, PAg, CAC, CMC

Executive Director and Registrar, Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists

Al Scholz was elected to the AIC Board of Directors in 2011 and re-elected to a second term in 2014.

He has been active in Canada's agriculture, food and environmental industry for over 30 years as a management consultant, business owner, community leader, author and a speaker at conferences and seminars. His expertise includes best management practice of top farmers, succession planning, value-add strategies, business planning, community-based rural development, entrepreneurship, association management and agricultural policy. He has also worked internationally in agricultural development and food security for over ten years.

Al Scholz is a graduate of the College of Agriculture (BSA), College of Education (BEd) and the Graduate School of Environment and Sustainability (M. SEM) from the University of Saskatchewan. Currently, he sits on Provincial Council of the Institute of Certified Management Consultants of Saskatchewan, the Luther Care Communities Board of Directors, the Board of Farm Management Canada and a Board member of Agronomes/ Agrology Canada.



Director

Ryan Barrett, MSc

Research/Communications Coordinator, Prince Edward Island Potato Board

Ryan Barrett was elected to the AIC Board of Directors in 2016.

Ryan works with the PEI Potato Board as the Research and Communications Coordinator. In this capacity, he works with other industry stakeholders to coordinate research projects and is responsible for communications for the PEI Potato Board.

Previously, Ryan worked with the Canadian Milking Shorthorn Society where he was responsible for marketing and communication projects and projects relating to genetic improvement for the breed. He also brings experience from Jersey Canada, having served as the publications editor for their magazine and website.

He holds an MSc in Dairy Genetics from the University of Guelph and a BSc in Animal Science from the Nova Scotia Agricultural College.



Director

Jim Brandle, PhD

Chief Executive Officer, Vineland Research & Innovation Centre

Jim Brandle joined the AIC Board of Directors in 2016.

Jim is the CEO of Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, a position he assumed in 2007 with the organization's start-up. In this capacity, he leads a team of research scientists and support staff in consumer and sensory research, horticultural and greenhouse production systems and applied genomics. Prior to this work, he was the site leader for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Canadian Crop Genomics Initiative. In addition to his work with AIC, Jim also serves on the Boards of the Invasive Species Centre, the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance and Innoventures Canada (I-CAN). In 2015, he was appointed to the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs' Agri-Food Growth Steering Committee.

He holds a PhD in Plant Breeding from the University of Manitoba, and an M.Sc. and B.S.A. in Crop Science from the University of Saskatchewan. He is also a graduate of the Ivey Executive Program at Western University.

Board of Directors as at December 31, 2016



Director

Andrea Brocklebank, MSc, PAg
Executive Director, Beef Cattle Research Council

Andrea Brocklebank was elected to the AIC Board of Directors in 2016.

Andrea is the Executive Director of the Beef Cattle Research Council, a division of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association (CCA). She has worked in various roles within the CCA over the last twelve years. Andrea works collaboratively with the industry to oversee the delivery of a research program through the BCRC and Beef Science Cluster that funds research projects in areas of importance to the Canadian beef industry. She has also played a key role in the development and implementation of the National Beef Research Strategy through her role as Chair of the national Beef Value Chain Roundtable (BVCRT) Research Committee.

Andrea completed a B.A. in Agricultural Studies at the University of Lethbridge and M.Sc. in Agricultural Economics at the University of Saskatchewan. Prior to working with the CCA, she worked within the Canadian cattle feeding sector and in agriculture finance. Andrea is an avid traveler and lives on her family's operation



Director

Joshua Dillman, PEng, CCA
Soil & Water Conservation Engineer, PEI Department of Agriculture & Forestry

Joshua Dillman was elected to the AIC Board of Directors in 2014.

Josh works with the PEI Department of Agriculture and Forestry as a Soil and Water Conservation Engineer. In this capacity he provides professional advice and engineering design services to PEI producers for the implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) that protect soil and water resources and ensures efficient and effective use of available water for on-farm watering needs.

In this role Josh also acts as a technical advisor to the Canada/PEI Agricultural Stewardship Program for BMPs relating to soil and water management, and energy efficiency. He also provides professional expertise on policy development pertaining to soil management, water resources, and agri-environmental issues on Prince Edward Island. Josh grew up on a dairy farm and has previously worked as a Research Technician at the Dalhousie University Agriculture Campus. He holds a Bachelor of Engineering from Dalhousie University and a Diploma of Engineering from the Nova Scotia Agricultural College.



Director

Lianne Dwyer, PhD
Agriculture Consultant, Ontario

Dr. Lianne Dwyer was elected President in February 2014, and was re-elected to the position in June 2014. She is also the AIC Board representative to the Scientific Journals Committee. She is retired from the Research Branch of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC). She remains active in agricultural research through international consultation, most recently with the University of Yangzhou, China.

Dr. Dwyer has over 30 years experience in agriculture research, her research is reported in more than 100 refereed scientific publications, 6 book chapters, and more than 175 technical publications and presentations. She has been a volunteer agriculture consultant in Brazil and in Henan and Inner Mongolia provinces of China. She has received several awards, including Fellow of CSA (1999), Fellow of CSSA (2004), and Gold Harvest Award for cultivating innovating advantage team in AAFC (2009).

Board of Directors as at December 31, 2016



Director

Rajasekaran Lada, PhD

Professor and Department Chair of Environmental Sciences, Founding Director, Christmas Tree Research Centre, Dalhousie Agricultural Campus, Dalhousie University

Rajasekaran Lada was elected to the AIC Board of Directors in 2016.

Rajasekaran is a Professor and Chair of the Department of Environmental Sciences and Founding Director of the Christmas Tree Research Centre at Dalhousie University. His research is focused on seed, plant, tree, stress and ecophysiology of various horticultural ecosystems, and has helped provide new knowledge and innovative solutions and technologies to edible horticultural industry, Christmas tree industry, maple industry and controlled environment production systems, regionally, nationally and globally through multidisciplinary collaborative research teams.

Rajasekaran's academic achievements include: MSc, Agriculture (Horticulture) from the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, India; PhD from the University of Adelaide, South Australia; and PDF at the University of Toronto. In addition to his research, Rajasekaran has served as the Scientific Advisor, Agricultural Green Technologies for the Republic of South Korea and an Advisor to the Deputy Prime Minister for the Royal Government of Cambodia.



Director

Robert Moody, PAg Councillor

British Columbia Institute of Agrologists

Robert Moody joined the AIC Board of Directors in 2016.

Bob is the Executive Director and Registrar of the BC Institute of Agrologists. He holds an MSc in Plant Science and a BSc in Biology from the University of British Columbia. He has over 30 years' experience working with non-profit associations and at senior executive

Director of the BC Conservation Foundation and the Grasslands Conservation Council of BC. In addition to AIC, Bob is a member of the Board of Directors of the BC Land Summit Society and the Canadian Executive Service Organization.



Director

Michael Trevan, PhD, CBiol, FIBiol, PAg

Professor and Department Head of Food Science, University of Manitoba

Michael Trevan was elected to the AIC Board of Directors in June 2014. He served as the Dean of the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences and Professor in the Department of Food Science, University of Manitoba from July 2004 to June 2014. He now holds the position of Professor and Department Head in the Department of Food Science.

Michael was appointed Chair of the Board of Directors at Safe Food Canada (SFC) – where he is working to establish SFC as a non-profit organization to coordinate and certify food safety education and training in Canada for governments, regulators and industry. Michael has 42 years of experience working as an academic, teaching and researching in universities in biochemistry related to health, nutrition, food biotechnology and plant disease and 23 years of senior university management and leadership. He has published well over 90 books and chapters, peer reviewed publications, invited conference and seminar presentations, and 1 patent on enzyme and plant biotechnology and human nutrition.

He holds a PhD in Science from the University of London (1973) and is a Fellow of the Institute of Biology, Fellow of the Royal Society of Medicine, Member of the Manitoba Institute of Agrologists, the Agriculture Institute of Canada, the honorary treasurer of the Association of Canadian Faculties of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine and the chair of the Western College of Veterinary Medicine.



AIC Staff

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Christine Helm
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Alyson Queen
Director, Communications

Gabriele Leguerrier
Manager of Finance


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