



Nuffield Notes

RR # 3 Site 3 Box 6 Innisfail AB T4G 1T8

403 224 2633/ fax: 227 5414 secretary@nuffield.ca

PEI Hosted Farm Tour Day

In conjunction with Nuffield Canada's AGM scholars were treated with "a behind the barn door" look at several of the Island's farm businesses.

First stop was MacKenzie Produce, where 2009 Outstanding Young Farmers Greg and Tania MacKenzie explained their operation. They have been farming in Stratford since 2003, growing all kinds of vegetables including cabbage, turnip, broccoli, cauliflower, pumpkins, gourds, peas, beans, cucumbers, Chinese cabbage and zucchini. They have erected two hoop greenhouses and are growing their own plants for the field. With a warehouse and two roadside stands it is a totally integrated operation. You can order produce online at www.mackenzieproduce.ca and follow them on facebook!



Jack Rigby and Ian McPhadden listen as Greg explains their operation

Next stop was Vanco Farms operated by the VanNieuwenhuyzen family - Peter and sons Rit and Willem. They focus on niche opportunities for potato production including minis for the Little Potato company, fingerlings in blue, red or yellow and an ever growing organic potato business. Their computerized food safety traceability program allows them to track a potato from field to fork.

Another facet of their operation is fresh cut tulips from the field or greenhouse. The tulip bulbs are put into large coolers where the temperature is lowered to create a

wintry climate. The bulbs are then brought out into the greenhouse and tricked into thinking it is spring. Starting in January, the flowers are shipped through out the Atlantic provinces and into the Montreal market.



Kevin Meadows, Blake Vince and Rod Bradshaw discuss potato varieties

The afternoon was focused on low bush blueberry production starting with a slide presentation by producer Richard Veinot. A visit to Wyman's Blueberry Processing plant gave us insight to the challenges of managing high volume during a short timeframe. Final stop was to MacDonald's farm, which has been in the family since the earliest settlers, to see field management for the cultivation of wild blueberries. Almost all the yield from the 13,000 acres of PEI crop goes into processing. Only 1% is sold fresh.



Three new scholars - Blake Vince, Gayl Creutzberg and Clayton Robbins were welcomed to the group.

Latest Scholars Present Reports



President Barb Cote presents awards to Kevin Meadow, Sarah Megan and Leona Dargis

At the AGM, participants were treated to hearing the reports from the three completing scholars as well as a trip down memory lane. Wally Doerksen gave a slide show of his 1988 scholarship Tour. Below are written reports and reflections from two of the scholars.

Value Chains by Kelvin Meadows 2011 Scholar

Western Canadian farmers have dabbled in value added opportunities since farming arrived over one hundred years ago. The reasons have varied but the most common one has been to try and capture additional value either up or down the value chain. Some companies have failed while others have gone on to do extremely well and it is the goal of this report to “determine the attributes of

successful farmer owned value chains” with an emphasis on Governance and how it contributes to a company’s success or failure. To prepare this report the author travelled extensively and interviewed individuals from 23 different companies representing corporate, individual and cooperative ownership in six different countries. While there are many factors that will ultimately decide the outcome of a new venture including sufficient capitalization, business location, investor expectations and the need for superior management, it is often at the board table where the biggest challenges are to be found. During the interview process it has been demonstrated that no matter the country visited, farmers will tend to respond in similar fashion when presented with similar challenges or opportunities. In preparing this report a number of “farmer tendencies” have been found to manifest themselves during the formation of the company and again at the board table and these decision making “tendencies” have been shown to be critical to the future of any farmer owned business. A general lack of board experience, time constraints, and a strong preference to only allow farmers on the board has lead many farmer owned companies to struggle under an inexperienced mono culture board that is based on trust versus experience. With a limited pool of potential candidates to draw from and skills in big picture items such as marketing, performance reviews and strategic planning lacking, these Boards will usually succumb to group think and greatly impair their ability to see very far into the future of their business. By understanding the decision making process this report hopes to clarify the challenges and avoid the pitfalls of previous farmer lead companies.

Agriculture’s Future in the Hands of the Next Generation Nuffield Presentation - Leona Dargis 2011 Scholar

On November 27th 2012 in Charlottetown PEI, I had the privilege to give a short presentation on the lessons I’ve learned throughout my Nuffield study. In 2010, I was an eager 25 year old who applied for the Nuffield adventure because I had grown to realize that this was more than a 2 year international industry scholarship but more of a ‘once in a lifetime’ opportunity to belong to a global family of forward thinkers and innovators. As a Next Generation agricultural leader I was aware of the challenges we face within our industry including: lack of support to become a leader/entrepreneur/strategic business person, high competition with challenges of gaining access to capital, and the ongoing instability of markets, just to name a few. With saying all this however I believe that we as young farmers in Canada have a world of opportunities because consumer knowledge and demands are increasing, technology has empowered us to become more efficient in our operations, and the world is literally at our fingertips. In the past few years I’ve had the opportunity to travel to New Zealand, Australia, Singapore, India, USA, UK, Zambia, Tanzania, and Kenya. The most incredible thing about the countless rural communities that I’ve visited is that they were all friendly and more than willing to have a discussion with me about succession planning and empowering the next generation. Having made new friends around the world has taught me four main things: Canada needs to better support the younger generations involved in agriculture, corporate family farms are successful, Canada is not the ‘bread basket’ of the world but we are innovators and offer specialties within the global marketplace, and global agricultural perspectives are slowly growing which will in turn drive our future. In the meantime I enjoy speaking to audiences across Canada about the Next Generation, Women in Ag and about the much needed conversation on Succession Planning. I look forward to a lifetime of belonging to the Nuffield family and would strongly encourage anyone who has a passion for agriculture to apply.

Busy Days Ahead as Canada Host Two Major Events

Spring 2013 - Contemporary Scholars Conference

report by Karen Daynard



The Contemporary Scholars' Conference is coming to Ontario March 9-17 and we're working hard to ensure that our 80+ visitors have a rewarding, fun and truly Canadian experience. On top of scholars from the traditional Nuffield countries, we will also be welcoming guests from the US and Brazil.

In addition to top speakers, interesting tours and lots of networking time, we're putting on our own Nuffield Canada curling bonspiel, complete with

professional (?) coaches (thanks Clayton and Blake), a piper and shots of scotch whiskey, courtesy of the Scottish scholars. And we wouldn't be Canadian if we didn't take them to a hockey game (Jr A) on the first night and provide them with their own Nuffield Canada hockey jersey.

Highlights of the program include:

- A panel discussion on the definition of sustainability including speakers from Syngenta, Food Banks Canada, and the Canadian Organic Council
- A "Taste of Canada" Welcome dinner with Ken Knox as key note speaker. Ken is a former deputy minister of several Ontario ministries, including agriculture, is a farmer, and was recently inducted into the Ontario Agricultural Hall of Fame
- Tours to a switch grass farm/bioplastics plant, a sheep feedlot, a large grain cooperative specializing in IP beans, wineries, a grape vine propagation operation, a large scale greenhouse floral operation, and a Niagara based research and innovation centre focused on adapting ethnic crops to an Ontario growing climate.
- A full day of hands-on communication and media skills training
- Discussions on young farmer financing programs around the world

- A global agri-food issues discussion facilitated by the University of Guelph using new meeting management technologies
- Dinners at a traditional Mennonite-run restaurant, a local food restaurant and an old pub.
- A discussion on Canada/US trade as well as speakers on the US Farm Bill, American lobby system and the US electoral process

And maybe the best of the week – a key note address at the final banquet by our own Steve Larocque who will be challenging the scholars to make the most out of their Nuffield experience.

Triennial 2014 - Save the Date

Barry, Triennial Chair

Triennial 2014 is only 16 months away and I want you to reserve the dates June 15 to June 27. The tour will consist of three segments: June 15 to June 18, tours of Annapolis Valley and south shore of Nova Scotia, June 19, conference day in Halifax, June 20 to 24 tours throughout PEI, then June 25 to June 28, tours of the Niagara region of Ontario. A post tour program will be available in western Canada from June 29 to July 2, commencing in Saskatoon and ending in Edmonton.

All information on the tour will be posted on the new and improved Nuffield Canada website with links to the triennial conference. Expect to see tour outlines, registrations, and costs after February 15. The program is being billed as an all inclusive package but costs will be broken down by province, with a cost for each of the three segments.

The theme of the triennial is "Prosperity through Innovation" which really is a the theme of many Nuffield scholarships.

Members of the national committee are John Lohr, Richard Melvin, Jack Rigby, Dan Cornwall, Carolyn Fuerth, Karen Daynard, Barb Cote, Rod Bradshaw, Alan Miller, and Barry Cudmore. There are three provincial committees as well. We would encourage your suggestions and advice.

Looking for New Nuffield Scholars

Please encourage potential Nuffield scholars in your acquaintance to check out the scholar section of our website www.nuffield.ca Each year Nuffield Canada awards 3 scholarships of \$15,000 to enterprising individuals with a passion for agriculture. The deadline for applications is April 30, 2013.

Nuffield 2013 Tour of Brazil

Submitted by Jack Rigby

We, 10 Americans, 28 Canadians and 1 person from the UK, came from many directions and met up in Miami for an early morning flight to Manaus, a large City carved out of the jungle. We then took a cruise on the Negro River down to the meeting of the waters. The black Negro River meets the brown Solimoes River to form the Amazon. These 2 rivers travel side by side for many miles without mixing due to the difference in temperature and density. Our next stop was the new capital city Brasilia built in the middle of the country to encourage the movement of people westward away from the coastal areas.

Our main reason for coming to Brazil was the big soybean farms. We visited a farm owned by SLC Agricola, one of the largest farm operators in Brazil. They own over ½ million acres of land throughout Brazil. The farm we were on was called Paiguas. They have 211 permanent and 80 temporary employees. There are 36 houses and 102 apartments on the farm. Including double cropping, they planted 78500 acres of crop on this one farm in 2012, 36% cotton, 47% Soybeans and 16% Corn. The fields average about 750acres each. To handle all of this work the farm has 80 Cotton Pickers, 162 Combines, 78 Sprayers and 369 Tractors. When you stand at the edge of the field you can't see either side or across the field to the other end. We also visited one of Maggi's farms. He is the biggest soybean grower in the world and owns close to a million acres of crop land. We saw a team of combines harvesting soybeans followed by self-propelled sprayers followed by planters planting corn. His farms plant 350,000 acres of Soybeans and 300,000 acres of cotton every year. Because the government wasn't supplying the infrastructure needed Maggi built hydroelectric projects, roads, towns, port facilities to load barges, purchased barges, transfer facilities to load ships and even purchased ocean going ships to deliver his product to the world.

We also visited a Case dealership who serviced customers in a radius of 300 miles from his location. He had about 50 rebuilt tractor and combine engines sitting in stock. If your tractor broke down they would swap out an engine and get you back in the field in 6 hours. After fixing your engine they would allow you to keep the engine they had installed or they would swap it back to the original.

Our last major stop was Iguassu Falls at the very south of Brazil bordering Argentina. This has to be the most beautiful falls in the world. They have a board walk that takes you out to the middle of the river between the falls to one side the water is dropping from above toward you and on the other side the water is flowing

under the walkway and dropping over the edge and falling away from you.

I wish to thank Wally Doerksen for arranging this tour with Rupiper Travel and negotiating a contribution to Nuffield of \$200.00 for each ticket we sold which added \$5400.00 to our Nuffield coffers .



Memories From the Presidents Desk

Maybe it's because Christmas has just passed filled with friends and family or maybe it's because it really cold outside and things are a little slower on the farm now but I find it is the time for me to reminisce. How often do you recall your Nuffield experience? What do you remember most and what do you recall only when you are reviewing albums or visiting with alumni? Whenever I think of my Nuffield experience I smile – a lot. And I am sure that you do to. But what surprises me is the times out of the blue that bring back memories.

For me every time I hear the term “no worries” which is used now quite commonly here in Canada, I recall my Aussie counterparts. I had not heard the term before but was quite relieved to hear it when I accidentally bumped the pint of my Australian cohort and sloshed beer all over his shoes in the Farmers Club. I don't look at sheep dogs without recalling the photos of one New Zealand scholar where he, and not one but two dogs rode the motor bike out to shepherd in the flock. Or sushi, yes sushi brings me back, I had travelled to Japan and still recall the gummybear like fish – eyes and all that adorned my little piece of rice and my host commenting on what a treat this was! Just for the record I now love sushi. Then there is the smile I get slipping on my “wellies” – for I remember my English host loaning me her “wellies” so that we could walk through farmers' fields. The list could go one and on.

For each of us the Nuffield experience is unique, of that I am very sure. What I am also sure of is that our lives have been changed by our Nuffield experience and I hope that you have a few moments to revisit your experience from time to time and marvel what a great opportunity you had. I know I do.

Thanks to Lord Nuffield – that we are all here – A toast.

Have a great year,

Barb