

THE BUZZ



News about the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs – University of Guelph Partnership

September 15, 2010

Vol. III, No. 7

Welcome back!

The leaves are beginning to turn, classes have started and people are getting back into routines after summer vacations and hot weather. This summer was busy for the Partnership, with a lot of research done, awards won and technologies created. Now we're entering the fall, a time of harvest...not only for Ontario's crops, but also for research, innovation and hard work that is part of, and because of, the OMAFRA-U of G Partnership.



Photo: iStock

~ Rich Moccia, AVP (Research) Agri-Food and Partnerships

RESEARCH



Photo: Stephanie Bach

Healthy spuds. Stephanie Bach, a U of G Master's student working with Prof. Alan Sullivan, is trying to find potatoes that will help stem obesity and prevent or moderate Type II diabetes. The study will assist breeders in developing new potato varieties with healthier starch profiles. Potatoes contain three different kinds of starch: those associated with a higher glycemic index (GI) which are rapidly broken down and cause blood sugar to spike soon after they are eaten, those associated with a lower GI which release their sugars more slowly and those called resistant starch – a form of dietary fibre. "A potato variety with low GI can help delay or even fend off potential health issues," says Bach, "and that leads to a happier, healthier, extended life."

RESEARCH STATIONS

All eyes on GTI. More than 100 people gathered at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute (GTI) on August 19 for the GTI Summer Research Field Day, featuring the official opening of the new species display garden, as well as research plot tours, and afternoon workshops. Several partnership research studies were highlighted, including a look at whether reclaimed water can be used to irrigate Kentucky bluegrass sod. Four different reclaimed water sources are being checked for potential dangers to groundwater and reclaimed water's impact, when used for irrigation, on soil and turfgrass health. "It's important for us to conserve and protect our municipal water supplies, but we need to do that in a way that keeps our groundwater safe," says Karen Chan, the Assistant Deputy Minister of OMAFRA's Research and Corporate Services Division, who gave opening remarks.



Prof. Katerina Jordan (right)
Photo: Jason Clark

NEWS

It's the Year of the Goat around here.

Ontario farmers recognize the growing market for goats, but need management techniques and genetics to help them produce superior animals year round. In response, at the recent fifth annual International Goat Symposium in Stratford, Ontario, a \$700,000 grant was announced for a three-year dairy goat pilot genetic improvement program involving 15 Ontario goat farms. The project will work towards developing top genetics, production and management activities



Photo: Ontario Goat

that can be adopted by the province's 261 licensed goat milk producers. At the centre of this effort is a new, virtual goat research centre involving the University of Guelph, Trent University, the Greater Peterborough Innovation Cluster, Ontario Goat, and the Ontario Dairy Goat Co-operative. [Owen Roberts](#) writes about the initiative in his [Urban Cowboy column](#) in the Guelph Mercury.

Call for letters of intent coming this fall. The next call for letters of intent under all themes in the OMAFRA-U of G Research Program is coming in fall 2010. For this call approximately \$7.6 million will be available for allocation to approved projects. Watch for more details [here](#).

AGRI-FOOD AND RURAL LINK

New intern at Agri-Food and Rural Link. Logan Juffermans, a recent graduate of the University of Guelph, has been hired through a unique partnership between the OMAFRA-U of G KTT program and Environment Canada's Science Horizons Youth Internship Program. While Logan is with the Link, he will be investigating the knowledge exchange process among researchers, policy-makers and the agricultural industry associations related to the Environmental Sustainability research theme. "It's important we understand

accelerators and barriers for knowledge exchange so we can meet the needs of research and research users more effectively,” says Evelyn Allen, KTT knowledge mobilization manager at Agri-Food and Rural Link.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Innovation grant for high immune responding cattle. Prof. Bonnie Mallard and Lauri Wagter-Lesperance have been awarded an NSERC Idea to Innovation grant that will help further their patented High Immune Response (HIR) technology, developed in part with OMAFRA funding. The technology represents a novel way to identify cattle with naturally stronger immunological responses to pathogens. This translates into better overall health/survivability, reduced veterinary expenses and improved response to vaccines. The technology is easily transferrable to other animal species. This represents an exciting opportunity for the future of farming and for the University of Guelph. For more information, contact the [BDO](#).

STAFF AND STUDENT NEWS

Partnership researchers acclaimed. Two U of G researchers were recognized with Canadian Society of Animal Science [awards](#) at their annual meeting in Denver, Colorado this past summer. Prof. Kees de Lange, research program director for the Productions System (Animal) research theme was given the award for Excellence in Nutrition and Meat Sciences and the Young Scientist Award was given to Prof. Trevor DeVries from Kemptville Campus. DeVries has been the principal investigator and a collaborator on several partnership funded research projects. The [Canadian Society of Animal Science](#) was formed more than 70 years ago and works to facilitate the discovery and dissemination of knowledge in animal science, for the benefit of society.

Pig congress in Canada for the first time. Canada hosted the International Pig Veterinary Society (IPVS) [Congress](#) in Vancouver in July, 2010 -- for the first time. The U of G had a big hand in organizing and Prof. Robert Friendship, species coordinator (swine) was co-chair of the program committee. The congress was the largest in its 21 year history, and included more than 2,600 attendees from 65-plus countries. The theme of IPVS 2010 was “Sharing Ideas – Advancing Pig Health” with a focus on providing solutions to emerging diseases and other significant challenges facing the swine industry.

COMING EVENTS

Master Gardeners of Ontario course at VRIC. Vineland Research and Innovation Centre and Master Gardeners of Ontario present an educational short course, Sunday, September 12, 2010, 10 a.m.- 3 p.m. The cost is \$50 to learn about leading edge horticultural science and innovation and its practical applications in the garden. For more information and to receive a registration package, contact Kathryn Goodish, 905-562-0320 x777.

2010 Canada’s Outdoor Farm Show. This year’s farm show takes place September 14-16 on the grounds of the Woodstock Research Station. It features demonstrations of innovative production systems, and energy and healthy living expos. For more information go to www.outdoorfarmshow.com.

News@Noon. The next News@Noon is being held Wednesday, October 6, 2010 at the OVC Lifetime Learning Centre, Room 1714. Prof. Mary Ruth McDonald will speak about her research into the health benefits of colourful vegetables.

About The Buzz

The Buzz is the electronic community news vehicle for the OMAFRA-University of Guelph partnership.

Editor: Liz Snyder, OMAFRA-U of G programs, 519-826-3376, lsnyder@uoguelph.ca. To contribute, contact Liz or contributing editors Robyn Meerveld, (519-826-4191, robyn.meerveld@ontario.ca) or Owen Roberts (519-826-5207, owen@uoguelph.ca).

Contributors to this issue: Evelyn Allen, Stephanie Bach, Renée Bergeron, Natalie Carter, Jason Clark, Kees de Lange, Robyn Meerveld, Rich Moccia, Ontario Goat, Owen Roberts, Liz Snyder, Alan Sullivan, Christine Taub, Mary Visser Kerr, Tyler Whale and Bronwynne Wilton.

Find out more about the OMAFRA-U of G Partnership at:

www.uoguelph.ca/research/omafra/index.shtml

www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/research/uofgagreement/uofgpartnership.html

Please forward this newsletter to anyone who may be interested.