

THE BUZZ



News about the OMAF and MRA – University of Guelph Partnership

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February 2014

Welcome Readers!

In this issue of The Buzz, you will read about the latest Partnership-funded research and innovation, including Knowledge Translation and Transfer (KTT) initiatives that ensure the Partnership outcomes reach those who can put them into action. You will also find information about upcoming events related to the Partnership.

A Dandelion by Another Name is Not Just a Dandelion



Dr. David Wolyn
Photo Credit: Bruce Sargent

"Natural rubber is essential, like oil - the economy can't function without it," says David Wolyn. And since the world's supply of rubber trees is vulnerable due to disease and political instability in those areas of the world where they grow, the cost of rubber is high. [The Russian Dandelion plant produces rubber in its roots with properties very similar to that of the rubber tree.](#) This

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crop can be grown in Canada, though further research is needed to determine ideal practices and growing conditions.

Up Coming Events



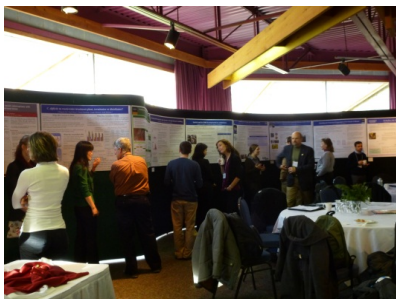
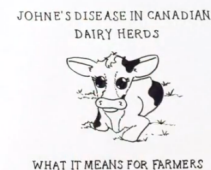
Tomatoes Ripe for Eating

Can wild tomato breeds from Peru improve Ontario's tomato lines? Steve Loewen, Professor at the UoG Ridgetown Campus certainly thinks so, and uses the South American genetic material in his efforts to breed a perfect tomato. Loewen was the guest speaker at a [News@ \(close to\) Noon](#) on September 10th, and gave the audience the chance to participate in a tomato tasting. He also shared practical facts

about tomatoes including the growing, purchasing and the intricacies and goals of tomato breeding.

Unmasking Johne's Disease

A PhD candidate in OVC has created a unique knowledge translation and transfer (KTT) tool, a short [animated and amusing whiteboard video](#) about Johne's Disease in Canadian dairy hers. Steven Roche released this video, the first in a three-part series, in November. It tells the story of a farmer (Bob) whose cow (Belle) contracts the disease, and how he discovered simple measures to prevent it. Look for the next two videos in spring and summer 2014.



Let's Get Prepared (Emergency Management Research Expo)

On December 5th, the annual [Emergency Management Research Expo](#) was an important occasion for individuals from academia, government and industry to network and find inspiration. Guest speaker, Brad Andres from Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development gave a talk about known and unknown emergency

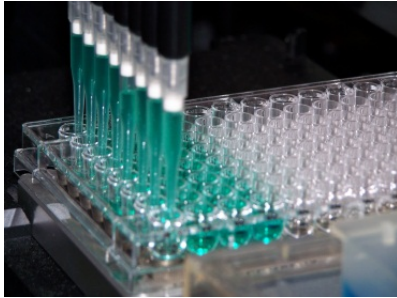
management issues in agriculture and possible implications. Graduate students added value to the day with their poster presentations.

Growing Food for the Future (Vineland Research Day and Field Tour)

In August 2013, [Vineland Research and Innovation Centre \(VRIC\)](#) held an event as part of the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Grower's tour. Over 100 guests got a firsthand look at the industry and researcher collaborations taking place such as the development of new yellow plum species. The day included a guided tour of the Research Services building, the



Sensory and Consumer Science Laboratory, and tours of the heritage apple orchard, plums, eggplants, sweet potatoes and peaches fields.



Labs can Prepare for an Outbreak

An animal disease outbreak can be very costly for a diagnostic laboratory. With the help of researchers at both the Animal Health Laboratory and in the College of Management Economics, veterinary laboratories will be able to use a simple Excel template to determine the benefits and costs of preparing for, responding to, and recovering from an emergency animal disease outbreak in their particular province.

Helping Farmers Go Green

Choosing a "green energy" system to install that's the most cost effective can be quite a challenge for farmers. With help from researchers, poultry farmers will soon have a [Complementary Energy Decision Support Tool \(CEDST\)](#) to assist them with this decision. This tool will consider current farm energy usage as well as the predicted economic and environmental impact of adopting green energy technologies.



Photo Credit: Natalie Osborne



Apple of my Eye

To increase profitability and compete globally, Ontario apple growers are [strategically improving returns](#) by adopting new cultivars, enhancing quality and adopting labour saving technologies. Prof. John Cline and his research team at the Horticultural Research Station, Simcoe are conducting a series of orchard experiments to address key industry challenges using more efficient orchard systems on dwarfing rootstock. His research on fruit physiology will which will help Ontario producers grow high quality apples in the volumes required for the Ontario produce industry.

A Peach So Sweet

Each summer consumers eagerly await the arrival of peaches. Now, a joint research team has identified regions of the genome that influence [how early the fruit will reach maturity\(page 5 of link\)](#). They've also developed a simple DNA test for these sequences. Producers will now be able to bypass the traditional 20 year process to develop new varieties according to Travis Banks, scientist at Vineland. Bottom line, growers will see higher quality, higher value

early maturing varieties because of this research.



Photo Credit: Vineland

Animal Health Laboratory

The Animal Health Laboratory has been awarded funding for an Ontario [Disease Surveillance Plan \(DSP\)](#) as part of the continuing OMAF/MRA - UofG Agreement.

With this funding the lab plans to not only enhance animal disease surveillance within Ontario, and integrate provincial data into the national surveillance framework, but to further develop testing capabilities as well.



Photo Credit: Anderson-Coats
Photography

HQP Student Spotlight - Tylar Meeks

After travelling all the way to Halifax to present her poster at the 2013 [Canadian Plant Genomic Workshop](#) and interact with renowned scientists, Tylar Meeks, an [HQP](#) and Masters student in the College of Biological Sciences, has advice for all the students out there:

"Network and learn from everyone you meet to continue your education even outside of your field of study, since you never know when this knowledge will be of use to you."

When Tylar is not helping with the KTT program at the Office of Research, she is characterizing the roles of members of the INDETERMINATE DOMAIN (IDD) gene family in the model plant, *Arabidopsis thaliana* (part of the mustard family). She believes they may be involved in some aspect of carbon assimilation.

Tylar is most excited about the possibility of finding ways to alter the amounts of carbon storage compounds (like sugar, starch and oil) in different tissues of the plant by manipulating the genes of the IDD family.

Partnership People: An Important Part of Innovation Success*

In the past 27 years [Craig Lonsdale](#) has travelled half way around the world and back again; but for the last 17 years

Craig has worked for the U of G, most recently in the dairy barn of the Ponsonby Research Station. One of Craig's greatest joys is his involvement with [S.H.A.R.E](#) (Sending Help and Resources Everywhere). When asked what keeps Craig excited at work, he responded "I absolutely love my job. As the oldest employee in the barn, working with the younger staff who are full of enthusiasm, great practical ideas and amazing work ethic, keeps me young and enthusiastic."



Photo Credit: SHARE Foundation

* "Partnership People" is a new feature in The BUZZ newsletter which highlights the incredible people that work within the partnership. Look for more inspiring stories in our future issues.

Up Coming Events

[HQP Applications for Graduate Students:](#) February 24th - March 7th 2014

For students starting their programs in Fall semester 2014, Winter semester 2015 or Summer semester 2015, applications for HQP graduate scholarships will be accepted from 9:00 a.m. on February 24th to 5:00 p.m. March 7th 2014.

[Growing Sustainable Bioeconomies - Making it Happen](#) conference: March 3-5th 2014

Presented by Growing the Margins, the conference and exhibition is being held at the London Convention Centre - London, Ontario.

[Kemptonville Campus College Royal:](#) March 6th - 8th 2014

The two day event is hosted by students, staff and faculty, with great events for all ages including a petting zoo and Celebrity Farmers' Olympics.

['Gryphons LAAIR'](#) Applications Due Date: March 12th 2014

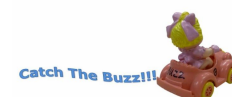
This new program funded through the OMAF/MRA and UoG partnership provides an opportunity to accelerate the development, application, and commercialization of innovative technologies.

[Project Soy](#) Judging Finale: March 21st 2014

An annual contest which challenges students to develop new products and marketing strategies for soybeans, the final judging will be held at 1 Stone Rd W, Guelph.

Equine Guelph [Horse Behaviour and Safety eWorkshop:](#) March 10th-23rd 2014

This 10 topic course covers horse evolution, behaviour and safety.



STAY CONNECTED



For more information on the OMAF/MRA - U of G Partnership Agreement, go to the website at: http://www.uoguelph.ca/omafra_partnership/en/index.asp

To subscribe, contribute or for more information, contact:
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The KTT program is supported by 'Growing Forward 2 - a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.'