

Partners for Progress: gift supports chair in sustainable food production

Thanks to a \$3-million gift from Loblaw Companies Limited, a new Chair in Sustainable Food Production has been created to provide leadership to U of G's research focus on the creation of robust food production systems. The position, which will be based in the department of Plant Agriculture, was announced April 7.

The chair will pioneer new approaches to current and emerging challenges facing today's food industry, leading change in food production systems through education, research, practice and outreach within the context of the essential elements of sustainability: the environment, communities and the economy.

"Working together, we can address the very issues that are at the root of today's global pressures around food sustainability," said Galen G. Weston, executive chairman of Loblaw Companies Limited. "Through this initiative, we believe we can help to increase Canada's capacity to produce food sustainably, train tomorrow's industry leaders, contribute to policy development, meet consumers' needs and nurture our environment."

The new chair will assemble a core of researchers in agriculture and food production, lead collaborations in the public and private sectors, serve as a key resource for government food and agriculture policy development, and work to lead and advance the sustainability of agriculture and food production in Canada.

Among other responsibilities, the chair will lead a national program in sustainable local food production, develop a national roundtable on the topic and create an industry advisory group to guide novel curriculum development.

The search for the inaugural holder of the Loblaw Chair in Sustainable Food Production is currently underway, with the expectation that the position will be filled early in the new year. ■



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Dean's message

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Since its establishment, OAC has worked to provide leadership for food, agriculture, the environment and rural communities. That mandate hasn't changed, although our activities and research efforts have certainly evolved over the years to meet the changing needs of the society we serve.

The broad diversity of programs and activities in today's OAC is a reflection of our traditional mandate, placed in a modern context.

Issues related to food production and sustainability are among the greatest societal challenges of our time. Here in OAC, we are uniquely positioned to understand those issues and apply our expertise and experience towards the development of effective, real-world solutions for food, food production and the supply chain.

It won't be easy – addressing current and emerging needs will require new ways of thinking about food production and research, new approaches to teaching and sharing knowledge for current and future generations of industry professionals, and new definitions of innovation which include collaboration across disciplines.

That's why I'm so pleased to share with you the news of OAC's partnership with Canada's largest food distributor for the establishment of the

Loblaw Chair in Sustainable Food Production (see story, p. 1). Together, we will develop long-term solutions that will provide benefits to consumers, to Canada's food industry and to the environment, leading the way to a healthy future.

The partnership with Loblaws is the first in a series of such alliances we are working to build as we seek greater connections with the broader food and agriculture sector. These partnerships are vital for the support they provide for our research and teaching efforts, but more than that, they help ensure our continued leadership and relevance in a rapidly changing world, by keeping us closely linked to those who our efforts are intended to serve.

This new collaborative model will help ensure that OAC can continue in its mission of providing innovative and adaptive solutions to some of society's greatest challenges.

With thanks,

Robert Gordon
Dean, Ontario Agricultural College
Guelph • Alfred • Kemptville • Ridgeway

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VOICE

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Students engage creativity at Project SOY, 2010

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Promoting diversified uses and markets for soybeans, the 14th annual Project SOY competition (Soybean Opportunities for Youth) held March 31 showcased 18 of the newest soy-based products created by U of G students.

Cash prizes of \$2500, \$1000 and \$500 were awarded to the top three projects in two categories: diploma and undergraduate/graduate.

In the diploma category, Samuel Nyandwi of Campus d'Alfred won the top prize for developing PSOYA, a soy-based muffin mix that is high in protein and fibre and free from gluten, lactose and nuts. Second prize went to Brian Romanick of Ridgetown for SOYTasty Seasonings, while Lugi Stephano Bikoroti of Alfred captured third place for creating FROMASOYA, a vegan-friendly cheese made from soymilk.



▲ **Food Science undergraduate students distributed samples of their product, FRITZ and Soysup, which earned their team second place in this year's competition.**

Topping the undergraduate/graduate category was Sara Bonham for Soya Plast BioPak, a soy-based, 100-per-cent compostable bioplastic food packaging material. Tonya Papanikolov, Matt McSweeney, Audrey Draper and Lauren Mertin took second place for FRITZ and Soysup. Third prize went to Meaghan Metcalf and Amanda Andreevski for Soylicious Ravioli.

Other products in the competition included soy-based wind turbine blades, all-natural dry instant-pudding mix enriched with soy protein, a soy-based all-natural carbonated fruit drink and 100-per-cent natural, biodegradable coffee cups.

Project SOY is sponsored by Dekalb Brand Seeds; SOY20/20; Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; and the Grain Farmers of Ontario. ■

Students challenged to apply theory and learning to the dairy industry



▲ **Animal & Poultry Science team members (from left): Ryan Wynands, Martina Pfister, Caitlin Shirreff and Steven Larmer with coach John Walton.**

OAC students won a Second Place Platinum standing at the ninth annual North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge (NAIDC) held April 9-10, in Visalia, California.

Hosted by California Polytechnic State University and California State University-Fresno, NAIDC 2010 attracted 28 teams from the United States and two teams from Canada. The U of G team consisted of Steve Larmer, Martina Pfister, Caitlin Shirreff and Ryan Wynands, and was coached by Prof. John Walton (Animal & Poultry Science).

Throughout the two-day competition, students from dairy science programs across North America were given the opportunity to inspect a host dairy, interview herd managers, analyze farm-specific data, and develop recommendations for nutrition, reproduction, milking procedures, animal health, housing and financial management. Teams presented their analysis and findings to herd owners and a panel of dairy industry judges. The event concluded with a reception and awards banquet. ■

Developing our international profile:

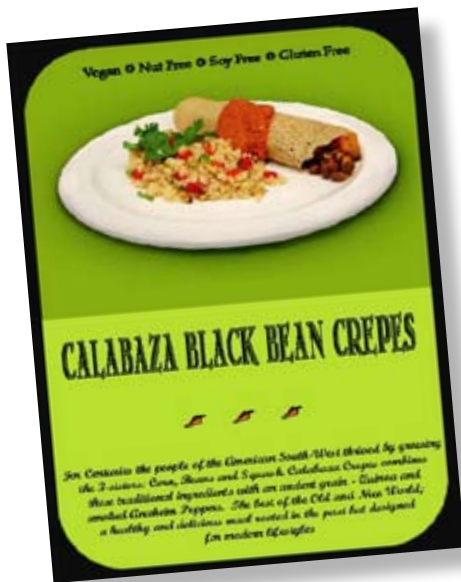
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Food Science students excel in North American **competition**

Congratulations to Food Science students Derek Vella, Aneta Rybak and Brittany Huschka, who were awarded third-place honours at the 2010 Culinology Competition hosted by the Research Chefs of America in conjunction with their conference this past March in Phoenix, Arizona.

The student team from OAC's Food Science department was the first-ever Canadian group in the annual competition, which challenged this year's students to create a Southwestern, vegetarian frozen entrée as well as a Gold Standard restaurant quality version of the same entrée. Participants were required to develop a proposal that included recipe formulations, nutritional breakdown, industrial scale-up, costing, sourcing, packaging and marketing. Teams selected to participate in the finals were required to ship their frozen meals to the event location prior to the event, then prepare the restaurant version on-site at the live competition. A panel of judges compared each team's reheated and plated frozen items against their corresponding freshly prepared items on the day of the event.

For their entry, the OAC team prepared **Calabaza Black Bean Crepes**, a Mesoamerican-inspired dish featuring butternut squash and black beans, served with a Citrus Quinoa Salad.



Vella and Rybak described the event as an excellent opportunity for both experiential learning and professional development, and look forward to participating in the 2011 event. They expressed tremendous gratitude for the support they received through travel grants provided by the OAC Class of '59, which helped to offset the costs of this unique learning experience. ■

Donation supports organic agriculture



Organic Advocates, a non-profit association that supports organic food awareness and sustainability, presented a cheque for \$5000 to the University of Guelph during the Guelph Organic Conference held early in 2010. The donation, which came from funds raised at the group's annual Feast of Fields dinner featuring the work of over 40 Toronto area chefs, will support teaching in the Organic Agriculture major of the BSc(Agr) program. ■

Agri-food industry leader awarded MacMillan Laureate in Agriculture

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^ At winter convocation are (from left): President Alastair Summerlee, MacMillan Laureate recipient Ted Bilyea, Chancellor Pamela Wallin and OAC Dean Rob Gordon.

Maurice Edward (Ted) Bilyea, world-renowned expert on international trade, food and agriculture issues and former executive vice-president of Maple Leaf Foods, has been named as the most recent recipient of the H.R. MacMillan Laureate in Agriculture.

The \$10,000 award is presented every five years to an individual judged to have made the most significant contribution to agriculture in Canada during the preceding five years.

Bilyea was honoured during the University of Guelph's winter convocation on February 17. He is the ninth recipient of the award, which was established in 1966 by the late H.R. MacMillan, a 1906 OAC graduate. Recipients are selected by a national panel of academic and industry leaders.

A Toronto native, Bilyea joined Canada Packers in 1971 shortly after graduating from York University. He served as president of Maple Leaf Foods International and retired in 2005 as executive vice-president of Maple Leaf Foods Inc. Under his leadership, Maple Leaf became Canada's largest food exporter.

Bilyea now works as an agri-food consultant specializing in innovation with public and private sector clients, providing expertise on critical policy issues to enhance Canada's competitiveness and trade. ■

Making a difference



Gwen Paddock (OAC '85) was presented with OAC's Outstanding Service Award at the OAC Alumni Foundation's 50th Anniversary celebration held on May 6.

Paddock, vice president of agriculture, agribusiness and commercial banking at RBC and a graduate of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program, was recognized for her outstanding contributions to OAC, Ontario's agricultural industry, and the local community.

The award was presented to Paddock by Rene Van Acker, associate dean (external relations), and Rob Gordon, dean. ■

Regional Campus NEWS

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Ridgetown receives major investment for bio-economy research

OAC's Ridgetown campus will receive an investment of more than \$2.63 million for the construction of an anaerobic digester and demonstration lab through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario. The announcement was made by MP Dave Van Kesteren (Chatham-Kent Essex) on April 9.

"The go-ahead to construct this at Ridgetown is a huge boost in stimulating the emerging bio-economy," said Art Schaafsma, campus director. "This investment will provide commercialization, development, research and training opportunities."

Also participating in the announcement event were representatives from the Southwestern Ontario Bioproducts Innovation Network (SOBIN), which was instrumental in the development of OAC's Centre for Agricultural Renewable Energy and Sustainability (CARES).

The project will be funded through the Community Adjustment Fund, a two-year, \$1-billion national program aimed at addressing the short-term economic needs of communities hit hardest by the global economic recession. ■



▲ Pictured at the announcement event are (from left): Matt McLean (SOBIN), Dave VanKesteren, Rob Gordon, Art Schaafsma, and Greg Devries (CARES)

6th Annual Organic Dairy Conference hosted at Alfred

Greening Dairy's Future was the theme of the 6th annual conference on Organic Dairying and Dairy Research held March 18 and 19 at Campus d'Alfred.

Participants at this year's event explored issues relevant to both organic and conventional dairy farmers, including pasture management, the impact of greener production on the farm and the environment, and organic standards in relation to animal welfare.

Keynote addresses were given by Claude Villeneuve, a biologist and professor from Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, and Jean-Louis Peyraud of INRA, France. ■



▲ Speaker Claude Villeneuve discussed *Organic Farming and Climate Change - Traps and Opportunities*.

New animal science lab opens at Kemptville

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Breeding and feeding studies are the focus of a new animal science lab to open at Kemptville campus this summer.



▲ **Profs. Trevor DeVries and Katrina Merkies in their new lab at Kemptville.**

specifically at proteins and lipids on stallion sperm membranes that affect survival of frozen semen. DeVries' research is largely focused on understanding the links between cattle behaviour and nutrition and developing appropriate feeding management practices. ■

The first such facility for the regional campus will provide new equipment and space for research by Profs. Katrina Merkies and Trevor Devries, Animal & Poultry Science, through the Kemptville campus.

Funding for the project was provided by the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the Ontario Research Fund, U of G and the Kemptville College Foundation.

The lab features a walk-in cooler and freezer, a darkroom for flow cytometry, and cytometry equipment for counting, examining and sorting microscopic particles.

Merkies, an equine scientist, will use the facility to help breeders and owners find better ways to store and transport semen of sport horses, and will look

Campus d'Alfred showcases talent to support refugees



▲ **Samuel Nyandwi (on keyboard) and Donatien Munyaneza (on guitar) join Lugii Bikoroti to entertain the crowd with a song from the Congo. Munyaneza and Nyandwi, who lived in a refugee camp in Malawi after fleeing Rwanda, began their studies at Campus d'Alfred in September 2009.**

Students and staff at Campus d'Alfred recently organized a variety show to celebrate their diversity and raise awareness and funds to support the Student Refugee Program of WUSC (World University Service of Canada). The show, held this past March, raised about \$1200.

For the past 11 years, the Alfred chapter of WUSC has annually sponsored a student from a war-torn country to study at the campus. Funds raised at this year's event will be used to help support two refugees who will arrive in August 2010.

According to Nicole Tessier, who serves as a member of Alfred's local committee for the WUSC program, the students are very grateful and eager to adapt to life in Canada. She credits retired Professor Robert St-Amant, who taught international development and was former head of Alfred's chapter of WUSC, for bringing the program to Alfred more than a decade ago.

For almost 25 years, U of G has been actively involved in WUSC's Student Refugee Program, which since 1978 has enabled more than 1000 young men and women to resettle in Canada as permanent residents and pursue their education in an environment free of violence and fear. ■

Appointments

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Industry leader joins Plant Ag Faculty



▲ Hamdy Khalil

Dr. Hamdy Khalil has been appointed as an adjunct faculty member in the department of Plant Agriculture for a three-year term. He is the Global Director of Research for the Woodbridge Group, the world's largest manufacturer of automotive foams and a recognized leader in the manufacture of auto parts using agriculture-derived feedstocks.

Khalil was instrumental in the creation of the Ontario BioAuto Council and will be working with faculty and researchers to facilitate linkages with major companies involved in the manufacture of plastics, chemicals, auto parts, furniture, packaging, construction materials and other industrial and consumer products.

He will also participate in teaching programs and provide guidance on initiatives by the Bioproduct Discovery and Development Centre and across U of G that are designed to develop our core strength in serving the growing bioeconomy. ■

Ecologist appointed to SES faculty



▲ Neil Rooney

Dr. Neil Rooney has been appointed as Assistant Professor in the School of Environmental Sciences for a five-year term from September 2009 through August 2014. The position is sponsored by the Saugeen Ojibway First Nations under the Saugeen Ojibway-University of Guelph faculty partnership.

As well as participating in the undergraduate and graduate teaching programs and advising graduate students' research, Rooney will be undertaking research related to environmental assessments (EAs) in the Traditional Territory of the Saugeen Ojibway and assuming management responsibilities for the Saugeen Ojibway Environment Office.

Rooney describes himself as "an ecologist by training and at heart." He holds a PhD in Biology from McGill (2002) as well as an MSc in Environmental Science (1995) and a BSc in Ecology & Evolution (1993) from the University of Western Ontario. ■

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Milestones



40 years and growing

Fortieth anniversary celebrations for the Arboretum kick off on June 19, with guided tours of the grounds and buildings provided by staff, auxiliary members and master gardeners. Tours will include the woody plant collections and gardens in the central core of the 406 acre Arboretum. All buildings will also be open to visitors.

Come out and see how 40 years has changed the landscape of what was once cropland, pasture and test plots.

Tours will begin every half hour between 10 and 2:30, leaving from either the Information Kiosk down the hill from Alumni House or the OAC Arboretum Centennial Centre. Groups of 10 or more should call ahead (519-824-4120 x53587) to book a time slot.

For more information, visit www.uoguelph.ca/arboretum or The Arboretum, University of Guelph on Facebook. ■



Celebrating a half-century of service

Alumni and friends of the college gathered at Creelman Hall on May 6 to celebrate the 50th Annual General Meeting of the OAC Alumni Foundation. Guest speaker Jay Bradshaw, president of Syngenta Canada, spoke on the topic of *Agriculture and Leadership - solving the world's big challenges*, focusing both on the successes of the past and the many opportunities ahead.

Other highlights included the airing of a new video developed for the occasion as well as presentations of the Order of OAC and Outstanding Service Awards. ■

Upcoming events

June 25-27: Reunion for Rural Planning and Development alumni
(School of Environmental Design and Rural Development)

For more information, contact Sarah Megens at smegens@gmail.com, or Harry Cummings at cummingssharry@hotmail.com

June 19-July 5: International Comparative Rural Policy Summer Institute (ICRPS 2010),
Portland State and Oregon State Universities.

Registration is now open. For more information, visit <http://www.icrps.com/> or contact John Devlin at jdevlin@uoguelph.ca.

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New logo to identify SES

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ses
school of
environmental
sciences

OAC's newest unit recently unveiled a distinctive logo intended to convey an inclusive, interdisciplinary vision of environmental sciences at U of G.

The new logo will be used on a variety of promotional and communications materials to help create a strong visual identity for the school, its activities, events and members.

Earth, air, water and life – the four spheres of the environment in which SES members study, research, and teach – are symbolized in its design, which conveys the unique integration of physical and life sciences related to the environment. It also represents the unification of the two former departments – Land Resource Science and Environmental Biology – which merged to form the school in 2009.

The logo, which was selected with the input of undergraduate and graduate students, staff and faculty, received approval for release and use in March 2010. ■

Congratulations!

- > Animal Science students **Lee-Anne Huber** (undergraduate) and **Michael Steele** (graduate) both placed first in their categories in the international 2010 Alltech Young Scientist Award competition, which invites students from colleges and universities across the globe to submit scientific papers aimed at finding natural solutions to animal health challenges.
- > **Marena Brinkhurst**, BSc (Env), received the Brian D. Sullivan Student Leadership Award, which recognizes a graduating student who has made significant contributions to student leadership on campus. The award was presented at the Student Life Recognition Banquet on March 25.
- > The **Campbell Centre for the Study of Animal Welfare Student Chapter** was one of four campus-based student organizations to receive a Gordon Nixon Leadership Award, which provides funding to support significant new projects that promote student involvement, service and leadership. The Campbell Centre Student Chapter was chosen for its animal welfare extension program and received the award at the Student Life Recognition Banquet on March 25.
- > **Brady Deaton** (Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics) was presented with a 2010 Teaching Excellence Award from the U of G Central Student Association (CSA) at the Student Life Recognition Banquet on March 25. The student-sponsored award is presented each year to U of G teachers who demonstrate profound dedication to university education, and who motivate and inspire students in and out of the classroom.
- > **Steven Liss**, associate vice-president (research services) and faculty member in the School of Environmental Sciences, has been appointed vice-principal (research) at Queen's University. The appointment takes effect September 1.
- > Three Master of Landscape Architecture students received an honourable mention for their submission to the Atlanta, Georgia, Park Pride student design competition. The entry by **Robert Cram**, **Philip Dixon** and **James Giddings**, entitled *Tabula Rasa*, demonstrated the park's physical evolution over the next 40 years under the influence of climate change, declining supplies of oil and community reformation.

Event acknowledges students' work and thanks clients



On April 7 at the Arboretum Centre, the School of Environmental Sciences (SES) hosted a poster presentation and client appreciation reception to recognize the efforts of students and clients in the BSc(Env) degree capstone course.

The fourth-year project course provides students the opportunity to work together as consulting groups with external clients, integrating and applying their skills and knowledge to address current, real-world environmental problems and policy issues.

In one example, students worked with the town of Wasaga Beach to develop a policy paper on alternative energy sources such as solar and bioenergy. Their project was presented to the town council on May 11. At left, four members of the student team are pictured in council chambers with Mayor Cal Patterson, Deputy Mayor David Foster and the town councillors.

Other clients for this year's projects included U of G's Sustainability Office, the Village of Eden Mills, OMAFRA, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Trout Unlimited Canada, the City of Mississauga and the Guelph Food Technology Centre. ■



▲ **At SES's first exhibit at College Royal, graduate students shared their knowledge and passion for the environment through displays and activities which included observing swarms of honey bees, racing cockroaches, measuring the weather, making rain gauges, and testing which soil types make the best mud pies. Here, Christie Bahlai invited visitors to explore bugs as she posed with a walking stick on her arm.**

College Royal 2010

An estimated 30,000 people attended College Royal Open House Weekend, March 20-21, to *Dream Big, Dream Royal*.

Some 3000 student volunteers and more than 100 campus organizations participated in efforts to showcase U of G teaching, research and community spirit through club displays, student competitions, educational and interactive exhibits.

Students were recognized for their contributions to the 86th annual event which has become North America's largest student-run university open house. Within OAC, top honours in the exhibit category went to the School of Environmental Sciences (SES) Graduate Student Council, the Horticulture Club and the Food Science Club. In the display category, OAC winners were CanAct Spark and the OAC 2010 Bucks. ■

SFOAC names new executive

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The 2010-2011 executive committee of the Student Federation of OAC (SFOAC) was recently announced following elections this spring:

President

Elliott Miller

Vice-President, Internal

Leigh Hudson

Vice-President, External

Harrison Todd

BComm Representative

Eric Martin

Animal Biology Representative

Laura Somerville

BBRM Representative

Sam Sage

Several positions are yet to be named for the upcoming year. ■

New Member inducted into Order of OAC



Lois Stockton of Guelph became the newest member of the Order of OAC early in May when she was inducted at a ceremony held in conjunction with the OAC Alumni Foundation's 50th Anniversary celebration.

The award was presented to Stockton by Brian Little, director and fundraising chair of the Foundation.

The Order, established in 1999, recognizes significant financial contributions by individual donors through endowed donations that enrich the teaching and study of agriculture, food, the environment, community and rural development at OAC. ■

In memoriam

> **Dr. Gary Ablett**, soybean researcher and professor at OAC's Ridgetown Campus, passed away on April 4. Ablett began his research and teaching career at Ridgetown in 1979, where he initiated a public soybean breeding program that would deliver more than 50 new soybean varieties for Ontario agriculture. A gifted teacher and administrator, he served as chair of OAC's department of Plant Agriculture as well as director at Ridgetown Campus.

> **Dr. Michael G. (Mike) Jenkinson** (BSA '63 and MSc '67) passed away on April 19. He served as an assistant to five OAC deans in his 34-year career at U of G, retiring in 2000 to continue his interest in agricultural education as a volunteer consultant in developing countries. In 2007, Jenkinson received the Alumni Volunteer Award, in recognition and appreciation of his outstanding loyalty and commitment to his alma mater. ■