Learn Agri-Food News

Issue 2.8
October, 2004

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Great opportunities for sharing ideas and information.

Learn Agri-Food Meeting—October 5 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. We're going to practice our stories and business lines for use with buyers and for:

Concept to Commerce—a chance to tell your business message, hear others and meet a number of business resource people.

The Innovation Network

Presentations for Selling

Julie Gour, **Peace Country Baskets** and Celine Dubois made their first vist to the Learn Agri-Food Meeting.

A business card and an appropriate appearance are the two first essentials in meeting buyers. Joan Hohenstein, Marketing Specialist with Alberta Agriculture called the business card a passport at the last Learn Agri-Food meeting. She said it matters much less how professional or glitzy the business card is—than that it exists. It lets you leave your business name and contact information with potential buyers. Not having a business card sends up a flag to buyers that you are not commercial or ready for the business world.

She also said personal appearance counts too:

- look neat,
- be clean
- stand up at trade shows (and farmers' markets (get rid of chairs unless you are infirm)
- we're still judging people by their hand shake so practice yours. Firm but not strong is the by word here.

The next tool is a brochure. Here is where the small company can shine over a large mega conglomeration. You can tell your story and it will be interesting. Your story is your connection to consumers. They love knowing (and telling others) about you. Make it easy and fun. For a brochure:

- make it simple—get help from others to edit it down, down, down to a quick and enjoyable read.
- include your certifications and special features (provincially inspected, organic or picked when cool)
- get your contact information on it (both sides
- use a separate (and throw in) price list—so you can change that as you need.

We Could Learn from This

Remember the term *paradigm shift*? That's the term used to describe seeing the same picture from two entirely different perspectives (or time periods) so it becomes a different story to you.

I was loaned a magazine that convenience store owners receive with advertising about the things they can use and sell (for lots of profit, one assumes). It included articles to help store owners do their businesses better including one on how to interview and check references for staffing success. The paradigm shift (ah hah!) was the last page giving ideas on how to treat school age humans like humans so they would spend their money at the convenience store. What a thought—targeting the market with the money.

We could learn from this.

Attend the Learn Agri-Food meeting on October 5 to hear the winter plans and suggest things you need on the agenda

If Food Service is Your Target

Background: in preparation for **Concept to Commerce and the Showcase**, Bruce Rutley arranged for meals with Peace products. Goals and dreams are good, but action… that's the point. Gerty Sorensen, Irene Gitzel and Susan Meyer are trying to fill a gap.

Executive Chef Kevin Havlin, Flavours

Action: The GIS Group (we need a new name, perhaps) has created a list of Peace Country products they can access for chefs. We took it to Flavours, Executive Chef Kevin Havlin who has oodles of information and loads of desire to help the direct market and regional cuisine project be successful.

Future: At the next Learn Agri-Food Meeting, we will share what 'Kevin said'. We will also meet him at the Showcase on October 13 and Concept to Commerce on the 14th.

Kevin is a resource because of his training and his food industry experience. We'll find ways to use him well. He's a man of action.

Last Meeting

In addition to the talk by Joan Hohenstein (780-427-7311) making presentations, we met Al Dooley (780-422-2559) and Stephanie Hand (780-422-8622)from Alberta Agriculture. They all had ideas for us to mull over.

The Showcase of our businesses to the speakers at Concept to Commerce required heavy thought. An e-mailing to members with the business profile enclosed in the last newsletter will let some of you change the template to suit your needs. A number of Learn Agri Food members discussed calling Elaine Stenbraaten for ideas on words to use in their profile. Find her name (and all the advisors) on the back page.

Learn Agri-Food Events to Attend

Tuesday, October 5 Alexander's (probably the basement) north east corner of highways 2 and 49 at Rycroft ***7:00 to 9:00 p.m.***	Learn Agri-Food Meeting The October meeting for networking and learning from others 1. practice making presentations 2. hear about Branding the Peace 3. getting into Food Service—a report Join us for supper in the dining room—if you'd like. We show up about 5:45 p.m., talk a lot, eat and then move to the meeting room at 7:00 p.m.	Just show up at 7:00 pm. A number of people are car pooling to extend the time for casual conversation.
This Winter and starting soon	A Repeat of last winter's Marketing Course. Watch for details. It was a great success.	
October 13 evening and October 14 You'll have received information on this event from The Innovation Network. If not—phone one of us.	Concept to Commerce A combination party, sales opportunity and chance to meet and talk to a wide range of people and agencies who can help your business. Don't forget to sign up for the classy awards banquet where you can rub shoulders with other Peace Region businesses, eat Peace Country food cooked by a chef and celebrate agri-food business success.	$25.00 for the opportunity to be in a trade show booth and attend the sessions. $35.00 for the evening awards ceremony and the banquet.

Farmers' Market

If you are a member of a Farmers' Market, please share this newsletter with any food producer who might enjoy sharing time learning with others. If they'd like to receive their own copy, tell them to give any of us a call.

For Peace Region Ag Entrepreneurs, brought to you by:

The Working Group which includes: Gail Briggs and Jerry Kitt, as well as:

Bruce Rutley

The Innovation Network
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Concept to Commerce

You'll have received the registration forms from **The Innovation Network** for **Concept to Commerce**.

We're going to discuss our involvement at the next Learn Agri-Food meeting. If you can't make the meeting on October 5, you'll be welcome to share in the business stories on October 13 at the Business Showcase. We are going to have fun.

October 14

Entrepreneur Awards Night

Gift yourself, your business partner and your business with a great meal in support of the Peace ag processing industry. It's a sign of the maturing of our industry that this kind of evening is in the works. It's $35.00 per person.

A newsletter to bring information, ideas and people together. If you are interested in profit from value adding agriculture in the Peace it's for you.

When we say 'member', who do we mean? We mean any person in the ag-value adding business from idea holders to multi billionaires, who read this newsletter or attend any of the training sessions.

This is Martha at Coal River and Donna Roger's **Berry Delightful** display of tourist money makers. After chatting with Donna last newsletter, a visit seemed in order. It's a simple trip from the Learn Agri-Food area: start at the Mile Zero post in Dawson Creek and drive 533 miles. Don't forget to bathe at the Liard Hot Springs on the way.