



Learn Agri-Food Network

January
February 2007

Supporting agri-preneurs in sharing information with peers to build **businesses** of ag or rural based experiences, products and services.

Learn Agri-Food Network Meeting

January Notes

Grande Prairie Meeting:

Although it was a miserable day in January, Eileen Hintz, Centre 2000 Gifts, drove to Gerty's for the January Learn Agri-Food meeting. Her business is the gift shop at the tourism and trade centre on the by-pass in Grande Prairie. Tourists and locals alike shop for gifts at her store. Eileen is looking for Peace region items that would be suitable as souvenirs, gifts for special occasions and for use while traveling. Snacks come to mind, along with reminders of the Peace and craft products. Gerty suggested people Eileen could contact. If you have appropriate products for her store call Eileen at Centre 2000.



Eileen Hintz in her store, Centre 2000 Gifts, in the Grande Prairie Tourism and Trade Centre on the by-pass.

Gerty says better signage would boost awareness of her operation, Mini Creek Farms. She values having a business card because it creates business. Road signage should produce even more sales. One day Gerty missed a call from customers as they headed into the river valley. As Gerty frequently checks her messages, before her customers reached Bezanson, she'd given them directions to her farm where they bought 100 dollars

Learn from others at the next
Learn Agri-Food Network meeting:
Tuesday, March 13, 2007



There will be NO February Learn Agri-Food Network meetings.

The Tuesday, March 13, 2007 Learn Agri-Food Network meeting will be a regional gathering in Grande Prairie from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. Some of us will surely go for supper afterward to share more ideas and conversation.

worth of chicken.

We wonder where she finds the energy. But if you need something done, ask a busy person. In 24 hours Gerty increased her herd by 25 lambs from 13 mothers. That same day, Mini Creek staff (read Gerty) had sexed, docked, tagged and recorded all the new farm members.

Gerty Sorensen reports that she and Dianne Schleiter are flying to Calgary for Grow West. They are ready for an educational holiday and both of them are value adding their trip by visiting relatives.

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**Grow West - North American
Farmers' Direct Marketing
Convention
February 12-17, 2007
Hyatt Regency in Calgary,
Alberta**



**Calling all Albertans...
For an Experience of a Lifetime.**

You can still register to attend the bus tour, the one day workshop or the two day conference or all three!

Topics for the one day workshop day include: staging engaging retail experiences, innovative marketing, pricing for profit, packaging and marketing agri-tourism experiences or creating an up-scale urban farmers' market.

Registration deadline is February 6th.
www.nafdma.com or 1-888-884-9270



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Rycroft Meeting:

January Learn Agri-Food Network meetings were cold affairs. Many of us chose not to drive, but Elaine Stenbraaten headed off to Rycroft and met the intrepid Tara Sallis, Birch Hills Bath Company, ever the country woman Kathy Meyer, Coveralls for Kids, and the artist in the bunch, Barb Barrs, Burnt River Clay.



Barb Barrs in her booth at the Farm Women's Conference.

Elaine reports that Barb is the busy one this season. The others enjoyed listening to her energy meter running overtime. Barb has signed up for a website building course through Grande Prairie Regional College. With her joy of colour, texture and beauty, we look forward to what her website might look like.

That's not all though, there's a bridal show coming to Grande Prairie and Barb purchased a booth - big bucks for that one we hear. On January 28, Barb's raku and pottery will glow with the big guys for brides and their wedding planners to enjoy at the Crystal Centre in Grande Prairie. It's a risk, but 'no risk, no reward' they say. Look to the next newsletter for the 'rest of the story'.

Nutrition Labeling Workshop

It is planned as a two day session covering labeling regulations and then building your own label. Tell us you are interested and we'll make sure you hear more.

Other Training & Ideas

We are planning a session on regulations related to food selling and another on food safety for farm direct sales. If you are interested call Sherry or Dorothy today at 780-538-6208 and let them know.

A RELEASE FORM

We can promote your business - BUT only if you give us written permission.

As government of Alberta employees we must operate under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

We don't share your information unless you give us permission. We need that permission in writing.

Please: fill out, sign and return by fax or mail the form enclosed with this newsletter or you could drop by the office and talk to us.



Who might ask us about your business?

- Media
 - newspapers such as: Peace Country Sun, Western Producer, Edmonton Journal, Calgary Herald, food magazines and tourist publications
 - radio and TV stations
- people looking for Peace country products
- businesses such as stores and restaurants wanting to buy regional products
- organizations and businesses wanting to tour or showcase the Peace
- governments and businesses wanting food or gift ideas





Designing Effective Websites

Barb Barrs is going to attend a Grande Prairie Regional College course **Designing Effective Websites** where she will “learn powerful graphic design techniques and build a website that is both attractive and wickedly effective.” We’ll pick her brain when she’s done. Until then, play with these web addresses to see what other Learn Agri-Food Network members are up to:



- <http://www.firstnaturefarms.ab.ca>
- <http://www.kemphoney.com/index.htm>
- <http://www.eurekasoap.com/>
- <http://www.backyardalpacos.com/>



- <http://www.auroraessentialoils.ca/default.html>
- <http://www.pctb.coop/home.htm>
- <http://www.telusplanet.net/public/suecaron/>

Find the course Barb will take at:
www.ed2go.com/gprc

Check out Page 4 for Web It Up! Internet Promotion and Selling—What’s Involved? Tuesday, March 13, 2007

New Realities, New Opportunities: Gearing up for the next generation of agriculture and agri-food policy

The Canadian agriculture and agri-food industry is an integral part of the Canadian economy and an important contributor to the social fabric of Canada. The sector faces a variety of opportunities and pressures in a rapidly evolving world. Together with government, the agriculture and agri-food sector will be seeking out new directions for future success.

In 2003, the federal, provincial and territorial governments implemented the Agricultural Policy Framework (APF) to position Canada as the world leader in food safety and quality, innovation and environmentally responsible agriculture production. Many elements of the APF expire in 2008. Meanwhile, a number of new economic opportunities are emerging, such as economic growth in markets like China, Brazil and India, the growing bio-based fuels industry and the increase in health awareness among Canadians and global consumers.

The time to build the next generation of agriculture and agri-food policy is now.

Consulting Canadians

All Canadians will have the opportunity to participate in national consultation sessions in January and February 2007. The purpose is to spark public debate on the future of the agriculture and agri-food sector in Canada. Beginning next week, Canadians can participate in the consultations:

- 1) Via AAFC Online: www.agr.gc.ca/nextgen.
- 2) By mailing responses to AAFC.
- 3) By attending a consultation event.

Full day public consultation will be hosted on:

Monday, January 29, 2007

Grande Prairie Inn
11633 Clairmont Road
Grande Prairie, AB

Lunch will be provided at each of these events and the consultations will run from 9:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

Pre-registration is required online at www.agr.gc.ca/nextgen or by calling 1-800-387-6030.

For Peace Region agricultural entrepreneurs.

Learn Agri-Food Network Team includes: Tyla Klassen, Gail Briggs and Jerry Kitt, as well as:

Jim Smith

The Innovation Network
1-866-835-5005

Gary Christopherson

Consultant, Grimshaw
338-2000

Alberta Agriculture & Food

Elaine Stenbraaten

Fairview
835-7531

Karen Goad

Grande Prairie
538-5629

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538-6208

Susan Meyer

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Grande Prairie
538-5630
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susan.meyer@gov.ab.ca

Send submissions to Susan.

For toll free calling of all government staff dial 310-0000 first.

The Learn Agri-Food Network Team helps agripreneurs build profitable businesses to grow their industries. Members look at business issues and apply them to the larger industry by supplying knowledge and information, reducing business development barriers and identifying resources.

We help reduce the tuition in the school of hard knocks.

Learn Agri-Food Events to Attend

Tuesday, March 13, 2007
Learn Agri-Food Meetings

There will be **NO** February Learn Agri-Food Network Meetings. Next meeting is on **March 13** and will be a regional gathering in Grande Prairie from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

February 12-17, 2007
Grow West

North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Association (NAFDMA)(www.nafdma.com/Alberta/)-more information on Page 1

It only happens once! Alberta is hosting the North American Farmers' Direct Annual convention—Grow West. This one-week event brings together approximately 800 farm direct marketers from across Canada, USA, and the United Kingdom. Choose a tour, a workshop, the conference, or all three! Take part in discussions, networking and sessions that will stimulate your business and allow you to harvest the world for new ideas.

Web It Up! Internet Promotion and Selling - What's Involved?
Tuesday, March 13, 2007

Investigate whether the internet is a useful tool for your business to connect to customers. Explore the differences between using the internet to promote your business and to sell products. Learn tools to teach prospective buyers about your products. Discover the benefits of using electronic communication - newsletters, email, etc, linking to other websites and building your won web presence. Recognize reputable internet sites. Understand internet scams.

Registration fee of 25.00 includes lunch. Cheques payable to the Peace Value Added food & Ag Association.

Call 780-538-6208 before February 23rd for information.

Linking Producers with Chefs
Tuesday, March 27, 2007
9:00 to 3:00
Grande Prairie

Dine Alberta is the September celebration in select Alberta restaurants of local ingredients. Learn how a restaurant kitchen operates and what the buyers need in order to use your products. You'll see the chef in action, peek into his working space and with three restaurant managers about why they are involved with Dine Alberta. In addition you'll hear about food safety as it relates to food service products.

Browse the Dine Alberta website at:

<http://www.dinealberta.ca>

Call 780-538-6208 to reserve your spot today. Registration fee \$20 per person and \$30 per couple (must be two people from the same farm). Cheques payable to the Peace Value Added Food & Ag Association.

We're on the web:
www.peacecountrycanada.com