



MEDIA RELEASE

Executive Development Program Allows Business Managers to Find New Opportunities in Challenging Global Conditions

Guelph, ON (August 4, 2010) Enhancement of business management skills, in order to manage and even find opportunity in the challenging global conditions, is the basis behind the George Morris Centre's Executive Development Program. The program is currently accepting applications for its 2010/2011 course. Application forms and more information can be found at www.georgemorris.org or by calling (519) 822-3929, ext. 205.

The Executive Development Program (EDP) is like a mini-MBA, but focused directly at businesses within the agriculture, food and rural sectors, so it is ideal for men and women who want to build and evolve their businesses, yet are unable to devote months on end to study. The course instead consists of four intensive four-day sessions held over eight months in different locations across Canada. The first module runs from October 13 – 16, 2010 in Halifax.

Larry Martin, Senior Research Fellow at the Centre, is one of the lead instructors. "The global economic crisis means that strong business management skills are now more essential than ever for doing well in any business. This is especially true in the agriculture and food industries where global and local opportunities are opening up. We have designed EDP to deliver both theoretical and practical components, in order to provide our participants with an industry-specific leadership and training experience."

Throughout the course, participants:

- Gain a deeper understanding of current agri-food issues and potential solutions
- Join a nationwide network of contacts within the sector
- Complete a practical, sophisticated business-planning model that can be used in a variety of situations
- Develop a broader appreciation for whole-firm strategic perspectives

"The EDP is real life and real time analysis of challenges and opportunities we face daily," says graduate Lee Whittington, President and CEO of the Prairie Swine Centre. "At the end of the first session, I felt I'd received my money's worth already because of the timeliness and depth of material that could be applied to our company's strategic thinking process. In the end, the combination of information provided, contributions from fellow participants and incorporation of what we'd learned into our own business plans made this program the most valuable management experience since completing my MBA."

One of the biggest benefits of the EDP is that modules build upon each other and participants are encouraged to implement the lessons learned in one before returning to the next session.

Trish Fournier, General Manager of Lake Erie Farms, found this break between modules to be very important. “Being able to apply what I learned and then share results with classmates was a great part of my EDP experience. Materials are presented in such a way that you can see what needs to be done and then do it. I was amazed that we could take the lessons learned and apply them directly to our operations, regardless of the diversity of industries we represented.”

The George Morris Centre is Canada’s independent agri-products think tank, dedicated to provoking informed dialogue on policies and issues and fostering excellence in the agri-products sector.

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