



# Agri-News

---

## **Berry and Vegetable School 2010**

Albertans getting into horticulture crop production or thinking about diversifying their existing operation with fruits or vegetables should consider attending the Berry and Vegetable School 2010. This conference is an opportunity for new, potential or experienced fruit and vegetable producers to learn and interact.

Being held in Red Deer on February 24 and 25, 2010, this year's schedule includes introductory and advanced streams, with fruit-related topics on the first day and vegetable-related topics on the second day. There is something for everyone.

"For new or potential growers, learn about strawberry, raspberry, Saskatoon berry and field vegetable production, in an interactive setting," says Robert Spencer, commercial horticulture specialist with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. "The school will also provide information on various diseases and insect pests and their management. Participants will be able to find out what things they need to consider when starting up a new venture of this type, and will hear some of the things that experienced growers think they should do or should avoid doing, in order to be successful."

For the more experienced producers, prepare to participate in interactive sessions that delve into more detail on topics such as weed management, food safety, forms of payment, plasticulture, growing season extension and irrigation system set up. Start thinking about alternative strawberry production practices that might be experimented with and participate in a discussion on production innovations for vegetables. Learn a lot more about direct marketing channels and their ins and outs.

Regardless of what sessions are attended, there will be lots of opportunities to learn, network and share knowledge and experiences with other participants. Come for one or two days.

For a tentative agenda and registration information, visit the Alberta Farm Fresh Producers Association website ([www.albertafarmfresh.com](http://www.albertafarmfresh.com)).

Contact: *Robert Spencer*  
310-FARM (3276)

---

### ***This Week***

<b><i>Berry and Vegetable School 2010</i></b>	<b>1</b>
<b><i>North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Convention</i></b>	<b>2</b>
<b><i>Gord Bamford Forms Partnership to Raise Money for 4-H Canada</i></b>	<b>2</b>
<b><i>Farmer Panel Returns to AgChoices Conference</i></b>	<b>3</b>
<b><i>Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development at Farm Tech 2010</i></b>	<b>3</b>
<b><i>Working Well Workshops</i></b>	<b>3</b>
<b><i>Agri-News Briefs</i></b>	<b>5</b>

---

## North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Convention

The North American Farm Direct Marketing Association (NAFDMA) is hosting its annual conference in the heart of Amish Country, Lancaster, PA. The 25th anniversary conference, February 5 to 11, 2010, promises to be filled with great learning opportunities in an atmosphere of experience and knowledge sharing.

"The seven-day convention features a jam-packed agenda including a three-day bus tour, fondly known as the School on Wheels," says Kerry Engel, manager food and health innovation with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development and Alberta's NAFDMA representative. "Participants can pick and choose which sessions and parts of the conference they want to attend. Albertans involved in direct marketing, ag-tourism, farmers' markets, local product sales and on-farm stores and sales will find this a truly beneficial conference."

As well as the over 25 speaker sessions that will cover topics from how to use social media, farm retail, business management and buying local. The speakers, who hail from across North America, are really in touch with the issues, opportunities and challenges direct marketers are facing. Listening to the information provided by the speakers as well as networking with and forming friendships with them and with fellow participants is an unequalled opportunity for sharing experiences.

"The conference also includes a trade show that will feature over 100 different vendors," says Engel. "The trade show is another opportunity to see a real variety of products, learn about unique challenges and how they were overcome, and it's also offers some great deals for conference goers."

For further information on the 2010 North American Farmers' Direct Marketing Convention or to register, visit the conference website at [www.nafdma.com](http://www.nafdma.com)

Contact: Kerry Engel  
780-644-2967

---

## Gord Bamford Forms Partnership to Raise Money for 4-H Canada

Canadian country music singer Gord Bamford and the Canadian 4-H Council have formed a partnership to raise funds for 4-H clubs across Canada.

The **Gord Bamford and Friends of 4-H Rural Roots Run Deep** fundraising project will provide an opportunity for 28,000 4-H members from clubs in every Canadian province to sell Bamford's new CD, titled *Day Job*, which is set to arrive in

stores on April 15, 2010, as well as his current CD *Honkytonks and Heartaches*. A portion of the profits from those CD sales will go back to the 4-H members' club.

"I am very excited to have developed this great partnership with 4-H Canada, and having the chance to give back to an organization that had such a big impact on my youth," explains Bamford, an alumni of Alberta 4-H. "What I gained from 4-H was invaluable, and it only makes sense for me, in my current career, to want to give back. I look forward to a great working relationship with 4-H in Canada."

"It is especially fitting that Gord has partnered with 4-H Canada, due to the fact that he is a former 4-H member," says Mike Nowosad, CEO for the Canadian 4-H Council. "Gord exhibits all the characteristics that 4-H embodies and this is apparent in his life and his music. We are extremely appreciative to Gord for this opportunity and his support of 4-H Canada."

The mission of the Canadian 4-H Council is to provide a strong national platform that offers innovative support and initiatives which inspire youth to become contributing leaders in their communities.

Bruce Banks, CEO of the 4-H Foundation of Alberta, was instrumental in encouraging other provincial 4-H organizations to become involved in the project. "Not only do we get an opportunity to work with one of our successful 4-H Alumni, a portion of the CD sales will go to the 4-H Foundation of Alberta Legacy Fund to enhance member and leader experiences through programs, workshops and special events."

Bamford acknowledges the importance of 4-H within rural communities and wants his public profile to help create opportunity, strengthen rural communities across Canada and affect positive change for 4-H members.

Bamford recently won a SOCAN (The Society of Composers Authors and Music Publishers of Canada) award on November 23, 2009, for his song *Stayed Til Two* as one of the top three Country Music songs that achieved the greatest number of performances on domestic radio in 2008. A past Canadian Country Music Award (CCMA) winner in 2008, Bamford, his band and management team received nine CCMA nominations in 2009. More about Gord Bamford can be found on his website at [www.gordbamford.com](http://www.gordbamford.com)

Contact: Corinne Szepesi, Gord Bamford media relations  
780-914-9175

Susann Stone, 4-H Foundation of Alberta  
780-898-4223

---

## Farmer Panel Returns to AgChoices Conference

Innovative, successful Alberta producers will tell their stories and share lessons learned along the way at the 2010 AgChoices conference.

As 2010 begins, many Alberta producers are looking for new ways to meet changing demands from consumers and the marketplace.

Why not take a lesson from those who've successfully done the same? That's the idea behind the Farmer Panel at the upcoming AgChoices 2010 conference. AgChoices 2010 takes place on Wednesday February 10 at the Capri Centre Hotel, Convention & Trade Centre in Red Deer.

The AgChoices 2010 Farmer Panel includes:

- Eric Chen, St. Albert. Eric owns and operates Peas On Earth Organic Garden with his wife Ruby. They have marketed certified organic vegetables at Edmonton-area farmers' markets for many years.
- Colin Felsted, Dapp. Colin and three family partners operate a 5,300-acre grain farm and 800-head feedlot. He is a director with the Alberta Canola Producers Commission and active with other groups.
- Tamara Taylor, Caroline. Tamara and husband Mark run Ravenwood Ranch with their family. In addition to naturally raising livestock, they also operate a butcher shop, home-style café, bakery and caterer.
- Christoph Weder, Rycroft. Christoph and his wife Erika, Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers for 2006, are founding members of the Prairie Heritage Beef Producers. The group markets sustainably raised beef.

"The four individuals on our Farmer Panel have a great business focus, used smart strategy and listened to the market to make it happen," says Jodi Murphy, conference organizer and business management program coordinator with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. "Their stories are informative and inspiring."

AgChoices 2010 is sponsored by Growing Forward, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative. Register for AgChoices 2010 today by calling toll-free 1-800-387-6030. For more information on the conference, please visit [www.agriculture.alberta.ca/agchoices](http://www.agriculture.alberta.ca/agchoices).

Contact: Jodi Murphy  
780-644-5379

---

## Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development at Farm Tech 2010

As part of the Farm Tech 2010 trade show, Alberta Agriculture staff will be on hand to visit with producers from across the prairies and discuss a variety of topics on January 27 to 29, 2010. Over the three days, Ag-Tech Centre staff will be available to talk about their energy efficiency display. Rhodiola Rosea experts and growers will be there to talk about the specialty crop, production and market considerations, and to serve cups of Rhodiola tea to visitors.

Producers who stop by the booth (#33-35) will also have an opportunity to speak with staff about Growing Forward programs, Alberta Carbon Offset System and Nutrient Management. Crop specialists from the Ag-Info Centre will also be on hand during the conference.

Alberta Agriculture's website, Ropin' the Web will be featured at the display, and staff will be available to highlight the new features on the site, as well as demonstrate the abundance of good information available.

If you don't get to Farm Tech 2010, remember to visit the website at [www.agriculture.alberta.ca](http://www.agriculture.alberta.ca) or connect with Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development staff and specialists by calling 310-FARM (3276). **Good Help - It's Closer than You Think.**

Contact: Betty Birch  
310-FARM

Laura Thygesen, B.Sc. Ag.  
780-644-1754

---

## Working Well Workshops

A poorly maintained water well can put your water supply at risk of contamination and reduce your well yield. To assist the 450,000 Albertans who use their water well for household purposes, **Working Well** workshops are being held throughout Alberta from January to March 2010.

The key to ensuring a safe and secure water supply is in knowing how groundwater works, learning about your well and understanding how to properly maintain it. Proper water well siting, construction, maintenance and plugging will help protect a well from biofouling and contamination, save costly repairs, and ensure well water yields are sustained over many years.

To find out what can be done to protect your well, attend one of the free water well management workshop being presented by the Working Well Program, with technical expertise provided by Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, Alberta Environment and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

## January 18, 2010 – page 4

The workshop will cover:

- groundwater – how it works
- water quality and quantity testing
- well protection – protecting your well from contamination
- basic well maintenance
- water sampling – how to do it

### Working Well schedule:

Location	Date	Contact
<b>Sturgeon County</b>	January 20, 2010	Jennifer Stoby 780-939-0618 jstoby@sturgeoncounty.ab.ca
<b>Flagstaff County</b>	January 26, 2010	Lindsey Catherwood 730-384-4129 lcatherwood@glagstaff.ab.ca Tim Nelner 1-866-828-6774
<b>MD of Greenview</b>	January 27, 2010	Susan Kerekanich 780-524-7615 susan.kerekanich@mdgreenview.ab.ca Cherie 780-524-7602
<b>Lamont/Beaver County</b>	February 10, 2010	Nick Wolanski 780-764-3927 nichwolanski@gmail.com
<b>Yellowhead County</b>	February 16, 2010	Jennifer Benson 1-800-814-3935 jbenson@yellowheadcounty.ab.ca
<b>M.C. of Rockyview</b>	February 18, 2010	Laura Poile 403-520-7273 lpoile@rockyview.ca
<b>Leduc County</b>	February 22, 2010	Heather Dickau 780-955-3555 ext 3287 heatherm@leduc-county.com
<b>County of Wetaskiwin</b>	February 23, 2010	Heather Dickau 780-955-3555 ext 3287 heatherm@leduc-county.com
<b>MD of Peace</b> (Grimshaw Gravels Aquifer Management Advisory Association)	February 24, 2010	Lyle McKen 780-338-3845 l.mcken@wispernet.ca
<b>Strathcona County</b>	March 4, 2010	Jennifer Stoby 780-939-0618 jstoby@sturgeoncounty.ab.ca
<b>Cypress County</b> (Medicine Hat)	March 10, 2010	Bob Phillips 403-488-8110 Bob@seawa.ca
<b>Special Area 3</b> (Oyen)	March 10, 2010	Audrey Bamber 403-664-3777 cara-ab@telus.net

---

## Agri-News Briefs

---

---

### Creating Value in Value Chains

Creating Value in Value Chains Seminar/Workshop is a one-day business intelligence workshop featuring Michael O'Keefe, Ross Drever, Randy Baldwin, Sven Anders and Greg Bott providing both international and local information. The workshop will focus on the tools available for the Alberta industry and building closer relationships in the fresh food supply chain sectors. The workshop is being held in Red Deer on February 16, 2010. Cost of the workshop is \$45 per person, and registration deadline is February 9, 2010. To register, contact the Ag-Info Centre Registration Line toll-free at 1-800-387-6030. As well as the workshop, six individual, one-hour appointments are available on February 17, 2010, for business units or individuals to meet with Michael O'Keefe. This is an opportunity for individual discussions and questions specific to your business and its value chain options. Please indicate your interest to sign up for the individual meeting when you register. Further information is also available by contacting Margurite Thiessen at 780-968-3513.

---

### Annual Alberta Beef Industry Conference

The 7th Annual Alberta Beef Industry Conference (ABIC), being held in Red Deer on February 17 to 19 2010, provides cattle producers from all sectors of the industry an opportunity to meet face-to-face. The largest of its kind in Canada, the ABIC is designed to address issues faced by many facets of the beef industry - not only in Alberta, but across the country. The conference is proudly hosted by Alberta Auction Markets Association, Alberta Beef Producers, Alberta Cattle Feeders' Association, Alberta Livestock Dealers & Order Buyers and Western Stock Growers Association. These five industry associations recognize the importance of connecting together to consider common issues and create plans for the future. Also, a new program is being added to the conference this year. One full day will focus on future young entrepreneurs/beef producers and students. This one-day workshop will educate

younger producers and students about the value chain and the importance each sector plays on our industry as a whole. The conference speaker line-up includes:

- Doug Price – owner/operator of Echo Sand Ranching
- Derek Hill – facility manager for Cargill Meats Canada, Spruce Grove
- Kirstin Kotelko – president of Spring Creek Ranch Premium Beef

For further information about the 2010 ABIC, and for details about the **Big on Beef - What's at Steak?** student and package and the young producer workshop, call 403-250-2509 or e-mail [jbrunette@cattlefeeders.ca](mailto:jbrunette@cattlefeeders.ca). The delegate exhibitor package can be viewed or downloaded from the conference website at [www.abiconference.ca/main/page.php?page\\_id=1](http://www.abiconference.ca/main/page.php?page_id=1)

---

### Hort Snacks

**Hort Snacks** is a monthly newsletter targeted at direct market horticulture crop producers and related industry. It contains timely articles and topics related to all aspects of horticulture crop production operations, including production, business and marketing. Upcoming conferences and workshops (regional, provincial, national and international) are listed. There are also thought provoking items, as well as monthly interactive questions and answers. To view this electronic newsletter, visit [www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/newslett.nsf/homemain/snack](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/newslett.nsf/homemain/snack)