

THE BUZZ



News about the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs – University of Guelph Partnership

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IN THE NEWS

Research helps corn producers get a 30-bushel “yield kick.”

The importance of controlling emerging weeds to boost a corn crop's yield potential was demonstrated at the annual Southwest Crop Diagnostic Days in Ridgetown by Greg Stewart, corn specialist with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and Prof. Clarence Swanton, weed scientist at the University of Guelph. Stewart and Swanton explained how plants use wave lengths from the sun to detect nearby weeds, along with reflected light from weeds, to guide and alter growing patterns. After the crop has reached the three-to-four leaf stage and is in a heavy, dense stand of weeds, the function and structure of the corn plants change dramatically and crops can be lost at a rate of half-a-bushel to 3.3 bushels per day. So delaying the herbicide application at the three-to-four leaf stage results in significant yield loss. Citing recent research from the University of Guelph, Stewart says there is a 30-bushel “yield kick” by spraying once at the three-to-four leaf stage versus waiting two weeks and spraying at the seven-to-eight leaf stage. Read more about this research [here](#).

RESEARCH STATIONS

Extending research findings into user communities. The University of Guelph's dairy research centres at Elora and Ponsonby operate in tandem to provide animals and facilities for an active research program, as well as for teaching purposes. Projects focused on such diverse areas as nutritional strategies, the assessment and management of post-surgical pain, and the evaluation of new technologies all have the same ultimate goal – that is, to provide dairy producers with tools that ensure optimal production and a high standard of animal well-being, says acting dairy program coordinator Prof. Todd Duffield. An extensive research outreach program features a variety of activities to promote new findings to key audiences, including producers, practicing veterinarians, industry professionals and advisors, and dairy and veterinary scientists around the world. A [Precision Dairy Management Conference](#) scheduled for March 2010, a joint initiative of OMAFRA, U of G, CanWest DHI and the Progressive Dairy Operators of Ontario, is the latest of these outreach initiatives and will focus on leading-edge technologies.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

New location for Business Development Office. The [Business Development Office](#) changed locations as of August 1, 2009. While still in the University's research park, the office is now located in Research Park Centre, 150 Research Lane, Suite 102. All other contact information remains unchanged. In concert with this change in address, the BDO has also been focusing on improving its services and responsiveness, by increasing outreach to researchers and partners, streamlining procedures to be more responsive to the needs of researchers, and expanding contact with industry and funding agents.

NEWS

Soy good for you – making bread better. A multi-disciplinary team, led by Prof. Alison Duncan, has been investigating the [benefits of isoflavones](#) in soy flour bread with broader health implications and economic market feasibility. Ontario soybean flour has been incorporated into bread that has satisfied several Health Canada nutrient content claims -- high-fibre, low sodium, low-fat, trans-fat free, excellent source of protein and more. The Ontario soy bread has even been tested for consumer acceptance and 75 per cent of those who sampled it say they are likely to consume it. This acceptance has prompted Canada Bread (Maple Leaf Foods) to develop a process to produce the soy bread on an industrial scale. With results such as these, more industry involvement in producing soy breads is likely, creating another production opportunity for Ontario soybean growers. "This bread has been developed at the University of Guelph and contains soy flour that was produced from soybeans grown in Ontario," says Duncan.

Agri-food yearbook *Research* magazine hits the stands. The first edition of *Research* magazine dedicated to the OMAFRA-U of G partnership is now available. The magazine features articles about all of the programs in the partnership including the Animal Health Laboratory, the Agriculture and Food Laboratory, Veterinary Clinical Education Program and research. Putting the magazine together was truly a partnership effort, with contributions from OMAFRA and U of G staff, including past and present SPARK students. Articles from the magazine are featured on the OMAFRA newsroom site [here](#), and you can see the magazine in its entirety [here](#). For print copies, contact Liz Snyder (lsnyder@uoguelph.ca) or Robyn Meerveld (robyn.meerveld@ontario.ca).

OMAFRA launches research advisory network. The OMAFRA Research Advisory Network (ORAN) is the outcome of a research priority-setting review process undertaken at OMAFRA. ORAN was developed to guide all OMAFRA-funded research, including research conducted through the new OMAFRA-University of Guelph Agreement. ORAN, implemented in June 2009, includes the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario, expert panels, the newly created Theme Advisory Groups (TAGs), OMAFRA Director Champions, University of Guelph Research Program Directors, research analysts and stakeholders. ORAN replaces the Ontario Agricultural Services Coordinating Committee (OASCC) system as a mechanism for setting research priorities for all OMAFRA-funded research. "While ORAN replaces OASCC as a priority-setting mechanism, the valuable service and technical advisory functions of former OASCC participants will not be lost," says Research and Corporate Services Assistant Deputy Minister Karen Chan. "A process is underway within OMAFRA, in consultation with stakeholders, to ensure that these valuable functions are maintained." Read more about ORAN [here](#).

STAFF AND STUDENT NEWS

New Masters of Public Health program in full gear. With 14 full-time and two part-time students starting this fall, a new Masters in Public Health program, based out of OVC, is at full capacity. "It was nice to get a robust set of applications for the first full year of the program," says MPH Coordinator Andrew Papadopoulos. One of the entering students is Dr. Trace MacKay, who earned a DVM at OVC in 2003. She has been practicing emergency and locum small animal medicine and surgery, but when she heard about the MPH, she knew it was for her. "I've always planned to do graduate work," she said. "The MPH is very attractive to me as I've always had an interest in international development and community health." Papadopoulos says those aspirations are echoed by others who have been accepted. "In addition to international development, students are interested in community health, infectious diseases, the human/animal interface and population medicine. They are also interested in health policy at the community level," he says. For more information about the program contact Papadopoulos at 519-824-4120 x 53894 or apapadaop@uoguelph.ca.

Associate VP Research named. Rich Moccia has been appointed U of G's new Associate Vice-President (Research) Agri-food and Partnerships. His five-year appointment began September 1, 2009. Moccia has served as interim AVPR since May 2007, and played a leadership role in negotiating the new partnership between OMAFRA and the University of Guelph. "I look forward to continuing to work with the dedicated people at U of G and OMAFRA and strengthening our successful partnership," said Moccia. "This role will allow me to build on what we've done and give further support to the agri-food sector, which is vital to the health and prosperity of this province."

Partnership soybean researchers have international appeal.

Bioeconomy-Industrial Uses Research Program Director Prof. Gary Ablett and U of G researcher Prof. Istvan Rajcan, along with graduate students Chase Phillips, Mark MacDuff, Amy McNaughton, research associate Lin Liao and former graduate student Sheila Murphy were part of the 33-member Canadian contingent who made the trip to the World Soybean Research Conference VIII held in Beijing, China in August. The event, hosted by the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences and the Crop Science Institute of China, saw over 1,500 participants from 40 countries attend. Hundreds of presentations and posters, along with a trade show, marked the event including three invited presentations and two posters from the U of G contingent. "The conference was a tremendous success with excellent presentations on genomics, pathology, molecular breeding, breeding and genetics, entomology, economics and food/health uses for soybeans," says Ablett. He chairs a committee which, among other responsibilities, decided the next site for the conference, which will be Durban, South Africa in 2013.

COMING EVENTS

News@Noon. The next News@Noon lunchtime seminar takes place December 4, 2009 in the conference centre at 1 Stone Road W., Guelph. Prof. Rickey Yada, Canada Research Chair in Food Protein Structure and Scientific Director of the Advanced Foods and Materials Network (AFMNet), will give an overview of the steps involved in developing and producing the perfect potato chip and the research that is presently going on at the University of

Guelph in this area. For more information, contact Liz Snyder (519-826-3376, lsnyder@uoguelph.ca) or Robyn Meerveld (519-826-4191, robyn.meerveld@ontario.ca).

About The Buzz

The Buzz is the electronic community news vehicle for the OMAFRA-University of Guelph partnership.

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Find out more about the OMAFRA-UofG Partnership at:

www.uoguelph.ca/research/omafra/index.shtml

www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/uofg/

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