

News Release

New approach to encourage producer involvement in value chains

For immediate release

Guelph ON, October 17, 2012 – The Agricultural Management Institute (AMI) is spearheading a project to help producers be more competitive by working more closely with their partners along the value chain. The project will conduct a baseline attitudes study of Ontario farmers, host capacity-building workshops and develop a strategy to assist the agricultural sector with value chain development.

“Value chains can offer great potential for farm businesses to increase their profitability and we want to identify where and how we can provide the most effective support to the sector in their development,” says Gerald Renkema, Chair of AMI. “AMI is committed to increasing farm business management skills and awareness, and this initiative is another way for us to provide tools and management solutions to Ontario farmers.”

A value chain aims to deliver value to consumers and sustainable profits to the individual businesses in the chain, from input supplier through to retailer. This fall, 500 Ontario farmers will be surveyed on their attitudes and knowledge of value chains, as well as identifying gaps and areas of concern. AMI will also be hosting workshops to seek input on value chain development, including barriers to uptake and possible tools that could assist producer participation. Information gathered will be used in development of AMI’s value chain strategy, tools and resources to help increase farmer engagement in value chains.

AMI will be leveraging previous work by the Value Chain Management Centre, Ipsos Forward Research and the George Morris Centre as part of its efforts to bring a more producer-focused approach to value chain development.

“We are taking a farmer-focused approach to value chains to ensure we are developing tools and supporting initiatives that will help farmers,” says Ryan Koeslag, AMI’s Executive Director. “Value chains are a government priority to help support industry competitiveness and boost agricultural profitability and we have had excellent uptake with farm business management topics and initiatives to date.”

The Agricultural Management Institute promotes new ways of thinking about farm business management and aims to increase awareness, understanding and adoption of beneficial business management practices by Ontario farmers. AMI is part of the Best Practices Suite of programs for Growing Forward, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

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