



# Future Farmer Newsletter

A voice for people new to farming or those considering farming

## The Organic Dream Future Farmer Profile

The year 2006 will always be a memorable one for Mark and Sally Bernard. That's the year they both graduated from the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, it's the year they got married, and it's also the year they began farming. That's a solid beginning, one on which they hope to build with the help of the Future Farmer Program.

Mark and Sally both knew they wanted to make their living by farming. They both grew up on a farm (he in Lower Freetown, she in New Brunswick), and when they met while studying at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, they soon discov-



ered their mutual interest. "I guess you could say that we really didn't decide to farm," says Mark. "We just always knew we would, and thankfully the two of us agree."

They are now settling in as the third generation on Mark's family farm in Lower Freetown, which had seen a 40 cow milking herd in the 80's and 300 acres of seed and table-stock potatoes in the 90's. The farm land has been rented since 2001 after the last crop of potatoes was harvested. This has given Mark and Sally the opportunity to start anew.

They decided to pursue opportunities outside of conven-

tional agriculture, and quickly settled on organics, which had been of longstanding interest to both of them. "We both knew that although conventional farming was working for a lot of people, it wasn't working for even more and we wanted to try something different," explains Mark.

This year, they grew 45 acres of certified soybeans and mixed cereals. By 2008, they plan to have 120 acres in certified production, with plans beyond that for more. Sally is going to raise her flock of registered Polled Dorset sheep as well as a small and diverse mix of other livestock. They are also looking at exploring the fresh cut flower and sunflower markets, as well as developing an agri-tourism enterprise.

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## Message from the Minister Hon. Jim Bagnall

Prince Edward Island agriculture has earned a strong reputation for the high quality and range of its products. We are ideally situated to produce a wide variety of crops and livestock, and that holds great potential for the future.

The department, working closely with individuals and groups, is strongly supportive of measures to further

diversify our industry, develop innovative new products and processes, and encourage higher value production. There are growing opportunities for all kinds of organic products, high protein feeds, specialty crops, natural pork, fruits and vegetable, and to market these and all other products in new ways to achieve higher returns for producers. We also

know there are tremendous opportunities to expand production in some sectors, such as beef, for example.

New farmers are an excellent source of new ideas and energy. That is why I look forward to continuing to work with you, to build on Prince Edward Island's reputation as an agricultural province. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

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### Contact Us:

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E-mail: [peiextension@gov.pe.ca](mailto:peiextension@gov.pe.ca)

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 Sandra MacKinnon 368-5647  
 Suzanne MacNeill 888-8040  
 Ron Sampson 368-5604 cell 314-0821

# The Organic Dream

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Mark is also employed as a field research coordinator for the province with the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada. This past year, replicated demonstration plots were planted to study options for high protein feeds and to evaluate variety trials for high value crops such as flax, lupins, faba beans, soybeans and canola. Mark is also conducting an inter-row spacing trial with his soybean crop. He is exploring 6 inch vs 18 inch row width



Mark checking the faba bean plots

spacing so he can incorporate cultivation passes and finger weeding for weed control. The results of the OACC trials will be writ-

ten up this winter and available on line at the OACC website

( <http://www.organiccentre.ca/> - click on English / French then choose Atlantic).

Both Sally and Mark plan to access training dollars for farm accounting, financial management strategies, and cost of production analysis. In the future, they have plans for some capital purchases and hope to access the Interest rebate section of the program. Although they have yet to access many of the offerings under the Future Farmer program, they say the opportunity to share ideas and talk to other young farmers is probably just as valuable as everything else. They say that networking with producers groups, including Future Farmers, Young Farmers and the PEI Certified Organic Producers Cooperative, along with staff from

the department, has helped them with their farming decisions.

“The new generation of farmers is more likely to seek out these groups and share their experiences,” says Mark. They also access ideas and information on the internet and through e-mail.

While they may look back to 2006 with happy memories, both Mark and Sally are also looking forward as part of the Island’s group of Future Farmers.



PEI Soil & Crop tour in September 2006.

## The Importance of Record Keeping in Agriculture

There are three main reasons for modern agricultural managers to keep proper financial records. These records are essential for obtaining credit, preparing income tax statements as well as a management tool.

When you decide to obtain credit for your farm operation, the financial institution will want to review your current financial records including balance sheet, income statement and a cash flow statement. These statements will be used by the your loan officer to determine the operations repayment capacity.

Each tax season, up to date financial records will be a valuable asset in preparing

income tax statements. A good set of records are necessary to prepare complete and accurate tax documents. Incorrect records will lead to overpayments or underpayments. Also in situation of Revenue Canada audits, considerable problems may arise.

Possibly the most important role record keeping plays in a farm operation is a management tool. Accurate financial records,

along with production data, will help the farm manager analyze the information and make the necessary adjustments to operate efficiently and therefore increasing profitability. These analysis will help plan for the future and focus efforts on the most profitable portions of the enterprise.

### Record keeping system

- A business chequeing account
- Monthly Income and expense ledger
- Inventory ledger for physical counts.
- Balance sheet
- An income statement
- A cash flow statement

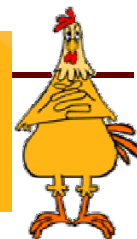
## Harvesting Positive Results

Mark Tuesday, December 12 on your calendar because Dan Ohler is coming to speak to you. Who is Dan Ohler you say? Well he is a man who has two degrees 1) A Phd or pretty happy dude and 2) a Degree of Personal Experiences (D. O. P. E.). He is a renowned speaker who has common sense, practical tips, and tools that will help you enhance your business and personal relationships, face challenges and change, and help you create a successful business environment.

He is a farmer at heart. He and his wife Carol operate a small beef operation and a

bed and breakfast just outside of Edmonton. He believes in the small rural communities and that we must work together in order to forge ahead. He will help you move beyond your comfort level and create the happiness and success you desire.

The goal of the day is to have a workshop that is informative, interactive and entertaining. This will be accomplished while discussing the following 1) Principle of creative thought 2) Principle of mental clearing 3) Principle of mindful awareness. Dan wants the participants to take away



practical ideas to consciously choose to live their lives on purpose rather than by default. Check out his website at: [thinkinoutsidethebarn.com](http://thinkinoutsidethebarn.com)

Funding for this workshop is provided by the Canadian Farm Business Management Council Speaker Sponsorship Program 2005-2006.

## Future Farmer Program Updates

**Welcome** to the ten recently approved entrants to the Future Farmer Program. This brings the total number of applications received to 206. In this fiscal year, the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture has approved a budget of \$550,000 for the program. Participants are reminded that interest rebate will only be considered for those individuals who have their farm ownership finalized, business plan completed and interest rebate forms submitted by March 31, 2007. Applications to the training, risk manage-

ment and business planning programs will continue to be accepted after March 31, 2007.

### We Look Forward to Your Participation

Training events, specifically designed for Future Farmers, are being scheduled during the next several months. The ideas for the workshops came from FFP participants who provided suggestions on the type of training required by individuals entering the indus-

try. The workshops will also give participants the chance to meet others in the program—to share ideas and discuss common concerns. Research indicates that a strong correlation exists between educational achievements and success in farming, therefore, take this opportunity to participate in the training. Workshops will include:

- Harvesting Positive Results
- Interviewing and Hiring Techniques
- Negotiating Skills for Farmers
- The Next Step in Business Planning
- Bringing a Food Product to the Market

## Canadian Farm Families Options Program

The Canadian Farm Families Options Program (Options) is designed to provide short-term income assistance to lower-income farmers and their families while they pursue training and advice to improve their business prospects and income for the long-term.

As a condition of receiving income assistance, participants must commit to completing one of the following Renewal activities:

- 1) Farm Business Assessment or business plan offered by the Canadian Farm Business Advisory Services, or an approved equivalent activity
- 2) Skills training or an Individual Learning Plan through the Canadian Agricultural Skills Service, or an approved equivalent activity .

Program details are available at:  
[http://www.agr.gc.ca/options/main\\_e.html](http://www.agr.gc.ca/options/main_e.html).

Applications can be downloaded from the web site:

[http://www.agr.gc.ca/options/form\\_e.html](http://www.agr.gc.ca/options/form_e.html)

**Deadline to apply is October 31, 2006.** For more information on the Options program or to request an application form, call toll free 1-866-367-8506.

## Summer BBQ's

On July 31, Future Farmers from the West Prince and Summerside areas attended a dinner and speaker at the PEI Preserve Company in New Glasgow. The event provided an opportunity for participants and their families to meet others in the Future Farmer Program, to hear about upcoming training activities and to be inspired by motivational speaker, Gordon MacNeilly. The message for the evening was to establish your vision, determine your goals and "to do it."

On Aug 1, the Orwell Corner Historical Vil-

lage was the gathering site for the Charlottetown, Montague and Souris Future Farmers' barbecue. Over 60 people, including Minister of Agriculture, Jim Bagnall were in attendance. Brenda and Tyler Howard gave a presentation on the Farm Advisory Team established for their farm. They credit the team with moving their farm forward during a very stressful and uncertain time for the family. The presentation generated lively discussion and has resulted in several inquiries for a similar program by other farms.



l-r: Mark Bernard, Bernie Shea and Morgan Smallman enjoy some relaxation

## PEI Occupational Health & Safety

Prince Edward Island's Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) Act comes into effect on all farms January 1, 2007. The main principle of the OHS Act is that workers, supervisors and employers share the responsibilities of safety in the workplace. The OHS Act sets out the rights and duties of everyone in the workplace and provides the Worker's Compensation

Board (WCB) the authority to investigate complaints, critical injuries and fatalities. The WCB's Farm Safety Specialist will:

- provide educational programs
- conduct workplace inspections
- investigate complaints, injuries & fatalities
- help farmers develop OHS policy

• enforce the OHS Act  
For more information on the OHS Act and the Farm Safety Code of Practice, contact the WCB's Farm Safety Specialist:

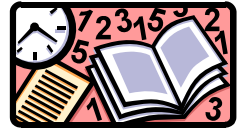
**Janice Whalen**  
(902) 368-5680  
1-800-237-5049  
[www.wcb.pe.ca](http://www.wcb.pe.ca)



Agriculture, Fisheries  
and Aquaculture

## Training Opportunities

Calendar of Events [www.gov.pe.ca/go/agevents](http://www.gov.pe.ca/go/agevents)



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Toll Free Phone: 1-866-PEI-FARM (734-3276)  
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[www.peifam.ca](http://www.peifam.ca)  
Email: [peixtension@gov.pe.ca](mailto:peixtension@gov.pe.ca)

### Farming for the Future...Today

#### Feedback

We would like to get feedback from you so tell us what you think of this newsletter or what you would like to see in future newsletters - all suggestions are welcome.  
Contact: AIO Desk via e-mail [peixtension@gov.pe.ca](mailto:peixtension@gov.pe.ca)

We're on the web!

[www.gov.pe.ca/go/begfarm](http://www.gov.pe.ca/go/begfarm)

- Oct 27 & 28: Maritime Beef Producer Conference, Moncton  
Contact: Rinnie Bradley (902) 368-2229
- Nov. 9 & 10: Biofuels Forum & Workshop, Dutch Inn, ADAPT Council 368-2005
- Nov. 23: Interviewing and Hiring Techniques and Keeping the Right Employees. Slemon Park. Contact: AIO Desk 1-866-734-3276.
- Dec. 8: Value Chain Workshop. Contact: Ronda 1-877-629-1845
- Dec. 12: Harvesting Positive Results, Slemon Park, 10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. \$20.  
Contact: 1-866-734-3276

#### Organic Workshops, Charlottetown:

Pre-registration. Contact: ACORN 1-866-322-2676 or visit [www.acornorganic.org](http://www.acornorganic.org)  
\$20 for ACORN members and \$30 for non-members.

- Oct. 23: Getting into Organic Agriculture  
Nov. 7: Building Soil Health and Fertility  
Dec. 12: Managing Weeds, Insects and Diseases Organically

#### Profit Learn Training: <http://profitlearn.upei.ca>

Nov. 22 : Time Management, Charlottetown, Contact: Winnie 628-2000  
Rodd Mill River Resort. Contact David Gamble: 853-4555

- Nov. 7: Business Basics  
Nov. 14: Pricing for Profit  
Nov. 21: How to Read Financial Statements

**Environmental Farm Plans Workshops** every Wednesday starting in November  
<http://peiefp.ca/index.php>

#### E-Letter

Do you have e-mail? Would you like to receive up-to-date agriculture information, news stories and events in the comfort of your own office? Contact AIO Desk at [peixtension@gov.pe.ca](mailto:peixtension@gov.pe.ca)

## Tool Shed

### Value Chain Workshop

December 8, Rodd Charlottetown Hotel Workshop is sponsored by the Canadian Farm Business Management Council (CFBMC) and hosted by the PEI ADAPT Council. Number of seats is limited. The workshop leader is Martin Gooch, Research Associate specializing in agri-food value chain innovation and management. For more information on Martin, check out his bio at [http://www.georgemorris.org/User/Doc/CV\\_MartinGooch.pdf](http://www.georgemorris.org/User/Doc/CV_MartinGooch.pdf).

Details on the workshop will be available by mid-October. To receive more information, or to register, contact:

Ronda Bellefontaine 1-877-629-1845 or (902) 629-1845 [rondab@peifa.ca](mailto:rondab@peifa.ca)  
Phil Ferraro 1-877-862-3706 or (902) 368-2005 [adapt@pei.aibn.com](mailto:adapt@pei.aibn.com) Fax: 368-2520

### Negotiation Skills for Farmers

Have you ever wondered why some people are more successful at making deals with supply companies, bankers and others. Course will be a combination of theory and role-playing. Possible Date: Mid-January, 2007. Contact Brian 368-4862.

### Diversifying Your Farm Business

This course for farmers who have ideas for diversifying their farm business. It will be a combination of theory and stories from entrepreneurs who took the risk, developed a plan and started a business. Contact Sandra 368-5647.

### Bringing a Food Product to the Market

Do you have an idea for adding value to something that you are producing on the farm? This one day course will help you to understand the steps involved to successfully bring a new product to the marketplace. The workshop is limited to 15 people. Course will be a combination of Food Technology Center training and "stories" from individuals who have developed new products. Potential Date: January 2007. Contact Sandra 368-5647.

### The Next Step in Business Planning

This workshop will provide an opportunity of individuals to keep their business plan current and use it to grow their operation. To understand that the business plan they create

is a living document and to encourage usage of the three follow-up days under the CFBAS. Instructor: Gerard Fitzpatrick and Randall Affleck, farmer. Date: mid- November. Contact Danny 620-3051.

### Interviewing and Hiring Techniques and Keeping the Right Employees

Many farmers do not consciously decide to become employers. They see themselves as business people first, employers second. Depending upon the labour requirements on a farm it may become necessary to hire. With the current labour opportunities available how is a farmer expected to hire and keep the best employees. This one-day workshop is focused on two topics "how to hire" and "how to keep employees". Depending upon your interest, you may want to take in one or both of the courses. The workshop is scheduled for November 23 at Slemon Park. For more information on the course, contact Danny at 620-3051.