

ANNOUNCEMENT

Ridgetown Campus Director Concludes Successful Five Year Term

Art Schaafsma, director of the Ridgetown Campus, will be stepping down from that role at the end of the year. During his term as senior administrator of the campus, Schaafsma led a number of successful initiatives while maintaining his research as a professor in OAC's Department of Plant Agriculture.

In 2011, Ridgetown saw the largest graduating class in its history, with 303 students receiving diplomas and certificates. In August an official opening was held for the Centre for Agricultural Renewable Energy and Sustainability (CARES), which incorporates an anaerobic digester designed to turn manure and other organic wastes into enough electricity to power approximately 300 homes. The goal of the project is to advance innovation and adoption of bio-energy. Schaafsma was instrumental in the development of CARES, which has received support from government and private sponsors, including the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the Agricultural Adaptation Council, the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, Ontario Seed Corn Growers and Grain Farmers of Ontario. He intends to remain closely associated with the project as it continues to evolve.

Under Schaafsma's administration, Ridgetown campus will also benefit from improved student services, library and classroom space. Construction is expected to begin in spring 2012 for a \$3.5 million renovation and expansion to the campus's Reek Administration building. The project has received financial support from the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, the Agriculture Research Institute of Ontario (ARIO) and several private industry and alumni gifts.

While fulfilling his administrative duties, Schaafsma continued his research and at this year's Plant Canada annual meeting in Halifax, he was named a Fellow of the Canadian Society of Agronomy in recognition of his research on mitigating mycotoxins in grain crops.

Schaafsma will be on administrative leave through the end of August, 2012 after which he will be returning to his faculty role, as well as assuming a leadership position with CARES. Ken McEwan will serve as Interim Director, effective January 1, 2012. Ken is currently the Research Coordinator at Ridgetown and a long-standing member of the campus community, having held a variety of administrative roles.

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