

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **The Future of Agriculture is Bright at the Southwest Agricultural Conference**

RIDGETOWN, ON (January 9, 2013)

Judging by the high energy level and enthusiasm from another record-breaking crowd at the Southwest Agricultural Conference, the Future of Agriculture is bright! Over 1 700 field crop producers, agribusiness representatives, researchers and students packed the University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus on January 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> for “The Future of Agriculture”. Even more participants enjoyed the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary conference by webcast in 8 locations across Ontario.

Conference co-chair, Adam Hayes summarized the event as “overall, the most successful event yet”. An enthusiastic team from OMAFRA, Ridgetown Campus and the Southwest Soil and Crop Improvement Associations put together a dynamic program of 71 speakers in 46 sessions, 2 feature speakers, trade show with over 60 exhibitors, research posters, internet cafe and a packed reception. Slide and audio recordings of many sessions are posted on [southwestagconference.ca](http://southwestagconference.ca). Participant evaluations noted it was “another excellent conference, well organized, (with a) great diversity of topics and speakers” who were “A+”.

The feature speakers were described as “excellent”, “amazing” and “phenomenal”. Celebrated humanitarian, Stephen Lewis, stirred the audience on the conference’s first day with his knowledge of malnutrition in Africa and Canada. He challenged participants to continue “Feeding the World”. On the second day of the conference, David Chilton, author and judge on Dragon’s Den, entertained everyone by discussing “The World of Money”. The audience kept laughing as Chilton explained how to be happy by living within our means. The crowd appreciated the knowledge and humour of each feature speaker and rewarded both with standing ovations.

There will be a new program at the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Southwest Agricultural Conference, next January, 2014. As one participant’s evaluation states: “It’s a great way to start the year!”

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