



## AALP Celebrates 25 Years

### NEWS RELEASE

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Almost one hundred alumni, supporters and friends recently joined together to celebrate the silver anniversary of the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) on September 15, 2009 at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show (COFS). AALP has been 'growing' leaders for 25 years! Alumni representing each of the past classes were in attendance to reunite with fellow alumni, past staff members and to meet other program stakeholders in celebration of AALP.

There was an air of excitement in the tent as guests were treated to the unveiling of a recently created video showcasing the history of AALP from the program's inception in 1984 through the present and in to the future. Recognizing William A. Stewart, former provincial Minister of Agriculture, Mike Jenkinson, Peter Hannam, Kenneth Knox, Jack Hagarty and others who were instrumental in getting the program underway, the video paid tribute to many who have been involved in the program over the 25 year period. Through testimonials from members of each of the 12 graduated classes and an interview with a member of the current AALP Class 13 who will graduate in 2011, the video showcased some of the more than 350 AALP graduates - men and women who have made and are making a difference in Ontario's agriculture and agri-food sectors and rural communities across the province.

"It was wonderful to see so many of those who were key to the success of the program over the past 25 years at our anniversary celebration," said Rob Black, Executive Director for The Centre for Rural Leadership. "It was a great way to celebrate leadership training excellence through the AALP program."

Established in 1984 AALP is an executive leadership and personal development program for men and women, in all sectors of Ontario's agriculture and food industry who aspire to help shape the future of Ontario's agriculture, agri-food and rural sectors. In a recent Ipsos Reid survey (2007), ninety nine per cent of AALP alumni reported that they regularly use the skills learned in the program and ninety eight per cent say that the program has made them better leaders. Graduates use their increased skills and knowledge of the entire agri-food system to work with others to lead, direct and manage change within the industry. They are recognized for their courage and confidence to move forward, building stronger agricultural and rural communities within the province and beyond.

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