

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Personality, Self-Understanding and Development**

BELLEVILLE, ON - How well do you understand your own personality and those of the people around you? These were some of the questions that were posed to the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program's (AALP) Class 14 participants during their three day seminar, November 25-27. This second seminar of the 18-month program was focused on the importance of personality in communication and development of leadership skills.

Friday night provided an opportunity for participants to learn more about each other through short personal presentations describing themselves, their family and their life. "It was amazing to see the diversity of people that have come together for the common goal of improving leadership in agriculture and agri-businesses," commented Leanne Cheesmond, a member of AALP Class 14.

Saturday's Lumina Spark Workshop, facilitated by Cora Wittington, a Class 3 AALP graduate, and assisted by Jamie Janzen, focused on learning about different personality styles. Each participant received their own personality portrait - an extremely accurate description of how they think and communicate with others. The group then spent the day becoming more self-aware and learning how to maximize their different personality styles. Wrapping up the day were a number of creative representations of what was learned, presented in a variety of new musical styles and sounds.

Sharing what leadership means to them, the guest speakers on Saturday evening were: Rick Culbert, president of Bioniche Food Safety and a graduate of AALP Class 7; Marianne denHaan; and the Honourable Lyle Vanclief, former Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Culbert described how he used his understanding of personality styles to improve the effectiveness of his communication skills. "Always remember your roots...but don't be afraid to step outside your boundaries," shared denHaan, who grew up on a farm near Alliston and is currently teaching high school in Repulse Bay, Nunavut, a remote northern community on the Arctic Circle. The Honourable Lyle Vanclief concluded the evening using his personal experiences to explain how changes are always happening and that a strong leader embraces change and makes the most of these opportunities.

A session led by Marnie Kloppenburg, a facilitator, trainer and coaching consultant prepared the class for their Issue Analysis Project, where class members will work as consultants with various agricultural and rural organizations to address issues affecting their industry.

The Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP) is an executive development program for men and women in Ontario to further develop their leadership skills and work to shape the future of the agri-food sector and rural communities. AALP is a program of the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI). For more information please visit [www.aalp.on.ca](http://www.aalp.on.ca). Coming up on Saturday February 11, 2012 is the Dream Auction, in Guelph. The Dream Auction is a major fundraising opportunity to support and raise funds for AALP. For more information, visit the website [www.aalp.on.ca/events-auction.aspx](http://www.aalp.on.ca/events-auction.aspx).

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