

Since 1984, the **Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP)** has been preparing leaders to help shape the future of Ontario's agriculture and agri-food industry!

Leaders who have...

- **Skills** to work with others to direct and manage change.
- **Knowledge** of the entire agri-food system and the world in which it operates.
- **Courage and Confidence** to build a stronger agriculture and rural community.

What is the Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program (AALP)?

A leadership development program for men and women who want to help shape the future of Ontario agriculture

The 48-day program is delivered over the course of 19 months, creating learning opportunities that combine instruction and practical application, international travel, distance education and dialogue with each other as well as today's business, government and community leaders.

In addition to the formal seminars and study tours, distance education and e-mail will be used for some learning activities, research and communication.

Further time is spent on independent study analysing a specific issue. This Issue Analysis Project sharpens participants' ability to think critically, to present arguments that support a firm position, and to plan actions for change.

Through this program emerging leaders in all sectors of the agri-food industry:

- Learn and practise leadership skills, such as communication, motivation, critical thinking, issue analysis, decision making, volunteer and group management, organizational change;
- Acquire knowledge of the agri-food system and the economic, political, social, cultural and physical environment in which it operates;
- Broaden their perspective on local, national and international issues;
- Gain confidence and develop the positive attitude needed to provide effective leadership in a complex industry and diverse society.

Participants learn from each other, from hands-on experience, and from a host of government, business and community leaders.

A variety of post-graduate services are available to participants upon graduation to continue life-long learning in leadership.

Who are the AALP participants?

- In each class there are thirty men and women with a typical age range from mid-twenties to late forties, from a wide geographic cross-section of Ontario.
- Approximately half of the participants are farmers; the remainder are farm suppliers, bankers, food processors and retailers, marketers, environmentalists, entrepreneurs, planners, civil servants, or in some other agri-food business endeavour.

What are the selection criteria for AALP participants?

- Commitment to the future of the agri-food industry and potential for leadership after the program.
- Demonstration of leadership potential in past activities.
- Evidence of open-mindedness and vision.
- Broad interest in agricultural & societal issues and involvement in farm, rural or industry organizations.

How are the AALP participants selected?

- Each interested individual completes a written application form and is given a personal interview.
- Interviews are held in 5 or 6 locations across the province. For Northern Ontario applicants, video conferencing can be arranged.
- Based on the written applications and the interviews, regional interview panels make recommendations to the Rural Ontario Institute's AALP Advisory Committee, and they select the thirty participants.

Who pays for AALP?

- Participants pay a tuition fee. Thanks to the generosity of the AALP partners, sponsors and donors across the agri-food industry, the tuition fee represents only one quarter of the total cost of the program.
- The Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, and the University of Guelph contribute financially to the program.
- Private corporations, rural and agricultural organizations, and interested individuals contribute to the fund raising campaign.
- Three endowments, namely, Wm. A. Stewart Endowment, Ken McKinnon Memorial Fund, and the W. Garfield Weston Endowment, earn income for AALP.
- Grants, known as the Rob McLaughlin Awards in Agricultural Leadership, are offered through the OAC Alumni Foundation at the University of Guelph to help farmers and Northern Ontario participants offset up to 30% of the cost of tuition.

What is the Rural Ontario Institute?

The Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) is a catalyst for dialogue, collaboration and action on issues facing rural Ontario and delivers leadership training and development to ensure that rural contributes to a healthy vibrant Ontario. Representatives from agri-business, AALP alumni, and other rural stakeholders, act as the Board of Directors for the Rural Ontario Institute.

Members of the Board of Directors (2011-2012):

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What are the benefits of AALP?

After over 25 years, AALP is one of the longest running and most successful agricultural leadership development programs in the world. It has a proven track record of delivering leading-edge training and development. To date, there are over 350 AALP graduates who are using their leadership skills in the industry - provincially, nationally and internationally. A study by Ipsos Reid confirms this and found that 98% of AALP graduates believe the program has made them better leaders. A 1996 Economic Impact Study by the University of Guelph shows that AALP has an overall return to the agricultural sector of 11 to 1. This was projected to grow to 25 to 1 by the end of 2005, as graduates continued to provide leadership to the agricultural and rural community.

AALP, A Program of Rural Ontario Institute

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