

2006 CFWF Conference Tops the Charts

by Lyndsey Smith, MFWBA Executive Member

They came from out east to way west to see for themselves if Manitoba really is just bald, flat prairie. And we didn't disappoint because, well, that's geography, but participants at the 2006 CFWF Annual Conference, held September 14-16, also spent time on the shores of the great Lake Winnipeg, inside the Food Development Centre, and through the reeds of Oak Hammock Marsh.

The convention kicked off Thursday with a well-attended lunch downtown, followed by a tour of Banker's Row and an extensive tour of CIGI - the flour mill, bakery and noodle plant in the sky - and the Canadian Malting Barley Technical Centre where attendees were introduced to their first of many samplings of beer.

Friday's diverse tours were the highlight of the convention for many - even if Tour Bus B was an hour and half late for dinner. Thank goodness the provincial ag minister didn't have much planned for the evening! Speaking of

the ag minister, anyone who missed the delicious pickerel dinner on the waterfront in Gimli also missed the energetic dancing of the *Kolomyjka* with Rosann Wowchuk and three clueless ag writers. Try and beat that, 2007 Organizing Committee!

The hospitality suite was well-attended each evening. Many thanks to our minstrels for their guitar playing and song leading. The guests down the hall didn't expect to be serenaded each evening - thankfully most of them were attending the conference.

Most everyone managed to put on their business face for Saturday's full plate of speakers who spoke on the theme of this year's convention: Evolution! 21st Century Trends in Agriculture. The organizing committee did a great job of rounding up a broad range of speakers, as we heard of



experiences from as near as our own backyard to as far as Ukraine.

And of course, no conference write up is complete without hearty congratulations to our Manitoba members who took home hardware and cash from the awards banquet Saturday night: **Ian Bell, Dave Bedard, Maureen Fitzhenry,**

Laura Rance and Jay Whetter.

Putting on this annual convention is a mighty large job; thank you to the organizing committee and all the volunteers for choosing and providing the delicious food, ever-flowing beverages, interesting speakers and a tour of my own province not soon forgotten.

Mark your calendar for next year's CFWF Annual Convention, slated for September 27-30, 2007, in lovely Belleville, Ontario.



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CWB Event a Lively Discussion

by Ed White, MFWBA Executive Member

Manitoba farm writers and broadcasters had a chance to hear two very different views about “dual marketing” at a recent forum.

Brian Oleson of the University of Manitoba’s agribusiness and agricultural economics department and Blair Rutter of the Western Canadian Wheat Growers Association presented their views on whether the Canadian Wheat Board could exist without its monopoly marketing powers and answered questions from the 35 people at the MFWBA luncheon on November 21.

Both agreed that farmers could form a farm marketing cooperative for selling export wheat and barley if the board’s monopoly is broken, but agreed on little else and shared few assumptions. Oleson, a former wheat board official, said there’s little point in discussing whether the wheat board would survive an ending of its monopoly powers, since that is the only element that gives the

organization its marketing clout, ability to control parts of its supply chain and to extract a premium from buyers. Farmers could form some sort of a farm marketing cooperative, but since there would be little about it similar to the present wheat board, it doesn’t make sense to refer to it as the wheat board if it loses its monopoly.

Rutter, a former Agricore United official, said he didn’t believe that the wheat board extracts premiums from the world market, so there’s nothing to lose there. And the three provincial hog marketing cooperatives have shown how monopoly marketing organizations can survive a transition to competitive marketing and even thrive, as Manitoba Pork Marketing Cooperative has done. Farmers don’t need to lose the wheat board just because it loses its monopoly powers. After the session was officially ended many members stayed on to discuss the issue.

In other MFWBA news...

Welcome aboard to new members since our last newsletter include (which was a while ago, our apologies!):

Glenn Cheater, Owner/Operator, High Bluff Media

Anne Cote, Freelance journalist

Heather Frayne, Communications Coordinator, Canadian Wheat Board

Andrea Geary, Technical Writer, Canadian Grain Commission

Kathleen Hodgson, Managing Editor, Craig Kelman and Associates

Julie McNabb, student

Darlene Meakin, Knowledge Officer, Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives

Adam Reid, Advertising Manager, Buhler Versatile Inc.

Jim Weir, Executive Director, Manitoba Institute of Agrologists

Rhea Yates, Communications Coordinator, Agri-Food Research and Development Initiative

Do you have a great idea for a MFWBA meeting? We would like to hear it! Email us info@mfwba.ca.

We also offer our members the opportunity to post their upcoming events and job opportunities on the MFWBA website at www.mfwba.ca.

Mark your calendar!

The MFWBA Happy Holidays Party

Wednesday, December 20
5:00 pm

King’s Head Pub (second floor)

Join us for an evening of good friends and good cheer! We will provide the snacks (cash bar) - all we ask is that you bring an item for Siloam Mission.

NEEDED ITEMS

- * warm long johns
- * wool socks
- * mens underwear
- * warm boots (no heels/steel toe)
- * jackets
- * small towels
- * CASH

RSVP by Dec. 15 to Bonnie at bonnieb@fbcpublishing.com

IFAJ 2011

Canada will be hosting the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ) annual congress in 2011. The congress will be held in the Guelph area, with dates still to be announced. Organizers are seeking CFWF members to serve on the IFAJ 2011 organizing committee.

If you are interested, please contact
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