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in and around the university

The Ontario Veterinary College has received two major donations that will advance its objectives in primary companion animal health care. New research in physics tells us more about our solar system, and a biologist using DNA bar-coding has opened a can of worms in the North American fish industry.

BUY FOOD? THINK GUELPH

Most consumers begin their experience with food in the supermarket, but for U of G, food is a priority that knows no bounds. Shop with us in this food feature to see the impact of Guelph research and the influence of Guelph graduates in every grocery aisle.

alumni matters

The University of Guelph Alumni Association welcomes new board members and presents its annual alumni, staff and student awards. Vice-president Joanne Shoveller describes U of G as the “home of eternal youth,” and we are reminded that Lucy Maud Montgomery will be the centre of an international conference on campus Oct. 23 to 26.

on the cover

Chef and U of G instructor Simon Day serves breakfast to his wife, Nadine, and children, Grace and Miles.

Photo by Dean Palmer
Photography

REPORT ON GIVING

A gift to the University of Guelph affects lives in Canada and around the world. In this special report, the University says thank you to its valued donors.

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ONLY ONLINE

The online version of The Portico offers more stories about U of G faculty and alumni who make food their top priority and features new profiles of some of our Great Guelph Grads. Check it out and “feedback” your comments.
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Publications Mail Agreement # 40064673
Printed in Canada — ISSN 1714-8731

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The summer of 2008 made food top-of-mind for people all over the globe. Of course we all think of food several times a day, but in recent months we’ve been drawn into the fray of a world crisis related to the availability and cost of basic food staples.

Most Canadians have been spared hunger pangs and high inflation that is making food unaffordable in many countries, but we are not immune to the effects of world events. Nor are we immune to the risks of food-borne illness. Here at U of G, we were deeply concerned about eight people who contracted a potentially serious strain of E. coli from food prepared on campus. Less than two weeks after Public Health declared the U of G outbreak over, we were shaken by the news of listeriosis cases across Canada that were traced to meat products from Ontario and salmonellosis linked to a Quebec cheese factory.

We know that Canadian food safety regulations are among the world’s most stringent, but these incidents are a tragic reminder that we are always vulnerable to bacterial infections. Our food system must not be taken for granted — not in Canada or anywhere else in the world.

At the University of Guelph, we have an additional responsibility to maintain and protect Canada’s food system. Our institutional history is inextricably tied to food — the initial and still the most important motivation for our role in agricultural research and teaching.

We are justifiably proud of the University’s history and its ongoing contributions to food production and processing, food safety and food nutrition. There is no other institution in Canada with the food expertise that you will find at the University of Guelph.

That fact is recognized daily through the University’s ongoing partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA). A new contract signed this spring increased the ministry’s core funding and, when combined with special programs, sets the OMAFRA agreement contribution at $76.1 million per year for the next five years. Those dollars support U of G’s role in research and development programs, services for animal health and food testing, and veterinary education.

Over the past decade, the OMAFRA investment has leveraged more than $1 billion in economic returns per year and untold savings in health and livelihoods through the University’s monitoring of animal diseases that also affect humans. Our partnership has also produced an army of Guelph graduates who are bringing innovation to the agri-food system in Ontario and in other jurisdictions around the world.

Stories in this issue of The Portico demonstrate how Guelph expertise in food has led the way to a growing reputation in the life sciences. Combine this with our knowledge base in animal care, human nutrition, food culture and economic policy and we are well-positioned to provide leadership and leaders who can resolve global food issues.

The University’s reputation was earned through a massive national (and often international) effort. Every research success mentioned in this magazine has been financially supported by your governments and organizations and businesses in the agri-food and health sectors. In addition, the University’s teaching and service enterprises receive support from donations made directly to U of G, so it seems appropriate to include Guelph’s annual donor report in this Portico.

If you recognize the name of a friend or business associate, help us to say thank you for their contributions to Canada’s food basket.

Alastair Summerlee
President
A

n orderly solar system like our own is a rare occurrence, happening only under peaceful conditions, according to new research by U of G physicist Ed Thommes. He developed a new computer modelling method that simulates the birth of planetary systems.

The study, conducted with Frederic Rasio and Soko Matsumura from Northwestern University in Illinois, found that planets of varying masses and orbits can move around one another and their parent star in different ways.

“Whatever possibility of a planetary system we can think of probably exists out there somewhere,” said Thommes, the co-author of 20 research papers about planets and planetary systems. “Nature really does throw the dice in all directions.”

But a solar system like ours is uncommon, he said. Planetary systems with equivalents to Jupiter and Saturn — two gas giants moving in near circles and practically unchanged since birth — pop out rarely in their simulations.

Most often, solar systems harbour unruly gas giants whose eccentric orbits make life unpredictable and even deadly for nearby bodies, he says.

But in our solar system, Jupiter and Saturn may help “keep the peace” by acting like bouncers to intercept unwelcome comet visitors before they near the inner planets.

Most scientists believe that solar systems form when gas in giant disks surrounding a star begins to collect into dust. Like a growing snowball, that dust attracts more material and eventually becomes planets, moons, comets, asteroids and other celestial bodies.

Much of the process is still a mystery, but scientists model it using powerful computer simulations. Unlike earlier attempts that looked only at parts of that process, Thommes and his collaborators simplified the model to cover the entire path from a gas disk to gas giants such as Jupiter and Saturn.

The researchers say their model offers a faster and easier method to investigate the formation of other planetary systems. Within the past decade, astronomers have found more than 300 exo-planets orbiting nearby stars, including 29 systems containing more than one planet.

Our solar system a rarity

Montage of planetary images taken by spacecraft managed by NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif.

BIG SUMMER FOR OVC

The Ontario Veterinary College will advance two key initiatives thanks to major donations from Royal Canin Canada Company and Hill’s Pet Nutrition.

A $3-million endowment will establish the Royal Canin Veterinary Diet Endowed Chair in Canine and Feline Clinical Nutrition and support independent research and graduate scholarships. This first-of-its-kind chair will be held by a faculty member in OVC’s Department of Clinical Studies. The University will conduct an international search for the first chair holder.

The position is part of a strategic initiative by U of G to establish new teaching and research chairs across the spectrum of the University’s disciplines.

Hill’s made a $5-million, 10-year commitment to support the Hill’s Pet Nutrition Primary Health Care Centre. It will be an international centre of excellence for teaching and research in primary companion animal health care and service delivery, and will provide a variety of educational experiences, from practical skills development to preventive medicine. Students will also learn to educate owners about the health, nutrition and well-being of their animal companions.

The centre — part of the overall redevelopment of OVC and its teaching hospital — is also supported by the Ontario government. The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities invested $9.5 million in OVC redevelopment in February.
QUESTIONS ANSWERED
U of G’s Food Safety Network (FSN) provides research, commentary, policy evaluation and public information on food safety issues from “farm to fork.” It runs a bilingual information centre that answers questions via a toll-free line (1-866-503-7638), e-mail (fsnrsn@uoguelph.ca) and website (www.foodsafetynetwork.ca).

Funded through a combination of public, private and foundation sources, this national network brings together all those associated with agriculture and food to enhance the safety of the food supply. In all FSN activities, the emphasis is on the integration of public perceptions of food safety risks into traditional food safety risk analysis and engaging the public in dialogue about the nature of food-related risks and benefits.

IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH
Gord Surgeoner, B.Sc.(Agr.) ’71 and M.Sc. ’73, is president of Ontario Agri-Food Technologies and the driving force behind the new Verified Health Quality website, www.vhqfoods.ca. The site provides consumers with proven scientific information about the nutritional value of 51 fruits and vegetables and the role they play in promoting good health.

The website includes features to help you monitor your food intake and shows the effect of proper diet on vitality, day-to-day energy levels and the probability of certain types of diseases. This information is made available by the Fresh Vegetable Growers of Ontario, the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers’ Association and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

E. coli outbreak on campus
The University of Guelph worked closely with the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health while it investigated an outbreak of E. coli at U of G this summer. The University was particularly concerned for those who required hospital treatment, says communications director Charles Cunningham.

The contamination occurred during the week of July 20, according to Public Health. When the outbreak was declared over on Aug. 14, there were eight confirmed cases. The strain was identified as E. coli 0157:H7, a potentially serious strain of the bacterium.

Public Health investigated all possible sources of contamination and said it was unlikely that the cause of the outbreak will ever be identified. It also called the situation an isolated incident and, following an inspection, confirmed that it was appropriate for the University to continue its food-service operations.

In addition to its normal sanitizing procedures, U of G took extra measures to disinfect its food-service operations under the guidance of Public Health. Cunningham says the University would like to express its appreciation to the campus and local communities for their patience and understanding during the outbreak. “The University regrets the suffering, inconvenience and concerns caused by the situation.”
If you ate today, thank farmers around the world and think of the University of Guelph.

Principal photography by Dean Palmer, with thanks to manager Daniel Bremner and staff at Food Basics, Clair Road, Guelph. Stories by University of Guelph staff and student writers.
However you define it, prepare it or consume it, food is essential for the maintenance of life and the growth of everything on Earth from single-celled organisms to entire civilizations.

In fact, it could be argued that the rise of every civilization in human history has been directly linked to the way its citizens chose to feed themselves. Hunters, farmers, traders: their first goal was to feed themselves, then they sought other riches.

The agrarian society that played such a key role in the development of Canada as a nation and gave rise to the University of Guelph itself has grown with success until it is now irrevocably entwined with and dependent on the food policies of other nations around the world. We may not yet be one civilization, but we are certainly one global marketplace for those who produce and trade food. As Guelph economists John Cranfield and Spencer Henson will attest, Canada’s food policies affect our customers and competitors just as theirs affect Canadian farmers and consumers.

The summer of 2008 opened our eyes to that reality as we watched food riots in Haiti and the Philippines and learned that some people in the world’s poorest countries are eating clay biscuits because they can no longer afford to buy rice, wheat or corn. Ironically, the biggest food-related issue in this country is not an increase in our weekly grocery bill, but an increase in our waistline.

Ours is an affluent society where our focus on food has gone from nourishment to leisure. Now faced by an epidemic of obesity, we’re turning our attention back to the nutritional benefits of food to help salvage our health. We want to consume food products that are free of additives and toxins, full of good nutrition and boosted with “natural” components that will prevent us from getting ill. Surprisingly, these are realistic expectations that Canadian farmers and food manufacturers are beginning to deliver.

The University of Guelph campus has been contributing to Canada’s growth as a food producer for more than 145 years. Our founding colleges became a university during the 1960s “Green Revolution” — the last great agricultural leap forward — when the goal was higher yields to feed a growing world population. The University of Guelph built its reputation in the life sciences by extending the frontiers of food production to include the underlying science of biological systems and the demands of cultural and economic forces.

The impact of Guelph research and the influence of Guelph graduates are found in every aisle of your local supermarket. As you fill your grocery cart, look for DHA-enriched milk, omega-3 eggs, soy products galore, lean pork and beef, multi-grain breads and fresh asparagus, cherries, peaches and apples.

Many more examples of food research and scholarship are presented in the following pages — all from U of G; all important in maintaining the quality, choice and low prices we expect from Canada’s food system; and some that may actually help to balance food inequities around the globe.

Mary Dickieson
Canadians concerned about food crisis

Profs. Spencer Henson and John Cranfield say most Canadians are worried about the current world food crisis and think Canada should be doing more to help people in developing countries.

The two agricultural economists recently surveyed 1,350 people and say 75 per cent of them expressed concern about the impact the rising price of food is having on Canadians with lower incomes, on farmers and on those living in developing countries.

“There was far less concern about the impact of increases in food prices on them-selves,” says Cranfield. “This is reflected in the fact that only 17 per cent of people indicate having made changes to the food their family eats as a direct result of increases in food prices during the last month.”

Survey responses also suggest that Canadian consumers are aware of the reasons behind the escalation in global food prices. The issues most cited were increases in global oil prices, production of biofuels and climate change.

And about 64 per cent believe Canada has at least some responsibility in the food crisis, says Henson.

When asked what Canada should be doing to help developing countries, the most frequent answers were to increase foreign food aid, transfer technology, revise biofuel policies and provide agricultural education to boost farm productivity in developing countries.

The survey is one of the first to be produced as part of the Guelph Food Panel project, the first large-scale panel of consumers dedicated to food research. Developed by Henson, Cranfield and post-doc Oliver Masakure, the panel will allow researchers to accurately track changes in Canadians’ eating habits and measure consumer responses to issues raised in the media.

“If there is a food scare tonight, we can send them a survey within 24 hours,” says Henson. “This system allows us to have our finger on the pulse of Canadians with respect to food.”

Partly funded by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and the Advanced Foods and Materials Network, the panel has 2,000 members who were recruited based on age, gender and level of education to ensure the group is representative of the Canadian population.

“There is no other instrument like this in Canada,” says Cranfield. “Our intent with this research is to find ways of making the food system work better.”

Deirdre Healey

Why food costs will rise

“Y ou hear about riots and rising food prices, but when you walk around the grocery store, you don’t see it.”

That’s just one of the paradoxes voiced by Prof. David Sparling in yet another interview this summer about rising global food prices. Like other U of G experts, Sparling has appeared numerous times this year in print, on the broadcast media and in discussion forums such as a symposium on the topic held this summer in Toronto by Guelph-based MaRS Landing.

Everyone wants to talk about what’s causing food prices to soar and causing unrest and violence abroad. Yet Sparling, associate dean of research and graduate studies in Guelph’s College of Management and Economics, knows that, like most of his neighbours here at home, he can pop out later to his supermarket and buy what he needs — or wants — without quibbling over dollars and cents. For now.

From the perspective of a developed nation like Canada, there’s been something surreal about the debate over food costs, Sparling says. Until now, he and other commentators have discussed the roots and implications of higher grocery bills without necessarily having encountered the problem first-hand. But that’s going to change, he says.

Can we expect to pay a larger percentage of our income on food? Yes, says Sparling.

That idea echoes an argument made by Prof. Alfonso Weersink, Department of Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics, in an opinion piece published this year in the Guelph Mercury. Look for changes to come, at the supermarket or at least in ripples from the developing world. Contrasting food scarcity and high prices in such places as Haiti and Mexico with the business-as-usual atmosphere here at home, Weersink wrote: “While our choices and spending at the grocery store will not change much, there will be an indirect cost that we will need to pay to help out those less fortunate.”

What’s behind food costs and their worldwide impacts? There’s no one factor but a handful of things that often surface, including the following:

• crop shortfalls and draw-down food surpluses,
• rising oil prices, meaning higher costs for fertilizers and transportation,
• use of crops and farmland for biofuels instead of food,
• higher demand for meat protein in growing countries such as India and China,
• export bans and food hoarding in some countries,
• speculation in commodity markets.
Those factors have yet to hit home here in Canada. This spring, Statistics Canada said the typical food basket in this country cost only 1.2 per cent more than a year earlier. For average Canadian consumers, food claims only about 10 per cent of disposable income. Corn, for instance, might account for about two cents’ worth of a $1 soft drink or six cents’ worth of a box of cornflakes.

Compare that with developing nations, where people may spend at least half — and often upwards of 80 per cent — of their income just to eat. Increase crop prices and you may put food out of reach of people spending their last dollar to buy wheat for bread or corn for tortillas, says Weersink.

Look for food price inflation here for a different reason, he adds, one that has recently been pushing up the general inflation rate. “Energy represents the major share of the consumer food dollar,” he wrote in another recent commentary. “Increases in the price of crude oil impact the whole system, from farm production through processing to distribution and retail.”

Sparling agrees. Walk through your supermarket and look for items that require lots of energy and grain to grow, produce or move around: baked goods, meat, eggs, dairy products. A high Canadian dollar and price competition can’t shield us from the rest of the world forever. “We’re being protected, and that’s not going to continue,” says Sparling.

But he also believes much of the solution lies close to home, right here in the life sciences and agri-food cluster based around U of G and such institutions as MaRS Landing. Economics and political science, food science, plant agriculture, human health and nutrition, environmental sciences: continued investment in research and innovation in these related fields — all represented here on campus — will allow Canada to benefit from competitive advantages and help feed hungry mouths in other parts of the world. “Guelph is perfectly positioned to make a major impact,” says Sparling.

Andrew Vowles

Research improves lives and livelihoods

Ontario Veterinary College professor Cate Dewey has a lot on her plate. In addition to chairing the Department of Population Medicine and maintaining her research in swine health management, she’s making regular trips to Africa to monitor pig production.

Dewey’s research project is investigating the links among pigs, the Taenia solium tapeworm and epilepsy in the Busia district of western Kenya.

The people of Busia are primarily subsistence farmers. Half the population struggles to survive on less than 50 cents a day, and HIV/AIDS infection rates are among the highest in Africa.

Busia also provides a tragic illustration of how lending a helping hand can sometimes have unintended and even tragic consequences. In one such development project, Busia farmers, who have taken in AIDS orphans and live in households with eight to 14 children, were given pigs as a way to lift them out of poverty. But many had little or no experience raising swine and couldn’t afford to buy feed for their animals, so they let them roam free to forage for their sustenance.

Poor husbandry practices, combined with nearly non-existent sanitation and rudimentary meat inspection, have created a situation where the T. solium parasite is being passed from pigs to people, people to pigs and people to people, says Dewey. It’s a vicious cycle that is destroying lives and livelihoods, she says.

When humans ingest a tapeworm egg, it leads to neurocysticercosis, a disease in which the egg migrates to the central nervous system, causing epilepsy. The disease is difficult to diagnose and problematic to treat, says Dewey. In a desperately poor country where medical resources are scarce, it makes more sense to stop the transmission cycle of the tapeworm infection in the first place, she says.

Her project involves U of G and University of Nairobi graduate students who work directly with farmers to help them understand the connection between the tapeworm and epilepsy. Global Vets students from OVC, 11 in total, did hands-on work for the project in 2006, 2007 and 2008.

Barry Gunn

Prof looks for good ideas

The world still has 800 million chronically malnourished people. Beginning with that statistic, plant agriculture professor Manish Raizada teaches a course called “The Student Philanthropy Project” in which students explore the underlying political, economic, medical, environmental and agricultural causes of hunger and rural poverty, particularly in Africa. And then they are asked to identify practical, inexpensive, creative solutions.

Raizada leads students on a worldwide search for under-recognized projects, organizations and creative people who have solutions to ending poverty and hunger, but who are currently underfunded. Projects from any relevant discipline are considered and debated. A final report from the class, identifying worthy nominees, is submitted to the Gates Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Omidyar Foundation to help bring attention to these deserving projects and individuals.

Mary Dickieson
Foods function as disease fighters

Back in the 1920s, table salt became a functional food when iodine was added to it to help prevent goitre. Next came vitamin D-enriched milk. Today we can buy many foods laced with ingredients both known and believed to help reduce the risk of disease. Fish oils, psyllium fibre, folates, plant sterols, antioxidants and many other compounds naturally found in some foods are sold as nutraceutical supplements or are added to other food products to increase their functionality as disease fighters.

Don’t like oily fish? Get your daily dose of DHA by taking fish oil tablets or eating eggs that contain omega-3 fatty acids that were originally fed to the chickens.

Nutraceutical and functional foods are taking the middle ground between food we eat to maintain life and the drugs we take to cure disease. And human intervention trials conducted at Guelph’s Human Nutraceutical Research Unit (HNRU) are adding to the body of research that supports their role in maintaining health and contributing to the prevention and treatment of diseases.

The HNRU is a teaching/research unit that also serves industry through consulting and clinical trials. The first established human nutraceutical trial unit in Canada, it conducts human trials for the food industry and companies manufacturing natural health products.

Prof. Alison Duncan is the associate director of research at the HNRU and a faculty member in the Department of Human Health and Nutritional Sciences. Her research is focused on the biological effects of soy protein and its role in reducing the risk of diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, breast cancer, prostate cancer and kidney disease. Most recently, she supervised PhD candidate Colleen Gobert and M.Sc. graduate Beth Pipe’s study of adults with type 2 diabetes who consumed a daily soy protein shake and saw a significant reduction in their cardiovascular disease risk.

The research was supported by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario and has been submitted for publication this fall.

Previous research had shown that adults with type 2 diabetes have as much as a six times greater risk of developing cardiovascular disease than adults who do not have diabetes. In fact, heart disease is the leading cause of death in adults with type 2 diabetes.

An earlier study funded by the Ontario Soybean Growers, Duncan, Gobert and others surveyed a group of adults with type 2 diabetes to see how many already use or know about the benefits of soy. While the prevalence of soy consumption in this group
It will come as no surprise that a new study has found most high school students are eating junk food for lunch at school. But the research by U of G sociologist Tony Winson also looked at factors influencing students to make unhealthy choices and found several culprits beyond the schools themselves.

High school students get a large proportion of their nutritional intake for the day from what they buy at school, says Winson. “In a typical high school with more than 1,000 students, the cafeteria would sell only three to five pieces of fruit in total per day, which is extraordinarily low, and virtually no one is buying plain milk.”

The study involved 10 Ontario public high schools in a school district northwest of the Greater Toronto Area.

Winson found students were making the best nutritional choices when buying their main meals at lunch, but even then, 35 per cent of the choices were food of only moderate or minimal nutritional value. On the other hand, upwards of 70 per cent of side dishes and 80 per cent of dessert purchases were junk food-type items.

Aggressive mass advertising targeting children and teenagers is one of the reasons kids tend to be drawn towards unhealthy foods, but that doesn’t entirely explain why high school cafeterias are purchasing and supplying fast foods and junk food, says Winson. He discovered one of the reasons is that school cafeterias are often competing against nearby fast-food outlets.

Mary Dickieson

was low at only 19 per cent, the researchers did identify soy beverages, tofu and roasted soy nuts as the most preferred soy foods. Most important, however, was the finding that soy consumption was not related to diabetes management. The most common reason for soy consumption was general health promotion.

This is important information for those who produce, market and sell soy products and those who disseminate health information about soy — all clients who could benefit from the consulting and testing services provided by the HNRU.

PHOTO BY KYLE RODRIGUEZ

PHOTO BY KYLE RODRIGUEZ

PHOTO BY KYLE RODRIGUEZ
To ensure that students spent their lunch money at the school, cafeterias felt pressure to feature less nutritious items such as hamburgers, pizza, french fries and other finger foods, as well as junk foods in tuck shops and vending machines.

Cafeteria staffing shortages are another factor contributing to the large percentage of low-nutrition foods offered in high school cafeterias. Winson says cafeterias are turning to frozen foods and ready-made mixes because they take less preparation time than healthier foods made from scratch. But these easy-to-make foods are often laced with trans fats and are of minimal nutritional value.

Winson says several provinces have taken steps to reduce the number of unhealthy foods in high schools, but notes Ontario is focusing only on restricting junk food in elementary schools and eliminating trans fats.

“It's a start but not nearly enough. The province needs to take a much stronger stand on this issue, especially given the health trends of today’s youth.”

Deirdre Healey

One of the best-known functional foods in Canada is DHA-enriched milk, developed by a University of Guelph research team led by Prof. Brian McBride, Animal and Poultry Science.

DDT scare gives rise to health food stores

Rachel Carson’s 1962 book, Silent Spring, helped set the stage for the environmental movement, but it also convinced many people to try to clean up their bodies as well.

“The book drew attention to the health risks posed by pesticides and herbicides, and by the late 1960s, many people had become distrustful of medicine and science,” says historian Catherine Carstairs, who is tracing the history and trends of Canada’s health food industry.

This change in people’s attitudes resulted in an increased interest in vegetarianism and a huge rise in the number of health food stores across the country, she says. Toronto went from having 13 such stores in 1957 to more than 100 by 1979.

Another wave of health food stores popped up in the 1990s, and by 1999, the Canadian government created the Natural Health Products Directorate to regulate over-the-counter health products such as vitamins and minerals and herbal remedies.

“The directorate has added a lot of legitimacy to the industry because it allowed people to make health claims for products,” says Carstairs.

In 2005, an Ipsos Reid survey found that 71 per cent of Canadians regularly take natural health products. Industry leaders interviewed by Carstairs report that most of their customers are women and the elderly.

“What they stressed above all was that the people who came to them were in search of better health, were not finding answers in mainstream medicine and so were looking for alternatives.”

It’s only in the last couple of decades that people have begun turning to health food stores for more than just improving their health, says Carstairs. Since the 1980s, there’s been a real emphasis on using natural health products to reverse aging and remain youthful, which she says is becoming an increasingly important aspect of the industry.

Rachelle Cooper

Promoting probiotics

If you are buying food with added probiotics, you may be interested in U of G research that showed a dramatic boost to the immune system of chickens fed probiotics — dietary supplements that contain live beneficial bacteria.

“We looked at the immune-enhancing ability of the probiotic and, lo and behold, the probiotic actually seems to be quite an immune stimulator,” says Shayan Sharif, a pathobiology professor in the Ontario Veterinary College, who worked in collaboration with James Chambers of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

This means chickens treated with probiotics early in life are able to mount higher immune responses and, as a result, may be better protected against disease-causing microbes, says Sharif.

“Afetr looking at the antibodies in the intestine and blood of the chickens, we found that the antibodies were more than twice as high in chickens treated with probiotics.”

The researchers also looked at two kinds of Salmonella that are most prevalent in Canada and found that some probiotics reduce, to less than one per cent, the level of colonization of Salmonella in the chicken gut. The gut contents sometimes contaminate carcasses, depending on how the meat is processed, which puts consumers at risk of getting sick, says Sharif.

In the studies, one-day-old chicks were treated with probiotics and one day later were given Salmonella bacteria. The immune status and Salmonella bacterial load in the chicks were examined at various intervals, and the positive results surfaced quickly, he says.

“There’s a hope that probiotics could actually work as a replacement for antibiotics, or at least be used to work in a complementary fashion with antibiotics.”

Probiotics are available from veterinary pharmaceutical suppliers and are fairly inexpensive. The overuse of antibiotics in chickens is a concern that caused European countries to restrict prophylactic antibiotic use in their poultry industry. “It would be great if we could come up with a better system using probiotics to work hand-in-hand with antibiotics,” says Sharif.

Rachelle Cooper
New fitness degree

In response to a dire need for professionals equipped to treat overweight Canadians, the University of Guelph and Humber College are creating a new degree program aimed at fighting fat.

The University of Guelph-Humber has already received 430 applications for 60 spots in the new program, which begins in the fall of 2009. Graduates will earn a bachelor of applied science in kinesiology from Guelph and a diploma in fitness and health promotion from Humber. They will be qualified to work as personal trainers, kinesiologists, wellness consultants and fitness specialists.

There is a crying need for professionals trained in nutrition, exercise science, anatomy and the science behind obesity-related diseases, says nutritional sciences professor Terry Graham, who notes that one in five Canadians is overweight and at increased risk for illnesses such as heart disease and diabetes.

He says medical schools give “virtually no training” to aspiring doctors on how to treat the obese, so there is a void in the system. Students graduating from the new four-year undergraduate program will be trained to work independently from medical doctors, focusing on such things as lifestyle modification.

Deirdre Healey

Super spearmint

Taking time for tea will soon have added health benefits for consumers. Plant agriculture professor Laima Kott has boosted spearmint plants used for tea with increased amounts of rosmarinic acid, a strong antioxidant and anti-inflammatory.

Kott has developed spearmint plants with 20 times more rosmarinic acid and says the increased levels will relieve symptoms of asthma, arthritis and other inflammatory diseases.

“Drinking two cups of spearmint tea with increased rosmarinic acid levels a day will show improvement in the health of people suffering inflammatory-type diseases,” she says.

In her work, Kott chemically selected seeds in vitro that produce plants with elevated amounts of rosmarinic acid. Once these individual plants were identified, the best were chosen for further breeding. She says spearmint is an ideal plant to use for this research because mints grow rapidly and already have some natural amounts of rosmarinic acid. The acid is difficult and very expensive to produce synthetically. By increasing the levels in spearmint, the plants produce acid that can be harvested for further use.

While spearmint leaves with increased rosmarinic acid are not yet marketed, they should be available soon. Consumers can then reap the benefits by brewing their own tea or using health products made from the extracted acid.

McMaster University Medical Centre researchers are currently conducting clinical trials with this tea for Kott to determine the level of benefit to asthma sufferers.

Katie Savage and Kim Waalderbos

Obesity test going online

A simple screening test to identify children who may be suffering from poor nutrition will soon be available online. Ten years in the making, the NutriSTEP screening checklist is the first of its kind in Canada. It has been piloted in selected areas across Canada as part of immunization programs and preschool screening fairs and will now be developed as an online tool.

Funding for the project comes from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Canada’s premier health research funding agency.

Created by Guelph professors Heather Keller and Janis Randall Simpson, both of the Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition (FRAN), and Lee Rysdale and Joanne Beyers of the Sudbury and District Health Unit, the checklist focuses on children between the ages of three and five, an age group that often slips between the cracks when it comes to keeping track of their nutritional behaviour.

By age three, children are typically finished with breastfeeding and are beginning to form nutritional habits, so this is the optimal time to intervene and make changes to prevent future nutritional problems, says Randall Simpson.

“In the past, at-risk children were identified only at the clinical stage when they already had nutritional problems,” she says. “We need to be identifying them before they suffer from obesity or get diabetes.”

Support for the initiative comes from research by FRAN colleague Prof. Susan Evers. She found that about 25 per cent of Ontario’s junior kindergartners are overweight or at risk for being overweight, and the percentage increases as children get older.

In addition, children who were overweight or at risk for being overweight in JK were six times more likely to be overweight four years later, says Evers, whose research team completed the first long-term study of four- to eight-year-olds.

Participating children were all part of the Better Beginnings, Better Futures project, a prevention initiative in low-income communities in Ontario.

The researchers didn’t find a sex difference in the prevalence of overweight children, but they did find that children whose mothers were overweight were more likely to be overweight in JK.

Mary Dickieson
A t ages five and three, Grace and Miles Day are already expert grocery shoppers, choosing such standard family fare as pears, tofu, dried split peas and cranberries. They’re learning about nutrition and food preparation from their parents, Nadine and Simon, who know that taste and nutrition go hand-in-hand both at home and at work.

Since graduating from U of G’s bachelor of applied science program in 1998, Nadine has managed a café, worked as a dietitian and public health nutritionist, trained as a chef and written two baby food cookbooks.

Simon came to U of G in 2003 as operations manager and fine-dining instructor in the School of Hospitality and Tourism Management (HTM). He had spent over 20 years travelling the world as an executive chef and later taught future chefs — including Nadine — at Liaison College. When he spotted an ad for an instructor at Guelph, he jumped at the chance to teach in the University’s hospitality school.

More than 1,500 Guelph students have passed through Simon’s classroom and the school’s teaching restaurant, called PJ’s. Students in both the fine-dining course and the restaurant-operations course have free rein over menu development and food preparation. The result is a different restaurant and menu each Tuesday and Friday in both the fall and winter semesters.

The restaurants are managed by student teams of four, who oversee everything from the theme and design of the menu to decorating the dining room, making purchase orders, marketing their restaurant and assigning front- and back-of-house jobs to the remaining 24 classmates, who must create each dish from scratch.

“Nothing comes prepackaged,” says Day. “If they’re making chicken soup, they’re making their own stock using chicken bones. If they want to use pasta, they mix the semolina, bread flour and eggs themselves. Everything we serve is made in-house, which is incredibly rare to find.”

The school’s 85-seat dining room also serves as a living laboratory for research in nutrition education and menu-item development. It has earned the Eat Smart! Award several times for its commitment to high-quality food and food safety.

At the Day home in Cambridge, Nadine could be developing a recipe for Healthline, the Heart and Stroke Foundation’s monthly e-newsletter, or writing a column for Parents Canada magazine. She works from home two days a week for President’s Choice and Loblaws to promote the popular “Too Good to Be True” line of products. This fall, she’s teaching a course on food and multiculturalism at Conestoga College.

Grace and Miles developed their taste buds trying out recipes from Blender Baby Food, a cookbook with 125 baby food recipes developed by Nicole Young and Nadine, who analyzed each recipe to determine its calorie, carbohydrate, fibre, fat, protein and iron content.

“Grocery stores don’t carry pureed asparagus, lentils or curry,” she says, adding that homemade baby foods are more economical than store-bought brands and are easy to make. “The most important thing to remember is to use foods that your baby will be expected to eat as they grow up. By 12 months, they should be eating a mashed or chopped version of what the family is eating.”

That advice is the premise behind her second cookbook. Written for the Canadian...
an Prenatal Nutrition Program, it’s geared to Alberta’s First Nations communities and will be published this fall.

“It was an interesting experience because I was working with a number of foods that were new to me,” she says. Recipes feature traditional aboriginal foods like elk, venison, duck and rabbit, as well as baby-friendly pemmican — a dish made of meat and fruit and bannock, a bread that she adapted by replacing flour with baby cereal.

“Balancing nutritional value with taste, texture and look is key to creating meals that people of all ages will enjoy,” she says. “If food doesn’t look or taste good, then people aren’t going to eat it. And if people won’t eat it, then it doesn’t matter what the nutritional value is, does it?”

Rebecca Kendall

Food is a science specialty

Developing a new “healthy” fat that can replace trans fat in cookies, pastries and other baked goods; testing a new packaging film that changes colour in the presence of bacteria; figuring out how to make butter spreadable when it’s refrigerator cold; and calculating the optimum temperature needed to preserve fruits and vegetables in a Tetra Pak container. These are all things that food scientists do by applying the basic disciplines of chemistry, microbiology, engineering and economics, among others, to the study of food and food components.

Grown from a need to control food-borne disease in the early 19th century, the food science discipline now covers the gamut from processing to preservation, storage, handling and marketing our food. The University of Guelph offers the only accredited food science program in Ontario, and its graduates are employed across Canada in all sectors of the food and beverage industries.

Prof. Doug Goff, who earned a B.Sc. in food science in 1981, says a tremendous number of opportunities await food science graduates. Most find careers in technical positions, food product development, quality control or technical sales support for suppliers to the food industry, he says. Others find their way into academia, research and government agencies, where they are involved in inspection or regulatory affairs.

No matter the path, careers in food sci-
The major component of most foods is water. Water, protein, carbohydrate, fat, fibre and ash make up 99+ per cent of all food material. The rest is vitamins and other microcomponents.

The nanoparticle nature made

The consumer push for added nutritional value in food has researchers at the University of Guelph taking a closer look at that classic food staple, milk.

Milena Corredig, Canada Research Chair in Food Nanostructures and NSERC / Ontario Dairy Council research chair in dairy technology, has been examining how to enhance milk’s nutritional value by taking advantage of protein molecules called casein micelles. Corredig wants to use these nanoparticles as carriers for nutrients such as antioxidants and immune boosters to enhance milk’s nutritional profile.

“Casein micelles are nanoparticles that nature made, so why not use them?” she says. “If we modify milk, we can use the micelles as a platform for delivery of other beneficial nutrients.”

Corredig is looking at ways to modify the structure of casein micelles, which naturally carry phosphorus and calcium from cow to calf. She hopes to use them as a delivery platform for nutrients such as selenium. It’s a way to get the additional nutrients into the milk without destabilizing or degrading it.

The key is the structure of the micelle. Researchers compare it to a bowl of spaghetti and hold out hope that by loosening its internal structure, they can alter it to carry nutrients other than phosphorus and calcium. This would allow for the health benefits of the added nutrients to be passed on to the consumer.

Corredig is hopeful her research will lead to a process for producers to add micronutrients on-farm. For example, polyphenols — a group of nutrients found in plants — and micronutrients such as selenium are beneficial antioxidants that have been recognized to decrease the risk of heart disease and some cancers. The successful addition of these nutrients to milk would increase its nutritional and economic value, while opening niche markets for finished specialty goods, including cheese and yogurt.

This project is the latest in a line of strategic dairy research conducted by Corredig at U of G, focused on enhancing the value of milk and milk components. Her research is supported by the Ontario Dairy Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council and Dairy Farmers of Ontario.

Maria Dombrowsky

Milena Corredig

PHOTO BY MARTIN SCHWALBE
Culinary artists treated royally

On opening night of this year’s Royal Winter Fair, Nov. 7 to 26, Cuisine Canada and the University of Guelph will present the annual Canadian Culinary Book Awards. Shortlisted authors will demonstrate recipes from their cookbooks assisted by student chefs, and the 2008 winners will be announced.

In addition, an interactive Cuisine Canada exhibit in the Journey to Your Good Health section of the fair will portray cooking from field to table through Canada’s best-loved cookbooks.

The annual Canadian Culinary Book Awards are designed to recognize excellence and creativity in food and beverage writing and publishing in both English- and French-language culinary books. They also promote Canada’s distinct food culture.

All cookbooks nominated for the awards are placed in the University’s culinary book collection — Canada’s largest culinary collection with 6,000 volumes in the library’s Archival and Special Collections, some of which date back to the 17th century.

The Guelph collection highlights the development of cookery in Canada and other parts of the world. Cookbooks are a valuable historical and sociological resource for understanding food habits, nutritional ideas, medical remedies, social customs, and scientific and technological progress. They reveal aspects of daily life and provide evidence of the transformations occurring in society, including multicultural contributions and the changing roles of women.

Highlights of the collection have been digitized for enthusiasts around the world. To view cookbooks online, go to www.lib.uoguelph.ca and search the site for “culinary.”

Defining Canada’s food culture

Cuisine Canada founder Anita Stewart is a longtime champion of Canada’s farmers and fishers. She launched the world’s longest barbecue as a Canada Day celebration in 2003, and her idea has taken off as a way to support those who produce Canada’s locally grown food.

Stewart has helped U of G celebrate its own food history by first creating a food inventory and then perfecting dinner menus that feature food products developed by Guelph researchers and grown at the University’s agricultural research stations.

After more than 25 years of tasting and travelling the nation, Stewart has published a new food book that might as easily be placed in the history section of the library. Anita Stewart’s Canada: The Food, The Recipes, The Stories begins with the country’s indigenous foods and showcases the peoples of our nation who have, over the centuries, developed a national cuisine which she calls “one of the most exciting on Earth.”

Watch the supermarket

At a Guelph Food Technology Centre presentation earlier this year, president Gary Fred talked about some of today’s emerging food trends: health foods, ethnic foods, natural sweeteners, convenience foods, environmentally friendly packaging and fusion.

The latter means fusing flavours and cooking styles, but also fusing food trends. Today’s consumers want everything, it seems — ready-to-eat foods packaged in single servings so they can be carried to work, but the food product has to be healthy and packaging has to be minimal and environmentally friendly. And don’t forget these new foods should reflect Canada’s cultural diversity.

Fusion food that combines elements of different international cuisines — like pizza made with naan bread — is a reflection of our associations at work and school with people of varying cultural backgrounds.

Anita Stewart

You’ve been eating so-called ethnic foods in restaurants for a while, and now they’re showing up in the supermarket.

Mary Dickieson
The answer to preventing future *Salmonella* outbreaks in tomatoes is fighting microbes with microbes, according to research by food science professor Keith Warriner. He has discovered a method that could effectively eliminate *Salmonella* contaminations by combining an antagonistic bacterium naturally found on tomatoes with viruses that infect the pathogen and introducing the solution to the plant.

“We have *Salmonella* outbreaks in tomatoes almost every year, and it’s a large food safety risk,” says Warriner, who has been studying the issue for the past five years. “Because *Salmonella* can become internalized in tomatoes, simply washing cannot inactivate or remove the pathogen. Preventing contamination of the tomato during cultivation and post-harvest is also problematic.”

His solution is to treat the tomatoes at the flowering stage.

In previous research supported by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Warriner found tomatoes are vulnerable to contamination at the flowering stage. In a study where he exposed tomato flowers to *Salmonella*, 90 per cent of the harvested fruit was contaminated. “These tomatoes weren’t just contaminated on the surface but in the tissue as well, so washing isn’t effective,” he says.

More recently, Warriner and graduate student Jianxiong Ye examined the types of bacteria that naturally exist on tomatoes and found that the microflora profile of the fruit differed depending on whether they were contaminated. Specifically, they discovered that the fruit harbouring *Enterobacter* prevented *Salmonella* from establishing.

Using mung beans, which take only days to grow compared with the months the tomatoes require, Warriner inoculated the beans with *Salmonella* along with an *Enterobacter* isolate recovered from tomatoes. When the *Enterobacter* strain was coinoculated with *Salmonella*, it reduced the levels of pathogens on the sprouts but did not eliminate them. He then combined *Enterobacter* with a type of virus known as a bacteriophage, which infects bacteria. This combination was successful in eliminating *Salmonella*.

Field trials on tomato plants were conducted this summer. Warriner’s goal is to
New research aimed at a major food crop

Over the past 18 months, a team of Guelph researchers began a new venture to find ways to increase the yield of Ontario’s corn crop. The “Genes to Fields: Corn Biotechnology Capacity for Ontario” initiative will help strengthen Ontario agriculture and make Guelph an international biotechnology hub, says lead researcher Steven Rothstein, a professor in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology.

Corn is one of the world’s most important food crops and the foundation of a new “green” economy based on renewable corn-based ethanol and industrial polymers, he says. The Guelph team includes experts in molecular genetics, plant breeding and whole-plant physiology. They hope to learn more about genes to enhance breeding, then use biotechnology to improve crop yields and help farmers grow corn in more efficient and sustainable ways.

The researchers will test how various genes affect plant development and determine which genes are responsible for desired traits. For example, Rothstein studies genes that help plants use nitrogen more efficiently. That may help reduce fertilizer pollution of ground and surface water and lower emissions of nitrous oxide, a greenhouse gas.

“This method addresses the problem at the source rather than coming up with a solution once the tomatoes are contaminated. We hope our biocontrol method will make Salmonella outbreaks linked to tomatoes a thing of the past.”

Deirdre Healey

develop a spray combining the Enterobacter and bacteriophage that farmers can apply to crops. The solution could also be introduced to the water tomatoes are transported in during the post-harvest stage, effectively cutting off all possible routes of contamination, he says.

PHOTO BY SAM COATS

PHOTO BY SAM COATS

Steven Rothstein

initiative will help strengthen Ontario agriculture and make Guelph an international biotechnology hub, says lead researcher Steven Rothstein, a professor in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology.
Success comes from our farms and gardens

Plant scientists at the University of Guelph have affected the daily lives of food consumers, growers and industries throughout the world:

• Since the late 1800s, Guelph researchers have been developing, testing and releasing new crop, fruit and vegetable varieties that increase yields, resist disease and pests, and add value to farmers’ fields and benefit the environment.
• The total economic impact of the plant varieties released by U of G is estimated at $300 million/year.
• Grape research has helped to establish Ontario as a major wine producer; barley research has resulted in new types of beer.
• Since potato breeding began on campus in the 1950s, U of G scientists have released the Yukon Gold, Rideau, Saginaw Gold, Conestoga, Red Gold, Rose Gold, Eramosa, Ruby Gold, Temagami and Royal Gold varieties.
• Research into haploid cereal production has decreased the time it takes to conduct traditional breeding in crops such as barley, which is eaten by both humans and livestock.
• Over the past 20 years, the Guelph and Ridgetown campuses have released 69 soybean varieties now grown on up to 40 per cent of the total acreage of soybeans in Ontario.
• A new variety of asparagus, Guelph Millenium, is poised to increase yields by 40 per cent compared to the U.S. varieties currently grown in Ontario, potentially raising gross income by $2.5 million/year for Ontario asparagus growers.
• Guelph researchers are trying to diversify the crops currently grown in Ontario by developing new varieties like high vitamin C broccoli, chives, herbs, sweet potato, nuts and medicinal plants.
• Scientists have discovered that soil sulfur deficiencies may be limiting the production of vegetables such as cabbage. This finding may lead to higher yields and reduced use of nitrogen fertilizers.
• Guelph researchers have increased food production in China and other developing countries, earning three faculty the Friendship Medal, the highest civilian honour bestowed by the People’s Republic of China to foreign scientists.

Ontario fruit tastes right

Juicy peaches, sweet cherries and fresh plums are all stone fruits that have become a familiar taste of Ontario summers. They also happen to be brimming with powerful antioxidants. And many of these fruits would have to be imported if not for the work of University of Guelph researchers. Through various techniques — genetics, selective breeding and biotechnology — researchers have been developing healthier fruit varieties that will flourish in the Canadian climate and markets.

Tree fruit expert Jayasankar Subramanian is based at the Vineland Research Station. To tap into growing consumer demand for local foods with health benefits, he’s focused his efforts on breeding stone fruits that mature earlier and have increased antioxidant properties.

“Being able to grow these fruits locally is important to take advantage of the health-promoting compounds that are more readily available in the fresh product,” he says. Specifically, Subramanian is leading a research team that has been breeding cherries that can be harvested earlier to help meet demands for local markets and compete with imported U.S. varieties. The researchers are beginning to notice there’s a connection between disease resistance in the tree and higher antioxidant levels in the cherries.

This connection is also being explored in other stone fruits. Some of the new varieties under development that show high levels of disease resistance also contain two to three times more antioxidants than the standard varieties, Subramanian says.

Economist says burn ethanol policy

Guelph economist Douglas Auld says Canadian policy-makers should reconsider the government’s current thrust into corn ethanol as a greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction policy. According to research conducted by Auld for the C.D. Howe Institute, increased ethanol production will raise food prices for Canadians and cost taxpayers more than other GHG-reduction alternatives.

Auld’s report is the first to put a price tag on what ethanol means to food prices in Canada. He says increased food prices linked to ethanol production already cost Canadians as much as $400 million annually. In addition, “public funds contribute approximately $368 for each tonne of CO2 reduced, roughly seven times greater than the cost of alternative policy measures.” In his report “The Ethanol Trap: Why Policies to Promote Ethanol as Fuel Need Rethinking,” Auld also argues that there is no conclusive scientific evidence that ethanol actually reduces GHGs or energy use, and he suggests that government consider more cost-effective GHG-reduction strategies.
No disease in peas, please

Powdery mildew is a serious fungal disease affecting peas and other plants. It appears as a grey-coloured growth on pods and leaves, and causes crop loss and reduced yields for pea producers. In Ontario, yield losses resulting from the disease typically affect 10 to 15 per cent of the crop.

Prof. Mary Ruth McDonald, Plant Agriculture, is studying methods to reduce or eliminate it. She and her research team collect weather data to try and predict when powdery mildew will develop at their research sites at the Muck Crops Research Station in Bradford, Ont., and the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) Research Station in Saskatoon, Sask. They also test the effectiveness of fungicides currently on the market and evaluate the differences in disease resistance among pea varieties. Data collected is made available to Ontario growers.

Certain types of pea varieties are more susceptible to powdery mildew, particularly late-season fresh-market peas, which are harvested in August and September when the humid days and warm evenings favour mould growth. The spores that cause the fungus are spread through the air and, unlike other spores, germinate well in relatively high humidity.

Also involved in this research are Kevin Vander Kooi of the Muck Crops Research Station, Prof. Greg Boland of the Department of Environmental Biology, Bruce Gossen of AAFC, and Mike Celetti and Elaine Roddy of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Mary Dickieson

Food safety begins with safe farm workers

Improving the living and working conditions for farm workers, immigrant and migrant alike, is not just a human rights issue, but is also a food safety issue,” says Guelph sociologist Kerry Preibisch. Her comment is based on the findings of research she conducted as part of the Economic Security Project, a joint initiative of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and Simon Fraser University.

“When farm workers’ health and safety are at risk, so is the safety of the food we eat,” she says. The study calls for government agencies to co-ordinate efforts to establish and enforce living and working conditions for farm workers. It suggests sweeping policy changes to protect farm workers, especially immigrant and temporary workers. The study was focused specifically on British Columbia but involved researchers from across Canada. Preibisch says some fundamental issues are the same from province to province. The researchers interviewed workers and government officials, and conducted surveys and reviews of other jurisdictions. They found systemic violations of employment standards and regulations, including poor and dangerous working conditions and lax government enforcement.

“Farm workers should enjoy the same rights and protections as workers in other sectors,” says Preibisch, who studies international labour migration and the rise of temporary migration programs in high-income countries.

Lindsay Brown

Apple growers get an edge

Prof. John Cline, Department of Plant Agriculture, operates a research project that spans five to 10 hectares at the University’s Simcoe campus. His goal is to boost the province’s $80-million apple industry, which faces increasingly intense international competition.

One area Cline oversees is the development of a series of seven apple rootstocks that have been researched at the Vineland station since the 1960s. Three Vineland rootstocks have already been commercialized, and he is evaluating the others for their potential.

Rootstocks (the tree’s root portion that is grafted with a genetically different cultivar in a nursery) have a huge influence on a tree’s performance, says Cline. They’re what make it large or small, productive or unproductive, and resistant or susceptible to disease, water stress and cold winter temperatures.

He and technician Debbie Norton found a better cultivar-rootstock match for a new apple variety called Honeycrisp by using a Vineland rootstock. This variety — originally developed in Minnesota but well-suited to Ontario’s climate — receives good reviews and is fetching high prices for growers. By matching it with a Vineland rootstock, Cline has cemented its place as one of the most marketable apple varieties available to growers.

Also involved in this work is master’s student Zia Ullah of the Department of Plant Agriculture. Other collaborators include Prof. John Zandstra of the University of Guelph’s Ridgetown Campus, research scientist Charlie Embree of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and several U.S. scientists.

Robert Fieldhouse
Healthy chickens = quality in the cooler

In the last two decades, food safety and food quality issues have become major priorities for every sector involved in food production in Canada. Nowhere is this more evident than in the livestock industries that fill the meat cooler in your neighbourhood supermarket. In virtually all meat-producing sectors, farmers have developed on-farm quality assurance programs that begin by ensuring a healthy environment for the animals they raise.

And behind the farmers stand veterinarians like Prof. Michele Guerin, DVM ’93, M.Sc. ’04 and PhD ’07. A former practicing veterinarian who pursued graduate work in epidemiology, Guerin was finishing her PhD as U of G was advertising for a new faculty position being sponsored by the Poultry Industry Council of Canada (PIC). That organization, representing producers of broiler and breeder chickens, egg layers and turkeys, is keen to help strengthen U of G’s poultry research and teaching programs. The industry is worth about $9.5 billion a year in Canada, with 40 per cent of that based in Ontario.

“I will be working closely with the Poultry Industry Council to make sure my research fits in with issues of importance to the industry,” says Guerin.

Those issues include food safety, animal welfare and biosecurity (disease management on and off the farm). Whether it’s studying ways to raise Campylobacter-free broiler chickens or investigating the health of cage-raised birds, Guerin will work with PIC’s poultry program team, which includes poultry specialists from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs as well as U of G professors Shayan Sharif of the Department of Pathobiology and Grégory Bédécarrats of the Department of Animal and Poultry Science.

The PIC team supports Ontario’s poultry industry through studies and teaching in poultry health and welfare, production and management, economic and environmental issues, and food quality and safety. Much of the research PIC funds involves faculty in OVC and the Ontario Agricultural College.

Guerin also belongs to OVC’s new Centre for Public Health and Zoonoses, which brings together campus researchers and external agencies to study animal diseases that jump between animals and humans, such as avian flu, SARS and West Nile virus.

Guerin hopes to conduct the kinds of studies she got involved in during her PhD with retired professor Wayne Martin, DVM ’67 and M.Sc. ’70. Funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, they studied Campylobacter in Iceland. The country had

The Animal Health Laboratory unit of the University of Guelph’s Laboratory Services Division specializes in determining the health of livestock, poultry, horses and pets, and providing disease surveillance in Ontario.
suffered a disease outbreak in humans in the late 1990s and wanted to learn more about averting the bacterial disease.

Guerin visited numerous broiler chicken farms in Iceland to observe practices and pinpoint problems. She says some farmers have altered practices based on their work, including paying more attention to drinking-water treatment and farm hygiene as well as slaughtering chickens at a younger age.

Andrew Vowles

Fish for DHA in the supermarket

As more and more people accept the benefits of adding DHA and other omega-3 fatty acids to their diet, the seafood counter in your local grocery store will keep on growing. Did you know that up to 40 per cent of the fish you’ll find at the seafood counter are farmed fish produced in Canada?

Atlantic salmon and rainbow trout are the most common species produced in Ontario and the focus of research at the University’s aquaculture research station. The 51-acre station near Alma maintains up to 200,000 fish and provides facilities for large-scale research projects and quarantine of fish species new to the province.

Guelph faculty collaborate with the private sector and other universities on commercial fish farming research. Areas under study include engineering, nutrition and feed formulation, genetics and breeding, waste management, semen cryopreservation, health and animal welfare. In co-operation with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, researchers at Alma have made a certified disease-free breeding stock available for widespread distribution to farmers.

Mary Dickieson

Omega-3 chickens about to hatch

The egg may have come first for omega-3-enriched poultry products, but the chicken isn’t far behind.

Animal and poultry science professor Steve Leeson has already enriched eggs with omega-3 fatty acids and is now leading an effort to do the same with poultry meat. He’s identifying various poultry feed combinations that can be fed to chickens to add heart-healthy fatty acids to the animals’ meat, while ensuring its enhanced nutritive quality doesn’t interfere with taste.

Arthur Churchyard
Can chickens grow too fast?

Chicken feed is the subject of another research project where animal scientists Julie Steele and Prof. Steve Leeson are actually trying to slow the growth rate of broiler chickens. Poultry producers want broiler chickens to grow quickly because they consume less food, but a too-short growth period can result in the birds having an immature skeleton and reduced bone development. That’s a problem for processors. Leeson wants to develop a feed ration that won’t increase the amount (and cost) of feed but will take genetically advanced chickens longer to eat it — say 33 to 35 days, which he has found to be the optimal market age for bone development.

Lindsay Brown

Improving lean pork

In future, consumers can expect to see a larger range of functional pork products in the grocery store with specific labelling and claims about increased health benefits to consumers, says animal science professor Kees de Lange.

“Addressing human health and aging concerns with designer foods will benefit consumers and society as a whole,” he says. Farmers will also benefit from producing functional pork by receiving premiums for their animals.

De Lange is leading a research program to manipulate fatty acid profiles in pork. He aims to increase the content of “fish-type” omega-3 fatty acids and to reach consistent levels of these fatty acids in the intramuscular (marbling) fat.

Omega-3 fatty acids in fish such as docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) are beneficial to health, yet are not consumed in sufficient quantities. De Lange says pork products that are enriched with omega-3 fatty acids mainly contain alphalinolenic acid (found in flaxseed), and most of this is present in the extramuscular fat (backfat) rather than the intramuscular fat. Ironically, most consumers trim the backfat from pork meat cuts, so they miss the fatty acid. De Lange’s research program is exploring alternative feeding strategies to maximize the retention of DHA and EPA in intramuscular fat.

Katie Savage and Kim Waalderbos

Guar gum reduces blood cholesterol

Of G researchers have shown that a plant extract from a legume grown in India can reduce cholesterol in pigs. Now they want to make cheaper sources of Ontario-grown fibre that will do the same trick, ultimately leading to health benefits for people.

Prof. Ming Fan, Animal and Poultry Science, led a research team that published a paper last year in the Journal of Nutrition. Supported by funding from the food research program of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the team includes researchers from Fan’s department, the Department of Food Science, the Department of Human Health and Nutritional Sciences (HHNS), and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

Fan hopes their work will eventually lead to supermarket products containing homegrown soluble fibre sources designed to help reduce cholesterol.

“We want to see how nutrition can prevent chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, and how nutrition and diet as a preventive strategy improves heart health,” he says.

The Guelph researchers found that pigs fed diets containing 10-per-cent guar gum showed a 27-per-cent drop in total blood cholesterol. LDL (bad) cholesterol dropped by 37 per cent. Guar gum, which is an extract of a legume plant grown in Asia, had already been shown to reduce blood lipid levels.

Food companies use the substance as a thickener and stabilizer in various products. The industry is also aware of Fan’s research, although he says it’s too early to say when new or enhanced products will hit grocery store shelves.

Co-authors on this study are Todd Rideout, a PhD student in the Department of Animal and Poultry Science; Prof. Marica Bakovic and post-doc Zongfei Yuan, HHNS; food science professor Yoshinori Mine; and a researcher in cardiac surgery at Toronto General Hospital.

Fan says that mix of agri-food and human health expertise at Guelph is vital.

“We have the potential to do a much higher level of research than other institutions on food and health issues.”

Andrew Vowles

Here’s the meat of the matter

A specific genetic component in beef cattle has been linked to meat tenderness by University of Guelph researchers. Using specialized analytical equipment and a decade of data from the Elora Beef Research Station, a research team led by Prof. Stephen Miller, Animal and Poultry Science, is working to develop a test producers can use to help guarantee beef is more tender.

“Using that test, we can focus our cattle genetics to develop clear advantages in meat quality,” says Miller, whose colleagues are already building a herd selected for meat tenderness.

Each year, semen from the best 24 bulls in his program is collected, analyzed and
Cashing in on a sweet crop

Prof. Gard Otis, Environmental Biology, has taken on a development project to teach farming families in Vietnam how to use honey to put food on the table.

“Beekeeping can make such a difference in income for these rural families,” says Otis, whose work is supported by a $1-million grant from the Canadian International Development Agency.

The six-year project is focused on villages in north central Vietnam — one of the poorest regions of the country — where selling just a dozen jars of honey can provide enough income to feed a family for months. Otis says beekeeping is ideal for poor farmers because it doesn’t require land ownership and the start-up costs are small.

Although many families already have a few beehives on their properties, they haven’t had any formal training in beekeeping, so their yields are far below what they could achieve. Otis is working on the project with Leo Smits of the Department of Family and Community Social Services at the University of Guelph-Humber and Stefanie Scott of the Department of Geography at the University of Waterloo.

They are helping staff at the Vietnam Bee Research and Development Centre design and implement new training methods and showing villagers the potential profits of selling beeswax and the importance of pollination when it comes to increasing their yields.

Deirdre Healey

Ag networks examine NAFTA

For the past several years, Prof. Karl Meilke of the Department of Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics has been leading two national agricultural policy networks based at U of G. Both networks, whose members include Guelph faculty, have made recommendations to improve trade policies in the agri-food sector in North America.

The Canadian Agricultural Trade Policy Research Network administers a competitive grants program to fund graduate student research and holds an annual workshop to help train the next generation of economists, says Meilke.

The North American Agri-Food Market Integration Consortium (NAAMIC) has been funded in part by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to monitor, analyze and discuss economic relationships among Canada, the United States and Mexico. Meilke says NAAMIC is one of the few non-partisan forums that bring together academics, government officials and the private sector to discuss issues affecting all three parties to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

The fifth NAAMIC workshop, held in Austin, Texas, in May, focused on the rapidly evolving issues of standards for food safety and border security. Public and private mechanisms are developing that have the potential for becoming significant barriers to trade and market integration under NAFTA, says Meilke. A related issue involves mechanisms for reducing congestion at the borders, given increased concern about the safety and security of the food supply and the need to further integrate markets to make NAFTA products more competitive.

Papers from the workshop are available at www.naamic.tamu.edu.

Mary Dickieson

Livestock antibiotics pose little risk

After a six-year study examining the use of pharmaceuticals in the Canadian hog and cattle industries, Profs. Paul Sibley, Environmental Biology, and Keith Solomon, Centre for Toxicology, conclude that antibiotics used on livestock pose minimal environmental risk in Canada.

Pharmaceuticals first raised concerns when they were detected in the environment more than a decade ago. It was thought they could cause contamination through routine practices such as manure spreading. To determine whether these concerns were valid, Sibley, Solomon and a team of researchers applied pharmaceuticals directly to soil and water to simulate a worst-case scenario. After exposure, they tested the soil, soil life, water and aquatic life in the area to measure the level of toxicity. They also measured concentrations of antibiotics at several locations in the Grand River Watershed, heavily populated with livestock.

Deirdre Healey

In both studies, they found the level of antibiotics detected was “significantly” lower than the amount required to elicit toxic responses.

Katharine Found
Ontario bakers have new support

Saskatchewan may be the bread basket of Canada, but almost all of the country’s cereal processors are located east of Manitoba. Cereal processing and baked goods are a multi-billion-dollar sector of the Ontario agri-food industry. Combine geographic proximity with expertise, and it’s no surprise that a new cereals research centre at U of G will be at the core of emerging innovation and a growing economic cluster in wheat and related cereals science.

Prof. Koushik Seetharaman, a recognized researcher, food science consultant and former faculty member at Penn State, joined the U of G faculty last fall. He holds a newly funded Industry Research Chair in Cereal Technology and will bring high-calibre cereals research to assist innovative companies in this region and expand uses for Ontario-grown wheat.

He’s interested in the complexity of grains in terms of nutrients, structure, disease resistance and genetic attributes and says his current research is looking at the molecular structure of starches in cereal and the ability to manipulate these structures to create healthier products with better glycemic responses.

“Lowering the glycemic index means that the starch is absorbed slowly and does not trigger a huge release in insulin,” says Seetharaman. “This modulating effect of low-GI products can help to reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes and other diseases.”

His lab is studying slowly digestible starch, which can lower the glycemic response of many types of baked products. For example, from low to high GI, there is insoluble fibre (wheat bran), soluble fibre (oat bran), slowly digestible starch and rapidly digestible starch (rice or bread). This is an area that holds great promise for innovation in the bakery industry and healthy cereal-based food choices for consumers, says Seetharaman.

Funding for the $1.1-million endowed chair was provided by the Ontario Cereals Industry Research Council, the federally funded Agricultural Adaptation Council and U of G. The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs also provided $750,000 through a rural economic development program grant to help people working in industry access the skills development courses and internships to be offered through the research chair.

Eighty per cent of the wheat grown in Ontario is soft, which means it’s more suitable for crackers, cookies and pastry than it is for breads. Seetharaman says he can assist the Ontario food industry in all matters.
related to cereals, including the pliability of dough and the effects of varying baking temperatures. “This level of support is required to assist product developers in this area,” he says. In addition to managing a research program and liaising with industry and government agencies, Seetharaman will develop Guelph’s undergraduate teaching in the cereal technology area.

Mary Dickieson

Food products top business ideas

The College of Management and Economics hosted U of G’s first Nicol Venture Creation Competition in March, with the top prizes going to commerce students who proposed a super-quick and portable cereal, biodegradable dishes and cutlery, and gluten-free beer.

A panel of top business leaders — Bill Johnson, former president and CEO of McDonald’s Canada; John Sleeman of Sleeman Brewing; Advantis partner Tom Peters; and John Pollice, district vice-president of TD Canada Trust — grilled the entrepreneurs on their proposals before handing over cash prizes of $6,000, $3,000 and $1,000 that were provided by the Wesley and Mary Nicol Charitable Foundation.

The winning team pitched “Cereal to Go,” a breakfast product that uses spray-dried milk so consumers simply have to add water. Developed by Sally Boeckner, Jamie MacLaren and Ben Holland, the unique process maintains the nutritional value of the milk and means the cereal could be offered as a healthy breakfast choice in vending machines.

Second prize went to the team “Green World Solutions,” made up of Kwasi Danso...
Coffee before cereal boosts blood sugar

Think you’re doing your body good by eating a low-sugar cereal in the morning? Not if you’re drinking a cup of coffee beforehand, Prof. Terry Graham in the Department of Human Health and Nutritional Sciences was the first to discover that drinking coffee before eating your morning cereal can significantly affect your body’s blood-sugar response.

“You may think you’ve made a healthy choice by eating cereal low in sugar, but if you have a cup of caffeinated coffee before eating that cereal, you are immediately changing the way your body responds to your breakfast without even knowing it,” says Graham, who worked on the study with master’s students Lesley Moisey and Stia Kacker.

Using two types of cereal — one with low levels of sugar and one with moderate levels — Graham examined the difference in response when healthy male subjects drank caffeinated and decaffeinated coffee one hour before eating breakfast.

The study, which was published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, showed the blood-sugar levels in subjects who ate the low-sugar cereal jumped 250 per cent higher when they drank caffeinated coffee than when they drank decaf.

“Caffeine interferes with our body’s response to insulin,” says Graham. “It makes us resistant to insulin, which in turn makes our blood-sugar levels go higher. Surges in our body’s blood-sugar level three or four times a day are challenging to the system. It will start to induce changes in the tissues of the body that can cause the health effects associated with diabetes.”

At the same time, there are many health benefits associated with long-term coffee drinking, “If you want the good without the bad, then you should consider drinking decaf,” says Graham.

It’s time to go local

Landcape architecture professor Karen Landman is part of a Guelph research team preparing a report for the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) that could make it easier for consumers to buy local food products. Consumer demand for local food is currently booming, says Landman, but there is no system in place to feed it.

The study was sparked after Landman and a team of landscape architecture students completed a research project for OMAFRA on the current status of the local food movement across North America. They found that the biggest challenge in making local food available to consumers is the lack of an overall distribution system.

Finding channels to distribute their products is difficult for local farmers, says Landman. There are often regulations in place that prevent them from selling directly on their farms.

“And nothing is in place for farmers to easily distribute their food to grocery stores, restaurants, hospitals, school boards or any other large institutions.”

She is working on the study with Prof. Charlotte McCallum, Geography, and Prof. Ricardo Ramirez, Environmental Design and Rural Development, as well as three graduate students. They’re focusing on the local Guelph area and have met with city and county politicians, local growers and larger consumer-based groups such as Guelph restaurateurs.

One outcome of the study could be a recommendation that grocery stores have a local food section, which would allow farmers to distribute to the larger chains and give consumers a more convenient way of accessing local food, says Landman. At the very least, the study has brought stakeholders together and started a communication channel.

Immigrant farmers gain experience

And resource science professor Stewart Hilts says Ontario’s multi-ethnicity is not reflected in what’s being grown in the province partly because immigrant farmers can’t afford to farm here. Recently, the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation awarded $400,000 to help establish a training farm where immigrant farmers can gain experience farming in Ontario.
Learning where their food comes from

“IT’S MEANT TO PREPARE YOUNGER GENERATIONS FOR A DIFFERENT KIND OF FUTURE.”

That’s how Prof. Ann Clark, Plant Agriculture, describes a new organic farm plot being prepared on campus. She’s talking not just about undergraduates in Guelph’s organic agriculture major but also about preschoolers from the U of G Child-Care and Learning Centre, who will have a vegetable patch in one corner of the plot.

A one-hectare spread near the northwestern corner of the Arboretum is returning to cultivation as the new Guelph Centre for Urban Organic Farming. The project unites the University with a number of organizations focused on organic production — and returns a portion of the campus to its roots in field husbandry.

The site will allow undergrads to learn about year-round local organic food production, food security and resource conservation.

“The overall context would be not simply operating a market garden but anticipating resource-based challenges and preparing society for greater self-sufficiency in healthy and nutritious food, with less dependence on fossil fuel energy,” says Clark.

Introduced in 2002, Guelph’s organic agriculture major is still the only one like it in Canada, says plant agriculture chair Prof. Rene Van Acker. He hopes to boost program enrolment by providing hands-on production to complement classroom learning. Clark plans to involve students as volunteers and says other instructors and students from U of G’s campuses might tie the site into various courses, not just in the Ontario Agricultural College but also across other colleges.

For example, students might monitor trends in vitamin content in produce, determine food pathogen risks on fresh vegetables, come up with garden plans to feed a family year-round or design plantings and garden layouts.

Andrew Vowles

Counting the bean ideas

TWELVE YEARS AND STILL GROWING STRONG, U of G’s Project SOY competition has proved that soybeans are a versatile and nutritious food crop. Among the 2008 winners were fortune cookies, candies, pizza, pasta and breakfast patties — all made from soybeans.

In past years, inventive Guelph students have wowed the judges with maple-flavoured soy-whiskey liqueur, snack crackers and soy chips, chocolate-flavoured soy spread, shake-style beverages, doughnuts, pancakes, green soybean coffee, soy sorbet, enriched soy bread, instant soups, oatmeal cookies, beer, coffee whitener, spreadable soy butter and soybean oil that doesn’t burn. And the list goes on.

Open to students at the Guelph, Kemptville, Ridgetown and Alfred campuses, Project SOY showcased 13 entries by 38 students in 2008.

Project SOY was introduced in 1996 by First Line Seeds, a Guelph-based soybean seed company, and U of G. It’s now supported by Monsanto, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Ontario Soybean Growers and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Mary Dickieson

Kemptville lab is the country’s kitchen

FOR THE PAST 40 YEARS, Health Canada has monitored the levels of chemicals to which Canadians are exposed through the food supply. Foods purchased from grocery stores across the country are prepared for consumption and then tested for chemical and drug contaminants.

Since 1999, food preparation for Health Canada’s Total Diet Study has been under the supervision of researcher Liz Forbes at the University of Guelph Kemptville Campus. Over several weeks this fall, her lab will receive approximately 900 food items purchased in grocery stores and fast-food outlets in Quebec City — the targeted city chosen by Health Canada for this year’s study.

Canadian Food Inspection Agency per-
Pseudo-foods offer empty calories

There’s a pseudo-food aisle in every supermarket where we find high-calorie beverages, candy and snacks — the “junk foods” that Guelph sociologist Tony Winson says are aggressively marketed to children and teenagers (see story on page 11).

Filling our grocery carts with pseudo-food deprives our bodies of nutrition and contributes to a growing epidemic of obesity and weight-related illness.

An estimated 18 million Canadians are obese or overweight, costing the Canadian health-care system over $4.3 billion annually. This epidemic has drawn the University of Guelph and the agriculture sector together with other institutions, industry and non-profit organizations to create the Canadian Obesity Network (CON).

Guelph is making a unique contribution to the two-year-old network, says Prof. Terry Graham, chair of the Department of Human Health and Nutritional Sciences. U of G provides a geographical centre of synergy between the agriculture and health sectors, but our biggest contribution is that we have long recognized and encouraged interactions among agriculture, food and human health, says Graham. “No other university around is better positioned in all three areas.”

Obesity is a multi-faceted issue that won’t be easily overcome, he says. While championing prevention, CON must also provide overweight and obese individuals with food options that could help reduce the risk of related health conditions, such as type 2 diabetes and coronary heart disease.

Developing these different food types is one of the ways those professionals in the food technology and agriculture network will help with the epidemic. For example, Graham is developing different bread recipes and testing how altering ingredient levels will affect metabolism of the bread in middle-aged overweight individuals. He hopes the research will eventually lead to bread that can be endorsed for individuals dealing with obesity and type 2 diabetes.

“We can’t avoid food; we are going to consume it,” says Graham. The trick is to make food the healthiest it can be and to encourage wise consumer choices. Through CON, resources can be more easily shared to encourage new ways to help overcome obesity.

Rebecca Moore
Eat better to live better

Since 2003, U of G has been home base for the national Advanced Foods and Materials Network (AFMNet), a Canada-wide centre of excellence focusing on food research. Food science professor Rickey Yada is scientific director for the network, which involves more than 75 researchers at 21 universities across Canada.

At its 2008 conference in Vancouver, AFMNet highlighted a University of Waterloo project aimed at reducing water loss in frozen foods (freezer burn), University of Manitoba research that is developing a natural product to reduce high blood pressure in kidney patients, and work at the University of British Columbia that may produce environmentally friendly alternatives to chemical fungicides currently used to prevent post-harvest rot in fruits and vegetables.

AFMNet-supported research at U of G is primarily aimed at helping Canadians eat better and live better, covering topics such as microbial agents and food safety, nutrigenomics and biomarkers of chronic disease, and the impact of Canada’s natural health product regulations.

The federal AFMNet program is funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and Industry Canada.
Guelph / OMAFRA partnership feeds Ontario

In 1874, the Ontario government supported establishment of an agricultural college near Guelph, giving it sole responsibility among the province’s universities for food production research. That calling was renewed in April when the University of Guelph and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) inked a new agreement to carry their partnership through the next 10 years.

The University will receive $300 million in the first five years, in addition to $56 million in one-time funding that was allocated to U of G in the 2008 Ontario budget. “This increased commitment will allow the partnership to generate even more than the $1 billion it has been returning every year for the past 10 years,” said University of Guelph president Alastair Summerlee.

Agriculture is Ontario’s second-largest industry, contributing $30 billion to the province’s economy. More importantly, agriculture provides food security for Ontarians, and the Guelph/OMAFRA partnership gives U of G the scope needed to look at the big agri-food picture and tackle problems with the appropriate breadth of expertise. In addition, the OMAFRA commitment draws more research investment by agri-food businesses and farm organizations across the province.

People might be surprised to know how much has already been developed through this partnership. In the previous 20 pages, green headlines and type indicate research support from the OMAFRA contract.

We’re world leaders in biological life-support systems

Kids heading off to elementary school this fall will probably see a spaceship land on Mars in their lifetime. The astronauts will grow their own food in a greenhouse developed by University of Guelph scientists.

Guelph’s Controlled Environment Systems Research Facility (CESRF) is integral to Canada’s contribution to space exploration. “It is our next Canadarm,” says director Mike Dixon, a professor in the Department of Environmental Biology.

Developing a greenhouse for outer space is a small but significant piece of the life-support puzzle for the space sector, says Dixon, who helped to design a growth chamber that was tested on campus last fall. It then went to Spain, where scientists at the European Space Agency will spend the next few years figuring out how to link the growth chamber to the crew cabin and other units of a spaceship.

The greenhouse that supports a Martian garden will also help to manage the atmosphere on a spaceship. Plants use carbon dioxide and generate oxygen, and the moisture plants give off can be condensed and used as drinking water.

The prototype chamber sent to Spain is too small to feed even one astronaut, so the Guelph team continues to work on ways to improve the yield — maybe developing plants that require less light. Imagine the potential this research could have for benefiting agriculture here on Earth. Their work on using plants to filter air has already led to bio-walls and one spinoff company, Air Quality Solutions Ltd. in Guelph.

Another important spinoff to Dixon’s research is the Tomatosphere project that was created in 2000 to educate students across Canada about science and technology and to attract them to the disciplines.

He and astronaut Bob Thirsk have been distributing tomato seeds that have spent time in space. Students in grades 3 to 10 plant the seeds and submit germination rates and growth data to Guelph researchers. Tomatoes were selected as the demonstration crop because they are a nutritious, versatile fruit high in lycopene and vitamins A and C. They could be a staple in the first Martian garden.

Tomatosphere has skyrocketed to success, earning a prestigious Canadian Aeronautics and Space Institute Award in 2007. The Allouette Award is normally reserved for aeronautic experts.

“For a group of educators to get the award was unprecedented,” says Dixon, whose initial goal was to reach 10,000 students through Tomatosphere. That number is now well over 250,000 and is still climbing.

U of G shopper is food guru

The mystery shopper and University of Guelph presence in the supermarket scenarios created for our feature on food is third-year student Anupriya Dewan. The Brampton, Ont., resident is majoring in nutrition and nutraceutical sciences and has plans for a career in naturopathic medicine. She’s also a writer with the University’s successful SPARK program (Students Promoting Awareness of Research Knowledge).

Established in 1988 by research communications director Owen Roberts, SPARK is a unique training opportunity for students to gain experience in written communications – from hard news to public relations – while learning about the University’s extensive research agenda. SPARK students interview Guelph researchers and write articles that appear regularly in U of G’s Research magazine, and news publications across Ontario and beyond. Many SPARK writers contributed to this feature issue of The Portico.
report on giving in 2007

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Alastair Summerlee
President and Vice-Chancellor

Donors to the University of Guelph prioritize excellence in education and share a commitment to our world’s future.

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On behalf of our students, faculty and staff, I extend a world of thanks.

Joanne Shoveller
Vice President
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Donna Woolcott spent 23 years on faculty at the University of Guelph and earned both her undergraduate degree and PhD here. “My loyalty to Guelph stems back to my early experiences on campus. I have wonderful memories, and it’s important to give back to a place that has given me so much,” she says. “I like to think my support will allow the University to continue to do good things. By contributing to the scholarships that I have chosen, I am honouring, in a practical way, colleagues who made a big difference in my life.”

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Raymond J. Cislo, B.Sc.(H.K.) ’85, and Julia M. Keenlside, DVM ’87, M.Sc. ’93
Daniel M. Keith, BSA ’49
Dorinda Keith, B.H.Sc. ’61, and Robert F. Keith, BSA ’60
Carolyn A. Kelm, B.H.Sc. ’55
William K. Kendrick, BSA ’58
Garry B. Kinoshita, M.Sc. ’73, PhD ’76, and Naomi Kinoshita, B.A.Sc. ’73
Craig and Tammy Kloosterboer
Gerald H. Knechtel, ADA ’59
Allan H. Koch, ADA ’54, BSA ’59
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Leon Kraemer
Reid D. Kreutzwiser
Suzanna Kronovic and Neil Shear
Al Kuntze
Judith Kyle
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Leslie Laking, BSA ’39, H.D.Sc. ’71
Anne B. Lambert, B.Sc. ’76
Dianna L. Lambert
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G. Guy Larente, B.A.Sc. ’83, and Sally A. Larente, B.A. ’84
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Graham M. MacLeod, DVM ’69
Margaret MacLeod
Catherine E. Maltby, DHE ’57, and Murray D. Maltby, BSA ’58
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Eva Marmurek, B.A. ’76, and Harvey H. Marmurek
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Arthur E. Maude, DVM ’52
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Paul May
Robert F. McCordic, BSA ’52
Bill McCreight
Sheila H. McCrindle, B.Sc. ’83

Donna Woolcott spent 23 years on faculty at the University of Guelph and earned both her undergraduate degree and PhD here. “My loyalty to Guelph stems back to my early experiences on campus. I have wonderful memories, and it’s important to give back to a place that has given me so much,” she says. “I like to think my support will allow the University to continue to do good things. By contributing to the scholarships that I have chosen, I am honouring, in a practical way, colleagues who made a big difference in my life.”
leadership

Bob Taylor, R.Dip. ’63
Cecelia Paine and James R. Taylor
J. McFarlane Taylor, BSA ’58
Anne H. Thiessen
Anne R. Thompson
Anne Todd
Larry Todd
Patrick J. Tomkow, BSA ’89
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Edward Tookle, BSA ’52
Gage Townsend, R.Dip. ’76
M. Jane and Peter Townshend
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Gayle A. Trivers, BSA ’80
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Kathy Tschirhart
Janet Tschirhart-Charest
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B.Sc.(H.K.) ’78
Emma K. Tucker, B.Sc. ’96
H. Michelle Turley, BSA ’87
Marie Bellman and John E. Turnbull, BSA ’51, MSA ’62
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Sharleen Van Woezik
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Phil Warkentin, R.Dip. ’86
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’01, and Jindelle A. Webb, B.Sc.
’95, M.Sc. ’97, DVM ’01, D.V.Sc. ’05
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Matthew Weber, R.Dip. ’81
Steven Weber
Donald Weigand, R.Dip. ’63
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Cleason Wideman
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BA ’87
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Mary Williamson
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J. Jeffrey Wilson, ADA ’76
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’50, and Erna L. Witherspoon,
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Robert G. Wright, B.Sc.(Agr.)
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K. Patricia Yungblut, B.Sc. ’73,
M.Sc. ’79
M. Christine Zink, DVM ’78,
M.Sc. ’82, PhD ’86
two anonymous donors

J. D. MACLACHLAN SOCIETY

Created in honour of the University’s first president, the J. D. MacLachlan Society includes alumni and friends who have confirmed their intention to make a will bequest, a gift of life insurance, trust agreement or gift annuity. The University of Guelph is most grateful for their visionary intentions.

ESTATE GIFTS

Legacy Gifts fund the work of our students, scholars and researchers. During 2007, 18 benefactors provided $1,017,740 to the University of Guelph and its campuses through will bequests, insurance gifts, trust agreements and charitable annuities.

Robert G. Brooks, BSA ’51
Richard A. M. Carlton
Helen R. Clemett
John C. Conroy
A. McNaury Cuddy, BSA ’42,
H.D.Let. ’94
Helen Fowler
Glen W. Francis, BSA ’43
Kenneth W. Hammond
Lyle W. Humphrey
Ann Legate
Alma E. Lindsay, DHE ’36

Both undergraduate and graduate students at U of G have approved a student-initiated referendum to contribute $10 per semester for the next 12 years to go toward energy conservation measures on campus. In total, Guelph students will donate $5 million to be matched by the University. Key organizer Derek Peiper, B.Sc. ’07, former executive of the Central Student Association says, “Guelph is a leader in the environmental field, and this project and the student support driving it confirm our reputation in this area.”
MEMORIAL GIFTS

The University of Guelph is grateful for all those who chose to honour friends and family members with memorial and tribute gifts. In 2007, the lives of 687 people were commemorated through the planting of trees in the Wall-Custance Memorial Forest in the Arboretum. The individuals listed here were honoured with memorial gifts to other University priorities.

Farokh Afshar
Ethel C. Anderson
Elizabeth Ash and Ed Reis
Amanda Augustine
Steven Ayers
Rudy Balfanz
Wilson “Wil” James Barbaur
Rex A. Barrell
Ted Barlett
Allan Bates
Annie Belford and Malcolm Watson
Lynn Bellinger
Marilyn Benoit
Terrance J. Beveridge
Pat Bingleman
Joanna B. Boehnert
Emma Bogad
Delores A. Brooks, B.H.Sc. ’57
Jeffrey D. Brown, BLA ’03
Gordon Burnett
Henry W. Burns, DVM ’51
Harold Burton, PhD ’84
Alf Butler
D. Ralph Campbell, H.D.La. ’74
Shirley Caroline
William F. Carr
Peter Carruthers
A. Jean Carter, DHE ’38
Wyan Catton
Eleanor A. Cebotarev
Victor Chanasyk
Frank E. Chase, BSA ’38, MSA ’40
Elise Christie
Ruth E. Clayton
C. Lindsay Coghlin, DVM ’41
Louise A. Colley
Donald Cooper
Ian Cowan

Thomas Cowin
Howard M. Culp, BSA ’46
J. Douglas Cunningham, BSA ’48, MSA ’50
Muriel Currie
Edith DeGeer
Erin Demers
Ozilda Denis
Autumn Lily Detta-Wight
Michael Di Girolamo
Viktor Djetschenko
Linda Donovan
Evelyn Doohan
Dennis Dowswell
Evelyn Drury
Mrs. Duke
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Kyle Fagan
Marion Faulks
Donald M. Fowler, DVM ’54
Helen Fowler
Patrick Fox
Winnifred Fulton
William J. Furlong
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Eunice Grayson
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Susan Harkins
Glen Harris
A. Eldon Hartwick, BSA ’48
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Sam Jenkins
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Jim Jupp
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John Kettlewell
Marie Kieser
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Joseph Le Blanc
Violet Lenhart
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David Lowe
Lorie Lukas
Elizabeth Ann MacDonald
Malcolm Robert MacKenzie
Marly Mandel
Alan H. Marr, BSA ’48
Robert Mastropaolo
Victor J. Matthews
Stan McClure
Audrey McConnell
Margaret McKane
Helen Patricia Wynne McKeen
Margery McKenzie
Eva McLaughlin
Hazel McNeil
Agnies McPherson
Betty McQuarrie
Harold Mercer
James Mercer
Audrey J. Mills
Jessie Moore
Eleanor Morris
Stephen Murray
Patricia Murrell-Wright
Ronald P. Neily, BSA ’51
Flora Nelson
Jay A. Newman
Alistair (Al) Forsythe Niven
Mary Niven
Andrea L. Nott, B.Sc. ’03
Al Notte
Henry Nyman
Bob Orr
Judith Otis, BA ’97, MA ’99
Garnet Palmer
Mildred Parr
Ida Pearce
Alexander M. Pearson, BSA ’42
Helen M. Pearson, DHE ’41
Roy G. Pella
Thomas H. Peters, BSA ’48
Pat Plummer
George Poole
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Sarah Ruthland
M. Eileen Savage
Angelo Scinni
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C. Harold Segraves
Gordon Sleeper
C. John Small, BSA ’42, H.D.La. ’75
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Eve Stickland
Albert E. Straby, BSA ’50, MSA ’53
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Retta Suttie
Robert Suttie
Lorraine Theberge
Maggie Threlkeld
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Adrienne E. Tubb
Gord Tyrrell
George Venator
Sharron Viersen
Bruce Walker
Tom Walker
Thomas Eric Wells
John A. Wiley, BSA ’58
Angela Wilke
Barbara Williamson
In 2007, the following people were honoured by tribute gifts made in recognition of their retirements or special occasion.

Drs. Amanda, Christine, Sarah and staff
Melanie Ammersbach, DVM '07
Naomi Apfelbaum-Lubek
Dr. Appel
Frank J. Archibald, BSA '39
Aurora Animal Clinic and staff
Paula Barney
Dr. Barrett
Bayridge Animal Hospital
Veterinarians
Beardall Animal Hospital and staff
Suzi Beber and Tom Wright
Dr. E. Beltran
Joanne Best, DVM '78
Dr. Bomben
Dr. Bondar and staff
Mr. and Mrs. Arie Booi
Brack Animal Hospital
Ann and Ray Bradley
Briarwood Animal Hospital
Bridle Trail Veterinary Clinic
Brock Animal Hospital and staff
Howard Brodsky
Buck Animal Hospital and staff
G. Burke, DVM '72
Kingsley Butler
Kathleen Byrne
Dr. Susan Campolongo and staff
Lisa Carioto, DVM '94
Dr. Rick Caron
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Cavan Hills Veterinary Services and staff
Cayuga Veterinary Clinic and staff
Judith Chant
Chartwell Veterinary Clinic
Marjorie Chatterton
Sue Clifton
Dr. Cochran and Dr. Gillick
Dr. Susan Cochrane
Dr. Wayne Cole
George Cooper
Mike Cormier, DVM '85
Joyce Coupland
Dana Cox, DVM '98 and staff
Fredric A. Dahms
Pat Davies
Sheila Denner
Dr. Holly Dodd and Susan Coventry
Dolgen Family
Steels Veterinary Service and Doncaster Animal Clinic
Dr. House and Dr. Drew, Brack Animal Hospital
Donald and Jasmine Duong and staff
Sean Egan, DVM '94, and staff
Eglinton Veterinary Facilities and staff
Dr. Finnen and Dr. Holnberg
Dr. A. Finsten
Dr. Jane Fleming, Glenda and staff
Forest Hill Animal Clinic
Fort Malden Animal Hospital and staff
Kerry French
Gagemount Animal Hospital
Mark Gemmill, DVM '93
Fiona Gilchrist, DVM '96
Lionel Goldstein, DVM '70
Mrs. David Graham
Cynthia and Paul Gratias
Dr. Green, Coleman Animal Hospital
Rodger Griffiths, DVM '86
Brian and Gael Harper
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Dr. Henrick and Nancy Malik
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Richard Hobart, DVM '81, and staff
Yvonne Holland
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Bryan Jones, DVM '71
Dr. Josephi
Juande Fuca Veterinary Clinic and staff
Dr. Nicholas Kemp and staff
Ron Kilius
Kincardine Veterinary Services and staff
Mark Kinghorn, DVM '04
Kingston Veterinary Clinic and staff
Dr. Kathy Kivi
Kogitz and Ellis Family
Kortright Animal Hospital and doctors
Cindy Krebs, DVM '91
Lakefield Animal Hospital and staff
Dr. Landsborough and staff
Debra Larkin, DVM '94
Jeffrey Latimer, DVM '92
Pam Lauten
Cindy Lee
Dr. Liptak and ICU staff
David Lowe
Sharon Lunney
Sarah Machell, DVM '97, and associates
Dorothy Magde
Randy Marchall and staff
Darren Marks
Dawn Martin
Richard Maser, DVM '86, Cavan Hills Vet Services
Sue McBay
Norman E. McCollum, ADA '66
Freeman L. McEwen
Shannon McGee
Catherine Thomson McGhie, DVM '91
McGilvray Veterinary Hospital
Ross R. McKiritch
Jan and Danny McKune and Levi
Susan McNabb, DVM '72, Lambeth Animal Hospital
Richard Medhurst, DVM '77
Morgan Animal Hospital
Al Moroz
Len and Jane Morris
David R. Murray
Heidi Musil
Jack and Judy Nederpelt
North Hill Animal Hospital and staff
Deji Odetoyinbo and staff

The W. Garfield Weston Foundation has had an ongoing fondness for the University of Guelph,” says foundation representative Wendy Rebanks. “The Foundation supported the first food packaging chair in Canada at Guelph, and we continue to stay interested in food research, packaging, retailing and merchandising.” The W. Garfield Weston Foundation Food Safety Research Award was established in 2007, providing up to $100,000 to a post-graduate researcher. Vitaliy Stoyan, left, was the recipient of the first award.
CORPORATIONS, FOUNDATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS AND VETERINARY CLINICS

We appreciate and acknowledge the following companies and organizations that donated $500 or more to the University of Guelph and its regional campuses from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2007.

$100,000 to $499,999

- BMO Financial Group
- Central Student Association
- Dairy Farmers of Ontario
- E.I. duPont Canada Company
- Kinross Gold Corporation
- Nestlé Purina PetCare
- Semex Alliance
- Sun Life Financial
- The Gosling Foundation

$50,000 to $99,999

- Cara Operations Limited
- Charles River Lab Preclinical Services Montreal Inc.
- Graduate Student Association
- H.J. Heinz Company
- MapInfo Canada
- Maas Family Fund of the Community Foundation
- Silicon Valley Research In Motion
- Student Federation of OAC
- The Atkinson Charitable Foundation
- The Co-operators
- The Jean Rich Foundation
- The Macdonald Stewart Foundation
- The TDL Group Corporation
- The W. Garfield Weston Foundation
- The William and Nona Heaslip Foundation
- University of Guelph Alumni Association

$25,000 to $49,999

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- Compass Group Canada
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- Medi-Cal Royal Canin
- Veterinary Diets
- Monsanto Canada Inc.
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- Purification Research Technologies Incorporated
- Standard Life Assurance Co.
- The Kenneth M. Molson Foundation
- The Scottish Studies Foundation Inc.
- Vineland Horticultural Experiment Station

$10,000 to $24,999

- Bayer CropScience
- CBS Student Council
- Class of OVC 2003
- Coast Hotels and Resorts Ltd.
- Connor Clark & Lunn
- Investment Management Partnership
- CropLife Canada Ontario Council
- Delta Chelsea Hotel
- Eubel, Brady & Stuttman Asset Management Inc.
- Farm Credit Canada
- Gay Lea Foods Co-operative Ltd., through ODC
- George Cedric Metcalf Foundation
- Gilbert’s LLP
- Harbinger Communications Inc.
- Hewlett-Packard (Canada) Co.
- Homewood Corporation
- Kraft Canada Inc., through ODC
- Legg Mason Canada Inc.
- Natrel (Ontario) Inc., through ODC
- Ontario Association of Landscape Architects
- Papazian Heisey Myers
- Parmalat Canada and Parmalat Dairy & Bakery Inc., through ODC
- Pfizer Canada Animal Health Group
- Saputo Inc., through ODC
- SIR Corp.
- Sleeman Breweries Ltd.
- Sobek Investments Ltd.

$5,000 to $9,999

- Acadian Asset Management, Inc.
- AGRIS Co-operative Ltd.
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- Ajax Veterinary Management Ltd.
- Animal Welfare Foundation of Canada
- Azar Trading/Neo-Paws International
- CH2M HILL Canada Ltd.
- Desire2Learn Incorporated
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- HarperCollins Canada Ltd.
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- Lambda Literary and Scholarship Foundation
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- Pfizer Canada Inc.
- Rotary Club of Chatham
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- Shur-Gain, Nutreco Canada Inc.
- Sun-Brite Canning
- Tembec Incorporated
- The George and Helen Gardiner Foundation
- The Guelph Athletic Club
- The J.P. Bickell Foundation
- The Jarlsklovsky Foundation
- ValleyCrest Companies
- Wall – Custance Funeral Home Limited
- Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health
- Woodbine Entertainment Group
- Xstrata
The late Dr. Ralph Campbell, a faculty member and former chair of the Department of Agricultural Economics, was honoured by the OAC class of 1957 and friends through a leadership donation to the new Bioproducts Discovery and Development Centre. “He was an incredible individual,” says Peter Lindley, who co-chaired the 50th-anniversary project; “a great teacher and our honorary class president. For our 50th anniversary, we could think of no better person to honour.”
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<th>Business Name</th>
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<td>Invisible Fence, Trans Canada</td>
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<td>Pet Boundaries</td>
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Kinross Gold Corp. has made a three-year, $1-million donation through ODC to help establish the Kinross Canada-Brazil Network for Advanced Education and Research in Natural Resource Management. It involves U of G faculty and students in projects focused on minimizing the environmental impact of mineral extraction. “We hope this network will prove a new partnership model for expanded co-operation between the private sector, government and outstanding research institutions like the University of Guelph,” said Kinross CEO Tye Burt, BA ’80.
A NOTE OF SPECIAL THANKS

Space limitations make it impossible to list the close to 500 corporations, foundations, associations and veterinary clinics that made gifts of up to $500 in 2007. These and all donors are recognized in the Alumni Affairs and Development website at www.uoguelph.ca/alumni.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of these donor lists. We recognize, however, that no record of this magnitude is likely to be perfect and apologize for any errors or omissions.

Please bring any corrections or concerns to the attention of Robin D’Lugos, Development Program Assistant, 519-824-4120, Ext. 56880, or rdlugos@uoguelph.ca so that we may correct our records.
Hire Guelph Students, Co-op Students and Alumni

Co-operative Education & Career Services
519-824-4120 ext. 52323
recruit@uoguelph.ca
The University of Guelph Alumni Association honours these alumni in 2008:

Alumnus of Honour
Jeff Lozon, BA ’76, is president and CEO of St. Michael’s Hospital, a major health-care and research centre in Toronto. One of Canada’s most influential health-care administrators, Lozon has distinguished himself over a 30-year career, piloting St. Michael’s through a major financial turnaround and positioning Canadian health care on the international stage.

He brought Ontario’s health-care system into the new millennium as deputy minister of health and long-term care. In 2006, Prime Minister Stephen Harper appointed Lozon as chair of the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer, a national agency devoted to improving cancer control.

Lozon is also an associate professor in the Department of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation at the University of Toronto and is a member of U of G’s Board of Governors.

Alumni Medal of Achievement
Dr. Mick Bhatia, PhD ’95, is a world leader in stem cell research. He received the Canada Research Chair in Human Stem Cell Biology in 2006 and was named the Michael G. DeGroote Chair in Stem Cell and Cancer Biology at McMaster University.

Bhatia is scientific director and senior scientist of McMaster’s Stem Cell and Cancer Research Institute and a faculty member at both McMaster and the University of Western Ontario. In 2002, he was named one of Canada’s Top 40 Under 40.

Alumni Volunteer Award
Terry Rothwell, B.Sc.(Eng.) ’75, has been volunteering for the University of Guelph since his days as a student. He has served on the Engineering Alumni Association board for more than 10 years and is a past president and the current secretary. His service to the
University includes membership on the UGAA Honours and Awards Committee. At the community level, Rothwell donates apples from his orchard to help support the Hungry Kids breakfast program for two schools in north Wellington.

Employee Volunteer Award
Toni Pellizzari has been involved in various roles with the United Way since 1995. She was the University of Guelph United Way co-chair in 2003/04 when U of G exceeded its target for the first time. She was involved with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Guelph from 1999 to 2006 and was president for two years. Pellizzari has also been heavily involved in the University’s Exempt Group since 1997. She received the Dr. William Winegard Exemplary Volunteer Involvement Award in 2007.

Student Volunteer Award
New graduate Caitlyn McCann is co-founder of Youth Action, a volunteer group that helps to educate youth in Guelph about social and environmental issues and get them involved.

She has been a member of the varsity figure skating team for three years and was responsible for starting an annual skating show to raise money for the team and local charities. McCann was also a key figure in establishing a varsity volunteer association at U of G.

1,000 ALUMNI RECONNECT

Dozens of reunion events were held during Alumni Weekend 2008. The President’s Lunch celebrated the 50th-anniversary classes, selling out at more than 450 people. Alumni from the class of 1983 had a Silver Anniversary celebration at the Alumni Dinner.

FACS ’83 classmates at the Alumni Dinner.

U OF G ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
alumni@uoguelph.ca

ALUMNI AFFAIRS
AND DEVELOPMENT
Joanne Shoveller, Vice-President / jshovell@uoguelph.ca
Kathy Hay, Associate Vice-President (Advancement) / alumni@uoguelph.ca
Kathryn Elton, Director, Principal Gifts / kelton@uoguelph.ca
Jason Moreton, Director, Alumni Affairs / jmoreton@uoguelph.ca
Celeste Bannon Waterman, Director, Central Services / cbannon@uoguelph.ca

ALUMNI OPPORTUNITIES
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Mary Feldskov / mfeldsko@uoguelph.ca
Students and Young Alumni, Arts / Mary-Anne Moroz / mamoroz@uoguelph.ca
CBS, CPES, Athletics
Sam Kosakowski / skosakow@uoguelph.ca
OAC, CSAHS
Vikki Tremblay / vtremblay@uoguelph.ca
OVC / Kim Robinson / krobin01@uoguelph.ca
Alumni Online Community
www.olcnetwork.net/uoguelph
Events & Communications
Wendy Jespersen / wjespers@uoguelph.ca
Grad News Updates
alumnirecords@uoguelph.ca

ALUMNI GIVING
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Athletics / Gail Kendall / gkendall@uoguelph.ca
CBS/CPES / Richard Manning / rmanning@uoguelph.ca
CME / Jennifer Barrett / jebarret@uoguelph.ca
CSAHS / Karen Bertrand / karenber@uoguelph.ca
Library / Lynn Campbell / lynn.campbell@uoguelph.ca
OAC / Paulette Samson / psamson@uoguelph.ca
OVC / Stephen Woeller / swoeller@uoguelph.ca

THE PORTICO
Mary Dickieson, Editor / m.dickieson@exec.uoguelph.ca

www.uoguelph.ca
COMING EVENTS
Through Oct. 5 • Macdonald Stewart Art Centre exhibition by John Eisler, we love you / join us, features six- by eight-foot stain paintings on raw canvas. Gallery open Tuesday through Sunday, noon to 5 p.m.
Oct. 3 and 13 • Arboretum workshops on shrub and tree identification, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; fee $50, register at Ext. 52113. For a complete schedule of fall and winter events, visit www.uoguelph.ca/arboretum.
Oct. 23 to 26 • “Inside and Out: The Lives of Lucy Maud Montgomery.” U of G’s extensive L.M. Montgomery library collection will be featured during this unique conference that also includes lectures, performances, films, music, tours and exhibitions. Registration details at www.nlmrc.ca/conference/program.
Nov. 5 • “Knocking Down Silos” with guest speaker Dave Howlett. Details at www.uoguelph.ca.
Nov. 15 • Hockey Day in Gryphonville, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the 1958 OAVC champions. Contact Sam Kosakowski at skosakow@uoguelph.ca.
Nov. 20 to 23 • Fair November, 34th annual juried craft sale in the University Centre, open 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday and Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. Admission free.
Summer 2009 • For help in planning a class reunion, contact Helen McCauley at Ext. 56691.
October 2009 • HAFA/HTM 40th-anniversary celebration. To get involved, contact Heidi Wilker at 905-457-2092.

For details of these and other alumni events, send e-mail to alumni@uoguelph.ca, visit www.alumni.uoguelph.ca or call 519-824-4120, Ext. 56934.

UGAAs welcomes new board

During Alumni Weekend, the University of Guelph Alumni Association (UGAA) elected Linda Hruska, B.Sc.(Agr.) ’85 and M.Agr. ’88, president for a two-year term.

Hruska has been active with the OAC Alumni Association for nearly 20 years, serving in many different positions, including president in 2000. Since becoming a member of the UGAA board of directors, she has chaired the Honours and Awards Committee, been an active member of both the Alumni Forum Planning Committee and the Student Awareness Subcommittee, and participated in an ad hoc committee to review the association’s bylaws.

“Linda’s unmatched breadth of experience in alumni affairs and lifelong commitment to the University will be a great benefit to the UGAA,” says past-president Trish Walker. “We look forward to Linda’s leadership and many accomplishments.”

Director of alumni affairs Jason Moreton says both the University and UGAA thank Walker for her commitment to advancing the mission and goals of the UGAA over the past two years. Under her leadership, the UGAA has accomplished much and gained a dynamic that promises more, he says.

“Trish has been instrumental in creating and implementing a strong strategic plan for the UGAA that focuses on engaging alumni at many different levels, strengthening the University’s central alumni association and enhancing the relationship among UGAA, the affiliate alumni associations and U of G.” Walker will continue to serve alumni as UGAA’s past president.

Other UGAA officers elected at the annual meeting are: Ted Young, ADA ’65, vice-president, external; Brad Rooney, ADA ’93 and B.Sc.(Agr.) ’97, vice-president, internal; and Deborah Butterwick, B.Sc. ’83, secretary/treasurer.

The UGAA membership also approved the nomination committee’s recommended slate of directors: Meaghan Hourigan, BA ’07; Debby Pavlove, BA ’94 and MA ’96; and Ian Rumbles, B.Sc.(Agr.) ’79, along with returning directors Sandy Warley, Hon. LLD ’03; Bill Laidlaw, BA ’74; and Colin Henry, BA ’91.

UGAA board of directors, from left: Jason Moreton (ex officio), Brad Rooney, Ted Young, Colin Henry, Bill Laidlaw, Linda Hruska, Meaghan Hourigan, Debby Pavlove, Sandy Warley and Trish Walker. Absent: Deborah Butterwick and Ian Rumbles.
There are many things I treasure about the University, but in particular, I love the fall. With the return of students to campus each year, the enthusiasm, vitality and passion are palpable. A campus is the home of eternal youth — each year a new set of minds joins the charge to solve the world’s problems.

When I joined the University of Guelph, Ginty Jocius, B.Sc.(Agr.) ’70, urged me to promote the beauty of the campus in my work with alumni. Guelph students are attracted by our “green space,” both literally and figuratively. Ginty said alumni feel the pull to that same “green space” and to the power of the University’s dedication to improving life.

Ginty passed away in December, but his words live on.

At a tree dedication ceremony for her late husband, Lori Jocius, B.A.Sc. ’72, paid homage to the deeply rooted relationships established by alumni and the importance of maintaining those connections:

“As alumni, we share the credentials of being part of an illustrious past and an impressive future. Alumni from the three founding colleges — OAC, OVC and Macdonald Institute — have rooted the University of Guelph in a tradition that has few equals.

“For over 125 years, alumni from these founding colleges have significantly impacted the quality of life we experience throughout this province, across this country and around the world. I believe it is because our alumni were able to build a strong foundation, foster a sense of community and remain committed to the principle of ‘giving back.’ These characteristics have rooted us to stand strong and tall amidst storms and sunshine alike.

“All those who have gone before are like the roots of this tree. But there’s a new breed of alumni from the University of Guelph — almost 50 years of alumni — who now help to form a canopy of knowledge that spreads to the four corners of the globe. They help to make the University of Guelph Canada’s top comprehensive research university and a world leader in the life sciences — changing lives and improving life and wrestling with world issues that will someday change the way we live together on this planet.”

Lori’s message is powerful, yet simple — stay connected to your alma mater. Your vision and support make a difference in the University community and around the world.

Now it’s fall, and I want to welcome you back to our “green space” — literally and virtually — where you can re-energize your charge to change the world.

Joanne Shoveller
Vice-president (Alumni Affairs and Development)

Dress for success
More than 300 young alumni from Guelph and McMaster attended the “Dress for Success” event at the Banana Republic flagship store in Toronto. The event gave U of G grads a chance to hear from renowned image consultant Zayna Mosam, who provided the inside scoop on how to build a successful career wardrobe. Participants also enjoyed a 20-per-cent discount on the entire store.

AIA luncheon
The Alumni-in-Action annual spring luncheon attracted a wide variety of alumni to hear guest speaker Prof. Mary Rubio describe the Lucy Maud Montgomery Collection at the University of Guelph. She talked about the wide international appeal of the Anne of Green Gables character and how U of G acquired the collection, which will be featured at the upcoming L. M. Montgomery conference Oct. 23 to 26.

Stories about Linc
The University of Guelph Alumni Association (UGAA) thanks all alumni who submitted their “what Lincoln said to me” stories. We had great participation in this project — a tribute to a caring and exceptional chancellor. To read some of the stories, visit the UGAA section on www.alumni.uoguelph.ca.

Stay in touch
Stay connected to your alma mater so you can take advantage of exclusive deals, special offers and networking events. Visit www.alumni.uoguelph.ca to update your contact information.
Poverty and hunger are issues that affect communities all across Canada. With cuts to social services and the realities of an ever-changing economy, food security is a critical issue on the minds of many. Meal Exchange, a national youth-led registered charity, has been working to eradicate hunger for the past 15 years and now has two University of Guelph grads at the helm.

U of G got involved with Meal Exchange in 1998 when Dave Kranenberg, then a first-year student, approached the Central Student Association (CSA) with a proposal to start an on-campus chapter. The University is one of 50 post-secondary institutions and high schools that support the organization, says Kranenberg, B.Sc. ’03, now the organization’s executive director. He works side by side with Leisha Zamecnik, BAS ’07, who is communications and program manager for Meal Exchange. They are the organization’s only full-time paid staff.

“A lot of people view the homeless person on the street as representing the hungry in Canada,” says Kranenburg, “but in fact, a large percentage of people who are hungry are the working poor: single mothers, the elderly and children.”

The key to the organization’s success lies in the power of youth and the campus co-ordinators who mobilize thousands of volunteers each year. Zamecnik, who was U of G’s campus co-ordinator for two years, says the desire of today’s youth to make change in their communities is stronger than ever.
Memories

“...This demographic is becoming increasingly involved, and I think they have the most energy and enthusiasm of anyone,” she says. “Meal Exchange lives and breathes youth. It’s what we are and what the organization is all about. The hunger that 2.4 million Canadians are experiencing is not OK. I know we have the power to do something about it, and Meal Exchange provides the support for students to do that.”

Students are more aware of hunger than ever before, especially with food banks popping up on campuses across the country, says Kranenberg. Meal Exchange alumni — those who were involved in the organization as students — are also fostering change in their communities by creating their own non-profit organizations and encouraging their employers to support hunger-reduction initiatives, he says.

Zamecnik says U of G has made “incredible” contributions to Meal Exchange, which celebrated its $2-million milestone in January 2008. Over the past 10 years, the University of Guelph alone has raised more than $250,000, including a whopping $70,000 worth of food collected on Halloween night 2007, she says.

So what makes Guelph such a driving force?

“There are a number of factors that come into play,” says Zamecnik. “First and foremost, it’s a socially conscious campus coupled with an incredibly supportive administration. Guelph’s hospitality services staff are also extremely helpful through their support of our ‘Skip a Meal’ program. And the support of student government has been key. The CSA has been integral to the success of Meal Exchange, and we also have strong ties with Interhall Council. This combination of enthusiasm makes Guelph a shining star among our chapters across Canada.”

The U of G chapter of Meal Exchange runs several programs. Skip a Meal encourages students, faculty and staff to donate unused meal points or cash to buy food at wholesale prices for those who can’t afford it. The program is run twice a year at Guelph. The University community also supports Trick or Eat, a national campaign in which students canvass for food donations in lieu of candy, and Clear the Shelves, an end-of-school-year initiative where students donate food, furniture and clothes to local agencies.

All fired up for golden anniversary

Members of OAC ’58 celebrated their 50th anniversary by renting a vintage fire truck for their Alumni Weekend party. It was a reminder of the camaraderie they enjoyed as students when some members of the class nearly froze to death driving an open-top fire truck to Florida for a winter holiday. Those were the good old days, eh?

1960

Constantine Campbell, BSA ’60, has documented his studies at OAC and his work experiences in a self-published book. The autobiography covers his childhood in Jamaica and the 50 plus years he has lived in Canada. Copies are available at U of G, in the Ottawa library of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, at the Ag Canada Research Centre in Swift Current, Sask., and in the soils department of the University of Saskatchewan. He also shares it for a nominal cost with interested readers who contact him directly. For more information, visit www.pubs.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/eng/books/authors/11.html.

1970

Richard Bourgeois-Doyle, BA ’73, is director of corporate governance at the National Research Council of Canada (NRC). He has headed a number of special projects since joining NRC in 1987 and was previously chief of staff to both the minister of science and technology and the minister of fisheries and oceans, as well as the start-up manager of successful technology and public relations firms. A former broadcaster and journalist, he has contributed to many books, articles, TV features and radio programs on science history. Most recently, he published a book on Elsie MacGill, the world’s first female aeronautical engineer and profes...
sional aircraft designer. MacGill’s inspirational life story is the third instalment of the NRC Research Press biography series.

- **Geoffrey Cochrane, DVM ’76**, received a master of science degree from the Royal Veterinary College, University of London, Dec. 31, 2007. In addition to holding the designation of Professional Animal Scientist, he is a diplomate of the American College of Applied Animal Behavior Sciences and a professor in the Faculty of Health, Public Safety and Community Studies at Algonquin College in Ottawa. Recently, he lectured with the U.S. Department of Justice, Canine Training and Operations Support Branch. Besides teaching, he operates a veterinary practice with a special interest in clinical behavioural medicine, risk analysis and evidence-based veterinary medicine.

- **Tony Gerrow, DVM ’79**, recently retired after selling his hospitals in Calgary to Associate Veterinary Clinics. He has moved to Priddis, Alta., and is planning a slower lifestyle with locums and spending more time on his quarter horses, fly-fishing and travel. He is involved with Big Brothers, the Alberta Mentor Foundation for Youth, Trout Unlimited, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and pickin’ and grinnin’ music with friends in foothill country settings. He sends warm thoughts to all of OVC ’79.

- **Earl Hall, B.Sc. ’70**, retired in October 2007 from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Forensic Laboratory Services in Vancouver. After graduating with an honours degree, he began training to become a firearms and toolmark examiner at the Centre of Forensic Sciences in Toronto. Four years later, he returned to U of G for one part-time semester and was then hired by the RCMP lab in Vancouver. The next 31 years were spent examining bullets, cartridge cases and toolmarks under the comparison microscope, as well as test firing guns of all types and testifying as an expert witness for criminal cases in the courts of British Columbia and the Yukon.

- **Lorne Heslop, B.Sc.(Eng.) ’70 and M.Sc. ’87**, recently retired from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada after 25 years. Before joining Ag Canada, he spent 10 years working in industry.

- **Howard Pulver, BA ’70**, is the author of the new *Ontario Bicycle Touring Atlas*. He maintains a website devoted to bicycle touring at www.bikeontours.on.ca and helps people who want to tour by bicycle in Ontario.

- **Robert Morton, BA ’70**, was recruited in October 2005 to launch the Children’s Treatment Network, a new service delivery model for kids and teens with multiple disabilities in York Region and Simcoe County. It links more than 40 health-care, educational, recreational, social and community service organizations for a team approach to each child’s care. The network is also adding new core and specialty rehabilitation and diagnostic services at 10 service delivery sites.

- **James Richardson, DVM ’71**, recently won a prestigious teaching award from the Mnie Piper Stevens Foundation of San Antonio, Tex. The award

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**University of Guelph Author Recognition Event**

Oct. 30  4:30 to 6 p.m  
McLaughlin Library

Recognizing the published work of alumni, faculty, students and staff

To submit your own book, visit www.author.lib.uoguelph.ca

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**Café Scientifique**

2008-2009 schedule at www.uoguelph.ca/cafescientifique

Organized by the Faculty of Environmental Sciences

Free admission • Everyone welcome
recognizes teachers in Texas colleges who have made a special impact on their students. A former large-animal veterinarian, Richardson is a professor of pathology and molecular biology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center.

Christopher Terry, BA ‘70, retired in June as president and CEO of the Canada Science and Technology Museum Corporation in Ottawa. He was appointed to the position in February 2001. Prior to that, he was director general of the Canada Aviation Museum for 13 years. He worked for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation from 1971 to 1989. His volunteer work includes chairing U of G’s Ottawa alumni chapter from 2005 to 2007, serving on the boards of heritage and museum organizations in Canada and abroad, and being honorary colonel of the Canadian Forces Aerospace Warfare Centre at 8 Wing Trenton. He and his wife, Victoria, live in Ottawa.

Bob Weir, B.Sc.(Agr.) ‘72, retired in November 2007 after 35 years with the federal government in the Department of Environment and the Canadian International Development Agency.

Sue Winlaw, B.A.Sc. ’73, and her husband, Alex Law, have established a publishing company and written one of its first books. Car Advice for Women (and Smart Men) is their first joint book, but both have worked as automotive journalists for many years. After earning her Guelph degree in textile science, Winlaw worked for Eaton’s and then Sears Canada Inc. in their textile testing labs. She stayed with Sears for 32 years, holding various management positions, and retired in 2005. To learn more, visit www.caradviceforwomen.com.

Donald Ziraldo, B.Sc.(Agr.) ’71, is research chair of the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre and a champion of Ontario-grown fruits and vegetables from the Niagara region. Founder of Inniskillin Wines and the idea man for Ontario’s VQA system, Ziraldo is working to rejuvenate the 103-year-old Vineland Research Station. Plans include a facelift and new research partnerships with U of G, Brock and McMaster universities and Niagara College that will benefit more than 60 horticultural commodities. There’s also a drive to create a Niagara brand for those food products.

1980

Janet Clements, B.A.Sc. ’83, has been an elementary school teacher with the Toronto District School Board for 24 years and is currently teacher-librarian at a K-8 school.

Christopher diCarlo, BA ’85 and MA ’89, is an assistant professor at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) and the winner of TVOntario’s 2008 Big Ideas Best Lecturer Competition. His prize was a $10,000 scholarship for UOIT. Born and raised in Guelph, he studied philosophy at U of G and taught here from 2000 to 2003, earning a College of Arts teaching award in 2002. While doing post-doctorate research at Harvard University and the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Cambridge, Mass., he began research for two books he is currently writing. Another book, How to Become a Really Good Pain in the Ass: A Practical Guide to Thinking Critically, was recently published.

Kent Groves, B.Sc.(Agr.) ’82, earned a master’s degree from the University of Saskatchewan in 1985 and received his officer’s commission in the Canadian infantry in 1986. He completed a PhD in pharmaceutical marketing and strategy at Dalhousie University in 2006, and is now vice-president, pharmaceutical strategy, at Epsilon in Wakefield, Mass. He lives in Halifax with his wife, Brenda, and two children, daughter Bailey and son Jack.

David Knight, BA ’87, an archeologist at the University of Southampton in England, recently published the book King Lucius of Britain, which tackles a long-standing historical mystery surrounding the second-century king. Less known but older than Arthur, Lucius is often referred to as legendary or mythical; his existence has been a subject of controversy over the last century. For the book, Knight examined historical sources spanning 1,600 years, as well as recent archeological discoveries. Born in Guelph, he spent summer breaks from university working with the Canterbury Archæological Trust in England. He went on to earn a master’s degree in archeology at the University of Southampton.

Desmond Layne, B.Sc.(Agr.) ’86, is a professor of horticulture at Clemson University in South Carolina. He has received an extension education award from the American Society of Horticultural Science for lifetime achievement. A Clemson professor since 1997, he is a well-known authority on peaches and pawpaws. His peach website is a popular source of information on all topics related to peach production. Layne provides leadership for horticulture extension programming in South Carolina and supervises 34 county extension agents. He is also a steering committee member of the Southern Region Small Fruit Consortium and has conducted more than a dozen on-farm trials at commercial peach farms. He recently completed a textbook called The Peach: Botany, Production and Uses.

Richard Leavens, MA ’86, lives in Banff, Alta., and is executive director of the Association for Mountain Parks Protection and Enjoyment. “This work involves advocating for appropriate use of the mountain parks,” he says, “and in many ways, it requires a skill set that I began to develop in my studies at Guelph.”

Marie LeGrow, B.Sc. ’80 and M.Sc. ’84, is a senior program support co-ordinator in the Ministry of the Environment’s (MOE) environmental assessment and approvals branch in Toronto. She was presented with a 2007 MOE Emerald Award by minister John Gerretsen and deputy minister Gail Beggs. For the last five years, LeGrow has been working to reach government targets to initiate renewable electricity-generation projects. She leads a team of planners, engineers and scientists who review and approve projects, track progress and resolve process concerns. She welcomes contact from U of G alumni at mlegrow@rogers.com.

Sylvia Markle-Craine, BA ’89, recently published Swimming to Fatima with Blaurock Press.
and played a key role in protecting the riverbank ecosystems in her Guelph neighbourhood.

She has also fostered community involvement in programs such as the Guelph Speed River Cleanup. McCallum was an early advocate of government action to protect the natural world. A member of the former Bird Sisters, she has been a singer, songwriter, performer, teacher and choir director who draws much of her inspiration from the natural world.

A member of the former Bird Sisters and a founder of Guelph’s Hillside Festival, she has also fostered community involvement in protecting the riverbank ecosystems in her Guelph neighbourhood and played a key role in community planting events.

1990

Karen Arnott, B.Sc. ’98 and M.Sc. ’00, and Jean-Paul Davis, B.Sc. ’99 and M.Sc. ’00, are the proud parents of Julien Scott Davis, born March 17. The couple met at Guelph 11 years ago when she was captain of the women’s basketball team and he was captain of the men’s hockey team. Today she’s a cosmetic dentist in Malibu, Calif., and he’s an oral maxillofacial surgeon — “all because of Fred Ramprashad,” she says.

Kim (Smith) Barrett, B.Sc.’96 and M.Sc.’02, and Glenn Barrett, B.Sc.’92, were married in April 2002. Their first child, Graham Esdon, was born May 18, 2008. Kim works at Conservation Halton; Glenn is with Environment Canada’s Wildlife Service. They live in Hamilton, Ont.

Christine Blake-Durie, BA ’91, has established a scholarship at U of G in memory of her husband, Kevin Durie, BA ’93, a longtime member of the RCMP who died in 2006. He was involved in residence life during his student days, so the scholarship supports a student employed by Student Housing Services, which also donated to the endowment. A $1,000 award will be presented annually.

Cameron Cairncross, B.Sc.(Agr.) ’71, is chief administrative officer for the Village of Sayward, B.C., where he says the fishing is great. “Come and visit Canada’s west coast.”

Jeremy Debling, B.Sc.’94, and Erin Sexton-Debling announce the birth of their first child, Tara Ann, on April 10 in Toronto. Dad is a formulation scientist in pharmaceutical development for Novopharm Ltd.

David Christiansen, BA ’94, lived in Newcastle, England, for nine years and completed a PhD in British history before returning to Canada with his wife, Fiona, in 2003. Their son, Cameron Mackenzie, was born in December 2007. Christiansen recently became corporate business manager for R.J. Burnside & Associates Limited, an environmental and engineering firm based in Orangeville, Ont., with nine offices in Canada, Barbados and India. He welcomes contact from friends and Gryphon rugby alumni.

Leanne Gris Delaney, B.Sc. ’92, lives on the south coast of Australia with her husband and three children. She says she enjoys the sun, beach and easy-going lifestyle of Australia.

Susan Steel Edwards, BA ’91, is a special-education specialist with the Lincolnshire Education Authority in the United Kingdom. She says: “We moved our family to the U.K. in July 2006 and plan on returning to Ottawa in July 2009. This European adventure has been wonderful for our three boys as well as our careers. We welcome the opportunity to host friends here in the U.K.”

Lyle Estill, BA ’92, is vice-president of Piedmont Biofuels and has released his second book, Small Is Possible: Life in a Local Economy.

Éric Kuchio Makokha, MA ’90, of Nairobi, Kenya, writes that he was saddened to read about the death of Prof. Nora Cebotarev in the last issue of The Portico. She was the first person he met at Guelph. “Throughout my two years’ stay at Guelph, she was like a mother to me and, indeed, to all my classmates. She was one of the three panelists who listened to my thesis defence and gave me a thumbs-up. As a result of that mentoring and nurturing, I am now able to contribute to the development of my community and country. I am currently CEO of a national NGO in Kenya that focuses on human settlements development.”

Elsa Mann, BA ’90, of Styll Gallery in Elora, Ont., and retired teacher Donna McCaw, BA ’69, were working on a committee for the upcoming Sensational Elora event when they discovered they were both Guelph grads. This “celebration of the senses” will take place Oct. 2 to 13. Mann is organizing “Empty Bowls” as a fundraiser for the local food bank, and McCaw is involved in programming for the festival. For details, visit www.sensationalelora.com.

Baljit Singh, PhD ’94, joined the University of Saskatchewan in 1999 and is a professor at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine. He recently received the University’s highest teaching honour, the Master Teacher Award, which is presented to two people each year. He lives in Saskatoon with his wife, Sarbjit Kaur, and son, Pahul Singh, and says U of G president Alastair Summerlee “was — and in some ways still is — a teaching mentor to me.”

Alison (Cox) Somers,
B.Sc. ’95, has been teaching high school science for more than 10 years and married Trevor Somers in 2004. “Our beautiful baby boy, Elliott, was born in September 2007 and is the love of our lives,” she says. The family lives in Stittsville, Ont.

- **Jeff Stewart, B.Comm. ’95,** completed an MBA at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ont., and has kept busy over the years teaching at Niagara College and U of G, as well as working all over the world as a chef. More recently, he’s been involved in consulting for hotels, restaurants, food manufacturers, hospitals and correctional facilities, and teaching hospitality and tourism management and North American business in the former Soviet Union and Peru. He is now on faculty at Niagara College.

- **Irene (Svazic Wells) Swedak, B.Sc. ’96,** is director of nutrition and product development at Healthy Sprouts Foods Inc. in Whitby, Ont. She says she often reflects on how her Guelph education in biochemistry and nutrition influenced her career choices, and she would like to hear from former U of G friends and classmates. Contact her at irene.swedak@healthysprouts.ca.

- **Diana Wilson, BA ’90,** graduated with an MFA from the Iowa Writers’ Workshop in May 2008.

### 2000

- **Tom Affleck, BA ’02,** a graduate of Guelph’s international development (ID) program, is president and founder of a charity called SchoolBox that is building a school in Nicaragua. Current ID student Dilya Niezova served as intern project co-ordinator for the school project this summer. For information, visit www.schoolbox.ca.

- **Leslie Greener, B.Sc. ’02,** and **Mike Tew, BA ’03,** were married May 10, 2008, at Chicopee Ski Club in Kitchener, Ont., with many U of G alumni in attendance. They are living and working in Toronto.

- **Valerie (Bratten) Hawke, B.Sc.(H.K.) ’01,** married Brian Hawke July 2, 2005. She graduated from Shenandoah University in 2007 with a doctorate in physical therapy, and is now living in Canberra, Australia.

- **Karine Jaouich, B.Sc.(Env.) ’01,** is assistant to the president of Local Food Plus, an organization that works to develop sustainable local food systems. She has previous experience as a senior manager with FoodShare and has worked with other organizations such as the Everdale Environmental Learning Centre and numerous organic farms.

- **Juliette Kahle, B.Sc. ’04,** married George Souroulas May 18 in Cyprus. Both are PhD candidates in molecular and human genetics at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Tex.

- **Sue MacKay, BA ’00,** is a mental health and addictions therapist in the Northwest Territories. She says: “I’m looking forward to the challenge of working in an isolated village (Lutsel K’e) and learning a new culture! This is a new position, so I get to be creative in defining what that role looks like.”

- **Katherine Paphitis, B.Sc. ’05,** is enrolled in Ryerson University’s public health inspector program and received the Air and Waste Management Association student essay prize for environmental leadership vision.

- **Pinakin Sureshbhai Patel, M.Eng. ’08,** says of his U of G convocation: “It was really a very good feeling to get your degree in the presence of all the University staff and family and friends. I really missed my parents on this occasion, but I am thankful for all my supporters.”

- **Glenna Pengelly, B.Sc.(Env.) ’01,** and **Eliza Hope, BA ’07,** set out to prove that cities love farmers when they hosted an event this spring at the Woolwich Arms in Guelph. The event was part of a group project for a post-graduate program in event management they were taking at Conestoga College. “We came up with the idea for ‘Cities Love Farmers’ as a way to celebrate the important connection between urban and rural areas,” says Pengelly. “We were able to educate attendees through some fun activities, enjoy food prepared with local ingredients.

- **Joel Sumithra Thalla-Vinayasar, MBA ’02,** earned CMA credentials in 2006. He is a manager in financial control and administration, but has been on leave since November 2006 to work for the first parliament

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**Guelph grads feed us**

**Christine Young**, who is completing an M.Sc. in geography with Prof. John Smithers, is leading a new incubator project called FarmStart that rents 200 acres of certified organic land on the Guelph city limits and another 50 acres in Brampton where immigrant Southeast Asian farmers can learn to produce familiar Asian foods in Ontario’s environment.

Call it “smart farming” — an alternative to the way food is traditionally grown and distributed in this country. “A lot of money is being spent to perpetuate a food system that doesn’t make sense,” says Young. “We need people with new ideas.”

**Visit The Portico online to read more about these and other Guelph grads and students who are challenging our taste buds and the way we produce food in Canada — www.uoguelph.ca/theportico.ca.**
Joe Tomei, BAA ’07, received a Civic Hero Award this spring from the council of Vaughan, Ont., for his volunteerism. He has been active in the community as a member of the Safe City Committee and as a Boy Scout leader. During his 35-year career in policing, he has served as a staff inspector and unit commander, and was named Orangeville police chief in December 2007. He is also the recipient of the Canadian Police Exemplary Service Medal and 30-Year Bar for meritorious service to policing.

Maria Trimble, BA ‘08, is one of 16 Canadian youth selected for an internship with the Coady International Institute as part of its Youth in Partnership program. She left July 21 for a six-month placement in Huancayo, Peru, where she’s working with a community organization developing infant stimulation programs for indigenous families in rural Andean villages. When she returns to Canada, she’ll head to the Coady Institute in Antigonish, N.S., for a re-entry and career development program designed to help interns process their experience and find long-term employment in their field.

Norman Amos, DVM ’49, July 16, 2008
Mary Barber, DHE ’35, Feb. 21, 2008
Fred Bentley, Hon. D.Sc. ’84, April 12, 2008
Robert Billin, DVM ’58, June 14, 2008
Lewis Bodenweiser, DVM ’36, July 26, 2007
Michael Borowik, BSA ’61, Jan. 4, 2007
Robert Brandt, DVM ’70, April 21, 2008
David Bray, BSA ’55, April 12, 2008
Leonard Butler, BSA ’35, June 30, 2008
Nicola Campbell, B.Sc. ’94, June 2008
William Coleman, BSA ’46, Oct. 4, 2007
William Davidson, DVM ’35, Jan. 26, 2008
William Devins, BSA ’49, May 2008
George Downham, BSA ’47, May 5, 2008
Robert Fahlman, ODH ’97, Feb. 3, 2007
Bruce Ferguson, B.Sc.(Agr.) ’75, Dec. 9, 2006
Mary Foster, DHE ’29, Nov. 11, 2006
Graham Gardiner, DVM ’59, June 11, 2008
Arlene Garvin, BA ’87, Sept. 30, 2007
Larry Gerrie, BA ’72, June 18, 2008
Frank Gibson, BSA ’53, April 14, 2008
James Gill, DVM ’47, June 27, 2008
John Gilray, DVM ’54, June 5, 2008
June Gore, BA ’82, Feb. 1, 2007
Donald Grieve, BSA ’55, April 8, 2008
Eric Hicks, DVM ’51, May 19, 2008
Desmond Hill, DVM ’50, April 21, 2008
Robert Horner, DVM ’64, June 27, 2008
Anne James, DHE ’48, Feb. 13, 2008
Muriel (Yaeck) Albee Jay, DHE ’36, Dec. 20, 2006
Arthur Johnson, ADA ’56, May 4, 2008
Marie (Barry) Klein, DHE ’36, April 5, 2008
Richard Kline, B.Sc.(Agr.) ’74, Feb. 12, 2008
William Loosley, BA ’69, Dec. 21, 2007
Eugene Manning, DVM ’39, July 15, 2008
Daniel Matsushita, ODH ’65, Dec. 7, 2008
Robert McAlorum, BSA ’64, May 15, 2008
Deborah (Frey) McCarthy, BA ’75, April 15, 2008
Marjorie (Duprau) McPherson, DHE ’34, July 19, 2008
Ross Mills, BSA ’52, May 7, 2008
Pauls Miniats, DVM ’55, July 22, 2008
Jennifer Naeberg, DVM ’92, April 13, 2008
Elizabeth Newell, DHE ’40, Jan. 17, 2008
Lorne Pacey, ADA ’39, June 4, 2007
Jane Paxton, BA ’71, January 2008
Peter Peart, ADA ’52, Dec. 21, 2007
Richard Renaud, B.Sc. ’72, May 26, 2008
George Rogers, BSA ’36, March 29, 2008
Gordon Rose, ADA ’49, May 17, 2008
Cameron Ross, ADA ’53, April 2008
Phillip Santangelo, BBA ’07, April 2, 2008
Raymond Skoropad, DVM ’60, May 5, 2008
Donald Slinger, BSA ’50, March 18, 2007
Maurice Smith, BSA ’42, June 17, 2008
Teresa (Colon) Stanbridge, BA ’88, Sept. 29, 2007
John Troutman, ODH ’83, March 10, 2007
Wesley Wait, ADA ’84, July 18, 2007
Wilbert Walker, DVM ’47, April 16, 2008
Paula Watson, BA ’78, Aug. 08, 2007
Mary Welch, BA ’92, June 2, 2008
Tina Witte, B.A.Sc. ’93, July 14, 2008
Ruth (Baker) Wright, DHE ’37, May 9, 2008
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