



CFWF Professional Development Fund (PD Fund)

2015 Recipients

“Communications preferences of British Columbia's dairy farmers”

Trevor Hargreaves

\$2,000

Trevor Hargreaves, BCFWA member, works for the BC Dairy Association as the Managing Editor of the BC Dairy Producer News. For the past year and a half he has been working on an agricultural specific thesis as a completion requirement for a Masters Degree in Communications at Royal Roads University. This thesis is focused on the communications preferences of British Columbia's dairy farmers.

This study is of direct relevance to CFWF due to the agricultural content, but more specifically because of the interesting findings that differ significantly from oft-preached communications industry developments. Specifically, the findings show a very high reliance on traditional print formats, and far less desire to read information digitally. This research provides strong support for traditional newsprint as a method to reach this sector of the agricultural community, and provides an argument for maintaining traditional journalism in the agricultural sector. He will publish findings in BC Dairy Producer News, related agricultural press (Holstein News/Country Life News), general media (including a press release and PR campaign around the findings), communications conferences, and dairy scientific publications.

"Plant Biotechnology Science Writing and Public Communication"

Owen Roberts

\$1,362

Owen Roberts, ECFWA member and vice-president of IFAJ, has been a journalist and columnist with daily, weekly and monthly print and online media for 35 years. He is also an agricultural communications instructor and a research communications director at the University of Guelph.

He has been invited as the sole Canadian communications representative to make a presentation on "Plant Biotechnology Science Writing and Public Communication" at the international University-Industry Consortium conference in Yuma, Arizona in March, 2015. He will be one of four speakers on communications; he will bring the Canadian perspective, based largely on what he knows as an active farm journalist and as the originator and coordinator of a unique student-based program at Guelph that promotes a greater understanding of agricultural research. He anticipates this will enlighten others from agricultural universities and industry about how they too can work cooperatively to involve young people in plant biotechnology communication in Canada. He will be able to prepare stories and columns from the material he collects at this conference, to present at a CFWF annual conference and at classes at the University of Guelph.

"IFAJ 2015 New Zealand"

David Schmidt

\$2,000

David Schmidt, BCFWA member, is currently associate editor of Country Life in BC and a freelancer for various other publications. He will be attending the 2015 IFAJ conference in New Zealand. As a supply management and dairy specialist he believes the opportunity to learn more about the "free market" dairy industry in New Zealand would be very helpful and the insights he would gain into agriculture on the opposite side of the world would also benefit his overall expertise.

CFWF members will benefit as they will have another liaison attending the conference, as well David will post articles for Country Life in BC and other interested publications. He will also provide a full report to the Farm Journalist and a presentation at a CFWF conference.

“Developing an International Perspective for Improving Agricultural Communications”

Shannon VanRaes

\$2,000

Shannon VanRaes writes for the Manitoba Co-operator covering issues ranging from animal husbandry and agronomy to farm policy, research, transportation and trade. In 2014, she was named the Glenn Cunningham Agriculture Journalist of the Year by the North American Agricultural Journalists.

To complement her 2015 participation in the IFAJ Exposure-4-Development tour to Zambia, Shannon will be attending the IFAJ 2015 Congress in New Zealand to further develop her craft by meeting new writers and gaining fresh insights since agriculture is viewed and covered differently across the globe. She will share her learnings in real time via social media and reflect on her experiences through articles in the Manitoba Co-operator, Metro News and broadcasts from CJOB Radio in Winnipeg. She will also be presenting to the Manitoba Farm Writers and Broadcasters Association and the Commonwealth Journalists Association, as well as making a presentation to CFWF members via webinar and/or at the 2016 CFWF conference, which will be held in Saskatoon.

“Implications of the Trans Pacific Partnership trade agreement on the Canadian dairy industry”

Lorne McClinton

\$2,000

Lorne has been working as a journalist and photojournalist for over 30 years, specializing in agriculture journalism since 1995. He will be examining the implications of the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement on the Canadian dairy industry given the significant changes that such an agreement would bring to the tariff-protected supply management system currently in place. He will be travelling to New Zealand and California to learn how the dairy industry operates in these areas and to examine whether it is even possible for Canadian dairy farmers to compete in a global free market system like New Zealand does and whether there are other support programs, such as those offered in the U.S. that might act as a substitute.

Lorne will publish his findings as articles in the agriculture press and mainstream business publications to provide greater insight to producers in Canada's supply managed sectors on what type of regulatory environment they might have to operate in, in the future. He will also provide useful information to consumers and to investors active in Canada's food industry. In addition, he will make a presentation to CFWF members via webinar and/or at the 2016 CFWF conference, which will be held in Saskatoon.