



CANADIAN LEADER 2010

Murray McLaughlin, PhD

Director, Sustainable Chemistry Alliance

For our third Canadian Leader we are delighted to profile Dr. Murray McLaughlin for his work in the agricultural sciences. Murray's successful career has helped bring forward agriculture and its bioindustrial potential across Canada. Combining the fertile ingredients of agricultural science, insights into financing, business development, marketing and government policy, and driven by a decades long passion, Murray's work has accelerated the evolution of agriculture into our bio economy. Fred Haynes, Publisher.

Agriculture has always been a business populated with innovators' and entrepreneurs. I have had the gratifying experience of growing up in this sector and being involved in various aspects of advanced technologies for the past 30 years. My career has spanned industry, government, economic development and venture capital and covered Eastern and Western Canada.

Agriculture is an industry that has seen significant changes over the last 50 years, continually meeting the challenge of feeding an ever growing global population. Advanced technologies have had significant positive impact - Biotechnology, Computers, and bioscience all play an ever increasing role. Bioindustrial Agriculture is playing an ever expanding role as we improve our ability to product biomaterials (plastics, fiberboard, biofuels, etc.). This movement to the bioeconomy continues to expand the role of our agriculture producers and increase their options of what to produce. This is taking place while we maintain a solid focus on continuing to feed the world and have a sustainable industry.

A few years ago, John Oliver and I brought together a few business leaders in Canadian agriculture and developed a Vision for the agriculture in Canada. Six years later we are starting to see this Vision begin to take shape.

The Vision:

"In the year 2015 Canada is a world leader in the enhancement of human, animal and environmental health through the application of research, technology, and social innovations in agriculture and the bioscience industry.

As a solution provider to society, we reduce the burgeoning health deficit, improve quality of life, and embrace environmental sustainability.

We are the trusted standard against which others measure themselves".

This Vision really talks about agriculture as an industry that will drive convergence between industries and disciplines - Science, Chemistry, Engineering, Health and Environment. Agriculture is truly a fundamental pillar for a "healthy Canada": healthy people; healthy economy; and healthy environment.

Today, I am working at the Sustainable Chemistry Alliance (SCA), which is focused on the commercialization of green and sustainable chemistry. This is a key sector of the Bioeconomy which continues the convergence theme - agriculture and the chemical industry teaming up.

My career has embraced economic and business development with organizations such as Ag-West Bio Inc., OAFT; Foragen Technologies Management Inc.; and presently the SCA. My focus has ranged from business plan development to venture capita investments in Canadian agriculture. Other experience include Deputy Minister for Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, and Director of BD at the Canadian Light Source in Saskatoon.

"The ability to learn faster than the competition is often the only sustainable competitive advantage a company (or country) can have." Aris de Geus.

I look forward to the future years as agriculture becomes the driver of convergence in the Canadian Economy.

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