

Canadian Farm Writers' Federation



2009 Annual Report

Presented to the CFWF 2010 Annual Meeting

Temple Gardens Mineral Spa Resort

24 Fairford St. E., Moose Jaw, SK

Saturday, October 2nd, 2010



Canadian Farm Writers' Federation

2009 Annual Meeting

7:30 am

Saturday, October 2nd, 2010

Temple Gardens Mineral Spa Resort, Moose Jaw, SK

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Adoption of the minutes of the 2008 annual meeting
4. Business arising from the minutes
 - Food writers
 - Logo
5. President's Report
6. Secretary-Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement
7. Conference Reports
 - 2010
8. Awards Program Report
9. IFAJ Report
 - IFAJ Bursary
 - IFAJ Congress in 2011
10. Regional Reports
11. Senate Report
12. New Business
 - By laws
 - Atlantic Canada Farm Writers Association
13. Board Elections
14. Adjournment

Canadian Farm Writers' Federation

Minutes of the 2009 Annual Meeting

Saturday, September 12th, 2009
Radisson Edmonton South, Edmonton, AB

1. **Welcome:**
John Greig called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

2. **Adoption of the Agenda:**
With the addition of varia items on the federal election, food writers and CFWF logo, Kelly Daynard moved adoption of the agenda. Seconded by Lilian Schaer.
Carried

3. **Adoption of the minutes of the 2008 annual meeting:**
David Schmidt moved the minutes of the 2008 annual meeting be adopted.
Seconded by Crystal Jorgensen.
Carried

4. **President's Report:**
John Greig presented the business for the year.
 - He stated it had been a pleasure to have been president for the year and was thankful for the dedication and quality of people involved in CFWF.
 - The membership numbers dipped a bit but stayed strong at 350 despite a weak economy.
 - CFWF was involved in the recent National Debate on Agriculture by having CFWF secretary-treasurer Hugh Maynard moderate.
 - CFWF is starting to make more global connections and is moving forward, connecting more with IFAJ.
 - CFWF received its first government grant for hiring a summer student, Christina Franc, who worked on the awards program.
 - The organization is evolving with its application to Industry Canada for incorporation and required by-law changes.Jane Robinson moved to accept the President's Report, seconded by Myrna Stark-Leader.
Carried

5. **Secretary-Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement:**
Hugh Maynard presented the summary of items from the secretariat including the administration of the awards program, website and listserves, and the publication of the Farm Journalist newsletter. Having a summer student for the first time helped considerably. Considerable work was carried out on the by-laws to make them compliant with Industry Canada requirements.

Financial Statement

- Both income and expenses were very close to the budgeted amounts
- Membership revenue stabilized after the increase in 2007 from late payments and higher numbers of members

- The Financial Statement has been reviewed by the Executive as well as a third party bookkeeper.

Hugh Maynard moved to accept the 2008 Financial Statement, seconded by Owen Robets. Carried

Hugh Maynard moved that Flo Johnson review the financial records for 2009, seconded by Owen Roberts. Carried

Hugh Maynard briefly reviewed the 2009 financial statement and budget for information purposes.

6. 2009 Conference Report:

Annemarie Pedersen reported on the 2009 conference providing information on the participation and sponsorships, in particular the very high number of registrations. Annemarie identified each of the host committee members and gave a brief description of their contributions to the conference.

The 2010 Conference will be hosted by SFWA in Moose Jaw, SK from September 30th – October 2nd. Myrna Stark-Leader gave a brief overview of the location and anticipated activities.

Conference rotation is as follows:

2010	SK
2011	EC (IFAJ)
2012	MB
2013	BC
2014	EC
2015	AB
2016	SK

7. Awards Program Report:

Christina Franc presented the 2009 Awards Program update. This year's awards program had 221 entries, about the same as the past year. The Press Feature category remained the largest category having 38 submissions and the Daily News category was the smallest with 2 entries reflecting the economic difficulties in that sector; the Radio News Reporting category finally emerged from its usual status as the smallest category with 9 entries.

We had many new judges on board this year and they really enjoyed their task, many thanking us for the opportunity to judge, one even mentioned wanting to hire some of the writers! However it remains difficult to find judges and your suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

It is a continuing challenge to maintain sponsorship for individual awards and one category remained unsponsored.

Adele Pelland moved to accept the Awards Program Report, seconded by Allison Finnamore. Carried

8. IFAJ Report:

Janet Kanters, CFWF representative at IFAJ, gave a report on proceedings during the year, including IFAJ's 2015 strategy, outreach to South America and Eastern Europe, and CFWF participation in the 2009 IFAJ Congress in Texas.

Myrna Stark-Leader gave a report on the IFAJ Monsanto Bursary and recipient Allison Finnamore will give a presentation at the banquet this evening.

Co-chairs Owen Roberts and Lilian Scaer gave a report on the 2011 IFAJ conference to be held in Canada by CFWF. CFWF set up a booth at the Texas congress, co-sponsored by FCC, to promote the event and has set plans for a similar promotion at the 2010 congress in Belgium. The theme for the 2011 event will be "Experiencing Agriculture in the New World."

Annemarie Pedersen moved to accept the IFAJ, seconded by Clare Illingworth. Carried

9. Regional Reports:

Written reports contained in the handout. Regional representatives provided a brief overview.

10. Senate Report:

Tabled to the evening banquet. Senators to meet in the bar at 5pm to prepare.

11. Executive Elections:

Owen Roberts chaired elections process. John Greig informed everyone of the process according to the constitution.

- BCFWA appointed Tamara Leigh as their representative on the CFWF board
- AFWA appointed Annemarie Pederson & Alexis Kienlen as their representatives on the CFWF board.
- SFWA appointed Myrna Stark Leader as their representative on the CFWF board
- MFWBA appointed John Morris as their representative on the CFWF board
- ECFWA appointed John Greig and Lillian Schaer as their representatives on the CFWF board

Janet Kanters moved to accept the nominations, seconded by Wendy HolmS.

Carried

Members at Large –

- David Schmidt nominated Glenn Cheater for the western representative. Carried
- Lilian Schaer nominated Hugh Maynard as eastern representative. Carried

Owen Roberts closed nominations, both nominees accepted.

12. New Business:

By-Laws

Hugh Maynard explained that CFWF needed to amend its by-laws to be compliant with Industry Canada requirements for incorporation. The registration was necessary in order to secure insurance for events like IFAJ 2011 and other legal matters such as bank changes. He presented a document that contained the current by-laws in side-by-side comparison with the proposed changes; these changes had been circulated to the membership, explained in an article in the newsletter and approved by the executive. He noted that the major changes were the use of the term “board of directors”, the description for individual membership, and provisions for new associations and special general meetings.

Wendy Holm moved to accept the proposed by-law changes, seconded by Jane Robinson. Carried

Hugh Maynard thanked Stephanie Maynard who had done most of the (tedious) work in lining up the by-laws in compliance with Industry Canada requirements.

13. Varia:

Federal Election

Maureen Henry raised the issue of a possible federal election with CFWF playing a moderating role if there would be an agricultural debate. Discussion followed on whether there should be two (east/west) debates and possible collaboration with CFA. General consensus was that CFWF should continue to play a role in these types of events and that the Board could respond to any such opportunity.

Food writers

Maureen Henry asked whether there had been any interaction between CFWF and food writers in Canada, and whether they might be included in CFWF activities such as the conference and awards program. She noted that there was a large increase in activity in reporting on food and food issues and that this was having an influence on consumers without much of an agricultural perspective. It was mentioned that CFWF had no formal interaction with any groups or individuals; it was agreed that the Board would follow up on this matter.

Logo

Maureen Henry raised the issue of the CFWF logo being out-dated and asked whether other members thought the same, and if so what changes could be made. There being no particular consensus on the question, it was agreed the Board would review the matter.

14. Adjournment:

Wendy Holm moved adjournment at 8:41 am, seconded by Adele Pelland.

Annual Reports

President's report

By Myrna Stark Leader, CFWF President

The Canadian Farm Writers' Federation continues to be a valuable asset to those in media, writing and public relations in the business of agriculture across Canada. There are opportunities for learning, mentorship, knowledge sharing as well as leadership and volunteerism.

There were several accomplishments this year.

We have 358 members which is up from around 350 last year. A highlight was to gain a new Atlantic chapter! This has been on the minds of some of our members and former executive for many years so it is very gratifying to see your effort come to fruition. We look forward to those members continued involvement in CFWF and, dare I write it, an Atlantic-based national conference in the not to distant future.

The Board continues to look for ways to more effectively run the organization and provide you with value for your membership fees.

Thanks to the work of Hugh Maynard who runs our day-to-day business and John Greig, the past president, CFWF is now an official organization registered through Industry Canada. This process took far longer than first anticipated mostly due to paperwork. While changing little in the day-to-day functioning of the group, the designation is a positive step. It enables us to deal more effectively with funding organizations and financial institutions. It also helps us qualify for insurance, which is important as we host national and next year, international events.

Another step forward came in the form of a new sponsorship guideline document. It was developed at the Board level with help from sponsorship guru Jane Robinson. It is not a policy document, but provides a starting place for requests for sponsorship. As you know, the CFWF conference is largely dependent on sponsor dollars. Their support enables us to keep the cost of this event so reasonable. However, when seeking sponsorship, it is often the same businesses and organizations, and the same people, who are approached year after year. The document establishes a process, sponsorship levels and what is offered in return for sponsorship dollars or in kind donations. The benefit will be greater consistency across the country. The guidelines will be housed at the secretariat and shared with local chapters and the next CFWF national conference organizing committees. As next year's conference planning was already well underway when the Board approved the guidelines, they will be in effect for the 2012 conference planning team.

Speaking of next year, plans are moving ahead with next year's conference being held in conjunction with the IFAJ congress. Just a few months after the largest Canadian delegation attended the IFAJ in Texas in 2009, seven of our members were off to IFAJ Belgium to not only experience the congress and international agriculture, but also to showcase Canada and invite delegates to visit our country in 2011. It appears that the Congress is also going to bring us some new members – including those based in Quebec. I've been told that typically an IFAJ congress has a unifying effect on the host country's agricultural journalism community. This is great for our organization!

Sadly, our CFWF Monsanto bursary winner was not one of them. John Greig found himself unable to get there because of the fall out of a certain volcano. Due to the freak nature of that event, Monsanto and the Board have agreed to send John to IFAJ Sweden in 2012. Thank you to Monsanto for their generosity and flexibility.

As you will have experienced when you read this, the SFWA did an outstanding job organizing this year's event.

Canadian agriculture is diverse and comes in all shapes and sizes. Most importantly, it is a business with many, many stories for us to tell. I hope you have found the learning that you were looking for this weekend.

I applaud them and thank them, on behalf of all CFWF members for their hard work. It has been really fun to be part of the group that has made this event a reality, especially in the city where I grew up. Although I haven't lived in Moose Jaw for years, it will always be home and I am grateful that you each decided to spend some time here this fall.

It has been a great pleasure and honour to serve as the CFWF president this year.

Sincerely,
Myrna Stark Leader

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

Prepared by Hugh Maynard

Administration

The 2009-2010 year was pretty much steady from an administrative perspective – a little bit of paperwork here, a little there, a few cheques to write and so on. CFWF's administrative coordinator, Christina Franc, CFWF's first summer student employed through a Young Canada Works grant, returned again to coordinate the awards program and membership activities. A journalism student at Carleton University, she also supported Connie Duivenvoorden, editor of the Farm Journalist, in the publication of the newsletter. Many thanks to both of them for all the work they did in the past year ensuring that we had well functioning organization and a quality newsletter. The CFWF Board met once in person at the 2009 annual meeting and three times by conference call – a good time was had by all.

Membership

Membership numbers stayed steady for 2009 at just above 350 which was good considering the increase in the membership fee and the economic situation.

Finances

The bank balance remained healthy due to the generous contribution of sponsors to the 2009 conference in Alberta, and the support for Secretariat activities through the YCW summer student grant. This has allowed continued contributions towards the organization of the IFAJ Congress in 2011 through the provision of support for an official delegate to IFAJ meetings and an advance in funds to the organizing committee, as well as other expenses.

The CFWF accounting system was fully converted from a cash to accrual basis (from Quicken to Quickbooks). While this change supports better administration practices that are required as CFWF has become formalized through incorporation and Secretariat responsibilities expand, the conversion requires a re-stating of the 2008 financial statement in order to establish a balance sheet and align the categories for subsequent reports. In the course of this conversion a \$919 discrepancy was revealed between the adjusted statement and previous reports; this requires that the re-statement of the 2008 financial statement be approved by the 2009 annual meeting.

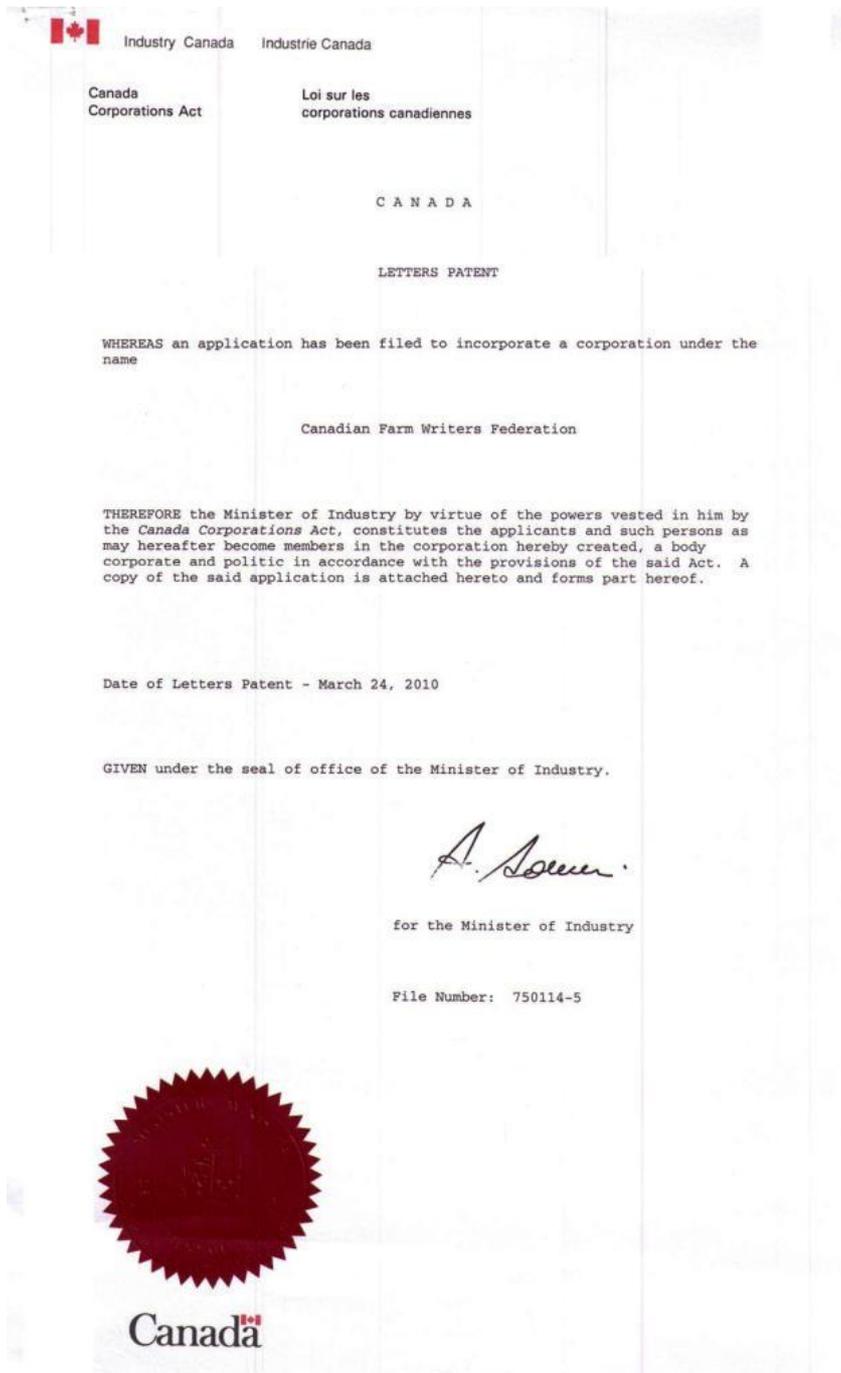
Conference Planning

As per the conference schedule adopted in 2004, the rotation has been adapted to accommodate the IFAJ congress in 2011 (otherwise ECFWA will be hosting 3 conferences in four years.) Start your organizational engines now, here's the conference rotation through to 2025:

2011	EC (IFAJ)	2016	SK	2021	AB
2012	MB	2017	EC	2022	SK
2013	BC	2018	MB	2023	EC
2014	EC	2019	BC	2024	MB
2015	AB	2020	EC	2025	BC

Incorporation

CFWF has finally grown up and become an officially incorporated organization with Industry Canada, despite their best efforts to deter us. The revised application was sent back with a second request for several (mostly technical) changes to the by-laws which will be dealt with at this annual meeting.



CFWF Financial Review 2009

Comptabilite Flo Johnson Bookkeeping
239 Bellevue Drive
Pincourt, Qc. J7V 4A7

September 1st, 2010.

To: CFWF Executive Committee.

I have been requested by Hugh Maynard, CFWF Secretary-Treasurer, to review the financial records of the Federation for the year 2009.

I have verified the figures listed on the CFWF Financial Statement 2009 by comparing:

1. Accounts Payable and Receivable against the figures listed.
2. Bank statement debit and credit entries against the general ledger and proved the bank reconciliation.
3. Compared Financial Statement figures of 2008 against 2009.

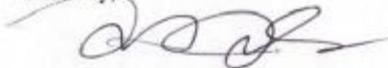
When comparing the bank statements to the Financial Statement, I found both the income and expenses on the Financial Statement matched the figures listed.

When comparing the overall amounts listed, they are mostly in line with the normal levels of variance. There were four items with difference of note:

1. The CFWF share of the surplus from the annual conference was higher than budgeted due to higher than anticipated revenue for the conference.
2. Memberships increased by 44% due to the increase in membership fees.
3. There was a considerable increase in the "Other" category of income; this was due to receiving a Young Canada Works grant for a summer student for the first time. As a consequence there was a moderate increase (21%) in Administration expenses for the "Admin-Coordinator" category.
4. In 2008, the CFWF financial records were converted from a cash (Quicken) to an accrual (Quickbooks) basis. As a consequence, it is necessary to re-state the 2008 financial statement on an accrual basis, a comparison of which is included in this report. The major change is that retained earnings, reported for 2008 have been decreased by \$4184, and this is a result of:
 - a. The 2007 conference surplus being transferred from 2007 to 2008 when it was actually paid. (\$7243)
 - b. The addition of the registration fee for a kiosk at IFJA 2009 which was actually paid in 2008. (\$2102)
 - c. A discrepancy of \$ 919 which can't be reconciled and is likely a transcription error committed prior to the accrual conversion.
 - d. The remaining \$38 is just miscellaneous adjustments.

Generally, the financial records were in good order and sufficient to complete the review.

Sincerely,



Florence Timms-Johnson

CFWF Financial Re-Statement - 2008

		<i>2008 Original</i>	<i>2008 Re-statement</i>	<i>2009</i>
<u>INCOME</u>				
Awards	Fees	\$ 4,950	\$ 4,530	\$ 4,729
	Sponsors	\$11,600	\$ 10,800	\$ 11,600
	IFAJ Bursary	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
Conference	Registrations	\$ 420	\$ 420	\$ 0
	Sponsors	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
	Other	\$ 3,519	\$ 10,762	\$ 9,500
Memberships		\$ 6,670	\$ 6,990	\$ 10,100
Interest		\$ 1	\$ 0	\$ 1
Other		\$ 176	\$ 176	\$ 6,010
TOTAL INCOME		\$29,836	\$36,178	\$ 44,440
<u>EXPENSES</u>				
Administration	Admin-Coordinate	\$ 7,174	\$ 5,908	\$ 9,076
	Conf. calls	\$ 493	\$ 492	\$ 139
	Other	\$ 1,020	\$ 3,072	\$ 642
Awards	Administration	\$ 2,239	\$ 2,239	\$ 1,836
	Certificates	\$ 912	\$ 912	\$ 934
	Judging	\$ 1,450	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,667
	Prizes	\$ 8,400	\$ 8,400	\$ 7,925
	Refunds	\$ 120	\$ 80	\$ 80
	IFAJ Bursary	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
Conference	Expenses	\$ 420	\$ 1,686	\$ 0
	Refunds	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Farm Journalist	Honorarium	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
	Travel	\$ 873	\$ 873	\$ 0
IFAJ	Fees	\$ 4,400	\$ 4,589	\$ 3,867
	Congress rep. 2011	\$ 1,683	\$ 1,683	\$ 1,500 \$ 2,500
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$32,683	\$34,784	\$ 33,666
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE		\$ (2,847)	\$ 1,394	\$ 10,774

CFWF Balance Sheet - 2009

	<i>2008</i>	<i>2009</i>
<u>ASSETS</u>		
Current assets		
Chequing	\$ 11,485	\$ 16,611
Accounts receivable	\$ 5,419	\$ (27,920)
Undeposited funds	\$ 110	\$ 40,000
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total current assets	\$ 17,014	\$ 28,711
Total Assets	\$ 17,014	\$ 28,711
 <u>LIABILITIES & EQUITY</u>		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 554	\$ 1,477
Total current liabilities	\$ 554	\$ 1,477
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Liabilities	\$ 554	\$ 1,477
 Equity		
Opening balance	\$ 16,296	\$ 16,296
Retained earnings	\$ (1,230)	\$ 164
Net income	\$ 1,394	\$ 10,774
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Equity	\$ 16,460	\$ 27,234
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$ 17,014	\$ 28,711

Awards Program Report

By Christina Franc, Awards Co-ordinator

The secretariat is happy to report an increase of four per cent in the number of awards entries this year. We had 207 entries in total, after two years of seeing a year-by-year decline in numbers, with 199 entries last year, and 221 entries the year before. More entrants are also starting to submit online pieces.

There has been an increasing demand for more online-friendly categories for things such as blogs and e-newsletters, something the Board will be looking at in the coming years. The press feature category once again was the largest with 43 entries. This year, the smallest category was radio news reporting with two entries, which is unfortunate after seeing an increase last year when the category began accepting digital audio material.

The daily press reporting category saw a small increase in the number of entries, despite the consolidation of that sector over the last few years. The television news reporting category continues to struggle to maintain a steady or growing amount of entries.

We strive to have a wide variety of judges from across North America to assist in the judging process. This year, we had farmers, Canadian Press editors and freelance writers, to name a few. Again, almost half of our judges were new, and many have signed on to help out next year as well.

There has been continuing difficulty to find companies to sponsor the awards categories, we have lost a couple long time sponsors, but we sincerely appreciate their support. Thank you to Ontario Farmer Publications for stepping up to support the weekly press reporting category. Once again, we encourage you to forward any suggestions for sponsors next year.

This year, we also named the feature photograph category after Don Baron, one of the five founders of CFWF. This was the last category that needed a name and Don Baron seemed like the perfect fit, as the only founder who had not yet been honoured.

As this was my second year coordinating the awards program, I greatly enjoyed working with all the members and volunteers of SFWA and CFWF. It is always a pleasure speaking with everyone and I look forward to catching up with old friends and making new ones at the conference again.

International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ)

It's Canada's turn next!

By Lilian Schaer and Owen Roberts

The IFAJ flag was officially passed to Canada as we formally assumed the role of host nation at the farewell banquet of this year's congress in Belgium.

The International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ) hosts its annual conference, called a congress, in a different member country every year. In 2011, Canada will be welcoming farm writers and agricultural communicators to our country for the first time in over 40 years.

Although our congress planning committee has been working on this event since early in 2007, preparations are now beginning in earnest – our event kicks off in southern Ontario less than a year from now!

It's going to be a little bit different next year...

Although we are hosting the IFAJ congress, we are combining this international event with our annual CFWF conference. We'll still follow our traditional CFWF format of tours mixed with professional development, but everything will be on a bit of a larger and decidedly more international scale. Here are some of the changes you can expect:

- Participants from about 30 different countries with approximately 250 – 300 delegates
- Although English will be the official language of the congress, you'll hear many other languages spoken
- Journalists from developing countries who are participating in a special Master Class program
- We'll still be having a CFWF annual meeting and awards ceremony, but it will likely take on a slightly different format than usual
- We're starting the congress in Guelph, going out on two days of tours with an overnight stop en route and ending with two days in Niagara Falls
- You'll have to decide early whether you're attending – registration will start much earlier (January 2011) and end much sooner (June 2011)
- The price you see will be higher – but will include shuttle pick up from the airport and all hotel accommodations for the duration of the congress

A monthly newsletter started going out in September 2010 to help keep you informed – and hopefully entice you to join us in Ontario next fall for this incredible international experience!

Promotions in Belgium

Congress co-chairs Lilian Schaer and Owen Roberts made a presentation to the delegates' assembly in Belgium about highlights of the Canadian congress. This was followed by a highly popular Crown Royal whisky tasting reception hosted by Canada's

IFAJ representatives: Kelly Daynard, John and Joan Morriss, Allison Finnamore, Lilian Schaer, Owen Roberts and Janet Kanters. Delegates also received IFAJ 2011 shot glasses and red luggage tags as promotional items.

Sponsorships, thank yous and acknowledgements

Fundraising for the IFAJ 2011 congress is now in full swing and we'd like to acknowledge Syngenta, FCC and BASF for leading the way as our first confirmed platinum, gold and silver sponsors, respectively. A full list of our sponsors, along with information on how you too can join this exclusive group, can be found on our website, www.ifaj2011.com or you can contact Jane Robinson at jane.robinson@adfarmonline.com for details.

We'd also like to recognize the contributions of the two congress development sponsors, Syngenta and Pioneer Hi-Bred. Their support has helped get our planning activities off the ground and promotions underway.

For more information

Full details on IFAJ 2011 to date can be found at www.ifaj2011.com. You can also follow IFAJ 2011 on Twitter – www.twitter.com/ifaj211 or @ifaj2011.

IFAJ Business

By Janet Kanters

Alltech to expand young leader program

Alltech has agreed to expand its sponsorship for 2011 to include the boot camp workshop for the Alltech Young Leaders, at the beginning of the 2011 IFAJ Congress in Canada. Alltech doubled its funding from current levels, and wants to help pay some funding to bring back the young journalists who were not able to attend in Belgium. The Professional Development committee is now working with the Presidium, the Canadian organizers and Alltech to develop an appropriate agenda, speaker lineup and logistics so the young journalists will have an outstanding event.

IFAJ believes the key to making this a success is that member countries follow through with identifying as many young (under age 35) working journalists as possible in the various guilds. Meanwhile, IFAJ is developing a budget to cover accommodations and programming for two additional days in Canada for the winners.

Pioneer Hi-Bred International to sponsor Master Class in 2011

Pioneer Hi-Bred International, a DuPont company, will partner with IFAJ to sponsor a pilot project Master Class that will bring a group of journalists from developing countries to a two-day workshop prior to the 2011 Canadian Congress. The Master Class project will be based loosely on the Master Class project initiated at the Belgium Congress. Master Class participants will be selected from China, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. This will be a great experience for each IFAJ Congress participant to be able to network with our colleagues who work in developing countries.

New newsletter editor is part of ACDC partnership

Karlie Elliott Bowman is the new IFAJ newsletter editor. Karlie's work with the newsletter is part of IFAJ's larger partnership with the Agricultural Communications Documentation Center (ACDC). Karlie is a young college graduate from the University of Illinois in agricultural journalism who has a great interest in IFAJ and international agriculture.

2011 Press Tour updates

The IFAJ is working toward possible dates and topics for a Press Tour in Italy. As well, Serbia is hosting a Press event May 18-22, 2011. This will include a visit to the largest agricultural fair in Eastern Europe and talks with the Ministry of Agriculture. IFAJ hopes there will be a possibility to hold an IFAJ reception to meet ag journalists from surrounding countries (Romania, Bulgaria) that may not be involved in IFAJ yet.

Website to be upgraded

The IFAJ website will be upgraded soon to allow photo and video uploads, as well as provide email alerts on important news for IFAJ members. The web designer is preparing a database (guilds, members and freelancers) for members and newsletter subscribers as well as articles, photos, audio and videos. The video-tool will be linked with Youtube. The website will also feature a 'photo of the day window', and will use past photo contest winners (at first) for this feature.

Farm safety initiative

IFAJ Presidium is reviewing a proposal for a farm safety initiative, to promote greater safety on farms through the best practice of communication and sharing the best ideas from different countries throughout the international network of IFAJ. This initiative is in the very early stages.

Future Congresses

Canada: Sept 13-18, 2011

Sweden: Aug 15-18, 2012

For more information

Janet Kanters

IFAJ executive committee

Ph 403-901-4559; janetkanters@gmail.com

Regional Reports

British Columbia Farm Writers' Association

Prepared by Tamara Leigh, BCFWA Secretary

It has been a year of quiet growth on the west coast. The BCFWA can boast six new members in 2010, swelling our membership to what may be a new record of 32, including 3 life members and one honorary member.

Following the CFWF conference in Edmonton, BCFWA members took a new look at agriculture in the city with a visit to the University of British Columbia (UBC) Farm. The UBC Faculty of Land and Food Systems hosted the tour, and we began with an informal conversation with Dean Murray Isman and senior faculty who presented new ideas emerging from Canada's most urban agriculture faculty.

The visit also included a tour of the UBC Farm, a 28-hectare plot of land on the south side of the UBC campus, embedded in one of Vancouver's most affluent neighbourhoods. The farm hosts academic courses, research plots, and community partnerships, as well as a popular farmers market and community supported agriculture (CSA) initiative. It also features a nice picnic area where the BCFWA settled in for a barbeque and informal meeting before bidding our hosts adieu.

Our second meeting of the year was the BCFWA AGM held in conjunction with the Pacific Agriculture Show in Abbotsford. This year we had a full agenda, as members ratified the BCFWA's first official constitution, and under the new rules awarded lifetime memberships to Bob Mitchell, Evelyn Harper, and Tony Greaves. We also awarded BCFWA's first-ever honorary membership to former BC Minister of Agriculture and Lands, John van Dongen.

BC Institute of Technology's Paula Brown, director of the Integrative Bioscience Research Cluster, provided information about a new Innovation Hub being developed in BC. Following the feature presentation, BCFWA launched their official web site, www.bcfwa.ca, officially moving member communications into the modern age.

There have been no changes to the executive this year despite David Schmidt's insistence that he would like to retire one day. The BCFWA executive is as follows:

David Schmidt, President

Peter Van Dongen, Vice President

Tamara Leigh, Secretary & CFWF Representative

Sandra Tretick, Treasurer

Bob Mitchell, Administrator, Tim Armstrong Fund

Alberta Farm Writers' Association

Prepared by Alexis Kienlen, Annemarie Pedersen, & Janet Kanters

The Alberta Farm Writers' Association membership currently stands at 89 members. Our executive consists of Janet Kanters as secretary/treasurer. This, despite pleas to AFWA members about the fame and glory associated with being on the executive. Sigh. J. AFWA representatives on the CFWF executive committee are Alexis Kienlen and Annemarie Pedersen.

The AFWA's main activity this year was our annual tour/meeting, held June 3-4 in the Calgary-Strathmore region. About 40 participants toured Cattleland Feedyards, a 25,000 head full service feedlot located just outside Strathmore. Participants took a tour of the feedlot by bus, and spoke with manager Greg Appleyard and research manager William Torres. Cattleland is a unique feedlot that participates in research projects in a number of areas. One of these projects involves measuring net feed efficiency using RFID tags. Cattleland also runs a diverse 15,000 acre farm that produces feed and cash crops.

Next up was Field Stone Fruit Wines, a cottage winery that opened in 2005 after the government of Alberta passed a law that enabled fruit growers to make and sell wines made from their products. Marvin and Elaine Gill own and operate Field Stone Fruit Wines and make their products from berries and fruits grown on their farm. Wines include Saskatoon berry, rhubarb, black currant, cherry and fortified dessert wines, which are sweet and made with vodka. CFWF 2009 featured some of Field Stone's wines at the final banquet in Edmonton last year.

Lunch and networking took place at Strathmore Station Restaurant and Pub, a restaurant featuring a historical railway theme.

Participants then toured SemBioSys Genetics Incorporated, a plant biotech facility where scientists grow insulin from genetically modified safflower plants. Alberta's farm writers took in every step of this process and toured the Calgary-based company and its sister company Botaneco, which manufactures natural safflower oil for the cosmetics industry.

The evening finished with a banquet sponsored by the Alberta Beef Producers, and an informative speech and question and answer session with the Honourable Jack Hayden, Alberta's minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.

On day two of the tour, we visited the University of Calgary's School of Veterinary medicine where we were able to speak with members of the student body, faculty and staff. Following this, participants travelled to Balzac, where they learned about Business Fusions technology, which developed software for use by equine veterinarians. The group also toured Moore and Company Vet Clinic.

In other news, the AFWA recently re-vamped their website. Check it out at www.afwa.ca.

Saskatchewan Farm Writers' Association

Prepared by Myrna Stark Leader

The Saskatchewan Farm Writers is running smooth with an increase in membership from 35 in 2009 to 46 in 2010. This may be the result of reduced cost to attend the annual national conference, or it could be because people really want to be part of a group that is moving and shaking in their area of employment/interest. Whatever the reason, it is great to see our numbers up this much. At the same time, we've been sad to see some of our members move on to jobs outside the ag. sector and withdraw their involvement.

As you can appreciate, this year has been largely about planning the 2010 CFWF Conference.

We were very fortunate that our CFWF conference planning guru Karen Briere, who works for the Western Producer, offered to Chair the organizing committee. In addition, we had an effective and efficient team, with each volunteer stepping up to take on a specific role. We met several times throughout the year via conference call and twice in person – during Agribition time in the fall and during Western Canada Farm Progress in June. These were largely conference planning meetings.

The conference did give us the opportunity to produce a new SFWA logo. We asked design students from SIAST to submit logos as part of a logo contest, and offered \$250 and a free conference registration to the winner. After receiving several strong entries, SFWA members viewed the entries and voted online. Mike Weznerowic's design came out as the winner. You can see the logo he designed on our website and at this conference.

As always, new members are always welcome.

President – Kevin Hursh

Vice-president – Penny Eaton

Secretary – Jan Cote

Treasurer – Marlene Hursh

National CFWF rep – Myrna Stark Leader



Manitoba Farm Writers' & Broadcasters' Association

Prepared by Crystal Jorgensen

EVENTS

In October 2009, MFWBA held a luncheon with speaker Trish Jordan, Monsanto Canada entitled "Monsanto on the hot seat". Easily one of our best-attended sessions in recent memory, the event drew more than 30 people to hear the latest on GM wheat. Trish spoke very openly about the challenges and future directions for her company.

MFWBA's annual holiday party was held in December at the funky Champa Bistro. We use this event as not only a social gathering but also an opportunity to feature a charitable or non-profit organization. This year John Morriss spoke about Farm Radio International, the Canadian-based organization working in direct partnership with approximately 300 radio broadcasters in 39 African countries to fight poverty and food insecurity. This was especially poignant given the passing of FRI founder George Atkins on November 30, 2009.

We held our 2010 Annual General Meeting in February over a hearty meal at the King's Head Pub. Guest speaker Eugene Warwaruk with the Value Chain Manitoba Initiative shared the organization's goals of encouraging and assisting Manitoba's agri-food industry to become more competitive through value chain development. Eugene illustrated the process with the example of a recently formed local value chain involving organic produce. We also presented the inaugural MFWBA Agricultural Awareness Award (see Other News).

A spring luncheon in April featured guest speaker Harold Froese, director with Manitoba Egg Farmers. Harold discussed how MEF is coming to terms with the realities of consumer expectations - and explained why "cage versus no-cage" is not the only choice for the future.

Our final event for the 2009-2010 season was our annual spring/summer tour, held in June and themed "Barley and Beer in Manitoba". We visited the Canadian Malting Barley Technical Centre where they conduct applied research and pilot scale malting and brewing tests of registered Canadian barley varieties. In addition to a tour of their labs and brewing facilities, we witnessed their beer-tasting panel of experts in action. Next stop - the Elephant and Castle Pub where lunch speaker Lorelle Selinger, Canadian Wheat Board barley marketer, talked about the international presence of western Canadian malting barley and its value to farmers as an export commodity. We then traveled to the University of Manitoba where Dr. Martin Scanlon in the Department of Food Science explained to us why the bubbles in beer (and other food products) are so important. We also heard from malting barley farmer and Manitoba Agriculture rep Scott Day, who shared the joys and challenges of growing malting barley and getting it selected by maltsters. We ended the day at Luxalune Gastropub where owners Chris and Lawrence Warwaruk have found a winning combination of innovative pub grub and beers of the world.

Membership

Our membership has increased slightly in 2010. It currently stands at 63 members, three of which are lifetime memberships.

Other News

As reported last year, the MFWBA Agriculture Awareness Award was established in early spring 2009. The award will be given annually to an individual or organization to recognize outstanding contributions to public awareness of agricultural issues in Manitoba. Journalists, communications professionals, entrepreneurs, producers and anyone else working to make a difference in agriculture are eligible to receive the award. The prize will include \$300 and a commemorative keepsake. The 2009 winner, announced at our 2010 AGM meeting, was Agriculture in the Classroom, MB - Inc. represented by executive director Johanne Ross.

Eastern Canadian Farm Writers' Association

Prepared by Clare Illingworth, President

It's been another exciting year for ECFWA and we are please to share the highlights of our activities. The organization has once again seen growth in its membership; both in numbers and engagement. Last year, our membership grew to 153 including 9 student members. Thanks to an energetic board of directors, ECFWA continues to provide regular professional development opportunities.

ECFWA Professional Development

Fall 2009 saw ECFWA members attend the Elmira Produce Auction Co-operative (EPAC). This one-of-a-kind auction in Canada opened in 2004 and has become the destination for market operators and independent grocers. EPAC is Mennonite owned and welcomes close to 100 sellers looking for a market beyond the farm gate for their locally-produced fruit, vegetables and flowers.

The tour was hosted by EPAC sale manager Noah Gingrich and Farm Writer Jackie Fraser who owns Fraberts Fresh Food in Fergus. Fraberts is a regular buyer at the auction which buys produce at the auction.

The Winter 2010 session continued on the popular twittertrend set last year. Michele Payn-Knoper, a social media expert who was named one of Mashable's Top 5 Twitter users in 2009 led the webinar. Members from Southwestern Ontario through to Ottawa and the East Coast logged on to learn what it takes to use twitter effectively.

Michele took the group through the basics of this social media micro-blogging tool, tweet management options and finally how twitter can be a business and marketing tool.

This was a good reminder about the audience popularity of twitter, which experienced a 1,928% growth from June 2008 to June 2009.

ECFWA annual meeting

The 2009-2010 ECFWA annual meeting was held on Tuesday, April 29, 2010 in the Holland Marsh – one of Ontario's most productive agricultural regions located just north of Toronto.

Known as 'Canada's Salad Bowl', the Marsh is approximately 12,000 acres of peat bog that is ideal for growing carrots, onions and celery. The expanding ethnic diversity of the Toronto population has brought significant changes to consumer preferences, opening the market to diversified crop production in the Marsh that now includes vegetables such as bok choy, Chinese broccoli and Asian radish.

ECFWA member and Executive Director of the Holland Marsh Growers' Association Jamie Reaume toured the group through an onion packing facility and field as it was being planted. Jamie and farm operator Jason Verkaik addressed the challenges facing the Holland Marsh growers, including differing township bylaws, growing in an

environmentally sensitive area and in a Greenbelt, how the growers work as a community and the changes with minimum wage and hiring farm workers.

The Holland Marsh Growers' Association began in 2008 with the help of the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation and works to identify markets for its produce and build its distinct brand, "Holland Marsh Gold" through Local Food Plus. With their produce grown, stored, processed and packaged in the Marsh, these growers have a strong hand in the strength of their local economy. For more information on the Holland Marsh, visit www.hollandmarshgold.com.

Two new lifetime members were introduced at the AGM; Glenn Powell and Jim Romahn. Both have been highly active members for decades, former presidents of the Canadian Farm Writers Federation and mentors for many young writers and communicators.

The AGM also provided the perfect venue to announce the new farm writers' association in Atlantic Canada. With the strong leadership of Allison Finnamore, the Atlantic Farm Writers are sure to see many successes.

The ECFWA 2010/2011 executive consists of:

President:	Clare Illingworth, Syngenta
First Vice President:	Sarah Andrewes, Hill & Knowlton Canada
Second Vice President:	Karen Dallimore, Words for Hire
Past President:	Kelly Daynard, Ontario Farm Animal Council
Secretary-Treasurer:	Andrew Campbell, Farms.com
Newsletter Editor:	Claire Cowan, Grain Farmers of Ontario

Directors:

Jane Robinson, AdFarm
Kathie MacDonald, Rural Ontario Institute
Terry Stevenson, Southern Co-operative Services
Christina Franc, Qu'anglo Communications

The ECFWA extends thanks to outgoing Newsletter Editor Kim Waalderbos, Past President and CFWF Representative Lilian Schaer, Director at Large Scott Allison and CFWF Representative John Greig.

Website

The care of our ECFWA website is now in the capable hands of Claire Cowan with the help of past web manager Kim Waalderbos. Additions, including the ride board and lifetime member biographies are just some of the changes this web team has put in place.

Allison Finnamore

100 Twin Oaks Dr.
Moncton, N.B E1G 0L8
Canada

Cultivating Words

Phone (506) 860-7761
Email allison@finnamore.ca
Web Site www.finnamore.ca

Canadian Farm Writers' Federation
PO Box 250
Ormsdown, QC J0S 1K0

August 18, 2010

Dear Madame President,

It is my pleasure to request that the Canadian Farm Writers' Federation consider expanding its membership organizations to include the Atlantic Canada Farm Writers' Association (ACFWA).

The newly formed Atlantic Canada Farm Writers' Association held its inaugural meeting in June 2010. We currently have 11 members and we see opportunity to increase those numbers as we continue to establish ourselves. Current members are from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island and we look forward to bringing in more members from those provinces, as well as Newfoundland.

At our inaugural meeting, Wayne Riley of Prince Edward Island was elected secretary/treasurer, Andy Walker, also of Prince Edward Island, was elected vice-president and myself, Allison Finnamore, of New Brunswick, elected president.

Along with expanding our membership, other future plans include networking opportunities, annual meetings and business functions.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,



Allison Finnamore
President, Atlantic Canada Farm Writers' Association
Freelance Writer & Editor
Author