



# NEWS AND VIEWS

OCTOBER, 2009

#104, 5013 – 48 Street, Stony Plain, AB T7Z 1L8  
 Phone: 780.963.3766 Fax: 780.968.6733  
 Website: [www.acca.coop](http://www.acca.coop) E-mail: [acca@acca.coop](mailto:acca@acca.coop)

ACCA *News and Views* will be published at the beginning of each month. Please submit news items or information you would like to share to [acca@acca.coop](mailto:acca@acca.coop).

## In this issue ...

---

ACCA Member Profile: Alberta Barley Commission .....	2
50th Anniversary of ACCA Co-operative Youth Program .....	3
Upcoming ACCA Workshops.....	3
Exploring Ownership Issues for Alternative Energy.....	4
Three Compelling Co-op Stories .....	5
News from the CCA .....	8
CDI Selection Committee to Review Project Proposals This Month.....	8
Developers Network Holds Founding Meeting; Takes Over	
Coopzone Website.....	9
Preview CDF's Co-op Week Online Auction! .....	9
MEC Targets Young People with New Member Promotion.....	10
Report on Health Co-op Conference Available Online.....	10
“Social Enterprise Angels’ to be Featured at SECC Conference	
in November .....	10
Co-op Week: A Time to Celebrate!.....	11
Prime Minister Issues Co-op Week Message .....	12
What Do Co-ops Mean to You? Have Your Say on CCA's	
Co-op Week Blog! .....	12
Calgary Co-op Appoints New CEO .....	12
Potato Co-op's Givaway a Huge Success .....	13
Stand Up to Make Poverty History! .....	13
Edmonton Housing Co-op Opens New Building For Seniors .....	14
CCA Seeking Volunteers For Assignment in Ghana .....	14
BCICS Seeking Fellowship Applicants.....	15

If you wish to have your name removed from our subscribers list, please send an email to [acca@acca.coop](mailto:acca@acca.coop).

 Search  
 First  
 Previous  
 Next  
 Last  
 Home  
 Quit  
 1  
 Page

## ACCA Member Profile: Alberta Barley Commission

---

The Alberta Barley Commission is a not-for-profit organization which is funded, directed and controlled by Alberta's 17,000 barley farmers. The Commission was established on August 1, 1991 under the province's Marketing of Agricultural Products Act with a mandate to coordinate and sponsor research, market development, technology transfer, and policy development on behalf of barley producers. It is the only barley commission in Canada.

Barley farmers in Alberta support the work of the Commission through a check-off program of 50 cents per tonne of barley sold (as of August 1, 2009, the check-off rate will be \$1.00). Funds are invested in projects which will move the barley industry forward while contributing to the economic well-being of the province's barley producers.

Each year, Alberta's barley farmers grow over half of Canada's annual crop of 11 million tonnes. About 80 per cent of the crop is used for livestock feed, particularly for the province's hog and beef sectors. Much of the remainder is used for malt production in Canada and around the world. While food barley for people currently represents just a fraction of the barley sold in Canada, barley plays an increasingly important role in a nutritious diet.

Nikki Jeffrey, Manager  
Office and Projects  
Suite 200, 3601A 21 Street NE  
Calgary, Alberta T2E 6T5  
Web Site: [www.albertabarley.com](http://www.albertabarley.com)  
Toll Free in Alberta:  
1-800-265-9991  
Phone: 403-291-9111  
[njeffrey@albertabarley.com](mailto:njeffrey@albertabarley.com)

## 50th Anniversary of ACCA Co-operative Youth Program

---

ACCA (formally REDA – Rural Education and Development Association) is proud to announce that the ACCA Co-operative Youth Program is celebrating its 50th anniversary!

To celebrate this momentous occasion we will be hosting a special 50th Anniversary Family Weekend from November 6 to 8, 2009 at the Goldeye Centre, located near Nordegg, Alberta. We invite past participants, volunteer staff, sponsors, individuals and families to join us. There will also be an opportunity to support the future endeavors of the ACCA Co-operative Youth Program through a silent and/or live auction.

Planning is underway with activities such as a site tour, sleigh rides, family games and a gala evening. Please note that there is no registration cost to attend the celebration; however there is a cost for meals and accommodations at the Goldeye Centre (877-721-2102).

If you are interested in more information or to donate an item to the auction, please email [acca@acca.coop](mailto:acca@acca.coop). If you know of anyone who has attended or sponsored the program, please let them know about this celebration.

You can [download the registration](#) form here.

## Upcoming ACCA Workshops

---

The new ACCA Workshop brochure is [now available for download](#) from the website. This year there are five workshops available to attend.

- Co-operative Basics
- Financial Analysis and Planning for Non-Financial Managers
- Financial Analysis and Planning for Non-Financial Managers – Advanced
- Parliamentary Procedures
- 2009 Agriculture Update for Professionals



## Exploring Ownership Issues for Alternative Energy

---

Finding alternatives to traditional fossil based energy sources usually focuses on the development of technology. This is not surprising, given that the ability to create energy from alternative sources will depend highly upon methods that enable more efficient harnessing of wind, water, geo-thermal, and bio-based energy sources.

However, another issue which will impact the adoption of alternative energy is ownership.

Ownership determines control of the operation. This means that, within legal limits, decisions regarding accessibility, pricing, and how the energy provider operates are under the control of the ownership. Local ownership keeps those decisions closer to the end user and/or the producer.

In some ways, this is a familiar scenario for this province. In Alberta, co-operatives arose to deliver natural gas and electricity to rural markets where the existing utility companies were not motivated to deliver. By using a co-operative structure, farmers and ranchers were able to co-operatively own and provide for themselves the energy that they needed at a reasonable price.

Today, the co-operative model may well provide the business structure needed for local control of alternative energy. This would assure that the primary beneficiaries of alternative energy are the people who use it.

Even so, energy generation and delivery is a highly regulated area and local ownership faces some unique challenges. What would more readily enable local ownership of alternative energy? What supports and policies will help to level the playing field making local ownership a more viable option?

This topic and these questions will be the subject of a forum hosted by the Alberta Community and Co-operative Association (ACCA) on October 15<sup>th</sup> in Calgary. “Alternative Energy and Co-operatives” is the theme for ACCA’s fourth annual Rise and Shine forum.

Speakers will include Steve Rison, Chair of the Peace Energy Cooperative; Susan Carlisle, Manager of Alternative and Renewable Energy, Alberta Energy; Julie MacArthur, Simon Fraser University; and Jim Jones, Bio-Industrial Development, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development.

In addition to the presentations, an alternative energy marketplace will enable groups to share their initiatives and to learn from others in attendance. Breakout sessions will give participants the opportunity to identify the issues and how to overcome obstacles.

For more information visit [www.acca.coop](http://www.acca.coop) . To register, contact ACCA at 780-963-3766 or email [lcourchesne@acca.coop](mailto:lcourchesne@acca.coop). Registration deadline is Tuesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>.

## Three Compelling Co-op Stories

---

October 12 to 18, 2009 is National Co-op Week. Canadians are encouraged to recognize and celebrate the significant contribution that co-operatives make and how they have impacted our lives. In the following brief profiles, we present three inspiring stories of co-operatives that are making a difference.

### **A Voice for Those They Serve**

Imagine moving to another country, not being fluent in the language, wondering about the different culture and systems, and feeling isolated and lonely. This is a common scenario for those who arrive in our communities from other countries. One group of women living in Edmonton who themselves “had experienced economic and social exclusion and did not want others to experience the same” chose to make a difference by providing a brokering service.

Beginning with a group of nine immigrant women from six ethnic communities, the group developed services to connect recent immigrants with the health care services and social supports and to do so with an understanding of their clients’ native languages and cultures. These women offer health promotion and preventative health services.

#### Sources used:

Bussière, G. (2007). Health Co-ops Around the World: Canada. International Health Cooperative Organisation.

(available at: [www.ica.coop/ihco/documents/canada.pdf](http://www.ica.coop/ihco/documents/canada.pdf))

The Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation. Worker Co-op Success Stories. The Co-operatives Secretariat.

(available at: [www.coop.gc.ca/COOP/display-afficher.do?id=1233009297681&lang=eng](http://www.coop.gc.ca/COOP/display-afficher.do?id=1233009297681&lang=eng))

For more information, visit: [www.mchb.org](http://www.mchb.org)

They provide “social, emotional, and informational support to immigrant and cultural minority families. [They also provide] prenatal education, parenting classes, hospital tours, support groups, and community development projects”.

Initially, each practitioner operated independently of the others with accountability directly to the Health Authority. As they were developing their skills and evolving their services, they came to realize the importance of being a voice for the populations they were serving. “If you’re working for the system, how can you speak up for your community? How can you challenge the system and point out where change is needed?”

Their answer lay in the structure of an employee-owned co-operative in which the individual employees jointly own and democratically control the co-operative that they work for. By establishing the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative in 1998, the group was able to provide the services needed, attain contracts with the Health Authority and other agencies, while speaking on behalf of the communities that they work with. Currently they have 24 members and they serve approximately 1500 users annually. They are, by all accounts, an inspirational force!

### **Making All Things Fair in Trade and Chocolate**

Three friends who had returned from working overseas were concerned about producers who do not receive a fair share of the consumer dollar. Their solution was to produce and sell chocolate products into the marketplace using only raw products bought in such a way that the producers received fair value for their labour and inputs. So it was that in 1999, these three friends started La Siembra, a worker owned co-operative.

These days, we are more familiar with the concept of Fair Trade. However, when La Siembra began, fair trade standards for Canadian cocoa and sugar were yet to be created. As their website notes: “In 2002 La Siembra worked with TransFair Canada to develop a certification system for cocoa, chocolate and sugar products in Canada and became the first registered importers of Fair Trade Certified cocoa and sugar in North America.”



Source used and for more information, visit:  
[www.cocoacamino.com/en/about\\_coop.php](http://www.cocoacamino.com/en/about_coop.php)

In addition to fair prices to producers, fair trade also ensures that revenues are directed to improving social conditions in producer communities, supporting democratic participation in farmer-owned co-operatives, supporting sustainable production methods, and not using forced or child labour.

Today, selling their products under the Cocoa Camino label, La Siembra is Canada's largest producer of Fair Trade Certified organic cocoa and sugar products.

### **Our Values Are in the Fabric of Who We Are**

In 1971, six Canadian climbers were looking for a place to buy gear for mountaineering, rock climbing, ski touring, and hiking. They established Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC). Today, MEC has over 3 million members worldwide.

As a member owned co-operative, MEC's identity is tied tightly to their values. These are portrayed through a transparent discussion on their website of how these values are being implemented and the challenges in doing so.

One of MEC's values is its commitment to selling products that have less environmental impact. "Our concern over the use of crude oil as a raw material for polyester has led us to source yarns made from industrial polyester waste and recycled plastic bottles. These yarns use as much as 75% less crude oil than virgin fibres, and they divert waste from landfills and 'up cycle' it into useful stuff." MEC's target in this regard is to achieve 100% recycled fibre in all of its polyester clothing. At the same time, MEC realizes that one of its first steps is to more accurately track the amount of materials purchased which are made from recycled polyester.

MEC also reports that they use bluesign® technologies of Switzerland as an independent auditor of the textile mills that provide fabrics for MEC clothing. Bluesign® does the work of determining the environmental health and safety risks of the textile mills that provide MEC's fabrics. As the MEC website notes, the journey has just begun: "At the end of 2007, only 15% of the 48 mills we use had been or were being screened. Our target is to audit 70% of our mills by 2012. ...Our long-term aim is to see bluesign certification become the world standard."

Source used and for more information, visit:

[www.mec.ca/Main/explore.jsp?FOLDER%3C%3Efolder\\_id=2534374302883315&bmUID=1255029133164](http://www.mec.ca/Main/explore.jsp?FOLDER%3C%3Efolder_id=2534374302883315&bmUID=1255029133164)

These are not foreign challenges for MEC. In the mid 1990's MEC was one of the top five purchasers of organic cotton. Today, even though all of the cotton in MEC branded apparel is 100% organically grown, they are now among the top 25 organic cotton purchasers. ... a sign that others have followed MEC's bold lead and perhaps a sign of things to come regarding other fabrics used by MEC and other retailers.

For further information on this story or about co-operatives in general, please contact Richard Stringham, Director of Co-operative Development, Alberta Community and Co-operative Association: Phone: 780-963-3766 or email: [coopdev@acca.coop](mailto:coopdev@acca.coop)

## News from the CCA

---

### CDI Selection Committee to Review Project Proposals This Month

Applicants to the [Co-operative Development Initiative's](#) (CDI) Innovative Co-operative Projects component (ICP) will likely know within the next month whether their project proposals will receive CDI funding.

Over the past four weeks, CDI's staff team evaluated the 194 projects submitted by the July 31 deadline. CDI is co-managed by the [Canadian Co-operative Association](#) and the [Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité](#).

On September 29-30, the seven-member ICP selection committee will meet in Ottawa to review the 60 highest-scoring proposals. The committee will draw up a list of recommended projects to be submitted to the Hon. Jean-Pierre Blackburn, Minister of National Revenue and Minister of State (Agriculture and Agri-Food), who is responsible for the federal government's Co-operatives Secretariat. It is expected that the results will be announced by Minister Blackburn in October.



The second call for applications – for projects beginning on April 1, 2010 – will be launched in October with a deadline of December 31, 2009. There will be \$2 million in funding available for innovative co-operative projects in four priority areas: agriculture; rural and northern community development; innovative goods and services; and capacity building and sustainability. More information will be posted shortly on the CCA website.

### **Developers Network Holds Founding Meeting; Takes Over Coopzone Website**

[Coopzone.coop](http://Coopzone.coop), a website that provides Canadians with resources and consultants to help develop co-operatives, now has a new home.

The recently-incorporated CoopZone Developers Network Co-operative is now responsible for the site. The Network held its founding meeting on September 17.

The CoopZone website was originally managed by Canada's two national co-operative associations, the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) and the Conseil canadien de la coopération et de la mutualité (CCCM). The two associations have granted the use of the name "CoopZone", and the CoopZone website to the CoopZone Developers Network.

David Daughton, who has been active in co-op development in Prince Edward Island, was elected chair of the new network.

If you are not a Developers' Network member and are interested in joining, please contact Hazel Corcoran at [hazel@canadianworker.coop](mailto:hazel@canadianworker.coop).

### **Preview CDF's Co-op Week Online Auction!**

The Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada (CDF) will be holding an online auction in honour of Co-op Week, but you don't have to wait that long to find out what's up for grabs.

A sneak preview of the 40 auction items – ranging from a Sri Lankan tiger eye pendant to a basket of Cocoa Camino chocolate – is available at <http://realauction.ca/cdfc/en/>. Bidding will open on October 8 and will remain open until October 20.

## **MEC Targets Young People with New Member Promotion**

In an effort to attract young people to the benefits of outdoor recreation, [Mountain Equipment Co-op](#) (MEC) has launched a [special promotion](#) for new members aged 16 to 24.

People in that age category who sign up to become MEC members before October 31 will receive a free reusable shopping bag, a free LED “Turtle light”, discounts on a number of items and an entry in a draw for a \$1,000 MEC gift card.

“MEC may have matured since its inception in 1971, but the cost of an individual membership is still \$5 and we certainly haven’t lost our youthful passion for discovering the outdoors,” MEC wrote on its website. “We want to share that passion and instil it in others, so one of our goals is to support and encourage young Canadians in discovering the benefits of outdoor recreation.”

Mountain Equipment Co-op now has over three million members across Canada.

## **Report on Health Co-op Conference Available Online**

If you’re interested in health care co-ops but weren’t able to attend last year’s international conference in Saskatoon, a full report of that conference is now online at [www.usaskstudies.coop/pdf-files/Health-Care-Conf-rpt-final-1.pdf](http://www.usaskstudies.coop/pdf-files/Health-Care-Conf-rpt-final-1.pdf).

Prepared by Catherine Leviten-Reid of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives at the University of Saskatchewan, the report summarizes presentations on health care co-ops around the world, including Canada, the United States, Japan and Spain.

## **“Social Enterprise Angels’ to be Featured at SECC Conference in November**

Do you have a great idea – but need investment – for a social enterprise venture? Your wish may be granted if you make a successful pitch to a panel of “Social Enterprise Angels”.

Inspired by the CBC television series “Dragon’s Den”, Social Enterprise Angels will be featured at the Third Canadian Conference on Social Enterprise, which will take place in Toronto in November. Three social entrepreneurs, selected from among a pool of

nationwide applicants, will have an opportunity to pitch their social enterprise to a panel of judges, in front of a live audience, in hopes of securing up to \$30,000 for their project.

The Social Enterprise Council of Canada is requesting letters of intent from social enterprises (defined by the Council as non-profit organizations or non-profit co-operatives) operating in Canada who are seeking investment toward the start-up and/or growth of their enterprise and would like to participate in the event. The deadline for submissions is 5 p.m., Monday, September 14.

[Click here](#) for more information and the letter of intent form.

### **Co-op Week: A Time to Celebrate!**

[Co-op Week](#) – October 11-17 – is just around the corner, and co-operators across Canada are preparing for next week’s celebrations.

Co-op Week is a time for co-op and credit union members across Canada to reflect on the achievements of the co-operative sector and the contribution our sector has made to the lives of Canadians and their communities.

This year Co-op Week themes focus on the advantages of co-operatives and credit unions in an uncertain economy. Co-op Week 2009 is highlighting three of these advantages:

- Co-operatives are...putting people first
- Co-operatives are...creating sustainable jobs
- Co-operatives are...investing in communities

In addition, International Credit Union Day – which will be celebrated this year on Thursday, October 15 – will have its own theme “Your Money, Your Choice, Your Credit Union”.

A calendar of Co-op Week events activities can be found at [www.coopscanada.coop/en/orphan/CoopWeekEvents](http://www.coopscanada.coop/en/orphan/CoopWeekEvents). If your event isn’t listed, please contact Donna Balkan at [communications@coopscanada.coop](mailto:communications@coopscanada.coop) and it will be posted as soon as possible.

## Prime Minister Issues Co-op Week Message

Prime Minister Stephen Harper has issued a special message for Co-op Week in which he cites the benefits co-operatives bring to Canadian society.

In his message, which he sent to the [Canadian Co-operative Association](#) (CCA), he wrote:

“This special week offers Canadians a chance to express their appreciation for the benefits that co-operatives have provided for our society. Indeed, co-operatives have helped many Canadians find solutions to social and economic challenges in their communities.”

[Click here](#) for the full text of the Prime Minister’s message.

## What Do Co-ops Mean to You? Have Your Say on CCA’s Co-op Week Blog!

In keeping with the themes for this year’s Co-op Week, the [Canadian Co-operative Association](#) (CCA) is calling on co-operators across the country to spread the word about the benefits of co-ops and credit unions.

CCA has created a blog just for that purpose. Go to [www.coopscanada.coop/blog/](http://www.coopscanada.coop/blog/) and click “Comment” under the heading “Have your say: what do co-ops mean to you?” You’ll then be able to post your comment. You can tell your own story about your involvement in the co-op sector, let people know more about the co-operative difference and provide some other endings for the Co-op Week theme, “Co-operatives are...”

Co-ops are one of Canada’s greatest success stories – and there’s no better time to talk about that success than during Co-op Week. Let’s hear from you!

## Calgary Co-op Appoints New CEO

[Calgary Co-operative Association](#) has announced the appointment of Deane Collinson as its new CEO, effective October 20.

Mr. Collinson comes to Calgary Co-op from Cadillac Fairview Corporation in Toronto, where he held the position of executive vice-president of operations. Before that, he worked for Loblaw Companies Limited for over 23 years.

Mr. Collinson will replace Ken McCullough, who resigned from his position as of September 30 to accept the position of vice president, retail division, at Federated Co-operatives Limited in Saskatoon. Mr. McCullough served as CEO of Calgary Co-op since 2004.

### **Potato Co-op's Givaway a Huge Success**

An Alberta potato-growers co-op has discovered that Edmontonians love their spuds: especially when they are given away for free.

[Edmonton Potato Growers Ltd](#), a co-op representing 11 potato farms in the Edmonton area, held a “Great Potato Giveaway” on September 26 to raise awareness of the amount of local food produced in the farmlands around Edmonton. The co-op invited members of the public to visit one of the farms and take home 50 pounds of potatoes per person. While it was supposed to be an all-day event, the giveaway was so popular it had to shut down by 1 p.m.

“Urban people don’t understand agriculture - where their vegetables come from,” said co-op member Gord Visser, owner of Norbert Farms where the giveaway took place. “I wanted them to see the soil, put their hands in the soil...hopefully get a better connection to the land.”

It is estimated that visitors took away about \$20,000 worth of potatoes: about three semi-trailers full.

### **Stand Up to Make Poverty History!**

On October 16, 17 and 18, millions of people around the world will “Stand Up and Take Action” to demand that world leaders end poverty.

Stand Up, which is being organized in Canada by the anti-poverty NGO [Make Poverty History](#), is a three-day global mobilization to show solidarity with anti-poverty activists around the world. Essentially, it is a gathering of people who agree to stand up and read the Stand Up Pledge to fight poverty.

For more information about Stand Up and how to organize an event in your community, go to [www.makepovertyhistory.ca/standup](http://www.makepovertyhistory.ca/standup).

## Edmonton Housing Co-op Opens New Building For Seniors

A housing co-op in Edmonton has recently opened a new building aimed specifically at senior citizens.

[Sundance Housing Co-op](#), which was founded in 1978, has added Sundance Place to its co-operative community. The new nine-suite apartment building was designed with senior citizens in mind and now houses three existing co-op members, who moved to Sundance Place from their previous units in the co-op, and eight new members.

The building has three storeys and three units on each floor, with easy elevator access to the basement where the co-op's community space is located.

In addition to the new Sundance Place, Sundance Housing Co-op has 69 townhouse, duplex and fourplex units.

## CCA Seeking Volunteers For Assignment in Ghana

The [Canadian Co-operative Association](#) (CCA) is seeking 10 credit union professionals for a group technical assistance assignment in Ghana. The group will participate in an orientation and travel to Africa together.

The members of the team will all be well rounded and experienced credit union generalists, able to offer advice and assistance on all aspects of primary credit union management. Topics may include the loans cycle, safety and security of deposits, board/management relations, technology, or human resource development. Candidates should be flexible, able to think on their feet, and have a broad range of experience to draw on. Previous international experience is not necessary, but candidates should be in good health and able to travel under conditions that may be difficult.

[Click here](#) for more information on this volunteer posting or visit [www.coopscanada.coop/en/international\\_dev/Get-Involved/Volunteer](http://www.coopscanada.coop/en/international_dev/Get-Involved/Volunteer).

Applications can be sent to Colleen Berrigan by email: [colleen.berrigan@coopscanada.coop](mailto:colleen.berrigan@coopscanada.coop), mail (address on application form) or fax: 613-567-0658. CCA staff will review every application and select short-listed candidates for interviews. All interviewees will receive notification of acceptance/non acceptance by late October.

## **BCICS Seeking Fellowship Applicants**

The [British Columbia Institute for Co-operative Studies](#) is pleased to announce that the 2010/2011 Research Fellowships are now available for application.

There are five fellowships available: University of Victoria Sabbatical, University of Victoria Faculty and University of Victoria Graduate Student as well as Visiting Scholar and Graduate Student Research Fellowships.

Deadline for submission is November 5th, 2009

For more information, visit [www.bcics.coop](http://www.bcics.coop).