

**Farm Level Policy**  **Agricultural Policy Research Network**Jim Unterschultz  
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(780) 492 - 5439**Farm Level Policy Progress Report  
(January to March 2005)****Overview**

The agreement between AAFC and the University of Alberta to fund the FLP was completed and signed in March of 2005. A communication person was employed one-quarter time to develop a website (<http://www.farmlevel.re.ualberta.ca/>) and handle other network communications. As of March 31, no formal accounts had yet been set up at the U. of A. to handle the finances. The Department of Rural Economy advanced money to cover the costs of the running the FLP network and the workshop. Procedures similar to the CMD network will be used for transferring funds, applying for research, and reporting on activities. The U. of A. systems and accounts are being developed to manage the network.

**Workshop**

A workshop was held in Edmonton from January 31 to February 2, 2005 to develop farm level research issues. The workshop brought together university researchers from across Canada and internationally to look at farm level issues and brainstorm on FLP objectives. AAFC representatives, graduate students, AAFRD representatives and others attended the workshop. There was a blend of formal presentations by local, national and international speakers and two breakout sessions. Many of speakers' presentations are hosted on the FLP website. The breakout sessions were used to generate ideas and discussion on the future direction of the network. Over twenty-nine people were in attendance at the workshop.

Appendix 1 summarizes responses to selected questions from the FLP participant workshop evaluation form. While the breakout sessions identified a huge number of potential research questions<sup>1</sup>, the responses to the evaluation form question "List the two most important research issues that you see this network tackling." provides an overview. Farm income, land use, farm level environmental issues, and rural development were key issues raised.

**Leader and Management Team Activities**

The management team held one meeting at the end of the Edmonton workshop. This meeting was used to identify key objectives, research priorities and management of the network/research. Management team members were to develop short proposals to be submitted to the network to get research started as soon as money and graduate students were available. Further research objectives were to be identified at later management meetings.

**Budget and Expenditures**

<sup>1</sup> Rough notes on these breakout sessions are available from the FLP Network Leader.

There is significant variance between the December to March 2005 budget submitted to AAFC in December 2004 and the actual expenditures as shown in the contribution control sheet. This variance is explained by the delay in finalizing the FLP APRN until March 2005. It was decided to fund the workshop, administration and overhead during the December to March 2005 time period. Expenditures on research would be delayed until the 2005-06 fiscal year when funds would actually be available.

## Appendix 1

### Selected Responses to Workshop Participant Evaluation for FLP APRN Edmonton Workshop (January 31, 2005-February 2, 2005)

#### FLP Workshop Evaluation of Scaling\* Questions (N=16)

Category	Mean Scaling Response
<i>quality of presentation</i>	4.1
<i>usefulness of information</i>	4.1
<i>time for networking</i>	4.4
<i>time for discussion</i>	4.2

\* Five point scale with 1= poor ...5=excellent

#### Evaluation Question

List the two most important research issues that you see this network tackling.

#### Responses to Question:

Respondent #	Response
1.	Environmental / Ag interface; Farm household well-being (not necessarily income).
2.	Environmental goods and services; Social / rural development / extension issues
3.	Shall we go down the route that EU does in terms of rural development vs. farm income? How to create market for public goods since it is so important for sustainability?
4.	Farm structure, farm growth and understanding decision making particularly with respect to corporate farms; What are the impacts of the ban on beef exports due to BSE? Incidence? Farm? Region? Decisions? How to respond in the future? Manure land water quality and supply efforts.
5.	Better definition of the "farm income crisis"; Discovering the true cost-benefit of farm level environmental policy.
6.	Rural development and agriculture; Income determinants of agriculture
7.	What are the impacts of various policies or ecosystem services and environmental quality? What are the special patterns of land use associated with agricultural policies
8.	Bring together diverse researches
9.	Identifying trade-off in food habits along with health outcomes; Consumer behavior in food choices and its unique nature compared to other products.
10.	Environmental goods and services – how to proceed Cost – Benefit of process standard
11.	Is there a farm income problem, and if so, who does it effect, and how can those specific people be targeted? How can policy best be directed to achieve environmental sustainability in agriculture?

12.	Is there a well-being problem among farm households? – Measure of well-being? Typology of classifying farms? – Longer term project? Impact & lessons learned from Ag-disease outbreaks: potato virus, avian flu, BSE potentially high policy impact and quick turn around
13.	Farm income: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how do we describe agriculture? What is a farm, characterize farm?</li> <li>• drivers of structural change;</li> <li>• lessons learned from recent disasters (avian flu, BSE). How to be better prepared with response.</li> <li>• Environment:</li> <li>• environmental goods as complements rather than substitutes</li> <li>• market for public goods.</li> </ul>
14.	Contributions in understanding the reasons for current income situation of farmers; Helping to understand investment decisions in an effort to maintain future viability
15.	Defining what a farm is, what types of farms are present in different regions in Canada; What do we want for rural economy to look like?
16.	Developing an adequate or appropriate definition of farms. This can help inform a broad range of modeling and policy development. Developing an understanding of effective ways to address agricultural (rural landscape) sustainability including the effective delivery of environmental program and policy.