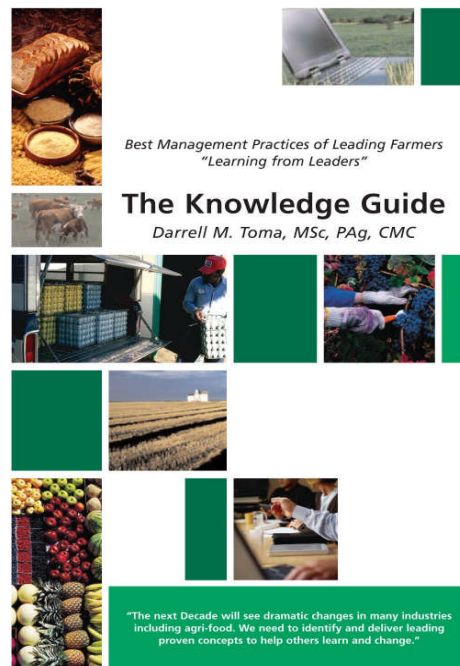


Knowledge Guide- Best Management Practices of Leading Farmers - 2005

A new Knowledge Guide is out on best management practice.

The Best Management Practice project is based on the idea that solutions to the ongoing farm crisis exists among “leading farmers”. These leading farmers are fundamentally good managers, market focused and excel in their management. They appear to make sustain and maximize profitability through securing new and emerging markets, moving up the value-chain and adapt their operation to meet consumer trends. The key question is “*What do these top farmers have in common?*”



The future of Canadian agriculture is rapidly moving away from a reliance on a “*production oriented commodity base*” to a “*higher value-add market orientation*”. The agriculture sector is still largely focused on the efficient production of commodities sold into a global market heavily influenced by production subsidies. Leading farmers research was based on farmers who were:

1. Full-time farm manager;
2. Involved in an alliance, network or value chain;
3. On-line Internet user;
4. Higher than average per acre gross revenue;
5. Using accrual accounting;
6. Previously recognized for achievement in farm management; and
7. Showing positive attitudes about agriculture and the future of their farm.

A cohort of 153 top farmers from Western Canada completed web based email surveys, followed by personal interviews to capture the common elements of their success and

better understand the strategies and tactics. In addition, a literature review was completed and industry experts contributed advice.

Findings show the 9 “best management practices” are:

- Vision for the agri-business
- Leadership
- Risk Management
- Human Resources
- Relationships and Alliances
- Production, Innovation and Environmental Management
- Financial Management
- Marketing Management
- Confidence and Motivation.

Further research and industry application projects are being discussed to help in the application of this important concept.

Call for more information on:

- Best practice application and the Knowledge Guide
- Research projects into new business models
- Speakers for industry meetings and AGMs
- Best Practice Orientation workshops (10-15 per group)
- Industry briefings and planning advice.

The core research Team included:

- Darrell M. Toma, MSc, PAg, CMC, CAC, Toma and Bouma Management Consultants, Edmonton. He has published the new Best Practice Knowledge Guide, available for farmers and agri-business. See www.tomaandbouma.com
- Terry Betker, PAg, CAC, of Meyers Norris Penny, Winnipeg, has extensive farm experience, was a Board member of the CFBMC and assisted in the guide. See www.mnp.ca
- Advisors to the project findings included: Rob Napier, Australia, Dr. Andrew Fearne, UK, and Dr. Danny Klinefelter, USA.
- Results have been presented in Canada to many meetings and conferences and in Mexico to a Texas A&M conference. The concept was recently presented in Brazil to the IFMA (International Farm Management Association) meetings.
- For information contact Darrell Toma at dtoma@look.ca and Terry Betker at Terry.Betker@mnp.ca.

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