

April 21, 2010

## News Release

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### ***Creating Rural Connections* Conference includes 47 Presentations Ample opportunity for networking at Alberta Rural Development Network event**

The best of Alberta rural development projects and research will be presented at the *Creating Rural Connections* conference in Lethbridge, May 11-13. Organized by the Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN), the conference is expected to attract community and business leaders, post-secondary researchers and others involved in rural development to share information, engage in discussion and network.

More than 60 presenters will take part in the keynote and concurrent sessions on topics ranging from sustainable rural living to quality of life, governance and leadership to renewable energy and agriculture.

“Though there is certainly a learning component to the conference, the greatest benefit in attending will come in discussion, sharing information and best practices, networking and collaboration,” said Dee Ann Benard, ARDN’s executive director. “We have created ample opportunities for this exchange to occur, and hope it will lead to new working relationships between rural communities and post-secondary institutions.”

The Alberta Rural Development Network was formed to foster those relationships. ARDN has representation from all 21 publicly-funded, publicly-governed post-secondary institutions in Alberta and is supported by a grant from Rural Alberta’s Development Fund.

“There is a link between research, education and community success,” said Benard. “Our role is to facilitate exchange between these three parties, online and in person, so we can learn from each other and partner on research and projects.”

Besides events such as the *Creating Rural Connections* conference, ARDN manages an interactive website where research and projects are posted and discussion forums take place. For more information about ARDN or the conference, go to [www.ardn.ca](http://www.ardn.ca) or call toll-free 1-877-987-1006. Registration information is available online.

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Conference program attached

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