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News Release

Albertans now connected to rich source of rural development research **Alberta Rural Development Network website launches**

The Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) has launched a new website (www.ardn.ca) to connect rural Albertans and researchers to a rich source of information related to rural development.

The site features numerous documents relating to successful rural projects, outreach programs and applied research in Alberta. The site includes a forum where viewers can post comments or connect with the authors or project leaders.

“The interactive nature of the website enables everyone to access an extensive bank of information and contacts no matter where they live,” said Dee Ann Benard, executive director of ARDN. “It may be the first time this type of information has been collected in one spot and made accessible to the public.”

The website is only one vehicle ARDN uses to connect to its stakeholders. The new organization, which has representation from all 21 publicly funded, publicly governed post-secondary institutions in Alberta, is organizing a conference May 11-13 in Lethbridge, and plans to participate in or host events in various regions of the province.

“Though events like these facilitate discussion, our main goal is to create a network of people and organizations who share a common interest in enriching the economic and community life in our rural regions,” said Benard. “There is a strong link between research, education and community success; ARDN exists to provide opportunities for education, research, networking and collaboration.”

ARDN was formed in 2006 and became fully active in 2009 when it received a three year grant from Rural Alberta’s Development Fund. For further information, visit www.ardn.ca or call toll-free 1-877-987-1006.

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