



Optimizing Land Use for Sustainable Growth: a CAPI Dialogue

February 21-22, 2019

Delta Calgary Downtown Hotel (209 4 Ave SE, Calgary, Alberta)

Thursday, February 21
DAY 1

11:00-12:20	Registration and lunch: lunch available from 11:30am (Glacier Ballroom)
12:20-12:30	Opening Remarks – John F. T. Scott, Chair and Don Buckingham, President and CEO of the Canadian Agri-Food Policy Institute (CAPI)
12:30-14:00	SESSION 1 – Setting the Stage: Measuring Sustainable Growth in Agriculture
12:30-13:00	“Green Growth Indicators: How does Canadian agriculture stack up against other OECD countries” Speaker: Dimitris Diakosavvas , OECD
13:00-13:30	Issues in measuring sustainability: Speaker: Ted Bilyea , CAPI Special Advisor
13:30-14:00	Participants’ discussion
14:00-15:30	SESSION 2 – Plants and Soils
14:00-14:30	“Crop land management to improve soils capacity for increased C-sequestration and implications on environmental indicators” Paper presenter: Sean Smukler , U. of British Columbia
14:30-15:00	Discussion leaders’ short presentations
	1. Industry initiatives for improved sustainability: Cam Dahl , Cereals Canada
	2. Innovations as seen from off-farm: Susan Wood-Bohm , Wood-Bohm and Associates
	3. Innovations at farm level: John Bennett , Saskatchewan Soil Conservation Association
15:00-15:30	Participants’ discussion
15:30-15:45	Health Break
15:45-17:15	SESSION 3 – Animals and Soils
15:45-16:15	“The Benefits of Cattle for Carbon Storage and Biodiversity in the Prairies” Paper presenter: Cameron Carlyle , U. of Alberta
16:15-16:45	Discussion leaders’ short presentations
	1. Industry initiatives for improved sustainability: Brenna Grant , Canfax Research Services
	2. Innovations as seen from off-farm: Jason Bradley , Olds College
	3. Innovations at farm level: Cherie Copithorne-Barnes , Rancher
16:45-17:15	Participants’ discussion
18:00-21:00	SESSION 4 – Dinner and Dinner Speaker (Rocky Mountain Room)
	“Connecting with the consumer: how evolving consumer choices will shape food production systems and land-use options in Canada” Dinner Speaker: John F. T. Scott , CAPI Chair and former CEO of Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers



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Friday, February 22
DAY 2

8:00-8:30	Breakfast (Glacier Ballroom)
8:30-8:45	Recap of DAY 1 – “Where did we end up at the end of DAY 1: A quick recap” Discussion leader: Don Buckingham
8:45-10:15	SESSION 5 – Externalities and Policy Instruments
8:45-9:15	“Sustainable growth, environmental goods & services and market failures in agriculture” Paper presenter: Tristan Skolrud , U. of Saskatchewan
9:15-9:35	Policy Instruments for addressing externalities: G. Cornelis van Kooten , U. of Victoria
9:35-9:45	Perspectives from a farm: Derek Tallon , Producer
9:45-10:15	Participants’ discussion
10:15-10:30	Health Break
10:30-12:00	SESSION 6 – Practices and Policy Options
10:30-11:00	“Factors affecting land use choices and agronomic practices” Paper presenter: Chad Lawley , U. of Manitoba
11:00-11:30	Discussion leaders’ short presentations
	1. Industry initiatives for improved sustainability: Stan Carscallen , Carscallen LLP, and White Moose Ranch Ltd
	2. Innovations as seen from off-farm: Richard Gray , U. of Saskatchewan
	3. Innovations at farm level: Graeme Finn , Southern Cross Livestock
11:30-12:00	Participants’ discussion
12:00-13:00	Lunch
13:00-15:00	SESSION 7 – Wrapping it up: Is there a clear way forward for optimizing land use for sustainable growth?
13:00-14:00	Participants break into 3 groups to discuss the following questions given what they have heard and their own experience:
	1. Are crops and animals in direct competition to reach higher sustainability outcomes?
	2. What direction and instruments are most promising for crop production sustainability outcomes?
	3. What direction and instruments are most promising for livestock production sustainability outcomes?
14:00-14:10	Reconvene in plenary room
14:10-15:00	Discussion leaders report back to all participants
15:00-15:30	Next steps and closing remarks – John F. T. Scott , CAPI Chair and Don Buckingham , CAPI President and CEO
15:30	Adjournment



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Background:

One of the most significant global challenges of the 21st century is producing enough affordable and accessible food to meet the demands of an increasing population while maintaining and improving natural capital (land, water, air, biodiversity). This event will focus specifically on land use choices and agronomic practices and their impacts on soil, air and water quality and biodiversity.

CAPI held 3 conversations titled “Barton Forward: Optimizing Growth” in 2017-18. At the end of these conversations CAPI concluded that “...we will require more than “simple” growth to achieve the ambitious growth targets in the Barton Report. “Quality” growth is needed to ensure that the gains in the agri-food sector can be sustainable. Not caring for the natural capital could accelerate environmental degradation resulting in losses in productivity and erosion of public trust, which would impede Canada’s longer-term prospects.” The CAPI report, entitled “What We Heard – Barton Forward: Optimizing Growth in the Agri-Food Sector” can be found [here](#).

In agricultural production, soil use and soil quality connect not only to farmers’ choices among competing enterprises, such as crops vs livestock, and management options but also to biodiversity, to air and water quality and, through carbon sequestration, to climate change. Farmers do allocate their land to optimize economic returns. However, optimizing land use with a view to maintain and improve its productive capacity over the long term while supporting the national carbon strategy may require more than just responding to market signals. In this context, production and consumption of animal proteins, in general, beef and cattle sectors, in particular, has become one of the most controversial and divisive issues in terms of the interaction of agricultural activities with natural capital, and the impacts of certain agricultural practices on positive and negative environmental outcomes.

The key question is “how the land use could be optimized in such a way to improve environmental and social outcomes while maintaining and improving the sector’s long-term competitiveness and securing “quality” growth”. To seek answers, CAPI and partners will convene a conference with the participation of transdisciplinary group of experts from industry, governments, academia and other research groups to commence a conversation on “Optimizing Land Use for Sustainable Growth”.