



MEDIA RELEASE

Study Proves the Benefits of Value Chain Management Workshops

Guelph, ON (December 6, 2012) – Value chain management (VCM) workshops lead to increases in the profitability of farmers, agri-food businesses, and retailers. A PhD study completed by Martin Gooch, Director of the Value Chain Management Centre (VCMC), found that 74% of managers who participated in VCM workshops attributed what they learned to changes in how they managed their businesses. In 37 cases, the changes led to improvements in business profitability, 11 of which were very significant.

VCM describes a business approach where businesses choose to work together to improve the efficiency of operations within and between firms and their effectiveness for creating consumer-recognised value. That the agri-food industry has been slower to adopt VCM practices than other industries has limited its ability to remain profitable in an increasingly global environment.

The study encompassed 279 exit surveys, which were completed at the conclusion of 13 workshops and 109 in-depth interviews conducted 14 months later. It identified relationships between participants' prior experience, reactions to the workshop, external factors in influencing changes in their attitudes and behaviour, and whether or not they changed management practices. Statistically less likely to change behaviour were stakeholders to whom agribusiness managers look for guidance and advice, namely individuals from government and industry organizations.

The study has implications for the way workshops are designed, delivered, and evaluated for teaching management skills in agriculture, agri-food, and other industries. With the findings identifying the sizeable impact that external factors have on motivating and enabling changes in an individuals' attitude and behaviour, the study also has implications for the manner in which policies and programs are developed and delivered by governments and industry organizations.

Gary Fread, Chair of the VCMC, stated, "The work of the Value Chain Management Centre has highlighted the critical importance of applying these management techniques to ensuring the success of our agri-food industry. Martin has done a terrific job of applying and adapting these techniques within the Canadian agri-food sector and establishing a strong global reputation for the Value Chain Management Centre."

This study, conducted through the University of Queensland, Australia, has positioned the VCMC at the international forefront in designing and delivering workshops to the agri-food sector. Based on the findings, a new series of workshops is planned for the spring of 2013.

The abstract of the study is available at: <http://www.valuechains.ca/www.valuechains.ca/reports.htm>

The VCMC is the only Canadian organization dedicated to researching value chain issues and opportunities, and assisting businesses implement value chain initiatives. It is a division of the George Morris Centre, a national, independent, economic research organization, which focuses on the agriculture and food industry. Areas of research include: trade, regulation, food safety, market analysis, agricultural research, environment, competitiveness, and corporate strategy.

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