

Fall 2010

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We Are...

City of Lethbridge
Town of Cardston
Town of Claresholm
Town of Coaldale
Town of Coalhurst
Town of Magrath
Town of Milk River
Town of Picture Butte
Town of Raymond
Town of Taber
Town of Vauxhall
Town of Vulcan
Village of Barons
Village of Carmangay
Village of Coutts
Village of Champion
Village of Lomond
Village of Milo
Village of Nobleford
Village of Stirling
Village of Warner
Cardston County
County of Lethbridge
MD of Taber
Vulcan County
County of Warner
Blood Tribe



SouthGrow

Regional Initiative

Creating Opportunities...

SouthGrow Excellence

Excellence – one word that describes SouthGrow Regional Initiative's focus. This focus is reflected in the four main initiatives that SouthGrow is spearheading: "Celebration of Creating Opportunities ..." Awards, Regional Sustainability, Water for Economic Development, and Productivity for Bottom Line Results. These four initiatives highlight SouthGrow Region's strengths: diverse opportunities and varied industry, communities striving to increase its sustainability, water to seize opportunities and sustain a high quality lifestyle, and a focus on productivity as a means to improve competitiveness. While this issue details these initiatives and encourages you to take advantage of the events and activities associated with them, we also provide an update on ongoing initiatives such as ensuring regional innovation and commercialization supports in the SouthGrow region and marketing the region to site selectors with Community Economic Development Profiles and www.southgrow.com. Be a part of SouthGrow success!

SouthGrow Celebrating Excellence

What do a pharmacy, an economic development agency, a cabinet maker, a school division and a specialty vegetable farm have in common? They have all been recognized for contributing to the excellence in the SouthGrow region. During the last three years, small, mid-sized and large; businesses, institutions and agencies; and individuals, organizations and municipalities have all contributed to SouthGrow's excellence and have all been celebrated at the annual "Celebration of Creating Opportunities ..." Awards. How does small compete with large? How does individual compete against institution? It comes down to EFFORT, IMPACT and SUCCESS.

As we launch the fourth annual "Celebration of Creating Opportunities ..." Awards, SouthGrow is calling for nominations of organizations/agencies/municipalities/businesses that deserve to be recognized for their excellence. When deliberating the diversity of entries received for consideration of Awards of Excellence, judges focus on the critical factors driving excellence and constituting best practices in community economic development: effort made given the resources available, the impact on the community and/or the region, and the overall success. Focusing on these critical drivers of excellence has resulted in SouthGrow being able to showcase a range of best practices and leaders throughout the region.

Nominations are currently being sought in the categories of Investment/Business Attraction; Business Retention/Growth/Expansion; Collaboration/Partnership; and Innovation. **Self-nominations are encouraged.** All nominees will be listed on SouthGrow Regional Initiative's website. In addition to receiving a special "SouthGrow Award", the top two nominees in each category will be featured as SouthGrow's "Success Stories" and will be included on the website as well as in the investment attraction packages as part of SouthGrow's marketing campaign positioning the area as an excellent place to live and do business. Winners will be announced at the fourth annual "Celebration of Creating Opportunities ..." Awards Ceremony to take place on January 20, 2011. To see success stories showcasing excellence from previous years, go to <http://southgrow.com/about/southgrown-successes>.

Creating Opportunities...



SouthGrow Regional Initiative is a regional economic development alliance of 27 municipalities in south central Alberta.

In an effort to recognize success and reward the efforts made towards developing the regional economy, SouthGrow Regional Initiative would like to honour businesses/organizations/individuals/agencies/municipalities through the "Celebration of Creating Opportunities ..." event. This event will take place on January 20th, 2011 at the Lethbridge Lodge.

We invite nominations in each award category:
Excellence in Investment/Business Attraction
Excellence in Retention/Business Growth/Expansion
Excellence in Innovation
Excellence in Collaboration or Partnership

Nomination forms and criteria are available at www.southgrow.com

Deadline is November 22nd, 2010
Phone 403-394-0615
Email: info@southgrow.com

PAST CELEBRATION OF CREATING OPPORTUNITIES ... AWARD WINNERS COMMENT

"I couldn't get started on my own for a long time, but when I did, I started strategically. I've put more than half my effort into developing markets. I enjoy the marketing side of the business."

— Noby Sudo, Sudo Farms Ltd.

"We decided to create a health centre as opposed to a traditional merchandise-based Pharmacy. We can represent a real positive impact in the health and well being of our clients. I look forward to an expanded scope of practice in delivering primary care to my townfolk."

— Phil Mack, Owner, Picture Butte Pharmacy.

"Being a small organization in a small community, and to accomplish what we have is commendable. To have someone outside the community recognize this and nominate us for this award was outstanding."

— Dee Murray, Lomond Multi-Purpose Facility Committee

"How we decide to build today will impact our ability to sustain our communities in the future. We are committed to advancing innovative and energy efficient construction practices. It is our hope that research from the Living Home Project benefits all our local home builders."

— Braum Barber, Lethbridge College lead in the Living Home Project.

"The board and administration felt honored to be recognized. We value the partnerships we have with business and industry and believe that together building a sustainable and viable future is possible in rural Alberta."

— Cheryl Gilmore, Superintendent, Horizon School Division

"We were surprised to even be nominated, and honoured to have won the award. There were great nominees in the category. While it is still improving on a daily basis, I feel our website is one of the best in the industry."

— D.J. Woodward, General Manager, Frontier Western Shop, Claresholm

"We were thrilled to get the recognition on behalf of our municipalities. Many of our members would be unable to afford the type of service and advice we offer if they had to do it on their own."

— Lenze Kuiper, Director, Oldman River Regional Services Commission.

Leadership in Water for Economic Development

In the SouthGrow region, our quality of life is tied to healthy and sustainable water supplies for the environment, our communities and for our economic wellbeing. Fortunately, when it comes to ensuring safe, secure water management and maintenance, our region displays leadership.

There are changes coming to the way the Province of Alberta administers the surface and groundwater, including license allocation and transfer systems. As a regional economic development alliance, SouthGrow has dedicated its efforts and research to ensuring this region continues to be promoted as a region that has water available to support economic development and investment attraction.

Over the next few months, SouthGrow will be working with the Mayors and Reeves of South West Alberta to develop a strategy to share the factual picture of our region's current and anticipated future water capacity. Many Albertans perceive that there is not adequate water in our region to support additional economic development. With our elected officials help, we will communicate that SouthGrow has water for economic development and we are indeed "open for business". SouthGrow's strategy will also include partnering with water agencies and organizations to develop an external, tightly focused marketing campaign targeted at residents, businesses and industries.

Profiling Member Communities

Providing information about member communities is important in investment attraction. SouthGrow staff has been working with communities to develop Community Economic Development Profiles, including information that would be of importance to site selectors. These two-page profiles are now available on the SouthGrow website (www.southgrow.com). The profiles will be updated following municipal elections in October and then be included in investment attraction packages ensuring the quality and assets of member communities and the SouthGrow region are marketed, portraying the region as the place to live in, visit, do business in and invest in.

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FACTS

SouthGrow's Image Gallery has photos highlighting each of SouthGrow's 27 member communities, including wind farms, original mansions and inns, and main streets.

Lethbridge research is environmental and bioproduct nutrition, and systems. South and development details.

SouthGrow – Striving to Meet Member Needs

In the Summer issue of the newsletter, we informed you of our efforts to touch base with municipal representatives of each member community. We sought feedback on the progress SouthGrow Regional Initiative has made in the past and more importantly, on the issues, projects and opportunities we should be investigating and assessing as we progress. Here are some highlights of what member communities conveyed to us:

- The Annual Celebration of Creating Opportunities ... Awards is seen as valuable.
- There was widespread support for SouthGrow's projects for the upcoming year.
- SouthGrow is valuable to communities and enhances individual community economic development efforts.
- Member community economic development practitioners feel that SouthGrow's value is in its dedicated and knowledgeable staff, the value of the regional economic development alliance versus similar organizations, diversity of its membership, networking opportunities and economic development tools and training.
- Outreach to communities is seen as invaluable, with face-to-face contact being most appreciated.
- Communities wish to have SouthGrow "put them on the map" and increase external marketing. These and other highlights were presented to the Management Board on September 10th, with staff now developing specific action plans to ensure continuous improvement.

Southern Alberta Innovation Network in Technologies

Over the past year, SouthGrow has been spearheading the concept of SAINT, the Southern Alberta Innovation Network in Technologies. SouthGrow is proud to support Lethbridge College as it takes the lead and utilizes its considerable expertise to take SAINT from concept to the reality of a market-focused, industry driven innovation and commercialization network that includes technology development advisors and that is linked to the University of Lethbridge, business development centers and other innovation supports in the region. SouthGrow will continue to work closely with Lethbridge College and support it to ensure the region's innovation and commercialization needs are met.



www.southgrow.com

ge Research Centre's
focused in the areas of
tal health, bioproducts
cesses, food safety and
d sustainable production
thGrow's other research
opment strengths are
ed on the website.

SouthGrow is home to
many large plants thriving
due to a skilled workforce
and good proximity to
markets. SouthGrow's
website details the region's
main industries and key
industry players.

A combination of low taxes, skilled workforce,
well-established infrastructure, high
worker productivity and choice locations for
commercial and industrial sites makes the
SouthGrow region an excellent place to do
business. For more economic indicators and
statistics, go to the site selection section of
the website.

Productivity and Leadership Conference – March 3, 2011

SouthGrow Regional Initiative continues to play a role in helping business and industry in the region improve their productivity for bottom line results. In an effort to retain business and industry in our region, SouthGrow has been focused on making a direct impact in organizations through productivity improvement tactics, including training, tours, network sessions and service supports.

Continuing with this priority, SouthGrow is proud to announce that it is hosting a Productivity and Leadership Conference on Thursday March 3, 2011 at the Lethbridge Lodge and Convention Centre. Organized in partnership with Productivity Alberta, the one-day conference includes keynote speakers as well as concurrent sessions which showcase examples of productivity, leadership and innovation for bottom line results.

Keynote speakers will address:

- Achieving outstanding leaps in productivity and performance through effectively incorporating people into change initiatives.
- Key strategies and leadership ideas that have permitted some organizations to achieve breakthrough innovations and absolutely compelling levels of creativity.
- Turning change and tough times into opportunities.
- Building authentic, accountable organizational cultures that attract and retain great people.

Concurrent sessions will feature Alberta companies that have taken the productivity journey. Diverse organizations will discuss how they have used productivity improvement in more than just manufacturing settings in order to better service clients and the community at large; how lean principles have resulted in energy savings; and how refocusing to achieve continuous improvement resulted in improved bottom line results.

The conference fee is \$100 and includes breakfast, lunch and nutrition breaks, all key note speeches as well as attendance at the concurrent sessions. Space is limited so participants must pre-register in sessions. More information will be available on www.southgrow.com in November.

Productivity Networking Group Offers Ideas for Conference

One of SouthGrow Regional Initiative's goals is to facilitate a networking group in southern Alberta whereby business people can share challenges and solutions; provide input into learning opportunities offered by SouthGrow; and identify best practices in the region. A group of six business leaders have supported SouthGrow with its productivity initiatives and form the networking group currently, and most recently provided feedback that was instrumental in shaping the upcoming Productivity Conference on March 3, 2011. Sincere appreciation is extended to the following individuals for their wisdom and advice:

Brent Bosley, Lucerne Foods, A Division of Safeway Canada (Taber)

Larry Conley, Lucerne Foods, A Division of Safeway Canada (Lethbridge)

John Davies, Lethbridge Iron Works

Bill Halley, Ring Container (Canada) ULC

Jeff Heggie, Kodiak Mountain Stone

Craig Leonard, Kawneer Canada Ltd.

SouthGrow hopes to increase the size of this group. If you are interested in learning more about our productivity initiatives, please contact Shilpa Stocker at 403-330-7869 or at westwindsmanagement@shaw.ca.

SouthGrowN Productivity

SouthGrow will be coordinating and hosting a major Productivity Improvement Conference to be held in Lethbridge on March 3, 2011 in conjunction with Productivity Alberta. In addition to coordinating this major conference, SouthGrow will be developing and distributing a 12-page publication showcasing productivity champions within our region. As we did with SouthGrowN Savours and SouthGrowN Sustainability, this publication will be distributed throughout the region prior to the conference and then again to conference participants on March 3, 2011.

If you know of a productivity champion in your community that would be worthy of being showcased in this publication, please contact Shilpa Stocker at 403-330-7869 by phone or by e-mail at westwindsmanagement@shaw.ca with your recommendation. Specifically, SouthGrow is looking for business owners/leaders who have displayed efforts in making their business efficient and increased productivity or who support productivity improvement in their specific business or industry. Productivity champions can be in any sector/industry including health care, agriculture, food processing, manufacturing, energy, construction, fabrication, ICT, retail, service, etc. SouthGrow would like to showcase champions throughout the region and covering a cross-section of industries/sectors through interesting and thought-provoking articles. The publication, which will be a documentation of best practices, is an excellent opportunity for companies and individuals in your community to gain exposure and marketing.



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