

NEWS RELEASE

Wilfrid Laurier
University



Conference targets gap in agribusiness management programs

First international case conference focuses on critical need for teaching materials

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WATERLOO – Academics from around the world are coming to Toronto May 19 and 20 to attend the first international conference dealing with case studies in food and agribusiness management.

Organized by Wilfrid Laurier University and the International Association of Food and Agribusiness Management, and sponsored by Maple Leaf Foods, the educational conference gathers 25 experts from as far away as Brazil, New Zealand, Sweden and Zimbabwe to discuss case studies and develop an agenda for further case writing.

"There has been a real growth in MBA programs in agribusiness management, but there is a shortage of cases in the field," says Kenneth Harling, a professor with Laurier's School of Business and Economics and the conference co-ordinator. "The need for teaching materials is critical so response to the conference has been very positive."

Case studies are used extensively in business programs to present students with situations facing real managers. Students develop practical applications of theoretical knowledge by making and justifying managerial decisions and then explaining how to put them in place.

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"I use case studies in my teaching because they are the best way of showing students that answers in the business world are not black and white," says Dr. James Beierlein, a conference attendee from Pennsylvania State University.

Harling hopes the cases from the conference can be included in the Laurier Institute's case data bank. The Laurier Institute, the management consulting arm of Laurier's School of Business and Economics, distributes over 150 cases to institutions across Canada and the United States.

The conference is being held at the Carlton Place Hotel in Toronto. For more information contact the hotel front desk at (416) 675-1234 and ask for Kenneth Harling or the Maple Leaf Conference.