

# NEWS RELEASE

## Wilfrid Laurier University



### **Laurier hosts international workshop on sustainable food systems**

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WATERLOO — Students, scholars and practitioners from around the world are at Wilfrid Laurier University May 7, 8 and 9 to discuss the key challenges facing the way we theorize, frame and deliver food through sustainable food systems.

“This workshop is timely given the new food equation,” says Dr. Alison Blay-Palmer, committee chair and assistant professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies. “This new reality — that cheap food is a thing of the past — is the result of increased demand for ethanol, shifting demographics, weather-related crop failures and investment speculation.”

Canada’s recent lead role to assist the World Food Program as it tries to stabilize the global funding crisis for food-aid programs is one aspect that participants will explore as part of their dialogue about global-local synergies and tensions. Participants will also discuss the move in Canada to develop more healthful food and farming systems. Other topics include food and its connection to communities of caring, human health, local economic development, community wellbeing and environmental sustainability.

Blay-Palmer is organizing the event with help from a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, Laurier’s Office of Research Services, the Faculty of Arts and the office of Laurier’s vice-president: academic. Blay-Palmer has more than a decade of research experience related to sustainable food systems and recently published a book called *Food Fears: From Industrial to Sustainable Food Systems*.