

Development of a Rural Agricultural Innovation Network Pilot in the Algoma District

TERMS OF REFERENCE

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Ontario Soil
and Crop
Improvement
Association



Ontario Federation of Agriculture



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Funded by:

Sault Ste Marie Innovation Centre
The Community Development Corporation of Sault Ste Marie & Area
The East Algoma Community Futures Development Corporation
Innovation Initiatives Ontario North
The NORDIK Institute at Algoma University
Algoma Soil and Crop Improvement Association
Algoma Federation of Agriculture

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1.0 Introduction

Northern Ontario is positioning itself to become a knowledge-based economy, building on its traditional strengths and expanding in areas of innovation and collaboration. In agriculture and related disciplines, this means expanded local and niche market opportunities as well as potential for research and innovation in existing practices and bio-products, new technologies, value-added products and services and sustainable resource management practices. The Algoma region in particular stands to benefit from a number of broad trends that are driving domestic and global demand for its products and services such as eco-awareness, health and wellness and advances in research and technology.

Northern agriculture is extremely important to Ontario and especially to the health, economic viability and diversity of its Northern communities. As some of Ontario's best agricultural lands are being reduced as they are converted to other uses¹, the significance of Northern agriculture to Ontario as a whole may soon be more recognized. However, the agricultural community of the North often lacks the resources to be fully effective in many cases in identifying and pursuing projects and research that would support the growth and sustainability of the industry.

To reach its full potential, Northern Ontario requires increased agricultural research, education and training that focuses on crops and agricultural practices tailored to the region's soils and climate. Support is needed to encourage early adoption of innovative technologies and practices, improvements to storage and processing facilities as well as new marketing approaches to increase availability of local agri-based products in Northern communities.

A new model is required that meets the need to communicate current and future activities of the industry and that builds on a requirement for collaboration and capacity building focused on the agri-innovation potential of Northern Ontario. There is a growing sentiment among agricultural stakeholders that Northern Ontario requires a comprehensive made in the north strategy and dedicated funding programs in order to be able to compete on an equal footing with other regions in the province or the Country.

The Northern Growth Plan

The Province is developing a growth plan for Northern Ontario as an effort to capitalize on existing innovations, its strong, diverse communities and unparalleled natural resources². With great strengths and advantages in its people and natural environment, Northern Ontario is positioning itself as a key player in the future of Canada's economy. However key sectors of the northern economy including forestry and agriculture face significant industry transformation and

¹ Planscape. Executive Summary Profile of Agricultural Attributes in the GTA. Bracebridge: March 2010. Online: <http://www.planscape.ca/agriculture.html>

² Government of Ontario. Ministries of Energy and Infrastructure, Northern Development, Mines and Forestry. Proposed Growth Plan for Northern Ontario. October 2009. Online: https://www.placestogrow.ca/images/pdfs/Northern_Proposed_Growth_Plan.pdf



as a result, partners will need to be more collaborative and apply resources in a more innovative way.

The focus of this Growth Plan is to attract and sustain development, in order to create opportunities that will enable people of all ages to live, work, and raise families in the north. A number of public consultations have taken place in Northern Ontario centres to gain insight in a number of strategic areas of critical importance to the north; included is the need for improving Northern Ontario's agricultural and rural sector.

From discussions at these consultations and from other agricultural interests in Northern Ontario, a conceptual framework has been developed by the Sault Ste Marie Innovation Centre to address some of the northern agricultural challenges. A new model has been proposed to take shape through the establishment of Rural Agriculture Innovation Networks (RAINs) across Northern Ontario. A pilot in Algoma is being designed to assess of the feasibility of the concept and its ability to act as an economic platform for the further development of the agriculture sector of Algoma and for replication in other agriculture jurisdictions in Northern Ontario. The Innovation Centre and its partners are supporting the RAIN concept as a delivery model for the agriculture sector component of the Northern Growth Plan.

The RAIN conceptual framework supports the need for Northern Ontario agricultural and related rural innovation to be recognized for its potential and the North as an emerging player in the industry. Northern Ontario agriculture is not considered to be a big contributor to the province's agricultural output, but nevertheless, northern agriculture is extremely important to Northern Ontario and to the health and viability of its local communities as people look to source foods and fibres closer to home³.

2.0 Purpose of the Pilot

The Sault Ste Marie Innovation Center (SSMIC) has been working with a number of community partners on the conceptualization and development of a collaborative model for the delivery of projects and services that would be most beneficial to agricultural and agri-forestry related organizations, individuals and private sector partners. The SSMIC and partners have identified what they believe is a potentially excellent and timely opportunity to move this agenda forward through the establishment of Rural Agricultural Innovation Networks (RAINs) across Northern Ontario. The concern is that the rural sector of Northern Ontario has significant potential to expand but it will require better coordination of effort and access to capital infrastructure and services to relevant organizations whose volunteer base no longer have sufficient time to donate. The establishment of a RAIN model that is fiscally sustainable serves to address this issue.

³ Harry Cummings and Associates. [Algoma-Manitoulin Agricultural Economic Sector Profile](#). Guelph: December 2009.



RAIN's are a proposed implementation tool for the Province's Northern Growth plan which intends to position the northern economy for success by encouraging collaboration between governments, industry, communities, and Aboriginal communities alike. With its emphasis on employment growth and industry sustainability, the Algoma RAIN will meet this goal and respond to several development priorities at both the provincial and municipal levels:

- Assist in increasing farm production, freshwater aquaculture and value-added processing in Northern Ontario to respond to markets through support for initiatives for new farmers, export strategies for niche products and more flexible capital support.
- Increase participation of northern operations in business support programs.
- Assist in creating district agricultural development plans identifying land improvement needs, regional storage and processing infrastructure, new markets, and research and training priorities with intergovernmental funding to support implementation.
- Collaborate with governments, communities and industry to increase access to competitive technologies and infrastructure.
- Increase local markets through buy-local initiatives and public procurement.
- Work with industry and the federal and provincial governments to expand agriculture, agri-forestry and aquaculture research in the North tailored to the region's environment and climate.
- Strengthen research, education and industry networks to speed adoption of innovative science and technology.

The RAIN model will support a comprehensive and coordinated approach combining collective agricultural resources and expertise of numerous organizations spanning several sectors and will be transferable for implementation in other regions across Northern Ontario. It will also provide an opportunity to reduce the financial burden of existing organizations and partnerships which are increasingly constrained due to the time demands on their mostly volunteer members.

This Terms of Reference has been prepared to guide the development of a 3-year Algoma RAIN pilot project in support of a community of local stakeholders who recognize the unique economic opportunity in Algoma to build on existing strengths in the region's agriculture and agribusiness sectors. It is also intended to serve as a framework for the establishment of future RAINs in other jurisdictions in Northern Ontario. These RAINs would be designed to meet the specific requirements of the districts in which they are located, however would potentially be based on the model created through the Algoma pilot. The Algoma RAIN pilot project's purpose is to create investment and jobs, attract and develop talent, accelerate commercialization of research discoveries and foster economic development for Algoma in the agriculture sector. The Algoma RAIN's success will be measured by its ability to align research, projects, investments and opportunities with the commercial interests of the local people it serves.



3.0 Project Context

Industry Overview: Algoma

According to the industry report undertaken by Harry Cummings in Associates (2009)⁴, the following points provide an overview of the agriculture industry for the region:

- The Algoma region reported just over 95,000 acres of farmland from 335 farms in 2006.
 - The average farm size in the Algoma region is 286 acres but there is considerable variation in farm sizes across the region.
- Off the farm jobs 35% in 1995 vs 52% in 2005 to increase income;
- Major farm production activities in the region include beef production, hay production, dairy production, greenhouse, nursery and floriculture production, as well as a range of other animal production activities including sheep, goats, and horses and maple syrup processing.
- Climate and soil conditions allow for the production of a variety of fruit, vegetable and field crops including apples, blueberries, strawberries, root vegetables, tomatoes, cucumbers, broccoli, barley, wheat, oats, corn, mixed grains, soybeans, canola and hay crops.
 - Approximately 38,000 acres or 40% of the total reported farm base in the Algoma region was used for crop production in 2006.
- The region is diversifying: specialty crops such as hemp and flax are being harvested with success as well as specialty livestock including alpaca, bison, as different breeds of horses and cattle have been introduced.
- Algoma accounts for 84% of the total maple taps on trees in Northern Ontario
- Several of the farms recently sold in Algoma were purchased by Mennonite and Amish families who plan to extend their community, bringing new life and youth to farming in this portion of Northern Ontario.
- The total economic impact of agriculture in the Algoma - Manitoulin region amounts to between \$72 million and \$80 million in sales (direct and indirect) and between 2,200 and 2,325 jobs (direct, indirect and induced).
- Agri-tourism, farmers' markets, and local food initiatives increasing.
- Amount of volunteer time has reduced significantly.

Barriers Facing Northern Agriculture

Based on recent stakeholder consultation, it has been determined that the agricultural community in the north, including those currently undertaking research and development, need to improve their ability to undertake short and longer term research, perform crop trials and demonstrations, develop local and external markets, innovate and transfer technology, network

⁴ Harry Cummings and Associates. [Algoma-Manitoulin Agricultural Economic Sector Profile](#). Guelph: December 2009.



and communicate best practices, and leverage resources necessary to make improvements to existing and much needed infrastructure. The following describes in greater detail some of these barriers facing Northern agriculture.

Economic and Market Barriers: Northern Ontario's economy has recently been devastated by the economic downturn and closure of forest and related industries. Funding programs most often require matching funds from private sector partners to be considered eligible. Such industrial support is virtually impossible under the current economic circumstances. As well, the employment profile of the agriculture sector is undergoing a transformation as farmers increasingly work more hours off the farm to supplement their farm income. Between 1995 and 2005, the proportion of Algoma - Manitoulin region farmers working off the farm increased from 35% to 52%⁵. Producers often link the need for a second income to a combination of factors including stagnant or shrinking commodity prices and rising production costs.

Diminishing Volunteer Base: The increase in off-farm work limits the amount of time that farm leaders are able to volunteer for organizations and activities that have traditionally helped to promote agriculture in the region. Consideration must be given to supporting agricultural support organizations and their efforts to diversify and respond to the needs of a changing agricultural sector and in attracting other investment in support of local agriculture.

Limited Aboriginal Participation: Aboriginal people in Algoma have had limited involvement in the establishment of new economies based on agriculture. Stakeholder consultations have determined that in some cases infrastructure, equipment as well as land is available to First Nations Band Members for agriculture. However there is a lack of organizational and business capacity as well as industry leaders in the community to assist in pursuing these opportunities. This challenge is shared not only by Algoma but by other Aboriginal communities in Canada. The general issues and concerns raised by Aboriginal people in Canada about participation in agriculture are on awareness of programs and services, a lack of community involvement in the industry, a lack of Aboriginal organizations in Agriculture, limited support services specific to Aboriginal people, and encouraging youth to get involved in agriculture⁶. These challenges must be addressed in order for these communities to have full participation in the agriculture industry and early engagement of Aboriginal stakeholders will be integral in building this capacity.

Limited Research Capacity: Northern Ontario represents a significant portion of the province's landmass and we possess a diversity of soil profiles, geography, weather and other factors which need to be considered in agricultural and agri-forestry production. Agriculture has become a very diverse industry in the Algoma Region. Efforts to improve growing conditions through tile drainage and agriculture liming have the potential to bring more land into

⁵ Harry Cummings and Associates. Algoma-Manitoulin Agricultural Economic Sector Profile. Guelph: December 2009.

⁶ Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Next Generation of Agriculture and Agri-Food Policy: Report on Aboriginal Discussion Workshops – National Report. March 2007. Online: http://www4.agr.gc.ca/resources/prod/doc/pol/consult/pdf/aboriginal_sessions_e.pdf



production and increase overall productivity. Interest in new ideas including new crops, new farm animals, non-timber forest products, aquaculture and agri-tourism, have expanded a number of opportunities for the region. Yet, the consensus of local stakeholders is that there is insufficient research in Northern Ontario in support of agricultural producers and value added innovation. Existing research locations are limited in their capacity to deliver full requirements of the agricultural sector in the Algoma-Manitoulin area. There is concrete evidence that the research efforts of Southern Ontario are yielding results in the variety of new crops being planted and increases in other aspects of agricultural production; this research needs to be replicated within the economic conditions and climate of all Northern Ontario's geographic regions.

Related is the concern that farmers, particularly in the Mennonite and Amish communities, lack the information and consequently the capacity for on-farm pest and disease identification and management. Algoma would benefit greatly from greater access to expertise, workshops and training that would result in increased number of integrated pest management systems in Algoma, greater communication between producers/suppliers of pests and diseases threatening the area, and increased protection against pests and disease resulting in fewer losses to yields.

Infrastructure Needs: Infrastructure in support of northern rural innovation is also inadequate. Grain and oilseed storage, processing facilities, abattoirs and other infrastructure which is taken for granted elsewhere, are simply non-existent in many northern communities. According to a report produced by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (1999)⁷, long term growth and sustainability of agriculture in the North can only occur if the majority of individual farm businesses participate in production facility expansion and land improvement projects. In order for the industry to remain competitive there must be direct investments in infrastructure within individual businesses. Northern growers pay increased transportation costs to get their crops to market, placing them at a marketing disadvantage. Agricultural stakeholders from the region have indicated that more grain crops could be grown in the area with the establishment of support infrastructure such as storage and drying but lack the fiscal resources to risk building the facilities on their own. An improved processing infrastructure is required in order to add value to more crops and livestock. In addition farmers markets in the area have emphasized that investments in grading equipment and cold storage would enable increased production and improve access to year round sales of some products.

The establishment of a grain elevator in Verner, ON is an excellent example of the benefits seen from adding storage capacity for the agriculture community which includes a tremendous boom in the production of cash crops and addition of jobs to the area. After only a few years in operation, the Verner facility is already looking to expand as the production capacity and product demand continues to increase. The same results can be expected for Algoma should these facilities be made available. Land improvement and infrastructure expansion needs to be

⁷ Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. NOHFC and Agriculture. 2009.



developed and expanded in order for Algoma to experience long-term growth and sustainability of its agriculture industry.

Opportunities for the North

Despite the identified barriers facing the North, it is also important to emphasize that there are opportunities for agriculture producers and suppliers in Algoma. Algoma continues to have competitive advantages and economic opportunities including a substantial farmland base that supports the growth of a variety of crops; lower land prices relative to land prices in southern Ontario, its isolation from the threat of contaminants from industrial farms⁸; growing interest in value-added processing, non-timber forest products; capitalizing on niche opportunities; development of cooperative structures; growing consumer support for 'buy local' initiatives; interest in local renewable fuels production; and a growing participation from Aboriginal and First Nations communities in the industry.

Based on projections from climate change models, the growing season in the region is also expected to gradually increase over the next 100 years which will result in further crop production opportunities for the region⁹. Further production increases can also be realized through investments in infrastructure and land improvement such as storage, processing, tiling and liming and the protection of pockets of agricultural land.

The agri-related business community also plays an important role in supporting the future of agriculture in the region as they represent a variety of industry sectors including retail and wholesale trade, manufacturing, construction, transportation, restaurant and business services. Through their relationships with the farm sector they have created an important support infrastructure and in turn, generate substantial economic benefits for the region¹⁰.

While participation is currently limited for Algoma's Aboriginal population, Aboriginal people are also an important element in the future of Algoma agriculture. In Algoma-Manitoulin, the Aboriginal population increased from 28,105 to 49,265 or 75% between 1996 and 2006. The Aboriginal population currently represents about 11% of the total population in Algoma District¹¹. According to a report released by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada¹², Aboriginal people are emerging as potential key players in the industry. The reasons stated are:

- A growing population with the largest segment of youth;
- Aboriginal people are seeking new opportunities for agricultural employment, training and businesses for their youth;

⁸ Harry Cummings and Associates. Algoma-Manitoulin Agricultural Economic Sector Profile. Guelph: December 2009.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Next Generation of Agriculture and Agri-Food Policy: Report on Aboriginal Discussion Workshops – National Report. March 2007. Online: http://www4.agr.gc.ca/resources/prod/doc/pol/consult/pdf/aboriginal_sessions_e.pdf



- First Nations are becoming more and more influential in their traditional territories, and are seeking significant business partnerships for their communities;
- The representation of Aboriginal people off-reserve and in rural communities is increasing; and
- Reviewing and modernization of Treaties and recognition of Aboriginal rights and title increase the influence of First Nations over lands and resources.

Aboriginal participation in agriculture is more visible in the southern areas of Canada; however opportunities exist in Northern Ontario for their participation. Each province tends to have a product that is unique to its location and to the traditions and culture of the people - Quebec is maple syrup, Saskatchewan and Manitoba is wild rice, BC is wine, orchards and organic, NWT/Nunavut is musk-ox and caribou¹³ and as such we can expect that with the right support, Algoma's Aboriginal people can bring a similar flair and diversification to agriculture in the region. As agriculture and related industries come to realize that Aboriginal people are an untapped market, the demand for Aboriginal engagement will increase the need for a RAIN to provide support and identify incentives for this demographic to enter agriculture.

As well, there is growing local support and acknowledgement for the need for greater networking between producers and community organizations that are working to promote local food production and consumption.

4.0 About the Partners

The development of this Terms of Reference was directed by a Steering Committee with support from representatives of the Sault Ste Marie Innovation Centre (SSMIC), the Community Development Corporations of Sault Ste Marie, and East Algoma, Innovation Initiatives Ontario North (IION), the NORDIK Institute at Algoma University, the Algoma Soil and Crop Improvement Association and the Algoma Federation of Agriculture. The activities of the RAIN are intended to add value to the organizations that form the network.

Sault Ste Marie Innovation Centre

The Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre (SSMIC) was established in 1999 as a catalyst for growth in the Information Technology (IT) and knowledge-based sectors. In 2009, they integrated with science enterprise Algoma (seA) and Upper Lakes Environmental Research Network (ULERN) to combine resources and accomplish their mutual goals of enhanced innovation capacity for both the IT and science sectors. The Innovation Centre works closely with community partners to enhance and improve science and IT sector opportunities. By focusing on this critical economic growth engine, the SSMIC plays an important role in the future growth and prosperity of Sault Ste. Marie and the Algoma District.

¹³ Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. Next Generation of Agriculture and Agri-Food Policy: Report on Aboriginal Discussion Workshops – National Report. March 2007. Online: http://www4.agr.gc.ca/resources/prod/doc/pol/consult/pdf/aboriginal_sessions_e.pdf



The NORDIK Institute (Algoma University)

NORDIK promotes more vibrant, caring, and sustainable communities through research, dialogue, analysis, and reflection dedicated to the practice of holistic community development. NORDIK works with communities (First Nations or Municipalities), community organizations, non-profits, and businesses to build their capacity. Capacity building is done through research projects that cycle through a process of planning, implementation, and evaluation. This type of research methodology encourages community engagement and mobilization, and civic participation, i.e., the participation of people at the grass-roots level in developing policy which is responsive to their needs. NORDIK will act as the RAIN's primary research partner for the duration of the pilot project and subsequent years of operation. NORDIK has a long history and is well-accepted for its valid research methodology, particularly in the fields of community development and organizational change.

Community Development Corporation of Sault Ste Marie & Area

The Community Development Corporation of Sault Ste. Marie & Area (CDC) is a community-based, non-profit organization governed by a local volunteer board of directors. The CDC is a FedNor/Industry Canada funded Community Futures Development Corporation, which was established in Sault Ste. Marie in 1986. The organization is dedicated to helping small and medium-sized businesses access services and capital, as well as enhancing the community's economic and employment base through community-based planning and economic development initiatives.

East Algoma Community Futures Development Corporation

The East Algoma Community Futures Development Corporation (EACFDC) is a federally supported not-for-profit Community Futures Development Corporation. Governed by a Board of local volunteers, EACFDC supports community economic development by assisting East Algoma communities and entrepreneurs to strengthen and diversify the local economy.

Innovation Initiatives Ontario North

Innovation Initiatives Ontario North was incorporated as a non-profit in 2007 with the primary goal of diversifying the Northern Ontario economy. This objective is met through the facilitation of partnerships between industry and educational institutions as well as between industries whose synergies may not have been as apparent in the past; for example, the lumber and chemical industries. The vision of IION is to firmly establish itself as the regional 'go-to' address for innovation and commercialization at the public-private sector interface, particularly but not entirely exclusively in the areas of Bioscience and Medicine as well as Bioproducts from renewable and sustainable sources. IION is an expert driven organization that places a strong



emphasis on both transformational and convergent technologies as tools to promote economic diversification and higher level job creation.

Algoma Soil and Crop Improvement Association

The Algoma Soil and Crop Improvement Association is the local branch representing Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association. The ASCIA helps to facilitate responsible economic management of soil, water, air and crops through development and communication of innovative farming practices in Algoma.

Algoma Federation of Agriculture

The Algoma Federation of Agriculture is the local representative organization for the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. AFA is a dynamic farmer-led organization working to represent and champion the interests of Ontario farmers. AFA is a leader in results-based advocacy and is Ontario's voice of agriculture. The AFA works collaboratively towards a profitable, sustainable future for Ontario farmers.

Other Stakeholders

As part of the pilot's development, a large and wide ranging group of stakeholders has been consulted through a number of different mechanisms including interviews, a survey, and group consultations with members of the abovementioned organizations and other core stakeholders. This input has been critical to establishing the scope of the pilot and informing the analysis and actions. A summary of the partners' dialogue on related issues is included as Schedule 3 to this TOR document; the Algoma RAIN pilot will include strategies to address and consider the matters raised therein in addition to the requirements listed in Section 7.0.

5.0 Objectives of the Pilot Project

The objective of the Algoma RAIN is to become a convergence point for Algoma's agriculture community by supporting collaboration, creating linkages, and promoting the importance and achievements of Northern Ontario agriculture. By developing an Algoma RAIN, the SSMIC and local community partners recognize that they can play an important role in strategically supporting agricultural capacity in Northern Ontario, which in turn, supports the region's broader commitments to economic diversification and sustainability.

Guiding the strategy to success are the following vision and mission statements:



Vision

To connect Algoma's agriculture community with timely information and support in order to improve opportunities for maximizing the value of rural based crops, commodities, value-added products and services, and the achievements of Northern Ontario agriculture.

Mission

The Algoma RAIN is dedicated to the needs of agricultural organizations, producers, suppliers and agri-entrepreneurs in Northern Ontario. Its primary focus is to enhance the industry by providing a collaborative and facilitative network for stakeholders that allows them to enhance their capabilities, diversify their productive output and successfully build their capacity to grow as organizations and individual business owners.

Guiding Principles

Delivering this vision and mission will involve the combined effort of governments and diverse partners across the Algoma district, and will be focused on the following guiding principles:

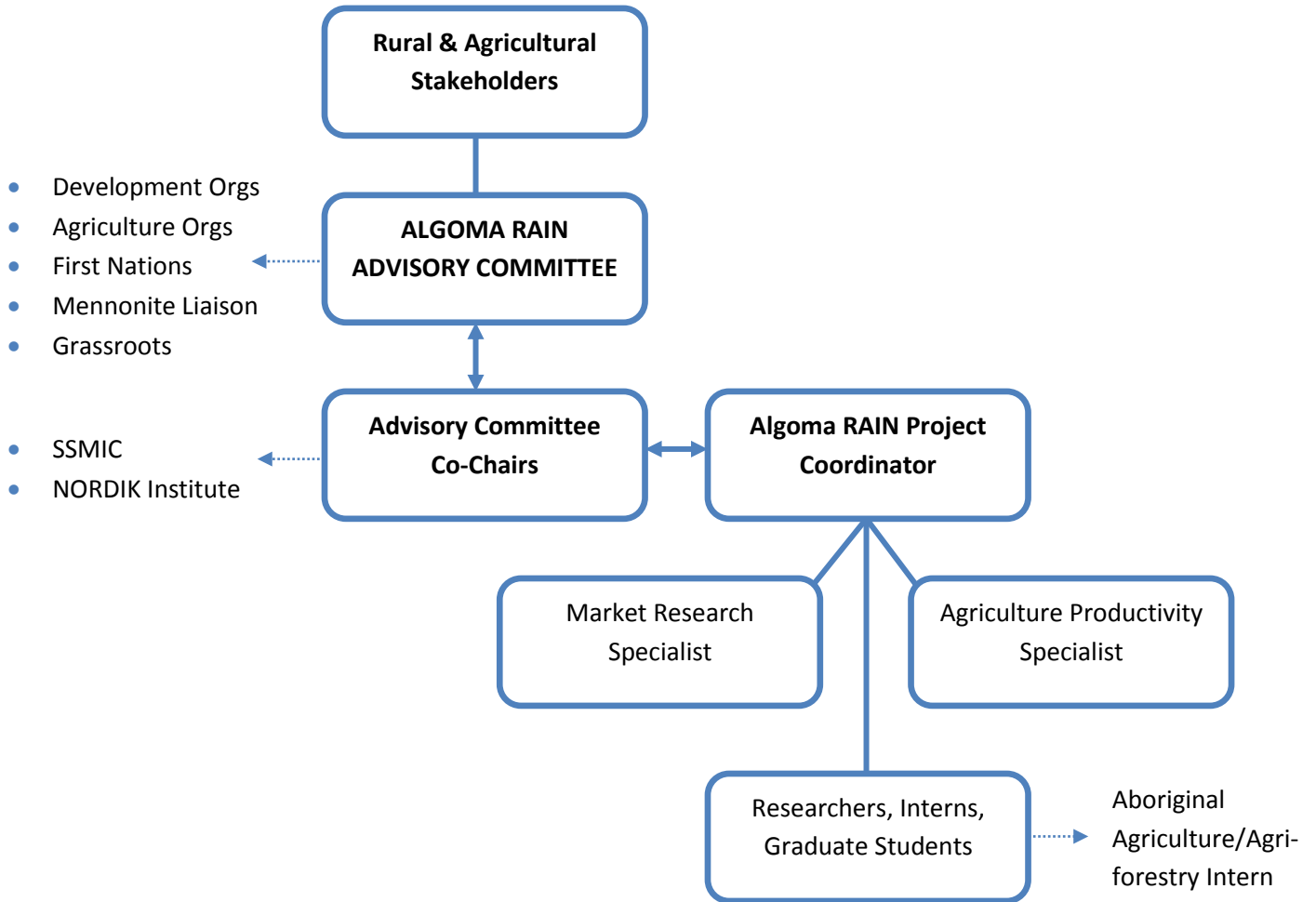
- To deliver activities that will achieve sustainable change within and between agriculture-based organizations and businesses in Northern Ontario;
- To create a convergence point where researchers, innovators, growers, businesses and other stakeholders can meet and/or work in close proximity with each other, share knowledge and excellence, and foster success in an open and collaborative environment;
- To undertake activities that require collaboration and participation across a wide range of stakeholders and organizations in order to better network to advocate for Northern Ontario agricultural research and infrastructure improvements;
- To facilitate business development opportunities that will attract private sector partner organizations, foster innovation, productivity and competitive advantages in the regional and global economies;
- To demonstrate a commitment to implementing best practice and evidence-based research by seeking input from consumers, producer associations, agri-business and governments;
- To partner with Aboriginal communities to share information, best practices and build internal capacity to support community-led projects and the creation of a highly educated and skilled workforce;
- To respect the culture and traditions of Aboriginal people and their communities;



- To undertake regular performance monitoring and quality improvement activities within the network to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of network operations.

6.0 Project Organization

The project will be overseen through a project management structure consisting of a volunteer Advisory Committee, two project Co-Chairs, RAIN Project Coordinator and support staff.



The Algoma RAIN Advisory Committee will provide leadership to and advocacy support for the pilot and the Algoma RAIN Project Coordinator, and will consist of volunteer representatives from (but not limited to):

- The Sault Ste Marie Innovation Center (SSMIC)
- NORDIK Institute (Algoma University)
- Innovation Initiatives Ontario North (IION)
- The Algoma Soil and Crop Improvement Association



- The Algoma Federation of Agriculture
- Representatives of area First Nations and other Aboriginal Organizations
- Grassroots representation from Algoma's agriculture community
- An observer from the Algoma Mennonite Community (to act as a point of contact and liaison)

The Advisory Committee will also encourage and invite the participation and contribution of appropriate resource people from the regional Community and Economic Development corporations, Ministries of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Northern Development, Mines and Forestry, Aboriginal Affairs and other related organizations.

Accountabilities of the Advisory Committee are:

- To represent the interests and concerns of their respective organization(s) and commodity sectors, and to identify RAIN priorities.
- To advocate for and generally raise awareness and support for the concept and 3-year pilot, its associated objectives and deliverables in their respective organizations/sectors.
- To arrange for and provide the necessary resources (where applicable), required to support implementation and completion of the pilot.
- To address and resolve issues or conflicts which arise under this pilot and to monitor and help ensure successful and beneficial project results.
- To participate in a job recruitment process for hiring the Algoma RAIN Coordinator.
- To provide support to the Project Facilitator/Mentor and Coordinator, including facilitating access to information and contacts within their respective organizations/sectors.

The Project Co-Chairs will be recruited one each from SSMIC and NORDIK, and will be assigned to the project on a part-time basis.

Accountabilities of the Co-Chairs are:

- To act as an advisor, mentor, facilitator and interface between the Advisory Committee and the Coordinator;
- To develop a job description and initiate the process of recruiting a Coordinator;
- To provide logistical support to the Coordinator;
- To keep the Advisory Committee and other stakeholders who are engaged as part of the project, aware of and informed of related activities, events, and outputs
- To report to the Advisory Committee on the status of milestones and deliverables achieved.

The Algoma RAIN Project Coordinator will undertake activities in accordance with the scope of work and objectives outlined in this Terms of Reference.

Generally, the accountabilities of the Coordinator are (but not limited to):



- To support and build awareness and capacity within the project organization and among related stakeholders on the subject matter of the project;
- To work within the project organization to hire adequate project staff, interns and researchers (where appropriate);
- To carry out primary research as required including identification, collection and review of data and information, and stakeholder consultation;
- To work within the project organization to analyze research and project opportunities and develop recommendations;
- To carryout stakeholder and community education and engagement sessions;
- To prepare and deliver reports and presentations on project activities and outcomes;
- To report to the Co-Chairs on project progress and to the Advisory Committee on specific outcomes as necessary.

The Coordinator will ultimately report to the Advisory Committee through scheduled meetings; day to day liaison with the Committee will be provided by the Co-Chairs with the Coordinator reporting directly to the Co-Chairs on specific project deliverables. It is envisioned that the person assigned for this purpose will subsequently be directly involved in full implementation at a future date.

The Support Staff will provide project support and assistance where directed by the RAIN Coordinator. It is envisioned that support staff will consist of a Market Research Specialist, Agriculture Productivity Specialist as well as rotating intern and research assistant positions. A position is also proposed for an Aboriginal Agriculture/Agri-Forestry Intern which will ideally be filled through a competitive process by an Aboriginal youth from one of the local First Nation communities.

The accountabilities of the support staff will be (but are not limited) to:

- Assist the Coordinator in successfully meeting the deliverables of specific projects as well as the overall goals of the RAIN pilot;
 - The Agriculture Productivity Specialist will concentrate in working with the Coordinator to define a research program for the RAIN pilot project and to carry out the necessary research in support of programs identified through the structure specifically as they relate to the activities of the RAIN Crop/Grower Trial Facility;
 - Research assistants will be made available as needed to assist in data collection and analysis.
 - The Market Research Specialist will focus on developing and encouraging markets for local products as well as the development of a sustainable funding model for the Algoma RAIN and will assist the Coordinator in creating a research program and structure for the RAIN pilot project;
 - Intern positions will be created to assist the Marketing Research Specialist in carrying out these activities.



- The Aboriginal Agriculture/Agri-Forestry Intern will specialize in engaging local First Nation communities in RAIN activities and also working with these communities in identifying specific projects that will enhance Aboriginal participation in agriculture through feasibility studies, workshops, training, and pilot projects among other initiatives;
 - To support and build awareness within the project organization and among related stakeholders on the subject matter of the pilot project;
 - Assist with other aspects of the RAIN pilot project as necessary.

It is also expected that some of the support staff involved during the RAIN pilot phase will subsequently be involved in full implementation at a future date.

The Sault Ste Marie Innovation Center and NORDIK Institute have partnered together to oversee the administration of the pilot project. SSMIC will act as the sponsor and contracting entity for purposes of any agreements related to the Algoma RAIN pilot project, and for purposes of receiving and disbursing any related costs. Project coordination and governance for the RAIN pilot project will be within SSMIC and NORDIK for its 3-year duration. After the pilot period and once the concept is proven viable, the RAIN will proceed with a more formal incorporation process and/or formal relationship with an incorporated agricultural organization.

7.0 RAIN Activities

Overall Approach

The overall approach of the Algoma RAIN is to work closely with producers, suppliers, entrepreneurs, Aboriginal and agricultural organizations in their search for and execution of innovative solutions to the region-specific issues facing the industry. This approach is important and critical to the long-term sustainability of agricultural producers and the viability of rural communities in the Algoma region and Northern Ontario. The goal is to surround stakeholders with all the resources they need to succeed by using the Algoma RAIN as a platform for collaboration that breeds economic development in the agriculture sector.

General Activities

This section sets out the activities needed to fulfil the RAIN objectives discussed above. The extent and duration of these activities is largely a function of the direction received from the Advisory Committee as representatives of the agricultural community, as well as the financial resources leveraged through the partners, and the private and public sectors. It must be emphasized however, that the Algoma RAIN's establishment is intended to act as an enabler of collaboration and as such the RAIN will focus on activities that support and add value to already existing programs and services offered in the Algoma region in an effort to avoid duplication of past and ongoing efforts.



The Algoma RAIN's general activities can be grouped into five main categories: Research and Development, Business Development, Networking Assistance, Public Outreach and Communications, and Resource and Data Collection. Some proposed activities overlap categories, others do not. However, many separate activities are needed to fulfil the objectives of the Pilot Project. (At this point the listed activities have not been prioritized). Again, it must be emphasized that the resources allocated to the projects in each of the RAIN activity categories is very dependent on the trends of the industry and the needs identified by the agriculture community each year.

a. Research and Development. General activities include:

- Researching new crops, livestock diversification, and value-added opportunities that are driven by the Northern environment, economy and market;
- Facilitating crop trials and other studies specific to the conditions of Northern Ontario, analyzing and reporting findings:
 - Examples include cold-climate resilient oilseed and cereal varieties, grasses and legumes, fruit crops, cultivation of non-timber forest products such as saskatoons and blueberries, experimenting with fertilizer regimes and grazing techniques, identification of commodities with nutraceutical properties, alternate applications for processing by-products such as oilseed meal (among others);
- Seeking research and extension service capabilities with the University of Guelph, enabling the establishment of long term trial locations and field testing facilities with results specific to Algoma and other Northern Districts;
- Identifying and implementing potential product development and technology transfer pilot projects:
 - Pilot projects involving local stakeholders partnered with researchers, educators and the private sector such as oilseed processing and biofuel/by-product uses on-farm, introduction of goat (through partnership with NORDIK) and other specialty livestock for meat and cheese production,
- Rural surveys and research to determine identified challenges and concerns that over time provide insight about the trends and changes occurring in rural Algoma;
- Assistance with organizing survey projects on behalf of stakeholders;
- Intellectual property management for First Nations partners:
 - Providing linkages to information on a variety of means for protecting information - patents, trademarks, copyright, etc. and information on cost effective means to provide protection for traditional knowledge.



- b. Business Development. General activities include:
- Providing growers and related businesses with assistance with:
 - Market analysis and development;
 - Business plan preparation;
 - Development of marketing materials to increase market share, potential sales, and exposure to consumers in Algoma and elsewhere;
 - Client and/or industry specific needs assessments and project implementation plans;
 - Regulatory and approvals processes;
 - Identifying and applying for funding sources for projects such as pilots, business expansion, product diversification and capital investments;
 - Web site development and hosting for new, existing and expanding businesses or product;
 - Organizing rural entrepreneurial training programs (with a strong focus on Aboriginal people) hosted by local communities, organizations and associations on business start-ups, financing your business, adding value to the business, bookkeeping, developing entrepreneurial skills among others;
 - Providing access to office space and related services as required.
- c. Networking Assistance. General activities include:
- Help to create and sponsor activities and events targeted to rural organizations' members, the private and public sector and general public including attracting new participants (youth), customers and investors into the industry;
 - Provide information about existing membership opportunities for local agriculture organizations, upcoming conferences, training and education and assist in registration in these events;
 - Help to coordinate conferences, training & education for local organizations by handling both registration related calls and informational calls regarding the course/conference on behalf of the organization;
 - Developing a network of idea exchange;
 - Developing stronger relationships with provincial research organizations and universities (i.e. Vineland Research and Innovation Center and the Guelph Agri-Innovation Cluster) in the form of formal agreements and MOUs;
 - Assisting with the integration and penetration into southern Ontario markets especially for niche and value added products (i.e. Maple syrup, non-timber forest products, specialty meats and fibre);



d. Public Outreach and Communications. General activities include:

- Actively support and communicate the needs of growers, organizations and related businesses to the public, government agencies, private sector, education and research sectors;
- Assist other network participants with the development and distribution of press and news releases;
- Develop on-line and printed updates for RAIN activities and other important information;
- Develop youth attraction and retention initiatives;
- Public education on local businesses and organizations (new and existing), including updates on products and services, mandates and objectives, ongoing and past projects, activities, and initiatives;

e. Resource and Data Collection. General activities include:

- Build and maintain electronic and hard copy databases and files for members;
- Create a library of electronic and hardcopy information for individuals and organizations to access information regarding:
 - Agriculture organization publications and newsletters;
 - Business Start-up Assistance;
 - Research publications on a variety of topics and commodities including oilseeds, cereal crops, grasses, legumes, vegetables, fruit growers, value-added products and processing, livestock diversification, introducing specialty livestock, fibre processing, dairy and cheese production using specialty sources (i.e. goat), crop rotation practices, grazing techniques, land improvement such as tillage and drainage;
 - Information on the regulatory environment including changes in food safety, abattoir and other processing practices, new farm legislation;
 - Herb, pest and disease identification and management;
 - Sources for industry equipment and supplies;
 - Opportunity Assessment and Business Planning;
 - Networking Opportunities;
 - Information on new markets & emerging industries;
 - Linkages for product development and marketing;
 - Grant Assistance and funding resources;



Pilot Deliverables in the First 24 Months

The Algoma RAIN pilot terms of reference will be reviewed after each fiscal year to identify the achievements and outcomes with a view to deciding the continued operation and viability of the network and to prioritize the work plan for the following fiscal year period. During the first 24 months it is expected that the following activities will be undertaken in order to establish the RAIN office (please see Schedule 2 for a complete work-plan breakdown):

- Formation of an Algoma RAIN Advisory Committee
- Recruitment of Algoma RAIN Coordinator
- Implementation of an Algoma RAIN Research and Program Structure
- Start-up of priority projects
- Development of an Algoma RAIN Communications Strategy
- Establishment of an Algoma Agriculture Resource Library
- Development of a Long-term Financial Sustainability Strategy

Priority Projects

Stakeholder consultation has already determined a series of focused activities that can be undertaken as part of the work plan for the 3-year pilot project. These projects have been identified as activities that would have a substantial impact on building long term capacity as well as having immediate benefits for the agriculture community of Algoma. The RAIN Team will act as the coordinating body in securing partners, refining the project scope and in overseeing the execution of these projects. Partnerships with other agencies and organizations will be developed to deliver these programs. Priority projects identified include:

<i>Project Name</i>	Developing a Research and Training Agenda for Algoma’s Agriculture Community
<i>Need Addressed</i>	Farming in Algoma is increasingly at risk because of lower profit margins (stagnant revenue, rising input costs), unsustainable agricultural practices, youth out-migration, international forces beyond the farmer’s control (e.g. BSE crisis), and lack of communication technology (high-speed internet).
<i>Target Sectors</i>	Producers, intermediaries, consumers, First Nation Communities, and policy makers.
<i>Description of Activities</i>	<u>Part 1: Environmental scan</u> Conduct visioning sessions with Algoma’s farming communities, which include Prince Township, Echo Bay, Johnson Township (Desbarats), St. Joseph Island, Bruce Mines, Thessalon, and Iron Bridge. These sessions will analyze the full extent of how agriculture is at risk, and will identify opportunities to address these gaps. Conduct focus groups with local consumers that are connected to local agriculture (food or fibre production). The focus groups would identify the needs, preferences, and attributes of consumers. Conduct focus groups and interviews with intermediaries (butcher shops, restaurants, abattoir, and distributors) that are connected to local



	<p>agriculture. These sessions would identify the needs, gaps, and opportunities that intermediaries find attractive for continuing to work with local farmers. Follow up interviews, surveys, and focus groups will be conducted with producers, consumers, and intermediaries who wish to give added feedback into the vision. Analysis would highlight case studies that consist of successful marketing initiatives, CED projects that connect the value chain (co-operatives or collective marketing), renewable energy projects, sustainable farming methods, and youth who continue to farm in Algoma. Draft community reports will be presented to the different farming communities to gather feedback that will be compiled into a final report to present to policy makers.</p> <p><u>Part 2: Research and Training Agenda</u></p> <p>A 'research and training agenda' would prioritize identified opportunities with communities to develop long-term projects. Opportunities may consist of new value-added products, agri-tourism initiatives, or adjusting processes to add value as well as identifying gaps in human resources and skills development. Researchers will work with producers to collectively develop new products or establish value-added processes, which may include the application of technology, advocating for policy change, or business development (financing, marketing, or organizational development).</p>
<p><i>Expected Outcomes</i></p>	<p>A visioning process with Algoma producers to determine a vision for agricultural production & livelihoods in the region. Transforming local agriculture through community engagement. Identify opportunities for self-sustaining food production within the District. A final report to be presented to policy makers. A 'research agenda' which would identify a number of priority areas.</p>

<p><i>Project Name</i></p>	<p>Gap Analysis of Existing and Needed Infrastructure in the Algoma District</p>
<p><i>Need Addressed</i></p>	<p>Growth for the agriculture sector in Algoma is significantly limited due to a lack of investment into infrastructure such as storage, processing, and land improvement.</p>
<p><i>Target Sectors</i></p>	<p>Oilseed and cereal growers, livestock owners, fibre processors, field crops and vegetable growers, farmer's markets, biofuels companies, woodlot owners (maple syrup).</p>
<p><i>Description of Activities</i></p>	<p><u>Part 1: Overview of the Algoma Food Shed</u></p> <p>Literature review of existing SSMIC and NORDIK publications. Review of the current production and processing levels for crops, livestock and value-added agriculture commodities with a focus on identifying gaps in what is and can be produced in Algoma. Linking this data to market research on consumers and market trends. Undertake an analysis of the production capabilities of the land and required infrastructure investments (such as storage, processing, tillage and drainage) and return on investment in terms of land productivity and variation between land types, increased yields, market share, job creation and revenues. Identify barriers for consumers in accessing products and restraints on suppliers and producers in</p>



	<p>meeting consumer demand. Discuss potential changes to food safety and other regulations that may require upgrades to existing equipment or the addition of supplementary processing capabilities.</p> <p><u>Part 2: Infrastructure Needs and Opportunities</u></p> <p>Create an inventory of existing infrastructure in the Algoma region and identify immediate opportunities for utilization of this infrastructure by industry participants. Develop a table of required infrastructure investments by commodity type i.e. storage, processing, abattoir improvements, value-added processing, land improvements (tiling, liming) etc. and listing the expected benefits for the agriculture sector. Communicate the results of the analysis to the private sector in formats that are appropriate to the demographic i.e. print, electronic, meetings and workshops etc.</p> <p><u>Part 3: Investments in Infrastructure</u></p> <p>Working with private sector partners, cooperatives and/or producer/supplier organizations, developing a strategy and securing financing for the most beneficial infrastructure investments as identified and supported by the project's results.</p>
<p><i>Expected Outcomes</i></p>	<p>Identification of gaps and bottlenecks for producers and suppliers; Inventory of existing infrastructure in the Algoma District; investments in agriculture infrastructure in Algoma; quantitative analysis of production/sales increases given each infrastructure investment; understanding of the returns on investment given variation in land productivity; increased quality control and standardization of products; increasing cash crop production capabilities; increased market seasons i.e. extending into fall and winter; providing agriculture stakeholders with a clear understanding of what they need to invest and their ROI; more diversity in the local Farmers Markets i.e. eggs, dairy, meat etc. and better competition with grocery chains by increased accessibility and convenience for consumers (one stop shop); addressing disincentives or misconceptions for growing certain types of crops; and providing opportunities for crop/ business diversification and creating spin-off effects for existing businesses in the agriculture sector.</p>

<p><i>Project Name</i></p>	<p>RAIN Crop Trial/Grower Facility</p>
<p><i>Need Addressed</i></p>	<p>Limited data exists for agriculture producers in Algoma that is applicable to the environment soil and other conditions that are specific to the area.</p>
<p><i>Target Sectors</i></p>	<p>Algoma Community Pastures Association, Cash crop and grain producers, vegetable growers, livestock owners, First Nations Communities, others TBD, NORDIK.</p>
<p><i>Description of Activities</i></p>	<p>Algoma Community Pastures Association is prepared to enter into an agreement with the Algoma RAIN for the use of 5 acres of land in the Thessalon area for the establishment of a permanent RAIN Crop Trial/Grower Facility. The facility would allow for farmers and researchers to conduct small scale plot trials, testing new crops/varieties and/or soil amendments and fertilizers. The results would be based</p>



	<p>on sound research that then can be applied with reduced risk, to larger scale operations. The facility could also be used to build on the farm research capacity by hosting various workshops on topics ranging from pest management and soil testing to educating farmers on interpreting and applying scientific results to their operations. Research to be undertaken in the short term includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cereal, grass, legume and fibre crop trials; • Pasture trials and research on various grazing systems, specialty forages • Fertilizer regimes • Non-timber forest products such as blueberry and Saskatoon trials <p>The Algoma RAIN facility would work in collaboration with existing Northern Ontario research stations, such as those associated with the University of Guelph in order to coordinate research efforts and provide research support and data that is specific to Algoma and other agriculture districts with similar environmental conditions to Algoma. As part of this project a Memorandum of Agreement will be pursued with the University of Guelph to pursue mutually beneficial research and student training opportunities. In addition, RAIN staff will use the facility to undertake a series of workshops and on-farm training focused on building local capacity by teaching producers and suppliers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic methodology for collecting and analyzing data • Identifying diseases and pests and understanding their lifecycles • Integrated Pest Management (IPM) systems • Soil testing and management • Other training and support programs as prioritized by the agriculture community
<p><i>Expected Outcomes</i></p>	<p>Filling gaps existing for research in Northern Ontario; developing a research partnership with other facilities and gaining a stronger research profile for Algoma and Northern Ontario; attracting private sector investment; providing the agriculture community with sound research that will allow farmers to improve, diversify and expand their businesses and reduce the risks associated with the implementation of new crops, practices and operations; increased number of IPM systems in Algoma; greater communication between producers/suppliers of pests and diseases threatening the area; increased protection against pests and disease resulting in fewer losses to yields; ability to participate in and understand research results and on-farm implications; greater ability to conduct research internally resulting in industry innovation.</p>

<p><i>Project Name</i></p>	<p>Algoma Agriculture Youth Attraction and Retention Strategy</p>
<p><i>Need Addressed</i></p>	<p>An aging farming population puts the future of agriculture at risk in the area as farmers move closer to retirement age. Youth are currently underrepresented in the industry and require better engagement and incentives to participate in agriculture.</p>



<i>Target Sectors</i>	Youth population of Algoma (under 30), immigrating youth, local First Nation youth.
<i>Description of Activities</i>	<p>The purpose of this project is to develop and implement a strategy that increases the involvement of youth in agriculture and agri-foods in Algoma. The strategy can encompass a variety of approaches promoting opportunities in agriculture and agri-food. The strategy will include initiatives designed specifically for youth that increase their awareness of agricultural opportunities and that gives them a chance to explore first-hand various types of agricultural activities (i.e. local farms, community gardens, farmers markets, summer employment). The strategy can include (but is not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities showing by example (i.e. showcasing successful cases of community initiatives such as gardens) • Connecting with in-class school programs such as day care and food programs • Exhibiting at career days • Developing training incentives and mentorship programs • Developing apprenticeship programs in agriculture • Coordinating fun community activities for youth • Sharing success stories of local agriculture • Apply innovative usage of technology to target and reach youth • Utilize cultural centres to promote agriculture • Work-share programs amongst producers to gain more experience and exposure to new methods of farming • Have youth visit existing farming operations • Promote more products and services that assist younger farmers with the “business” of farming
<i>Expected Outcomes</i>	Educating youth on the wide range of opportunities in the field and providing programming that allows youth to explore them; encouraging young adults and youth to start farms or greenhouses, and to pursue studies in agriculture and agri-food sciences.

<i>Project Name</i>	“Buy Algoma” – Consumer and Producer Education & Marketing Campaign
<i>Need Addressed</i>	Farmers lack the time and resources needed to create sufficient demand locally for their products and often are disconnected from what consumers want in a product.
<i>Target Sectors</i>	Consumers, tourists, producers and suppliers, restaurants, businesses, public sector, Farmer’s markets,
<i>Description of Activities</i>	<p>Building on the current and existing research, the Algoma RAIN will partner with NORDIK to address the gaps that still exist in establishing a stronger ‘buy-local’ consumer mentality.</p> <p><u>Part 1: Where Does My Food Come From?</u> Literature review of existing ‘buy local’ campaign efforts. Building on these materials and development of additional marketing targeted at consumers focusing on the</p>



	<p>food chain as it exists for most products bought at supermarkets. Comparisons can be made to the added transportation and increased carbon footprint as well as the decreases in nutritional value as food travels from the farm to the plate. Other references can be made to the differences between large-scale farming vs. smaller scale i.e. free run and other more socially acceptable farming practises. Information will be provided for consumers on what foods/products can be accessed in Algoma, when it is available throughout the different seasons of the year and where can it be purchased.</p> <p><u>Part 2: The Food Dictionary</u></p> <p>Developing education materials to assist in creating a language of enablement between consumers and producers/suppliers by educating each party on the terminology of the industry i.e. what does it mean to be organic and certified organic? Are there other options other than buying organic? What does it mean to be natural and sustainable? What are consumers looking for? What can local producers offer? Teaching producers and suppliers new terminology and concepts in healthy eating and sustainable growing practices so that they can become educators themselves and speak the language of consumers.</p> <p><u>Part 3: The Active Consumer</u></p> <p>Provide information to consumers on how they can help to support Algoma Farmers, where to go to access local products, as well as how to influence Governments, grocery chains and other food-related businesses by demanding grown and/or made in Algoma products.</p>
<p><i>Expected Outcomes</i></p>	<p>Education and marketing materials for producers, suppliers and consumers on what it means to 'Buy Algoma' i.e. brochures, information sessions, workshops, events; teaching consumers how to access food outside of conventional channels; teaching consumers to become seasonal shoppers by helping them to understand what products are available and when in the year to buy them; educating the public on influencing the food chain and demand for Algoma products; breaking down misconceptions about 'buying Ontario' i.e. Southern Ontario vs 'buying Algoma' i.e. Northern Ontario; teaching both producers and consumers to be educated on the food they supply and buy.</p>

Preliminary consultations with area First Nation representatives have also determined that there is an interest in the area for Aboriginal people to pursue opportunities in agriculture. In order to further develop opportunities with the First Nation communities of Algoma, the RAIN is proposing the creation of an Aboriginal Agriculture-Agri-forestry Intern to carry forward with engagement sessions with each of the First Nations in Algoma.

In addition to the projects listed above, other projects the RAIN would like to explore further with these communities include capacity building, training and opportunities identification. Note



that the implementation of any First Nation driven initiatives is contingent on approval from the communities; projects will not move forward without these partnerships. Potential projects to investigate further include:

<i>Project Name</i>	NTFP and Other Agri-related Business Opportunities for First Nations
<i>Need Addressed</i>	Limited participation of Aboriginal people in the agriculture sector as well as a need to build the entrepreneurial capacity of community members. A support strategy is needed for Aboriginal people on how to access markets for these products and new market opportunities should be developed.
<i>Target Sectors</i>	Aboriginal and First Nation Communities, Related Organizations
<i>Description of Activities</i>	<p><u>Part 1: Options Analysis of NTFP and Agri-related Businesses</u> Preparation of a feasibility study helping to identify options for local First Nations and Aboriginal communities to participate in the agriculture sector. Identify market and product opportunities unique to the Aboriginal community. Market opportunities will be explored from the perspective of new and existing markets and products. With a strong focus on protecting traditional knowledge, an options analysis of potential non-timber forest product harvesting and processing operations will be undertaken including a discussion on the level of investment and training required. In addition to NTFPs, the study will look at other agri-based opportunities including livestock, fruit and vegetable growing, farmers markets and market gardening as well as the potential for Aboriginal people to become partners in agri-based research initiatives. The study will look at what infrastructure is already available in these communities to be accessed by local entrepreneurs such as band-owned equipment, storage and other facilities and help to match this infrastructure with potential businesses. The study will also incorporate examples of success stories coming from other First Nations communities and Algoma.</p> <p><u>Part 2: Aboriginal Product Marketing Strategy</u> Part 2 will involve the development of a marketing strategy that distinguishes the Aboriginal products and promotes them to the proper consumer markets. Within the strategy there will be consideration of participation in marketing boards, pricing and supply strategies in collaboration with the Aboriginal business and marketing Associations, as well as consideration of advertising in local, agricultural industry and Aboriginal publications to reach non-Band affiliated Aboriginal agriculture producers and Métis.</p> <p><u>Part 3: Business Training</u> Working with the training and economic development units of the partnering First Nations, help to facilitate capacity building workshops and training for interested community members. The training may include topics such as writing a business plan, basic accounting, marketing, accessing funding, among others as determined by the communities. The training will also incorporate Q&A sessions with local</p>



	<p>business owners and industry experts.</p> <p><u>Part 4: Communications Strategy and On-going Support</u></p> <p>Develop a coordinated and relevant (client/community centered) communication strategy that provides information to Aboriginal communities on agricultural programs and services on an on-going basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop communication material that highlights the programs and services that are applicable to Aboriginal People and communities. • Ensure agriculture programs are delivered in the communities where Aboriginal People can access information and obtain technical expertise. • Host conferences/forums in various communities to encourage information exchange. • Have frequent and regular interaction in the communities via personal visits, workshops, presentations, and exhibiting at community events.
<p><i>Expected Outcomes</i></p>	<p>Engaging First Nation and Aboriginal communities in the agriculture sector; identification of potential business opportunities for community members; support Aboriginal producers' to access markets; develop an Aboriginal product marketing strategy to promote and distinguish Aboriginal agricultural products; building community capacity to successfully operate and sustain businesses; creation of jobs and demand for skilled community members; creation of an entrepreneurial spirit.</p>

<p><i>Project Name</i></p>	<p>Crop Trials to Demonstrate the Production of Non-Traditional Crops</p>
<p><i>Need Addressed</i></p>	<p>Farming presents an opportunity for Aboriginal people to diversify the economy and create new revenue streams within their communities. Aboriginal people may be interested in growing non-traditional crops such as sweetgrass, mints and teas etc. but lack the knowledge needed to determine whether these non-traditional species can be grown sustainably and on a large scale.</p>
<p><i>Target Sectors</i></p>	<p>First Nation communities, entrepreneurs, researchers, economic development and natural resource departments.</p>
<p><i>Description of Activities</i></p>	<p>The proposed project seeks to educate First Nation community members on various aspects of non-traditional crop production through small-scale research trials. The Algoma RAIN will help to facilitate a combination of background research and consultations with area First Nations to determine their interest in growing non-traditional crops and to identify which species of non-traditional crops could potentially be integrated into crop trials. Crops will be chosen based on community interest and potential economic returns. Plots of non-traditional crops will be established at the RAIN Crop Trial/Grower facility or at another location as determined by a partnering First Nation. Crops will be grown according to standard practices in other regions, or requirements for related crops in Ontario. Crops will be monitored on a regular basis for pests, stage of maturity, and agronomic issues.</p> <p>The information gathered from observations of these demonstration plots will be used to compile profiles for each of the crops. The profiles will include other common</p>



	names for the crop, uses for the crop, traditional markets, related crops, agronomic requirements, and pest issues. Additional marketing information for these alternative crops, supply chain/value-added chain, storage/post-harvest handling/shelf life, and yields/cost of production information will be incorporated into the final analysis. The information developed will become the property of the partnering First Nation communities. The project is proposed to culminate through a non-traditional crop open-house for interested community members looking to start businesses in agriculture. The open house will demonstrate to potential growers the challenges and opportunities in growing these non-traditional crops.
<i>Expected Outcomes</i>	Demonstrate the wide range of non-traditional crops that can be grown in Ontario, and give Aboriginal growers options to diversify cropping systems; identify and demonstrate the agronomic challenges of growing non-traditional crops, including nutrient and pest management; raise awareness of the challenges and opportunities for marketing non-traditional crops for Aboriginal businesses in Ontario.

<i>Project Name</i>	Mapping the Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) of First Nations Communities in Algoma
<i>Need Addressed</i>	Community level maps are emerging as a powerful medium to communicate local values and knowledge and to help guide land and resource use decisions within a community. Algoma's traditional territories have a long, rich history of use, but because the knowledge is traditionally oral, putting it into mapped format can be challenging especially for Aboriginal communities that lack GIS technology and expertise.
<i>Target Sectors</i>	First Nations Communities of Algoma – Lands and Resource Departments, Economic Development Offices, local hunters, harvesters, aqua culturists, youth and elders.
<i>Description of Activities</i>	<p>Working with First Nations communities of Algoma and in partnership with NORDIK and the SSMIC's Genomics Centre, the RAIN will support interested communities in defining First Nation-led projects for the collection and mapping of Traditional Ecological Knowledge of their traditional lands in Algoma. The project will address issues with the use of culturally sensitive data in planning processes and business decisions, the ability of non-First Nations to interpret the data in a sensitive manner, and the credibility of the data arising from the collection process.</p> <p><u>Part 1: Collection of Oral History</u> Through interviews with community elders, data is proposed to be collected on the traditional uses of the land including hunting, fishing, harvesting and gathering. This information can be cross referenced with data collected on modern land usage by other community members and youth.</p> <p><u>Part 2: Mapping Algoma's Traditional Ecological Knowledge</u> Using the information collected through community interviews, the stories can be associated with geographic locations on maps as well as integrated with additional</p>



	<p>information collected via ground surveys, soil mapping and GPS to generate a comprehensive picture of the relationship with the land. The final product can then be presented to and made available for viewing by the community.</p> <p><u>Part 3: Developing Community-based Resource Management Strategies – Workshop</u> Workshops can be held with key staff and community decision makers to analyze the results of the mapping process and apply them to decision making in the community including resource management and land use strategies, including potential for agricultural activities. The methodology used during the project will be shown to be applicable to additional community-based research and in the development of future GIS databases of traditional ecological knowledge and other First Nation resources in Algoma. The information collected during the project will remain the property of the First Nation communities directly involved.</p>
<p><i>Expected Outcomes</i></p>	<p>Development of a replicable research methodology for collecting TEK; Complete mapping of traditional land uses for First Nations in the Algoma region showing distribution of food and animal sources such as bear, moose, eagles, fish, berries and mushrooms; provide an information base for conservation and for developing new sustainable economies; guiding the creation of new integrated agriculture and non-timber forest products resource management plans; provide training and education on mapping and GIS for community members; the facilitation of the inclusion of local and traditional knowledge into maps and GIS databases in the region; to provide effective mapping products to support and lead conservation advocacy and sustainable resource use.</p>

In order to successfully implement these initiatives, the RAIN staff will involve the following six steps in execution of projects:

- Engage stakeholders within and external to the region.
- Assess the project’s assets reinforcing innovative solutions in the context of regional, provincial and global opportunities and competition.
- Determine and prioritize strategic actions for the future from the range of possible approaches.
- Plan implementation of strategic actions.
- Guide implementation of the action plan over time.
- Evaluate progress and make corrections as needed.

8.0 Preliminary Budget Estimates

The following represents the projected budget for the 3-year Algoma RAIN pilot project including project specific costs for the implementation of a permanent crop trial facility.



Expenses will be revisited annually and as necessary to adjust for inflation and other factors that may affect these estimates.

Expense Category	Description of Expenses	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Subtotal
Salaries/MERC	RAIN Coordinator Contract position	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 52,000.00	\$ 54,000.00	\$ 156,000.00
Salaries/MERC	RAIN Research Analyst	\$ 38,000.00	\$ 39,000.00	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 117,000.00
Salaries/MERC	RAIN Market Development Specialist	\$ 38,000.00	\$ 39,000.00	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 117,000.00
Salaries/MERC	RAIN Intern(s)/Research Assistants (up to two) wages	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 75,000.00
Travel	Travel budget for activities directly related to the work plan.	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 30,000.00
Training & Skills Development	Knowledge transfer relevant to work plan activities including workshops, conferences, seminars and materials.	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Communications	Community Outreach for activities such as community meetings, presentations and workshops related to the work plan.	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 15,000.00
Communications	Printing	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,500.00
Communications	Phone and Internet @ \$100/month	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 3,600.00
Office Expenses	Office Supplies including one-time computer purchase	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 150.00	\$ 150.00	\$ 2,800.00
Administration	Project Administration Fees	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,500.00
Total		\$ 167,200.00	\$ 182,350.00	\$ 185,350.00	\$ 534,900.00

RAIN Research Facility Project Costs

Land Preparation	Plowing, disking, harrowing, harvesting, seeding, liming	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 4,500.00
Land Rental	\$100/acre @ 5 acres	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,500.00
Building	20'x50' custom insulated shell	\$ 20,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,000.00
Building Service	Electrical, Security, phone hook-ups	\$ 2,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,500.00
Equipment/Tools	Metal Fencing	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100.00
Equipment/Tools	Hand tools, shovel, rake, hoe, hand mower, scale, rototiller, row seeder, small scale pesticide applicator	\$ 2,500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,500.00
Equipment/Tools	Weather Station	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000.00
Communications	Phone/Internet, security hook-ups	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500.00
Communications	Phone/Internet @ \$50/mo	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00	\$ 1,800.00
Office Expenses	Utilities - 6 months @ \$50/mo	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 900.00
Total		\$ 39,500.00	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 44,300.00

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	\$ 206,700.00	\$ 184,750.00	\$ 187,750.00	\$ 579,200.00
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Funding for the pilot project is expected through a combination of grants from the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund (NOHFC), Ontario Trillium Fund, the Rural Secretariat's Community Development Program, FedNor, and the Canadian Community Economic Development Network, as well as contributions from partners and stakeholders in the project.

Expense Category	Total Expenses (3 years)	NOHFC - Emerging Tech	Trillium	Rural Secretariat	CCEDNet	FedNor - Internship Program	RAIN	Total Revenue
Salaries/MERC	\$ 465,000.00	\$ 163,500.00	\$ 61,200.00	\$ 162,500.00	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 27,500.00	\$ 24,300.00	\$ 465,000.00
Travel	\$ 30,000.00		\$ 10,000.00	\$ 20,000.00				\$ 30,000.00
Training & Skills Development	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00						\$ 15,000.00
Communications	\$ 18,800.00		\$ 4,800.00	\$ 14,000.00				\$ 18,800.00
Office Expenses	\$ 7,800.00		\$ 3,000.00				\$ 4,800.00	\$ 7,600.00
Administration	\$ 1,500.00			\$ 1,500.00				\$ 1,500.00
Capital	\$ 32,600.00	\$ 20,000.00					\$ 12,600.00	\$ 32,600.00
Land Prep and Rental	\$ 6,000.00						\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
Servicing	\$ 2,500.00						\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
TOTAL	\$579,200.00	\$198,500.00	\$ 81,000.00	\$198,000.00	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 27,500.00	\$ 50,200.00	\$579,200.00
<i>% of Total</i>		<i>34%</i>	<i>14%</i>	<i>34%</i>	<i>4%</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>9%</i>	<i>100%</i>

In addition to the anticipated financial contributions to the project, a significant level of in-kind support has been confirmed from the partner organizations. In-kind contributions can be broken down as follows:

Funding Source	Item	Rate Calculation	Total
SSMIC	Assignment of staff to Co-Chair position	Yr 1: 17.5 hrs/week x \$50/hr x 52 wks	\$ 45,500.00
		Yr 2: 10.5 hrs/week x \$50/hr x 52 wks	\$ 27,300.00
		Yr 3: 8.75 hrs/week x \$50/hr x 52 wks	\$ 22,750.00
SSMIC	Equipment, IT Network and related services	\$2,000.00/yr x 3 yrs	\$ 6,000.00
NORDIK	Assignment of staff to Co-Chair position	\$50/hr x 5 hrs/wk x 52 wks/yr x 3yrs	\$ 39,000.00
NORDIK	Use of NORDIK Staff on RAIN projects	\$30/hr x 10 hrs/wk x 52 wks/yr x 3yrs	\$ 46,800.00
NORDIK	Office space/equipment for intern use	\$300/month x 12 month x 3yrs	\$ 10,800.00
NORDIK	Partnership access and development services (workshops, conferences, e-communication)	300 x \$15 x 3 yrs	\$ 13,500.00
Algoma University	300 sq/ft of office space for RAIN staff	\$2,619.00/year x 3 years	\$ 7,857.00
Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee Meetings, RAIN project promotion	Estimate: 8 members x 10hrs/month x \$35/hr x 36 months	\$ 100,800.00
TOTAL IN-KIND			\$320,307.00



Project specific funding will be secured on a case by case basis from the most appropriate source(s). Long term sustainability of the network will be contingent on maintaining local support, the organizations ability to implement projects and having a flexible yearly financial model.

9.0 Implementation Schedule

The anticipated timeframes for implementation of the Algoma RAIN pilot activities is as follows:

Activity	Responsibility	Expected Start	Expected Completion
<i>Prepare Funding Proposals and Secure Pilot Project Funding</i>	Project Co-Chairs Consultant	November 2010	April 2011
<i>Establish an Algoma RAIN Advisory Committee</i>	Project Co-Chairs Stakeholder Organizations	October 2010	March 2011
<i>Begin recruitment and hiring process for RAIN Coordinator</i>	Project Co-Chairs Advisory Committee	April 2011	May 2011
<i>Hire RAIN Coordinator</i>	Project Co-Chairs	May 2011	June 2011
<i>Implement Algoma RAIN Pilot Work-plan</i>	RAIN Coordinator Project Co-Chairs	June 2011	May 2014
<i>Secure funding for full implementation</i>	RAIN Coordinator Project Co-Chairs Advisory Committee	Beginning June 2011	May 2014

10.0 Enquiries

All inquiries regarding this project shall be directed to:

Errol Caldwell
Research Director
Sault Ste Marie Innovation Centre

1520 Queen St. East, RM NW 307
Sault Ste Marie ON P6A 2G4
Phone: 705-942-7927 ext 3147
Cell: 705-255-1558
Fax: 705-942-6169
Email: ecaldwell@ssmic.ca
Web: www.ssmic.com



Schedule 1 – Rural Contacts List

LOCAL PRODUCERS

Applehill Farm	Will and Elaine Samis		(705) 843-5567
Birchgrove Farms	Jason & Kit Koivisto	kitandjason@toast.net	(705) 782-2276
Desbarats Country Produce	Enus Sherk & Sons		No phone
Downover Farm	Sheila and Tim Harris	sylvanvalley@xplornet.com	(705) 248-2891
Fairisle Maple Products	William Stadnyk	wstadnyk@shaw.ca	(705) 253-5379
Grandpa's Dream Worm Farm	Sharon & Ken Lane	kenalane@hotmail.com	(705) 843-2226
High Fibre Alpacas	Monika and Mike Pritchard		(705) 246-1077
Jane Darlow	Jane and Art Darlow	jacraft@sympatico.ca	(705) 779-2546
Marshall Farms	Jeff Marshall	marshalljeff2000@yahoo.ca	(705) 779-1012
Mary's Bees and Crafts	Mary Eaton	eaton-laakso@sympatico.ca	(705) 248-2021
McFadden's Acres Certified Organic	Ken and Fannie McFadden	fannie_p@hotmail.com	(705) 782-2207
McKay Organic Farm	Diena McKay	info@northernlightsenergy.com	(705) 246-2073
Meadowview Alpaca Farm	Denise and Robert Martel	rd.martel@meadowviewalpaca.com	(705) 785-3389
Mills Farm	Roger & Karen Shaule	kshaule@tarpfarm.on.ca	(705) 736-1124
Murdock's Gardens	Gail Murdock	g.r.murdock@xplornet.com	(705) 246-2679
Northorizon Farm	John Karhi	info@karhi.com	(705) 782-6863
Pearce Farms	Jennie Pearce	jlpearce@shaw.ca	
Rainbow Ridge Farm	Neirdre Powis-Clement	mnaprrf@hotmail.com	(705) 246-2683
Roberts Pork	Alf Roberts	alfspigs@soonet.ca	(705) 248-2806
Rose Valley Maple Syrup	Judy & Norman Hughes	juno.hughes@gmail.com	(705) 248-3038
Silas Bowman	Silas Bowman		No phone
Stourie Brae Alpacas	Sally Kennedy	sally.kennedy@sympatico.ca	(705) 248-2255
Sweet Water Ranch	Luke & Amy Vine	lwlvine@hotmail.com	(705) 842-2265
Thompson's Maple Products	Doug and Joyce Thompson	info@canadamaplesyrup.com	(705) 246-2970
Valleyfield Farm	Martti & Melanie Lemieux	mmlieux@gmail.com	(705) 248-3071
Little Rapids General Store	Merv Brooks		(705) 842-3717
Co-op Algoma Ag-Centre			(705) 248-2201
Algoma Farmer's Market	Martti Lemieux	mmlieux@gmail.com	(705) 248-3071
Johnson Township Farmer's Market	Edith Orr	edith.orr@xplornet.com	(705) 782-2201
Iron Bridge Farmer's Market	Sharon Lane		(705) 843-2226
Bruni's Fine Foods	Lou Bruni		(705) 256-7367
Leboeuf's Meat & Deli			(705) 356-6070

Northern Quality Meats	Kathy Haynes		(705) 782-4224
Algoma Farm Fresh	Jack Tindall	johnhindall@sympatico.ca	(705) 782-6328
Clear Water Farms	Ken & Robin Macleod	clearwaterfarms@sympatico.ca	(705) 736-2236
Spruce Ridge Farm	Ray & Joanna Prestedge	rjprestfarm@sympatico.ca	(705) 842-0476
Leeburn Valley Farm	Gordon Hacker	gordonhacker@vianet.ca	(705) 736-1086
Salamander Ridge Farm	Pete, Kris and Peter Stinnissen		(705) 246-3019
St. Joe Island Coffee Roasters	Shane Hoffman	sjicoffeeroasters@xplorenet.com	
FS Cooperative	Curtis Kirby	curtis.kirby@algomaagcentre.ca	(705) 248-2201
Master Gardener	Susan Milne	susanmilne@shaw.ca	
SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS			
Algoma Soil and Crop Improvement Association	Murray Cochrane	murray.cochrane@sympatico.ca	(705) 842-5622
Ontario Federation of Agriculture	Neil Tarlton	tarlton@isys.ca	(705) 962-7276
Algoma Federation of Agriculture	Ken Tomlinson	tken@gocom.ca	(705) 782-0378
Algoma Federation of Agriculture	Ron & Cathy Bonnett	croncath@hotmail.com	(705) 785-3402
Algoma Federation of Agriculture	Gordon Hacker	gordonhacker@vianet.ca	
Algoma Cattlemen's Association	Ken MacLeod or Ted Tindall	clearwaterfarms@sympatico.ca	(705) 736-2236
Algoma Maple Syrup Producers	George Willoughby	margeo.willoughby8@gmail.com	(705) 246-2694
Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (NE ON)	Alf Roberts or Harold Stewart	alfspigs@soonet.ca	(705) 248-2806 or 842-0392
Algoma Sheep and Lamb Producers	Sheila Harris	sylvanvalley@xplorenet.com	(705) 248-2891
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs	Dave Trivers	david.trivers@ontario.ca	(705) 842-1582
Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry	Karen Speers	karen.speers@ontario.ca	(705) 945 5816
Algoma Food Network	Birgit Kroll	saultpersonalfit@gmail.com	
Algoma U/ NORDIK	Dave Thompson	david.thompson@algomau.ca	(705) 949-2301
Algoma U / NORDIK	Derek Rice	derek.rice@sympatico.ca	(705) 949-2301
Algoma U / NORDIK	Gayle Broad	Gayle.Broad@algomau.ca	(705) 949-2301
Algoma U / NORDIK	Jose Reyes	jose.reyes@algomau.ca	(705) 949-2301
Northern Ontario Agri-food Education & Marketing	Neil Tarlton	tarlton@isys.ca	(705) 694-4396
Slow Food SSM	Mary Ledlow	vinaissance@yahoo.com	
Northern Ontario Agri-Food Marketing	Myrna Barager	collie@vianet.ca	
Northern Ontario Agri-Food Marketing		noront.agrifood@sympatico.ca	
Community Quality Improvement	Rob Coleman	coleman.rob@gmail.com	
Algoma Food Network	Suzanne Hannah	wildgardener@shaw.ca	
Algoma Public Health / Food Security contact	Tracey Perry	tperry@algomapublichealth.com	



East Algoma Stewardship Council	Tracey Cooke	tracey.cooke@ontario.ca	
The Canadian CED Network - Youth Program	Matthew Thompson	mthompson@ccdnet-rcdec.ca	(416) 760-2578
Rural Secretariat - Community Development	Allen McGuire, Regional Advisor	allen.mcguire@agr.gc.ca	(613) 868 7207
Community Development Corporation of Sault Ste Marie & Area	Al Wright	awright@on.aibn.com	(705) 942 9000
East Algoma Community Futures Development Corporation	Shawn Heard	sheard@eastalgomacfdc.ca	(705) 356 1152
Sault Ste Marie Economic Development Corporation	Andrew Ross	a.ross@ssmedc.ca	(705) 759 5461

ABORIGINAL CONTACTS AND SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

Batchewana First Nation (Natural Resources)	Dan Sayers Jr.	dansayers@batchewana.ca	(705) 759-0914 x 223
Batchewana First Nation (Economic Development)	Marlene Hewson	marlenehewson@batchewana.ca	(705) 759-0914 x 224
Garden River First Nation (Economic Development)	Marie Nolan	mnolan@gardenriver.org	(705) 946-6300
Garden River First Nation	Sharon Sayers	ssayers@gardenriver.org	(705) 946-6300
Michipicoten First Nation (Band Manager)	Carol Sanders	csanders@michipicoten.com	(705) 856-1642 x 213
Mississauga First Nation	Keith Sayers	keith@mississaugi.com	(705) 356-1621
Thessalon First Nation	Pam Yukich	pyukich@soonet.ca	(705) 842-2323
Thessalon Bio-Centre	Jukka Heikurinen or Daren Belleau	tfnbiocentre@hotmail.ca	(705) 842-1340
Sagamok First Nation	Levi Southwin	migisi@primus.ca	(705) 865-3184
Serpent River First Nation	Chief Isadore Day		(705) 844-2418
Indian Agricultural Program of Ontario	Mark Leahy, Farm Management	mark@indianag.on.ca	(613) 395-5505
Indian Agricultural Program of Ontario	Beth Wismer, General Manager	beth@indianag.on.ca	(613) 395-5505
First Nations Agriculture Association		info@fnala.com	1-866-314-6804
Aboriginal Agricultural Education Society of BC		info@aaesbc.ca	1-866-314-6804
The National Aboriginal Land Manager's Association	Julia Taylor, Project Manager		1-877-234-9813



Schedule 2 – Algoma RAIN Work Plan (First 24 months)

Activity	Short-Term Objectives for Activity	Long-Term Goals for Activity	Indicators of Success
<p><i>Formation of an Algoma RAIN Advisory Committee</i></p>	<p>Seek interest from stakeholder organizations in participating in the Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Confirm list of Committee Members from stakeholder organizations.</p> <p>Participate in monthly Advisory Committee Meetings.</p> <p>Provide updates on Stakeholder organization activities, industry developments and related information.</p> <p>Recruit and hire Algoma RAIN Coordinator and support staff.</p>	<p>Build a community-based advisory group to receive information and provide feedback and guidance on research priorities, service gaps, industry needs and barriers to be addressed by the Algoma RAIN pilot.</p> <p>Advise on issues affecting the access and delivery of programs and assistance that are both unique and that cross existing organizational boundaries.</p> <p>Evaluate the effectiveness of the Algoma RAIN Coordinator and pilot activities.</p>	<p>Algoma RAIN Advisory Committee is formed and meets regularly.</p> <p>Improved communication and coordination of projects and activities between stakeholders and stakeholder organizations.</p> <p>Committee Terms of Reference.</p>
<p><i>Recruitment of Algoma RAIN Project Coordinator</i></p>	<p>Provide short-term contract employment (optimally) to an Algoma-region community member.</p> <p>Provide orientation and training to the Coordinator on the objectives, the structure and operations of the Algoma RAIN.</p> <p>Provide introduction of the Coordinator to the Algoma RAIN Advisory Committee and other key stakeholders and stakeholder organizations.</p>	<p>Build a sustainable organization that is mandated to plan, implement and monitor research and development projects and create partnerships in support of agricultural and agri-forestry related organizations, individuals and private sector partners.</p> <p>Strengthen the current short-term contract staff team into a self-sustaining permanent organization that will be mandated and resourced to implement priority programs and initiatives on behalf of the Algoma stakeholders it represents.</p> <p>Build in-house knowledge and expertise and decrease reliance on external professional expertise, where possible.</p>	<p>Employment contract with one staff person.</p> <p>Notification to stakeholder groups and the greater community of the creation of the employment opportunity and hiring of the staff person.</p> <p>Creation of an opportunity with a community member with interest and training in a related field to return home and apply and develop their knowledge within a community-based initiative.</p>



<p><i>Implementation of an Algoma RAIN Research and Program Structure</i></p>	<p>Develop and manage a multi-year program of initiatives to support improvements and innovation in agriculture-based industry and research in Northern Ontario arising out of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary stakeholder consultation; • Existing industry research and reports; • Gap analysis of existing supports and programs; • Specific development and research proposals from the Advisory Committee, community partners and external proponents. <p>Prepare detailed research plan and work schedules for 2010/11.</p> <p>Prepare an inception plan that will document the proposed methodology in detail, including tasks, activities (e.g. meetings), timing of activities and deliverables.</p> <p>Confirm extent of partner participation and contributions.</p> <p>Secure supplemental funding to support research and project expenses as required.</p>	<p>Develop and manage a program of initiatives to support improvements and innovation in agriculture-based industry and research in Northern Ontario.</p> <p>Prepare a strategy for subsequent years' research and project activities for the period 2011/2012.</p> <p>Develop and implement a protocol and related arrangements for monitoring and updating of data so that changes can be tracked and understood and that the impacts of new developments can be defined and understood.</p> <p>Build a greater understanding and data base of the agricultural resources and businesses on the land base and how existing, planned and future industry activities will interact with the changing economic environment.</p>	<p>Development of a community based set of research and project priorities concerning mainstream agriculture-based activities within the Algoma region and Northern Ontario.</p> <p>Establishment of a detailed multi-year program and work plan of Algoma RAIN initiatives which incorporates mechanisms which support long term financial stability.</p> <p>Enhanced capacity within the staff team in the planning and implementation of research and project programs.</p>
<p><i>Start-up of Priority Programs</i></p>	<p>Prioritize research and project activities as set out in the Algoma RAIN Program Structure in collaboration with identified partners.</p> <p>Enter into and continue negotiations with proponents of research and development projects.</p> <p>Carry out research and project tasks that can be accommodated in the remainder of year one.</p> <p>Recruit additional research staff and interns as required.</p> <p>Carry out required foundational work for subsequent year research and project activities.</p>	<p>Build capacity and a core staff team with competencies in project management, research, and data collection.</p> <p>Identify and establish spin-off initiatives that will support the Algoma RAIN Program Structure during the pilot period and subsequent years.</p> <p>Identify and promote agriculture-based business opportunities and entrepreneurship in the Algoma region.</p>	<p>Confirmation of resources and project partners.</p> <p>Written reports and presentations related to the subject matter of the activity.</p> <p>Presentation of the reports and proposals to the Advisory Committee and target audiences.</p> <p>Employment for additional short-term research technicians, labour and interns as required.</p>



<p><i>Development of an Algoma RAIN Communications Strategy</i></p>	<p>Develop a communications framework for engaging stakeholders and community members, and communicating activities and accomplishments of the Algoma RAIN.</p> <p>Review the effectiveness of actions taken to respond to emerging industry issues, and recommend best practice approaches for dissemination.</p> <p>Report to the community on the initial experience with the Algoma RAIN pilot project and its program structure.</p> <p>Present and validate research and project results through various media outlets.</p> <p>Plan, promote and run community information session(s) as required to present results of data collection/research/projects and validate same.</p> <p>Advise on issues affecting the access and delivery of programs and assistance that cross existing organizational boundaries.</p> <p>Research, develop and propose business tools and processes that could be integrated into existing agriculture-based resource management.</p> <p>Hold information sessions to promote agriculture-based business and employment opportunities to target audiences.</p> <p>Provide training, advice and support to agricultural and agri-forestry related organizations, Aboriginals, individuals and private sector partners.</p> <p>Pursue partnership opportunities with external organizations to increase research and project collaborations by executing MOUs and related partnership agreements.</p>	<p>Ensure community awareness and endorsement of current and future research and development projects of the Algoma RAIN.</p> <p>Build a locally-based/derived and current understanding of the agriculture industry of the Algoma Region.</p> <p>Stimulate interest among community members in related fields/studies/occupations, with a specific focus on researchers, youth and Aboriginal demographics.</p> <p>Assist with the promotion of the involvement and capacity building of the community in the collection and dissemination of knowledge.</p> <p>Inform the community on related activities and results and seek input on modifications based on these initial experiences.</p> <p>Establish mechanisms to support communication and collaboration between representatives across existing organizational boundaries.</p> <p>Collaborate with stakeholders and other related bodies that influence Algoma agriculture in fostering quality improvement in the delivery of programs and services across Algoma.</p> <p>Form sector-based advisory committees including value-added, research, non-timber forest products, renewable energy, others that will receive information and provide guidance on agricultural developments as well as participating in related planning, development, and financing of related projects and enterprises.</p> <p>Support an increase in the number and diversity of agriculture-based resource businesses that are owned/co-owned by First Nations Members.</p> <p>Attract a highly educated and skilled workforce into the region.</p>	<p>Establish mechanisms for network communication.</p> <p>Hold minimum 3 related community interaction workshops – target up to 20 attendees.</p> <p>Hold 1-2 community opportunities forums – target up to 100 attendees.</p> <p>Expand the capacity and frame of reference of the RAIN in considering and responding to potential development opportunities.</p> <p>Create opportunities for the community to share knowledge and perspectives and contribute to the development of the community's knowledge base of its lands, agricultural businesses, organizations and natural resources.</p> <p>Improved collection and dissemination of knowledge and capacity building with community members.</p> <p>Stimulate interest and activity among community members in pursuing business and career opportunities in agriculture-related fields.</p> <p>Build awareness, interest, excitement and activity among governments and communities in researching and pursuing sustainable agriculture-based enterprises that contribute the economic development of Northern Ontario.</p> <p>Build the strength and confidence of the stakeholder groups to engage with external domestic and international businesses/organizations within related sectors.</p>
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<p><i>Establishment of an Algoma Agriculture Resource Library</i></p>	<p>Building and maintaining electronic and hard copy databases and files on agriculture-related research, industry and business development.</p> <p>Explore a working protocol with community organizations with a specialty in database management (e.g. Sault Ste Marie Innovation Center).</p> <p>Explore and develop data sharing arrangements with external agencies (e.g. OMAFRA).</p>	<p>Build an in-house knowledge and competency of agriculture-based programs and services.</p> <p>Build a comprehensive historical and base line data base of industry statistics that can be used for agricultural management planning and the consideration of agriculture-based development proposals.</p> <p>Procedures and protocols for the sharing of the data base to external users.</p>	<p>Establishment of a central community information hub of information that serves as a primary access point for partners and other parties seeking to access resources.</p>
<p><i>Development of a Long-term Financial Sustainability Strategy</i></p>	<p>Research and propose strategies that will support the long term financial sustainability of the Algoma RAIN, including options for incorporation.</p> <p>Identify opportunities that are supportable and sustainable by project proponents, to support the resourcing requirements of the RAIN through the sale of services and administration of fees, memberships, royalties and other forms of revenue sharing.</p> <p>Solicit and secure several core corporate sponsors.</p>	<p>A financially sustainable, standing organization that is mandated and sufficiently resourced to provide support and direction on agriculture-based management and planning matters.</p>	<p>The Algoma RAIN and the services provided therein will not be threatened by or vulnerable to changes in the availability of funding from external sources.</p> <p>At least one new financial mechanism will be implemented within the budget each year for this project.</p>



Schedule 3 – Algoma RAIN Pilot Project – Discussion Paper
