



...is pleased to present:

## **“AgroEcology and the Economics of Organics”**

*A Course in Knowledge-Based Consulting for Business Agronomists*

*Featuring educators Joel Williams and Brenda Tjaden*

*Farmer Panel:*

*Stuart McMillan, Legend Organic Farm*

*David Rourke, Rourke Farms*

*Jason Peters, Kroeker Farms*

*Andreas Boersch, RegenAgSolutions*

*Facilitators and Wrap-Up Panel:*

*Terry Aberhart, Aberthart Farms and Sure Growth Technologies*

*Terry Betker, Backswath Management*

*Garth Rempel, RBC*

Feb 11-12, 2029

Winnipeg, MB

Fort Garry Hotel

Fees: \$450 plus GST

### **COURSE AGENDA:**

#### February 11

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|---------------|--|
| 12:00 - 12:30 | Arrive and collect a light lunch.  |
| 12:30 - 1:15  | <u>Macro-economic setup</u> - Brenda Tjaden - How western Canada is converting a million+ acres into certified organic food grain production without a negative impact on organic prices/premiums. |
| 1:15 - 2:15   | <u>Understanding Soil Biology</u> – Joel Williams  |

- Soil health as a function of chemistry, physics and biology.
- Photosynthesis and root exudates as the drivers of soil biology.
- Functions, roles and interactions of soil organisms towards nutrient cycling for plant uptake.
- Ecological succession, annuals vs perennials, fungal:bacterial balance.
- Mycorrhizal fungi – nutrient cycling, soil aggregation, management.
- Managing soil organic carbon.

2:15 – 2:30                      Coffee Break

2:30 – 3:15                      Organic prices market outlook – Brenda Tjaden - wheat, durum, feedgrains, oats, peas, chickpeas, beans/lentils, flax, rye, hemp, mustard

3:15 - 4:00                      Rethinking Soil Chemistry – Joel Williams

- Nutrient management from a biological perspective.
- Total, exchangeable, soluble nutrient pools – nutrients for plants vs nutrients for biology.
- Nutrient behaviour, synergies and antagonisms.
- Increasing nutrient use efficiencies and protecting soil life with carbon-nutrient complexes.

4:00 - 5:00                      Minimum tillage options in organic systems – facilitated by Terry Aberhart, Aberhart Farms and Sure Growth Technologies

5:00 – 7:00                      Cocktail Hour

## February 12

8:30 - 9:30                      Plant Management – Joel

- Seed treatment – minerals, microbes and carbon.
- Foliars – tips for a top foliar formulation.
- Biofertilisers & Biostimulants.
- IPM – understanding the foundation of plant health and resilience.

9:30 - 10:30                      Managing the transition years – Farmer Panel facilitated by Terry Betker, Backswath Management

10:30 - 10:45                      Coffee Break

10:45 - 11:30                      Soil and Tissue Interpretation case study and class discussion - Joel

11:30 – 12:15                      The sales process for organic grains - Brenda

- Liquidity, relationships and market development
- Quality and residue testing

- Forward planning and acreage-based production contracts
- Transportation and logistics considerations
- Rejection risk and payment terms

12:15 – 1: 00            Lunch

1:00 – 2:00            Economic thresholds – Farmer Panel facilitated by Garth Rempel, RBC

2:00 - 3:00            System Redesign

- ESR – efficiency, substitution, redesign.
- Designing with diversity – intercropping, cover crops and impacts on soil biota.
- Breeding next generation varieties for regenerative production systems - linking together plant genomes, phytobiomes and soil microbiomes.
- Agroecology – integrating ecology into agronomy.
- Integrating agroecology into economic sustainability and long-term ROI potential

3 – 3:30                Coffee and final Q&A with Joel

3:30 – 5                Facilitator Q&A Panel: Brenda to facilitate group discussion with panelists Terry Aberhart, Terry Betker an Garth Rempel

- Managing the agronomy of transitioning and organic farms
- Transition issues – working with neighbours, financiers and service providers
- Financing options and long-term financial planning