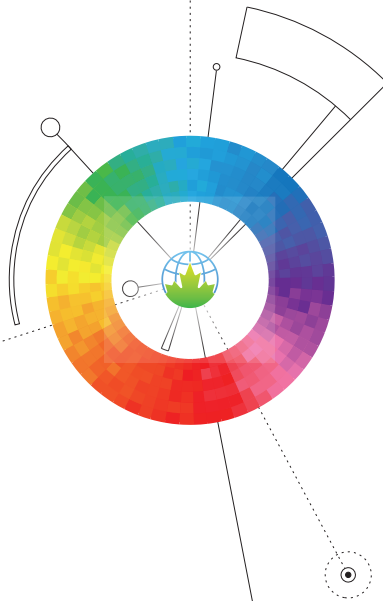


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# The Odd Couple: Farmers and Cleantech CEOs Growing the New Economy

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Comparing cleantech CEOs and traditional Canadian farmers might seem counterintuitive. But when it comes to establishing a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy, farmers are every bit as important as the producers of solar panels and electric cars.

In many ways, nature is the foundation of both farming and cleantech. Renewable energy and biomimicry directly harness the natural world for their products, as do crop production and livestock ranching. Because both industries share a dedication to sustainability and increased resource efficiency, the connection runs even deeper.

The ALUS (Alternative Land Use Services) program concept is as creative as turning garbage into electricity or carbon dioxide into cement. Invented by farmers in Manitoba, ALUS changes the terms of the conversation by recognizing the value of ecosystem services and having farmers produce them.

ALUS is a community-developed, farmer-delivered program that provides annual payments for the production of clean air, clean water, biodiversity, and other such ecosystem services. On-the-ground activities include wetland restoration and enhancement, planting trees and native species, and modifying agricultural practices to produce more wildlife such as grassland birds. All these activities have a considerable and measurable beneficial impact on flood- and drought-mitigation, water quality, carbon sequestration, pollinators, species at risk, and wildlife populations.

Combining the work of ALUS with clean-tech innovations will be an important part of our future economy. For instance, cleaning water through ALUS wetland and grassland projects coupled with greener-built infrastructure based on cleantech innovations will reduce costs. Likewise, Canada's vast agricultural landscapes provide many opportunities for renewable energy projects.

ALUS Canada has already established programs in twenty communities in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and PEI. Embraced by supporters who want to contribute to a healthier environment and a stronger economy, ALUS is now launching a unique funding stream, known as the New Acre Project, that connects buyers to acres producing ecosystem services. Like cleantech CEOs, ALUS farmers are looking ahead, embracing opportunities and doing their part to grow a new, climate-resilient economy for all Canadians



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