

Research Poster from the
Canadian Agricultural Innovation and Regulation Network (CAIRN)
Enabling Research for a Competitive Agriculture



Abstract CAIRN-02

Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) for the Management of Agricultural Research and Development Innovation Systems

Bill Boland and Peter Phillips

Department of Political Studies, University of Saskatchewan

My thesis analyzed the expanding use of Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) for the management of technologically-dependent agricultural innovation systems. The specific focus was the growing role of producer groups using crop-based levies to replace government funding of research and development (R&D) in order to support the continual development of new plant varieties and breeding technologies. Most of this effort was focused on the use of biotechnology in the context of two key crop commodities: pulses and canola. I wrote three peer-reviewed articles that are under review for publication.

The first article developed a new methodology using social network analysis to visually and statistically assess the critical role that P3s occupy in the regional, national, and global pulse-crop R&D innovation systems. The specific focus was the central role of the Saskatchewan Pulse Growers, an 18,000-strong producer-funded and managed P3, in developing the Western Canadian pulse sector as the dominant exporter of peas (accounting for 59% of total global exports) and of lentils (accounting for 68% of global exports). In 2009, pulse exports contributed \$2.1 billion to the Canadian economy (AAFC, 2009). The second article used a regression analysis to assess the role of producer P3s in the canola sector. This work demonstrated that where P3s engage in financing R&D, there are higher rates of knowledge development and technology transfer. This conclusion was reached by a citation analysis of published peer-reviewed Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) canola research papers, differentiating between those funded solely by internal sources and those involving external partners. This paper traced the evolution of producer P3s in financing the development of canola, a uniquely Canadian innovation that contributes \$14 billion in economic activity with almost \$3 billion in exports (SaskCanola, 2012). The third article was an International Development Research Centre (IDRC)-commissioned paper on the growing role of P3s in the international sector as a means of achieving food security and agricultural economic growth in the developing world. In the past 10 years, the use of P3s in the developing world as a means of transferring technologies and practices from the developed world to the developing world has grown by over 1000%. The research used a set of qualitative interviews with P3s and their partners to assess the key factors in successful P3s and best practices in structuring new partnerships.

The poster will provide a synopsis of each case study, followed by a discussion on the public policy should support the continued expansion of the use of producer P3s in Canadian agriculture.

Growing Canada's Agricultural Economy: The Role of Trade
3rd Annual Canadian Agriculture Policy Conference
January 23-25, 2013
Ottawa, Canada