

CAMA'S AGRI-MARKETER OF THE YEAR

As the Senior Vice-President of marketing in a multi-billion-dollar Crown corporation, **Lyndon Carlson** has lots of opportunity to have an impact on the profile of Canadian agriculture.

But don't be fooled by the title on his business card. It may get him in the door to connect with industry partners and make him a sought-after speaker at producer association meetings, but it's his warm smile, quick humour, engaging conversation and almost evangelical passion for the industry that leaves everyone he meets with the unshakeable impression that this guy loves what he does.

Doubt the future of the family farm? Carlson will tell you it's alive and well and that even though farms have continued to grow bigger and more sophisticated, one thing remains constant: virtually all farms are family farms, with the same core values that many of us hold close.

Wonder about opportunities for young people to get involved with the industry? Carlson will point to the huge demand for people with post-secondary agriculture training in research, finance, communications, processing, sales, service and yes, primary production.

Caught up in the stereotypes that farmers are slow to adapt to change, wary of technology or single-minded about doing things the way they've always been done? Carlson will tell you farmers are some of the most business savvy people you'll meet — and that the entrepreneurial nature of their business makes them natural innovators with a tremendous ability to mitigate risk, plan for success and embrace opportunity.

Just one conversation with Lyndon Carlson and you're bound to walk away with the notion that he knows his stuff — the people, the business and the industry.

Carlson's career with **Farm Credit Canada (FCC)** started some

30 years ago, with a field office position where he spent his days with Saskatchewan producers, helping their operations succeed and talking his favourite subject — agriculture.



Lyndon Carlson

Since then he has moved to different positions within the corporation, settling in marketing where today he leads a team of 100 employees responsible for product development, strategy and pricing, software sales, interactive services, learning programs and brand management.

During the past ten years, Carlson has led the corporation's marketing and brand-building efforts by growing and promoting product and service offerings that position FCC not just as a financial lender to the industry, but as a knowledge provider for those who work in it.

He recognized that FCC customers had little opportunity for ongoing training to sharpen their farm management skills and that his organization had the knowledge, connections and resources to fill this gap. Ten years later FCC learning programs have grown to include farm management training for customers and non-customers alike, free of charge, delivered through print and electronic material, in-person workshops and seminars, webinars, podcasts, instructional videos and events.

Carlson knew producers also needed tools to help them operate

efficiently and supported a move to add farm accounting software to FCC's offerings. A decade later, it's expanded to include a full farm management software program, with programs for field management, traceability, GPS and GIS.

Just this year, Carlson's commitment to strengthening the industry led to his passionate involvement in **Agriculture More Than Ever**, a multi-year, multi-partner initiative created to change the perceptions of agriculture. He travels the country presenting at conferences and conventions, farm shows and association meetings, encouraging others to join the cause, champion the industry, get involved and start telling the real story of agriculture.

Personally and professionally, Carlson strives for nothing shy of excellence. He is a founding chair of the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture and serves as a Director on the Board. He is also Past-President of the Canadian 4-H Foundation, which awarded him the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in May of this year for his tireless work on behalf of their organization.

Whether he's wearing his hat as volunteer, speaker, marketer, industry champion or formal leader at FCC, the agricultural industry and the people who love it are fortunate to have Lyndon Carlson on their team. His commitment to ag and personal leadership inspires others around him to find new and better ways to give their very best.

His belief in the positive things agriculture has to offer is contagious, helping to educate and inspire. He's likeable, fun, clever, compassionate, hard-working and wise. And when it comes to Canadian agriculture, he's one of the best damn champions an industry could have. **AM**