



## Agriculture & Fishing

*A new generation of community-based organizations is engaged in innovative farming and fishing practices. These sectors, particularly commercial fisheries, have experienced decline in Canada and continue to be highly susceptible to unpredictable weather patterns. The agriculture sector is experiencing increased growth in organic farming practices and niche markets are opening. In the fishing sector, value-added products are being developed. These successful initiatives have created opportunities for new learning and action.*

**Community-based organizations engaged in the agriculture and fishing sectors are undertaking innovative approaches to organizational structure, marketing, and education to create increased economic opportunities in sectors that have experienced decline.**

**There are four co-operatives working in this cluster as well as a First Nations' corporate entity and a non-profit CED community development organization.**

**In Phase I (1997-2000), CEDTAP supported emerging organizations in this area. The emphasis in Phase II (2001-2003) has been the strengthening of mature and growing organizations.**

**Niche markets include :**

- **goat milk & cheese production in Ontario**
- **abalone shellfish farming in British Columbia**
- **medicinal plant research and development in Québec's Gaspé region**
- **rural publications focusing on organic agriculture and rural entrepreneurship in Montebellard, Québec**
- **cattle leasing to create jobs and new revenue for a First Nations ranch in Saskatchewan**

**CEDTAP contributions range from:  
\$3,000 - \$20,000**

**CEDTAP offers a variety of technical services to organizations at different phases of development. The types of technical service accessed in this cluster include leadership skills training & development, a learning exchange and the development of new products & services.**



*“The project could not have been completed without the help of CEDTAP. Thunderchild First Nation is very pleased with the support received and the results of the work.”  
Len Taylor, General Manager, Thunderchild Investment Inc., 2002*

### Case Studies:

#### **Solidarity Co-operative of Rocher-Percé, Val d'Espoir, Québec**

Since 1997, the Solidarity Co-operative of Rocher-Percé has been working on renewing the agricultural sector in the Gaspé region of Québec. When the co-op secured 80 hectares of green-zone land, they decided to embark upon a sustainable agriculture strategy that included researching the economic possibilities of medicinal plants.

#### **Malcolm Island Shellfish Co-operative, Sointula, British Columbia**

In response to the downturn in traditional resource based industries including commercial fisheries, the Malcolm Island Shellfish Co-operative was established in 1997. The main goal is to grow, harvest and market abalone, which sells between \$50 and \$5,000. There are 108 community members and strong links within the coastal region, among interest groups and the federal government. The co-op studied international models from Australia and California before selecting pinto abalone, which needs a six-year growing cycle but is one of the most sought-after varieties. To attract outside financing, the co-op was restructured as a limited company, valued at 49% of its assets while 51% remains in the hands of the co-op shareholders.

### Other Community Partners:

#### **1997-2000:**

Table agroalimentaire du Haut-Saint-François, Québec  
Coopérative Générale de Rocher-Percé, Québec

#### **2001-2003:**

White Buffalo Ranch-Thunderchild Investments Inc., Prairies  
Mornington Heritage Cheese & Dairy Co-operative Inc., Ontario  
Solidarité rurale Abitibi-Témiscamingue, Québec

### The CEDTAP Contribution:

With three other similar projects underway in the Gaspé region, there was a real need to explore the role of this alternative agriculture practice. To this end the co-op members approached a number of partners, including CEDTAP, to help support a study tour to France.

The members visited the Drôme Valley, a region with a similar climate and home to a number of medicinal plant farms, in order to learn about adapting the practices to their communities in the Gaspé.

There was much interest in modeling the co-op's approach to hatchery technology, stock enhancement, conservation and enforcement. A training program, that will eventually serve the university community, was supported by CEDTAP. Technical assistance for the *Upland Abalone Modular Training Program* included technical writing, graphic design, marine-biology validation, and computer programming.



© Malcolm Island Shellfish Co-operative