

# CANADIAN TOTAL EXCELLENCE IN AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT (CTEAM):

## MANAGEMENT TRAINING FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

By Larry Martin

CTEAM aims to help farmers improve their management skills. Farmers, by definition, are CEO's of their businesses, so they have to take leadership in making decisions about strategy, finance, marketing, operations, human resources, succession and other business functions.

CTEAM provides training and best practices in all these areas during more than 20 intensive days of contact with management experts, plus more time on-line and by interacting with their peers. Participants receive one-on-one coaching from our experienced instructors and become part of a network of knowledgeable farm business managers in the country.

CTEAM is national in scope by exposing participants to successful agribusiness operations through tours during its four modules across Canada. It is **not** a commodity program: participants learn early that business is business. It's a mini-MBA program in which horticulture, cash grain and livestock operators find that they face similar problems of financial management, human resource management, succession and growth strategies, with

specific differences by type of farm.

CTEAM participants learn by applying course content to their own operations, starting with learning about business strategy by analyzing their own business environment. Similarly, the finance component is learned by calculating their own efficiency, liquidity, solvency and profitability ratios, seeing how they stack up against national and regional benchmarks, and what they mean for the strengths and weaknesses of their operations. Each subsequent module offers similar opportunities analysing their own business situation. When the course is completed, they will have developed a strategic and operational plan for their farm with which they can hit the ground running, greatly increasing the value of the course. And the planning process will keep paying off as it is applied over time.



## What Grads Say About CTEAM

In 2018 an evaluation of CTEAM was conducted by surveying graduates of the program since its start in 1998. They were asked to estimate the return on their investment in CTEAM in three ways: Did your farm's profits increase? Did your farm's organizational effectiveness increase? Did your personal managerial skills improve? In all three cases, graduates reflected a return on investment of 80% above costs. Most studies suggest that return on investment in agriculture is in the 6-8% range.

Increased profitability resulted from:

- Improved debt management
- Improved revenue
- Reduced costs
- Improved access to capital

Organizational effectiveness improved because of:

- Improved performance measurement – knowing how to properly measure the performance of the business and/or specific aspects of it
- Improved decision-making processes
- Stronger relationship with lenders
- Improved management proactivity in creating new business opportunities
- Improved communication of the management team.

Personal Skills/Attributes improved from:

- Improved ability to manage people
- Improved confidence in decision making ability
- Improved communication skills
- Improved leadership
- Improved competence in business management skills

"I would say it took us from being just farmers to being business managers. It gave us the tools to become managers vs. just being somebody just out there toying in the field."

Robert and Angela Semeniuk, Smoky Lake, Alberta

In addition to business management skills, all graduates also received intense personal and psychological benefits. Those most strongly underscored in the survey were:

- Improved mental health and stress reduction
- Improved self-confidence
- Improved family dynamics
- Improved home/life/work balance

---

*"I want you to know how much CTEAM has changed my life! I met with my doctor of 31 years recently, so she knows me well. She could absolutely not believe I was participating in this program. That I talked in front of people almost brought her to tears!!"*

*"I not only feel confident in these types of situations now but feel I can now make a difference on our farm."*

Mari-Lee

Runnalls

New Liskeard, Ontario



# A FINAL NOTE

The two major push backs we get about CTEAM are “It costs too much” and “It’s too much time away from home”.

As can be seen in the information about graduates’ return on investment, the cost is low compared to the benefit: how many six-figure machinery investments have an 80+% return on investment? Compared to other educational programs and conferences, it is quite inexpensive on a contact hour basis.

Last year we examined the possibility of reducing CTEAM to three modules which would both reduce the amount of time away from home and its cost.

We surveyed a number of our graduates. 100% said don’t do it because getting away from the day-to-day and looking at the big picture is one of the best aspects of the program. We then presented the lower time, more on-line, lower cost alternative to the current class after their first module. They said the value is very high and, without hesitation, chose to stay with the four module model.

So, we continue to offer the longer, higher priced course because it provides the best value.

---

## **REGISTER FOR CTEAM HERE:**

<https://www.agrifoodtraining.com/for-producers-cteam>

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

*Larry Martin*  
*AME Principal*  
*[larry@agrifoodtraining.com](mailto:larry@agrifoodtraining.com)*  
*519-841-1698*

*Heather Broughton*  
*AME Principal*  
*[heather@agrifoodtraining.com](mailto:heather@agrifoodtraining.com)*  
*780-781-2840*

