



# ***Seed an Idea***

**Final Report to Parkland County – March 2013  
Multicultural Heritage Centre**

**An Agriculture Education Initiative in Partnership with Parkland County**

**ZEPHYR**  
**Zephyr Ventures Inc.**

## ***Phases of Seed an Idea***

### **Phases of Seed an Idea**

**Phase One** – Working with Youth to Gauge Their Interest in Agriculture Entrepreneurship and What Support They Require

**Phase Two** – Developing a Program that Allows for 24/7 Access and Support for Youth Starting a Business and Helping a Group of Youth to Start Their Own Businesses

**Phase Three** – Collecting Data on What Physical Resources Are Required to Support Local Youth in Starting Their Business

**Phase Four** – Building Physical Resources for Incubating Youth Businesses

This report is based on Phase One of the Seed an Idea project.

## ***Recommendation***

It is the recommendation of the Multicultural Heritage Centre **not to proceed** with Phase Two through Phase Four of the *Seed an Idea* project.

Phase One was purposely incorporated to gauge interest and to see if there is a need and desire from the youth in Parkland County to engage in agricultural entrepreneurship opportunities, and if they require support systems to assist them through the process. A part of this enquiry was to educate the youth on what agriculture related businesses are and allow them to make educated decisions on whether they would be interested or not.

Based on the small number of responding students, interest is not sufficient to proceed with the initiative. The majority of participation was arms-length (online) with negative feedback to starting an agricultural business received from local youth. We did not proceed with the final deliverable as it was evident the project would not be going forward based on limited interest from the targeted client group. The Heritage Agricultural Society will return to Parkland County the funds assigned for preparation of the Youth Action Plan.

## Financial Reporting

### Deliverables

Deliverable	Update on Deliverable
25 Students to participate in Phase 1	<p>106 unique youth were involved in gaining information on Seed an Idea – youth entrepreneurship, agriculture and support required</p> <p>A further 30 young adults were polled asking about agriculture and living in rural Alberta</p> <p>20 businesses located in rural Alberta were polled</p> <p>12 Parents in rural Alberta were polled</p>
6 Youth Meetings – one in each division, high schools or with other organizations. Deliver 6 live meetings, recorded and streamed live and then posted online for 24/7 access.	<p>We delivered 6 Speaker Events. 5 were presented live online and accessible via Seed an Idea website or YouTube channel. 1 event was presented live at Memorial Composite High School to their Entrepreneurship Class</p>
2 Youth Field Trips	<p>We will run 1 Youth Field Trip but visit three local businesses with the Memorial Composite High School Entrepreneurship Class</p> <p>Businesses Visited:</p> <p>Blarney Stone Farms</p> <p>Carvel Store</p> <p>Home Grown</p>
Visual Identity	The program is well branded
Entrepreneurship Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A website focused on businesses youth could start today with a \$3000 loan in partnership with Community Futures or using their own funding</li> <li>- The website educates youth on learning what are agriculture related businesses – not necessarily just traditional farming types of businesses</li> <li>- The website will also provide basic</li> </ul>

	steps required in order to start a business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The website features our animated video with key messages for the program</li> <li>- The website features videos on our speaker series</li> </ul>
Youth Action Plan	N/A
Place Youth on Ag and Rural Life Advisory Committee	2 youth were placed on the committee
Final Report to HAS	Delivered February 2013 as requested

### **Budget**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Paid</b>	<b>Date</b>
Project Management	\$20,000	\$20,000	June 26, 2012
Marketing	\$10,000	\$10,000	Sept 27, 2012
Youth Action Plan	\$10,000	\$0.00	
Social Media	\$4,800	\$5,000	Sept 27, 2012
Youth Meetings/ Field Trips	\$5,000	\$0.00	
Websites	\$10,200	\$10,200	Dec 27, 2012
Administration	\$15,000	\$15,000	Dec 27 2012
GST	\$0.00	\$1,130	Dec 27, 2012
Total	\$75,000.00	\$61,330.00	(\$13,670)

Zephyr Ventures Inc. (Kathy Rondeau – Principle) was contracted by the Heritage Agricultural Society to fulfill this project and deliverables. Drive Solutions (Lance Johnson – Principle) was sub-contracted by Zephyr Ventures Inc. for portions of the contract.

The Heritage Agricultural Society terminated the project prior to embarking on the Youth Action Plan as the outcome had become evident and it was deemed to be financially imprudent to proceed. The Heritage Agricultural Society will reimburse Parkland County for unexpended funds in the amount of \$13,670. If desired, the Heritage Agricultural Society will provide suggestions for reinvestment of this money into other organizational programs or initiatives.

# Zephyr Final Report to the Heritage Agricultural Society

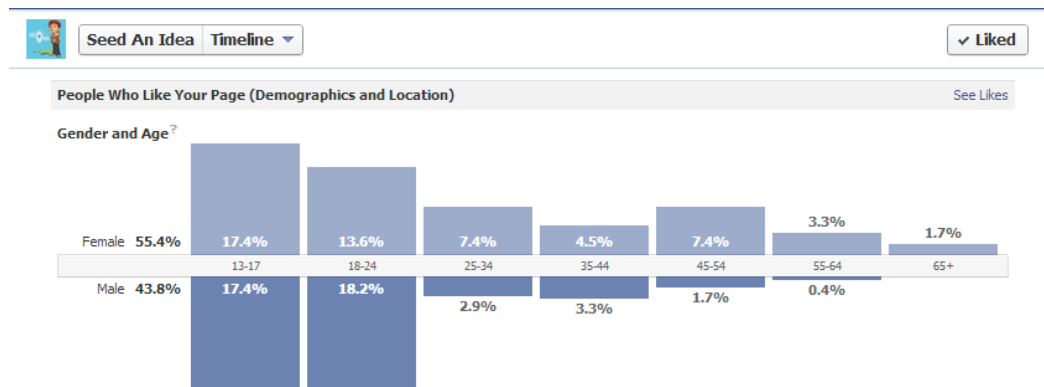
## February 2013

### Seed an Idea- Data feedback

#### Facebook

##### 242 Likes

The majority of Seed an Idea Facebook Likes were from the demographic age we were targeting – 13 -17 year old youth. The second largest group was from 18 – 24 year olds. We did advertise in order to gain this amount of Likes within 6 months. Ads were targeted at Friends of Friends that had Liked our Page. We did expect more as our videos were very popular. The youth seem hesitant to click that ‘Like’ button. When Zephyr asked the youth involved in Seed an Idea if they normally ‘Liked’ Pages, they indicated they didn’t - even if they did like the Page.



Based on limited interest from the targeted client group, the majority of our Likes came from Edmonton. The second largest location was Stony Plain, which would also include the region around Stony Plain. It was a very close second and we feel very successful for getting this reach. Because of the viral way that Facebook works, friends of friends (family also making up a portion of ones friends) – the Page was also quite popular in Saskatchewan.



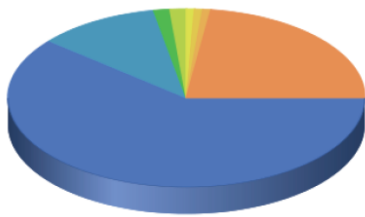
## Twitter

### *198 Followers*

If you want to work with youth, Social Media is a must. Facebook and YouTube are the most popular sites for youth. Twitter hasn't caught on so much. We used Twitter as a means to ask questions during the Speaker Series, and it was also an easy way to reach other organizations interested in youth, entrepreneurship and agriculture. With 61% of our Followers in Canada, this was quite successful as Twitter can't be targeted as regionally as Facebook – more a worldwide audience. As we can't target as well on Twitter as we can on Facebook and YouTube, Twitter wasn't our focus other than for questions. We chose not to do advertising or promotions on Twitter. Our Followers grew only via our postings. 198 Followers without paying for them or advertising is a great result for 6 months of activity.

SeedanIdr

Clicks by Region



Region	Clicks
Canada	61% (83)
United States	11% (15)
United Kingdom	1.5% (2)
Jamaica	1.5% (2)
Romania	0.7% (1)
Chile	0.7% (1)
Mexico	0.7% (1)
Others	22.8% (31)

## YouTube

12 Videos made up our Speaker Series and animated videos promoting Seed an Idea. There were a total of 10,742 views with none of the viewers marked as over 24 years of age. Impressions were 137,460. This means that 1 in every 13 people that saw our ad watched the video. The ad was only viewable by people residing in the Parkland County area. These are beyond amazing statistics. Reaching youth via videos is definitely the way to get to them. The videos started going up in November 2012 and ended in February 2013. These stats are over a 4-month period of time. Again, a huge success! For each of the Speaker presentations, on average there were 3 questions sent in via YouTube, Twitter or text messaging during or after each presentation.

### **Seed an Idea Website**

[www.seedanidea.ca](http://www.seedanidea.ca) is viewed an average of 164 times per month.

The website contains:

- Starting a Business – explains what is required to start a business
- How to Get Started – quick links to get started and encouragement to contact us for help
- Business Ideas – Organized by Categories, then a Business Sample, How it is related to agriculture, How they can start a business like this
- Events Blog – has our speaker series
- Register Form
- Contact Us information

### **Various Polls:**

#### **Polling for Interest in Seed an Idea**

36 Youth Were Polled – Age Ranged from Youth in Grades 10 – 12

We polled the youth on whether they had a job or not and if their job related experience affected their desire to own their own business.

64% of the youth currently had a job

47% of youth have had a difficult time applying for and securing a job

25% of the youth had never applied for a job before

When asked what were the three most important factors to having a job here, the top three answers were:

77% indicated the most important reason for having a job was to earn money

Second most important was To Learn Responsibility and,

Third was to Gain Experience.

41% of this group indicated they wanted to start up their own business;

38% weren't sure and 22% were not interested in starting their own business

100% of the youth interested in starting their own business would also like assistance – a program that would take them through the steps for starting their business.

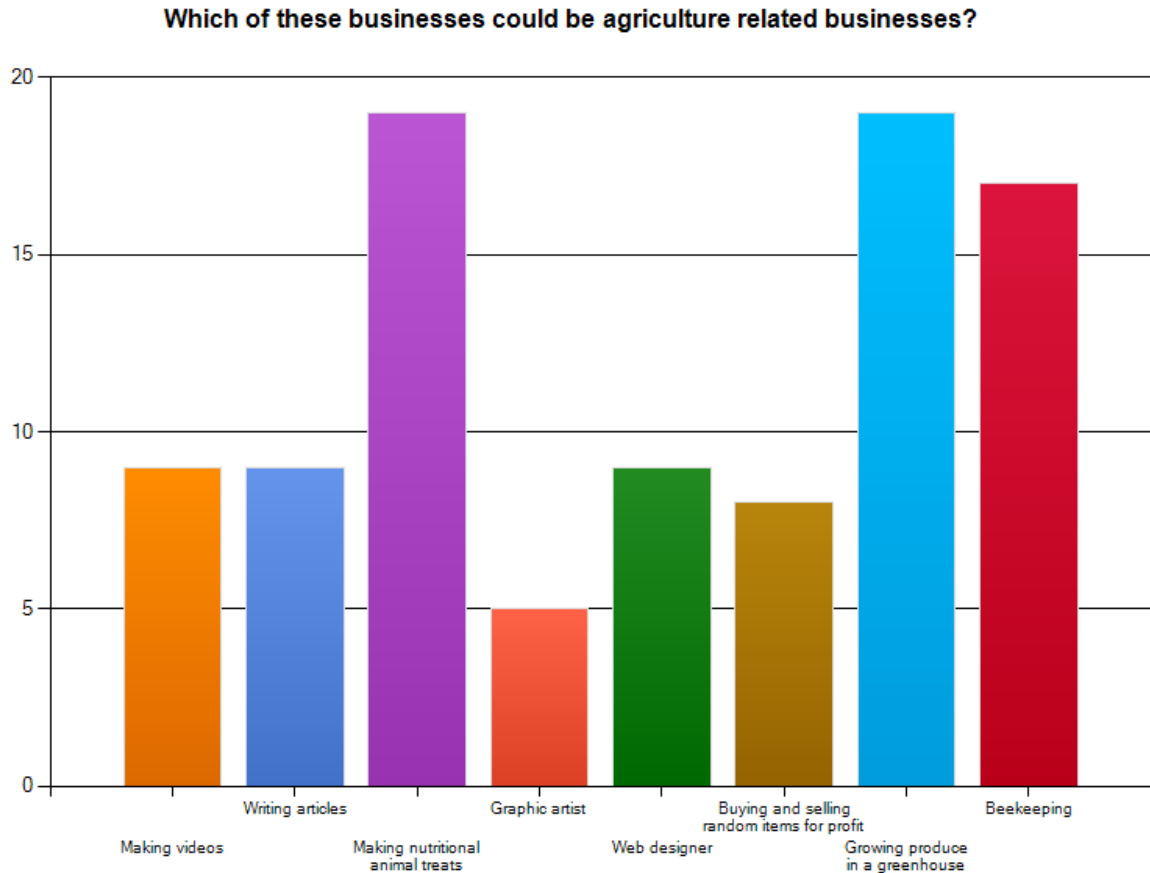
When asked how Seed an Idea would benefit the community – here are their responses:

- By making more businesses
- A larger number of small businesses might start up, boosting the economy.
- This would benefit the community because there would be more opportunities for people to get jobs



- It would help people that need job understand that starting a business is possible
- It will create businesses.
- It would help to bring new job opportunities and also more stores to shop at.
- It would be fun.
- People can start more businesses
- High School students would have a better idea of how businesses are run and earn a greater respect for business owners.
- More young people may want to stay in the town instead of moving to the city.
- To give kids a chance to learn.
- I think it would supply a lot of teenagers with more job opportunities and other teenagers with fulfilling their dreams.
- For youth to start taking responsibility and learning how to be business people.
- Both of my brothers are going into university right now and they are both going to get a business degree and I know that they would of really appreciated a course like this when they where my age.

Out of the 36 youth polled, the chart below indicates what the youth view as whether the businesses mentioned could be related to agriculture. The highest and most obvious business was the 'Growing Produce in a Greenhouse' with only 19/36 youth believing that this was an agriculture related business. Probably the most shocking was only 17/36 youth thought that Beekeeping was agriculture related. Youth are very disconnected on what businesses could be agriculture related. It was only through one on one conversation that helped youth to understand that most business ideas could have a niche market in agriculture.



### **Youth Interested in Seed an Idea**

49 Youth - Age Ranges were from 13 – 18 years of age.

*19 Paper Registrations; 8 Online Registrations; 22 Live Participants via Memorial Composite High School (these youth had a live speaker and went on a field trip)*

100% of these youth are interested in Entrepreneurship or assisting with Phase 2 – Game Development. Memorial Composite High School students will not be completing the survey until after their field trip on March 6.

### **Youth Polled that Were Not Enrolled in Seed an Idea**

23 Youth – age ranges from 15 – 18 years of age.

33% of random youth surveyed were interested in entrepreneurship.

We asked youth what came to mind when they thought of agriculture to see if they still viewed agriculture as farmers and fields – and that is what the results were. The top three words were:

***Farming, animals, fields***

Unless they have interest in one of these areas, they probably won't be interested in agriculture. These same answers came from everyone we surveyed. Some respondents

didn't want to answer the question as they couldn't think of any agriculture related words.

When asked if they would consider a business or career in agriculture:

100% of the youth responded No.

60% of the youth don't remember learning anything about agriculture in school.

25% of the youth plan on living in rural Alberta in their adult lives.

### **We also polled people that would be influencing youth:**

#### **Local Businesses**

We met with over 20 businesses throughout the county:

90% of the businesses within the county understood that their business related to agriculture in some way. Some businesses, even if they were related to agriculture, didn't immediately recognize it.

100% of those polled used the word 'Farm' to describe agriculture.

100% also said they ran businesses in rural Alberta for the 'lifestyle'.

33% indicated that they hired youth.

### **Challenges**

Some of the challenges in running a business in rural Alberta:

- Internet connectivity – not able to get reliable connection or high enough download speed
- Long hours – too hard of work
- Hard to get workers
- Cell phones don't work
- Seasonal business
- Not enough customer base

Other comments:

- Never going to make a lot of money running a business in rural Alberta
- Advice to youth – get a good job in the city – work a 5 day/week job

### **Youth that Moved Away**

Over 20 young adults were polled on why they left rural Alberta.

Reasons they left:

- Found a job in Edmonton
- The commute is too time consuming
- Going to Post Secondary

Do they plan on returning to rural?

100% responded they have no plans to living in rural Alberta again.

Why don't they want to live in rural locales?

- Job is in the city
- Friends are in the city
- Poor Internet connection in rural Alberta
- Poor Cell phone service in rural Alberta
- Restaurants, activities, etc. are better in the city
- If you go out and party, you can't even take a cab home
- It's just more convenient to live in the city
- There is nothing to do in rural Alberta

100% responded that they wouldn't consider a career related to agriculture.

### **Young Adults that Live in Parkland County**

We only polled 10 young adults.

- Young Adults were provided financial support from the family to be able to live close to family (90% - either by providing shelter or helping them to purchase)
- Internet and cell connectivity is not as good as in the city and is a frustration
- Top three reasons they want to live in rural Alberta:
  - o family,
  - o its peaceful, and
  - o the lifestyle

### **Parents in Rural Alberta**

We received 12 responses. Here are the results:

- 100% of the adults polled had children who were exposed to agriculture as they were growing up
- 100% of the adults felt that they were in agriculture related businesses
- 50% of the adults felt that they would encourage their children to have careers in agriculture
- 80% of the adults want their children to have careers that they have an interest in whether agriculture related or otherwise. The remaining adults have succession plans and want their children to remain in family related agriculture businesses.

### **Adults Working in Schools or School Related Positions**

Zephyr met with a representative from Parkland School Division. They would encourage assisting with an agriculture entrepreneurship program, but it would take a lot of speaking engagements and education of the decision makers.

## ***Other***

One of our youth was part of the round table meetings with the Minister of Education – and one of the three educational focuses is entrepreneurship. There is a lot of support and interest in developing entrepreneurship in our province and through education, however, many of the youth and Memorial Composite High School lost interest when we started talking about agriculture entrepreneurship. From Zephyr's work on the Seed an Idea project we can report that entrepreneurship and support for youth with business ideas and startup are greatly desired. To encourage agriculture as a niche market for business will take a lot of education and will be a slow process.

In speaking with youth not in agriculture, it seems there is still segregation between people that are in agriculture and those that are not. Youth still see agriculture as farmers and fields and feel there isn't a lot of money. The news feeds them stories of hardship for the farmers and it doesn't seem like a prosperous business choice. They view agriculture as a lot of hard work that includes a lot of risks for little return. Because they haven't experienced the lifestyle, living that lifestyle isn't a draw for them.

## ***Zephyr's Recommendations***

73 out of 106 youth (69%) that we surveyed were interested in entrepreneurship.

Support for entrepreneurship is required in our community. More education on agriculture related businesses and having agriculture as a niche starting market is needed. We did this at every opportunity but didn't notice any movement in changing youth's opinions, as we weren't able, at time of this report, to complete the final survey to see the movement. This may come from Drive Solutions Inc. after the field trip with the youth from the Entrepreneurship Class at Memorial Composite High School.

Using videos and social media is a must for reaching youth. Zephyr works with many established businesses providing social media professional services and none of our clients have ever experienced the results we were able to achieve on YouTube in such a limited time. Social media results aimed at youth are dramatically different than results targeted at adults.

In talks with 4H – they indicate that they will be proceeding with developing a program to support youth entrepreneurs. In communication with Agripathways (Federal government program) they also have plans to build out an agriculture entrepreneurship support program. It doesn't seem to make sense to compete with such large and well-recognized organizations that will support agriculture entrepreneurship.