

Ag-West Bio-Bulletin June 2010

BIO Convention a good investment

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Team Saskatchewan returned from BIO 2010 in Chicago satisfied that the trip was well worth it.

BIO is the world's largest gathering of companies, researchers and investors in the biotech industry. The theme of this year's show : *Fulfilling the Promise*, refers to industry advances in both pharma and agriculture.

The show was smaller than some years, but with registration totalling 15,322 (from 49 states and 65 countries), there were plenty of opportunities for new contacts to be made and existing relationships to be fostered. According to BIO organizers, a record number of [partnering meetings](#) were held this year.



Ag-West Bio hosted the Saskatchewan booth and organized the trip with funding from [Enterprise Saskatchewan](#), bringing a delegation that included companies, researchers and business development groups: [AdeTherapeutics](#), [Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization](#), [Saskatchewan Regional Economic Development Authority](#), [Saskatchewan Research Council](#), [Prairie Plant Systems](#), [Canadian Light Source](#), [ABIC 2010](#). Innovation Place also contributed to the booth at BIO.

(Photo: Wilf Keller, president & CEO for Ag-West Bio, congratulates Firebike winner Paul Brennan.

The booth served as home-base and allowed Saskatchewan participants to focus on meeting as many people as they could during the busy days of sessions and networking. A Saskatchewan-made "Firebike" drew visitors to the booth and served as a conversation starter. Paul Brennan from BioWest Therapeutics in BC was the lucky winner.

Canada registered over 700 attendees for the conference, with federal and provincial government representation, including Tony Clement (Minister of Industry), Jean Charest (Premier of Quebec), Ed Stelmach (Premier of Alberta) and Robert Ghiz (Premier of Prince Edward Island), along with six provincial Ministers and other officials.

Saskatchewan participants agree that political involvement is vital for the province to be seen as a legitimate player in the global biotech industry. The presence of government representatives at BIO would add tremendous value for participants, allowing inclusion in certain meetings and portraying the province as positive and welcoming to the life science industry.

Brent Zettl, president and CEO of Prairie Plant Systems, says he's amazed at the level of cooperation between the private and public sectors. "Governments are supporting their life science industries to ensure success— this was evident at BIO." He notes that an important aspect of the conference is competitive intelligence gathering: "It's critical to understand what the world needs so we put our energy into areas that add value. The entire world is changing at a dizzying pace; the lines are blurring between pharma and agriculture and there's a new harmonization in the life sciences."

Sanj Singh, CEO of AdeTherapeutics feels that the BIO Convention, particularly the Bio Partnering Forum and the networking opportunities, such as the CEO Reception and many other events, are priceless and a highly effective investment. "BIO has been instrumental in the development of our company, identifying key partners, earning credibility and recruiting key management personnel and advisory board members. 80% of success is showing up."

Wilf Keller, president and CEO of Ag-West Bio, says as long as the province asks for our help to bring a delegation to BIO and the participants find value in attending, Ag-West is willing to do the work. "BIO offers excellent opportunities for building relationships, establishing collaborations and accessing emerging technologies. Participation in this world-class event is a worthwhile investment for both public and private sector organizations."

Planning for next year has already started.

For more on BIO 2010, go to <http://convention.bio.org>