

Young Canadians share their IFAJ experiences

A desire to meet people and learn about agriculture in a different country took two Canadian agricultural communications students to the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists (IFAJ) world congress.

Christine Eisler and Kevin Hood (pictured right) from the University of Guelph spent almost a week in Hamar, Norway, in August, taking part in professional development sessions and tours. They learned about the congress when IFAJ Norway mainstay Mari Bjorke was in Canada on business, and guest lectured to their class through a connection with their professor Owen Roberts, who is also the IFAJ's vice president for professional development and education.



Christine and Kevin had the chance to meet agricultural journalists and communicators from 24 countries when they were in Norway, and earned an experiential education credit in the process. They recently gave a presentation on their trip to their class to share their experiences and to encourage other young communicators to become involved in the IFAJ.

They will also be making a presentation to the Canadian Farm Writers' Federation (CFWF) at its 2007 annual conference, as Canada prepares to host the IFAJ event in five years' time. The 2011 event will be based in Guelph, with pre- and post-conference tours likely to the Maritimes and Western Canada.

"It was a great experience to be able to represent Canada at such a prestigious international event," Christine said. "It's important for young agricultural communicators to get involved in groups like the IFAJ, both to build our networks and to promote our craft."

To find out more about the trip visit their blog at <http://ifaj2006norway.blogspot.com/>