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University of Lethbridge to present agriculture leader Cor Van Raay with Honorary Degree

The University of Lethbridge Senate is honoured to announce it is recognizing Alberta agriculture innovator and entrepreneur Cor Van Raay with a 2015 Honorary Degree.

“Cor Van Raay has meant so much to agriculture and the world of agribusiness in southern Alberta, and we are thrilled to highlight his contributions to the region with an honorary degree,” says University of Lethbridge Chancellor Janice Varzari. “His entrepreneurial spirit is truly unique and has established his operations as an industry leader. Beyond that, Cor Van Raay has always been committed to bettering his community through charity, philanthropy and the furthering of education.”



The U of L will present Cor Van Raay with the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*, at the Fall 2015 Convocation ceremony on Saturday, October 17, 2015 at 10 a.m. in the 1st Choice Savings Centre for Sport and Wellness.

Cor Van Raay

Agricultural innovator and entrepreneur Cor Van Raay has made a significant impact on farming, ranching and livestock production in Alberta.

Originally from Holland, Van Raay began farming in Iron Springs, Alta. 50 years ago with a half-section of cropland and a small herd of Holstein cattle. Since then, he has built one of the largest and most successful cattle production and feedlot operations in the country. His agriculture endeavours over the last five decades have included co-

founding a grain company in the 1980s, and becoming a majority owner of a highly successful John Deere dealership.

His big-picture thinking, intellectual curiosity and strong work ethic have not only enabled him to greatly advance Cor Van Raay Farms, but to do so in an ecologically sustainable fashion. Today he is recognized as a leader in the agriculture industry and his noteworthy achievements in cattle farming have earned him accolades such as a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Alberta Cattle Feeders Association and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Van Raay's passion for agribusiness is not confined to the borders of his farmstead. His vision is a future where agriculture, an enterprise on which the southern Alberta economy was established, continues to be an attractive career option for young people. Further, he seeks to ensure that agriculture, regardless of the size of the operation, remains a significant force in our economy. Early in 2015, he gave the University of Lethbridge and Lethbridge College \$5 million to jointly establish the Cor Van Raay Southern Alberta Agribusiness Program. Designed to provide leading-edge training in agribusiness practices, the program will focus on agricultural economics, entrepreneurship and innovation.

Van Raay's commitment to community is further reflected by his many other philanthropic gifts and charitable activities. Over the years, he has made generous donations to organizations such as the Chinook Regional Hospital Foundation, the Helen Schuler Nature Centre, the Interfaith Food Bank Society of Lethbridge and the YMCA.

In addition, he has funded a number of scholarships at the University, including the Cor Van Raay AGILITY Scholarship in Agriculture and Agribusiness, and two Faculty of Management scholarships, including one that was created in memory of his late wife, Christine, who passed away in 2006.

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