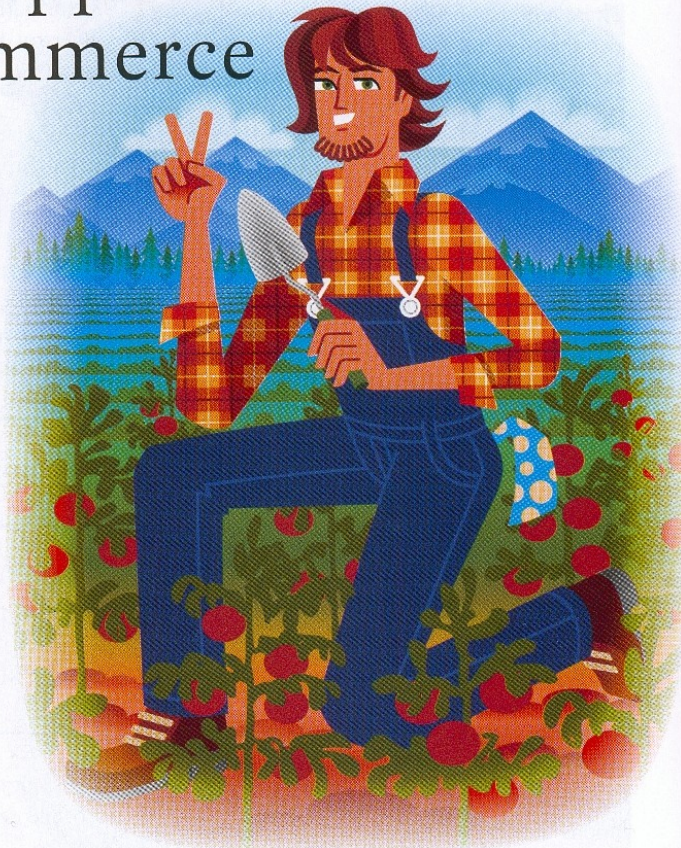


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Growing support for eco-commerce

ANDREW FRANK AIMS TO BE THE McDONALD'S OF THE HUMANITARIAN MOVEMENT



By Janet Gunn, Journalism '97

Like most students in final year of university, **Andrew Frank, Radio and Television Arts '04**, stayed up many a night to cram for exams and complete assignments. It wasn't the only battle Andrew was fighting in the early hours of the morning.

He was also on another mission—to save an endangered part of the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia.

“There were plans to build a power substation in the Antelope Brush Grasslands, which is one of Canada’s most endangered ecosystems,” he says. “So in the middle of the night, because of the time difference, I made a lot of phone calls and sent a lot of e-mails to local politicians.”

In the end, the project was approved by just one vote, but the experience made Andrew realize what had to be done to raise awareness of environmental issues. “I like to describe it as a leaky garden hose,” he says. “This one fight was a leak, but what I have to do is go to the source and turn off the tap.”

After graduating last June and receiving a Ryerson Gold Medal (the University’s highest academic award), Andrew is back in the sunny Okanagan. He has kept busy growing basil, beans, tomatoes, and peppers on Canada’s first virtual farm, so called because it borrows land to cultivate crops.

It’s all part of a “big idea” that has turned into a federally incorporated, non-profit organization called Eat for Peace, which aims to introduce people to new, ecologically responsible lifestyle choices and raise awareness of biodiversity issues.

Andrew’s hope is that Eat for Peace will become the “McDonald’s of humanitarianism and the Starbucks of the social profit movement.”

“We are looking for farmers and landowners to loan vacant portions of their land so we can grow organic crops,” explains Andrew. “The crops will be served in the form of ecologically sustainable meal choices at our eco-café’s, which are kind of like Tim Hortons meets The Body Shop. It’s the missing interface for the average Joe who wants to eat healthy and do good, but doesn’t know how.” Andrew hopes to have the first eco-café up and running in Vancouver this year.

Putting his video production skills to use, Andrew says the eco-café’s will also be a media outlet where customers learn through video about local ecological issues and see exactly what their dollars are supporting.

“Media production is integral to Eat for Peace,” says Andrew. “My skill set in radio and television arts allows me to reach more people and make a difference in society.”

For now, Andrew is focused on growing and cultivating – growing food for his fellow Canadians and cultivating support for Eat for Peace. “There is a certain beauty in coming home and farming,” he says. But the real beauty will be the success of Eat for Peace, which Andrew hopes will turn his big idea into reality.

For more information on Eat for Peace, visit www.eatforpeace.org