

George Leroux – A profile

George consults with and invests in organizations in the food sector and serves on the boards of several organizations. He works with senior managers to develop their general management skills, facilitates strategic planning, provides strategic and financial analysis advice, and assists organizations address difficult and contentious organizational issues. George has refined his skills of understanding and balancing multiple interests and demands, and builds on his strong business analysis skills with well developed communication, facilitation, governance and listening skills.

George was born in Vancouver B.C., and grew up on several mixed farming operations in the Lower Fraser Valley near Vancouver, B.C. Between graduating from high school in 1972 and entering the Ivey Business School in 1984, George worked in agriculture, construction and forestry. He also attended the University of British Columbia and the University of Saskatchewan as he pursued his interests in agriculture, ecology, rangeland management, plant genetics, and forestry.

In 1986, George joined Cold Springs Farm, an Ontario-based vertically integrated agri-food business with business operations in Ontario and Michigan in turkey production and processing, hog production and processing, grain trading, feedmilling, agricultural supply, farm equipment, crop and beef cattle production, and construction together with land development activities in Ontario and Florida. George rose through the company, serving as President & CEO from 1994 until the business was sold in 2003.

Leadership of Cold Springs provided George with a unique perspective on the agri-food sector. He led the transformation of a company from being a production-focused and fragmented business to being a market-focused, vertically aligned value chain connecting farming families with the food distribution market. George worked with all parts of the business, guiding the management team to co-operate and co-ordinate between the “two solitudes”, farming and processing, and leading them to function as one. In 2003 the business was sold to J.M. Schneider Corporation.

Since 2003 George has worked closely with a group of food processing companies in B.C. He and his wife Kelly live on Pender Island where they are rehabilitating an orchard and operate a small market garden.

Synopsis of Activities and Experience

Current Activities

- Principal, Toque One Investments (management consulting)
- Chair, Vitalus Nutrition Inc., Abbotsford, B.C.
- Chair, Vanderpols Eggs Ltd., Abbotsford, B.C.
- Chair, Sandel Foods Inc., Chilliwack, B.C.
- Chair, Vanderpol Enterprises Inc., Abbotsford, B.C.
- Chair, Natural Homegrown Foods Ltd. (Hardbite), Maple Ridge, B.C.
- Chair, Advisory Board - Heppells Potato Corp., Cloverdale, B.C.

Professional Experience

- Management Consultant, 2002 – present.

- Cold Springs Farm Limited, Thamesford, Ontario: President and C.E.O., (1994 – 2002), Vice President, (1991 – 1994), Manager, Turkey Operations, (1986 – 1991),
- Range Agrologist, B.C. Ministry of Forests, Williams Lake, 1981 – 1984.

Education

- M.B.A., Ivey Business School, University of Western Ontario, 1984.
- B. Sc. (Agr), University of British Columbia, 1976.
- Unclassified, Forest Ecology, University of British Columbia, 1980/81.
- M. Sc. (incomplete), Plant Genetics, University of Saskatchewan, 1978/79.

Previous Activities

- Director, Paul Ecke Ranch, Encinitas, Calif – 2006 – 2011.
- Chair, B.C. Hog Commission – 2008 – 2011.
- Chair, B.C. Vegetable Marketing Commission – 2005 - 2008.
- Fellow and Instructor, George Morris Centre, 2002 – 2007.
- Director, Chair of Audit, North Waterloo Farmers Mutual Insurance Co, 1999 – 2006.
- Chair, Ontario Greenhouse Vegetable Growers, 2003 – 2004.
- President, CEO & Director, Cold Springs Farm Limited, 1994 – 2003.
- Member, Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission, 1995 – 2001.
- Industry representative / Director, Canadian Turkey Marketing Agency, 1991 – 1996.
- Member / Director, Canadian Poultry and Egg Processors Council, 1991 – 1996.