

Leading the growth
of Saskatchewan's agri-food industry

Annual Report 2020

VISION

The leader in advancing Saskatchewan's agri-food industry.

MISSION

To provide expertise and services enabling our agri-food industry to develop new products and market opportunities through innovative processing technologies and training.

CREATE
CONNECT
COMMERCIALIZE



CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



Over the past several years, the Food Centre has proactively been at the forefront of the plant-based protein market. The Food Centre has positioned Saskatchewan to lead this movement.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we are proud of how the Food Centre adapted and demonstrated resilience to the challenges of this past year. As COVID-19 put a halt on most commercial operations, the food industry is a sector that has not encountered any significant shutdowns. In fact, the Food Centre saw an increase in the use of its services, from interim processing through to project development.

April saw the Food Centre complete its phase 1 expansion, an additional 12,200 square feet providing space for a commercial extrusion line, increased processing capacity and extra storage. Phase 2 expansion will commence in 2021 with the development of additional space to house a dedicated fermentation and ingredient processing suite, and maintenance shop. The expansion was made possible through funding from Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan as part of the Canadian Agricultural Partnership to strengthen and grow Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector.

The Board would also like to pass along congratulations to Dan Prefontaine for being presented with the Pulse Supporter Award from the Saskatchewan Pulse Growers

Association. Dan was chosen for his many years of work and leadership increasing the use of pulse ingredients in food products. His efforts to help increase the utilization of Saskatchewan pulse ingredients in food products around the globe, resulted in the first twin-screw extrusion technology in the province, development of a culture of pulse innovation at the Food Centre, and construction of the Agri-Food Innovation Centre.

Over the past several years, the Food Centre has proactively been at the forefront of the plant-based protein market. New technologies acquired last year and the development of new services have enhanced the Food Centre's capabilities to assist the industry in this alternative protein revolution. The Food Centre has positioned Saskatchewan to lead this movement.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Directors of the Food Centre Board for their dedication and commitment. Also a fond farewell to outgoing Board members, Rick Green and Rodelle Genoway. Their role in the board was greatly appreciated.

In closing, a huge thank you to Dan Prefontaine for his tireless leadership during this challenging year. Kudos to the staff for their commitment and hard work this year to provide the same high quality service to the industry during the pandemic. Food Centre operations were able to quickly pivot to meet client needs while continuing to advance the Food Centre's strategic priorities. The Food Centre's reputation for excellence and innovation is stronger than ever. With support from government, strategic industry partnerships, and enhanced expertise, the Food Centre will continue to make huge impacts in the agri-food industry.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Skotheim'.

JASON SKOTHEIM

Globally, this has been a year of unprecedented challenges and changes, both at home and work.

Although as the food processing industry remained as an essential service; the ripple effects of COVID-19 such as new controls in food manufacturing plants, outbreaks, supply shortages and shifting consumer demands on food products made it a challenging year for the Food Centre. It has been demanding for staff but together we did it. Over the past year, we have forged new partnerships, supported entrepreneurial aspirations and explored new opportunities that have arisen from the crisis. This has also been a rewarding year for the Food Centre on many fronts.

Our new addition to the Agri-Food Innovation Centre was completed in April. Most notably to this addition is our commercial extrusion line, added incubator suites and extra storage. This will enable Saskatchewan agri-businesses to capitalize on the increasing interest of plant-based proteins. The Food Centre has been working with several companies in exploring plant-based alternatives in ingredients, dairy, meat, ready meals, snacks and other food types. Our unique expertise in ideation, development and manufacturing will ensure that Saskatchewan's agriculture industry continues its critical role in the plant-based protein market.

COVID presented challenges in how we engaged our clients and provided access to the Food Centre services. Throughout the year, we diligently reviewed our commitment to provide superior service to our clients and the industry while abiding with the constantly changing COVID regulations. Client meetings were provided virtually, interim processing was accessible with protocols in place and visitors were welcomed at certain points throughout the year following the appropriate cautionary measures to protect staff.

The Food Centre also did its part to help fight the spread. We collaborated with North West Terminal and Black Fox Farm & Distillery and retooled equipment to produce over 60,000 hand sanitizers, and distributed thousands of units to numerous nonprofits across Saskatchewan. In addition, we produced over 13,000 units of nutritious pulses snacks donated to Saskatchewan food banks and communities to help families during this challenging year.

Our clients showed incredible resilience in 2020. Our clients worked through the challenges and kept their business

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The Food Centre is constantly innovating and looking to see where we can create opportunities for Saskatchewan's agri-food industry. Our plan is to keep the momentum going.

going to provide quality food products to their consumers. Congratulations to our clients who have managed to launch new food products to the market in 2020. These new products include, pickled chickpeas, fish jerky, Filipino meats, wheat snack and protein bars just to mention a few. Overall our processing industry has seen a renewed commitment to local sourcing and innovation. Our industry continues to grow and adapt to the changing landscape.

I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to my staff for their hard work, dedication and strength in 2020. Our ability to adapt and evolve to meet the changing needs of our clients and industry amidst the COVID pandemic has shown that we can overcome any challenges together.

As always, thank you to our Board of Directors for their support and commitment to the Food Centre's mandate and growth. The Food Centre is constantly innovating and looking to see where we can create opportunities for Saskatchewan's agri-food industry. Our plan is to keep the momentum going.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Prefontaine'.

DAN PREFONTAINE

CREATE CONNECT COMMERCIALIZE

The Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre Inc. (Food Centre) is a leader in providing expertise and resources to assist agri-businesses to **CREATE** innovative products and value-added opportunities in the food industry.

Whether it involves a specific ingredient, a delicious family recipe or a company looking to expand their market, the Food Centre can **CONNECT** agri-businesses with a variety of our services and industry partners to move to the next level.

Our collective expertise, facilities, and networks at the Food Centre can help companies successfully **COMMERCIALIZE** their products. Our objective is to reduce the risk in test marketing a product and provide customized services to meet all business objectives.

We have a long list of services and expertise and it is increasing every year. From the idea to the final product and everything in between! Besides our long list of services, the Food Centre operates several facilities. Our 10,000 square ft. federally inspected Pilot Plant on the University Campus enables companies to process on a daily rental contract with access to processing equipment and certifications. The Agri-Food Innovation Centre (AFIC) is a 43,000 square ft. federally inspected facility and offers long-term incubation suites, customizable with client owned equipment.

In 2020, we added an additional 12,200 square ft. of incubation space and another 5,200 square ft. is slated for completion in 2022. Once complete the Agri-Food Innovation Centre will be the agri-value hub of Saskatchewan for value-added ideation and innovation.

SINCE 1997, THE FOOD CENTRE HAS PROVIDED SERVICES TO APPROXIMATELY 410 CLIENTS IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANUFACTURING OF OVER 944 PRODUCTS FOR THE MARKETPLACE.

EXPERTISE

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT
INTERIM PROCESSING
PULSE INNOVATION
PLANT-BASED PROTEIN
INGREDIENT VALIDATION
PROCESS DEVELOPMENT
SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
PACKAGING AND LABELLING
REGULATIONS
INDUSTRY TRAINING
AND MORE!!

FACILITIES

INCUBATION SUITES
PILOT PLANT
R&D AND COMMERCIAL EXTRUSION LINE
INNOVATION SUITE FOR MINI SCALE-UP
FOOD DEVELOPMENT SUITE
CHEMISTRY AND MICROBIOLOGY LABS
INGREDIENT INNOVATION SUITE

QUICK GLANCE

AWESOME Program held its first virtual industry conference with great success. Fifty-two registrants registered to learn about external financing. Twelve women-led processing businesses from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta were recognized for their success, growth and impact in the industry.

Dan Prefontaine was presented with the Pulse Innovation Award from SK Pulse Growers Association for his leadership at the Food Centre for increasing the use of pulse ingredients in food products. His advocacy resulted in the first extrusion technology in the province, which will further increase the utilization of pulse ingredients.

EXPANSION TO SUPPORT CANADA'S VALUE-ADDED INDUSTRY

Over the past decade, Canada's agricultural industry has worked tirelessly to broaden its footprint in global markets. In the last two decades, the Food Centre has set our sights to be global leaders in creating greater value for the crops we grow through applying innovation, ingenuity and processing capacity in our prairie provinces.



We set out to do this first through the development and construction of the Agri-Food Innovation Centre in 2018 and now the completion of phase 1 expansion of the Agri-Food Innovation Centre. The phase 1 addition, completed in April 2020, has added 12,200 square feet of commercial extrusion processing, incubation suites and added storage. The additional capacity will support exploration of novel uses from locally grown inputs to create greater value for our agriculture sector, specifically the plant-based protein market. Our activity with extrusion R&D and processing has increased substantially with several projects involving high profile international clients.

Phase 2 of the expansion is expected to be completed in 2022. This second phase expansion will see new added technologies



New extrusion commercial processing facility

to explore unique ingredient manufacturing practices and fermentation to offer pre and post processing in filtration, separation, drying and convert bio and plant materials using ingredients derived from plant-based sources to meet consumer demands for clean label and natural products. Phase 2 of the expansion will also provide capacity for pre and post processing in fractionation, isolation, and modification of ingredients.

JOINING THE COVID FIGHT

The Food Centre was doing its part to assist in the fight against COVID-19. The Food Centre retooled a few pieces of equipment to produce hand sanitizers during the COVID pandemic. We partnered with North West Terminal, who supplied the alcohol, and Black Fox Farm & Distillery, who blended the product in a controlled environment. The Food Centre then packaged the sanitizers using an existing piece of equipment to produce over 60,000 units of hand sanitizer. Approximately 1,300 units of hand sanitizers were donated to nonprofit organizations in Saskatchewan. Some were personally dropped off to local organizations around the city such as The Lighthouse, Friendship Inn, White Buffalo Youth Lodge, Salvation Army, Metis Society, etc.

2 Day HACCP Classroom Training was accredited by the International HACCP Alliance.

Food Centre joined the fight against COVID-19 by retooling equipment to produce hand sanitizers, with many donated to charities across the province. In addition, over 13,000 units of Pulse Puffs snacks were produced and donated.

A virtual extrusion workshop on plant proteins drew over 225 registrations from around the globe. This is a good indication on how the plant protein market is expanding around the world.



The Food Centre also partnered with Federated Co-op to provide sanitizers to their frontline workers and SaskCanola to donate and distribute 1,000 units of hand sanitizers to Saskatchewan farmers.

We also produced and donated over 13,000 units of Pulse Puffs snacks to the community. Half were donated to the Food Banks in Saskatoon and Regina and the other half were personally distributed to several nonprofits in Saskatoon and area.

CELEBRATING WOMEN AGRI-FOOD ENTREPRENEURS

The Food Centre's AWESOME Program, geared to grow and advance women-owned businesses in the food processing sector, has been very successful in bringing programs and services specifically to women entrepreneurs.

The AWESOME Program, funded by Western Economic Diversification in 2019, welcomed Shenuka Wickramasinghe as the new Program Manager in October 2020. They currently have 150 women entrepreneurs in their membership base.



SASKATCHEWAN
BAECHU KIMCHI
DOSCH ORGANIC ACRES
TRAILS END BISON
ULIVIT

ALBERTA
CONFETTI SWEETS
WORTHY
A&A GREENILLA FOOD
JUDY G FOODS

MANITOBA
SMAK DAB
HAPPY DANCE HUMMUS
GORP
HIGH TEA BAKERY

In September of 2020, the program received an additional \$250,000 to support women and deliver programming to assist in moving women entrepreneurs to new markets through web-based platforms and increasing their social media presence.

The first AWESOME conference was held virtually in November with 52 registrants. The conference highlighted how to access external financing and brought in experts in the field. At the virtual conference, AWESOME awards were presented to four women-led processing businesses from each province to recognize their success, growth and impact in the industry.

PLANT-BASED FOODS STILL A HUGE DEMAND

In 2020, the Food Centre worked with approximately 93 clients in product development, processing, extrusion and ingredients as compared to 82 in 2019. There was an increased number of clients utilizing multiple services in 2020. Clients are realizing the advantage of bringing projects to the Food Centre and being able to tap on all services in one location to get their product out to market.

Plant-based foods have maintained its climb in popularity into 2020, specifically plant-based proteins. It has become a marketable food in the past few years due to better taste, price and accessibility. From start-ups to leading fortune 500 companies and the world's largest meat companies, food manufacturers of all kinds are introducing plant-based foods to their categories. The plant-based trend is an opportunity for Saskatchewan processors to focus on clean label, improving the nutritional profile, taste and texture properties of plant-based foods and beverages.

The Food Centre has been collaborating with several companies in exploring plant-based alternatives in ingredients, dairy, meat, ready meals, snacks and other food types.



Plant-based burger developed by the Food Centre

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT AND INGREDIENT INNOVATIONS

Innovative ideas and ingredients played an important role towards the rise in activity at the Food Centre for all food types, specifically for plant-based foods.

In Saskatchewan, pulses and unique crops that we grow have loads of potential in many food products. The Food Centre teams in Ingredients, Product Development and Extrusion R&D work in collaboration to assist clients in transforming their ingredient or idea into viable options for new food products.

The Food Centre continues to work on extracting, characterizing, and/or developing food products from sunflower seeds, hemp, pumpkin seed, canola, flax, oat, mustard, crickets, algae, bison, pork, beef, vegetable, fruit, among others.

Extruded snacks, breakfast cereal, protein bars, vegan jerky, hummus, mustard and pulse tofu are just some of the unique development projects in 2020. There were approximately 60 clients tapping into our expertise in food and ingredient development, extrusion of plant proteins in 2020.



Ingredient innovation suite will expand and move to a newly constructed facility adjacent to AFIC building in 2022.

A growing area for the Food Centre is its involvement in various food companies seeking to add value to by-product streams. We have consulted and started projects with several companies in this area. Looking forward, we anticipate that more companies will be looking at by-product utilization across a number of different sectors to help reduce waste and find value in their by-product streams.

INSPECTED FACILITIES FOR COMMERCIALIZATION AND INCUBATION

While COVID put a halt on some services around the world, Food Centre clients were busier than ever manufacturing their food products to meet demand. Although plant-based foods have seen an increase in the market, the Food Centre's processing facilities are still busy with the production of numerous meat products, from bacon, bison jerky, lamb, to pork ribs.

Approximately 38 clients used the federally inspected Pilot Plant for production of many different food products, from Kimchi, protein bar to mustard, pickled vegetables and many meat products. We welcomed several new clients in 2020. New to the Food Centre include clients producing wheat snacks, dumplings, veggie burgers, yogurt beverage and vegan jerky.

The Food Centre has been successful in utilizing the Pilot Plant to support much of the industry over the past 20 plus years. The short-term processing options enables clients to manufacture on demand without investment in equipment or facility. Our diverse list of technologies allows clients from all sectors to manufacture a variety of food products.

Our long-term incubation units at AFIC offer food processors the opportunity to make the transition from proof of concept to commercial industrial stage of business in an economical sustainable approach. All suites are rented out and being utilized to manufacture meat products, beverages, vegetable and fruit-based products.

Dosch Organic Acres processing wheat snacks



EXTRUSION PAVES WAY FOR OPPORTUNITIES

As consumers become increasingly nutrition-savvy, their interest in protein diversity is growing. Consumers are choosing plant-based proteins from sources other than soy and wheat. Pea, flax and chia proteins are all increasing in popularity, not just in plant-based meat and dairy, but also in bars and bakery products. Ingredient development and validation is also an important line of business for the Food Centre. We are using extrusion in new ways to generate new ingredients for innovative food applications.

The new addition to AFIC designated a suite to house the commercial extrusion line and was completed in April. The extrusion business was separated into two areas, with the existing area being used specifically for R&D and the newly constructed extrusion suite being utilized for commercial processing and co-packing. The new commercial extrusion configuration allows for a more streamlined and continuous process.

In 2020, we saw continued interest in projects involving high moisture extrusion cooking (HMEC) to produce plant-based protein fibres for vegetarian meat products. Extrusion projects in 2020 include new ingredient development, vegan jerky, extruded snacks, keto snacks, textured vegetable protein, and much more.



Extrusion R&D facility

There were approximately 27 extrusion clients accessing our extrusion technology for R&D and manufacturing or extrusion consulting. Our extrusion clients are from all over the world, ranging from medium enterprises to large multinational companies developing new food products and testing ingredients.

NEW CLIENT HIGHLIGHTS

Dosch Organic Acre | Willow Bunch, SK
www.doschorganic.ca

Crispy organic wheat snacks with six flavours. By using the Food Centre's commercial scale equipment at the pilot plant, Dosch Organic was able to expand their markets and sales and supply to larger retailers.

Riverstone Family Farms | Assiniboia, SK
www.riverstonefamilyfarms.ca

Ready to eat pickled jalapeno & garlic flavoured chickpeas. The Food Centre worked with Riverstone to develop their formulation and process and move to the pilot plant for scale-up production.

A&M Corp | Saskatoon, SK
www.am-corp.ca

Prairie's Best Juicylicious Sausage. Inspired by Philippine's ethnic recipe and made with 100% Canadian pork & chicken. A&M utilized the pilot plant for production.

Azra's Kitchen | Winnipeg, MB
www.azraskitchen.com

Plant-based patty made with real ingredients with no preservatives or binders. Azra's Kitchen worked with the Food Centre in recipe refinement and production.



EMPLOYEE AND FOOD SAFETY

The health and safety of the food processing industry and its employees during the COVID-19 pandemic was intensified in 2020 around the globe. The government declaring the food and agriculture industry workers as part of the country's essential workforce was both a blessing and a challenge.

At the Food Centre, we were continuously updating our protocols and procedures to ensure a safe work environment for our staff in the production line and our clients using our facility for their processing.

The Food Centre's 2 Day HACCP Workshop received accreditation by the International HACCP Alliance.

AFIC maintained its British Retail Consortium (BRC) accreditation with "AA" rating in 2020, the highest possible rating for a BRC audit. BRC is an international food safety management systems standard and is one of the GFSI recognized certification schemes. This accreditation demonstrates the Food Centre's commitment to food safety standards and allows export market opportunities to clients manufacturing in our facility.

While COVID restrictions halted on-site activities for some companies throughout the year, the Food Safety team assisted several companies in adopting food safety and quality programs in 2020. Through virtual consultations and some on-site visits, the level of food safety in the Saskatchewan food industry has been increased. This has allowed for greater market access for many stakeholders in the industry and has generated a great deal of awareness regarding food safety standards and regulations.

VIRTUAL ONE-ON-ONE CONSULTATIONS
AUDIT TRAINING
ORGANIC PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION
ASSISTANCE IN WRITING A HACCP SYSTEM
INTERNAL AUDIT
GFSI IMPLEMENTATION
TRAINING ON FOOD SAFETY CULTURE
CANADAGAP
BRC PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
ONSITE GAP ANALYSIS
COMPLYING WITH COVID REGULATIONS

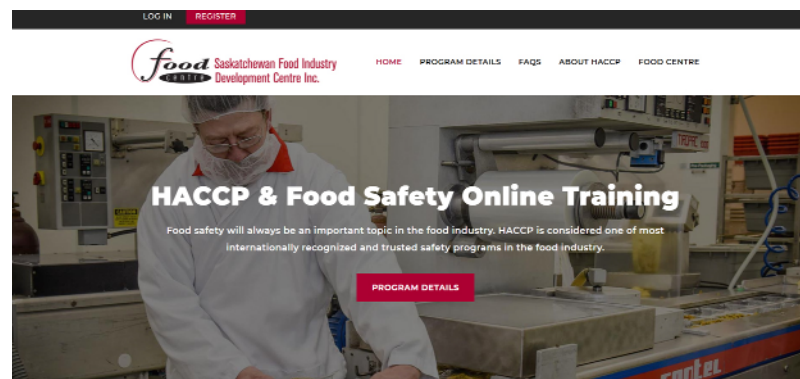
VIRTUAL TRAINING

With the pandemic restricting face-to-face gatherings much of our training was provided virtually or over the phone.

As the plant-based eating continues to climb and further drive new products, the Food Centre partnered with Cleextral Inc. to host a virtual plant-based extrusion workshop in December. Registration was very well received, with approximately 225 logged in. Attendees were from all over the world, including Canada, USA, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, France, India, Israel, Spain and United Kingdom. This is a strong indication that interest in plant-based foods is a global trend.

Two teleconferences were delivered on safe food handling and COVID protocols in conjunction with the AWESOME program. The teleconference reached food preparation businesses in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta.

With many educational institutes reverting to online teaching, our online training for HACCP (hazard analysis and critical control points) and GMPs (good manufacturing practices) saw a big uptake in 2020. Both online training was originally designed to provide "ease of access" for companies based in rural Saskatchewan. However, over the years, our HACCP online training, accredited by the International HACCP Alliance, have seen registrants worldwide. We have trained over 728 individuals through our online HACCP & Food Safety Certificate Program.



The GMPs online training has also been a very popular avenue to train groups of employees on good manufacturing practices. It is free for Saskatchewan companies and has had over 150 companies accessing this training since its launch in 2007. The site will be going through a redesign in 2021 to bring to a more modern platform.

www.GMPsOnline.ca

www.HACCPonline.ca

WE APPRECIATE OUR PARTNERSHIPS

The Food Centre is fortunate and grateful for the many partnerships we have created over the years. Our diverse network in all sectors of the food and ingredient industry allows the Food Centre to harness the strengths and abilities of other organizations to provide strategic direction for diversifying Saskatchewan's agri-food industry. We appreciated the collaboration and their support.

FOUNDING PARTNERS

Saskatchewan



AgriFood
INNOVATION CENTRE

Thank you to the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative, Western Economic Diversification of Canada, Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan for the funding investment towards the expansion of the Agri-Food Innovation Centre, which was completed in 2020.



The Canadian Agricultural Partnership is a \$3 billion five-year (2018-2023), investment by federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) governments to strengthen and grow Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector.

The predecessor to CAP, Growing Forward 2, also a federal-provincial-territorial initiative, provided funding for the initial construction of the Agri-Food Innovation Centre.

SUPPORT FOR SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

The Food Centre's ability to service the industry enhanced by special programs to meet current industry demands. In 2020, we were very pleased to have the financial support of Western Economic Diversification (WD), Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture and National Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC IRAP) for several unique programming and service delivery.

WD provided support for the AWESOME Program, targeted to advance and grow women-owned businesses in the food processing sector through specific business development services.

NRC-IRAP and the Ministry's Product2Market program has made it possible for small to medium sized companies to access expertise for new product and process development.

Thank you to the following organizations for their financial support towards the Agri-Food Innovation Centre. All support is greatly appreciated and helps to create new value-added opportunities for the agriculture industry in Saskatchewan.



James Cameron
and
Suzy Amis Cameron



SaskBarley Development Commission
Saskatchewan Egg Producers | CanMar Grain Products Ltd.
Chicken Farmers of Saskatchewan | InfraReady Products Ltd.
Ag-West Bio Inc. | Cherry Insurance
LPL Management | Ledcor Group
MGM Specialty Livestock | Boreal Berry Bar Inc.
Triad Power | Excel Refrigeration Ltd.
Ace Plumbing & Heating Inc.

FOOD CENTRE STAFF

Dan Prefontaine -- President
Shannon Hood-Niefer -- VP Innovation and Technology
Valerie Menzies -- Administrative Assistant
Carmen Ly -- Communications Director
Glenna Long -- Accountant
Sara Lui -- Manager, Product Development
Catherine Querimit -- Senior Assistant, Product Development
Hayley Kumitch - Specialist, Product Development
Adrian Kristoff -- Operator, Product Development
Ferdinand Mendoza -- Assistant, Product Development
Ricky Lam -- Manager & Scientist, Ingredients
Mark Dyck -- Lab Technician, Ingredients
Holly Rempel -- Lab Technician, Ingredients
Chelsea Andrews - Lab Technician, Ingredients
Satinder Gill -- Food Scientist, Extrusion
Matthew Marcotte -- Specialist, Extrusion
Nenita Sanchez -- Production Assistant, Extrusion
Cara Wandler -- Operator, Extrusion
Erin Hiebert -- Manager, Food Safety and Skills Development
Leolean (Nyle) Diaz-Bade -- Food Safety Specialist
Greg Hamilton -- Operations Manager, AFIC
Arran Hamilton -- Plant Supervisor, AFIC
Joel Montelibano -- HACCP & Food Safety Coordinator, AFIC
Dean Regnier -- Shipper/Receiver, AFIC
Brev Chesky -- Operations Manager, Pilot Plant
Scott Irvine -- Supervisor, Pilot Plant
Nolan Langer -- HACCP Coordinator, Pilot Plant
Sue Waldner -- Technician, Pilot Plant
Jennifer Pasaje -- Technician, Pilot Plant
Barry Motilag -- Maintenance Supervisor
Jack Zhang - Maintenance Assistant
Michael Suru -- Maintenance Assistant
John Wilkinson -- Maintenance Assistant
Patrick Campbell -- Maintenance Assistant
Vince Neiser -- Program Manager, FC Food Inspection
Shenuka Wickramasinghe -- Manager, AWESOME Program

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MEMBERS

Alister Muir -- President, Saskatchewan Food and Ingredient Processors Association
Greg Fowler -- Vice-President, Finance and Resources, University of Saskatchewan
Paul Johnson -- Assistant Deputy Minister of Policy, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture

BOARD ADVISOR

Michele Kuxhaus -- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

** List of Staff, Board of Directors, Members and Board Advisor at time of printing.*



624 Duchess Street
Saskatoon, SK S7K 0R1 CANADA
Tel: (306) 933-2970
Fax: (306) 933-2981

AUDITED 2020 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Financial statements are available upon request by contacting the Food Centre.
Please direct your inquiries to info@foodcentre.sk.ca or (306) 933-7555.



AgriFood
INNOVATION CENTRE

2335 Schuyler Street
Saskatoon, SK S7M 5V1
CANADA

www.foodcentre.sk.ca