



2022 ANNUAL REPORT



Advanced Food Ingredients Centre
Fermentation & Bioengineering Excellence

A worker wearing a white lab coat, hairnet, and face mask is operating a large industrial machine. The machine has a large rotating drum and a conveyor system. The worker is using a blue tool to transfer small, yellow, irregularly shaped food items from the machine's output into a blue tray. The background shows other industrial equipment and a clean, bright environment.

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.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

BLAIR KNIPPEL

This is the first year of reporting to the Members for both myself and our new President, Dr. Mehmet Tulbek. While Dr. Tulbek and I are not new to the Food Centre, we are grateful for the assistance of the outgoing Chair, Jason Skotheim, and our retiring President, Dan Prefontaine. With their leadership, the Food Centre is financially stronger than ever and more capable of meeting the technology needs of its staff, clients and Members in the future.

Jason and Dan continue to contribute tremendously to the collective vision of the Board to ensure a smooth transition and that both its core values and value proposition are retained. I cannot express strongly enough my gratitude to have been able to work closely with both of them over these past several years.

When combined with the strategic investments made over the last several years, the Food Centre will continue to be a leader in each of the local, regional, provincial, national and global stages on a number of core areas. The earlier decisions required to select which investments to make and how to make them are so far proving accurate. We welcomed new Board members Shannon Sears, Kendra Meier and Peter Gosselin, each of whom will be critical as the Food Centre continues to evolve to meet the needs of the Members and the agri-food community.

Canadians and Saskatchewanians, in particular, have a role and responsibility to finding alternatives and new solutions for global food security using the ingenuity of our farmers, entrepreneurs and academic institutions. Such challenges are not lost on the staff and Board. Food inflation, supply chain constrictions, labour shortages and ongoing concerns with the impact of environmental changes on food production continue to remain top of mind. As our existing clients bring their products to the global market and new clients seek improvements to their platforms, the Food Centre's core and new technologies will have even more value.

As our world begins to pull away from the disruptions from the global pandemic, the Board looks forward to the challenges the future holds for the organization and the industry as a whole. We expect to see a future with new partnerships, new



expertise and new ideas combined with our commitment to leading the growth of Saskatchewan's agri-food industry and staying relevant on the global stage. •

Board of Directors

Blair Knippel -- Chairman, T Base 4 Investment Corp.
Sav Bellissimo -- Vice Chairman, Federated Co-operatives Ltd.
Brian Sim -- Agri-Business Consultant
Bryan Kosteroski -- Agriculture Council of SK
Godwin Pon -- Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture
Jennifer Evancio -- Avena Foods
John Coté -- Black Fox Farm & Distillery
Kendra Meier -- HPS Food & Ingredients
Matthew Bennett -- Ingredion Inc.
Patrick Pitka -- Genome Prairie
Peter Gosselin -- Red River Indigenous Brands
Phyllis Shand -- University of Saskatchewan
Shannon Sears -- Bioriginal Food & Science Corp.
Morgan Brown -- Board Advisor, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Members

Greg Fowler -- Vice-President, Finance and Resources, University of Saskatchewan

Paul Johnson -- Assistant Deputy Minister of Policy, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture

** Listing of Board of Directors and Members are current at time of printing.*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

DR. MEHMET TULBEK



On behalf of the Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre team, it is my pleasure to provide the update for 2022. Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our Board of Directors and the Food Centre staff for their warm welcome, esteemed and dedicated work ethic and their continuous support during the year. My first year as President has gone like a whirlwind and I can honestly say there is not a dull moment on this job.

In 2022, we observed the extended impact of COVID-19 with rising food prices, global supply chain disruptions due to Russia-Ukraine war and further uncertainties in the global marketplace. However, with the Food Centre's diverse services, innovation and manufacturing portfolio, our team continued to lead the food innovation and commercialization in Saskatchewan and contributed to the Provincial and Canadian economy. I am pleased to let you know that the Food Centre added new programs, services, provided new processing solutions to our stakeholders, clients, and continued to expand the Food Centre's capabilities.

In February, we have kicked off our Fermentation and Bioengineering Program and started our ecosystem development project supported by Protein Industries Canada. Thanks to this initiative, the Food Centre has become one of the leading contract research, manufacturing and scale-up organizations in Canada and we successfully interacted with over 500 contacts within the sector. We anticipate that the future growth of this program will create more synergies within our core technical programs in the future.

In May, we launched our Pulse Quality Program thanks to the generous support of Saskatchewan Pulse Growers Association. The Food Grade Crop Quality team has analyzed over 800 samples in their first year. The understanding in the genotype level will create more opportunities for the growing pulse industry in the plant-based food industry.

By fourth quarter of the year, we formally established a new program on process engineering services. This program provides services in five focus areas: process design and advanced manufacturing (PDAM), data-driven process analytics

(DDPA), techno-economic analysis (TEA), life cycle analysis and sustainability (LCA-S), and process authority services (PAS) for canned and aseptic foods.

The Food Centre's core programs continued their growth and we supported numerous start-ups, small and large SMEs as well as multinationals in many aspects. As we increased the number of our cross-functional projects, the Food Centre team provided comprehensive and collective solutions for our clients, which also helped improve our business process efficiencies and project turnarounds.

As I reported last year, the Food Centre's vision to be "the leader in advancing Saskatchewan's agri-food industry" will shine bright as we expand our capabilities with traditional, biomass and precision fermentation technologies to utilize co-products and by-product streams in creating high value and novel food products with improved nutritional and functionality aspects. We started to build the fermentation ecosystem in Saskatchewan and our contract research and manufacturing services will assist the ongoing growth of the agri-food sector in Saskatchewan and Canada.

Fermentation and bioengineering will be the future frontiers for the global food industry and we will continue to provide the leadership, expertise and services to hold steadfast in our mission of "enabling our agri-food industry to develop market opportunities through innovative products, processing technology and training". •

2022 HIGHLIGHTS

- Dr. Mehmet Tulbek takes over leadership of the Food Centre as its new President.
- Construction of the Advanced Food Ingredients Centre started.
- Completed 10 webinars for the industry.
- Extrusion Processing Suite received “AA+” rating for BRC audit. “AA” is the highest possible rating for a BRC planned audit.
- AWESOME’s first in-person Conference was a success with 80 registrants.
- AWESOME Program received SEDA Award for Community Project Award.
- Food Centre received funding for Food Crop Quality Program – Saskatchewan Pulse Growers.
- Food Centre received funding for Fermentation & Bioengineering Ecosystem Development – Protein Industries Canada.
- Several Food Centre clients launched new products in 2022 - extruded pulse-based snacks, vegan meat products, egg-based breakfast bars and pulse tofu.
- Completed 3 of 4 Fermentation Webinar Series (PIC Funding).
- Hosted Fermentation & Bioengineering Highlight and Facility Tour event as part of Global Biotech Week activities.
- Hosted 2 Smart Manufacturing webinars (IRAP funding).
- Food Centre Management attended a Truth and Reconciliation Workshop at Wanuskewin.
- Welcomed several VIP visits/tours.



Since 1997, the Food Centre has provided services to approximately 500 clients in the development and manufacturing of over 1,000 products for the marketplace.

The Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre Inc. (Food Centre) is a leader in providing expertise and resources to assist businesses in creating, identifying and capturing opportunities in the agri-food sector. Our unique services and facilities allows clients to develop their idea into a viable product and get it to market. Most importantly for small to medium sized business, the Food Centre’s certified processing facilities provide the equipment, facility, and knowledgeable staff to help SMEs with market entry without the capital risk. This has been an important component of the Food Centre’s services to Saskatchewan’s food industry.

Year 2022 welcomed new President, Dr. Mehmet Tulbek, with over 20 years of agricultural business and leadership experience. His first year of leadership saw the implementation of new initiatives and programing to the Food Centre to enhance service delivery to the agri-food industry.

UNIQUE SERVICES AND FACILITIES *to advance the agri-food industry*

ingredient & product development
processing
pulse innovation
plant-based proteins
fermentation & bioengineering
process development & engineering
skills development
packaging and labelling
regulations
industry training
and more!!

incubation suites
pilot plant
R&D and commercial extrusion suite
innovation suite for mini scale-up
food development suite
chemistry and microbiology labs
ingredient innovation suite

NEW PROGRAMMING INITIATIVES IN 2022



NEW Advanced Food Ingredients Centre Will House Fermentation & Bioengineering Program

The agri-food industry in Canada has significantly changed over the last decade and has been growing at an exceptional rate due to the developments of food ingredient manufacturing capital projects in Western Canada.

The Food Centre will be completing the construction of the Advanced Food Ingredients Centre (AFIC-2) by Fall of 2023. AFIC-2 will be a major compliment to the Food Centre's current product development, manufacturing, extrusion, food safety, ingredient science, and incubation programs. AFIC-2 will house the Food Centre's "Fermentation & Bioengineering Program" to support development and commercialization of advanced food ingredients, fermented food ingredients, enzymes, crop inoculants, probiotics, biocontrol agents, bioproducts, and bioactive compounds from all parts of the world.

AFIC-2 will offer submerged and solid-state fermentation solution systems with downstream processing capabilities such as continuous centrifugation, cell lysing, membrane filtration, pasteurization and various drying (spray, vacuum, freeze, fluidized bed and microwave assisted vacuum) technologies. AFIC-2's scientists and technical team will be able to scale up products from 10L up to 20,000L to cater to the demand for some intermediate level of production.

Precision fermentation is opening new opportunities for Canadian companies to contribute to healthy and nutritious food and the Food Centre is currently helping to advance and commercialize this technology. The Food Centre is excited to introduce AFIC-2 to the industry in the fall of 2023.

It will expand the Food Centre's capabilities and assist companies with scale-up, manufacturing and commercialization of high-value ingredients, which will address upcycling, food waste as well as sustainability needs of the Canadian agri-food manufacturing and supply-chain infrastructure. The Food Centre is pleased and proud with the new services and look forward to assisting the growing needs of the industry. •



Saskatchewan!

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NEW PROGRAMMING INITIATIVES IN 2022



Food Crop Quality Program

The Food Crop Quality Program's mission is to identify best management practices for Canadian food-grade crops and to help the development of plant-based ingredients/products in the food industry. The new program focuses on crop quality evaluation and related standardized methodology development for high throughput screening purposes.



The current focus of the program is on pulse crops, under the Pulse Quality Project and is funded by the Saskatchewan Pulse Growers Association. The project aims to

develop a comprehensive database of composition, functionality, and nutrition for pulses through a genotype by environment evaluation (GxE). The first phase of the program evaluated pulses including peas, lentils, chickpeas, faba beans, and dry beans, with up to 3000 samples annually from multiple cultivars and locations. The main focus of the parameters includes seed quality, nutritional composition, and physical properties. The program is currently analyzing samples collected from 2021 and 2022.

Eventually the Food Crop Quality Program will include all types of food-grade crops such as barley, oats, flaxseed, wheat etc. •

Process Engineering

New service delivery in 2022 is our Process Engineering Services which includes the five following focus areas: process design and advanced manufacturing (PDAM), data-driven process analytics (DPA), techno-economic analysis (TEA), life cycle analysis and sustainability (LCA-S), and process authority services (PAS) for canned and aseptic foods.

Innovative process design, improved process efficiency, debottlenecking, mass and energy balances, troubleshooting, co-product utilization and waste reduction methodologies are the critical components of the PDAM services.

In the DPA services, the Food Centre offers descriptive, diagnostic, predictive, and prescriptive analytics based on clients' requirements from all programs. The client's requirement will determine the complexity and value of the analytics.

The TEA service includes scale-up/down process simulation and economic evaluations for continuous and batch-type operations. The economic evaluation report often used by small and medium enterprises for raising funds includes CAPEX, OPEX, ROI, and profitability analysis.

The LCA-S services include life cycle analysis, life cycle costing, social life cycle assessment, carbon & water footprints, and environmental product declarations are the focus components. Flows, processes, product systems, and project scenarios will be developed and compared.

In the PAS area, the Food Centre serves as a process authority for clients in the acid, acidified, and low-acid human and pet food markets. The essential functions include product development, microbiological assessments, canning services, retort processing, lab analytical services, labelling, and packaging.

Under this new service programming, the Food Centre provides project management services and guidance on aseptic processing and packaging, cans and tetra packing, and nutritional review. •



Image (top): Obtaining information of seed size distribution (lentils)

Image (bottom): Texture Analyzer to measure seed hardness by providing information of the precise force needed to crush a seed.

NEW PROGRAMMING INITIATIVES IN 2022



Fermentation and Bioengineering Program


While waiting for the construction of the Advanced Food Ingredients Centre to be completed, the FAB (Fermentation and Bioengineering) team has established a basic microbiology, genomics and fermentation laboratory in the Processing Innovation Suite to facilitate projects. A shipment containing small-scale fermenters and other associated laboratory equipment arrived late 2022 and is partially set up to run fermentation projects in the interim.

Two old 15 L benchtop fermenters obtained from the University of Saskatchewan has been customized for solid-state fermentation. There has been a number of inquiries from potential clients for fermentation projects (both small and large scales). Food Centre has signed over 20 NDAs with prospective clients and in the process of filling the project pipeline for this program.


Advanced manufacturing and data-driven process analysis are currently offered through the program and gaining traction with clients. This initiative assists us as a vertical integration partner for extrusion, ingredients, fermentation and bioengineering, product development, etc., helping companies understand and make meaningful decisions based on the data processing methodologies. We recently conducted a webinar in October with positive audience feedback.

The Food Centre has installed and commissioned a microwave-assisted vacuum dryer to dry products at low temperatures under a vacuum. With this technology, the Food Centre can help companies identify and optimize the processing steps, dewatering, concentration, and drying and have received interest from companies in collaborating with us as a fermentation and downstream processing partner. •

Image: Airflow adjustment during biomass fermentation for value-added food products development



Saskatchewan Food Industry
Development Centre Inc.



**CREATE
CONNECT
COLLABORATE
COMMERCIALIZE**

EXPERT FIELDS

- Biotechnology
- Microbiology
- Bioprocess Engineering
- Molecular Biology
- Quality Analysis / Control

ENGINEERING

- Techno-Economic Analysis
- Process Simulation Modelling for Scale Ups / Downs
- Data-Driven Process Optimization and Controls

STRENGTHS

- Small-Scale Fermentation Suite
- Microbiology Suite
- Fermentation Scale-Up Suite
- Advanced Ingredient Suite
- Access to Pilot Plant and Processing Suites
- CFIA / FDA Regulated Facility
- Access to Labs (U of Sask and GAAP labs)
- Fast-Track Commercialization of Ingredients and End Products

FERMENTATION AND BIOENGINEERING CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

ORGANISMS

Bacteria • Fungi • Yeast • Algae • Higher Plant Cell Cultures

PRODUCTS

Fermented Food Ingredients • Enzymes • Crop Inoculants
Probiotics • Biocontrol Agents • Bioproducts • Bioactive Compounds

FERMENTERS

Submerged Fermenters (1.5 / 10 / 15 / 30 / 75 / 150 / 750 / 15,000 L)
• pH, temperature, agitation, dissolved oxygen monitoring and control

Solid-State Fermenters (300 L)

DOWNSTREAM PROCESSING

Continuous Centrifugation
• Decanter/Tricanter
• Disk-stack centrifuge (Clarifier/Separator/Concentrator)

Cell Lysing
• High shear cell lysing

Membrane Filtration
• MF/UF/NF

Pasteurization
• HTST and Jet cooking

Drying
• Batch (Convective Air Dryer, Vacuum Dryer, Freeze Dryer, Fluid Bed Dryer)
• Continuous (Spray Dryer)

Accessories
• Pumps, Shear Mixers, Process Tanks





2022 IN REVIEW

Clients Are Seeking Our Services From Around the Globe

The Food Centre is well known in Saskatchewan's agri-food industry for its support in helping entrepreneurs launch new product and providing interim processing solutions since 1997. We are also known around the globe! Our clients are diverse in size but also in location. Clients are from the heart of the prairies in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan all the way to Mexico!

Year 2022 was extremely busy as the industry regains some normalcy after the COVID pandemic. In-person meetings with clients were starting up once again. However, virtual meetings through Zoom and Microsoft Teams platforms have become so convenient that these options are here to stay. On average, the Food Centre is providing over 100 virtual meetings on a weekly basis with clients and prospective clients. Virtual meetings have been very successful in initial project discussion and keeping clients updated on projects.

The Food Centre receives numerous project requests from prospective clients through its online forms on various issues ranging from business start-up to new product formulation, processing, shelf life testing, etc. Our online intake form provides an easy way for clients to submit their information confidentially. Over 175 prospective client forms and general inquiries came through our online intake in 2022, with an estimate of 3-5 per week and from all over the world.

The Food Centre engaged in service contracts with approximately 128 clients with projects in ingredients, product development, contract manufacturing and extrusion R&D. In 2022, we saw a huge increase in a number of large cross-functional projects involving 2 or more departments with large multinational fortune 500 companies. A Program Facilitator was hired to manage these complex projects to ensure successful completion. •

Industry Engagement Activities

Targeted advertisements through various publications, staff presentations, hosting of webinars, attending tradeshow and media events help to profile Food Centre's services to the

industry to help them identify the Food Centre as an important role in the pathway to commercialization. We were also fortunate to have both provincial and federal government agencies promote the Food Centre and bring a wide array of international guests and potential customers to the Food Centre for virtual meetings and tours in 2022.

Webinars Hosted in 2022

World Pulse Day Webinar

REMAP – Smart Manufacturing

Food Safety Environmental Monitoring

Virtual Industry Day for SK Meat Plants

Extrusion Capabilities at the Food Centre

Leveraging the Science to Develop Novel, Value Ingredients

Advanced Manufacturing 2.0

Fermentation Webinar Series:

Industry Outlook on Trends and Opportunities

Canada's Fermentation Ecosystem

Industry & Supplier Connection

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING 2.0 WEBINAR
OCTOBER 19, 2022 @ 9AM - 12PM CST-SK

LIVE WEBINAR
Extrusion Capabilities at Saskatchewan Food Centre

June 2, 2022
9:00am - 10:15am CST

2022 IN REVIEW



In addition Food Centre staff attended/participated in numerous conferences/events in 2022 to engage with industry and promote our expertise. We were pleased to have been invited to speak at some of these events.

Conferences and Events Attended

Presented at the SK Ministry of Agriculture Forum

Attended with booth in Indigenous Business Gathering

Spoke at Canada China Plant Protein Conference

Tradeshow and speaking at Canada's Farm Show in Regina

Presented at Saskatchewan Asia Trade Conference and provided facility tour

Presented at 2022 Plant Based Texturized Proteins

Attended IFT Annual Meeting

Presented at Protein Trends and Technologies Seminar

Panelist at Beyond the Harvest - Indigenous Food Security Summit

AND MORE!

Strengthening the Fermentation Ecosystem in Canada

Fermentation technologies have played a large part in feeding the global population for thousands of years. More recently, fermentation has gained renewed interest from industry as one of the world's leading technologies to address issues regarding food sustainability and security. The link between fermented foods and gut/overall health and wellness, and the potential to improve the quantity and quality of plant-based proteins and starches through fermentation, are two of the major factors driving this renewed focus.

Western Canada is lagging behind in its capabilities to address the growing demand in both technology and capacity in fermentation even though the region is positioned as a global ingredient supplier of plant-based proteins with a strong focus on ingredient purification/fractionation. In Saskatchewan, we are investing in building a fermentation ecosystem that will aim to connect new and existing players in the fermentation field in Canada.

With funding from Protein Industries Canada, the Food Centre and its project partners, AgWest Bio, GAAP, and the University of Saskatchewan delivered a series of webinars to promote the use of Western Canadian plant-based and co-product streams from the commodity ingredient processing industries for fermentation, build a collaborative partnership environment for fermentation-based projects and support training and education in fermentation to augment industry growth.

Three of the 4 webinars were successfully delivered. A Fermentation Ecosystem Report, "Mapping Canada's Fermentation Ecosystem" was developed as part of the webinar series and is available to industry. A strategic discussion and networking event is scheduled for 2023 to bring together key stakeholders in the local and national fermentation and bioengineering ecosystem to join forces to strengthen Western Canada's capacity. •





2022 IN REVIEW

Product Development Innovation

The Product Development Suite is a magical place at the Food Centre. Ideas become prototypes and prototypes become successes at the marketplace.

In 2022, the R&D Teams for Product Development and Extrusion worked with approximately 80 clients in the development of new food, beverage, and snack products.

Activity has been fueled by increased interest in plant-based proteins in the vegetarian meats sector. The Food Centre is recognized globally for its capability in this area and the focus on plant-based foods was very strong in 2022, in particularly plant-based meats that mimic ground and formed to whole muscle “meat” products, with several into the seafood category.

Convenience is still very important for all product categories. Consumers want meal/snack options that are flavourful and fuss free.

We worked with several clients to access funding from either Protein Industries Canada, IRAP, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture’s Product2Market program and/or ADF Research Programs. •

Image: vegan ground beef development



Examples of products in development

- Vegan meat products (jerky, ground beef, burgers, chicken nuggets, seafood, and other “meat” products)
- Plant-based cheeses, sauces and condiments
- Granola/protein/keto bars
- Plant-based protein beverage mix
- Hemp butter
- Pet food/treats
- Hummus products
- Fruit snacks
- Ethnic food products
- Pulse snacks
- Low sugar jam line
- Gluten-free cookies
- Tea , Oat milk
- Extruded puffs & crisps
- Breakfast cereal
- Seaweed snack

Ingredient Science and Technology

The Ingredient Science & Technology department worked with approximately 38 clients, from within Saskatchewan, Canada, United States and some international locations. A client that has developed their protein ingredient through us are currently seeking to launch this protein in 2023.

Some activities the Ingredient Innovation department worked on in 2022 include:

Working with ingredients that helps upcycle co-products or co-streams from other value-added processing, such as spent grain, fruit pomaces and pulses.

Helping clients look at alternative technologies and pathways to making protein ingredients.

Utilizing dry and wet fractionation technologies and techniques with pulses to identify new uses.

The program currently is involved with providing training on ingredient functional traits and consulting on different ingredient related problems faced by the industry. •

2022 IN REVIEW



Manufacturing & Extrusion

The Food Centre's **Pilot Plant**, located on university campus, has been in operation since 2001, providing entrepreneurs with the option of manufacturing on demand without investment in equipment or facility. This interim processing option has helped companies grow their business with reduced risk. In 2022, there were approximately 27 clients utilizing the Pilot Plant facility for processing. The Pilot Plant was successful in implementing a new packaging line for sauce-like condiments and dips and has produced approximately 78,540 units of hummus for a client. Over the years we have had many "graduates" who have set up their own manufacturing facility or have moved their process to one of our suites in our Agri-Food Innovation Centre (AFIC).

In 2022, the Food Centre's **AFIC** facility was providing contract manufacturing to approximately 15 clients for extruded snacks, jams, pickles and ingredients.

Our automatic bottling line has produced over 100,000 jars of pickles for a private label company in 2022. Production is expected to increase in 2023.

We are at full capacity with several permanent tenants in the meat, fruits and vegetables and oat-based products industry, renting the incubation suites. The incubation suites are long-term lease whereby companies lease, provide their own equipment and staff to run their operations.

Image: Hummus production at the Pilot Plant



The **Extrusion Manufacturing** Suite houses the commercial extrusion line and auxiliary equipment for further baking and seasoning of extruded products. This suite has been utilized in the manufacturing of extruded snacks, breakfast cereals, TVP and HMMA.

Certifications and Recognitions

HACCP Recognized by CFIA

CFIA Inspected - licensed to process meat, dairy, processed fruit and vegetables, fish and processed foods

Organic Certified (USA and Canada) through ProCert

HALAL Licensed through Halal Advisory Group

FDA Approved for processed foods

Kosher (product specific)

Products Manufactured at AFIC and Pilot Plant Facilities

- Bacon, pork ribs, jerky
- Bison patties
- Hemp butter
- Pretzel and wheat snacks
- Vegan "meat" products
- Wild rice packaging
- RTE egg breakfast snack
- Fruit jam, haskap juice
- Protein snacks
- Caesar drink mix
- Puffed and seasoned quinoa
- Hummus
- Sour cherry products
- Vegan burgers
- Gourmet mustard, salsa
- African sauce
- Dill pickles, carrots, relish
- Extruded snacks
- Meat analogues
- Haskap powder packaging

Image: Packaging snack product at AFIC's dedicated dry packaging suite



FOOD SAFETY FOCUS



As the food industry adjusts to a new normal after COVID, the after effects have significantly altered how business approached food safety in everyday services. The industry is more aware of the potential problems that a pandemic may bring and have opted to be proactive to control food safety and protect public health. The Food Centre has been at the forefront to help the industry be proactive

The Food Centre is working with Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies (SIIT) and Protein Industries Canada (PIC) to develop and deliver a micro-credentials training program for the agri-food industry. Our Food Safety team instructed the Fundamentals portion of the Micro-Credential Program for SIIT – Agri-Food Processing Technician for the 1st Cohort, with the 2nd Cohort starting in 2023.

The Food Centre is currently managing the Domestic Meat Program in Saskatchewan and is well positioned to assist the industry through its current expertise, in field staff and web-based training platform it has developed.

The Food Safety Team assisted the vegetable industry in adopting and implementing the CanadaGAP program for vegetable production which was key in their ability to develop a cooperative program for the retail sector. Over the years, the Food Centre has worked with a variety of sectors (meat, pulses, dairy, and cereals) within the food chain (growers, suppliers, manufacturers, distributors, etc.) to deliver training to small, medium and large enterprises.

New challenges to food safety will continue to emerge, largely because of changes in our food production and supply, including more imported foods. The Food Centre will continue to play a leading role in assisting companies in developing and implementing food safety programming, providing industry training and guidance to the industry to support food safety programming compliance. •

- Conducted in-house training for all AFIC and Pilot Plant staff related to food safety and food safety culture.
- Conducted 14 CanadaGAP webinars for Leduc County.
- Internal audits and training were conducted for several clients.
- Held annual Meat Industry Day for provincial and domestic inspected meat facilities.
- Conducted annual food safety training for a client.
- Completed writing one GFSI program for a client and currently writing 2 GFSI programs and one Safe Foods for Canadians Program.
- Delivered 2 information sessions for AWESOME Program members on food safety.
- Complete Gap Analysis for the CAP program.
- Conducted 2- Day HACCP training for two clients.
- Completed a Safe Foods for Canadians Program for one client.
- Completed 2 GFSI programs.
- Completed 1 Gap Analysis.
- Provided lectures (2 lectures and 1 webinar) and tour for Palette Skills students.
- 4 Food Centre employees took part in BRCGS update training.
- Completed one Needs Assessment for one client.

WEBINAR ALERT

Environmental Monitoring Strategies & Solutions for the Food Processing Industry
April 7 @ 9 am - 10:30 am CST

SUPPORTING WOMEN AGRI-ENTREPRENEURS TO ACHIEVE MARKET SUCCESS



The objective of the Food Centre's AWESOME Program is to provide business development support through one-on-one and group education services to women who own food and beverage processing companies in Canada. AWESOME's services are available to women in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The AWESOME Program had many great successes in 2022 and currently has approximately 285 active members from across the Prairie Provinces - 40% AB, 40% SK, 20% MB. Ten percent of the active members are from the Indigenous community.



Supported by:
Prairies Economic
Development Canada



2022 Program Highlights

AWESOME Leaders Podcast: Lessons for Food Business

Success released 16 episodes in 2022. This monthly podcast explores current topics where participants learn from other food processors and industry experts. These podcasts can be found on Spotify,

The **2022 AWESOME Conference** was held November 9th in Saskatoon at Innovation Place. This was the first-ever in-person conference for the program. The event was open to the public and was a great opportunity to collaborate and connect with the AWESOME Community. The keynote speaker was Amy Kaban, Founder and CEO of Parkerview Brews from Saskatoon, SK.

The **AWESOME Virtual Accelerator** is a 10-week program focused on sales development for women entrepreneurs with emerging food and beverage product businesses. The 3rd Accelerator wrapped up in May 2022 with Preserved Foods Boutique from Bragg Creek, AB, winning the pitch prize money. The 4th AWESOME Virtual Accelerator began in September and concluded with a live pitch competition at the 2022 AWESOME Conference with Goodness Bombs (energy bites and mixes) from Red Deer, AB winning the pitch prize money. By the end of 2022, 45 Female Founders will have graduated from the Accelerator, gaining business acumen for growth and market success.

Cohort 3 winner: Preserved Foods Boutique, Bragg Creek, AB

Cohort 4 winner: Goodness Bombs Energy Bites & Mixes, Red Deer, AB



The **AWESOME Achievement Awards** are given out every year to highlight the accomplishments and impact of women in the food & beverage manufacturing sector in the Canadian Prairies. The ten 2022 recipients were announced at the AWESOME Conference followed by a panel with the recipients.

The AWESOME Program also developed the **Export Initiative**, a free on-demand course for food processing businesses who want to learn about international sales opportunities. The course offers 4 hours of video content featuring speakers with specialized expertise, field experience, and direct industry connections.

The success of the program has spurred the Food Centre to submit a new application to build on the momentum and increase its reach from prairie provinces to a national level. It will target rural engagement, Indigenous and newcomer engagement for women entrepreneurs. •



HUB OF SASKATCHEWAN'S AGRI-FOOD INDUSTRY



CREATE CONNECT COLLABORATE COMMERCIAL

The 4 C's have been a mantra for the Food Centre in last several years. As the hub of Saskatchewan's agriculture processing industry, the Food Centre plays an integral role in connecting clients to expertise that stretches from the science and food industry community, educational institutions and government organizations to manufacturing suppliers. We have vast industry networks and connections to numerous organizations in the food industry to support client project development or business requirements.

These relationships are years in the making and the support and commitment of our partners and organizations help expand development and commercialization capacity Saskatchewan's food industry.

The Food Centre will continue to lead and harnesses the strengths and abilities of other organizations to provide strategic direction for diversifying Saskatchewan's agri-food industry. •

Support for Special Programming

The Food Centre's ability to service the industry enhanced by special programs to meet current industry demands. In 2022, we were very pleased to have the financial support of Prairies Economic Development Canada, (PrairiesCan), Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture and, National Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC IRAP), and Protein Industries Canada (PIC) for several unique programming and service delivery.

PrairiesCan provides 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.

PIC provided support to the Food Centre to deliver a series of webinars to strengthen the fermentation ecosystem in Canada. •

Member Partners

Saskatchewan 



UNIVERSITY OF
SASKATCHEWAN



FOOD CENTRE STAFF



The Food Centre team consists of over 70 full-time and part-time staff who are working to grow the agri-food industry in Saskatchewan. Our expertise is diverse but our goal is the same – providing the industry with the best service possible.

Mehmet Tulbek -- President

Dan Prefontaine -- Director, Special Projects and Past President

Tracy MacDonald -- Administrative Assistant

Carmen Ly -- Communications Director

Glenna Long -- Finance Manager

Emma Laing -- Project & Program Specialist

Product Development

Sara Lui -- Director, New Product Innovation

Cathy Querimit -- Senior PD Specialist

Savanna Spendiff -- PD Assistant

Maryam Rafati -- PD Assistant

Amelia Rivera -- PD Assistant

Anula Perera -- PD Assistant

Extrusion

Satinder Gill -- Manager, Extrusion R&D

Gurkirat Kaur -- Food Technologist

Matthew Marcotte -- Extrusion Specialist

Nenita Sanchez -- Extrusion Production Assistant

Ingredient Science & Tehnology

Maria Hounjet -- Manager

YanRan Tang -- Research Associate

Mark Dyck -- Ingredient Assistant

Fermentation Program

Mahesh Sivakumar -- Senior Food Process Engineer

Pooba Ganeshan -- Principal Scientist

Siyang Shen -- Junior Scientist

McKenna O'Neill -- Jr. Fermentation Microbiology Tech.

FC Food Inspection

Vince Neiser -- Manager

Food Safety & Skills Development

Erin Hiebert -- Manager

Elmer Peralta -- Food Safety Specialist

Agri-Food Innovation Centre Processing

Greg Hamilton -- Director, AFIC Operations

Arran Hamilton -- Plant Supervisor

Ken Melchkart -- Plant Supervisor

Joel Montelibano -- Food Safety & Quality Assurance Coord.

Glen Sanchez -- Shipper & Receiver

John Wilkinson -- Maintenance Assistant

Floyd Sookocheff -- Maintenance Assistant

Robert Duret -- Maintenance Assistant

Pilot Plant Processing

Scott Irvine -- Pilot Plant Manager

Nolan Langer -- Assistant Plant Manager and HACCP Coord.

Michael Suru -- Maintenance

Sue Waldner -- Production Supervisor

Jennifer Pasaje -- Lead Operator

Food Crop Quality Program

Lindsay Wang -- Program Manager

Lily Sun -- Food Grade Crop Jr. Quality Technician

Sheena McNeill -- Food Grade Crop Jr. Quality Technician

Armandt Joubert -- Food Grade Crop Jr. Quality Technician

AWESOME Program

Kendra Wack -- Director, Women Entrepreneurship Strategy
Program & Business Advisor

Nafisa Mahabub -- Marketing Specialist

** Staff listing is current at time of printing*



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Audited 2022 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.



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