



2023 Annual Report





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. Collaborate. Commercialize.





Chairman's Message

J. Blair Knippel



First and foremost, on behalf of the entire Board of Directors, we want to thank everyone for their continued support of the Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre (Food Centre). With our team of world-class professionals, the vision and purpose is even more relevant today than when the Food Centre was taken from ideation to existence in 1997. From the shoulders of those giants who came before us, the Food Centre team continues to do the hard work and create new pathways.

I have had the privilege of travelling extensively over the past 12 months for my day job meeting numerous industry leaders and global food innovators. With only a few isolated exceptions, all were aware of the history of the Food Centre, its importance to our province, the legacy that has been created for innovative solutions across numerous technology platforms and the high-calibre team members that serve our clients. Thank you to Dr. Mehmet Tulbek and his team for bringing excellence to everything they do.

The Board, Mehmet and I truly believe that today's challenges in food innovation, those being met here in Saskatoon and elsewhere in the world, will become tomorrow's everyday products. Innovation is the only way we will be able to solve the existential crises that have grown over the last century and face each of us over the next century. We take these challenges to heart and believe our investments in new technologies such as precision fermentation will help make our organization even more relevant.

I would like to extend a heartfelt appreciation to the outgoing members of the board of directors and staff, who's dedication, expertise and efforts have propelled the Food Centre forward, positioning it as a leader in the industry. Thank you to outgoing Directors, Brian Sim, John Cote and Peter Gosselin and outgoing staff for your contributions. As we bid farewell, we also welcomed a new addition to our Board, Elyse Simpson Fraser of Simpson Seeds, and countless staff with diverse expertise and passion to fulfill our vision of leading the evolution of Saskatchewan's agri-food industry.

As demand for food surges alongside population growth and challenges to the sustainable and cost-effective production of that food shift from changes in both regional climates and economic realities, the Food Centre's mandate will become even more important. Concepts of food security and food sovereignty which, much to the disappointment of those already suffering, were never really considered or discussed much detail in years gone by are now front and centre. But now those issues are being discussed in most levels of government, board rooms, equipment sheds and lean-tos, and over kitchen/cafe tables globally.

Board of Directors

Blair Knippel - T Base 4 Investments Corp.
Sav Bellissimo - Federated Co-operatives Ltd.
Bryan Kosteroski - Agriculture Council of Sask.
Jason Skotheim - Horizon Pet Nutrition
Pat Pitka - Genome Prairie
Matthew Bennet - Rise Advisors LLC
Jennifer Evancio - Avena Foods
Godwin Pon - Sask. Ministry of Agriculture
Phyllis Shand - U of S, College of Ag & Bioresources

Shannon Sears - Bioriginal Food & Science Corp.
Kendra Meier - HPS Food & Ingredients
Elyse Simpson Fraser - Simpson Seeds

Advisor

Morgan Brown - Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Members

Amy Standish - Sask. Ministry of Agriculture
Devan Mescall - University of Saskatchewan

Special Tribute

Mark Pickard, founding member of Food Centre Board of Directors and champion of Prairie Agriculture and a friend to many.

The agricultural community has lost a dear friend. Mark Pickard successfully ran InfraReady Products for thirty years sharing his philosophy of the goodness of whole grains and his vision for value-added agriculture. Early on, he saw the opportunity to add value to grains, especially wheat, barley, and pulses that were underutilized on the prairies. He championed the prairies wherever he travelled and had clients and business relationships in more than 50 countries.

Mark was the consummate entrepreneur, with a strong vision, a flair for creativity and thinking outside the box, and excellent problem-solving, networking, leadership and communication skills. He took risks but did this with a quiet confidence and optimism. He was able to successfully blend science and business, building on his earlier education at the University of Saskatchewan (receiving a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture degree in applied microbiology and food science followed later by a Master of Business Administration degree).

Mark had a natural curiosity which led to several signature products that he loved to share with others – purple wheat, purple vodka, barley-based cat litter.... And the list goes on. His company funded many research projects on various scientific areas related to micronization / infrared heating such as sprouting, GABA (gamma-amino butyric acid) and process and product improvement. He also willingly donated seed materials to various projects.

Mark was a strong supporter of Agriculture and of Saskatchewan. He was always willing to share his time and expertise and participate in events to share his enthusiasm for what this province could offer the world. Mark was a founding member of the board of directors of the Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre where he contributed to the early vision for its activities. Later, he was a collaborator and a client. Many other organizations benefited from his participation including the Saskatchewan Agriculture Development Fund advisory committee, Food Processing Skills Canada board of directors, etc. Most recently he served as co-chair of the steering committee for the Prairie Food Link.

Mark was always a willing collaborator and mentor to many in the academic and research community. Over a dozen students from the University of Saskatchewan and University of Manitoba did their graduate degrees on infrared heating of food ingredients with support from InfraReady. Mark took a keen interest in the students and often attended their defense seminars and other presentations. He also willingly participated in career days and was a key employer of students and graduates from the Department of Food and Bioproduct Sciences, and others.

On a personal note, it was exciting to share Mark's enthusiastic support for NutraReady, a lentil-based meat binder that he promoted based on our shared research. I also had to smile at his skillful marketing to the meat industry – he had a knack to learn the jargon and talk the talk to get their interest.

Mark was very proud of his InfraReady team and their professional and personal accomplishments. He led with humility, respect and empathy. Together they won several awards: the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership Exporter of the Year Award (2000) and the ABEX Award for Innovation (2018) come to mind.

Mark was a visionary in Saskatchewan's agriculture and food industry. Mark inspired, encouraged, guided, and mentored so many of us. May his legacy continue and be acknowledged through our own journeys moving forward. Our deepest condolences to Mark's wife and children and to the InfraReady staff. He will be missed.



The Food Centre was honoured to plant a tree memorial in Mark's name. His legacy will continue to flourish, nurturing a healthier and greener planet for generations to come.

Tribute by Phyllis Shand, with input from Jennifer Evancio, Linda Malcomson, Susan Arntfield, Dan Prefontaine and Bob Tyler.



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 2023. Firstly, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Food Centre staff for their hard work, dedication and exemplary work ethic in delivering our technical and business programs. Additionally, I am deeply grateful to the Board of Directors for their continuous and invaluable support.

In 2023, we continued to observe the extended impact of global headwinds in particular continuing inflationary measures, high interest rates, rising food prices and reduced venture capital in agri-food marketplace. Despite these hurdles, we expanded our contract research, manufacturing, incubation services, making significant contributions to both the provincial and national economy. This year was marked by organizational development, business process training and team building as we continued our journey to accelerate innovation excellence at the Food Centre. I am pleased to share that we increased our capacity and added new programs over the past year.

In March, we received funding from Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada's WES Ecosystem Fun for our Women Entrepreneurship Program. We rebranded this program as FEAD (Female Entrepreneurs in Agri-Food Development) and have since been supporting over 700 women entrepreneurs across Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Northwest Territories, Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan and Yukon. With the rebranding, FEAD launched several new programs in 2023, including the Sohkitehew Circle program, Farm to Fork Accelerator, Restaurant to Retail Accelerator, and Venture Capital Readiness Programs.

In April, we initiated the delivery of SCAP-Product Development Program (PDP) on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture. This strategic initiative aims to cultivate growth and innovation within Saskatchewan's agriculture and food processing sector. The program's core objectives include increasing overall revenue from value-added agricultural products, advancing processing techniques, promoting sustainability by minimizing by-product waste, and nurturing the growth of value-added businesses. We look forward to collaborating with the Ministry of Agriculture staff over the next four years to achieve these goals. Our Fermentation and Bioengineering Program continue to flourish, thanks to the support of Prairies Economic Development Canada, Government of Saskatchewan and Protein Industries Canada. The Food Centre is paving the way for the future and is poised to become one of Canada's leading organizations for contract research, manufacturing and scale-up. We are developing new capacities and creating synergies across our programs. The construction of the Advanced Food Ingredients Centre's construction is nearing completion. We plan to commission the facility and welcome our first round of clients by August/September 2024.

In 2023, the Food Centre's core programs continued to thrive, supporting numerous startups, rural entrepreneurs, women founders, SMEs, and multinational companies in various capacities. We saw a significant increase in cross-functional projects, allowing us to provide comprehensive, streamlined, and precise solutions for our clients.

As we expand our capabilities in downstream processing, fermentation technologies, sustainable food processing solutions, and co-product and food waste utilization, the Food Centre remains dedicated to serving as "the leader in advancing Saskatchewan's agri-food industry" within our ecosystem.

Empowering growth and innovation in the agri-food industry

For over 27 years, the Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre (Food Centre) has been instrumental in the success of numerous food companies, both in Saskatchewan and globally. Offering a comprehensive suite of services and facilities, from product development to commercial production, we empower clients at every phase to mitigate the financial risks associated with business start-ups or new product launches.

The Food Centre is a key player in boosting the value of our agri-food industry and supporting Saskatchewan's goals. Building on decades of success, we're dedicated to driving innovation, technology transfer, business incubation, and providing regulatory and technical support to Saskatchewan's agri-food sector. We're committed to strengthening the value-added processing industry, focusing on a diverse range of ingredients, foods, and food products across the province.

In 2023, the Food Centre assisted over 130 clients from around the globe in product development, ingredient services, manufacturing and extrusion. Many clients have already launched their product in the market and are seeing success. We are honoured to be part of their innovation journey and look forward to continuing the momentum of the industry's growth.

The Food Centre is well-positioned to adapt to the evolving demands for growth and innovation in agriculture, food production, and processing. Our commitment to our clients and the industry is key to fostering collaboration with stakeholders and nurturing success.

Dosch Organic Acres

"The Saskatchewan Food Centre was absolutely beneficial in getting our products to market. Having the staff assist us with the creation of our product and educate us on how the food industry works allowed us to finally be capable and confident to move forward onto the next step which was opening our very own facility in Willow Bunch, SK. We couldn't have done it without them."

Darlene & Dean Dosch
Dosch Organic Acres, Willow Bunch, SK



2023 Highlights



Media event at the Food Centre - Prairies Economic Development Canada announced \$1Million to the Food Centre for enhanced co-packing capacity for the agri-food sector in Saskatchewan.

Prairies Economic Development Canada funding announcement for women entrepreneurship program (FEAD).

Media event at the Food Centre - Federal and provincial governments announced \$5Million for the Food Centre over 5 years to continue to grow the value-added industry.



Media event at the Food Centre - launched Farm2Kitchen, a pulse-based soup mix to address food insecurity in SK.

Hosted Sneak Peek of the Advanced Food Ingredients Centre (AFIC2) as part of National Biotech Week.

Hosted 9 webinars: extrusion, drying technologies, fermented pulse-based foods, sustainability, food trends and more.



Winner of the Newcomer Youth Recruitment Award , presented by Saskatoon Open Door Society at their Annual Diversity Awards Gala.

Launched the Product Development Program to foster growth and innovation in the agricultuer and food processing sectors in Saskatchewan - funded by Saskatchewan Government and administered by the Food Centre.

Completed the Protein Industries Canada funded “Advancing Fermentation Processing in Western Canada” webinar series.



FEAD kicks off several new programs: Sohkitehew Circle, Farm to Fork Accelerator, Restaurant to Retail Accelerator, and Venture Capital Readiness Program.

Launched GreenPrints webinar series to educate the industry on sustainability practices.

Year in Review



Since its establishment in 1997, the Food Centre has played a pivotal role in enhancing the value of Saskatchewan's agri-food industry. Through leadership in technology transfer, industry innovations, business incubation, and regulatory and technical support, we have been instrumental in fostering the growth of the value-added industry in crop utilization and the commercialization of food and beverage products in the province.

The Food Centre had another busy year in 2023, collaborating with approximately 130 clients on product development, processing, extrusion, and ingredients. There were numerous cross-functional projects involving multiple departments. Clients recognize the benefits of bringing projects to the Food Centre, a comprehensive service provider from ideation to commercialization.

We launched the new and improved women entrepreneurs program, FEAD, with resounding success amassing over 700 members across Canada.

We hosted nine webinars to provide industry with knowledge and tools to address sustainability, food waste in Canada, opportunities in plant-based innovations, drying technologies, and fermentation.

The Food Centre reached a significant milestone with the partial completion of the Advanced Food Ingredients Centre (AFIC2). This dedicated facility represents another vital component in bolstering our agri-food industry by aligning with provincial goals. AFIC2 serves as a hub for ecosystem partnerships, facilitating upcycling and co-product utilization in the fermentation and bioengineering sector. With projections indicating incremental growth in the sector over the next decade, AFIC2 is poised to play a pivotal role in IP generation, technology transfer, industry innovation, and offering contract research and manufacturing capabilities.

Product Development Innovations

Entrepreneurs in the food industry exemplify innovation and tenacity, constantly pushing boundaries to bring new and exciting products to market. Many of our development projects are cross-functional, involving various departments at the Food Centre, such as Ingredients, Development, Extrusion and Pilot Plant.

Our cross-functional projects contributed to the creation of a diverse range of products, including pasta sauce, chutney and jam using locally grown ingredients, hummus, mustard sauce, dry soup mix, drink mixes breakfast cereal, extruded chips, HMEC cheese, extruded puffs, upcycled ingredients, pulses, and various plant-based meats, to name a few. We are excited to see that many of these products have been launched in the market in 2023.

Our emphasis on plant-based foods using pulse ingredients remains strong. There's notably high demand for TVP in vegan meat products throughout Canada, plus a continued interest in plant-based meats that mimic ground and whole muscle meat products.

Non dairy analogs have seen a significant surge in popularity over the past few years, driven by a combination of health, environmental, and ethical considerations. Plant-based milk alternatives, such as almond, soy, oat and coconut milk have become mainstream, with oat milk experiencing particularly strong growth.

We are utilizing our combined development and technical expertise to explore Saskatchewan-grown crops for developing texturized plant protein for vegan foods, meat substitutes, and non-dairy analogs.



Year in Review



Ingredient Innovation in the Food Industry: Driving Growth and Sustainability

Ingredient innovation is revolutionizing the food industry, offering new opportunities for growth and sustainability. By developing advanced food ingredients that enhance the nutritional profile and functionality of food products it also supports environmental sustainability through improved production processes and reduced waste.

In 2023, the Ingredient Science & Technology department collaborated with approximately 50 clients, from Saskatchewan and also from other parts of Canada, the US, and internationally.

It was a busy year with many activities including:

- Facilitating innovative ingredient functionalities through extrusion and milling techniques using starches and flours, supporting clean-label products and expanding market opportunities
- Providing milling services for R&D and scale-up operations for both coarse and fine milling needs
- Spearheading and successfully concluding two ADF projects focused on developing novel ingredients
- Delivering technical expertise on comparative analysis of drying technologies and their impact on nutritional value across different ingredients
- Leading an NRC project to establish a platform for innovative and functional pulse proteins and starches
- Engaging in wet and dry fractionation of macronutrients in various grains and wheat proteins
- Facilitating shelf-life services for clients, including assessments under accelerated and normal conditions

The department will be working closely with our new fermentation team with fermented foods applications to address consumer demand for healthier and more sustainable food options.

Empowering Innovation and Industry Growth: The Food Centre's State-of-the-Art Facilities and Collaborative Approach

The Food Centre prides itself in providing state of the art equipment and inspected facilities to support industry development through our 10,000 square ft pilot plant and its 64,000 square ft Agri-Food Innovation Centre (AFIC). Both facilities' inspected status and food safety accreditations have filled a crucial gap for new entrepreneurs and existing business in developing and commercializing new products in the area of food, ingredients and natural products.

The pilot plant's daily rental fee structure enables start-ups and small agri-businesses to launch new food products without the need for capital investment in equipment and facility. AFIC is designed to provide the secondary longer-term incubation step to support company growth and business expansion for food and ingredients. It provides the infrastructure for companies to come in and grow their businesses to a level in which they can attract investment to grow beyond AFIC's capability.

In 2023, approximately 50 clients utilized the Food Centre for manufacturing of processed meats, hummus, jams, salsa, ethnic meats, gourmet mustards, relish, extruded snacks, texturized protein and more.

Gravelbourg Mustard

"The Food Centre staff has always shown an exemplary level of knowledge and professionalism. Their expertise has enabled us to produce our high quality gourmet artisanal mustard. Our partnership with the Food Centre has played an important role in the continued growth of our business over the years and we value our relationship with them."

Paul Léost and Matt Sirois - Gravelbourg Mustard, Regina, SK





Year in Review

Leading the Charge in Food Safety and Industry Training

The Food Centre 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. The focus of the program is to provide education to the industry, implementation, assessment, training and maintenance for new and existing food safety and quality systems.

Throughout 2023, we provided initial food safety consultations, needs assessment, and internal audits for several companies in Saskatchewan.

The Food Centre's on-site visits, virtual consultations and training opportunities has elevated the level of food safety within the Saskatchewan food industry. Consequently, many stakeholders have gained greater market access, while raising awareness about food safety standards and regulations.

The Food Centre worked with Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies and Protein Industries Canada 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 – Process Operator Technician for the 1st Cohort in 2022 and taught a second cohort in 2023.

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

We saw an increased activity in co-manufacturing a variety of pickled products such as baby carrots and cucumbers, relish, mustard, and pasta sauce for clients.

While demand for extruded snacks remains stable, high input costs are limiting growth. Most clients are focusing on high-protein snacks. Extrusion retail manufacturing supported 13-15 clients, producing snacks, baby snacks, cereal, and pet food. Several clients who tested formulations in Extrusion R&D have launched their products.

With the installation of the FT75 extruder, our extrusion capacity has significantly increased, enabling two Canadian clients to expand into the US retail market in 2023. We anticipate producing 2.5 million units for three clients in 2024.



Evova Foods Inc.

"This past year, we revamped our packaging and, based on consumer research, decided to emphasize the non-GMO nature of our product. Non-GMO certification is an arduous process, but the Food Centre was a huge help throughout this process. The Food Centre's policies and processes, along with the knowledge and experience of staff, was essential to us passing the non-GMO audit."

Dion Martens - Evova Foods Inc., Saskatoon, SK





Year in Review

Advanced Food Ingredients Centre

Supporting the 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.

In the past year, several significant milestones have been achieved to advance innovation in the agriculture sector with the Food Centre's new Advanced Food Ingredients Centre (AFIC2).

The construction of our expansive fermentation and downstream processing suites continues to progress steadily. We have completed the commissioning of various small-scale equipment within the new facility, marking significant milestones in our operational development. Furthermore, our efforts have culminated in the full operationalization of two 10L glass fermenters and one 50L stainless steel fermenter within AFIC2.

In the Food Centre's commitment to sustainability, we've taken proactive steps by installing a chilled water recirculation system for the 50L fermenter operation, further aligning our practices with eco-friendly initiatives. We anticipate welcoming clients starting in the fall of 2024, ready to explore new opportunities in the growing demand for healthy nutritious plant-based foods.

We have had positive response from industry, with approximately 15 client engagements in fermentation projects and bioengineering services. Four projects were completed in 2023 in areas of submerged and solid-state fermentation.

We offered comprehensive support to various clients, engaging in process design, simulation, and economic analysis to optimize their operations.

We conducted an ADF funded project, "Valorization of by-products from pulse processing industries to produce higher alcohols using simultaneous saccharification and fermentation (SSF)" with optimization of process conditions in small flasks in 2023.

We provided specialized assistance to multinational corporations, aiding them in harnessing the power of data analytics to drive product development initiatives forward. Furthermore, we partnered with a local client, extending our expertise in process engineering and delivering tailored manufacturing solutions to enhance their liquid processing and packaging operations.

Food Centre's fermentation and bioengineering team assisted several clients to access National Research Council's IRAP funding to solve technical challenges and support clients' innovation journey.

We are excited to see the progress of the new facility and look forward to engaging with new clients. Through AFIC2, our enriched service delivery, integrating bioprocessing, fermentation and bioengineering, it will propel the Food Centre into new territories in the areas of advanced food ingredients, fermented food ingredients, enzymes, crop inoculants, probiotics, biocontrol agents, bioproducts, and bioactive compounds.



Year in Review



GreenPrints Campaign Launched to Create a More Sustainable and Prosperous Future for the Canadian Agri-Food Industry

In today's world, Canadian consumers exhibit a growing concern for the environmental impact of their food choices. However, there remains a lack of comprehensive public information on the current state of sustainability practices in Canadian agriculture. In response, the Food Centre launched the GreenPrints campaign in May. This program is funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the AgriCommunication Program. GreenPrints' objective is to promote environmental sustainability in the agri-food sector and celebrate the industry's prioritization of sustainable best practices in food production post-harvest.

All webinars are led by the esteemed Dr. Sylvain Charlebois from the Agri-Food Analytics Lab at Dalhousie University. Dr. Charlebois' expertise and engaging presentation style provide attendees with a comprehensive understanding of each topic.

The GreenPrints Campaign aims to host a five-part bilingual webinar series. Three of five webinars were completed in 2023. Webinar #1 - The State of Plant-Based and Sustainable Protein Consumption in Canada; Webinar #2 - Addressing Food Waste in Canada, Upcycling, Rescuing, and More; and Webinar #3 - Harnessing AI for Waste Reduction and Efficiency Enhancement Along the Agri-Food Supply Chain in Canada. Webinar 4 and 5 is offered in 2024.

Product Development Program Aimed at Supporting Agriculture Innovation

The Food Centre launched the Product Development Program (PDP) in May, which is a revamp of the previous Product2Market program that was administered by the Ministry of Agriculture. The PDP program is funded through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership and is administered by the Food Centre. The program is open to Saskatchewan based companies and aims to foster growth and innovation in the agriculture and food processing sectors by supporting strategic initiatives.

In the pilot year, the Program has already made significant strides, approving 12 projects aimed at enhancing research and development, new technology development, pre-commercial testing, and commercialization testing. Notably, at the culmination of 2023, 60% of the pilot year funding had already been distributed to these projects, demonstrating a strong commitment to supporting innovation in Saskatchewan's agriculture and food processing industries.

These various projects span a variety of Canadian agricultural commodities where value has been added, including pulses (such as peas, fabas, chickpeas, and lentils), irrigated fruits (like berries), oilseeds, oats, flax, and animal proteins (including beef, pork, fish, bison), among others.

Approved projects under this program will play a pivotal role in bolstering provincial value-added revenues and promoting thriving businesses, thereby driving sustainable economic growth and reinforcing the province's leadership position in the global market of value-added products.



WEBINAR | JUNE 16, 2023

The State of Plant-Based and Sustainable Protein Consumption in Canada



Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada



Year in Review

The Food Centre was the recipient of various funding opportunities from provincial and federal governments in 2023. We were pleased to host several events to acknowledge the support and continued commitment.

Funding for Co-Manufacturing Equipment

Food Centre hosted an announcement on \$1Million funding earmarked for co-manufacturing equipment. This financial support is poised to bolster the Food Centre's capabilities in various domains, including packaging, condiment production, snack food processing, milling, scaled-up modification of ingredients, ingredient isolation and purification, general food processing, and research and development services within the plant-based food sector. The Honourable Gudie Hutchings, Minister of Rural Economic Development, made the announcement and stayed for a guided tour of the Food Centre.



\$5Million to Enhance Saskatchewan's Value-Added Industry

The Food Centre organized a press gathering to announce funding from both federal and provincial governments. The Food Centre received \$5Million allocated over the span of five years to further strengthen Saskatchewan's value-added industry. The Food Centre was very pleased to welcome this support to increase its efforts to grow and enhance the value-added sector. The announcement was delivered by the Honourable David Marit, Minister of Agriculture for Saskatchewan, who also participated in a tour of the Food Centre's recently inaugurated Advanced Food Ingredients Centre.

Partners in Innovation to Tackle Food Insecurity in Saskatchewan...and Beyond

The Food Centre organized an event to mark the culmination of a fruitful collaboration with Global Institute for Food Security (GIFS), University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon and Regina Food Banks, aimed at tackling food insecurity in Saskatchewan. Over 15,000 packages of dry soup mix were formulated and manufactured at the Food Centre, destined for distribution to families in need through the Regina and Saskatoon Food Banks. Additionally, a promotional video titled "Farm2Kitchen" was created to raise awareness about this initiative. The success of this collaboration has inspired the Regina Food Bank to expand the initiative nationwide.





The FEAD team hosted, collaborated and presented at various conferences, seminar and workshops throughout 2023. FEAD hosted their first Table Talk Conference in Niagra Falls, ON, leveraging its partnership with Advancing Women's Conference (East). The success of this event has inspired the FEAD to collaborate with AWC West 2024 held in Calgary, Alberta.

The Food Centre was approved for a new stream of funding to support women entrepreneurs in the agri-food industry in March. The program, which is an iteration of the previous AWESOME program takes on a strategic focus toward engagement in the following demographics: First Nations, Inuit and Metis, Rural, U39, Immigrant and New Comer. The updated program is a federally recognized program funded through ISED-WES Programming and thus, has expanded its reach to encompass British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, as well as Yukon and Northwest Territories.

The program was renamed, rebranded and a new website was launched. Introducing FEAD (Female Entrepreneurs in Agri-Food Development)!

The FEAD team, led by Kendra Wack, has revamped existing programs and introduced new ones to ensure its membership has the resources to grow and succeed in the agri-food industry.



Year in Review

FEAD increased social media presence and strategic growth of LinkedIn and Instagram followers and hosted, partnered and presented at various conferences, seminars and workshops.

Re-launch of Podcasts and webinar series FEAD for Thought was well received by the members.

Redesign of the Awesome Accelerator curriculum. Wrapped up Cohort 5 at the end of October, with the winner being Dani Genest from Skip a Beet of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

New Program Initiatives

SOHKITEHEW Circle - program designed to foster FNIM entrepreneurs and reduce the unique barriers for FNIM founders in agri-food space.

Farm to Fork Accelerator - program is to provide entrepreneurs who may also be primary producers to create and curate food products to take to retail. Twenty participants were selected for this program and will wrap up end of Feb. 2024 with a pitch competition.

Restaurant to Retail - will start in March 2024 to support food service founders seeking to transform recipes into retail-ready products by developing and honing their skills and operations.

Venture Capital Readiness - training founders how to be ready to approach venture capital.



FEAD Team: Kendra Wack, Executive Director (middle); Lindsay Toth, Member & Marketing Coordinator (left); Nafisa Mahabub, Operation & Program Coordinator (right)

Year in Review

Building Relationships Through Industry Engagement and Strategic Partnerships

The Food Centre collaborates with various experts, and industry partners to offer specialized programming and webinars on topics pertinent to the agri-food industry.

We are pleased to have the financial support of Prairies Economic Development Canada, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture, National Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Assistance Program, and Protein Industries Canada for several unique programming. The industry has benefited greatly from this support.

In 2023, we hosted numerous webinars, presented at several conferences, and participated in various events to engage with industry professionals and stakeholders.

- Indigenous Business Gathering tradeshow
- Dr. Pooba Ganeshan spoke at Future Food Tech
- IFT, StartUp Pavilion - Dr. Mehmet Tulbek was a judge at their food competition
- Participation in Manitoba Protein Symposium in June
- Presentation at the Women's Business Hub
- thinkAG Career Expo at Canada's Farm Show – presentation on the production of mustard and the importance of this crop in the foods that consumers eat
- Participated in GAAP's Navigate Ecosystem Training Program
- FCC Food and Beverage Summit – FEAD and Food Centre, sponsorship and tradeshow
- Sneak Peak of the Fermentation Facility as part of Ag-West National Biotech Week Activities
- Science of Bread Making in partnership with Farm & Food Care Saskatchewan for National Biotech Week activities
- 3 of 5 GreenPrints webinars completed
- AWESOME webinars: Food Trends and Prairie Food Manufacturing

WORLD PULSES DAY

WEBINAR
OVERVIEW OF GLOBAL FERMENTED PULSE-BASED FOODS
10:00AM CST February 10, 2023

food Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre Inc.

LIVE WEBINAR
CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS IN PLANT-BASED MEAT ANALOGS

February 9th 2023
10 AM CST / 11 AM EST

Virtual

[Register Now](#)

Firmenich **CLEXTRAL** **food** Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre Inc.

WEBINAR
Introduction to NuWave's Innovative Drying Solutions
April 6, 2023 @ 10AM CST-SK

NUWAVE **food** Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre Inc.

COLLABORATING TO ADVANCE CANADA'S FERMENTATION ECOSYSTEM

March 8, 2023
12:00 PM - 4:00 PM CST-SK

Strategic Discussion & Networking
By Invitation Only | Saskatoon, SK

food Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre Inc.
GAAP | **Ag-West Bio** | **Protein Industries Canada**

SNEAK PEEK **GLOBAL BIOTECH WEEK** **food** Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre Inc.

Food Centre's New Fermentation Facility
September 28 | 1pm and 2:30pm Tours

GreenPrints
Empreintes Vertes

WEBINAIRE | SEPTEMBRE 14, 2023

Lutter contre le gaspillage alimentaire au Canada, recyclage avec valeur ajoutée, récupération et bien d'autres choses encore

food Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre Inc. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada



Our Team

The Food Centre 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 and seeing our clients succeed.

Mehmet Tulbek - President
Greg Hamilton - VP of Operations (AFIC & AFIC2)
Carmen Ly - Communications Director
Glenna Long - Finance Manager
Tyechia Thomas - Finance Assistant
Emily Nickel - Business Development Specialist
Tracy MacDonald - Administrative Assistant

Product Development & Ingredient Innovation

Maria Hounjet - Director
Cathy Querimit - Program Lead
Anula Perera - Food Scientist
Danielle Osowsky - PD Specialist
Amelia Rivera - PD Assistant
YanRan Tang - Research Associate
Maria Guerrero - Research Associate
Juliana Oduro - Research Assistant
Mark Dyck - Ingredient Processing Technician
Rasika Ralalage - Laboratory Technician

Processing & Extrusion (AFIC)

Matthew Marcotte - Extrusion R&D Manager
Cara Wandler - Extrusion Technologist
Kaleel Scott - Extrusion Technologist
Ken Melchkart - Plant Supervisor
Nenita Sanchez - Plant Supervisor
Dan Turchyn - Shipper & Receiver
Chester Ugali - Shipper & Receiver
Allan Furrow - Maintenance Supervisor
John Wilkinson - Maintenance Assistant
Robert Duret - Maintenance Assistant
Floyd Sookocheff - Maintenance Assistant

Pilot Plant

Scott Irvine - Manager
Nolan Langer - Assistant Manager & HACCP Coordinator
Sue Waldner - Production Supervisor
Jennifer Pasaje - Lead Operator
Michael Suru - Maintenance

Fermentation & Bioengineering (AFIC2)

Mahesh Sivakumar - Manager Engineering Services
Kerry Griffiths - Process Specialist
Pooba Ganeshan - Principal Scientist Fermentation
Brandon McLellan - Lead Fermentation Technologist
Siyang Shen - Junior Scientist

Food Safety & Skills Development

Elmer Peralta - Program Lead

Food Crop Quality Program

Lindsay Wang - Manager
Lucy Chen - Technician
Armandt Joubert - Junior Technician
Minh Nguyen - Junior Technician

FC Food Inspection

Vince Neiser - Manager

FEAD Canada

Kendra Wack - Executive Director
Nafisa Mahabub - Operation & Program Coordinator
Lindsay Toth - Member & Marketing Coordinator

**Staff listing is current at time of printing*



Financial Statements

Audited 2023 financial statements are available upon request by contacting the Food Centre.
Please direct your inquiries to info@foodcentre.sk.ca or (306) 933-7555.





food
centre

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