
News Release

For immediate release

GOVERNMENTS INVEST \$3 MILLION TO SUPPORT LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE PROCESSING INDUSTRY

CAMBRIDGE, Ontario, August 7, 2008 – The food and beverage processing industry is being provided with the support they need to remain competitive thanks to a joint investment by the Government of Canada and the Province of Ontario.

Gary Goodyear, Member of Parliament for Cambridge, on behalf of Federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz, today announced a new \$3 million Food and Beverage Industry Innovation (FBII) Fund, made up of equal contributions by the federal and provincial governments.

“Innovation has always driven this sector and our Conservative government wants to ensure that proud tradition continues,” said Mr. Goodyear. “Our government believes supporting producers will help the Ontario food and beverage processing industry, the second largest manufacturing sector in the province, achieve successful results.”

“I am very pleased to see the co-ordination of efforts to develop this program as part of the funding that the McGuinty Government announced earlier this year to support the competitiveness and productivity of Ontario’s food and beverage processing sector,” said Leona Dombrowsky, Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

The federal contribution of \$1.5 million is being provided through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada’s Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food program which, in Ontario, is delivered by the Agricultural Adaptation Council (AAC). The provincial contribution of \$1.5 million was provided to increase food industry competitiveness and was announced on January 31, 2008.

The Alliance of Ontario Food Processors (AOFPP) and the AAC joined efforts to establish the FBII Fund to encourage investment into new, innovative processes, products or skills development in the food and beverage processing industry. Projects are expected to improve the long-term sustainability of individual businesses as well as sectors within the industry.

“Long term sustainability and competitiveness are critical to the future success of Ontario’s food and beverage processing industry,” said Jane Graham, Executive Director of the AOFPP. “The Alliance thanks both the provincial and federal governments for recognizing the importance of this industry by providing support for this newly created Fund.”

“The Agricultural Adaptation Council is pleased to be the administrative partner for the FBII Fund,” said Kim Turnbull, Chair of the AAC. “The Food and Beverage industry is so important to the continued wealth of Ontario that anything that improves this sector will help the province.”

Ontario's food and beverage processing industry is the second largest manufacturing sector in the province, generating more than \$33 billion annually in sales and employing more than 110,000 people. The industry is the largest customer of Ontario's farmers and purchases more than 70 per cent of all farm production.

The Food and Beverage Industry Innovation Fund will be administered by the AAC. More information and a request for proposals for companies and sector associations will be posted on the AAC website at www.adaptcouncil.org.

The deadline for submission of proposals is September 22, 2008.

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