

**Kelly Lush**

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**From:** Kelly Lush  
**Sent:** September 9, 2024 2:15 PM  
**To:** Kelly Lush  
**Subject:** Governments Investing in Innovation to Strengthen Ontario's Agri-Food Sector

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**From:** Ontario News <[newsroom@ontario.ca](mailto:newsroom@ontario.ca)>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 9, 2024 10:01 AM  
**To:** Jennifer White <[jwhite@huronkinloss.com](mailto:jwhite@huronkinloss.com)>  
**Subject:** Governments Investing in Innovation to Strengthen Ontario's Agri-Food Sector



**NEWS RELEASE**

## **Governments Investing in Innovation to Strengthen Ontario's Agri-Food Sector**

Research and innovation projects will reinforce long-term resilience and economic growth

**September 09, 2024**

[Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness](#)

TORONTO – The governments of Canada and Ontario are investing an additional \$3.5 million in the [Ontario Agri-Food Research Initiative \(OAFRI\)](#) to support the development and adoption of new technologies for farmers, food processors and agri-businesses that will enhance their competitiveness and growth. Funded through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) between Ontario and Canada, this additional intake will support investments in the applied research, pilot and demonstration, and knowledge translation and transfer streams. The Grow Ontario Accelerator Hub (GOAH), which provides advisory services to agri-food companies, will continue to be available.

“Ontario’s agri-food sector plays a vital role in bringing innovative, top-quality food to Canadians,” said the Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. “With support under Sustainable CAP, research projects funded through the Ontario Agri-Food Research Initiative will help the sector stay on the cutting-edge, access the resources they need, and gain new market opportunities for their products.”

“Our farmers and food processors must continue to innovate to compete. Our investment in OAFRI will supercharge their innovation efforts,” said Rob Flack, Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness. “The return on investment from these research projects will ensure our agrifood sector reaches its full potential through new growth, new jobs and new economic opportunities.”

Over 100 research and innovation projects and activities have received funding through the latest intake, which includes [67 applied research and pilot and demonstration projects and 10 commercialization projects](#). More than 30 businesses are also receiving specialized expert mentoring through the Grow Ontario Accelerator Hub.

Examples of projects funded under the last OAFRI intake include:

- A digital animal biosecurity product for swine and poultry farmers
- Developing solutions to detect contamination at food processing plants and large farms
- Improving data management and communication for Ontario dairy farmers with a digital platform to boost efficiency.

“Innovation is a key driver for long-term competitiveness of a sector. For agriculture, the development and adoption of new technologies and processes will result in greater productivity, lower production costs and increased efficiencies,” said Dave Smardon, President and CEO of Bioenterprise Canada Corporation. “OMAFRA has recognized the need to proactively support the adoption of innovation across the value chain. These two initiatives, OAFRI and GOAH, are designed to accelerate the adoption of innovation and propel Ontario’s global competitiveness in agriculture and food production.”

The Sustainable CAP is a five-year, \$3.5-billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen competitiveness, innovation, and resiliency of Canada’s agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector. This includes \$1 billion in federal programs and activities and a \$2.5-billion commitment that is cost-shared 60 per cent federally and 40 per cent provincially/territorially for programs that are designed and delivered by provinces and territories.

## Quick Facts

- The next OAFRI applied research, pilot and demonstration and knowledge translation and transfer (KTT) streams will open on October 15, 2024. The applied research and pilot and demonstration streams are expected to be further targeted compared to the earlier intake. More information will be available on [the OAFRI website](#).
- [Bioenterprise Canada Corporation](#) delivers the Commercialization stream and the Grow Ontario Accelerator Hub. The [Grow Ontario Accelerator Hub](#) is open on a continuous basis until all spots are filled. The next Commercialization stream intake will open on October 2, 2024; more information is [available online](#).

- [Agricultural Research and Innovation Ontario \(ARIO\)](#) provides strategic advice on research and innovation activities that contribute to a prosperous, competitive and sustainable agricultural and food sector.
- [Sustainable CAP](#) is a five-year (2023-2028), \$3.5-billion investment by federal-provincial and territorial governments to strengthen the agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sectors. Ontario's total share will be \$569 million. It will help achieve the goals outlined in Ontario's Grow Ontario Strategy, which includes growing the market for Ontario-led innovative technologies domestically and globally and enabling more than 250 patents and licenses are granted through the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness-funded research by 2032.

## Additional Resources

[Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership](#)

[Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada](#)

[Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness and Ministry of Rural Affairs](#)

[Grow Ontario](#)

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