

Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs

Ministère de l'Agriculture, de
l'Alimentation et des Affaires rurales

Office of the Minister

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Ontario

November 21, 2023

Cathy Lennon
General Manager
Ontario Federation of Agriculture
cathy.lennon@ofa.on.ca

Dear Cathy:

I am pleased to share with you information about new investments to expand production capacity and boost efficiency in the agriculture and food sector.

Through the Agri-Tech Innovation Initiative, up to \$25 million is being committed by the governments of Canada and Ontario to farm and food processing businesses, to assist them in making investments in their technology, equipment or processes to increase production capacity and increase efficiency.

The initiative will support the objectives laid out in the Grow Ontario Strategy such as increasing the production of food grown and prepared in the province by 30 per cent by 2032 and boosting the economic impact of Ontario's robust food and beverage sector by 10 per cent.

The Agri-Tech Innovation Initiative will offer a variety of cost-shared funding supports, according to the type of project proposed by applicants. There will be supports specifically targeting businesses seeking to make investments in their operations up to \$100,000 and there will be different assistance for larger-scale projects as well. This program will enable businesses to acquire innovative, advanced and commercially available equipment and technology geared to increasing productivity and efficiency. Enhanced cyber security will also be considered an eligible outcome.

It is important to note, the Initiative builds on other actions the government has taken to support the sector. These have included a \$22 million commitment through the Agri-Tech Innovation Cost-Share Program, the \$16.4 million Ontario Agri-food Research Initiative, this year's signing over \$300 million Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance and the provision of the Agri-Food Energy Cost Savings Initiative, a \$10 million commitment offered through Sustainable CAP.

The Agricultural Adaptation Council will deliver the Agri-Tech Innovation Initiative. More details will soon be available online. Applications will be available February 15, 2024.

We're determined to support the province's agriculture and food sector in realizing its tremendous potential for sustainability and growth. These investments will allow established and emerging sector businesses to speed up efforts to optimize their operations and help in achieving the ambitious goals we have set for the industry in the Grow Ontario Strategy.

We look forward to continuing to work with you, as partners and stakeholders to help meet the needs of Ontario's agri-food sector.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa M. Thompson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lisa" and last name "Thompson" clearly distinguishable.

Lisa M. Thompson
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Did you know about the Farmers' Wellness Initiative?

- Your mental health is important! If you're a farmer or a member of a farm family and in need of mental health support, please call 1-866-267-6255 and arrange to speak with a professional today.
- For additional resources visit: <https://farmerwellnessinitiative.ca/>.