

# FOOD & BEVERAGE INSIDER

Alliance of Ontario Food Processors

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[www.aofp.ca](http://www.aofp.ca)

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## **STRATEGY FOR THE ONTARIO FOOD AND BEVERAGE PROCESSING INDUSTRY: WHERE WILL WE BE IN FIVE TO TEN YEARS?**

Following the 2007 Industry consultations held throughout the province, the Alliance is pleased to release the culmination of this process in *A Strategy for Ontario’s Food and Beverage Processing Industry*. The Strategy was driven by industry, with support from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, to develop a plan to guide both industry and government in decision and policy making over the next five to ten years. The key priorities of the Strategy include:

- the need for greater collaboration and communication with farmers, government and our customers, the retail and foodservice sector – ultimate goal to sell more Ontario produced and processed products
- the need to develop greater awareness about the importance of the food and beverage processing sector to the provincial economy and the agri-food sector
- the urgent need to address competitiveness of the sector through innovation and productivity improvements
- the need to reform regulations to create a supportive business climate that allows the sector to compete and take advantage of opportunities, such as healthier products
- the need to develop a workforce with the skills required to support the Ontario food and beverage processing sector

The Strategy is the beginning. The measurement of success will be the implementation of the priorities and the actions identified in the Strategy. In order to begin implementation of the Strategy, the Alliance has been granted \$2 million from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs that will be used to support industry in enhancing competitiveness, productivity and skills development. Programming details are currently being developed and will be available on-line in the near future.

To review the Strategy go to the website [www.aofp.ca](http://www.aofp.ca) – see link under “latest news” on the home page.

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## INDUSTRY SUMMIT 2008: FOOD AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY WORKFORCE ISSUES AND STRATEGIES – SEPTEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup> AND 30<sup>TH</sup>

Plan now for the Industry Summit on Workforce Issues and Strategies on September 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. The Summit is being co-hosted by the Alliance of Ontario Food Processors, the City of Toronto and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. The opening reception and dinner on the 29<sup>th</sup> will be an opportunity to celebrate industry leaders in workforce management. The featured speaker will be Roger Martin, Chair of the Ontario Task Force on Competitiveness, Productivity and Economic Progress.

The all day session on the 30<sup>th</sup> will focus on workforce issues and strategies and provide an opportunity to learn about how to become an “Employer of Choice”. This symposium will be of interest to company owners, CEO’s, general managers and those with HR responsibilities.

The event is being held at the Old Mill in Toronto.

More details on this event will be emailed to you and posted on the website [www.aofp.ca](http://www.aofp.ca).

## “TOGETHER WE’RE BETTER!” A BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS!

The Alliance has recently completed the first phase of a multi-phased project to assist the food and beverage processing sector in addressing its needs with respect to a skilled work force. The 2007 AOFPI Initiative – supported by funding from the Agricultural Adaptation Council – brought together industry, academia and government to develop a Blueprint to clearly articulate a path for the development of programs at the community college level to address the need for skilled labour in the

food and beverage processing industry. The Blueprint provides a framework on which subsequent phases of curriculum and implementation will be developed. The ultimate goal of this project is the development of an Institute for Food Processing Technology in Ontario. The development of a Business Plan is currently underway. A copy of the Blueprint is available under the ‘latest news’ on the AOFPI website at [www.aofp.ca](http://www.aofp.ca).

## CHANGES TO CONSUMER SAFETY CONTINUE

Prime Minister Stephen Harper continued with his focus on Consumer Safety with the April 8<sup>th</sup> introduction of a legislative package of product safety changes that, if passed, will expand Ottawa's power to recall unsafe toys, food and drugs from the market, issue major fines and crack down on firms selling dangerous goods.

The Bill includes updates to the Food and Drugs Act, and the creation of a Canadian Consumer Product Safety Act, designed to give Ottawa the power to keep potentially unsafe products off the shelves. Up until now, the government has only been able to order recalls of food. But with this legislation, that power would now cover all consumer products. The government can also fine companies up to \$5-million if they manufacture or sell ‘problem’ products (up from the current \$5,000 fine). Under this Bill, Industry would also face increased requirements to inform the government when consumers are injured or experience health problems after using a product.

(Bill C-51 - *An Act to amend the Food and Drugs Act and to make consequential amendments to other Acts* (in both official languages on one file):

[www2.parl.gc.ca/content/hoc/Bills/392/Government/C-51/C-51\\_1/C-51\\_1.PDF](http://www2.parl.gc.ca/content/hoc/Bills/392/Government/C-51/C-51_1/C-51_1.PDF)

(Bill C-52 - *An Act respecting the safety of consumer products* (in both official languages on one file):

[www2.parl.gc.ca/content/hoc/Bills/392/Government/C-52/C-52\\_1/C-52\\_1.PDF](http://www2.parl.gc.ca/content/hoc/Bills/392/Government/C-52/C-52_1/C-52_1.PDF)

This announcement comes after several changes during the last few months to the consumer product and food safety laws. These have included the launch of the Food and Drugs Act Liaison Office; a newly created branch of Health Canada that will handle consumer complaints and investigate improprieties. This is in addition to the 2007 launch of a website to improve communications surrounding food and product recalls ([www.healthycanadians.gc.ca](http://www.healthycanadians.gc.ca)).

## ALLIANCE WELCOMES THE ONTARIO DAIRY COUNCIL AS NEW MEMBER

In 2007 the Alliance was pleased to welcome the Ontario Dairy Council (ODC) to the growing number of association group members. Members of the Ontario Dairy Council become members of the Alliance. With the addition of ODC the Alliance now represents over 325 food and beverage processing companies.

Established in 1971, the Ontario Dairy Council is the provincial trade association through which milk processors and marketers discuss matters of mutual interest and concern with representatives of government, consumers and milk producers.

Catherine Tokarz, Saputo Foods and Jay Kirktown, Gay Lea Foods, represent the ODC on the Alliance Board of Directors.

The ODC joins the Association of Ontario Chicken Processors, Ontario Food Processors Association (fruit and vegetable processors), Ontario Independent Meat Processors and the Wine Council of Ontario as Group Members of the Alliance. The respective memberships of each of these organizations automatically become members of the Alliance.

## DIRECTORY OF ONTARIO'S FOOD AND BEVERAGE PROCESSORS

With the start of the year and renewals of memberships, we would like to tell you about one of the advantages of being part of the Alliance: work is being done to bring you an updated Directory of Ontario's Food and Beverage Processors. With funding support from the Agricultural Adaptation Council, the

Alliance will be providing you with a searchable, dynamic database. The goal is to have this accessible from the AOFB website in the summer. You will be able to play a part in creating a product that is relevant to your needs and may be contacted to verify information and add details. Stay tuned!

## NEW STAFF - ADDED SERVICE!

There have been a number of changes at the Alliance office in the last few months. The welcomed return of Program Director, Janisse Routledge after maternity leave has been supplemented with the hiring of Julie Tribble as Executive Assistant, Janice Emery-Carter will focus on Membership and Communications and Michele Poisson, on an 8 month loan from the Ontario Government, Ministry of Economic Development and

Trade, will focus on projects profiling the industry and develop the Directory of Ontario's Food and Beverage Processors. Janisse can be contacted at [jroutledge@aofb.ca](mailto:jroutledge@aofb.ca), Julie at [jtribble@aofb.ca](mailto:jtribble@aofb.ca), Janice at [jemerycarter@aofb.ca](mailto:jemerycarter@aofb.ca) and Michele at [mpoisson@aofb.ca](mailto:mpoisson@aofb.ca). The Alliance's Executive Director, Jane Graham, is also available at [alliance@aofb.ca](mailto:alliance@aofb.ca). The staff at the Alliance welcomes your contact!

## APPRENTICESHIP MOVES AHEAD:

In March of 2007 the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) created the training standard for "Process Operator – Food Manufacturing 246T". This training standard has risen out of the industry's need to have a trained labour force and a move to provincially certify employees working in the food and beverage processing industry.

It is expected that the food industry will foster this new skilled trade and the documentation has therefore been designed to be usable in both smaller and larger food and beverage production operations, as well as for various types of food manufacturing.

A Process Operator (Food Manufacturing) operates, monitors, adjusts and maintains food and beverage

manufacturing and processing systems and equipment. The trade standard will address learning safe working practices, maintaining tools and equipment, as well as components, preparing raw materials, operating a control room and continuous quality improvements, to name a few. The program consists of on-the-job training as well as 480 hours of in-school training.

To help with employing highly skilled workers, companies can take advantage of the Apprenticeship Training Tax Credit offered by the province. You can receive up to \$5000 per qualifying apprentice per year. For further details please contact the MTCU at 1-800-387-5656 or go to [www.edu.gov.on.ca](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca)

## AGRICULTURE POLICY FRAMEWORK 2 (APF) - GROWING FORWARD

*Growing Forward* will be phased in to replace the existing APF which expires on March 31, 2008. Consultations in 2006 and 2007 between federal-territorial-provincial (FPT) governments and industry were followed up by further consultations in early 2008.

*Growing Forward* will guide governments with a common vision – a vision of a profitable and innovative industry that seizes opportunities in responding to market demands and contributes to the health and well-being of Canadians. Policies and programs will:

- Encourage an approach to innovation that encompasses the full continuum from mind to market, and uses the best ideas from other sectors and other countries
- Include a new suite of business risk management programs that better respond to the needs of producers
- Generate benefits for the sector and all Canadians by contributing to their priorities ranging from

food safety to environmental sustainability to health and wellness

- Enable provincial-territorial flexibility, consistent with national objectives, so that provinces and territories can adapt programming to local needs
- Modernize and implement innovative regulations and standards in a way that ensures society's needs are met and contributes to the sector's competitiveness
- Ensure streamlined, transparent and efficient service delivery for all programs

Government is now working towards finalizing the new framework that aims to build on the best of the APF, but also provide opportunity for changes that address the lessons learned. The Alliance will continue to be actively involved in *Growing Forward* to ensure that the interests of the Ontario food and beverage processing sector are included in the new framework.

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

A reminder to members of the AOFPP that 2008 membership renewals are now past-due. If you have not renewed your membership yet for this year, please do so before you miss out on any of the 2008 benefits of the Alliance membership! Membership forms can be requested by emailing [jtribble@aofp.ca](mailto:jtribble@aofp.ca) or by downloading a form from the website, [www.aofp.ca](http://www.aofp.ca) (under 'Membership').

### AOFPP ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

You know that spring is here when thoughts turn to golf! Mark your calendar and get your foursomes together for the Annual Alliance Golf Tournament to be held on Thursday June 26th at Springfield Golf & Country Club, Guelph, Ontario.

For those that have participated in the past tournaments you know this is an excellent event for the food and beverage processing industry. For those of you who have not taken advantage of this great opportunity to spend the day with colleagues and clients, enjoy a round of golf and a great dinner, this year is your chance! Registration Forms and details can be downloaded from the website

### UPCOMING EVENTS - 2008

April 29

Alliance Annual General Meeting  
Cambridge - Future Inns

June 26

Alliance Annual Golf Tournament  
Springfield Golf & Country Club  
Guelph

September 29 & 30

Industry Summit:  
Food and Beverage  
Industry Workforce  
Issues and Strategies  
Toronto - Old Mill  
Inn.

or you can request a form by email at [jtribble@aofp.ca](mailto:jtribble@aofp.ca). The tournament is open to both members and non-members. Members have the privilege of inviting non-members to fill their foursome at the member rate. Take advantage of the early bird registration opportunity and register your group before June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Sponsorship opportunities are available for: tournament sponsor, hole sponsor, dinner sponsor, game ball sponsor, as well as longest drive and closest to the pin. To find out more on the benefits of sponsorship please contact [jemercarter@aofp.ca](mailto:jemercarter@aofp.ca) or [jtribble@aofp.ca](mailto:jtribble@aofp.ca).