

# Shaping the Future of Work

For Canada's Food and Beverage Manufacturing Sector



Impact Report | 2026



# THANK YOU

The achievements and learnings featured in this report would not be possible without the dedication and efforts of the people and businesses of the food and beverage industry, our partners, and funders.



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**CHAIR**  
**Mike Timani**, President  
Fancy Pokket Corp.



**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
**Jennefer Griffith**  
Food Processing  
Skills Canada

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP

In a world facing global supply chain disruptions, climate-driven food insecurity, and evolving workforce demands, Food Processing Skills Canada (FPSC) remains committed to empowering Canada's food and beverage manufacturing sector through evidence-based workforce development.

Our programs have reached record levels of engagement, while our commitment to inclusive practices, youth employment, and international collaboration positioned FPSC as a trusted leader and industry champion. From launching new skills training programs and interactive workforce development tools to partnering with employers on emotional intelligence and accessibility, we are helping shape a sector that is future-ready.

We recognize the vital role played by every employer, team member, learner, and funder. Thanks to your support, FPSC continues to lead the way in delivering practical, results-driven resources that strengthen Canada's food system and ensure food security remains a promise Canadians can count on.



SECTION 01

## ABOUT US

As the leading workforce development organization for Canada's food and beverage industry, FPSC empowers businesses with highly skilled talent and growth resources. Founded in 1997, we partner with governments, educational institutions, and industry associations to support this vital sector.

And this sector deserves the support.

Food and beverage manufacturing businesses are a key driver of Canada's economy, contributing \$35.2 billion to the GDP and employing more than 315,000 people in 2024. However, FPSC's Industry Growth and Outlook Report from December 2023 revealed that this sector requires over 90,000 new hires or nearly one-third of its current workforce by 2030 to sustain growth and replace retiring individuals.

With a growing demand for skilled individuals, in an industry with diverse and rewarding career opportunities, the training and resources available through FPSC have proven to support businesses and people. Read on to enjoy the success stories and the impact that has been accomplished.

# WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

1

## SUPPORT CANADA

During these challenging times for Canada and the world at large, we are taking a hard look at our programs and resources. FPSC's deliverables must bolster domestic production, support homegrown solutions, and ensure the Canadian consumer can easily find and support local businesses.

2

## FOCUS ON PEOPLE

Our research has confirmed that when people feel valued and have the right skills, businesses succeed. The employers we work with understand that people come first and the end result is proven increases to productivity, employee retention, and improved workplace diversity and inclusion.

3

## LISTEN TO OUR STAKEHOLDERS

When we have an opportunity to design an innovative resource or build a new program, we start by learning from our stakeholders. Consultation with industry leaders and experts is core to the organization's business development strategy because people know what they need to succeed.

4

## BUILD PARTNERSHIPS WITH TRUSTED ALLIES

For 28 years, our partnerships with industry associations, community and employment groups, educators, and governments have delivered award-winning programs and resources. It takes time to build trusted partnerships, but the results speak for themselves.

5

## ASSESS PERFORMANCE AND MAKE CHANGES

We know a resource is only as good as its performance. Delivering top quality, responsive support is an iterative process that demands a critical eye, labour market insights, program evaluation, and an accurate assessment of return on investment.

# WHAT WE DO



As the workforce development organization for Canada's food and beverage manufacturing industry and developing industries around the globe — our work is about your success.

■ **For employers**, our HR Toolkit, Food Skills Library, and Learning and Recognition Framework is everything your workforce strategy requires.

■ **For employees, HR practitioners, and educators**, our FoodCert, with industry-recognized certifications, and Canadian Food Processors Institute with hundreds of courses in technical skills, food safety, emotional intelligence, and diversity and inclusion is your toolkit.

■ **For jobseekers and students**, our career tools such as the interactive career wheel, occupational profiles, and career pathways are your go-to resource.

■ **And for businesses, industry stakeholders and policymakers** our labour market reports and case studies provide the most up to date and accurate sector, regional, and workforce trends available.

Visit our website.



## PROVEN PROGRAMS FOR WINNING BUSINESS STRATEGIES

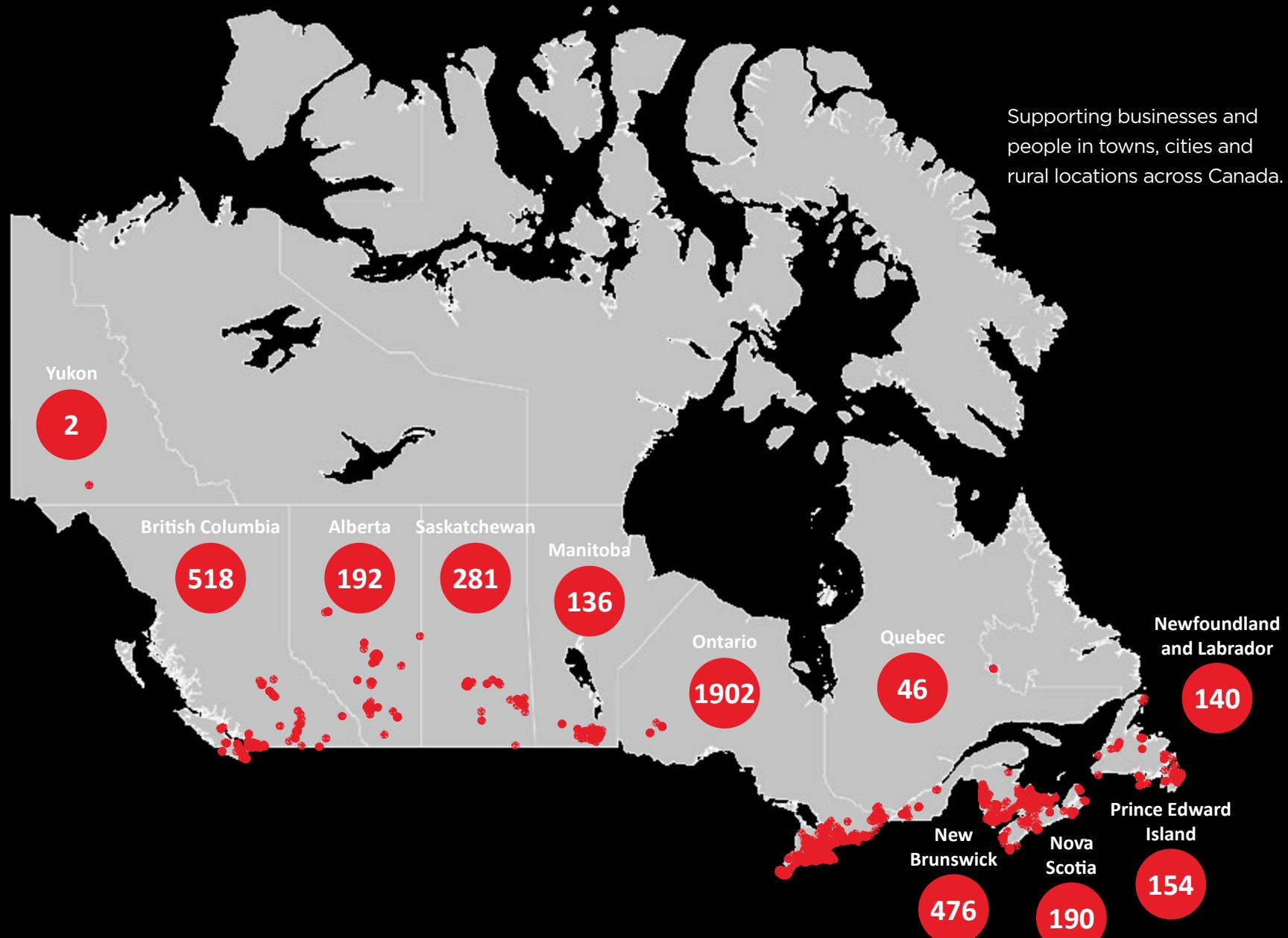
We identify gaps in workforce development and career planning within the industry and develop targeted solutions. Our programs are often fully funded, providing businesses with no-cost opportunities to train and develop their teams.



Doug Alexander, Premium Brands Ltd.

“ FPSC MAKES IT EASY FOR BUSINESSES TO ACCESS PROGRAMS, EMPLOYER DASHBOARDS, EMPLOYEE CHROMEBOOKS, PROVEN TRAINING, AND EVEN REIMBURSEMENT FUNDS. WE HAVE TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF SEVERAL OF THEIR RESOURCES TO SUPPORT OUR PEOPLE. ”

# IMPACTING 4,000+ COMMUNITIES ACROSS CANADA



# CANADA'S FOOD ECONOMY

Canada's food economy stands as one of the nation's greatest strategic advantages — and it is powered by people.

Across the entire value chain, from agriculture and food manufacturing to distribution, retail, and foodservice, more than 2.36 million Canadians — 11.4% of the national workforce — contribute to a system that sustains the country. Together, they operate more than 397,000 establishments that anchor communities, drive innovation, and generate over \$143 billion in GDP.

The food economy forms the foundation of Canada's prosperity, food security, and economic sovereignty. Yet, the food and beverage sector as a whole has a forecasted labour need of more than 300,000 new hires by 2030. A requirement that is both a challenge and an opportunity.

Recognizing the strategic importance of the food economy and investing in workforce development and human capital are essential to securing Canada's future. These investments will not only strengthen the nation's food system but also reinforce Canada's competitiveness and leadership globally.

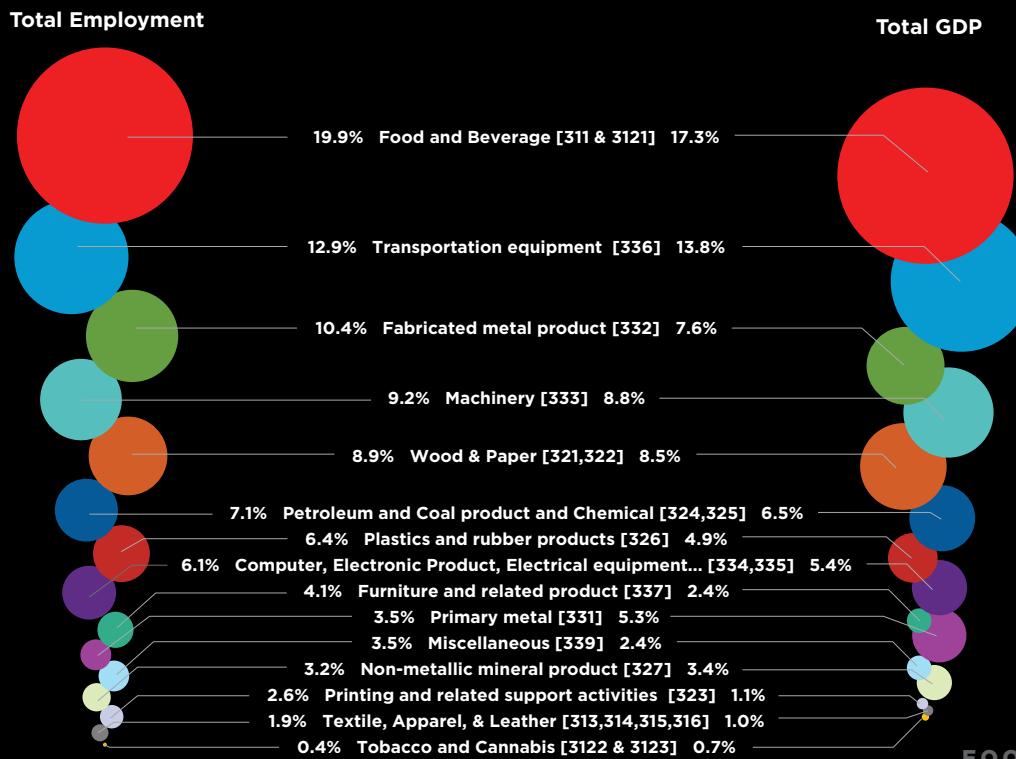
	Food Economy	Automotive	Aerospace	Tech
Exports (\$B)	101	79,148	21,547	11,315
Workers	2,359,577	534,266	47,412	723,319
GDP (\$B)	143,384	62,881	8,396	112,807
Establishments	397,209	81,756	593	139,701
Sole Entrepreneurs and Family Businesses	233,167	38,241	288	55,025
Number Self Employed in 2021	311,150	66,230	800	94,280
% Aged 55-64 in 2021	15.52%	19.9%	24.0%	12.8%
% Over 65 in 2021	5.62%	5.5%	3.1%	2.3%
Forecasted Labour Needs to 2030	309,844	218,730		

# GUIDING BUSINESS AND POLICY DECISIONS

Food and beverage manufacturing is the engine behind Canada's food economy. It is the largest manufacturing sector in Canada by employment — providing jobs for 315,589 people in 2024 — and also the largest in GDP contributing \$35.8 billion.

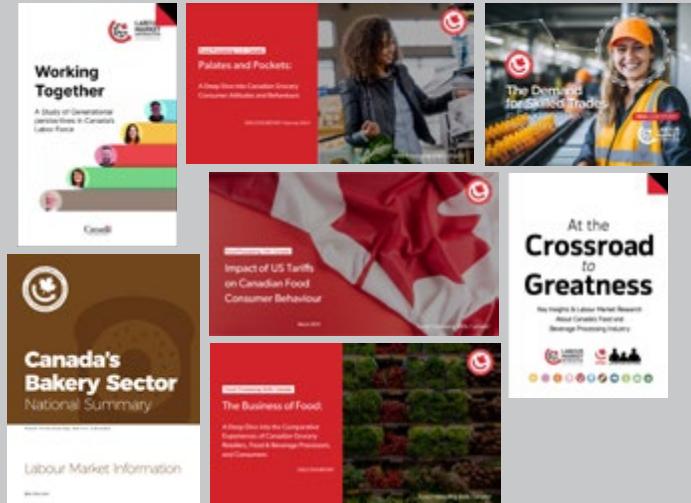
However, this sector requires over 90,000 new hires or nearly one-third of its current workforce by 2030 to sustain growth and replace retiring workers. Our research tells us that seven in ten employers are facing recruitment and retention challenges, and 40% do not have dedicated HR support.

## Comparing Employment and GDP Across Canadian Manufacturing Sectors

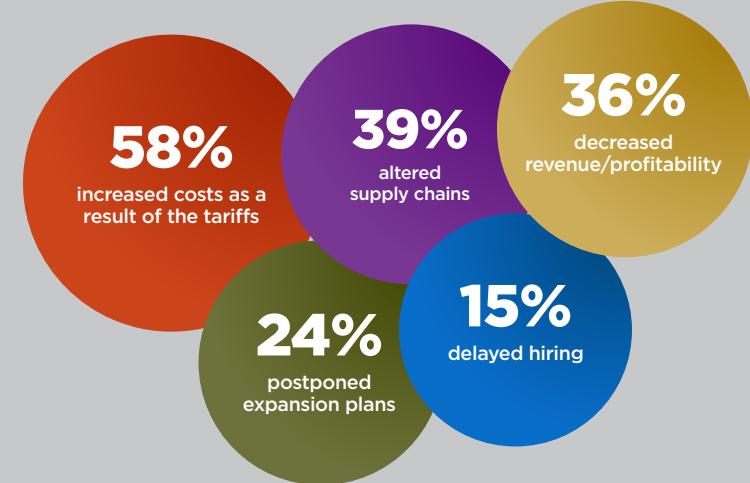


## FPSC's Data Centre

provides reports and labour market information that inform Canadian businesses, educators, and public policy decision-makers.



## Impacts of Tariffs on Sector Businesses



## DRIVING IMPACT

FPSC is driving measurable change across Canada's food and beverage sector—strengthening businesses, elevating workforce skills, and opening doors for the next generation of talent. The scale of our reach, from thousands of learners trained to hundreds of employers supported, demonstrates the tangible impact these programs are making across the country.

### Sector Investment

**\$7.25M**

in wage subsidies provided to businesses

**\$312K**

reimbursed to businesses for knowledge contributions

**\$65.5M**

in training delivered

**1,700**

job seekers engaged in CareersNOW! Job Ready Skills Training

**75**

industry validated online courses developed

### Workforce Training

**54,203**

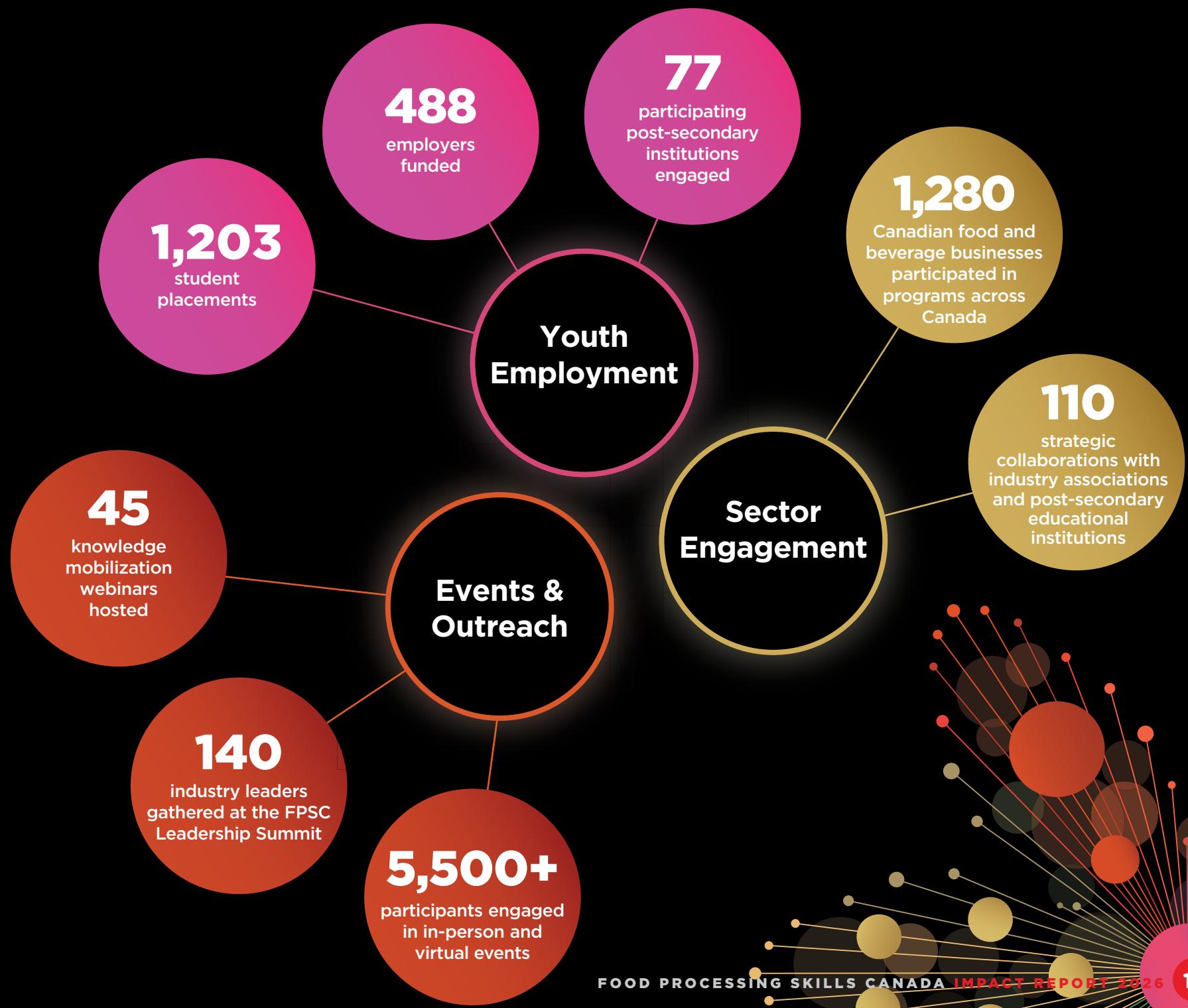
digital credentials issued through online training

**5,739**

certificates awarded for emotional intelligence & coaching sessions

**970**

frontline staff trained in technical and core competencies



## SUCCESS STORIES

PEOPLE ARE  
OUR GREATEST  
STRENGTH



## WHEN OUR PEOPLE GROW, WE ALL GROW TOGETHER.

At JBS Foods Canada, people aren't just part of the operation — they are the operation. Inside the company's Brooks, Alberta facility, more than 3,300 team members drive Canada's number one beef processor every single day.

What sets JBS apart isn't only its scale, but its commitment to helping their employees grow. Through a partnership with FPSC, the company invests in training and certification that strengthen safety, skill, and excellence across the workforce.

For JBS, success is measured by more than productivity. It's found in the countless inspiring stories of resilience, growth, and transformation — from newcomers building a new life in Canada, to families achieving dreams such as home ownership, education, and stability.

"Beyond investing in professional growth, what makes us most proud are the life journeys of our team members. When our people grow, we all grow together." Celio Fritche, President, JBS Foods Canada.



Celebrating Skills Training  
Across Canada program  
graduates with JBS  
Foods Canada President  
Celio Fritche



“ WHAT I LEARNED CONFIRMED WHAT I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED — BEING AN AUTHENTIC ENGAGED LEADER IS THE PATH TO SUCCESS FOR A BUSINESS AND PEOPLE. ”



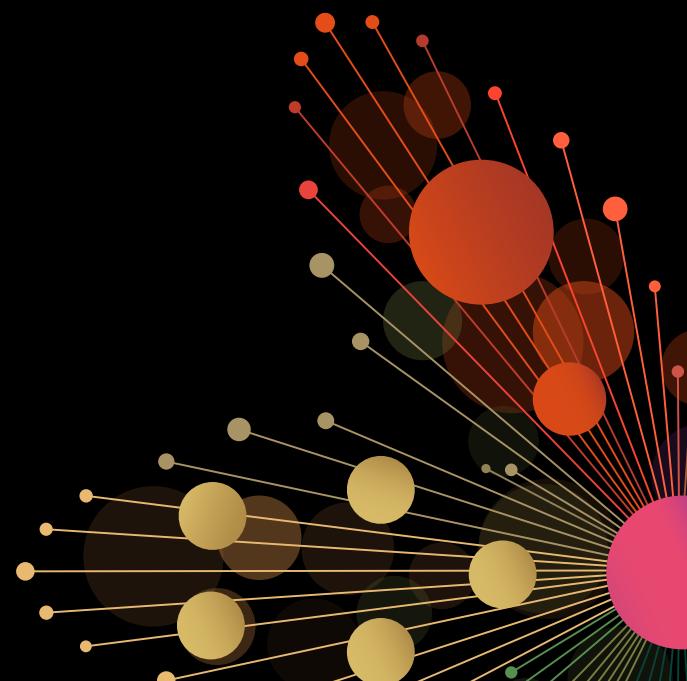
Kim Wilson  
Former HR Manager,  
Champlain Seafood



When Kim Wilson registered for Refine Yourself: Emotional Intelligence for Effective Leadership she was ready to embrace new ways of thinking about leadership. As the former HR Manager at Champlain Seafood in New Brunswick, Canada, Kim was already a dedicated HR professional applying her 'people first' approach to a career across several sectors.

“With employers, regardless of the sector, we often talk about employees being their best but what we really mean is people being their best. When it comes to business you are only as good as your people and that means leading from a place of empathy, integrity and professionalism.”

Refine Yourself provided Kim with new emotional intelligence tools, but it also provided a forum to learn together with colleagues across the industry.



## THE TECH COMPANY THAT **BAKES**

As the Campus Manager for Talent Acquisition, Samantha Sturges has a huge job leading student recruitment for FGF Brands across North America, especially when this winning company has a 'startup' mindset that is ready to adapt and innovate. Student hiring isn't a side of the desk activity for FGF Brands, it's a company commitment to engaging young talent and shaping successful future careers.

"We have 130 college and university students engaged at any given time across a huge range of roles within the company. Of course, FGF is looking for eager and driven individuals, but this is not hard to find. Students come with theoretical knowledge and fresh ideas which is incredibly exciting for a company like ours that embraces innovation."

FGF Brands has been a long-time participant in FPSC's Student Work Placement Program that facilitates wage subsidies for student hiring by food and beverage companies across Canada.



**Samantha Sturges**  
Talent Acquisition  
Campus Manager,  
FGF Brands



## CRAFTING CHOCOLATES THAT CANADIANS **LOVE**

For over 100 years, Purdys Chocolatier, located in BC, Canada, with distribution across the country, has been making exceptional chocolates alongside an impressive commitment to workforce training. Sixteen Supervisors, Lead Hands and back-up Lead Hands graduating from the program can attest to the incredible value delivered by the program.

“Purdy’s has made a promise to supporting employee professional development. Programs delivered by our training partner, FPSC, makes learning accessible and enjoyable with self-paced courses and individual Chromebooks. Through this partnership, one of our talented Lead Hands was promoted to a Supervisor role. We’re committed to providing growth and development opportunities to our staff and promoting internally as opportunities arise.”



Purdys  
Chocolatier Team

Kathrin Phung, Manager, Talent Management



## FROM ASSISTANT TO **FOOD SAFETY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGER**

When Bertchel Bade arrived from the Philippines he didn't know his professional journey at SJ Fine Foods would quickly progress from Assistant to HACCP Coordinator to Food Safety and Quality Assurance Manager.

"Not too long ago I was asked by FPSC to participate in the development of the National Occupational Standard for the role of Food Safety and Quality Assurance Manager with industry leaders in that position. Today, I am in the role myself!"

SJ Fine Foods is a mid-sized, ready-to-eat meat processing company with 160 employees in Saskatchewan, Canada. The company has made a big commitment to employee professional development. Bertchel's participation in the Refine Yourself program gave him the management and emotional intelligence skills to excel.



**Bertchel Bade**

**Food Safety and Quality  
Assurance Manager**

**SJ Fine Foods**



“ OUR TURNOVER RATE WENT FROM 36% TO 16%.”

When Brennan Wiens, Director of HR, Safety & Admin at Harvest Meats — a household name in Western Canada — learned about Skills Training Across Canada he jumped at the opportunity for the company's employees.

“We registered 60 Supervisors immediately. I couldn't believe the quality of the training, and management was equally impressed that the program was free. Most importantly staff felt valued and the emotional intelligence training really hit home. Learning how to better communicate and be more empathetic is always beneficial and our team hugely benefitted.”

With turnover a major concern in food and beverage manufacturing Brennan and Harvest Meats can boast some impressive company improvements. Before partnering with FPSC on workforce training, the company turnover rate was sitting at 36%. As of December 2024 turnover is down to an extraordinary 16%.



Brennan Wiens

Director of HR,  
Safety & Administration

Harvest Meats



## SECTION 06



# LEADERSHIP 2024 SU~~MM~~IT CONFERENCE

## EXCELLENCE IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR CANADA'S FOOD AND BEVERAGE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

FPSC's inaugural Leadership Summit successfully brought together more than 160 industry leaders for an exceptional day dedicated to tackling the most pressing workforce development challenges in the Canadian food and beverage manufacturing sector.

With a shared commitment to putting people and culture first, participants engaged in thought-provoking discussions, interactive workshops, and high-value networking opportunities. The event fostered a transformative approach to learning, inspiring change leaders across the industry to drive meaningful progress.

Participant enthusiasm and growth mindset made this summit a powerful catalyst for innovation and collaboration. Internationally recognized presenters including Riaz Mghji, a human connections expert, complemented presentations on artificial intelligence, labour market insights and interactive workshops on emotional intelligence and diversity and inclusion in the workplace.



# THE POWER OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TRAINING

Emotions are our inner compass. They shape how we connect, lead, and show up at work and in life. By strengthening emotional intelligence, individuals enhance their well-being, relationships, and professional success.

FPSC delivers emotional intelligence training through the Acahkos strategy—named after the Cree word for “star”—and the Refine Yourself for Managers program. These offerings have helped people across Canada strengthen both their technical capabilities and their capacity to lead with clarity and confidence.

Through training approaches that include webinars, personal coaching, and real-world case studies, FPSC guides individuals along a meaningful learning journey.



# DISABILITY INCLUSION IN THE WORKFORCE

Canada has 800,000+ individuals who are ready and willing to work but too often, capable individuals remain overlooked — not because of a lack of potential, but because traditional HR practices weren't built with everyone in mind. Yet, these individuals represent an important workforce opportunity for the sector.

FoodAbility is an ability-focused strategy that was developed to provide food and beverage manufacturing sector employers and HR professionals with the tools to shift their focus from limitation to ability. With one in three Canadians experiencing some form of challenge or functional limitation (disability) — many already in the workforce — it makes sense to support employers with the resources necessary to support all individuals including those with invisible and visible challenges.

## Proven Business Impact of Hiring People with Disabilities

Retention Rate	<b>72%</b> higher retention compared to traditional hiring
Job Performance	<b>90%</b> rated average or better on performance
Attendance	<b>86%</b> had average or better attendance records
Employee Development	<b>94%</b> would stay longer with learning investment

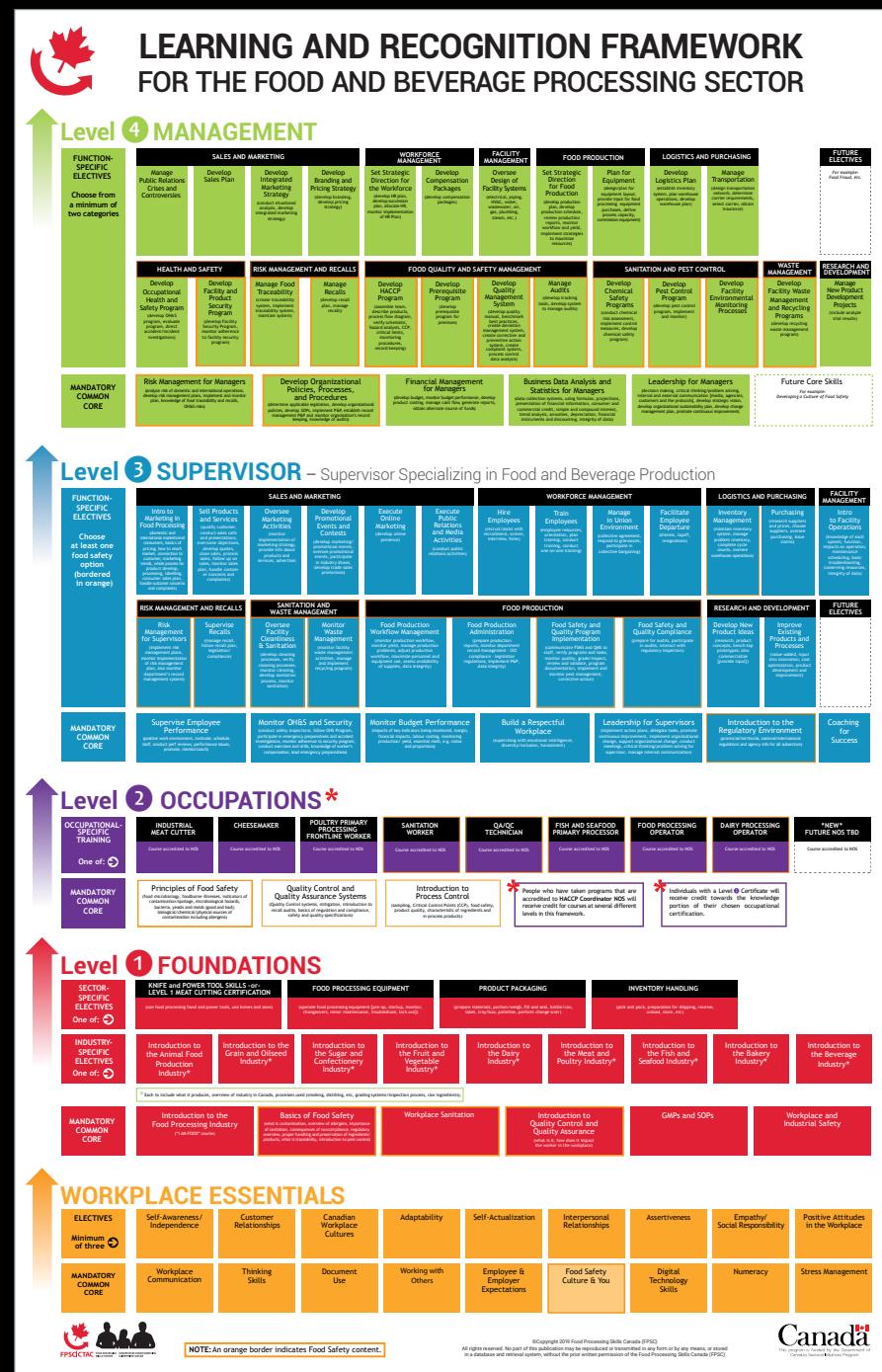


# SKILLING WITH CONFIDENCE

The Learning and Recognition Framework is a groundbreaking Canadian initiative that standardizes and simplifies education-to-career pathways in the food and beverage manufacturing sector.

It provides industry and educators with a documented model that clearly defines qualifications and progression. The framework outlines a structured path for learning and achievement, from entry-level roles through to senior management, while also supporting certification and accreditation.

Developed through a series of consultations beginning in 2019, the Learning and Recognition Framework now comprises five levels with defined competencies and serves as a foundational tool for effective workforce development.



# TOOLS THAT BUILD CAREERS



Food Processing Skills Canada's Career Wheel has helped thousands of jobseekers and students explore and understand the career opportunities in the food and beverage industry. An interactive tool — the Career Wheel makes navigating occupations by industry sector a simple process that highlights skills, educational paths, and career progression.

Scan the QR code to visit the Career Wheel.



# RECOGNIZING THE SUCCESS OF CANADIAN PROFESSIONALS

Built on the industry's Learning and Recognition Framework, FPSC certifications deliver a trusted, national standard for recognizing skills and expertise across the food and beverage manufacturing sector. They provide employers and professionals with a clear, formal way to validate competencies, celebrate achievements, and demonstrate career-ready expertise.

Available through FoodCert, both current and in-development certifications strengthen workforce credibility and mobility. Certification empowers professionals by recognizing their contributions, reinforcing pride in their work, and supporting long-term career growth.



**Every \$1 invested by employers in training results in \$20 or more in beneficial outcomes for the company.**

## OUTCOMES

**95%**

of companies noted improvements in productivity with individuals and teams.

**92%**

of companies have observed improvements of employees' levels of interest in overall company.

**90%**

of companies noted increased interest in training and learning opportunities among the workforce.

**98%**

of companies noticed an improvement in workplace communications and 95% an improvement to workplace culture.

**82%**

of supervisors are more satisfied with their job.

**86%**

of employees enjoy supervisory aspects of their job after taking STAC.

# PROVEN IMPACT THROUGH EVALUATION

We are dedicated to rigorous, ongoing third-party evaluation to drive meaningful improvements in program delivery and positive outcome-based results for employees and businesses.

Our analysis of the national Skills Training Across Canada program—designed to upskill supervisors and frontline employees—speaks for itself, revealing key insights into how targeted training strengthens workplaces and supports long-term workforce growth and success.



**66** WHEN EMPLOYEES BECOME MORE INTERESTED IN THEIR COMPANY WE KNOW THAT CONTRIBUTES TO A SENSE OF BELONGING WHICH WILL EVENTUALLY CONTRIBUTE TO IMPROVED RATES OF RETENTION AND ABSENTEEISM. **99**

Celine Pinsent,  
DPM Research

## SECTION 10

# ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Resources and programs developed by FPSC are designed to support Canada in achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

Develop a Skilled Workforce (SDGs 2, 3, 4, 8): Equip program participants with skills to meet global standards in food processing.

Create Sustainable Jobs and Reduce Inequality (SDGs 1, 5, 8, 10): Provide equitable access to underrepresented groups, fostering job creation and entrepreneurship.

Promote Value-Added Production and Responsible Consumption (SDGs 9, 12): Enhance processing techniques to reduce waste, extend shelf life, and boost export readiness.

Strengthen Food Security and Sustainability (SDGs 2, 12): Link agriculture to food processing, reducing import dependency and food insecurity.

Capitalize on Tourism, Exports, and Regional Integration (SDGs 2, 12, 13, 14, 15): Position international industries as a leader in sustainable food production and export.

## GLOBAL REACH AND DEVELOPMENT IMPACT

We are proud to share the global reach of our training resources and capacity-building partnerships. Our impact has extended to a number of low and middle-income countries where food safety, workforce development, and sustainable production are critical to local economic development.

In the past year, we have collaborated on projects in the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia providing tailored occupational standards, leadership training, and technical knowledge transfer to support:

- Export readiness and compliance with international food safety regulations.
- Strengthened local economies through workforce development.
- Increased food safety in tourism and hospitality sectors.
- Sustainable training infrastructure, including train-the-trainer models and digital access.



# PARTNERS

We're committed to building a stronger, more connected Canadian food and beverage industry by partnering with organizations and governments across the country and playing an active role on key committees to champion shared priorities and industry progress.



FOOD, HEALTH &  
CONSUMER PRODUCTS  
OF CANADA



**Future Skills Centre** - Resilient Workforce Working Table

**Serco** - Centre of Excellence Committee

**Fanshawe College** - Professional Butchery Techniques Program

**Algonquin College** - Bachelor of Culinary and Food Science Program Advisory Committee

**Excellence in Manufacturing Consortium** - Workforce Pulse Committee

**Workforce Development Councils**

**CareersNOW! Advisory Committee**

**Canadian Supply Chain Food Safety Coalition**

**Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Skills Tables**

**National Index on Agri-Food Performance**

**National Workforce Strategic Plan Committee**

**Canadian Standards Association** - Technical Specifications Development Committee

**C.D. Howe Institute** - Trade Crisis Working Group



## SECTION 12

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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President  
Fancy Pokket Corp.  
New Brunswick



**VICE CHAIR**  
**Jeff Purcell**,  
President & CEO  
Eden Valley Poultry  
New Brunswick



**TREASURER**  
**Yonathan Negussie**,  
Director of HR  
JBS Foods Canada  
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**Steve Martin**,  
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Martin's Family Fruit Farm  
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**Amy Proulx, PhD.**  
PhD. Professor and  
Coordinator - Culinary  
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Intelligence  
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**Aliya Jiwani**  
Manager  
Systems Training  
& Development  
Aliya's Foods Limited  
Alberta



**Suman Corcoran**  
Director of HR and  
Indigenous Affairs  
Premium Brands  
Holdings Corporation  
British Columbia



**Paul Taylor**,  
Vice President, People &  
Culture  
Purdys Chocolatier  
British Columbia



**Jennefer Griffith**  
Executive Director  
Food Processing  
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