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October 2022



Alliance Innovations

A collaboration between OMAFRA and the University of Guelph

Stories of the Alliance people, places and programs generating impact in the agri-food sector in Ontario and around the world.

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Province invests in U of G agri-food innovation





Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Minister Lisa Thompson with U of G president Dr. Charlotte Yates, Dr. Malcolm Campbell, vice-president (research), Dr. Loong-Tak Lim (left) and several U of G student researchers

The Government of Ontario is investing \$7.25 million in University of Guelph research to help advance a competitive and sustainable agri-food sector in Ontario and around the world.

The [50 projects funded](#) through the Ontario Agri-Food innovation Alliance focus on a range of topics, from new packaging to lengthen the shelf-life of fruits and vegetables to supplements that improve cattle gut health and performance to research that looks at climate change, mental health and gender.

Read the OMAFRA news release

Guelph Turfgrass Institute celebrates 35 years with new state-of-the-art facility



Grand opening of the new G.M. Frost Research and Information Centre on September 16, 2022.

A new turfgrass centre has opened at the University of Guelph that will foster research and teaching to support Canada's multibillion-dollar sports, golf and residential turf industry.

The new G.M. Frost Research and Information Centre will be the centrepiece of the

recently relocated Guelph Turfgrass Institute (GTI), which marks its 35th anniversary as a national leader in research, extension work and professional development for the study of turf.

Its development was funded largely by the Government of Ontario through the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario (ARIO).

[Read the full story](#)



GTI staff members cut the grand opening ribbon with Dr. Eric Lyons, director of the GTI, Dr. Lorne Hepworth, chair of the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario, Dr. Malcolm Campbell, U of G vice-president (research), and Dr. Rene Van Acker, dean, Ontario Agriculture College, U of G.

Showcasing U of G research at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show



Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Minister Lisa Thompson with two U of G staff members.

Canada's Outdoor Farm Show was back in-person this year and the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance was excited to participate.

Our theme this year was *Breeding the Future of Food Together*. Our table featured crop varieties developed by U of G researchers with support from OMAFRA through the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance.

Explore the Breeding & Genetics Impact Case Study

Two Alliance-funded researchers were also featured as part of the Innovation Pavilion hosted by OMAFRA.

Dr. Erica Pensini displayed her prefabricated bio-based bale wrap plastic and Dr. Wael Ahmed featured his energy-efficient pumping technology for sustainable food production systems.

Both Drs. Pensini and Ahmed were finalists in the 2022 Innovations Program.

View the winners of the Innovations Pavilion at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show

Scientists one step closer to a sustainable bale wrap



Samples of bio-based plastics and their ingredients.

University of Guelph researchers have reached the “holy bale” in their quest to create a biodegradable alternative to about 3,500 tonnes of petroleum-based plastic hay bale and silage wrap used in Ontario each year.

Dr. Erica Pensini, an engineering



professor in the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences, and Dr. Alejandro Marangoni, a food science professor in the Ontario Agricultural College, have worked with local farmers since 2021 to field-test spray-on and prefabricated silage films they developed from corn proteins.

Dr. Erica Pensini

Support from the Alliance

Dr. Erica Pensini uses the following Alliance resources to conduct her research.

Tier 1: Research project operating funding

Highly Qualified Personnel: The research is training two graduate students - tomorrow's workforce

[Read the full story](#)

Special Initiatives Research Program seeking expressions of interest



The Ontario Agri-food Innovation Alliance Special Initiatives Research Program is seeking Expressions of Interest for projects focused on climate change and food security.

The desired outcome of this Special Initiatives call is to understand and address the impacts of climate change on agricultural/natural systems or biodiversity within agroecosystems that directly impact food security, food safety and plant/animal disease. The proposed work should clearly demonstrate the complex interconnectedness of the elements within the system in response to climate change.

This call will support one or more large, collaborative project(s) that will bring a One Health approach to explore climate change impacts, opportunities and solutions related to human, animal, plant and environmental systems. Projects are expected to be transdisciplinary and lead to multi-sector outcomes.

- Project budget: up to \$1 million
- Project length: 3 years
- Expressions of Interest due November 22, 2022

An information session will take place Tuesday, October 11 at 11:00 a.m. in ANNU 141 (Animal Science and Nutrition building).

View full details for the Special Initiatives Research Program

REMINDER: Alliance Tier 1 Research Program call for proposals



The Alliance Research Program funds research projects that support strong rural communities, help keep our food safe and develop a prosperous, environmentally sustainable agri-food sector in Ontario.

The single-stage call for proposals for project operating funding is open until 1 p.m. on Monday, November 7, with an intent process deadline of Friday, October 14.

A town hall was hosted on September 15 and a [copy of the presentation](#) is now available.

[View Tier 1 Funding details & town hall presentation](#)

Project proposals must align with OMAFRA Research Priorities 2022-23 and address a specific research question.

Eligible U of G researchers interested in applying for research project operating funding may do so through the Tier 1 Research Program Call for Proposals. If you have questions, email rescoord@uoguelph.ca.

Skills for Research Impact Workshop Series





Join us online this fall for one or multiple sessions from the [Skills for Research Impact Workshop Series!](#)

Faculty, research staff and graduate students interested in enhancing the impact of their research will learn how to successfully plan, execute and evaluate knowledge mobilization activities. Sessions will cover key topics relating to effective research communications and engagement of non-academic audiences.

[October 11: Approaches to Knowledge Mobilization](#)

[October 25: Clear Language Writing](#)

[November 8: Infographic Development and Design](#)

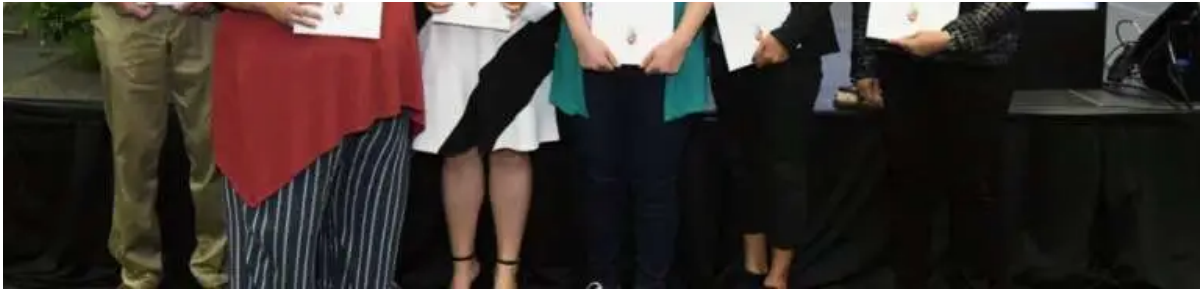
[November 22: Evaluating Knowledge Mobilization \(KMb\) Activities](#)

This workshop series is a collaboration among the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance, [the Community Engaged Scholarship Institute](#) and the [Research Innovation Office](#) at the University of Guelph.

For more information, contact us at kttadmin@uoguelph.ca.

Alliance staff celebrated for exemplary service





Alliance recipients (back row) Holly Byker and Laurie Halfpenny-Mitchell at the U of G 2022 Exemplary Staff Awards. Absent from the photo: Ridgetown Campus Livestock Team

At a recent community breakfast, U of G president Dr. Charlotte Yates presented six individuals and two U of G teams with the annual President's Awards for Exemplary Staff Service. The awards recognize U of G staff and faculty committed to excellence who have exceeded expectations.

Office of Research, Agri-food Partnership team members, Holly Byker and Laurie Halfpenny-Mitchell, were recognized for their exemplary service.

Byker is the manager of the eastern and northern Ontario Crops Research Centre sites. She received the Hidden Hero Award. She inspires staff and students with her work ethic and excellent service and has fostered an environment of collaboration and inclusiveness.

As director of the OMAFRA-U of G agreement and research programs, Halfpenny-Mitchell manages the University's compliance with the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance's conditions as well as its budget, which accounts for about 11 per cent of U of G's total operations. She received the Innovative Leadership Recognition Award. Her personal integrity, her strategic leadership and mentoring skills, her commitment to building relationships and her rigorous oversight of cost-benefit data all help to ensure continuous improvement of the Alliance's contributions to Ontario's agri-food sector.

In addition, the Ridgetown Campus Livestock Team, which supports the Alliance, won the Wellness, Health and Safety Award. Ensuring top-notch wellness and maintenance of Ridgetown Campus's animals and facilities used by students in the renowned experiential learning agriculture diploma is the job of the Ridgetown Campus Livestock Team of Mark Monden, George Woudenberg, Norm Tosh, Rob Reid, Dave Hogg and Christina Lockerbie-Thom. The group ensures that the livestock team has reliable and accessible use of the facilities and strives to share pertinent data, knowledge and other information. The team members have ensured prompt attention to occasional wellness, health and safety issues and even stepped in to help with livestock experiential teaching while an instructor recuperated from surgery.

[Read the full story](#)

Media

A selection of Alliance people, places and programs cited in popular and trade media.

[Ontario Crops Research Centre in New Liskeard provides insight on crops to help](#)

area producers (Sept. 29, CTV Northern Ontario)

CTV Northern Ontario visited the site as part of its Fields to Forks video series. CTV spoke with research centre assistant technician Melinda Drummond, senior cropping systems technician Nathan Mountain and [Department of Plant Agriculture professor Dr. Joshua Nasielski](#) about how research studies on soil fertility, nutrient management, environmental impact and pest management benefit local farms.

U of G Researchers Aim to Make ‘Smart Farming’ Work for Greater Food Security (Sept. 27, U of G News)

Just as farmers work to protect their crops and livestock from pests and disease, technology providers, governments and farmers need to recognize potential risks associated with cyberattacks and data misuse that come with ever more pervasive “smart farming” technology, said Dr. Rozita Dara, a professor in the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences.

U of G Cover Cropping Studies Aim to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Sept. 22, U of G News)

“Cover crops can be good for reducing emissions but sometimes they can lead to an increase in nitrous oxide,” said Dr. Kira Borden, holder of a Banting Post-doctoral Fellowship in the Ontario Agricultural College’s School of Environmental Sciences (SES).

A new green building for the Guelph Turfgrass Institute (Sept. 17, GuelphToday.com)

Sustainable features and new spaces for students at the new G.M. Frost Research and Information Centre are the focus of this article in Guelph Today.

Ontario farmers and their families can now access more mental health supports (Sept. 15, CBC)

A mental health literacy training program developed by U of G researchers for the agriculture community is one of three services offered to farmers by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) and the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA).

Dr. Dorothee Bienzle and Dr. Shayan Sharif named to the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (Sept. 14, U of G News)

The professors, both in the Ontario Veterinary College’s Department of Pathobiology, have been elected Fellows of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences (CAHS).

Food security, sustainable farming the aims of new Chair at U of G (Sept. 8, U of G News)

Growing crops more efficiently to ensure food security while keeping soils healthy are key goals of a new faculty chair funded this year at the University of Guelph.

Diversifying on-farm land use (Sept. 2, Farmtario)

Farmers are diversifying land use and businesses on their farms, whether related to agriculture or not – such as a winery, wedding venue or winter retreat – to generate additional revenue and support primary production. Emily Sousa, MSc candidate and HQP Scholar, and Pam Duesling, PhD candidate, both in the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development (SED RD), explore the land use policy framework for on-farm diversification with the joint goals of protecting farmland and contributing to agricultural livelihoods. Their research project, led by Dr. Wayne Caldwell, is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs through the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance.

Sending barley seeds to space a successful venture for U of G researchers (Sept. 2, U of G News)

After exposure to the extreme temperatures, the seeds’ ability to germinate is the successful step Dr. Mike Dixon, a professor in the School of Environmental Sciences and

director of the Controlled Environments Systems Research Facility, did not initially foresee but had hoped for.

Do hock injuries heal? Researchers address literature gaps via Alliance-funded project (Sept. 2, Dairy at Guelph, PDF)

Former PhD student Dr. Amanda Armstrong and Dr. David Kelton, Department of Population Medicine, professor and Dairy Farmers of Ontario Chair in Dairy Cattle Health, investigated hock injury healing in dairy cows.

Bees Don Backpacks for U of G Pollinator, Insecticide Research (Aug. 30, U of G News)

"Farmers will benefit because they'll know what they need to do to get free pollination services and increase their yields," Dr. Amanda Licnzer explained, referring to knowing more about a bee's movement and how they choose which flowers they forage on.

Dairy's gap on the map to net-zero (Aug. 28, Farmtario)

Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) has a goal to reach net zero on carbon emissions by 2050. Dr. Claudia Wager Riddle, School of Environmental Sciences, consulted with DFC on its net-zero plans.

Plans to Reduce GHG Emissions 'Reckless,' Says U of G Plant Ag Researcher (Aug. 22, U of G News)

The U of G researcher, a professor in the Department of Plant Agriculture, says the federal government's plan to reduce agricultural emissions by 30 per cent by 2030 would mean reducing the use of nitrogen-based fertilizers that are necessary for sustainable harvests.

Corn School: How much nitrogen is lost when applying in season? (Aug. 15, realagriculture.com)

On this episode of the RealAgriculture Corn School, Dr. Josh Nasielski shares what he and his collaborators are learning about the best way to minimize in-season losses using a 4R nutrient management framework — right source, rate, time and place — based on research at three Ontario Crops Research Centres sites in Ridgeway, Winchester and Elora.

Events

ANIMAL BIOSCIENCES RESEARCH
Graduate Student Symposium





IMPULSIVE LEAD,
ONTARIO AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL BIOSCIENCES

OFFICE of RESEARCH
AGRI-FOOD PARTNERSHIP

Ontario 

Animal Biosciences Research: Graduate Student Symposium

NEW DATE: Thursday, October 13, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Animal Science and Nutrition Building, Room, ANNU 141 & Virtual (Zoom)

Come learn from graduate students about the latest advances in Animal Biosciences Research at the University of Guelph!

[Click to register for the Graduate Student Symposium](#)

Make an Alliance Connection



[Visit the Alliance website](#)

Comments? Feedback? Events or content to include? Email kttadmin@uoguelph.ca.



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