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December 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.

In this issue:

- Happy holidays & farewell to Dr. Bev Hale
- Highlights from the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair
- December 5: World Soil Day
- READ: Harvest Genomics: Picking up the pace of genetic progress
 - University of Guelph researchers aim to inform post-COVID rural policy
 - Artificial intelligence offers a tool to predict and control outbreaks of avian influenza
- Welcoming Beef Farmers of Ontario to the Ontario Beef Research Centre
- Alliance people, places and programs in the media
- Upcoming events



Wishing you, and those near and dear to you, happy holidays and best wishes for 2023.

*From the team at the
U of G Office of Research - Agri-Food Partnership.*

The University of Guelph will be closed from December 23, 2022 to Monday, January 2, 2023 and will re-open on Tuesday, January 3, 2023.

Farewell and thank you to Dr. Bev Hale



*Thank you, Bev, for five years of
dedicated support!*

December 31 marks the end of Dr. Bev Hale's five-year term as associate vice president research (agri-food partnership) in the Office of Research at U of G.

Over the past five years, Bev's phenomenal work has supported the agri-food partnership team through significant events such as the pandemic and agreement renewal negotiations.

Her calm, practical approach, steady hand and wisdom have been greatly appreciated by her team and will be truly missed.

Bev returns to her research and teaching endeavours at U of G's School of Environmental Sciences.

Plans for an interim leader will be announced shortly.

Highlights from the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair





From November 4 to 13, the impact of the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance was on display at the University of Guelph's Future of Food exhibit during the 100th anniversary of the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. The exhibit focused on four themes: Food Security, Climate Change, Soil Health and Collaboration.

Missed the Royal this year? See some of the highlights in the link below and check out the Future of Food video.

Round Up: U of G's Royal Agricultural Winter Fair Exhibit

The Future of Food



December 5: World Soil Day





December 5 was [World Soil Day](#), intended to raise awareness of the importance of soil health and sustainable soil management.

Soil health and sustainable soil management are an ongoing focus for several Alliance-funded researchers whose conservation work has become increasingly important in countering the risk of climate change impacts while growing enough food for the planet.

Explore projects that are advancing soil health

U of G soil initiative at the Ontario Crops Research Centre

Established in 2018, [Soils at Guelph](#) is a knowledge mobilization initiative in the University of Guelph's [Ontario Agricultural College](#) that aims to build bridges among farmers, government and the public to improve soil health.

Led by Drs. Laura Van Eerd, Kari Dunfield and Claudia Wagner-Riddle, all professors in the School of Environmental Sciences, Soils at Guelph research aims to develop agricultural practices that benefit soil, farmers, society and climate.

Wagner-Riddle, a professor of agrometeorology, and her team study how different crop rotations and cover crops improve the soil and the environment. She uses a state-of-the-art soil health monitoring station at the [Ontario Crops Research Centre](#) in Elora.

Learn more:

Follow [@SoilsAtGuelph](#)
on Twitter

Visit the [Soils at Guelph](#)
website

Explore the United
Nations World Soil Day
website

READ: Harvest Genomics: Picking up the pace of genetic progress





Harvest Genomics CEO and co-founder Chris Grainger with a prototype mobile lab testing unit. The company recently received funding from Bioenterprise to help commercialize the unit and bring it to market.

Chris Grainger is living a DNA dream. He's channelling his passion for integrating genetic technology with practical applications to create innovative products for Canada's agri-food industry.

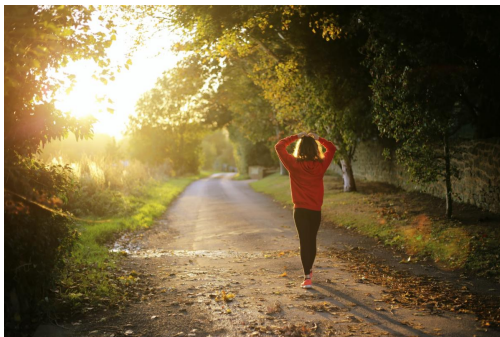
Shortly after Harvest Genomics opened, it received the grand prize in the [Gryphon's LAAIR pitch competition](#) in 2020.

"The Gryphon's LAAIR event was a great connector and accelerator for our business that offered a way for us to quickly make connections with government, academia and industry," says Grainger. "It was really the springboard to get us going."

Read about their impressive lineup of three innovative flagship products.

Read the full story

READ: University of Guelph researchers aim to inform post-COVID rural policy



A University of Guelph study of COVID-19 in small and rural communities emphasizes that government policy needs to include the pandemic experiences of those communities.

Read the full story



READ: Artificial intelligence offers a tool to predict and control outbreaks of avian influenza



Protecting human and poultry health is the goal of University of Guelph researchers developing an artificial intelligence system to predict early outbreaks of avian influenza.

Read the full story





Dr. Leath Deacon

Support from the Alliance:

Dr. Deacon uses the following Alliance resources to conduct his research.

Tier 1: Research project operating funding

KTT Mobilization: Advancing research to accelerate the transfer of knowledge



Dr. Rozita Dara

Support from the Alliance:

Dr. Dara 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

Beef farmers tour Ontario Beef Research Centre



On Tuesday, November 29 members of the Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO) board of directors were welcomed to the Ontario Beef Research Centre (OBRC) in Elora.

BFO members received a tour of the unique research facility where researchers, students and industry work together to deliver farm-tested innovations for Ontario's beef sector.

Researchers and students highlighted current projects and BFO members had the opportunity to ask questions and discuss the importance of the beef centre in research.

The OBRC in Elora is the result of a vibrant collaboration among the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, the University of Guelph and the Ontario beef industry.

Media

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

[Bulk tank testing confirms leukosis prevalence on Ontario dairy farms](#) (Dec. 2, Farmtario)

The ongoing testing program is funded in part by the Alliance, and is led by U of G's Dr. David Kelton, Dairy Farmers of Ontario Research Chair in Dairy Cattle Health and professor in the Ontario Veterinary College's Department of Population Medicine.

[World Soil Day: U of G Testing Technique Promises Healthier Soil, Food](#) (Dec. 1, U of G News)

Alliance-funded researcher Dr. Adam Gillespie is using infrared spectroscopy to create a "fingerprint" of the chemical bonds within the soil to its properties. The goal is to replace traditional time-consuming and costly methods that involve extracting soil samples and sending them to a lab to be analyzed.

[New centre is a big step forward for farmers' wellbeing](#) (Nov. 24, Woolwich Observer)

This virtual centre is a not-for-profit organization designed to support farmers with a research-to-action approach to mental health. Dr. Andria Jones-Bitton and Dr. Briana Hagen, co-developers of the mental health literacy program In the Know and recent winners of a U of G Innovation of the Year award, are on the Centre's roster.

[Ontario's "mini-Cinderella" crop: Adzuki bean acreage continues to grow. Can agronomy catch up?](#) (Nov. 22, Top Crop Manager)

TopCropManager.com looked to two U of G professors for advice on breeding and growing adzuki beans in Ontario. The article also includes guidance on weed management and herbicide tolerance from a paper recently published by Dr. Peter Sikkema, professor in the Department of Plant Agriculture.

[From candy apples to N95s: Lincoln agri-food innovation conference shows off new sanitization technology](#) (Nov. 15, Yahoo!News)

Clean Works uses ultraviolet light with a mist of ozone and hydrogen peroxide to decontaminate fruits, vegetables, food packaging and N95 masks.

[U of G-developed climate model to help adapt to cold, heat extremes](#) (Nov. 14, U of G News)

Helping everyone from farmers to urban planners predict frost-free days, heat extremes and temperatures in between is the goal of a new model developed by University of Guelph engineers.

[Mental health literacy program, environmental DNA detection named U of G Innovations of the Year](#) (Nov. 14, U of G News)

Drs. Andria Jones-Bitton and Briana Hagen in the Ontario Veterinary College, working with a team of agriculture and mental health stakeholders, designed a mental health literacy program for farmers and the agricultural community.

[Watch their interview with Dr. Malcolm Campbell, vice-president \(research\).](#)

[Gift to support new ecological pest management chair at U of G](#) (Nov. 11, U of G

News)

The new E. Alan (OAC '60) and Jule A. Cameron Chair in Ecological Pest Management will be funded by a \$3-million gift from Alan, a graduate of the Ontario Agricultural College, and his wife, Jule. The new faculty member will study ecologically based pest management strategies such as biological controls, semiochemicals (e.g., pheromones), and chemical and biological pesticides with minimal environmental impact.

Yeast shows promise as a feed additive for beef cattle (Nov. 9, U of G Office of Research)

Melissa Williams, a U of G animal biosciences doctoral candidate, is investigating yeast as a substitute for antimicrobial use in feed for beef cattle. Her results suggest that yeast has the potential for similar average daily weight gain in beef cattle as traditional additives.

The next green revolution: How Canada can produce more food and fewer emissions (Nov. 7, RBC Special Reports)

U of G's [Arrell Food Institute](#), along with RBC and Boston Consulting Group's Centre for Canada's Future, have released a report examining how to increase global food production with less impact on the planet called "The Next Green Revolution."

What's happening at relocated Guelph Turfgrass Institute (GTI) (Oct. 28, Turf & Rec)

Turf & Rec highlights the newly located Guelph Turfgrass Institute, including the brand new G.M. Frost Research and Information Centre.

Events



OFFICE of RESEARCH
AGRI-FOOD PARTNERSHIP



School of Environmental Sciences (SES) Graduate Student Symposium Thursday, February 2, 2023

Don't miss out on this great opportunity to learn about SES research! This is also a great chance to network with OMAFRA personnel, U of G faculty and graduate students in the department. Registration, lunch, and refreshments are free!

SES Grad Symposium event details & registration

Make an Alliance Connection



Visit the Alliance website

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



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