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October 2023



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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U of G names new leadership in the Office of Research



Left: Dr. Shayan Sharif, interim associate vice-president research (agri-food partnership)

Right: Dr. Rene Van Acker, interim vice-president (research)

Dr. Shayan Sharif has been appointed U of G's new interim associate vice-president research (agri-food partnership). In this role, Sharif will oversee the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance, a collaboration between the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) and the University of Guelph, providing strategic management and support to the largest single research agreement at the University.

Sharif, currently associate dean (research and graduate studies) in the Ontario Veterinary College and a professor of immunology, investigates diseases of poultry, including avian influenza, and ways to control these infectious diseases through developing novel vaccines.

U of G has also named Dr. Rene Van Acker, professor and dean of the Ontario Agricultural College, as its interim vice-president (research).

"I am honoured to take on this leadership role for the University on an interim basis," said Van Acker. "The University of Guelph has a culture of being research-intensive and has a proud and long history of significant research achievements. I will work hard to facilitate ongoing research capacity and success."

[Read the full announce for Dr. Sharif](#)

[Read the full announcement for Dr. Van Acker](#)

Alliance Tier 1 research program call for proposals



**Research Project
Funding Available**

Submit your proposal today

Ontario
Agri-Food
Innovation
Alliance

The Alliance Tier 1 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 Tuesday, November 7, with an intent process deadline of Friday, October 13.

Project proposals must align with [current OMAFRA Research Priorities](#) 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.

Visit Tier 1 funding details

Skills for Research Impact workshop series returns



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 (or knowledge translation and transfer) activities. Sessions will cover key topics relating to effective research communications and engagement of non-academic audiences, including policy, industry and community stakeholders.

[October 17: Planning for Research Impact](#)

[October 24: Community Engagement](#)

[October 31: Clear Language Writing](#)

[November 7: KTT Strategies and Dissemination](#)

[November 14: Evaluating KTT Activities](#)

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

Alive and well: Understanding risk factors for stillbirth and neonatal mortality in pigs



Growing up in Toronto, Sarah Hill didn't have much exposure to agriculture, but she's always been fascinated by farming, particularly pigs. Her early love of the industry might have been a sign that she'd find herself doing her PhD in swine research at the University of Guelph.

Hill is now completing her PhD in epidemiology with Dr. Bob Friendship, swine research co-ordinator in the Department of Population Medicine at the Ontario Veterinary College. She's investigating how to reduce stillbirth and pre-weaning mortality in piglets.

"As litter size has increased over the past decade, we've also seen an increase in stillborn piglets and pre-weaning death," says Hill. "We want to look at how to balance economics and welfare so that farmers can realize the economic benefit of larger litters but not at a cost to the piglet."

Continue reading about Hill's research

Agri-food Data Canada launches consultations and blog



AGRI-FOOD DATA



CANADA

AT THE UNIVERSITY *of* GUELPH

Agri-food Data Canada (ADC), hosted at the University of Guelph, is working with participants of the research data ecosystem to help create tools and training that will increase the value of research data.

ADC is guided by the FAIR data principles, that data should be Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable. They are making it easier for researchers to apply the FAIR data principles to their research data, increasing the value for everyone in the sector.

If you are starting a new project and are interested in learning how to document your data, consider meeting with an ADC team member to learn more.

Book a consultation now to discuss Research Centre Data Access or Data Schema Consultations.

Book a consultation

Explore ADC's new blog and stay up to date on data analysis and research data tools.

Explore the ADC blog

Research in Focus photo contest



The U of G Research in Focus photo contest is an opportunity for U of G faculty, staff and students to showcase their research through photography.

The contest is aimed at providing a way to share compelling research stories.

Contest closes November 3rd!

Click for photo contest details

Upcoming Events



The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair



November 3-12, 2023, Exhibition Place, Toronto

Celebrate the best in agriculture, local food, and equestrian competitions from across the country. The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair is jam-packed with home-grown fun and the best in local food and animal entertainment.

Visit the Royal website



Arrell Food Summit 2023: Pathways to Change November 14, 2023, Toronto Region Board of Trade & Online

Join the Arrell Food Summit: Pathways to Change, where you'll learn about food system solutions that have had impact and what we can expect next.

Visit the Arrell Food Summit website

Media

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

Dairy farmer eager to see results of low-methane breeding decisions (Sept. 28, Farmtario)

When dairy farmer Ben Loewith's calves are born next spring, they will be among the first in the world to be bred with a specific environmental goal: burping less methane. Thanks to years of research by U of G's Dr. Christine Baes and the Ontario Dairy Research Centre - Elora.

New pork research barn called a 'game changer' (Sept. 18, Farmtario)

The Ontario Swine Research Centre officially opened Aug. 24 and will diversify swine research into nutrition, genetics, reproduction, nutrient management, animal health and welfare, with additional consumer-oriented goals.

Seven researchers recognized with U of G research excellence awards (Sept. 13, U of G News)

Three Alliance-funded researchers, including Dr. Ataharul Chowdhury, Dr. Jennifer Geddes-McAlister and Dr. David Renaud, received the award, which is sponsored by the Office of Research and the Office of the Provost.

Innovations program winners announced (Sept. 12, Farmtario)

Winners of Canada's Outdoor Farm Show Innovations Program were announced in Woodstock, including Clean Works, which won for Environmental Sustainability.

Follow the data: Wearable sensors bring proactive management to herd health (Aug. 15, OVC, U of G)

Researchers with Dairy at Guelph at the University of Guelph are studying precision technologies, including wearable activity trackers and automatic feeders, to notch up knowledge and optimize their value to farmers.

Dairy Farmers of Ontario partners with U of G's Ridgetown Campus on dairy.

apprenticeship (Aug. 9, U of G News)

Dairy Farmers of Ontario and the University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus, have partnered to enhance the Dairy Herdsperson Apprenticeship program to reach more students interested in a professional career as a herdsperson.

Make an Alliance connection



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This newsletter is produced by the University's Office of Research. The views expressed are the views of the University and do not necessarily reflect those of OMAFRA. Questions regarding the OMAFRA-University of Guelph Agreement can be addressed to omafra@uoguelph.ca.



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