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December 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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HAPPY Holidays

Wishing you, and those
near and dear to you,
happy holidays and
best wishes for 2024.



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

*The University of Guelph will be closed from December 25, 2023 to Tuesday, January 2, 2024,
and will re-open on Wednesday, January 3, 2024.*

Highlights from the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair



From November 3 to 12, the impact of the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance was on display at the University of Guelph's Future of Food exhibit during the 101st anniversary of the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair.

U of G returned to engage visitors in its innovative research, bringing an educational perspective to the celebration of the very best food, livestock and horsemanship in Canada.

Visitors learned about the ways U of G researchers are advancing vertical farming, climate resilience, biodiversity, soil health, food security, AI and technology and much more. As well as how researchers are using robotics to detect plant disease and developing new methods to extend the shelf life of fruits and vegetables using cold plasma.

Ontario Agri-Tech Pitch Competition

Thursday, June 20, 2024 · 10 am to 11:30 am EST

HYBRID EVENT · 120 - 150 Research Lane, Guelph ON

An extension of
the Gryphon's
LAAIR Program

① \$10,000 ② \$2,500 ③ \$1,000



Best in Class

People's Choice
Award

Finalist Award

Open for entries from early-stage Ontario companies.

Early-stage Ontario agri-innovation start-ups are encouraged to participate in the second annual Ontario Agri-Tech Pitch Competition run by the University of Guelph's Research Innovation Office (RIO) in collaboration with the Government of Ontario.

The competition is open to any Ontario-based agri-tech start-up company, with a focus on early-stage companies preparing for seed investment. Companies must be incorporated as a business for less than five years and have a scalable business model to deliver a product or service from or for the agri-food sector.

Ontario Agri-Tech Pitch Competition entry details

The Arrell Food Institute is now accepting scholarship applications



The Arrell Food Institute at the University of Guelph is now accepting scholarship applications for students **entering a graduate program in the Fall 2024 semester.**

The Arrell Scholarship application **deadline is February 22, 2024.**

Arrell Scholarship application details

Enhancing the agri-food data ecosystem: Updates from ADC and the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance





The Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance is making it easier to share and reuse high-quality, reliable data that can unlock insights and innovations across the food supply chain.

Precision agriculture, artificial intelligence and machine learning are generating massive amounts of data across farms, agri-businesses and research labs.

A recent event co-hosted by [**Agri-food Data Canada**](#) (ADC), which is based at the University of Guelph, and the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance brought together experts to share work that will make agri-food research data FAIR – findable, accessible, interoperable (easily combined with other data) and reusable. FAIR data is and will be high quality and useful to producers and researchers, both today and into the future.

About 70 in-person and online participants from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs joined the November event. They heard from ADC experts about the newest iteration of the Ontario Dairy Research Centre Data Portal and other tools ADC is designing to help make agri-food data FAIR.

Continue reading

Celebrating World Soil Day



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

The state-of-the-art soil health monitoring station at the [Ontario Crops Research Centre in Elora](#) is helping researchers identify practices that support farm productivity and soil health.

The U of G knowledge mobilization initiative [Soils at Guelph](#) shares results from soil health research and aims to build bridges among farmers, government and the public to improve soil health.

The Ontario Crops Research Centre is owned by the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario and managed by U of G through the Alliance.

[Soils at Guelph researchers featured in upcoming episode of TVO's Water Brothers](#)

[Explore the Crop Rotation Counts series. A collaboration between the Alliance and Soils at Guelph](#)

Media

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

[A peek inside the Ontario Dairy Research Centre – Part 3](#) (Nov. 24, ADC blog)

Discussing milk and milk analysis data at the Ontario Dairy Research Centre.

[Ontario company offers award-winning Clēan](#) (Nov. 22, Farmtario)

Alliance-funded company Clēan Works was awarded at Canada's Outdoor Farm Show this past summer.

[Corn School: How rotation impacts yield and crop resilience](#) (Nov. 22, RealAgriculture.com)

On this episode of the RealAgriculture Corn School, host Bernard Tobin and University of Guelph crop researcher Dr. Dave Hooker look at the importance of crop rotation and key corn management insights gleaned from the trials over the years as well as new information that continues to emerge.

[Thank the U of G for those great mashed potatoes](#) (Nov. 20, Guelph Today)

The humble Yukon Gold potato has a fascinating history, and Guelph played a part in it.

[Expanding knowledge about cover cropping effects](#) (Nov. 16, Farmtario)

Tour hosted by Soils@Guelph puts current research efforts on display.

[U of G's first Canada Excellence Research Chair brings new research talent](#) (Nov. 16, U of G News)

Water quality researcher and engineer Dr. David McCarthy has been announced as the new CERC in Waterborne Pathogens: Surveillance, Prediction and Mitigation at the University of Guelph, supported by \$8 million in federal funding over eight years.

[Green ammonia research centre to be co-led by U of G researcher](#) (Nov. 2, U of G News)

Dr. Claudia Wagner-Riddle, a professor in the School of Environmental Sciences within the Ontario Agricultural College, will collaborate with colleagues from the University of Maryland (U.S.) and Rothamsted Research (U.K.) to establish the Global Nitrogen Innovation Center for Clean Energy and the Environment (NICCEE). The NICCEE will be based at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science and led by Dr. Xin Zhang.

Hannah Woodhouse wins best overall research poster at the IDF conference (Nov. 2, Dairy at Guelph blog)

PhD candidate and 2021 HQP Scholar Hannah Woodhouse won best overall research poster at the October conference for showcasing her work in identifying the major on-farm factors contributing to free fatty acids in bulk tank milk.

Methane breeding tool's developers look to long-term adoption (Nov. 1, Farmtario)

Uptake has been slow among producers, but the discussion on methane efficiency has begun. Lactanet discusses three methane-focused research projects, one of which involves data collection with the GreenFeed system at the Ontario Dairy Research Centre.

Celebrating soybean breeding (November, Ontario Grain Farmer Magazine)

Istvan Rajcan, professor and graduate coordinator in the Department of Plant Agriculture, has led the University of Guelph's soybean breeding efforts for the last 25 years and discusses the decades of success.

U of G's Arrell Food Institute director appointed to UN panel of experts on food security (Oct. 27, U of G News)

Dr. Evan Fraser, who is director of the Arrell Food Institute and professor of geography at the University of Guelph, has been appointed to the steering committee of the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE-FSN) of the United Nations Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

Rural Ramble on the Road: Rising Plate Meter (Ontario Beef YouTube Channel)

U of G master's student Courtney Higgins shared her pasture research with BFO's Jaclyn Horenberg at the Ontario Beef Research Centre as part of the organization's Rural Ramble on the Road series.

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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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