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January 2025



Alliance Innovations

Growing Ontario agri-food together: A collaboration between the Government of Ontario 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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Explore the Alliance's 2023/24 annual report



UNIVERSITY
of GUELPH

OMAFRA-University of Guelph Agreement
Annual Report 2023/24

Ontario 

Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance delivers results for food producers and agribusinesses

The Government of Ontario, the University of Guelph, and Agricultural Research and Innovation Ontario are celebrating a year of world-class research, innovation, training and laboratory testing that have delivered sustainable solutions for Ontario's \$51-billion agri-food sector.

In its first year of a renewed five-year agreement, the collaboration known as the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance contributed nearly \$207 million to the province's growing agri-food economy, growing businesses and helping the sector thrive.

Explore Growing Ontario Solutions 2023/24

By the numbers

By combining U of G expertise with strategic, long-term investment from the Government of Ontario, the Alliance advances world-class research, innovation, training and laboratory capacity while charting a vibrant, sustainable path for the future of Ontario agri-food.

\$72
million

invested by the
Government of
Ontario

\$135
million

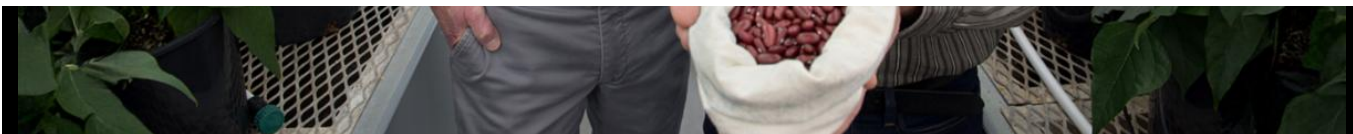
leveraged and
invested by U of G

187%
returned

by U of G on every
dollar invested by the
Government of
Ontario

2024 Innovation of the Year winner developed at Ontario Crops Research Centre





Dr. Peter Pauls and research technician Tom Smith.

The dark red kidney bean dubbed Dynasty has earned the [University of Guelph's 2024 Innovation of the Year award](#). Dynasty is recognized for its high yield, disease resistance and adaptability, translating into 15 per cent yield increases for Ontario farmers and an estimated return of \$250 more per acre.

The bean was developed by Dr. Peter Pauls, a [plant agriculture](#) professor in U of G's [Ontario Agricultural College](#) and research technician Tom Smith at the [Ontario Crops Research Centre in Elora](#), which is owned by Agricultural Research and Innovation Ontario and managed by the University of Guelph through the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance.

Read the full story

Dynasty by the numbers

- Accounted for an estimated **90 per cent** of the province's dark red kidney bean acreage in 2022.
- **Increased yields by 15 per cent** compared to other varieties.
- Accounts for **50 to 60 per cent of all dark red kidney bean acreage** across North America.
- **One of 12 bean varieties** available for licensing from U of G.
- Drove U of G dry bean licensing revenue **increases by nearly 25 per cent** from 2019/20 to 2020/21.

2024 Innovation of the Year marks tenth Alliance-funded winner

For the tenth time since 2016, an innovation developed with support from the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance has won the University-wide Innovation of the Year award, demonstrating clearly how Alliance investment leads to game-changing solutions for Ontario farmers, agribusinesses and consumers.

[Explore previous winners](#)

Student chefs explore farm-to-fork production at the Ontario Beef Research Centre



The Ontario Beef Research Centre's managed pasture is used for rotational grazing and research into sustainable beef production, soil health and productivity.

Culinary students from across Canada gained first-hand experience with Canada's world-class beef production system through a unique field trip this past October to the [Ontario Beef Research Centre in Elora](#), Ont.

The excursion, which was also attended by selected online food influencers, was a collaborative venture among the University of Guelph, Agricultural Research and Innovation Ontario (ARIO), Canada Beef, Taste Canada and Canadian Food Focus.

Read the full story

Skills for Research Impact workshop series



Join us online this winter 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.

January 21: Planning for Research Impact

January 28: KTT Strategies and Dissemination

February 4: Clear Language Writing

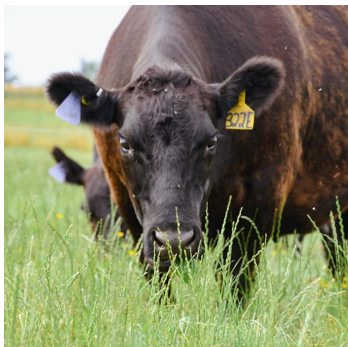
February 11: Community Engagement

February 25: Evaluating KTT Activities

Explore all the workshops

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

Upcoming events



Annual Virtual Beef Symposium

January 30 and February 6, 2025, 7 - 9 p.m.

Mark your calendar for two evenings of engaging presentations and conversations on a variety of topics for both cow-calf and feedlot producers. Presented by Beef@Guelph.



Rural Symposium 2025

February 11, 2025, 1 Stone Road West Conference Room, Guelph

Are you interested in learning about rural research emerging from U of G? Join faculty and students at the 2025 Rural Research Symposium.

[Event Registration](#)



Weaving Knowledge: Indigenous Research Gathering 2025

February 26, 2025, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Virtual

Join U of G and OMAFA for a day of exploring and celebrating Indigenous research in action.

[Event Registration](#)

Media

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

[U of G professor and food scientist named to Order of Ontario](#) (Jan. 8, U of G News)

Dr. Alejandro Marangoni, professor in the Department of Food Science, Ontario Agricultural College and Tier I Canada Research Chair in Food, Health and Aging has been named to the Order of Ontario.

[OVC professor emeritus appointed to Order of Canada](#) (Jan. 8, U of G News)

Dr. Carlton Gyles was named an Officer of the Order in recognition of "his profound

contributions to veterinary microbiology,” whose seminal studies “have led to new vaccines, improved infection control and a safer food supply.”

[U of G researchers breeding the perfect wheat to resist disease](#) (Jan. 3, Farms.com)

Dr. Helen Booker, leader of the wheat breeding program at the University of Guelph, is breeding the perfect wheat to resist disease.

[Diverse crop rotations bring savings in poor growing conditions](#) (Farmtario, Dec. 23)

Data from the Ontario Crops Research Centre sites in Elora and Ridgetown form contributed to a public database of crop rotational information, designed to inform farmers, policy makers and others about cropping systems, policies or programs that can reduce risk.

[U of G generative AI work predicts rising food costs in 2025](#) (Dec. 5, U of G News)

Machine learning predictions from University of Guelph researchers are helping Canadians get a better picture of what they will need to spend on groceries next year.

[U of G holds 2nd place in top Canadian research university rankings](#) (Dec. 5, U of G News)

This marks the 10th year in a row that the University has held this spot among Canadian comprehensive universities in an annual survey of top research institutions.

[U of G pomology professor interview about Alliance-funded research among top 6 podcast episodes from The Grower](#)

The Grower is Digging Deeper behind its May 2024 cover story and speaking with Dr. John Cline. He shared information on his most recent trials with a plant growth regulator for peaches and nectarines, that could shave 40 to 50 per cent off the time required to hand thin. That's new technology eagerly awaited by Canadian growers with 8,600 acres of tree fruit.

[Listen to the episode](#), or read the Alliance story: [U of G researchers' product testing could revolutionize the tender fruit industry](#).

Make an Alliance connection



Visit the Alliance website



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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 OMAFA. Questions regarding the Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance can be addressed to omafago@uoguelph.ca.



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