



# TABLE TALKS

SSFPA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2022 ISSUE

## SSFPA News

**SSFPA to Celebrate 20th Anniversary:** March 7 marks the 20th anniversary of the SSFPA. To celebrate, the SSFPA will be having an anniversary event on September 30, 2022. The virtual event will include webinars with guest speakers, awards and dedications, and a trade show. To stay updated on the details of the event, check out the dedicated webpage [here](#).



**Small Scale, Big Dreams!**  
How to Launch & Fund a Food Processing Business

### SSFPA and WE-BC to Launch Business Support Program for Women:

WE-BC and SSFPA have launched "Small Scale, Big Dreams! How to Build & Fund a Food Processing Business." Designed for businesses in the startup stage, the program has six sessions that address labeling and regulations, profitability, scalability, business planning, and more. Applications are open until March 18 – to learn more and apply, click [here](#).

## Industry Highlights

**International Women's Day 2022 - Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow:** March 8, 2022, is International Women's Day, with this year's focus exploring the "vital link between gender, social equity and climate change, and recognizing that without gender equality today, a sustainable future, an equal future, remains out of reach." To learn more about IWD, click [here](#). Explore the resources below that focus specifically on women entrepreneurs:



- Farm Credit Canada's [Women Entrepreneurs Summit](#): webinar on March 8, 2022
- Startup Women's [Fundraising 101](#): webinar on March 30, 2022
- Financial Alliance for Women's [Measuring the Value of the Female Economy](#): the latest collection of data measuring the performance the female economy

## President's Corner

*Monthly musings from SSFPA President Pam Baxter*

Carrying on with the theme of "Issues" that the SSFPA is tackling on behalf of our members... January's musings were about Food Safety. February's were about labelling as it pertains to leveling the playing field vis-à-vis imported food. This month the theme is "small vs big."

We are an association of small and medium-sized processors and growers, employing from one to twenty-five people. Let's look at some facts from Ag Canada:

- The food and beverage processing industry in Canada was worth \$118 Billion in 2019, the second largest manufacturing industry in terms of value
- It provides employment for 290,000 people, the largest employer sector in Canada
- Meat and dairy account for the bulk of the sales
- Other food manufacturing accounted for \$12 Billion in sales
- 95% of food manufacturers in Canada are "small"
- Corporate giants dominate – "big"



Let's take BC as an example. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (MAFF) reports that:

- There are 2500+ food processing companies in BC.
- Sales were 9 Billion last year.
- Most of the companies are small



Ministry of  
Agriculture, Food  
and Fisheries

Naturally, governments and regulators listen closely to the major contributors to the Canadian economy, the 5% who are corporate giants. We, the little guys, jump up and down to be heard. Sometimes we were excluded from meetings, or if present, discounted and dismissed. Notice the past tense. SSFPA, led by Candice, has hung on and insisted on having a voice for 20 plus years. Now, the federal and provincial governments ask what we, the SSFPA, have to say, what we need – and they are creating programs that recognize and truly help small manufacturers, and in some important instances, they are asking SSFPA to lead the way.

There are more big vs small issues – regulations, insurance, WorkSafeBC, bar codes. We are on it, and that's for another column. Glad you belong?

## Stories of Innovation

*Each month, we choose one of our Stories of Innovation entries to highlight the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of our members. To access our full catalog, click [here](#).*

### Alida Dubé - Microbakester

Alida Dubé was a participant in the SSFPA Ag-Food Entrepreneur Program offered in partnership with the Mission Skills Community Skills Centre Society and funded by the BC Ministry of Advanced Education. After participating, Dubé realized that she could give the byproduct left from beer production a new life in the form of hand-rolled pretzels. Dubé uses regionally acquired spent barley grains that have been dried and milled into flour. She then teams up with local breweries to incorporate their beers into pretzels for their tasting menus, giving each pretzel a unique flavour. "We use whatever beer they want to highlight; it's an artisan product, and I want my pretzels to reflect the time they put into it. You can really taste the difference when I am using a stout vs a lager, which is super interesting." After developing her recipe from scratch, Dubé says her success in connecting with local breweries has been exciting, especially given the unique flavours of all of her recipes. "People that have their eye towards a local, sustainable, circular economy and that are willing to take a chance on local people, they make a difference. I think that's part of innovation is sometimes maybe not thinking bigger, but thinking smaller. It allows for more room and more diversity in our local food chain."

**To check out Microbakester, click [here](#).**

