



SSFPA News

SSFPA Publishes Policy Project: In conjunction with Carleton University, the SSFPA brought together five universities to research and document the lack of infrastructure and support for Canadian small scale food processors. The final result is a policy brief with specific recommendations as to how to improve business conditions for small processors, and why encouraging these small businesses is crucial to the Canadian food system. A summary of these findings was submitted to the Next Policy Framework, which will guide Canadian agriculture/agri-food spending for the next five years.



The policy brief focuses specifically on the following themes: focusing Federal Agri-food policy to invest and support start-up and scale-up food processors, increasing investment in regional food systems value-added infrastructure, supporting the development of regional (short distance) value chains, and ensuring representation of food entrepreneurs in ongoing policy and program discussions. To read the full report, click [here](#).

Industry Highlights



Small Businesses Can Claim up to \$600 in Credit Card

Lawsuit: A multimillion-dollar lawsuit with Visa and Mastercard may put money into the pockets of SSFPA members! The lawsuit addresses the expensive fees associated with processing credit card transactions, and the lack of ability to surcharge these transactions to offset the costs. This is especially timely given the shift away from cash sales during the pandemic.

If your business earned an annual revenue of less than \$5 million, it may claim \$30 per year for all years merchant discount fees were incurred between 2001 and 2021, for a maximum total of \$600. Businesses have until September 30 to register.

The settlement will also require Visa and Mastercard to alter their surcharge rules, and allow business owners the ability to pass merchant fees onto their customers. This change is expected to take effect in October 2022. To learn more about the settlement and determine eligibility, click [here](#).

President's Corner

Monthly musings from SSFPA President Pam Baxter

Associations. What's the point? I have run across a number of new foodie people over the years who back away from the very idea of joining an association. They will exhibit and sell their wares at trade shows and markets and stores. But the very idea of joining an association gives them the heebie-jeebies. They are certain they know everything they need to know and are managing well on their own.

I'm an "association" person. I've worked for them, set them up, joined them, and joined their boards. There's power in working together. Listening and chatting to entrepreneurs and vendors, one starts to hear common themes and common problems. Examples would be the cost of shipping, or variable application of regulations in different areas of the provinces, difficulties in getting financing, or finding trustworthy and inexpensive educational workshops and courses.



As a large group, something can be done about these challenges. Governments and regulators will listen to the spokespeople of large groups; in fact, they seek out the opinions and input of large groups. The association can hire trusted experts to teach and guide food entrepreneurs. The association can spot looming problems and get in front of them – such as partnering with universities to come up with best practices to control the alcohol content of fermented foods and beverages. Or putting some serious eyes on the problem of sustainable packaging.

But of course, I'm preaching to the converted! Happy June!

Affirmation Station



Each month, we will be posting something new to remind food processors how incredible their tenacity and work ethic are, even in the face of incredible challenges.

When we asked ourselves "what words describe a food processor?" many words came to mind. We have created a wordmap to show off all of the remarkable traits of a food processor. SSFPA members are resilient, bold, change-makers, and so much more! Which words do you relate to the most?

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](#).

Dafne Romero - North Pacific Kelp Wild Foods

Dafne Romero believes that when creating a successful business, there are bound to be ups, downs, and lots of surprises. "You have to accept the struggles that go along with building a company and brand. It's only then that you can go forward." Her business, North Pacific Kelp Wild Foods, uses kelp to produce a variety of kelp flakes, powders, and more. As for why she got into kelp, Romero says "The seaweed absorbs minerals and nutrients from its ecosystem, making this plant a healthy and unique specialty item in many kitchens." Romero uses Giant Kelp in her products, which is one of the fastest-growing kelp varieties on the planet, with strands reaching lengths of over 175 feet (54 meters). Romero is constantly looking for ways to grow her business, and says innovation isn't just about technology. "Expansion doesn't have to mean more. It means making better use of what you already have." When COVID-19 hit, Romero saw it as an opportunity to reflect and grow; "I don't see it as a negative situation—it kind of humbles the humans. We have been so human-centric for so long that we don't really see the consequences of our actions, and now we're seeing them. So, I think it's wonderful to be in this kind of position as I see this time now as an opportunity to change and transform and adapt further ahead."

To check out North Pacific Kelp Wild Foods, click [here](#).

