



TABLE TALKS

SSFPA MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2022 ISSUE

SSFPA News

20th Anniversary Date: The SSFPA 20th Anniversary will be celebrated on Friday, October 21. The anniversary celebration will include awards and recognition, and a summary of the decisions made in the strategic planning session by the SSFPA Board of Directors. The zoom link will be available via email and the SSFPA [Anniversary webpage](#) soon.



Buy BC is Looking for Vendors: SSFPA's online marketplace, Buy BC Food & Drink, is looking for vendors! The vision of Buy BC is to offer an identical shopping experience to that of big retailers, but without the barriers to entry of high commissions, service fees, and lack of vendor support. With Buy BC, vendors have the ability to sell to both consumers and the wholesale market, and even have the option to trade products alone or as part of a commodity group. Included in the marketplace services are vendor training, vendor support, vendor financial management, and a sustainable marketing plan for the resulting vendor website. With over 10,000 visitors monthly, Buy BC is a great way to grow exposure and awareness for your product! Learn more about becoming a vendor [here](#).



Industry Highlights



Announcement of WEOC National Loan Fund: The Women's Enterprise Organization of Canada has announced the launch of a National Loan Program, with loans of up to \$50,000 available. The program will support women and non-binary entrepreneurs as they start and scale their businesses, and will include wrap-around services to guide entrepreneurs through the entire process. Click [here](#) to learn more about the fund and its eligibility.

Government of Canada Announces Lifting of all COVID-19 Travel Restrictions: The Government of Canada announced the lifting of all COVID-19 related travel restrictions for anyone entering Canada, including entry restrictions, as well as all testing, quarantine, and isolation requirements for anyone entering Canada. This will not only make travel easier for personal reasons, but also for businesses and temporary foreign workers entering Canada. Read the full press release [here](#).



President's Corner

Monthly musings from SSFPA President Pam Baxter

In May 2001, 21 years ago, a grass roots coalition of small scale food growers and processors produced a report. The report was quite comprehensive, 28 pages long. It showed that farmers, processors and community commercial kitchens faced similar obstacles to moving forward into new markets. Recommendations were made:

- Develop a plan for processors to come together as a structured entity.
 - Small Scale Food Processor Association was incorporated the next year, 2002.
- Address developmental needs of the industry, such as training and education, organization of regional and provincial marketing and distribution, transportation and shipping, capital and equity sourcing, community and government partnerships, policy development, product development, resource and information networks.
 - SSFPA now has all of the above – courses galore, Buy BC Food and Drink, shipping discounts with Canada Post, equity sourcing, partnerships, 100+ policy papers, food scientists on contract, the list serve, and more.
- Develop strategic partnerships to support a sustainable infrastructure for the sector.
 - This is still our plan. We continue to develop strategic partnerships that benefit both our and the partner organizations.

We are now set to celebrate SSFPA's 20th anniversary! Keep an eye out for more information for October 21st!



Pictured: Some of SSFPA's founding members during the inaugural electronic AGM, held in 2004.

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.

FCC Reports Positive Forecast for Processors: [Farm Credit Canada's](#) mid-year [Food and Beverage Report](#) has reported that despite harsh economic conditions, projections for sales in the food and beverage sector are expected to remain positive, averaging out to a 9% increase by the end of the year. Leading categories for growth include grain and oilseed milling, sugar/confections, fruit and vegetable preserving, and specialty food.



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](#).

Melinda Kopet - Alkeme

Frustrated with the lack of options for people with multiple food sensitivities, Melinda Kopet set out to make a delicious product that everyone could eat. The result is a range of wildly fermented gluten-free bread products that are created using a yeast starter drawn from the air, giving each loaf a unique flavour. Now running the business with her husband Todd, Melinda had to develop a variety of innovative processes to make sure the product she delivers to customers is always fresh. "How we fulfill our orders is very different from what many producers would generally do. We care about the product quality and want to get products to our customers as fresh as possible. Our system has been leading on the innovation front." While running a food business is challenging, especially with the constraints from the COVID-19 pandemic, Melinda says it is extremely rewarding. "As an entrepreneur, you might go in with naiveté, then realize it's not as easy as you think. So the fact that we have a product that's on the market, getting positive reviews, and the first bread that I've been able to eat, is amazing."

Check out [Alkeme](#).



SMALL SCALE
FOOD PROCESSOR
ASSOCIATION

ssfpa.net

1-866-547-7372

info@ssfpa.net