



## SSFPA News

**Welcome to 2024!** As we ring in the new year, it is a great time to reflect on our activities and accomplishments in 2023 – it was a big year for the SSFPA! In 2023, we:

1. Collaborated with partners to offer a variety of business workshops, including the Business Planning Workshop series with Farm Food Drink and the Foodpreneur Biz Camp workshop series with PARO Centre For Women's Enterprise.
2. Selected as a recipient of funding through the WES Inclusive Women Venture Capital Initiative. With the help of our vast partner network, we launched Venture-Capital Ready: Investment Training for Women Entrepreneurs.
3. Partnered with the Government of British Columbia to create resources for the BC Food Hub Network, which aims to increase access to facilities, technology, equipment, and business supports for food processors in BC.
4. We began a commitment to offer all our content in both official languages, starting with our Venture-Capital Ready.
5. Exceeded our targets for the Venture-Capital Ready program applications, and successfully ran our first cohort.

For 2024, we look forward to running additional Venture-Capital Ready cohorts, collaborating with our partner network, and supporting our members in bolstering Canada's food system.



## Venture-Capital Ready: Monumental Moments from Year 1

*From Project Manager Sandy Mark*

2023 marked the launch of Venture-Capital Ready. We learned so many important lessons during our first year of piloting this program; below are some of our favourite monumental moments from year 1:



When the program launched, our goal was to have 20 applicants in 2023. By December, we had over 100 applications to the program.



Getting our extensive partner network together for a face-to-face meeting in BC to collaborate and discuss the future of the program



Building an evolving resource bank that food entrepreneurs can use to help them find information on all aspects of starting/scaling a food business.



Hearing success stories from our first cohort about how the program is building their skillsets and confidence regarding scaling their businesses.

## Community Highlight

*Highlighting the members and partners of the SSFPA*

This month, the SSFPA is highlighting partner **FEAD**.

FEAD (Female Entrepreneurs in Agri-Food Development) is a organization dedicated to empowering and advancing women entrepreneurs in food processing. Their programming includes accelerators for new businesses, workshops for those interested in starting a food business, indigenous peer circles for FNIM founders, and more.



FEAD is an initiative of the Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre, and their programs are currently available in Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Saskatchewan, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories. FEAD is an SSFPA partner for the Venture-Capital Ready program, and helps eligible entrepreneurs learn about our program.



[Check out FEAD here.](#)

## The Scoop

*Monthly musings from the SSFPA Executive*

Prescriptions. Not all prescriptions are for pharmaceutical drugs.

I like my family medical doctor a lot – she is most likely to prescribe a remedy involving food or exercise. For instance, some years ago I had pain radiating down my arms – she thought it might be a pinched nerve in my neck, which was confirmed by x-rays. She prescribed a Pilates exercise call “swan” that stretched the space between the bones in my neck. Within days I was feeling much better. I continue to do the “swan” every day; it takes less than a minute.



Again, some years back, after a routine bone density test found that I was losing bone mass, she prescribed cheese, 30 grams per day. After a year, my bone density had improved! I continue to eat cheese daily. This past week I talked to her about stomach aches.

For the first line of defense, she prescribed oatmeal. Porridge.

That, she says will coat the stomach and soothe it, reducing acid. Next time my stomach acts up, I will get out the oatmeal and give it a try. She also says there is a German-made herb that I can have before meals, if my stomach is feeling delicate. There's a back up pharmaceutical prescription, just in case.

Hippocrates lived from about 460 BC to 370 BC. His famous quote still rings true today, more than 2000 years later. “Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.” That's us! Small scale food processors! We grow or make real food, with lots of micronutrients. We are a growing force in the Canadian economy, and about time, too! Have a healthy happy New Year!

