



SSFPA News

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[Check out our Facebook page here.](#)

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Venture-Capital Ready: Addressing Food Insecurity

From Project Manager Sandy Mark

One of the largest issues facing Canada today is food insecurity. In 2022, as many as 6.9 million Canadians reported experiencing some form of food insecurity (Statistics Canada, 2022).

At the heart of this issue are women. Women are disproportionately affected by food insecurity. Single mothers with children under the age of eighteen are impacted the most by food insecurity; within this group, indigenous and black women are impacted the deepest, with food insecurity rates for these groups being, on average, more than double the rate of other ethnic groups. Food insecurity is caused by a variety of factors, including issues related to lack of income to purchase food, a lack of availability of nutritious food, and supply chain issues that affect how much food is available on shelves ([PROOF](#), 2022).

As part of the [VC Ready](#) program, we participated in a discussion on food insecurity with the [Canadian Federation of University Women](#). Alongside two of our research partners from Carleton University, we discussed how food insecurity happens, why our current food system is set up to be inherently insecure, and how women are uniquely positioned to help address current issues. This important discussion not only highlights how women become disproportionately affected by food insecurity, but also how our current food system infrastructure in Canada means that we are ALL at risk.

Watch the webinar “**Canada’s Food (in)Security: Why We Are All at Risk**” [here](#).



Community Highlight

Highlighting the members and partners of the SSFPA

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

Farmworks is a co-operative organization that assists food businesses located in Nova Scotia with securing funding. As of 2024, Farmworks has loaned over \$9 million dollars to Nova Scotian food businesses to assist them in delivering healthy local foods and beverages.

Farmworks uses the innovative Community Economic Development Investment Fund (CEDIF) model, which allows community members to purchase shares in return for provincial tax credits and RRSP deferrals. This is mutually beneficial for the investors and the food businesses. Their goal is to assist those that are “helping increase the economic, health, social, environmental, and other benefits that result from producing and eating Nova Scotian food.”

Farmworks is an SSFPA partner for the [VC Ready](#) program, helping eligible businesses in Nova Scotia learn about the program.

[Check out Farmworks here.](#)



The Scoop

Monthly musings from the SSFPA Executive

Epidemiology and traceability. I just finished reading an engaging book by Dr. Mark White, *Adventures of a Disease Detective*. Epidemiology, in part, has to do with epidemics. It is the practical study of how diseases spread – anticipating the emergence of diseases, carefully surveilling the population to determine where diseases begin, and then either preventing, limiting or stopping the spread. Think immunization. Clean water. Education.



Epidemiologists are not just concerned with diseases – they can investigate the health effects of water table contamination, or toxins in fish making their way into humans, or blood lead levels. In a previous career I had a lot to do with such studies. As part of a team, we designed questionnaires, and I was the site supervisor to gather the raw data – supervising nurses and interviewers as they collected survey results and also blood, hair and urine samples. We looked for cancer, sickness, mortality, deformities.



Now, think traceability. We at SSFPA are over the top about food safety. That is the firm baseline at the beginning of all we do. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) is a preventative approach to making sure what we produce is safe, and consumers will not get food borne illnesses. Traceability of all our raw materials and every single package we send out is required – and that makes us proud! We small growers and processors love our good reputation for the safe and delicious food we make. SSFPA can your biggest helper in this regard! Let’s keep the epidemiologists at bay!

– Pam Baxter, SSFPA President

