

*Food*  
centre

Saskatchewan Food Industry  
Development Centre Inc.

# 2017 Annual Report





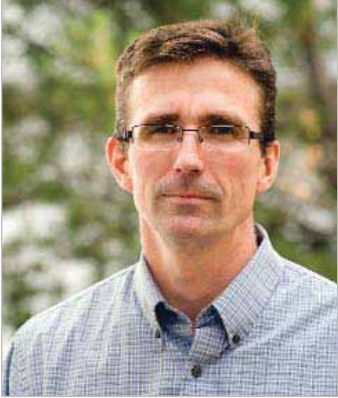
## VISION

The leader in advancing Saskatchewan's agri-food industry.

## MISSION

To provide expertise and services enabling our agri-food industry to develop new products and market opportunities through innovative processing technologies and training.

# CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE



JASON SKOTHEIM

It is my pleasure to bring greetings on behalf of the Board of Directors.

In early 2017, the Food Centre took a big step, making its move to the new Agri-Food Innovation Centre. Careful planning for the construction of the new AFIC has paid off. The new facility is an impressive 42,000 square feet, offers several incubation suites, expanded extrusion suite, fully equipped development kitchen with a sensory room, wet and dry innovation suites and many new technologies and processes to develop and commercialize innovative products.

In the midst of the move and adapting to the new facility, the Food Centre staff continued to prove to the industry that their expertise and services are important and make a difference to Saskatchewan agriculture and its economy.

The reputation of the Food Centre as a centre of excellence has put us in a high level position to not only increase the competitiveness of Saskatchewan processors in a global marketplace but also contribute to the provincial economy.

The Board of Directors are working towards a new strategic plan to achieve the objectives as set out for the development of the new Agri-Food Innovation Centre. It will seek to promote the enhanced expertise of the Food Centre and provide a strong financial position for delivery of services to the industry, explore new opportunities and technologies and for the future growth of the Centre.

2017 was a year of change but 2018 will be a year of results as we enter into our first full year of operation in the new facility.

Thank you very much to the Food Centre Board of Directors who regularly donate time, expertise and thoughtful direction to guide the future of the Food Centre. A special thank you to Muriel Garven and Harry Meyers for their guidance and involvement in the Board.

Thank you to Dan's leadership who played a significant role in the transformation of the Food Centre. Under his direction, the Food Centre staff continues to demonstrate their commitment to the industry through their handwork, dedication and enthusiasm.

We are pleased to highlight the accomplishments of the Food Centre in this 2017 Annual Report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Skotheim', written in a cursive style.





2017 was a challenging but exciting year for the Food Centre as we made our move to the new Agri-Food Innovation Centre, celebrated numerous client successes, and welcomed new strategic partnerships.

In 2014, plans for the Agri-Food Innovation Centre (AFIC) were put in motion to create a fully integrated facility to provide the industry with technical support in new product and process development through incubation for food processors. In 2017, this vision became a reality. Moving our staff, resources and technologies was a monumental task but together we accomplished it. Since our move in early 2017, the Food Centre continues to gain momentum and we clearly see the positive benefits to our clients.

For the past 20 years, the Food Centre has been leading the way in providing unique and tailored services to entrepreneurs exploring value-added opportunities. The food world is changing at an incredible speed, and the industry must evolve. Each year the Food Centre expands its diversity and continues to enhance our technical expertise to spearhead and support the growth of Saskatchewan's food and ingredient industry.

Saskatchewan's food industry is a kaleidoscope of entrepreneurs passionate to bring their distinct ideas to market. In 2017, our staff fielded an estimated 4,221 inquiries through daily phone consultations, meetings and emails, and assisted 69 clients in the development and processing of their unique food products for local and international markets. Products such as ulivit protein bars, Canadian Prairie Bison's jerky, Oatdeal the Healthy Choice's OAT-BOOST enhanced with probiotics, and a flax beverage, just to name a few, have been launched in the marketplace.

While the Food Centre is designed to be a food incubator, we are proud to highlight clients that have achieved market success and business viability to be able to "graduate" from our facility through a co-manufacturer or setting up their own facility. Congratula-

tions to Zak Organics for setting up their organic pea processing facility in Moose Jaw, SK and Santa Fe Food Company for setting up a processing facility in Shackleton, SK for their cherry condiments. We are pleased to assist these companies, and many others, on their road to success.

As the scope of the Food Centre's services and technologies increase, the Food Centre has an immense opportunity to expand the food agricultural processing industry in Saskatchewan by creating a pathway to support multiple industry players in a start-up and expansion strategy.

Thank you to both levels of government under Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative, Western Economic Diversification Canada, Saskatchewan Pulse Growers, SaskCanola, James and Suzy Amis Cameron, and our many industry supporters that are contributing in the development of strategic programming and services to strengthen the value-added sector.

I am extremely grateful to be part of an exceptional team at the Centre that includes our dedicated Board of Directors and hard-working staff. Our clients appreciate the depth of collaboration and professionalism at the Food Centre; if they succeed, we succeed! I would also like to provide a special thank you to Muriel Garven for her 12 years of dedication to the Food Centre Board. She was instrumental in the development of the Agri-Food Innovation Centre.

In 2018, the Food Centre will be working with our Board of Directors and staff to build on our strategic plan and vision to continue advancing the agri-food industry through 2025. I am looking forward to an exciting year ahead with new business ventures, friendships, and success stories that will expand the Food Centre's outstanding reputation and growth.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



DAN PREFONTAINE

Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre Inc. (Food Centre) is a not for profit organization that provides unique services to support industry growth and increase value-added activity in Saskatchewan.

With the new Agri-Food Innovation Centre (AFIC), Food Centre's new home, we look forward to providing enhanced and new services to the industry to explore more value-added opportunities.

**Since inception in 1997, we have provided services to almost 300 clients, developed over 800 products with 50% launched into the marketplace.**

The Food Centre prides ourselves in customizing services to meet the needs of our diverse clientele. With increased global competition, staying abreast of food industry trends and our flexibility to evolve has put the Food Centre in a catalytic position for Saskatchewan's agriculture industry.

**OUR EXPERTISE**

product development • interim processing • extrusion  
 pulse innovation • ingredient application  
 process development • product testing • path finding  
 skills development • industry training • online training  
 nutrition labelling • label review • packaging  
 ingredient sourcing • network of suppliers  
 and more!!

Over the past 20 years, the Food Centre has experienced many milestones: grand opening of our Commercial Kitchen in 1999, grand opening of our federally inspected Pilot Plant in 2001, and implementation of Saskatchewan's first and only Twin Screw Extruder in 2009. The highlight of 2017 was the Food Centre's next big milestone – the completion of the new Agri-Food Innovation Centre.

## 2017 HIGHLIGHTS

**JANUARY** Client Success: Three Farmers is featured on Dragons' Den

**FEBRUARY** Food Centre received Fish Processing License for Pilot Plant; Client, Oatdeal the Healthy Choice is featured on Dragons' Den

**MARCH** Food Centre is profiled on Global Ventures

**APRIL** Food Centre is settled in the new Agri-Food Innovation Centre

**MAY** Client Successes: Canadian Prairie Bison launched its jerky products; Zak Organics is "Top 10 companies to watch for in 2017" in Food in Canada Magazine

**JUNE** 2 Day HACCP Workshop

**JULY** Food Centre presented at Haskap Conference

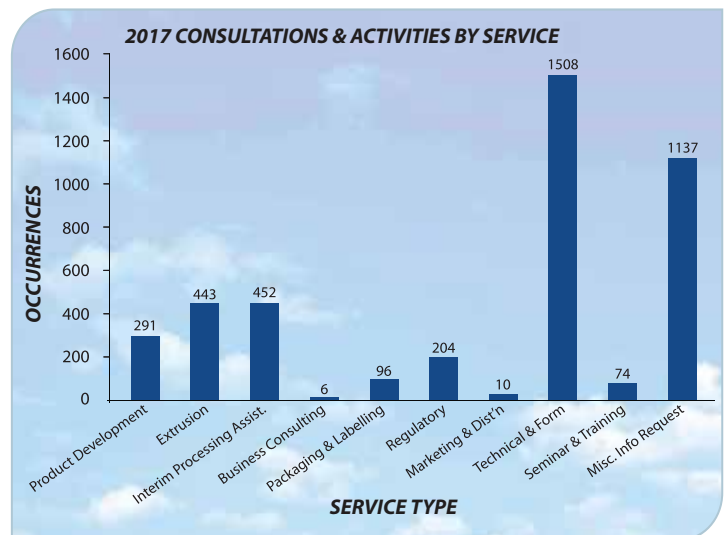
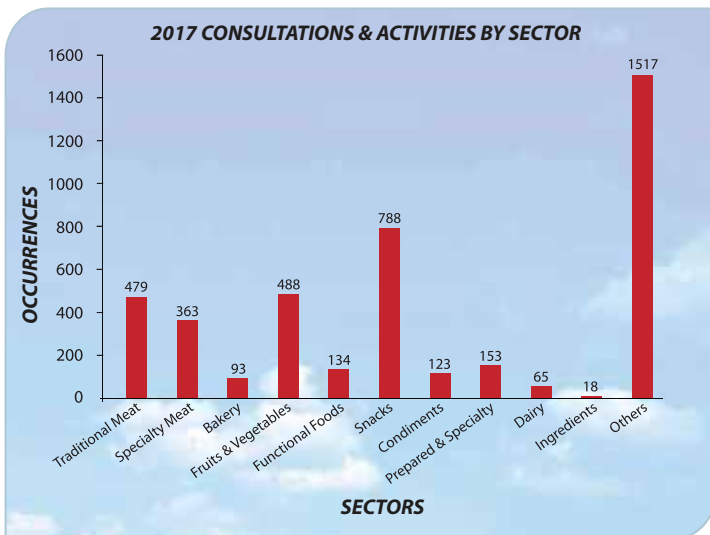
**AUGUST** Client Success: Oatdeal the Healthy Choice is profiled in Western Producer

**SEPTEMBER** James Cameron's Verdient Foods announced 4 year research contract with the Food Centre

**OCTOBER** 2 Day HACCP Workshop

**NOVEMBER** Client Success: Bar Country launched their unique cocktail mix

**DECEMBER** Client Success: Gravelbourg Mustard is featured on Dragons' Den





Since the funding announcement in 2015 for a new Agri-Food Innovation Centre, the Food Centre has been busy the last 2 years in the construction of this new facility. At the time of the announcement, location, size and design of this facility were only ideas. After much activity and change in 2016, we moved into our new facility in early 2017.

AFIC has attracted a lot of attention and new clients to the Food Centre. We have seen an increase in clients seeking technical expertise in adapting new Saskatchewan manufactured ingredients to the food industry.

The Food Centre is leading the conversation with major retailers in the province to discuss future growth of the industry and how the new AFIC can provide opportunities to its clients and access shelf space in the retail sector.

The Food Centre is working in collaboration with Verdient Foods, supported by James and Suzy Amis Cameron, to develop value-added organic food products using ingredients from the Verdient plant in Vanscoy, SK.

Co-housing of the Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan's value chain project has supported new opportunities in food processing for SME's and allowed a direct connection from retail to manufacturing and distribution of new food products to the marketplace.

With our expanded services and facility, the Food Centre will continue to encourage entrepreneurship, nurture incubation, foster discovery and support the industry in its period of growth.

**Thank you to the following organizations for their financial support to the new Agri-Food Innovation Centre.**



*James Cameron  
and  
Suzy Amis Cameron*

- SaskBarley Development Commission
- Saskatchewan Egg Producers
- CanMar Grain Products Ltd.
- Chicken Farmers of Saskatchewan
- InfraReady Products Ltd.
- Cherry Insurance
- LPL Management
- Ledcor Group
- MGM Specialty Livestock
- Boreal Berry Bar Inc.
- Triad Power
- Excel Refrigeration Ltd.
- Ace Plumbing & Heating Inc.

## ◀◀ BRIDGING RESOURCES TO INDUSTRY

- "I have a great food idea but don't know where to start."*
- "I am selling my products at the Farmers' Market but would like to explore retail markets. Is my product ready?"*
- "Can I get Nutrition Facts Table done for my product?"*
- "My product has some inconsistencies, can you troubleshoot?"*
- "I grow lentils and would like to do some value-added products."*
- "What types of food safety training do you offer?"*

Our expert staff field these types of questions and more. These daily occurrences are usually through telephone, meetings, and emails ranging from minutes to possibly several hours depending on the request. In 2017, we fielded an estimated 4,221 inquires and consultations. We have built a solid reputation as a "Pathfinder" for the value-added industry in Saskatchewan. Sometimes we may not have the answers but through our network of industry partners, the Food Centre is able to connect you to the right resources.





# Product Development

Snacking and health and wellness continue to be at the forefront for consumer food preferences and was evident in the flurry of activities in product development. Products such as high protein bar, flax bar to help lower cholesterol, and a smoothie enhancer with probiotics were all tapping into the health and wellness food trend and making its way to the marketplace in 2017.

The Food Centre was proud to have worked with approximately 36 clients in food development, research and analytical, and ingredient applications. Thirty market-ready products were completed with 50% launched into the marketplace.

The Food Centre also worked with several multi-national companies and research & development organizations involving ingredient applications, analytical testing and prototype development for the promotion of Saskatchewan agriculture.

We have several new equipment to enhance our development services such as a temperature-controlled incubator to conduct accelerated shelf life for various food and ingredient products.

## CELEBRATING SUCCESSES

**Congratulations to Zak Organics**, who worked with the Food Centre in 2016 to develop a line of flavoured organic pea snacks for the marketplace. In 2017, they opened their own processing plant in Moose Jaw, SK to cater to their growing market. The Food Centre is proud of their accomplishment and continues to provide development and testing services to their operations.

**Congratulations to ulivit** for launching their protein bars in the market. Since its launch, it has elicited great interest from several retail stores across Saskatchewan and Alberta.

**Congratulations to George Barreras at Oatdeal the Healthy Choice** for being nominated for the Saskatchewan Newcomer Entrepreneur of the Year award. Oatdeal launched a new shake and smoothie enhancer, OAT-BOOST, made with pea protein and probiotics.

### PRODUCTS DEVELOPED

- Enhanced Smoothie Mix
- Reformulated Flax Bars
- BBQ Sauce
- Vegetarian Food Products
- Garlic Condiments
- Beverages
- Pasta
- Non Dairy Dessert
- Protein Bars
- Pea Snacks
- Tofu
- and MORE!



Images - Top to Bottom: Oatdeal the Healthy Choice OAT-BOOST Smoothie Mix; ulivit Protein Bars; Flax to Go Bars

These clients, along with many others, are game changers in the food industry. As plant based proteins surge on in 2018, and new trends arise, we are looking forward to creating more success stories with our enhanced services and new technologies at our new AFIC location.



# Processing Expertise



## PRODUCTS PROCESSED

- Various Snack Bars
- Jerky
- Sausages, Salami, Bacon
- Honey
- Dry Mix
- Extruded Snacks
- Chickpea, Pea, and Lentil Snacks
- Fruit Jam and Spread
- Mustard
- Fish
- Fruit Honey
- and MORE!

Our Pilot Plant on the University of Saskatchewan Campus will continue to fill the test market and incubation needs for Saskatchewan's food industry. A large percentage of new and smaller clients entering the value-added industry do not have the capital or resources to set up their own facility or purchase equipment to launch their business. The option of daily rental fee and access to numerous processing technologies and certifications will continue to be a valuable resource and help to grow the processing industry in Saskatchewan.



The Food Centre has been successful in utilizing the Pilot Plant to support much of the industry over the past 20 years. AFIC's long-term incubation units will offer Pilot Plant clients the opportunity to make the transition from proof of concept to commercial industrial stage of business in an economical sustainable approach.

In 2017, the Pilot Plant obtained its fish license for processing of value-added fish products. We were pleased to assist the Wollaston Lake Fishery to develop and produce their smoked trout and savoury-flavoured trout for the marketplace.

Thirty-two clients used the Pilot Plant for production of over 30 different types of food products, from granola type bars, jerky, powdered drinks to honey.



## NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO SERVICE THE INDUSTRY

The Food Centre identified key technologies to equip the new facility that would present the best solutions for the value-added industry. New to the Centre include fermentation technology for the production of beer, wine and spirits. Equipment in drying, milling, roasting, cooking, and enrobing for confectionary have also been added to our service offerings.

Adopting and adapting innovative technologies to equip AFIC is an ongoing process and are evaluated based on food product applications, processing techniques and equipment that can support the growth of the value-added processing sector in the province and provide future benefits to the industry.

Images - Top to Bottom: Sweet Prairie Haskap Berry Powder; Bar Country Pocket Cocktail Mixes; Canadian Prairie Bison Jerky Flavours





With the move to the Agri-Food Innovation Centre, the extrusion department quadrupled in size and capacity. A new twin screw extruder with capability to produce up to 250 kg/hr, auxiliary equipment, new designated packaging room and ingredient storage are some of the additions to enhance our extrusion expertise. With the increased capacity, clients will be able to produce enough product for test marketing as well as incubation.

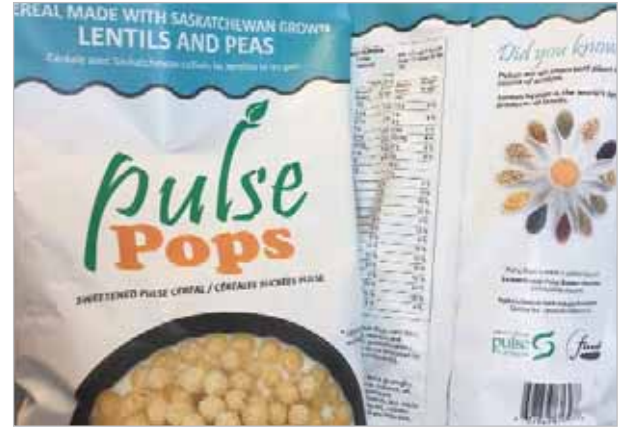
In 2017, the Food Centre provided extrusion services to 21 clients in R&D, manufacturing and consulting. Five were international clients, 6 national and 10 Saskatchewan-based companies. Prototypes in development included high moisture extrusion cooking (HMEC) to produce plant-based protein fibres, extruded snacks of various shapes, breakfast cereal, pellets for non-food use, pet food, and imitation rice. Several study trials were conducted to obtain ingredient and product functionality information for clients.

We are currently extruding for several local and international clients to cater specific markets: egg protein snack, breakfast cereal, extruded pea snack, and pet food.

## SHOWCASING SASKATCHEWAN AGRICULTURE

The Food Centre is in its second year agreement with Saskatchewan Pulse Growers to provide nutritious pulse-based food products on an annual basis for donation to Saskatchewan Food Banks. In 2017, we delivered approximately 25,000 units of Pulse Puffs, Prairie Pulse Bars, and Pulse Pops Cereal.

Extrusion opens opportunities for commodity groups to explore unique food concepts in direct expanded snacks, breakfast cereals, meat analogues and co-extruded snacks, among others, utilizing a variety of ingredients and formulations. Saskatchewan Egg Producers launched their X-110 extruded egg snacks in the market in 2015 and have since expanded their market to across Canada and speciality stores in Saskatchewan.



*Images - Top to Bottom: Pulse Pops (made in partnership with Saskatchewan Pulse Growers for donation to SK Food Banks), Ginger "Beef" (using plant based protein fibres through HMEC), Peatos (extruded pea snack), and close up of barrel of extruder.*

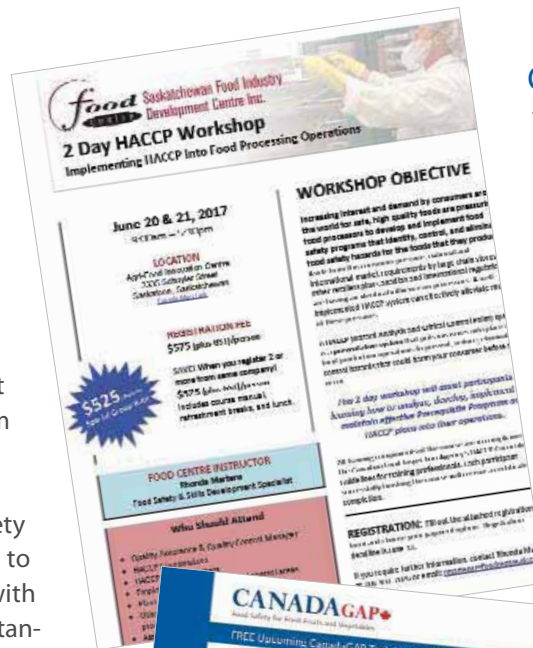
# Training the Industry

The food industry in Saskatchewan is growing and evolving at a rapid pace. In order to meet the needs of the changing local and export markets, the industry must be supplied with access to tools that will foster growth and support education. Saskatchewan companies are finding it increasingly difficult to stay abreast of the new regulations, new market trends and heightened demands from the retail sector.

At the Food Centre, our Food Safety Department works with industry to ensure that their facility complies with established policies, regulations and standards related to the safety of the foods that they produce.

We offered several training workshops in 2017 to assist the food industry in Saskatchewan to remain competitive and compete in the global marketplace. We performed on-site training at the manufacturer's facility. Training was customized to target specific needs such as audit readiness, BRC programming, and training staff on Good Manufacturing Practices.

Through our contract with Agriculture Council of Saskatchewan, the Food Centre provided several CanadaGAP workshops, webinars and conference calls in 2017. These events provided information on how to access the program to achieve CanadaGAP certification. CanadaGAP is a national, voluntary food safety program that has received full Canadian Government Recognition. It consists of standards and a certification system for the safe production, handling and brokerage of fresh fruits and vegetables.



## ONLINE TRAINING

The Food Centre's online training for HACCP (hazard analysis and critical control points) and GMPs (good manufacturing practices) continue to generate interest around the world. The web-based training option provides better flexibility for food manufacturers to upgrade employees' food safety skills at their own time.

The online HACCP & Food Safety Certificate Program reaches students globally. Although the majority are from British Columbia, Ontario and Saskatchewan, there has been 21 international students since inception. In 2017, we had approximately 93 new students enrolled in the HACCP online with several students from the United States, India, and China.

The GMPs online training is also a great training option for smaller companies on Good Manufacturing Practices. This program is free for individuals and companies based in Saskatchewan.

[www.GMPsOnline.ca](http://www.GMPsOnline.ca)  
[www.HACCPonline.ca](http://www.HACCPonline.ca)

## 2017 Training

- 2 Day HACCP Workshops
- CanadaGAP Training
- Onsite Training
- Public Health Inspection Training
- Recall/Traceability
- Quality Assurance
- Internal Auditing
- Sanitation
- Needs Assessments
- Facility Modification Assessments
- Pre-Audit Assistance

## MEAT INSPECTION SERVICES

In 2017, two new facilities joined the Domestic Meat Inspection Program. The Domestic Meat Inspection Standard is complete and accepted by the Saskatchewan Inspected Meat Plants and the Ministry of Agriculture. The Food Centre and Ministry of Agriculture are working on the new inspection contract to begin April 1, 2018.





# Partnerships

## SASKATCHEWAN MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

The Ministry of Agriculture offers valuable support to the Saskatchewan food industry. Their experienced staff is available to assist the agriculture industry through its service offerings such as business expertise and leadership, research, funding, and industry information. The different departments in the Ministry of Agriculture are committed to enhancing the development of a vibrant agricultural industry.

## UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

The Food Centre works closely with the research scientists at the University of Saskatchewan's College of Agriculture and Bioresources. The College links processors to the latest technology and research information. The Food Centre collaborates with the numerous departments in special projects that helps to expand and diversify the food industry.

## SASKATCHEWAN FOOD AND INGREDIENT PROCESSORS ASSOCIATION

The Saskatchewan Food and Ingredient Processors Association (SFIPA) is an industry association that represents and serves as a spokes group for the collective interests of our food and ingredient sector provincially, nationally and internationally. They provide special programming, market awareness, pathfinding, and collaboration to grow and increase the competitiveness of the food and ingredient sector.

## WE COULD NOT HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU

We appreciate all monetary contributions, sharing of knowledge and resources, project collaborations in support of the Food Centre's strategic initiatives to grow the food industry in Saskatchewan. Over the last 20 years, we have solidified many partnerships with industry in order to target specific challenges and opportunities in the industry.

Some of the important initiatives that the Food Center is undertaking to advance the agri-food sector and agriculture industry are: Working with Saskatchewan Pulse Growers Association (to deliver 25,000 units of pulse-based product to Saskatchewan Food Banks), working in collaboration with Verdient Foods (to develop value-added organic food products); and working with major retailers in the province (to open opportunities for clients to access shelf space in the retail sector).

Special thanks to Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative, Western Economic Diversification of Canada, National Research Council, and Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture for their financial support with special projects, programming and the construction of the Agri-Food Innovation Centre.



*The Food Centre was founded on a partnership arrangement with the Government of Saskatchewan (represented by Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture), University of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan Food and Ingredient Processors Association. This partnership provides resources targeted at growing and diversifying Saskatchewan's food processing industry.*

*The Food Centre also relies on relationships with external organizations such as POS Bio-Sciences, Clextral Inc., STEP, GFSI, funding agencies, industry associations and many suppliers to be able to develop strategic programming and services to strengthen the value-added sector. We appreciate these and other partnerships tremendously. The knowledge and expertise that these collaborations bring to the table help accelerate Saskatchewan-made products to market.*







## Food Centre Staff

Dan Prefontaine -- President  
Shannon Hood-Niefer -- Vice-President, Innovation and Technology  
Valerie Menzies -- Administrative Assistant  
Carmen Ly -- Communications Director  
Glenna Long -- Accountant  
Sara Lui -- Manager, Product Development  
Catherine Querimit -- Senior Assistant, Product Development  
Tao Yee Lim -- Assistant, Product Development  
Mark Dyck -- Technician, Product Development  
Sara Tang -- Lab Technician, Product Development  
Anula Perera -- Food Scientist  
Satinder Gill -- Food Scientist  
Ricky Lam -- Ingredient Specialist  
Matthew Marcotte -- Specialist, Extrusion  
Aaron Pidskalny -- Technologist, Extrusion  
Michael Roberge -- Operator, Extrusion  
Erin Hiebert -- Manager, Food Safety and Skills Development  
Vince Neiser -- Program Manager, FC Food Inspection  
Brev Chesky -- Operations Manager, Food Processing  
Dean Regnier -- Shipper/Receiver, AFIC  
Krishna Ambilwade -- HACCP & Food Safety Coordinator, AFIC  
Scott Irvine -- Supervisor, Pilot Plant  
Arron Hamilton -- Assistant Supervisor, Pilot Plant  
Nolan Langer -- HACCP Coordinator, Pilot Plant  
Sue Waldner -- Technician, Pilot Plant  
Jennifer Soriano -- Technician, Pilot Plant  
Barry Motilag -- Maintenance Supervisor  
Michael Suru -- Maintenance Assistant  
John Wilkinson -- Maintenance Assistant  
James Bedient -- Maintenance Assistant

## Board of Directors

Jason Skotheim -- Chairman  
Horizon Pet Nutrition  
Alister Muir -- Saskatchewan Food and Ingredient Processors Association  
Blair Knippel -- T Base 4 Investments Corp.  
Brian Sim -- Agri-Business Consultant  
Carl Flis -- LC Global Services  
Godwin Pon -- Ministry of Agriculture  
Harry Meyers -- Saskatchewan Seed Potato Growers' Association  
Jennifer Evancio -- Best Cooking Pulses  
John Coté -- Black Fox Farm & Distillery  
Mehmet Tulbek -- Alliance Grain Traders  
Muriel Garven -- Garven & Associates Consulting Ltd.  
Phyllis Shand -- University of Saskatchewan  
Rick Green -- POS Bio-Sciences

## Members

Alister Muir -- President, Saskatchewan Food and Ingredient Processors Association  
Cammy Colpitts -- Assistant Deputy Minister, Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture  
Greg Fowler -- Vice-President, Finance and Resources University of Saskatchewan

## Board Advisor

Morgan Brown -- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

*\* List of Staff, Board of Directors, Members and Board Advisor at time of printing.*

Davies &  
Drury | CHARTERED  
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Audited 2017 financial statements are available upon request by contacting the Food Centre.  
Please direct your inquiries to (306) 933-7555 or email: [info@foodcentre.sk.ca](mailto:info@foodcentre.sk.ca).



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