

SSFPA WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Overcoming Business
Barriers Facing Women
Food Processors

 SMALL SCALE
FOOD PROCESSOR
ASSOCIATION
SUPPORTS INDEPENDENT
FOOD PROCESSORS & GROWERS



Facilitating Food Processing Start-Up and Scale-up



Land Acknowledgement



From coast to coast to coast, the SSFPA acknowledges the ancestral and unceded territory of the Inuit, Metis, and First Nations people that call this land home. We gratefully acknowledge Indigenous peoples as the original caretakers of the lands, waters, and foodways.



What is the SSFPA?



The **Small-Scale Food Processor Association (SSFPA)** is a national trade association of processors, growers, and suppliers of food and agriculture products. We help members grow their businesses and expand local economies by offering leadership, education, and advocacy to foster success in a competitive global market.

The SSFPA was founded in 2002 after a group of food entrepreneurs realized they needed support to bolster the food sector. Today, 20 years later, processor and supporter members assist each other through sharing ideas, advice, and industry knowledge.



SSFPA Women's Initiative



A 2018 member survey revealed over 66% of SSFPA members are women-led businesses

- Further surveying found that women entrepreneurs get turned away from regular banks, or are forced to seek “B” lending solutions, which are risky
- Research revealed women entrepreneurs in the food sector face extensive issues regarding access to capital; women-led businesses only receive 3% of venture capital invested in the food sector
- The food industry is complicated, making it difficult for investors to evaluate risk and opportunity; the SSFPA is working with SVX to create a gender, diversity, and rurality intelligent investment fund



SSFPA Women's Initiative

- After the survey in 2018, the SSFPA was accepted for a proposal from Women and Gender Equality Canada to improve women's economic security
- The SSFPA has funding from 2018-2024 to support the Women's Initiative, which will focus on policy reform to support small scale food processors and the development of resources and tools to facilitate gender intelligent financing options



Why Policy is a Priority

SSFPA Policy Project:

- In collaboration with 5 Canadian universities, the SSFPA created a policy document that highlights the importance of small and medium Canadian food entrepreneurs
- Strengthening regional food infrastructure and support for entrepreneurs and their communities is the best path forward to a resilient food system



Why Policy is a Priority



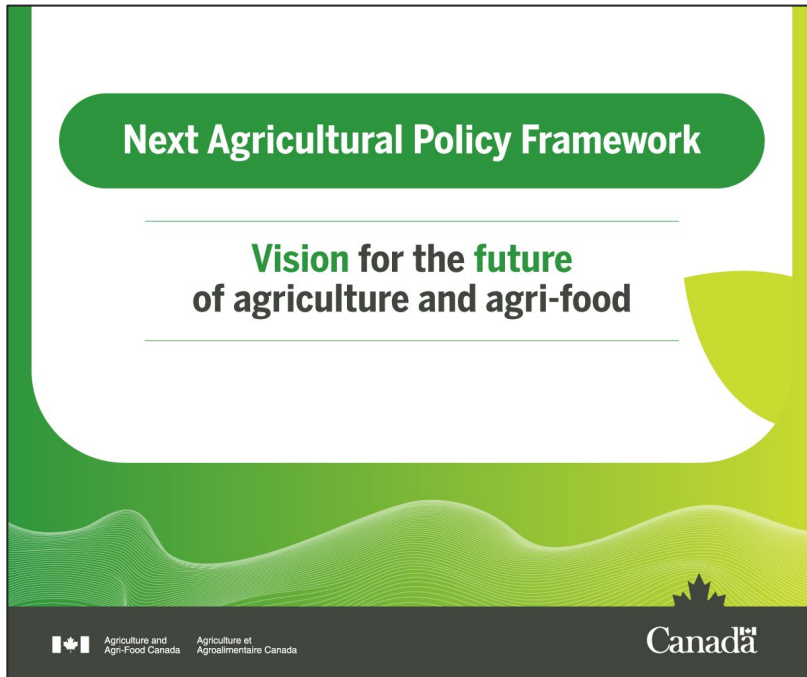
Food Policy in Canada must change to:

- Recognize the scale of operations; policy is tailored to big corporations, and the qualifications and terminology are often not applicable to smaller businesses
- Only a narrow definition of innovation is recognized and valued: innovation needs to be recognized on the micro-level, outside of large technological innovations



Next Policy Framework

Our request for addition to the Next Policy Framework:



- **Recognize** the importance of start-up and scale-up food enterprises as key to development of a more resilient, climate smart food system
- **Recognize** that many if not most of these enterprises are women led
- **Provide** nationally coordinated, consistent support for development of these enterprises
- **Create** an investment program to facilitate development of regional food processing infrastructure



Summary

[SSFPA Women's Initiative Website](#)

[SSFPA Policy Brief](#)

