



2024-2027 AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD SECTOR STRATEGY AND PROGRAM UPDATES

Presented to

Agriculture and Agri-food
Advisory Committee

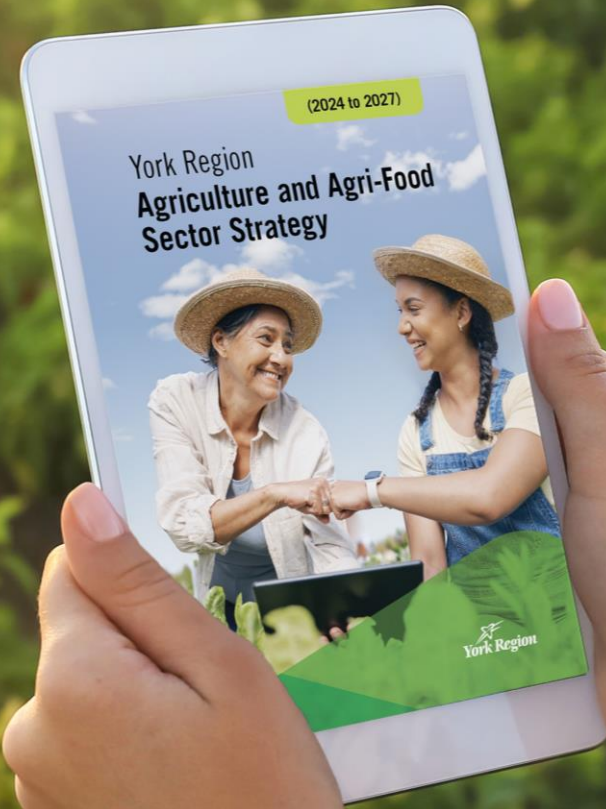
Presented by

Meena Hassanali
Nadia Mohammed
Eman Ali

Presented on

March 19, 2025



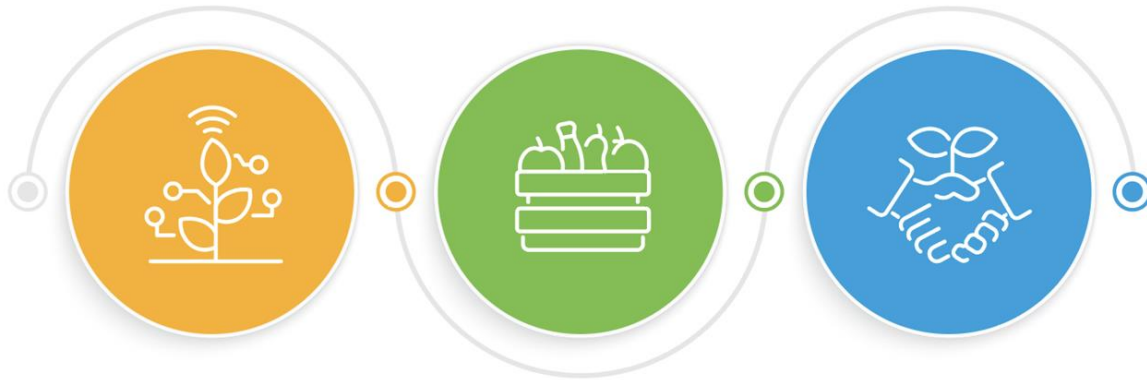


OVERVIEW

- 2024-2027 Agriculture and Agri-food Sector Strategy
 - Agri-food programming updates
 - Trade support resources
 - Next steps

yorklink.ca/agrifood

2024-2027 AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD SECTOR STRATEGY



**1. Business,
entrepreneurship
and innovation**

**2. Resilient and
diverse local
agri-food value chain**

**3. Outreach,
education and
communication**

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION IS ON TRACK

- Builds on previous partnerships
- Strengthen agri-food entrepreneurship and innovation capacity
- Inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility (IDEA) and Indigenous Reconciliation lens
- Climate change and sustainability
- Raise the profile of York Region's agriculture and agri-food sector

AGRI-FOOD PROGRAMMING UPDATES: 2025

DRAFT AGRI-FOOD COMMUNICATIONS PLAN FOR 2025

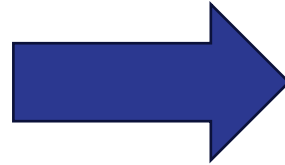


Goal 3
Action 3A.1

GOALS

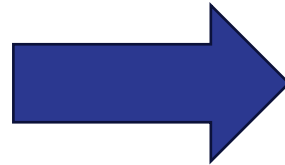
HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE IT

Raise the profile for local agriculture and agri-food sector.



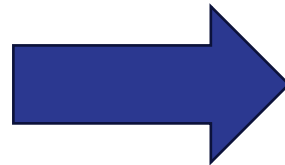
- Success stories/business spotlights
- Promote days of significance
- Support events
- Web updates

Strengthen communication and collaboration to support sector development.



- Newsletter
- Promote funding opportunities
- Slow moving vehicles campaign
- Work with internal departments to identify collaboration opportunities

Build capacity and prioritize impactful education for sector growth.



- Education and capacity building workshops
- Informational toolkits and resources

COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH



Goal 3

Action 3A.1

King Climate Resilient Agriculture Workshop

Market Gardening:

The Business and Innovation of Resilient Agriculture

Schomberg Community Hall

Thursday
Mar. 27
10:30am-1pm

Register at
king.ca/ResilientAG



KING

#MadeInYR



Kisko Products

Mr. Freeze, Crush Freeze Pops, Motts, Welch's, and Mrs. J's Naturals brands of frozen juice bars, freezies, and ice pops



YORK LINK

2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

- Highlights achievements of our Economic Strategy team and the collaborative work with our local partners
- Section with agri-food portfolio achievements
- Will be presented to York Regional Council in May 2025



LOCAL FOOD PARTNERSHIP — YORK FARM FRESH



Goal 2

Action 2A.1



Continued partnership for 2025

- Annual York Farm Fresh Directory 2025
- Enhancements of the website
- Attended and provided remarks at the Annual General Meeting on March 5, 2025



COMMUNITY PARTNER ACTIVITIES - GHFFA



Goal 3
Action 3B.6

Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance

- Attended Working Group and Alliance Board Meetings

unConference: Multifunctional Spaces for Whole Communities

- February 27, 2025: Barrett Centre Urban Agriculture
- Keynote Speaker: Johl Whiteduck (Anisihnewbe Chef)
- Community Expo and Farm Tours
- Content- Food security, Innovation to strengthen urban agriculture in communities



CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH STUDY



Goal 2
Action 2C.8

Climate Change Research Study

- Initial research findings from KPMG
- Focus of the study: Impacts of climate change on agriculture and agri-food sector

Next Steps:

- Workshop to share the finding
- Your input on timing



KNG CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENT AGRICULTURE WORKSHOP



Goal 1

Action IB.5 / 1C.8

Soil Health and Regenerative Farming/Cover Crops Workshop

- Partnership with Township of King, TRCA, LSRCA
- February 21, 2025

Market Gardening: The Business and Innovation of Resilient Agriculture

- March 27, 2025
- Representation from Advisory Committee
 - Brandon Hebor, Boreal Farms
 - Antonio Gomes, Cavaleiro Farms
 - Register at king.ca/ResilientAG

King Climate Resilient Agriculture Workshop
Market Gardening:
The Business and Innovation of Resilient Agriculture
Schomberg Community Hall

Thursday
Mar. 27
10:30am-1pm

Register at
king.ca/ResilientAG

 **KING**





Public Works Department – Roads, Traffic and Fleet, Operations and Services

- Planning for Drainage Improvement Program for Summer 2025
- Facilitated meeting with project stakeholders on Feb 28, 2025
- Input from Advisory Committee



FOODPRENEUR LAB — BLACK FOOD HISTORY MONTH



the social **foodpreneur lab** where food dreams grow.
CTV FEBRUARY 24TH 2:00PM ET

Watch Foodpreneur Lab Executive Director Janice Bartley chat up the ladies on The Social and sharing her favourite items from our Black Food History Boxes.

Available at www.foodpreneurlab.com



BLACK DIASPORA HOLIDAY BOX CURATED BY foodpreneur lab

EXPLORE THE BLACK DIASPORA BOX

CAROBIUM
ANGEL MOSS
THE ABIBIMAN PROJECT
SUNSHINE CHIN CHIN

DISCOVER FOODPRENEUR LAB'S CURATED HOLIDAY BOXES
WWW.FOODPRENEURLAB.COM

Foodpreneur Lab

- February 24, 2025:
The Social
- Showcase of food items from Black Food History Boxes

BUSINESS EXPO AND MARKETPLACE

BUSINESS EXPO & MARKETPLACE

**INNOVATE.
NETWORK.
THRIVE:**

**Celebrating Black-owned
businesses in York Region**

Saturday, April 12, 2025

12 p.m. to 6 p.m.

17250 Yonge Street, York Region
Administrative Centre, Newmarket



F.A.C.E.

ysbec
YORK SMALL BUSINESS
ENTERPRISE CENTRE

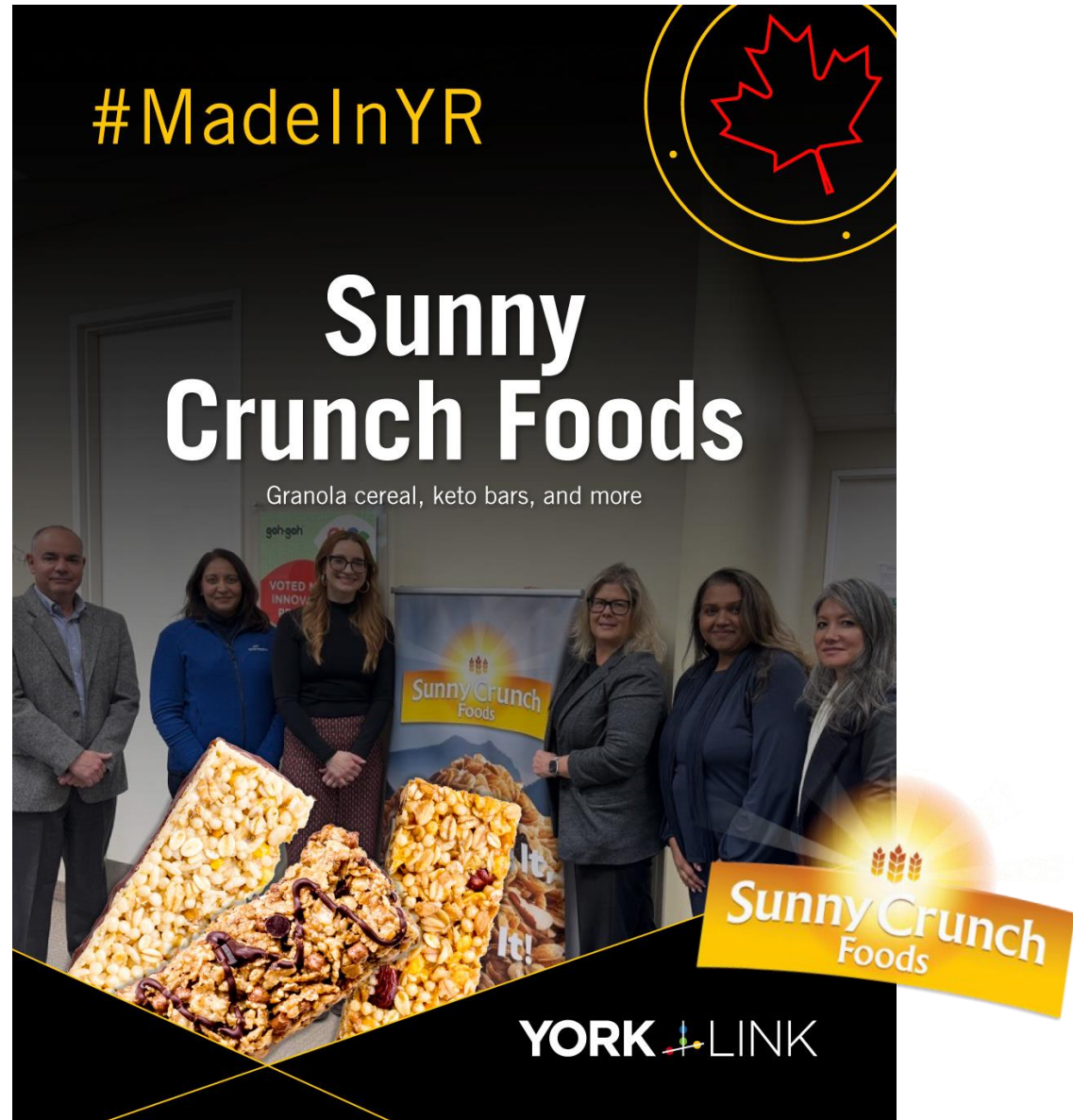
York Region



#MadeInYR

Sunny Crunch Foods

Granola cereal, keto bars, and more



Sunny Crunch Site Visit

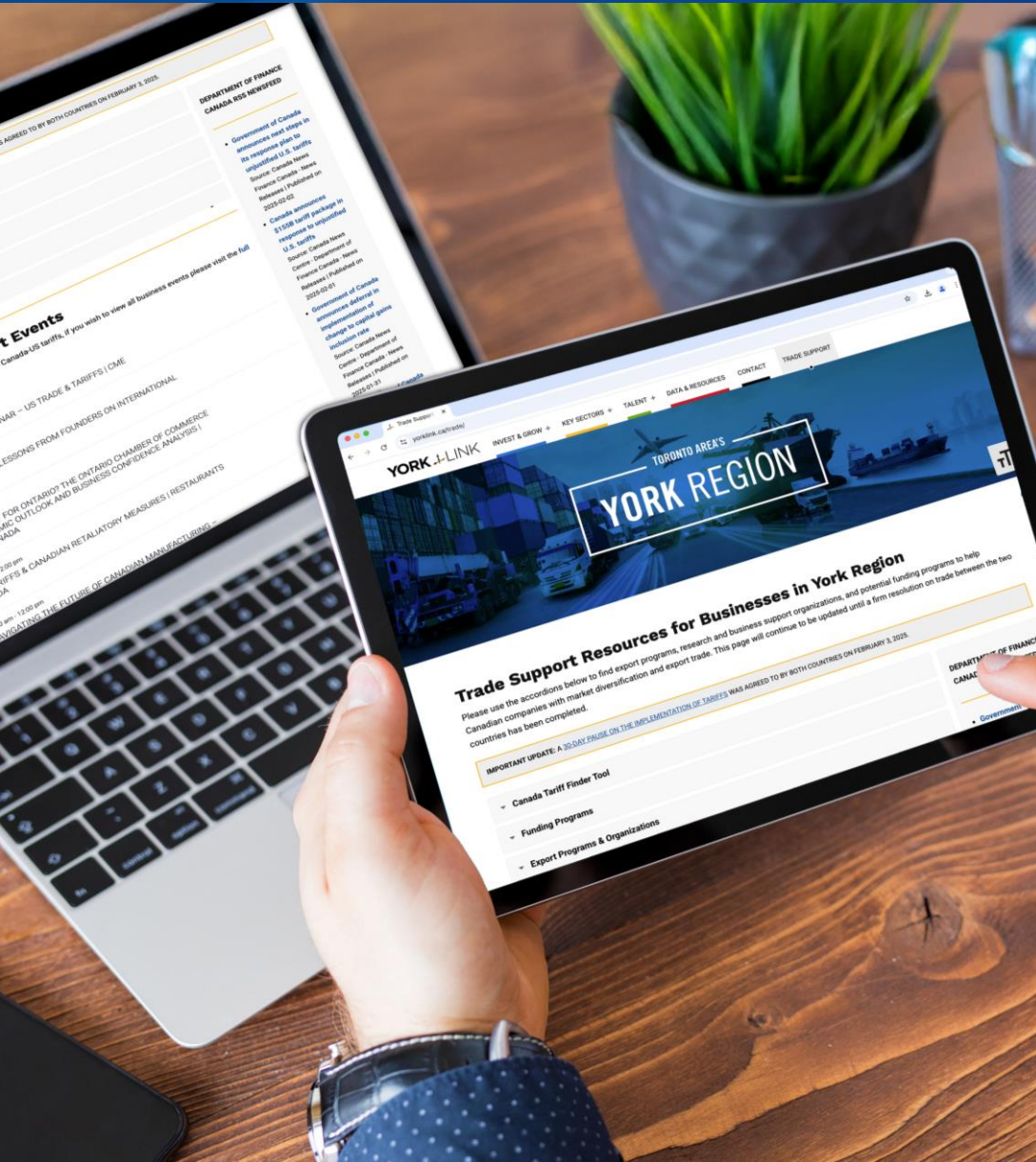
- City of Markham and York Region site visit March 6, 2025
- Strengthen communication and collaboration
- Support agri-food businesses with current trade issues

TRADE SUPPORT RESOURCES AND ROUNDTABLE



Goal 1

Action 1A.1



York Region Economic Strategy

- **Trade Support Resources**
 - yorklink.ca/trade
- **Business Recovery Support Partnership (BRSP)**
 - Roundtable with local municipalities, Boards and Chambers
 - Meetings in February / March 2025
 - Working group with tangible actions
- **Shop and support local**
 - york.ca/SupportLocal
 - Agri-tourism – leverage York Farm Fresh
- **Review Statistics Canada Dataset**
 - York Region's agriculture and agri-food sector

FUNDING IN SUPPORT OF TRADE

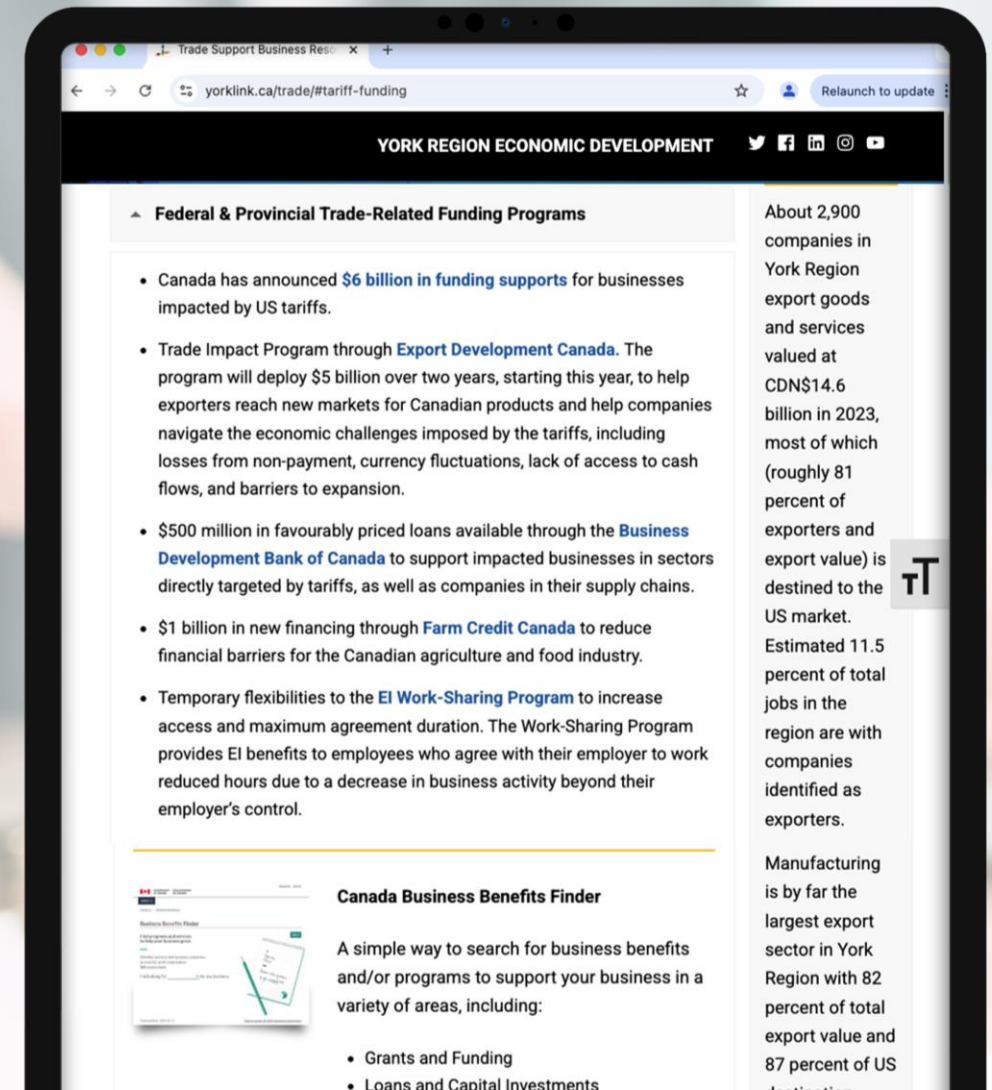


Goal 3

Action 3B.4

Government of Canada funding for business support programs

- Farm Credit Canada - \$1 Billion in new financing to reduce barriers for agriculture and agri-food industry
- Export Development Canada - \$5 Billion over two years to help exporters reach new markets
- Business Development Bank of Canada - \$500 million in loans for businesses impacted in sectors targeted

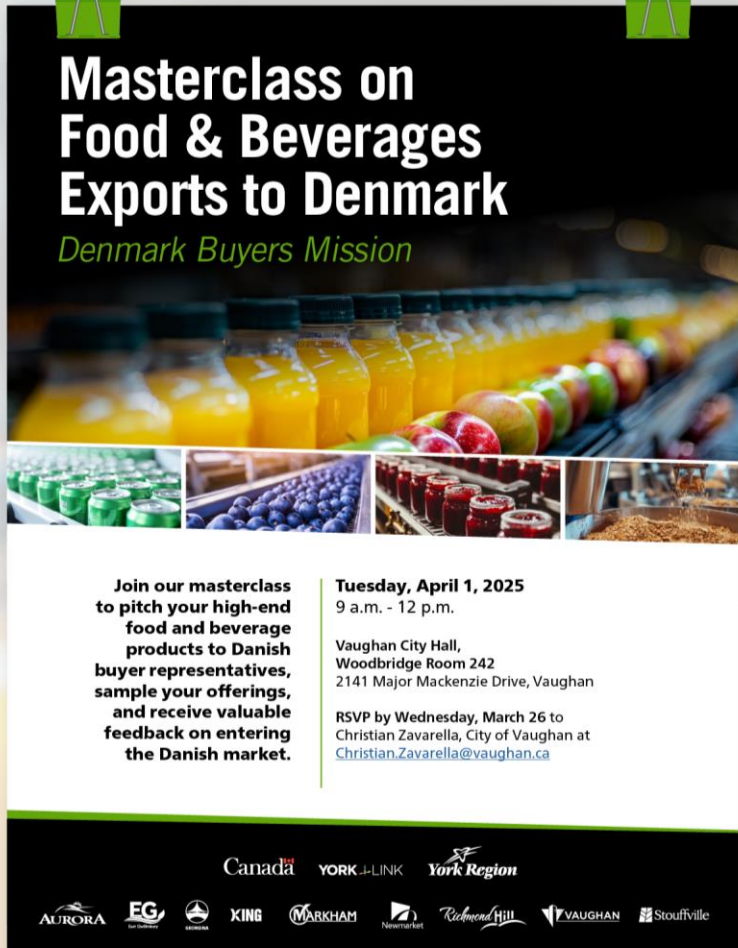


MASTERCLASS ON EXPORTS TO DENMARK



Goal 2

Action 2A.2



**Masterclass on
Food & Beverages
Exports to Denmark**
Denmark Buyers Mission

Join our masterclass to pitch your high-end food and beverage products to Danish buyer representatives, sample your offerings, and receive valuable feedback on entering the Danish market.

Tuesday, April 1, 2025
9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Vaughan City Hall,
Woodbridge Room 242
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive, Vaughan

RSVP by Wednesday, March 26 to
Christian Zavarella, City of Vaughan at
Christian.Zavarella@vaughan.ca

Canada ¹⁵⁰ YORK ⁴LINK York Region

AURORA EG KING MARKHAM Newmarket Richmond Hill VAUGHAN Stouffville

Diversifying to global markets

- Trade Commissioner, Embassy of Canada to Denmark
- Planning for Masterclass / Denmark Buyers Mission on April 1, 2025
- Hosted by City of Vaughan
- **Action:** Members assist in promoting the event to your networks

2025 PROJECTS

Action	2024/2025 New Projects	Timelines
1C.8	Partnerships to support skills development in the sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agri-Tech Skills Development Workshop with Boreal Farms and STEM Minds - Completed 	November 28, 2024
1C.9	Support business succession planning initiatives for the sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnership with Treefrog for Succession Planning Workshop for Agri-business 	November 2025
2B.5 2B.6	Explore opportunities to engage and build relationships with Indigenous communities related to agri-food initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a research study to understand barriers and opportunities for equity-deserving entrepreneurs in the sector – OMAFA Funding Application 	2025
2C.9	Conduct research study to identify climate change impacts and programs for the agriculture and agri-food sector in York Region – RFQ Issued <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop to disseminate findings Climate Change workshop with King Township – February 21, and March 27, 2025 	2025
3A.3	Delivery of Farm 911 Support Program Initiative - Ongoing	Ongoing 2025
3B.6	Explore farm and food tour with Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee - Discuss Timing/Audience/Farms in a working group setting	Timing TBC 2025
*NEW	Tariffs: Agri-Food Business Support and Resouces	Ongoing 2025

NEXT STEPS

1

Continue to work with Advisory Committee to implement the Strategy

2

Assist with resources and identifying funding for trade support

3

Deliver the workplan actions for 2025

4

Raise awareness of Strategy and York Region's agriculture and agri-food sector



QUESTIONS

Charles Banfield

Manager, Strategic Economic
Initiatives

Charles.Banfield@york.ca

Meena Hassanali

Program Manager, Rural and Agri-
Food Initiatives

Meena.Hassanali@york.ca

Nadia Mohammed

Agri-food Business Specialist, Strategic
Economic Initiatives

Nadia.Mohammed@york.ca

Eman Ali

Department Communications Advisor,
Strategic Economic Initiatives

Eman.Ali@york.ca

APPENDICES: SCORECARD WITH STATUS ON ACTION ITEMS




2024-2027 YORK REGION AGRICULTURE AND ARGRI-FOOD SECTOR STRATEGY SCORECARD

Pillar 1: Business, Entrepreneurship and Innovation

GOAL	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	STATUS
Goal 1A: Strengthens business, entrepreneurship and innovation services in York Region.	1A.1 Provide business services and strategic sector support with partners to facilitate retention, expansion and attraction of agri-food businesses in York Region.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	
	1A.2 Support nine local cities and towns with investment attraction and readiness initiatives in the agri-food sector.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	
	1A.3 Promote and support agri-food business entrepreneurship and innovation programs.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	
Goal 1B: Enable a supportive ecosystem for innovation to drive sector growth.	1B.4 Strengthen the agriculture and agri-food innovation network in York Region by enhancing the regional map of resources to support growth and promote the network.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	
	1B.5 Facilitate adoption of agri-tech and food-tech solutions by making connections, profiling solutions, and supporting pilots.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	
	1B.6 Explore opportunities to enable urban agriculture in York Region by reviewing existing policies and sharing best practices.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	

2024-2027 YORK REGION AGRICULTURE AND ARGRI-FOOD SECTOR STRATEGY SCORECARD

Pillar 1: Business, Entrepreneurship and Innovation - CONTINUED

GOAL	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	STATUS
Goal 1C: Support skills development and labour force attraction in the sector.	1C.7 Leverage industry expertise and promote resources to help employers in the agriculture and agri-food sector better understand and engage newcomer and immigrant talent.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	
	1C.8 Continue to foster partnerships with educational institutions (i.e. post-secondary) to support skills development in the sector.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	
	1C.9 Support business succession planning initiatives for the agriculture and agri-food sector.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	



2024-2027 YORK REGION AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD SECTOR STRATEGY SCORECARD

Pillar 2: Resilient and Diverse Local Agri-Food Value Chain

GOAL	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	STATUS
Goal 2A: Facilitate growth of a diversified and connected local agri-food value chain.	2A.1 Support and promote locally grown food and agriculture products made in York Region.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	
	2A.2 Facilitate networking opportunities and collaboration between local production, processing and market channels.	2027	
	2A.3 Support the York Region Food Council activities for enhanced coordination, alignment and collaboration of the Regional initiatives, including supporting the development of the York Region Food Charter.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	
	2A.4 Support agri-tourism, agriculture-related uses, culinary tourism and on-farm diversified uses across York Region.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	
Goal 2B: Foster a supportive environment for equity-deserving and Indigenous communities in the sector.	2B.5 Explore opportunities to engage and build relationships with Indigenous communities related to agri-food initiatives.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	
	2B.6 Conduct a research study to understand barriers and opportunities for equity-deserving entrepreneurs in the sector.	2025	
	2B.7 Enable equity-deserving agri-food entrepreneurs and business owners in York Region to have access to entrepreneurship and innovation support services.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	

2024-2027 YORK REGION AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD SECTOR STRATEGY SCORECARD

Pillar 2: Resilient and Diverse Local Agri-Food Value Chain - CONTINUED

GOAL	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	STATUS
Goal 2C: Promote climate resilience in the sector.	2C.8 Conduct research study to identify climate change impacts and programs for the agriculture and agri-food sector in York Region.	2025	
	2C.9 Generate awareness and promote climate change and circular economy programs through success stories.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	

2024-2027 YORK REGION AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD SECTOR STRATEGY SCORECARD

Pillar 3: Outreach, Education and Communication

GOAL	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	STATUS
Goal 3A: Raise the profile for local agriculture and agri-food sector.	3A.1 Develop and execute an agri-food communications plan to communicate the impact of York Region's agriculture and agri-food sector and the importance of the land base for sector growth at local and provincial levels.	2025-2027	
	3A.2 Develop business success stories, spotlights and case studies to showcase the importance of agri-food businesses across the value-chain.	2025-2027	
	3A.3 Collaborate with local, regional and provincial agriculture and agri-food organizations on local food projects, support and participate in related events.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	
Goal 3B: Strengthen communication and collaboration to support sector development.	3B.4 Communicate and promote funding opportunities to agri-food businesses.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	
	3B.5 Coordinate and collaborate on agriculture and agri-food programming across York Region and nine local cities and towns.	2025	
	3B.6 Continue to support and administer the Agriculture and Agri-Food Advisory Committee.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	

2024-2027 YORK REGION AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD SECTOR STRATEGY SCORECARD

Pillar 3: Outreach, Education and Communication - CONTINUED

GOAL	ACTION ITEM	TIMELINE	STATUS
Goal 3C: Build capacity and prioritize impactful education for sector growth	3C.7 Collaborate with York Region community health partners to support food skills, food literacy and agricultural education activities.	2027	
	3C.8 Collaborate with industry associations and partners to host education and capacity-building workshops for agri-food businesses in response to emerging business challenges and opportunities.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	
	3C.9 Undertake on-going agriculture and agri-food sector analysis to identify sub-sectors of relevance to the Region and develop a list of agriculture and agri-food sector businesses from farms, food processors, retailers to food service.	2024-2027 (Ongoing)	