

FOOD NEWS



News and Information for Alberta's growing Agri-Processing Industry

June 2008

PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Is your company struggling with labour and competitiveness issues? Alberta agri-processors are invited to participate in **either** an automation/productivity improvement assessment or lean manufacturing coaching. Both areas will evaluate existing production systems and offer solutions to labour, equipment and process flow inefficiencies in order for companies to increase productivity, reduce waste and be more competitive, efficient and responsive to customer demands.

An initial pre-assessment of selected companies will be performed and 100% of the cost incurred will be covered by AARD. The in-depth assessments and the lean coaching will take a cost sharing approach between AARD and the processor. AARD will cover 80% of the total cost and qualifying companies will cover the remaining 20%. To receive further information, contact your Development Officer or **Nicola Stevens** at 403-948-8511 or nicola.stevens@gov.ab.ca

NEW NUTRITION GUIDELINES NOW AVAILABLE

The recognition that the food environment has a significant impact on what Albertans eat has led to the creation of the "Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth", a document released by Alberta Health and Wellness in June of 2008. These guidelines provide individuals, organizations and communities the tools they need to identify, obtain and choose healthy foods. They are also a valuable source of detailed information for food service operators, vending businesses and the Agri-food Industry to understand the kinds of foods being promoted for public consumption. The guidelines may also be a source of inspiration for potential reformulation to products to improve their healthfulness.

To obtain a copy of the guidelines, contact the **Publications Branch**, Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development at 1-800-292-5697.

SR&ED TAX INCENTIVES FOR INNOVATIVE COMPANIES

Several proposals announced in the 2008 federal budget essentially improve the federal tax incentives offered under the scientific research and experimental development (SR&ED) program to innovative companies, including companies in the food industry. Enterprises of all forms and sizes and in all sectors are entitled to tax incentives under this program if their SR&ED activities meet the program's criteria. Food industry projects involving basic research, applied research, or experimental development qualify for SR&ED investment tax credits if their projects meet three basic criteria: scientific or technological advancement; scientific or technological uncertainty; and scientific and technological content.

For companies in the food industry, the SR&ED process normally includes some or all of the following types of activities, projects or programs: new product, packages and/or process development; technical procedure development; and product improvement, technology advancement, productivity improvement and product line extension.

Specific federal program details, including the recent changes, can be found at www.cra-arc.gc.ca/E/pub/tg/t4052/t4052-e.html

FALL FOOD SAFETY WORKSHOPS

- **Nutritional Labelling**
Calgary – September 25, 2008
 - **HACCP I: Documenting Your Prerequisite Program**
Calgary – September 29-30, 2008
 - **HACCP II: Development of Your HACCP Plan**
Calgary – October 1-3, 2008
 - **HACCP IV: Validation and Verification of Your HACCP Plan**
Edmonton – October 14-15, 2008
 - **HACCP V: Effective Auditing of Your HACCP Plan**
Edmonton – October 16-17, 2008
 - **Detection & Management of Allergens**
Calgary – October 28-29, 2008
 - **ASQ Certified HACCP Auditor**
Calgary – November 18-20, 2008
- Course and registration details are available on-line at www.afpa.com/snq/train.shtml

FOOD SAFETY FUNDING AVAILABLE

The Food Safety Initiative Program (APF-FSI) will continue for another year making funding toward the implementation of food safety measures available to non-federally registered agri-processors. The program supports the upgrading of food safety systems and training; provides food safety coaching for you or your staff; assists with the identification of food safety gaps and the development of a work plan. For further information, call 780-427-4054 or visit www.agric.gov.ab.ca/aha. Please note, if you have applied for and received previous funding under the APF-FSI program and wish to apply for further funding, a new application form together with all supporting documents outlined on the application will have to be submitted to our office for review and pre-approval.

Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development
(Dial 310-0000 for toll-free access)
Processed Foods Branch - 780-427-7325
Livestock Products Branch - 403-340-5322
Business Commercialization Branch 780-980-4722