



Food and Beverage Ontario
Pre-Budget Submission February 2023

The Industry

Ontario's Food and beverage processing is the **largest manufacturing industry by employment**. We employ more than 125,000 people in over 4000 companies.

Nearly 20% of Ontario manufacturing jobs are in food and beverage processing. **90% of our processors are small businesses**, and **25% in rural communities**. Processors indirectly support hundreds of thousands of jobs in other industries.

The Challenge

Labour is our top challenge. Despite concerted recruitment efforts by the industry, **there are not enough people working in the sector to maintain status quo**. We must recruit and retain thousands to meet a growing food demand.

Supply chain issues impact Canadians through empty shelves and higher prices. We must ensure federal and provincial policies do not further weaken a system already under strain.

The Opportunity

25% of the sector's workforce will retire or be in the process of retiring by 2025. The sector needs a multi-faceted, industry/government collaboration to resolve our ongoing labour crisis, outlined in the diagram below.

We strongly support the Grow Ontario initiative recently announced by the province. However, more needs to be done to address the labour crisis in the industry.

The Solution

We need focused support to address the labour crisis:

- 1. Expand the CareersNOW! program to support establishments and their communities across the province.**
- 2. Additional program changes that allow for increased recruitment of foreign workers and pathways to permanent residency.**
- 3. New programming to enable long-term investments that support industry promotion and adaptation to advanced manufacturing and automation.**
- 4. A long-term commitment to raising awareness and drive positive perceptions of employment in the sector.**

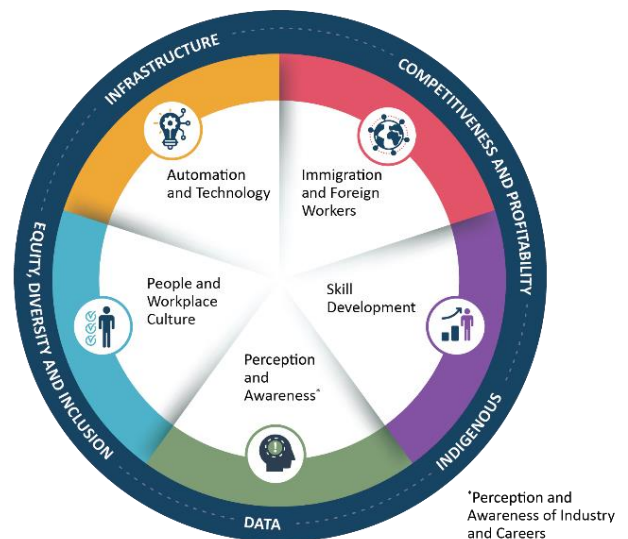
CAHRC National Workforce Strategic Framework

Note: Food and Beverage Ontario, through its national association Food and Beverage Canada is part of the Canadian Agricultural Human Resources Council (CAHRC). CAHRC's *National Workforce Strategic Framework* recognizes five Strategic Pillars that contribute to a strong and sustainable workforce, including:

- *Perception and Awareness of Industry and Careers*
- *People and Workplace Culture*
- *Immigration and Foreign Workers*
- *Skill Development*
- *Automation and Technology*

The Framework also identifies five foundational themes – themes that extend beyond the scope of this initiative and, in some cases, the sector. These foundational themes include:

- *Infrastructure*
- *Competitiveness and Profitability*
- *Indigenous Perspectives*
- *Equity, Diversity and Inclusion*
- *Data Elements of the Strategic Framework*



Source, including graphic: *CAHRC National Workforce Strategic Plan for Agriculture and Food and Beverage Manufacturing – Interim Report*
December 6, 2022