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MEDIA RELEASE

NEW FREE PROGRAM LAUNCHES FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGE ENTREPRENEURS

***Stratford Perth Centre for Business and Perth County partner to present
The Foodpreneur Advantage Program***

Stratford, Ontario – January 19, 2024... **Today the Stratford Perth Centre for Business and Perth County announced the launch of a new small business resource for the area's food endeavour enthusiasts by introducing the Foodpreneur Advantage Program.** The program is suitable for anyone looking to start their food venture, or ready to expand and scale their operation and a special partnership between Stratford Perth Centre for Business and Perth County has made the unique program available to area businesses.

Ontario's food and beverage processing (FBP) sector is the largest in Canada – accounting for 37% of the industry's revenue in the country and the Food and Beverage manufacturing sector of Ontario is the 3rd largest in North America. The sector has more than 4,000 establishments in the province, employing over 95,000 people, vitally important to the province's local and regional economy. More than 90% of its establishments employ fewer than 100 people and approximately 40% of these establishments do not maintain an employee payroll but may have a workforce which consists of contracted workers, family members or business owners.

Under the umbrella of **Foodpreneur Advantage**, the Stratford Perth Centre for Business and Perth County have come together to offer a collection of entrepreneurial food related programming. The exciting new program is designed specifically for early growth food and beverage manufacturing ventures that produce consumer packaged goods and provides ten weeks of training, mentoring, and coaching. Both economic development partners are committed to guiding people through the start-up and early growth stages of small business and this program helps achieve this goal with 6 free 60 minutes online seminars. The program features workshops for any food related business and comprehensive programs for scalable food and beverage manufacturing ventures that produce consumer packaged goods (CPG).

Upcoming webinar dates:

Jan. 25: Starting a Food Business & Regulatory Compliance
Feb. 1: How to Sell your Food Product
Feb. 8: Costing & Pricing to Make Profits
Feb. 15: Marketing & Branding your Food Product
Feb. 22: Selling to Food Retailers
Feb. 29: Labelling & Packaging your Food Product

Please register for the seminars through the Foodpreneur website <https://foodpreneuradvantage.ca/> or for more information about this and other small business support programs visit <https://www.stratfordperthbusiness.ca>

QUOTES:

Holly Mortimer, Business Advisor, Stratford Perth Centre for Business: *"We're really excited to work with our partners at Perth County to bring our local food and beverage economy an incredible program that will help them bring their products to market in a way that allows them to feel supported and confident in their plan. We look forward to watching their businesses grow inside of this valuable free resource and we're grateful for the support of Perth County to allow us to bring the program to the entire region's food and beverage producers."*

Meredith Forget, Manager of Economic Development and Tourism, Perth County: *"Ontario's food and beverage processing sector is the largest in Canada and Perth County is home to many small businesses in this field. There is opportunity for new entrepreneurs to start their food-based business and existing ones to grow. We're excited to partner with the Stratford Perth Centre for Business on the FoodPreneur program – this collaboration will ensure the success of businesses across the Region for years to come."*

About the Stratford Perth Centre for Business

The Stratford Perth Centre for Business is committed to helping small business owners achieve their business goals. Operating as a department of investStratford, the Centre offers local small business support and complimentary consultation and easy access to resources, including business start-up services to support the development of new and already established small businesses. In addition to advisory services, events, seminars and training opportunities are held throughout the year to meet small business essentials. For more information visit: stratfordperthbusiness.ca email: info@stratfordperthbusiness.ca or follow on Facebook

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