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Excitement Builds as OAFVC Opening Approaches



Producers who attended yesterday's tour of the new [Ontario Agri-Food Venture Centre](#) [1] were given a first-hand glimpse into the nearly limitless possibilities for value-added production soon to be available in east central Ontario. Thanks to the efforts of the Regional Local Food Business Retention and Expansion project (a collaboration of 9 jurisdictions across eastern Ontario), farmers and local food entrepreneurs will soon have access to shared infrastructure designed to help grow their businesses.

The first of its kind in the province, the non-profit OAFVC has been built with farmers in mind, to help increase farm revenue by supporting opportunities for adding value to fresh fruit and vegetable crops. The new 15,000 sq. ft. facility, located in Colborne, ON, houses industrial equipment for cooking, chilling, freezing, packaging, and labelling, available for producers to rent on a cost-recovery basis. Also available will be short-term cold storage space (for both refrigerated and frozen items); meeting and office spaces; and food processing expertise from regional educational institutions and on-site staff.

Producers wishing to utilize the facility must first complete food safety - food handling certification, as well as training on the pieces of equipment they wish to use. Rooms and equipment are rented on an hourly basis, generally to one producer at a time (though to cut costs, multiple producers may opt to share timeslots). Bookings will be arranged through the online [Facility Schedule](#) [2], and producers are encouraged to consult with site staff about their processing requirements before arranging their first booking.

Staff at the small-batch, niche processing facility are currently eyeing an opening date in mid-June. For full details about the facility, visit oafvc.ca [2]. FAW is open to considering another tour, so if you would be interested in seeing and learning about the plant before it opens, please [let us know](#) [3].





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Links

[1] <http://www.oafvc.ca> [2] <http://oafvc.ca/content/facility-schedule> [3] <mailto:info@farmsatwork.ca>