



SDG Counties Economic Development Newsletter - January 4, 2024

SDG Counties launches 2024 intake of Regional Incentives Program

Another project supported through the



SDG Counties - Regional Incentives Program

To learn more and to apply, visit: www.sdgcountries.ca/stay-discover-grow



Regional Incentives Program accepting applications until February 29, 2024

SDG COUNTIES, Ontario – A new intake period for the next round of the SDG Counties Regional Incentives Program will be open from January 5 to noon on February 29.

A New Year brings with it some important changes to the popular funding program which provides incentives to grow and expand new businesses within SDG Counties.

"In 2024 we will pivot to a single intake period so that we can ensure that the program remains as competitive as possible and that applicants have the best opportunity for equal consideration. This will also ensure that all funds can be dispersed by early spring so that potential candidates can begin their projects in advance of the seasonal thaw," said Tara Kirkpatrick, SDG Counties Manager of Economic Development.

Since 2018, SDG Counties has invested \$1.35 million by way of the Regional Incentives Program. This has culminated in more than ten million dollars in local construction projects.

"The Regional Incentives Program is a tool to help grow and expand our businesses in SDG Counties. This program is reducing the number of vacant commercial buildings within our communities, while creating jobs, tourism and agricultural experiences as well as inspiring a new generation of entrepreneurs to grow their business," said Kirkpatrick.

To be eligible for the Regional Incentives Program, applicants must meet a number of criteria and also demonstrate that they meet at least one of the regional economic initiatives identified by SDG Counties. The three regional economic initiatives include projects that:

- Stimulate investment in tourism and in the agricultural sector by funding diverse, on-farm expansions and agri-tourism.
- Encourage redevelopment and private sector investment in existing building stock within the Counties to support employment, reduce the number of vacant commercial, institutional and industrial buildings, and increase the assessment base.
- Increase the amount of permanent roofed accommodations within the Counties to specifically accommodate for an increase in tourism establishments that cater to short-term accommodations.

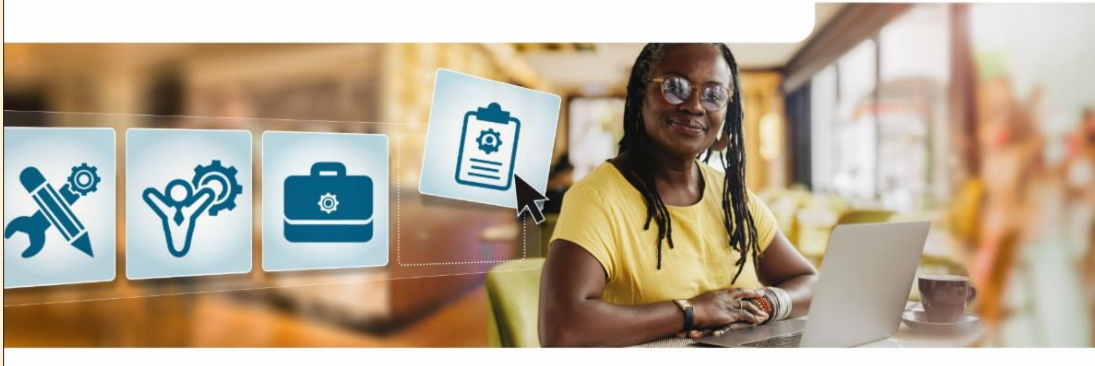
To learn more about the program, contact Tara Kirkpatrick at tkirkpatrick@sdgcounties.ca or call 613-932-1515 ext. 1227.

[Visit our Website](#)

Get paid to train with 'Skills in Action Program'. Enroll

with ACC Futures

Do you want to increase worker productivity? Here's your chance!
Take part in a free innovative online training initiative!



ACC Futures are currently delivering the ***Skills in Action Program*** to all businesses located within Akwesasne, Cornwall, and the Counties. This program gives businesses the opportunity to learn about 4 different topics including: essential skills training, digital skills, reading and numeracy. These trainings will be provided online and are completely asynchronous courses.

Skills for Success training in the workplace can provide many benefits to your business, including:

- Increased productivity
- Better quality of work
- Improved workplace health and safety
- Better use of technology
- Increased staff retention

More benefits of participating in this initiative:

- Free training and management tools
- Ongoing support throughout the training process

Financial incentives available for Canadian businesses

Compensation

Below is a breakdown of the compensation structure:

- 1-5 employees = \$750
- 5-10 employees = \$1,000
- 10+ employees = \$2,000

Additionally, the company will receive an extra \$500 for each employee who completes their training.

Deadlines

- Must register your employees of choice by Thursday, January 12th, 2024
- Training must be completed by the end of day on **January 22, 2023**.

Contact **Cynthia Quenneville** or call 613-932-4333

This program is funded by the Government of Canada's Skills for Success Program.

Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program now accepting applications

Funding is to support the planting of native perennial grasses, either as naturalization or as high-yield crop grasses.

Native grasslands result in more resilient agricultural landscapes with an increased ability to sequester carbon, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce soil erosion and provide many other ecological benefits. Native grasslands are often best suited to wet, sloping, poor-soil, or otherwise marginal fields.

*The eligible project **start date** is the date a written approval letter is issued by Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) for each successful application. Eligible costs can only be incurred, invoiced, and/or paid by the applicant on or after **start date** specified on the approval letter.

\$2,000/acre for establishing a single-species, native perennial grassland or rejuvenating an existing grassland

\$3,000/acre for establishing diverse (multi-species) native perennial grasslands

[Visit the OSCIA website to learn more](#)

SDG Counties home to largest cheese manufacturing facility in Canada



Some people might describe SDG Counties as “cheesy” – which is a title we wear with pride. SDG Counties is home to one of the largest dairy clusters in Ontario. With multiple small and large cheese factories and hundreds of dairy farms, we are a region where innovation and food combine to create culinary delights.

Others often refer to SDG Counties as “the land of milk and honey” as the region has long been associated with commercial dairy production. This is largely attributed to the early workings of the Ault family, who opened their first cheese making facility in Cass Bridge in 1891. The company’s founder, Jack Ault quickly expanded Ault Foods across Ontario and Quebec.

Following Jack Ault’s death in 1940, Ault Foods Limited was sold to Ogilvie Flour Mills, later part of John Labatt Ltd. After serving in the Second World War, Jack’s son, Sam Ault returned to SDG and assumed the role of General Manager at Ogilvie Flour Mills in Winchester. With a vision for a new way of producing cheese he introduced temperature control which allowed quality cheese to be made year-round, 24-hours a day. That changed cheese making not just in the County, but worldwide.

In the 1960s, Sam consolidated production at the Winchester plant site, closing the smaller, seasonal cheese factories that had been acquired by the Ault’s across Dundas County. Farmers were encouraged to begin producing milk year-round and to transition from milk cans to dairy trucks. What is also interesting is that Sam Ault is credited with the development of a vacuum process that was added to the cheesemaking process to further revolutionize the industry. By 1991 the company was operating 20 cheese plants and employing around 3,000 people.

Fast forward to present day, now owned and operated by Canadian dairy manufacturer Lactalis Canada, the Winchester cheese processing facility, which still bears the original Ault namesake smokestack, has grown to become the largest cheesemaking facility in Canada. On a daily basis the Lactalis Canada site in Winchester processes about 1.6 million kilograms of milk, which is transformed into cheese and butter using state of the art technology that leads to the production of a wide range of products for both industrial and commercial clients.

In fact, nine out of ten Canadian households have at least one of Lactalis Canada's products made across Canada in their refrigerator at any given time, including Made in SDG products like the company's award-winning Balderson aged cheddar, which was most recently named the 2023 American Cheese Society winner and consistently ranks as one of the Most Trusted Brands in Canada. Lactalis Canada also operates a cheese processing facility in nearby Ingleside which manufactures popular cheese brands such as Black Diamond cheese – which just recently celebrated its 90th anniversary.

Right here in SDG Counties, Lactalis Canada employs a team of nearly 300 in Winchester and team of 475 in Ingleside, making it one of the region's largest employers.

Cheesemaking helps to support the 233 dairy farms operating in SDG Counties, which produced just in excess of 218.7 million litres of milk last year. Additional milk needs are met by Canadian farmers producing quality milk.

We hope you will enjoy watching the video below which provides a special look inside Lactalis Canada's Winchester, Ontario facility - the largest cheesemaking facility in the country. This video was proudly produced by SDG Counties Economic Development Department with Jeremy Baxter Videography. It was made possible by Lactalis Canada.



SDG Counties is dedicated to supporting our residents and businesses. Subscribe to our free newsletter to stay informed about grants, supports and news impacting our community.

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