

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Centre for Meat Innovation and Technology (CMIT) dedicated to advancing and strengthening the Canadian meat processing sector

CMIT is the only Canadian meat processing hub bringing together skills development, knowledge, collaboration, technology, innovation and research to make meat processing industry more successful

GUELPH, ONTARIO – April 18, 2023: A new Centre for Meat Innovation and Technology (CMIT) was officially launched today by Meat and Poultry Ontario to help Canadian processors collaborate, find and adopt new technology and innovation and make it easier for their employees to learn and advance their skills.

“This centre will ultimately help both processors and meat and poultry producers,” says CMIT Director Luis Garcia. We did our research and both processors and farmers told us there was significant room for them to grow if some of the key barriers holding them back could be addressed,” he explains.

One example is that processors have difficulty finding good employees with the specific skills they need. CMIT has been created to help address that gap. Garcia points to micro-credentialing courses already held for sausage making and other in-demand skills, with more being planned.

Another challenge for processors is often finding and testing the latest technology to see if it would be a fit for their operations. By collaborating with experts and manufacturers around the world, CMIT will help processors find and access solutions that will improve their operations and efficiency. The equipment can then be set up and tested through CMIT’s collaboration with the University of Guelph’s federally-inspected meat processing facility.

“The Centre for Meat Innovation and Technology is an example of how our agri-food advocacy groups are highlighting the valuable career opportunities available in Ontario’s agri-food sector,” said Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. “I would like to express my appreciation to the organizations who have donated the new equipment for this facility, and to Meat and Poultry Ontario for making this Centre a welcomed reality.”

The Centre is officially being launched today in Guelph with a reception and tours of the University of Guelph meat processing facilities.

“Young people need to see meat processing as a viable career and the best way to do that is through education,” comments Kevin Stemmler, Owner of Stemmler Meats and a strong supporter of CMIT and the organization’s mandate.

Stemmler has a second reason for his support. “During the pandemic we relied too much on a few companies to support our internal food system and we had issues. To protect the food system in the future, we need to be able to rely on more companies so we need to help them with skills and technology. That’s what CMIT will do.”

CMIT has a plan to be self-sustaining within the next five years by building fees for services and is launching a campaign to raise \$1,000,000 to cover initial operations costs as revenue streams grow. Initial work and projects are already underway.

CMIT is founded and supported by Meat & Poultry Ontario to advance and strengthen the Canadian meat processing industry. The Centre is the leading Canadian meat hub powering industry collaboration and innovation. CMIT is dedicated to showcasing the world’s leading technology and helping Canadian processors adopt these innovations to become more competitive. CMIT is the only Canadian meat technology hub that encompasses skills development, training and sharing best practices backed by world class research and education.

-30-

ABOUT MPO

Meat & Poultry Ontario (MPO) is the representative voice of Ontario’s meat industry. Our members are independent businesses proud to serve the communities they live and work in. The association is comprised of meat and poultry processors, wholesalers, and retailers; industry suppliers; and not-for-profit organizations that support MPO’s objectives.

Ontario’s meat and poultry sector employs 25% of Ontario’s food and beverage processing industry – the single largest manufacturing employer in Ontario – and generates \$11.2 billion of the province’s \$45 billion food and beverage processing industry revenue.

For more information:

April Jackman

Marketing and Communications Manager

Meat & Poultry Ontario

april@meatpoultryon.ca

W: (519) 763-4558 x 225

C: (519) 784-4582