



CANADIAN FOOD INNOVATION NETWORK WELCOMES THREE NEW DIRECTORS TO ITS BOARD

Dr. Mehmet Tulbek, Heidi Dutton, and Sarah Nisker add sector-spanning expertise to support CFIN's industry-led approach to catalyzing food innovation

GUELPH, ON, SEPTEMBER 29, 2025 — The [Canadian Food Innovation Network \(CFIN\)](#) has welcomed three new directors to its Board: Dr. Mehmet Tulbek, Heidi Dutton, and Sarah Nisker. Collectively, they bring decades of leadership experience in food science, plant-based processing, and national grocery retail operations—strengthening CFIN's industry-led approach to driving innovation throughout Canada's food sector.

Dr. Mehmet Tulbek is President of the Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre and a globally recognized expert in plant-based proteins, pulse crops, and functional ingredients. With 25+ years of experience in R&D, technical services, and international market development, he previously held senior roles at AGT Food and Ingredients and North Dakota State University.

Heidi Dutton is CEO of Lovingly Made and a seasoned agri-food executive with deep expertise in scaling purpose-driven businesses. She has overseen the development of multiple plant-based processing facilities and has previously held leadership positions with major agri-food processors including Ingredion and ADM.

Sarah Nisker is VP of Supply Chain Planning & Initiatives at Loblaw Companies Ltd. She previously held executive roles including VP of Food Safety, Quality Assurance and Regulatory Affairs and VP of Pharmacy Operations, and brings extensive experience in regulatory affairs, operational strategy, and public health leadership.

CFIN extends its sincere gratitude to Dan Prefontaine, James Pratt, and Véronique Simard, who are concluding their terms as Directors. Each played a vital role in shaping CFIN's early success and helping the organization establish itself as Canada's leading voice for food innovation.

QUOTES

“CFIN exists to serve the full breadth of Canada’s food innovation ecosystem—and that requires leadership with equally expansive experience. Mehmet, Heidi, and Sarah each bring deep expertise from distinct parts of the sector. Their perspectives will help ensure CFIN’s work remains industry-driven, collaborative, and tightly aligned with the challenges and opportunities shaping every link in the food value chain.”

— Dana McCauley

CEO, Canadian Food Innovation Network

“Mehmet, Heidi, and Sarah bring important and diverse sets of expertise to CFIN’s Board of Directors. Their leadership will help CFIN tremendously as we continue to tackle the sector’s most pressing challenges. We are deeply grateful to Dan, James, and Véronique for helping shape CFIN’s early trajectory, and confident these incoming board members will help us build on our momentum as a catalyst for transformative change throughout Canada’s food industry.”

— Sandy Somers

Chair, Board of Directors, Canadian Food Innovation Network

ABOUT THE CANADIAN FOOD INNOVATION NETWORK

The Canadian Food Innovation Network (CFIN) is a national organization that’s stimulating transformative and transferrable innovation within the Canadian food sector. CFIN has over 7,000 members from across the food value chain—including manufacturers, processors, distributors, operators, tech companies, funders, and innovators—and connects the Canadian food ecosystem to fresh insights, ideas, and technologies to grow their business and increase their innovation capacity. [CFIN’s free membership](#) includes access to exclusive funding programs, five Regional Innovation Directors, and [YODL](#).

Since 2021, CFIN has awarded more than \$22,906,994 (matched by \$26,134,106 in industry investment) to 108 Canadian foodtech projects that derisk new technologies that will make the food sector more competitive. CFIN-funded companies have generated \$90 million in economic impact and created over 355 jobs and co-op placements. Our funding recipients have attracted more than \$82 million in follow on investment.

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