

On-Farm Grain Processing

Amy Nikkel, Adagio Acres

Resources



On-Farm Grain Processing

The On-Farm Grain Processing curriculum provides producers who may be interested in adding value to the grains they grow. While many organic grain farmers add some value by cleaning or bagging their grains, this curriculum is intended for producers who wish to take ownership of the entire value chain by growing, cleaning, further processing and selling their own grains to direct, wholesale or retail markets.

The curriculum consists of three modules:

- Module 1: Is On-Farm Processing a Good Fit for Your Farm?
- Module 2: Infrastructure, Operations and Human Resources
- Module 3: Marketing Your Grain Products

The On-Farm Grain Processing curriculum was written and delivered by Amy Nikkel. Amy is an organic farmer and grain miller from the Interlake region of Manitoba. For nearly a decade, Adagio Acres has been growing naked oats, and then cleaning and milling those oats into a variety of retail and foodservice products. Additionally, bridging the gap between human-scale food production/consumption and industrial scale agriculture has become a growing focus of the farm, so Adagio Acres also mills small batches of organic lentils, beans, corn, flax, and buckwheat from other organic farms around Manitoba, with an emphasis on reducing on-farm food loss through matching the scale of processing with the needs of the small farms around the province.

All curriculum content can be access on pivotandgrow.com.

The On-Farm Grain Processing curriculum was developed as part of the [Prairie Organic Development Fund's Canadian Organic Ingredient Strategy](#).

The Canadian Organic Ingredient Strategy was funded by:



On Farm Grain Processing

Module 1: Is Value-Added Processing a Good Fit for Your Farm?

This module provides guidance in determining whether value-added processing is the right fit for your operation. The module explores some of the positive and negative aspects of adding processing to an existing farm, describes the value chain and the various 'layers' of value that can be added, outlines some considerations for choosing and developing a specific product, an overview of regulatory requirements for selling provincially or intra-provincially, provides guidance in assessing your existing infrastructure and labour, and an overview of how to choose what market (export, retail, foodservice, or direct to consumer) to pursue.

Module 1 Supplementary Resources:

Direct Marketing Food Products:

[Farm Direct Marketing for Rural Producers](#), Government of Alberta.

[Direct Marketing Your Food Product](#), Government of Manitoba.

[Female Entrepreneurs in Agrifood Development](#) (FEAD), Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre, Inc.

Module 2: Infrastructure, Operations & Human Resources

This module provides guidance and considerations for some of the technical and practical considerations for setting up on-farm processing for your grain products. Topics include the regulations around buildings and infrastructure, equipment design, co-packing options, considerations for outsourcing additional food inputs, quality control, primary and secondary packaging and CFIA labelling requirement, insurance and regulatory considerations, options for product distribution, pricing your product for retail and wholesale, budgeting, and factors for reviewing the financial health of your operation.

Module 2 Supplementary Resources:

Regulations for setting up a food processing facility:

[Guideline For The Design, Construction And Reconstruction Of A Food Handling Establishment](#), Government of Manitoba.

[Saskatchewan Food Processing Facility Best Management Practices](#), Government of Saskatchewan.

[How to Start a Food Business](#), Alberta Health Services.

[Canadian Organic Products](#), Canada Food Inspection Agency.

Grain Drying:

[Installing Your Grain Dryer A Guide For Agricultural Producers](#), Office of the Fire Commissioner, Government of Manitoba.

[Buying a Grain Dryer](#), Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan.

Grain Cleaning Equipment:

Cleaver, Lisa. (October 1, 2020). "[How to Select the Best Grain Cleaning Equipment.](#)" *Feed and Grain*.

Co-Packer Services and Directories:

[Co-Packing Food Industry: What to Know](#) (January 2020), Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Government of Alberta.

[Co-Packer Services Finder App](#) (GIS App), Government of Manitoba.

[Co-Packing Portal](#), Alberta Food Processors Association.

Sample Standard Operating Procedures for Grain Cleaning:

[Sample Good Operating Practices for Grains, Oilseeds and Pulses Grain Handling and Processing Facilities](#), Canadian Grain Commission.

Food Labelling Guide for Industry:

[Industry Labelling Tool](#), Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

[Organic Claims on Food Labels](#), Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Food Waste Reduction Strategy:

[A Food Loss and Waste Strategy for Canada](#). National Zero Waste Council.

[AgriInnovate Program](#). Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Government of Canada.

Working with Distributors:

[Choosing the Right Distributor for Your Food Product](#). Business Pathways, Government of Manitoba.

[Distribution Logistics](#), Government of Alberta.

Hiring & Wage Subsidy Grants:

[Wage Subsidy Programs](#), Young Agrarians.

[Canada Summer Jobs Wage Subsidy](#), Employment and Social Development Canada, Government of Canada.

Provincial Labour Codes – Agricultural Settings

[A Guide to Employment Standards in Agriculture](#), Government of Manitoba.

[Employment Standards Agriculture Industry](#), Government of Saskatchewan.

[Employment Standards: Farm and Ranch](#), Government of Alberta.

Workplace Safety:

[Manufacturing](#), Safe Work Manitoba.

[Guide to Occupational Health and Safety](#), Government of Alberta.

[Know Your Rights at Work: Employers](#), Work Safe Saskatchewan.

Setting Prices for Food Products:

[Pricing](#), Food and Beverage Manitoba.

[Setting the Price for Your Food Product Webinar](#), Government of Manitoba.

[Markup vs. margin – know these metrics for better customer communication](#), Farm Credit Canada.

Module 3: Marketing

This module will provide guidance in developing a marketing plan to help promote sales for your grain products, and will describe some of the formats and platforms that are available for marketing your food products. Marketing is the communication that needs to happen with all the people involved in your sales channels; with your end consumers, and also with the store managers, distributors, sales reps, chefs, and even delivery drivers, so there are divergent methods, and even differing goals, between each of these marketing channels. Some of the topics that are explored are: branding, package design, print materials, sell-sheets, demos and tradeshow, promotional pricing, website design and social media, and collaborative marketing venues.

Module 3 Supplementary Resources:

Developing Sell Sheets for your Food Product:

[How to Make Buyers Notice Your Food Product: Creating an Effective Sell Sheet](#), Business Pathways, Government of Manitoba.

Tradeshow Participation:

[Step-by-Step Guide to Successful Trade Show Preparation, Delivery and Follow-Up](#). Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, International Trade, Government of Canada.

[Trade Show Checklist for Food Entrepreneurs](#), Government of Manitoba.

Digital Adoption Grant

[Canada Digital Adoption Program](#). Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, Government of Canada.



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The [Prairie Organic Development Fund](#) (PODF) is an investment platform established to develop organic agriculture and marketing in the Canadian Prairies. PODF builds resilience by investing in organic provincial associations (Capacity Fund) and high impact programs (Innovation Fund) related to marketing, research, policy, education and capacity development that have broad public benefit to the organic sector. The fund is directed by a board made up of organic producers, grain buyers, organic brands, researchers and provincial organizations.

The **Canadian Organic Ingredient Strategy (COIS)** provides farmers with tools and support to incorporate organic farming practices that help meet the growing demand for organic foods in Canada. The tools developed as part of this project will help Canadian farmers benefit from increased knowledge and skills in organic farming methods, which can improve soil health and boost farm resilience in the face of changing markets and climate change.

Visit www.pivotandgrow.com to learn more about the tools created as part of COIS.