FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canadian Food Innovation Network Awards Nearly $2M to Four Clean Technology Projects

Backed by the True North Sustainable Food Fund, four companies will take clean technologies for food processing from pilot to industrial-scale demonstration.

GUELPH, ON, NOVEMBER 26, 2026 — Four foodtech companies in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, and New Brunswick will use $1,996,594 from the True North Sustainable Food Fund to test clean technologies in real operating conditions. Delivered by the Canadian Food Innovation Network (CFIN), the fund's Impact stream backs Canadian foodtech SMEs working on post-farmgate processing and distribution.

CFIN is covering up to half of each project's costs, bringing the total value of the four projects to nearly $4 million. Three of the four projects turn a food-processing byproduct into a usable input. The fourth aims to replace the energy-intensive heat step used to concentrate dairy liquids with a process that needs none.

The True North Sustainable Food Fund Impact stream recipients are:

Project Lead: CURA Climate (Calgary, AB)
Project Title: Valorization of Sugar Beet Spent Lime into Reusable Lime and Low-Carbon Cement
Funding: $649,662
Project Summary:
The sugar beet refinery in Taber, Alberta has built up a stockpile of more than 850,000 tonnes of spent lime, a costly byproduct with no viable disposal route. CURA, a UBC climatetech spinout, will test its CURALYTE electrochemical technology on this material in a 100-tonne-per-year demonstration hosted by Grand Forks Concrete in southern Alberta. The process runs on electricity instead of fossil fuel, dissolving the spent lime, separating out phosphorus, and recovering clean hydrated lime and high-purity CO_2. The refinery can return the lime to its sugar process and retire its fossil-fuelled kiln, while Grand Forks Concrete can use it to make low-carbon Portland cement for its precast products. The project is a step toward a first commercial plant handling at least 30,000 tonnes of lime a year.

Project Lead: Carbonaut Baking (Mission, BC)
Project Title: Closing the Loop: Industrial Deployment of a Wet-Process Oat Husk Pelletization and Fibre Recovery System in Mission, BC
Funding: $546,367
Project Summary:
At the shared Mission facility where Carbonaut operates, sister company One Degree Organic Foods produces about 2,000 metric tonnes of oat husks a month through wet-process oat processing, and the husks currently end up in landfill. Carbonaut will install a full-scale pelletization and fibre recovery line, building on a pilot that validated the pelletizing and milling process. The line will make at least two products: food-grade oat fibre for Carbonaut's own low-carb and keto-friendly baked goods for other Canadian food manufacturers, and certified organic feed pellets for animal feed producers in BC's Fraser Valley and beyond. Keeping the husks out of landfill is expected to deliver measurable annual reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and the model is intended to be replicable across Canada's grain industry.

Project Lead: Chinova Bioworks (Fredericton, NB)
Project Title: Cranberry Pomace to Cranova™: Industrial Demonstration of an Upcycled, Shelf-Life-Extending Natural Antimicrobial
Funding: $325,000
Project Summary:
After cranberries are juiced, the leftover pulp, called pomace, mostly goes to low-value uses such as livestock feed, composting or land application. Chinova Bioworks will scale its validated food-grade extraction process to industrial level to turn that pomace into Cranera™, a natural antimicrobial ingredient containing cranberry polyphenols and organic acids. Cranova is intended to extend the shelf life of processed foods and beverages in place of synthetic preservatives. Using Canadian pomace at a confirmed demonstration site, the project will measure how the ingredient performs, including shelf-life extension in commercial products with food-manufacturer partners. By diverting pomace and reducing food waste, it is expected to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

Project Lead: Forward Water Technologies (Sarnia, ON)
Project Title: Sustainable and Efficient Production of Dairy Concentrates
Funding: $475,565
Project Summary:
Turning dairy liquids into ingredients for consumer products often involves concentrating them through thermal evaporation, which uses a lot of energy and can reduce nutritional value. Forward Water Technologies and a Canadian globally positioned dairy company have already shown that forward osmosis can concentrate dairy liquids to exceptionally high levels without heat. This project will scale that process using FWT's proprietary osmotic agent, with the goal of commercial production of high-quality food-grade dairy concentrates that carry a lower carbon footprint than conventional ones. The technology will also be used in other food and beverage sectors, such as caffeinated drinks and alcoholic products such as beer and wine.

QUOTES

“Canadian innovation is key to building a stronger, more competitive, and sustainable economy. By supporting homegrown clean technologies, the Government of Canada is helping Canadian businesses reduce emissions, improve efficiency and turn waste into new economic opportunities. These projects demonstrate the ingenuity of Canadian entrepreneurs and the potential of our food processing sector to lead in sustainable innovation. The government will continue to support the development and adoption of made-in-Canada solutions that strengthen our industries, create good jobs and drive long-term economic growth.”

— The Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec Regions

“These four projects show where clean technology can do the most good in food: turning byproducts into useful inputs and cutting the energy it takes to make what we already produce. The True North Sustainable Food Fund gives these companies the chance to prove their technologies at industrial scale, with real partners, so that food businesses across Canada have solutions they can adopt with confidence.”

— Dana McCauley, CEO, Canadian Food Innovation Network

"We’re excited to demonstrate how agricultural byproducts can become inputs for the next generation of low-carbon cement. This project brings together agriculture, manufacturing, and clean technology in a way that creates value for each partner while reducing emissions. With CFIN’s support, we’re advancing a circular solution that can help strengthen Canadian industry and accelerate industrial decarbonization."

— Erin Bobicki, Co-founder & CEO, CURA Climate

“We’re excited by the opportunity to turn a byproduct of oat processing into useful ingredients and feed products while reducing waste. This project reflects our ongoing focus on finding practical ways to make better use of resources, strengthen Canadian food manufacturing and support a more sustainable food system.”

— Stan Smith, President & CEO, Carbonaut Baking

“We're very excited to take this sustainable innovation to the next level with the support of CFIN's True North Sustainable Food funding. We know that we can solve major issues facing the sustainability of the food industry with this upcycled Canadian cranberry extract, by both reducing food waste in landfills and making healthy, nutritious food more accessible to Canadians.”

— David Brown, COO, Chinova Bioworks

“Launching this project with the support of CFIN TNSFF funding and our partner, enables FWT to truly move into the commercialization phase for the dairy industry. The use of forward osmosis for the F&B sector is known to produce superior products but has been handcuffed by

high operational expenses. We have shown this limit can be overcome with our unique and proprietary approach and are excited to rapidly scale the solution through this enabling program."

— C. Howie Honeyman, CEO, Forward Water Technologie

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The True North Sustainable Food Fund supports Canadian foodtech SMEs in developing and demonstrating novel clean technology solutions for the food manufacturing and distribution sectors. It provides targeted funding for industrial demonstration projects that validate emerging technologies in real-world operating environments, helping to accelerate the adoption of solutions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve sustainability across the food value chain.

The Impact stream funds larger-scale industrial demonstration projects requiring between $250,000 and $1,000,000, with CFIN providing up to 50% of eligible project costs. Eligible projects are led by Canadian foodtech SMEs with fewer than 499 full-time equivalent employees and less than $50 million in annual revenue, focus on post-farmgate processing or distribution, and advance clean technologies from a minimum Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of 4–5 toward TRL 8. Projects must align with one of four priority areas: low carbon energy and fuel systems, emissions quantification, waste reduction or reuse, and water usage. Funded projects must be completed by December 31, 2027.

ABOUT THE CANADIAN FOOD INNOVATION NETWORK

The Canadian Food Innovation Network (CFIN) is the national catalyst powering Canada's transition to Food 4.0. By equipping food and beverage manufacturers with plant-level automation, advanced robotics, and digital transformation tools, CFIN helps Canadian processors increase productivity, strengthen domestic supply chains, and build a more resilient food system. Backed by a $50M investment through Canada's Strategic Response Fund and National Food Security Strategy, CFIN supports F&B enterprises across the country.
To date, CFIN's national network spans over 9,500 members, with more than $24.5M invested into 155 high-impact foodtech projects that have generated over $90M in economic returns and unlocked $82M+ in private follow-on funding.
Join the country's fastest growing F&B community at cfin-rcia.ca.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

True North Sustainable Food Fund
CFIN Membership
CFIN Media Page
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MEDIA CONTACTS

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