The objective of the Start Up Program is to ensure new dairy businesses in Ontario have a complete business plan, based on validated market opportunities. This comprehensive program is designed to provide start-ups with the opportunity to learn from entrepreneurial and dairy industry experts. The program is mentorship-driven and supports new business opportunities by providing access to expert insight and analytical tools.

Participants in the Start Up Program:

1. Meet with food business experts for an in-depth two-hour assessment designed for dairy start-ups
2. Develop a business and support plan tailored to their unique needs
3. Engage with industry specialists who offer insight, knowledge, and help specific to their needs
4. Participate in mentoring sessions over a six-month period. Mentoring sessions provide support for completing a business plan and, if desired, an application for the Scale Up Program (see below)
5. Receive a final assessment on progress made during the program

The Scale Up Program provides support for small and mid-sized dairy processors who are introducing new products or implementing innovations. It is also available to new processors who have completed the Start Up Program.

The Scale Up Program is designed to help:

1. On-farm processors planning to expand on-farm operations
2. Processors aiming to create custom or specialty products for food service or contract caterers, or to introduce new global products to the Canadian markets
3. Dairy innovators: processors with a growth strategy exploring innovative ways to build businesses

The program provides access to an extensive network of business and dairy experts in areas including market research strategies, trade, product formulation, market testing, sales and distribution, business planning support, plant design, distribution systems, milk allocation, and packaging.

Program rules and guidelines maintain a strict focus on equity, effort, and partnership: ensuring opportunities are fairly presented to all qualifying processors in Ontario, providing resources to entrepreneurs who are willing to put their own efforts and resources into the project, and conscientiously using each of our interactions to build a supportive ecosystem for dairy in Ontario.

For more information, contact
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