



Ontario Government invests in local Asparagus for Future Success

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As the first field crop of the season, the arrival of local asparagus each May signals the start of summer and is eagerly awaited by many, including the 73 farms which grow three quarters of Canada's asparagus.

"Our government is proud to invest up to \$80,000 over three years to support the Asparagus Farmers of Ontario in their efforts to promote fresh Ontario-grown asparagus," said Rob Flack, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness. "The market research and promotional activities that stem from this investment will go a long way in ensuring more people know about and look forward to this spring treat, which I trust will increase consumption."

Asparagus is very cost competitive compared with other fresh vegetables on a per serving basis and Ontario producers are known for their superior quality and excellent tasting varieties. Ontario's asparagus farmers have made significant investments in automations to increase efficiency and ensure the high quality of their crops. The industry has a farmgate value between \$40.6 million, and this is expected to increase as the industry engages the public in a concentrated way that leverages the latest market insights.

Brandon Yott, AFO Executive Director commented, "Asparagus Farmers of Ontario (AFO) welcomes the investment from the Government of Ontario to help fund consumer research and improve marketing communications on a cost share basis for the next three years. We are excited to have government support to help us build awareness of this superfood in an effort to increase consumption levels among a wider segment of the Ontario population."

About Asparagus Farmers of Ontario (AFO)

AFO is Ontario's oldest non-profit marketing board, representing 73 growers in Ontario who grow local asparagus on over 3400 acres in Ontario. These farms grow three quarters of Canada's asparagus. As a perennial plant, asparagus is eagerly anticipated as the first local field crop each year and is available from May through to early July. While there are niche plantings of white and green asparagus, 99 per cent of the asparagus grown in Ontario is green.

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