

Goat cheese pioneer will be speaker at food seminar in Orangeville Feb. 25

Tony Dutra, CEO of pioneering Canadian goat cheese processor Woolwich Dairy Inc., will be the featured speaker at a community seminar for food entrepreneurs, hosted by the Orangeville Campus of Georgian College Feb. 25.

The event, entitled Preserving Our Heritage, Creating Our Future, takes place at Monora Park Pavilion in Mono. Dutra will give the keynote address and also participate in a panel of experts later in the day.

Dutra, his wife Olga and his mother Adozinda founded the company in Grand Valley in 1983. Now headquartered in Orangeville, Woolwich is North America's largest goat cheese producer, with manufacturing facilities in Quebec, Wisconsin and Orangeville, and a distribution centre in Amaranth Township. With about 150 employees, Woolwich produces more than 50 varieties of cheese.

Locally, the company purchases and processes a substantial amount of the goat milk produced by family farmers across Ontario. The seminar will help local food entrepreneurs and aspiring artisan food producers understand how to cultivate a successful food business. It's aimed at food and beverage entrepreneurs who want to know more about the agricultural and economic development trends. The seminar will offer tools and resources so agri-food businesses can position themselves advantageously to meet new consumer demand.

The day will feature a showcase of local food and beverage entrepreneurs who have launched a successful product or concept, presentations from a panel of experts, special guest speakers and a lunch catered by a local chef.

Food entrepreneurs should attend this event to learn about the processes and preparation required for starting a food business; discover lessons learned from successful local food entrepreneurs; discuss important food trends; connect with other entrepreneurs, producers and suppliers; and enjoy a delicious lunch catered by a local chef

The event runs from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Monora Park Pavilion at 500 Monora Park Pavilion Rd., Mono. Admission is free, but space is limited and tickets are required. Register online at <http://foodentrepreneurshipheadwaters.eventbrite.ca> or contact Mary Whittaker at 519-940-0331, ext. 1774 for more information.

The event is offered by Georgian College in partnership with the Orangeville and Area Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC), Headwaters Food and Farming Alliance (HFFA), Downtown Orangeville BIA, Headwaters Communities in Action (HCIA), Dufferin.Biz, local municipalities and economic development partners in Dufferin County and Caledon.