



Farm Business Diversification

Whether you are creating your first business plan, or diversifying your existing farm business, diversification can help to maximize your returns.. Consider how you could layer activities throughout the year and across your landbase, while keeping you (and your equipment) in action through idle periods.

Are there complementary crops you could add to your rotation? Can you extend your harvest through more of the winter months? Are there items you could produce for sale during the off-season? Would you sell more to your existing customer base if you had additional offerings? Do you have land resources that are under-utilized? How about further processing (adding value) to products you already produce? Can you use diversification to reduce risk?

Here are some resources that could help to get you thinking about diversification of your business and how to assess the feasibility of your new ideas.

Ontario Ministry of Food and Agriculture resources:

[Comprehensive Crop list](#) [1]

[Specialty Crops](#) [2]

[Comprehensive Livestock list](#) [3]

[Growing Non-Traditional Crops in Ontario: Factsheet](#) [4]

[Establishing and managing a value-added business](#) [5]

[Food Safety Workshops and Webinars](#) [6]

Other Publications and Resources:

[List of Alternative Crops and Enterprises for Small Farm Diversification](#) [7]

[Evaluating a Farming Enterprise \(ATTRA\)](#) [8]

[Farming Alternatives: A Guide to Evaluating the Feasibility of New Farm-Based Enterprises](#) [9]

[Grower to Grower: Creating a livelihood on a Fresh Market Vegetable Farm](#) [10]

[Keys to Success in Value-Added Agriculture \(ATTRA\)](#) [11]

[Ontario Woodlot Association Journal: A Commercial Woodlot is a Farm](#) [12]

[Making a Case for Growing New Crops](#) [13]

Regional Commercial Kitchens (Peterborough County-City



Health Unit)

- Commercial kitchens in our region are inspected and certified by the PCCHU, our local health unit. Since the status of kitchens is constantly changing, the PCCHU does not keep an updated list. Rather, they recommend checking with them about the status of publicly available commercial kitchens by contacting the Food Safety Program: (705) 743-1000 x 232 or info@pcchu.ca [14]. They also advise that church halls and community centre kitchens are often certified, so you may wish to inquire with those in your area before contacting PCCHU.

- Food Handler Training is also a good idea if you are interested in food preparation as a part of your business. Courses, led by a Public Health Inspector, are free of charge and held regularly throughout Peterborough County. The courses tend to fill up quickly, but if you have a group (of roughly 20), Inspectors will offer a class just for you! For more information about Food Handler Training in the County, visit: <https://www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca/clinics-and-classes/food-handler-course/> [15]

Source URL: <http://farmsatwork.com/farming-resources/37>

Links

[1] <http://www.omafr.gov.on.ca/english/crops/index.html#spec> [2]
<http://www.omafr.gov.on.ca/CropOp/en/> [3]
<http://www.omafr.gov.on.ca/english/livestock/index.html#alternative> [4]
<http://www.omafr.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/09-043w.htm> [5]
<http://www.omafr.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/valueadd-bib/index.htm> [6]
<http://www.omafr.gov.on.ca/english/food/foodsafety/producers/workshops.htm> [7]
<http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/pubs/altlist.shtml> [8] <https://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/summaries/summary.php?pub=277> [9] http://palspublishing.cals.cornell.edu/nra_order.taf?_function=detail&pr_id=65&_UserReference=1BE11F8CF4B8A9284F880D7E [10] <http://www.cia.s.wisc.edu/crops-and-livestock/report-helps-fresh-market-vegetable-growers-understand-and-share-finances/> [11] <http://attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/summaries/summary.php?pub=271> [12] http://www.farmsatwork.ca/sites/default/files/A%20Commercial%20Woodlot%20is%20a%20Farm_1.pdf [13]
<http://takeanewapproach.ca/growingnewcrops/#/> [14] <mailto:info@pcchu.ca> [15]
<http://www.pcchu.ca/clinics-classes/classes/foodhandler-course/>