

We've made it to the 12th and final chapter of 2022- what a year it's been! Amidst all the uncertainty and unfamiliarity, there have been so many moments of delight as we've finally been able to resume the activities and traditions we hold dear. It's been so good to see you again, Elgin County! As we take stock of a year almost complete we are deeply grateful to be part of such an incredible community.

Now more than ever, the impacts of prioritizing shopping local make a huge difference. Wherever possible, please consider looking a little closer to home for the items on your shopping list- these purchases help to support the heart of our communities and ensure strong local economies now and in the future.

From all of us at Elgin County Economic Development and Tourism, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Have a magical December in Elgin!





Congratulations to Natterjack Brewing Company Ltd. in West Elgin, who recently received a Gold award in the Smoked Beer category at the Ontario Brewing Awards ceremony in Toronto! Their 'Logger' beer is a must-try, along with the rest of their incredible locallymade lineup! Check them out and shop online <u>here</u>



Earth + Honeybee



There are new beekeepers on the scene in Elgin County, and the community is already abuzz! Husband and wife duo Melissa and Adam are new residents in Union, having just arrived from the Ilderton area in October 2022, and they are already establishing a strong local presence at farmers' markets and through their online shop.

The couple's passion for environmental stewardship is evident in everything they do, but most significantly in the way they work with and for the bees in their care. Cultivating spiritual ties with bees allows one to be able to connect with nature in a vulnerable way, says Melissa. In caring for the hive you start to deeply understand the role bees play in the broader ecosystem and to use all your senses to appreciate their contributions. One thing Melissa enjoys most about beekeeping is the way that it becomes meditative, through the hum of the bees and routine of their care. She reflects that being amidst an active hive of bees makes you feel like you're stopped in time. Seeing them living with such structure and instinct, serving a collective benefit that's greater than any one bee, is an inspiring metaphor for life.

These are all lessons that the couple has learned in a relatively short amount of time, having first started keeping bees as a hobby born from a brainstorming session in 2017. At that time, they were looking for hobbies they could share but also potentially turn into a business. Melissa thought about beekeeping, and it all started rolling from there, eventually leading to her leaving her career in mental health to serve the business full-time while Adam continues to work for the City of London. The process has all seemed quite natural and symbolic, almost predestined! Since Melissa was a child, she has been interested in name meanings, with hers being 'honeybee'. Adam's means 'red earth,' so the combination of the two inspired the business name.

Education is at the core of Earth + Honeybee's identity. Melissa and Adam love to help people learn more about honeybees, give them more confidence in starting or continuing their beekeeping journeys, and providing access to affordable equipment and bee byproducts that people may not otherwise be able to find. They are passionate about inviting people to see firsthand how deeply they care for their hives as working members of the operation, with bee health and welfare as their top priority.

The couple hopes that by learning about and experiencing beekeeping firsthand, people can become more connected to the original roots of self-sustenance and join the network of humans taking an active role in supporting pollinators. This, they feel, is connected to

broader activities and values that include soil maintenance through composting, wellness and meditation, and planting pollinators. They plan to facilitate these educational and healing encounters through experience-based opportunities at their new property in Union as well as virtual workshops. Through sharing their love for bees and beekeeping, Melissa and Adam are building a pretty incredible community!

With a strong start and big goals for the future, Earth + Honeybee is a great new addition to Elgin County. Please check them out at their website below and look for them at a market near you in 2023!

Earth + Honeybee 6039 Fairview Rd., St. Thomas, ON N5P 3S8 519-494-8070 Email: Earth.Honeybee@gmail.com Shop online with local pickup or find them at a local market <u>Website</u>



Paleta Passion



Another new Elgin business with a very fitting name is Paleta Passion, now with a lovely storefront on Talbot Street in Aylmer! Owner Christina Friesen, an Aylmer native, spent part of her childhood in Mexico and was inspired to start a small business centred on a nostalgic sweet treat from her time there.

The paleta is a Mexican frozen treat made from either fresh natural fruits or rich, creamy ingredients, and it plays a strong role in the country's cultural tradition. Christina remembers how exciting it was to enjoy paletas as a child and notes that in Mexico there is a great deal of regional flavour variation, since they traditionally use fruits that are local and in season. If the ultimate Mexican paleta taste-testing road trip isn't in the cards for you anytime soon, a trip to 81 Talbot St E in Aylmer is very close to being the real deal!

Christina jumped right into the creative freedom of crafting new flavours. She developed a blueberry paleta that is unique because blueberries are not grown in Mexico! The most popular flavour among customers who come from a Mexican background is horchata, while those new to the paleta seem to favour mango. With Christmas flavours in-store now, this is the perfect holiday venture with the family.

Christina has big plans for the future and will continue to pop up at local markets throughout the summer season in addition to operating the new store. This is definitely one to watch, and we strongly recommend keeping her in mind for your next corporate event or party!

Congratulations, Christina, we are excited to see where this new venture takes you!

Paleta Passion 81 Talbot St. E, Aylmer, ON 226-231-2615 Email: paletapassion@gmail.com Open Tuesday-Saturday 1pm-6pm, open until 9pm Fridays <u>Website</u>



Here is the menu! Stop by in-store for the list of seasonal offerings.



Southwestern Ontario Development Fund

The newest SWODF application intake will be open from January 12, 2023 to February 23, 2023. You can find more information about eligibility and the intake process <u>HERE</u>

For advice on developing and strengthening your application, you are encouraged to contact your regional advisor or Business Advisory Services at:

Business Advisory Services - Western Region Main Office westernregionbas@ontario.ca Toll-free: 1-800-267-6592

Canada Summer Jobs

Canada Summer Jobs provides wage subsidies to employers with 50 or fewer full-time employees to create quality summer work experiences for young people aged 15-30 years. Applications are open until January 12, 2023 and more details are available <u>HERE</u>

Business Scale-up and Productivity- FedDev Ontario

Thinking of taking things to the next level? Funding under this stream helps to accelerate the growth of firms and assist with the adoption of new, innovative technologies that support scale-up, productivity, adn the development of and entry into new markets to help companies become globally competitive. More details <u>HERE</u>

Community Economic Development and Diversification- FedDev Ontario

Funding is available to businesses and not-for-profit organizations in small communities who are working to develop, diversify, and transform their local economies. <u>DETAILS</u>



Are you an Immigrant or Racialized Person who has Experienced Discrimination in St. Thomas or Elgin County in the Last Three Years?

If you are, and you have experienced discrimination in a Workplace Setting, in a Public Place, or By the Police, please consider participating in a <u>virtual interview</u> with researchers at Western University.

By sharing your stories and feedback, you will help communities across the region become more inclusive and welcoming. If you are interested in participating, please fill out a short survey and the researchers will contact you.



FALL 2022 TOURISM BUSINESS SURVEY





We want to hear from you! If you operate a tourism-related business in Elgin County, the department would greatly appreciate your taking the time to complete our quick survey summarizing the summer 2022 tourism season <u>HERE</u>. Thanks so much for your consideration!

Have an opportunity you'd like us to share? Please send details to <u>economicdevelopment@elgin.ca</u>

BUSINESS PLANNING



A FOUR-PART SERIES



Sarah Noble

Marketing & Communications



Elle Crevits

Business Advisor

JAN. 23 & 24 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm JAN. 30 & 31 09.00 am - 3.00 pm

SBECINNOVATION.CA

Is 2023 the year you start working toward a new business or a new business growth goal?

When was the last time you brushed up your business plan, or are you on the journey without your map?

This FREE four-part Business Planning Boot Camp is designed to support entrepreneurs to refresh their plan or start from scratch with the support needed to polish it up too.

Because if you are looking for funds, you are going to need a plan.

If you are looking to grow, you are going to need a plan.

If you are looking to start, this is the starting line.

Join Sarah and Elle from the St. Thomas-Elgin Small Business Enterprise Centre in

January to start the new year strong! Signup here



Start 2023 strong!

Take advantage of our Digital Sign Program!

5,000 weekly impressions for your business for FREE Limited Opportunity contact snoble@stthomas.ca

Provincial Government Updates

On November 14, the Ontario Government released the <u>2022 Ontario Economic</u> <u>Outlook and Fiscal Review - Ontario's Plan to Build: A Progress Update</u>. It included the government's progress report on previous budgetary commitments, as well as new measures including support for small businesses. Key highlights:

- Providing over \$675M in Ontario income tax relief over 3 years by temporarily allowing eligible businesses to immediately expense up to \$1.5M per year for certain capital investments
- Proposing to extend the phase-out range for the small business Corporate Income Tax rate to between \$10M and \$50M of taxable capital
- Proposing to expand eligible expenditures for the Ontario Productions Services Tax Credit to include location fees
- Establishing consultation groups to support refocused red tape reduction efforts, inviting representatives from key industries and areas of activity across the province
- Proposing legislation to launch a voluntary Clean Energy Credit registry
- Proposing amendments to the Securities Act to enable digital access to documents

On November 23, the Provincial Ministry of Red Tape Reduction introduced the *Less Red Tape, Stronger Ontario Act*, which includes 28 new measures to increase Ontario's competitiveness, support stronger supply chains, and make government easier to access and interact with. <u>Read the backgrounder here</u>

Highlights of the package include:

• Removing legislative barriers to support greater investment in clean and emission

reducing technologies.

- Providing more data and tools to municipalities to determine optimal Reduced Load Periods on roadways and improve supply chain efficiency.
- Increasing court capacity and efficiency to improve service, including the introduction of digital jury questionaries.
- Modernizing the Veterinarians Act, including identifying opportunities to streamline requirements or reduce compliance burden for vets and practice owners.

The *Act* also included the creation of the **Grow Ontario Strategy**, which outlines the province's plan to strengthen the agri-food sector, ensure an efficient, reliable, and responsive food supply and address ongoing vulnerabilities through new innovations.

The plan focuses on three key priorities:

- Strengthen Agri-food Supply Chain Stability: Increase both the consumption and production of food grown and prepared in Ontario by 30 per cent, increase Ontario's food and beverage manufacturing GDP by 10 per cent and boost Ontario's agri-food exports eight per cent annually by 2032. This includes opening applications for the \$10 million Food Security and Supply Chain Fund which will provide funding for projects such as updated inventory software, expanded warehousing to allow increased inventory levels or automation equipment to address labour gaps. The province is also strengthening its food processing capacity and food security to position the sector for growth through the \$25 million Strategic Agri-Food Processing Fund.
- Increase Agri-food Technology and Adoption: Boost research infrastructure, advance the uptake of new technologies, grow the market for Ontario innovative technologies domestically and globally, and grow the use of data to support efficiencies in the agri-food sector and value chain. The province will also begin consultations on modernizing the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario Act to fuel innovation and support efforts to provide modern, relevant research information to farmers and agri-food businesses.
- Attract and Grow Ontario's Agri-food Talent: The province aims to increase total agri-food sector employment by 10 per cent by 2032, as well as increase awareness of modern, high-tech agri-food careers, opportunities for mentorship and hands-on job training, and support efforts to increase veterinary capacity in underserviced areas of the province. This includes launching public consultations to explore opportunities to modernize the Veterinarians Act as part of the plan to increase access to veterinary care in Ontario.

DEPARTMENTAL ACTIVITY





On November 22, the Economic Development and Tourism team attended the Aylmer Chamber of Commerce's Business After 5 networking event held in the future home of the Aylmer-Malahide Museum and Archives. It was a great opportunity to connect with some familiar faces and hear about all the exciting things happening in the Aylmer business community!



Members of the Economic Development team attended the 2022 Growing Your Workforce conference hosted in partnership with the Western Ontario Wardens' Caucus.

Members of the team also attended the St. Thomas and District Chamber of Commerce's Annual General Meeting on November 30.



- Saturdays and Sundays in December- Port Stanley Terminal Rail Treats Trains
- Saturdays in December- Old Imperial Farmers' Market Christmas Market
- Saturday, December 17- Holidays at Sparta Lavender Farm
- Saturday, December 17- Sip and Shop Market at London Waffle Co.



THE FINGAL SHEDDEN AND DISTRICT OPTIMIST CLUB

Christmas Tree Sale

36008 Fingal Line, Fingal

Trees are \$45 each - Cash only - honour box in place

Only 100 available!

First come, First Served





CHRISTMAS

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WAYSIDE DINING & BAR

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APPETIZER

Fish Pakora Beef Kabab Spring Rolls Samosa

MAIN COURSE

Roast Beef Striploin Roast Turkey Grilled Chicken with Mushroom Sauce Butter Chicken Shahi Paneer

Stirfried Noodles

Mashed Potatoes Seasonal Veg.

SALADS

Assorted 12 Type Cold Cut Platter Assorted Cheese Platter

SOUP

Cream of Tomatoes

DESSERT

Apple Pie Fruit Cake Assorted Cookies Fresh Cut Fruits

12.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. Price : \$29.99 Kids 7 to 12 Yrs \$15.99 Kids under 7 - FREE

519-633-0360

10680 Sunset Drive Talbotville, ON NOL 2K0 www.waysidedining.ca

UPCOMING NETWORKING EVENTS



 January Business after 5 hosted by the St. Thomas & District Chamber of Commerce, January 18- <u>Details</u>

Have an event you'd like us to share? Please send details to <u>economicdevelopment@elgin.ca</u>

Elgin County Economic Development & Tourism | www.elgincounty.ca



Elgin County | 450 Sunset Drive, St. Thomas, N5R 5V1 Canada

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