



Canadian Greenhouse Excellence Network (CGEN)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Canadian Greenhouse Excellence Network?

CGEN is a national, sector-led network to mobilize expertise, research, and innovation by connecting stakeholders at the critical intersection of food production, energy, and the environment.

Who is driving the CGEN development?

The Canadian Greenhouse Excellence Network (CGEN) is a strategic initiative of the Fruit and Vegetable Growers of Canada's Greenhouse Vegetable Working Group to advance collective opportunities towards the vision for Canada as a world leader in sustainable agriculture and agri-food.

What is its Purpose & Goals?

CGEN's primary purpose is to solve complex challenges that meet the triple bottom line of sustainability (economic, environmental, social). CGEN will be an effective vehicle for advancing research and innovation needed by various stakeholders (growers, allied-industry, academia/educational institutions, governments, and consumers).

What will CGEN do?

As a central hub – a connector of people and expertise, it will be designed to include functional components such as:

- Facilitated point of connection for growers, researchers, and private solutions providers;
- Dedicated Knowledge Translation & Transfer (KTT) mobilization;
- Support to help navigate a pathway for commercialization;
- Data generation, cyber-security and management;
- Youth engagement and resources to support their career path in the sector;
- Multi-institutional learning, integrated credentialing program.

Why now?

Within the Government of Canada's vision for a low-carbon economy, GHG emissions reduction targets for 2030, and the transition to net-zero by 2050, all industries including agriculture are being asked to do even more as a world leader in sustainable agriculture and agri-food -- but with even less of an environmental footprint.

To position the sector for success we need evidence-based policies, feasible on-farm energy options, research and innovation, funding opportunities, and incentives.

Our sector's unique roadmap requires the energy, technology, and infrastructure options to supply greenhouse crops with the heat, carbon dioxide, and electricity needed to grow year-round and secure fresh fruit and vegetables for Canadians and consumers around the world.



FRUIT & VEGETABLE
GROWERS
OF CANADA

PRODUCTEURS
DE FRUITS ET LÉGUMES
DU CANADA



Why CGEN?

So many good reasons! Here are a few:

- The sector needs CGEN as a credible (science, policy, and infrastructure) response to address the challenge of unavoidable carbon costs, the significantly rising fuel charge costs imposed on greenhouse growers, and growing demand for electrification that is outstripping supply.
- The government needs CGEN to help achieve net zero emissions while supporting food security and resiliency, ambitious production growth opportunities, and export targets. CGEN offers an effective mechanism to help off-set and stabilize the rising price on carbon emissions, a way to return fuel charge proceeds back to the sector, and build our roadmap to 2050.
- A broad base of stakeholders needs CGEN (its people and expertise) to solve complex challenges in a way that meets the triple bottom line of sustainability (economic, environmental, social).

How did CGEN get started?

Starting in Fall 2021, as we reviewed our National Greenhouse Research and Innovation Priorities, and put out a call for Expressions of Interest (EOIs) in preparation of the Agri-Science Cluster Program that clearly identified a goal to develop a “Greenhouse Network of Research Excellence”.

Rupp Carriveau, Director of the Environmental Energy Institute at the University of Windsor responded and subsequently received support in principle to continue to develop his proposal within our discussions with AAFC.

In Fall, 2022, through the valuable financial support of our greenhouse vegetable members, we began a national conversation through a series of engagement sessions with our stakeholders and received strong support to launch CGEN at the February 14, 2023 Summit in Ottawa.

What’s next?

Please read the CGEN Roundtable Report (*PowerHour* results, CGEN Summit report).

We are shifting from an initial focus on stakeholder engagement to network design. Even as CGEN is in its early development, we have seen alignment of our objectives, timelines, and resources. Given the workshop feedback, we are consulting with our key partners and experts to ensure CGEN has a strong foundation including the network architecture, governance, and funding mechanisms to begin building working components that demonstrate value and deliver tangible benefits to stakeholders.

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