

Stratego's SectorStim cluster development process provides Ontario with snapshot of cluster make-up

Offers Ontario Functional Food and Natural Health Products cluster strategic framework for further cluster development efforts, based on cluster diversity; Cluster considered poised for growth

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Toronto, ON, June 18, 2008 --

The province of Ontario has taken a major step towards further development of its Functional Foods and Natural Health Products Industry Cluster by developing a comprehensive map of all stakeholders and influencers considered part of the Ontario FF and NHP industry cluster. The mapping exercise, conducted by Stratego International, LLC, a business growth consultancy with headquarters in West Orange, NJ and offices in Toronto, Canada, was part of a cluster development project assigned to Stratego by MaRS Landing in Toronto.

MaRS Landing, located in Research Park at the core of the agriculture and food cluster located in Guelph, Ontario, facilitates the commercialization of innovation in the agriculture and food sectors across the Ontario province. As part of their cluster development activities, MaRS Landing has developed a dynamic FF/NHP directory database with industry participants throughout the province, which is intended to support Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's development of a larger model. This development is expected to lead to a better understanding and growth of the functional food and natural health products sector across Canada.

Stratego International was charged with providing additional depth to the database, which numbers over 500 companies and organizations, by developing a series of geospatial maps showing industry structure and locations, and highlighting thematic constellations such as location and concentrations of distribution networks, raw material suppliers, and manufacturers, as well as track the gravitation of certain industry sub-groupings to R&D centers located in the province.

As an initial step in Stratego's SectorStim™ cluster development methodology, mapping the Ontario cluster utilizing GIS (Geographic Information System) software allowed Stratego to better visualize the database information collected, to help illustrate industry structure, relationships and growth trends not possible utilizing traditional data sets or directories alone. Additional steps within the SectorStim process, although not part of the original project framework, include interviews with stakeholders, best-of-breed benchmarking, SWOT analysis, competitive positioning, and development of growth strategies and action plans.

The Stratego mapping exercise has set a strong foundation for further cluster development work and follow-on analysis. "By utilizing GIS mapping, MaRS Landing now has a unique tool for analyzing and showcasing the Ontario Functional Foods and Natural Health Products Industry Cluster" said Rune G. Nilssen, project manager and Partner with Stratego's

Toronto office. "There are virtually no limits for what this dataset can be used for or grow into. Over time, growth trends, entrepreneurial activities and technology gravitation will be visualized, offering a unique tool for the cluster management to further align resources and efforts accordingly. As a dynamic and flexible tool, the database and maps will also be very helpful to drive industry networking and collaboration within the province, as well as showcase Ontario's industry to the world in a very unique way", continued Nilssen.

Strategro, in cooperation with MaRS Landing, recently presented project findings and analysis to key members of industry, trade group members, and representatives from regional government, in an effort to gain wider exposure and support for MaRS Landing's on-going cluster development efforts.

About Strategro International

Strategro International is a market entry and business growth firm working with companies and organizations within the functional foods, nutraceuticals, marine biotechnology, and life science sectors. Typical consulting engagements include helping companies with go-to-market strategies, providing business development, strategic advice, market intelligence and hands-on assistance to help companies grow. In addition Strategro works with trade groups, governments and economical development organizations to enhance development and growth within core industry clusters, utilizing Strategro's SectorStim™ cluster development approach (www.sectorstim.com).

Strategro International has offices in the U.S. and Canada.

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