

OMAFRA RESEARCH IN ACTION WEBINAR SERIES

Navigating Trade Barriers for Ontario's Agri-Food Sector



July 23rd, 2026



Virtual (Zoom)



10:00 – 11:00 AM

Dr. Sylvanus Kwaku Afesorgbor, University of Guelph

- Navigating Canadian Trade Disputes: Implications for Ontario's Agri-Food Exports and the Role of Provincial Economic Diplomacy
- Measuring Interprovincial Trade Barriers in Canada and Assessing Their Impact on Ontario's Agri-Food Exports to Other Provinces

MEET OUR GUEST SPEAKER

Dr. Sylvanus Kwaku Afesorgbor

Associate Professor, Department of Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Guelph



Dr. Sylvanus Kwaku Afesorgbor is an Associate Professor of Agri-Food Trade and Policy and the Graduate Program Coordinator in the Department of Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics at the University of Guelph. He is an International Associate at the Environment and Natural Resource Research Initiative (ENRRI-EfD Ghana) and a Program Associate at the Global Law and Economics Research Program at the European University Institute. He was a Jean Monnet Fellow (2023/24) at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute in Florence, Italy. His research and teaching focus on international trade, political economy, international development, energy and the environment, food and agriculture, and meta-analysis.

Dr. Afesorgbor began his academic journey at the University of Ghana, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Statistics. He then pursued a Master of Arts in Development Economics at Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands, and later completed a PhD in Economics and Business at Aarhus University in Denmark. After completing his PhD, Dr. Afesorgbor was awarded the prestigious Max Weber Postdoctoral Fellowship at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy, and subsequently held a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Tuborg Centre for Globalization and Firms at Aarhus University.

PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

Dr. Sylvanus Kwaku Afesorgbor

Associate Professor, Department of Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of Guelph



Navigating Canadian Trade Disputes: Implications for Ontario's Agri-Food Exports and the Role of Provincial Economic Diplomacy

International trade has long grappled with the influence of politics, but recent political actions have heightened trade restrictions and trade policy uncertainty, undermining global trade flows. This presents a significant challenge for small, open economies like Ontario and Canada, which rely on stable global trading regulations. This challenge is particularly acute in the agricultural sector, where political interference in international trade is more pronounced than in other industries. In the context of politically-driven trade policies, economic diplomacy emerges as a crucial strategy for Ontario/Canada to boost their exports. This proposal aims to investigate the impact of trade disputes and diplomatic relations on Ontario and Canadian agri-food trade. Canada serves as an exemplary case study due to escalating geopolitical tensions with major players in the global agri-food markets. Largely, Ontario will be affected by geopolitical tensions involving Canada. Ontario also actively participates in paradiplomacy activities at the sub-national level.



Measuring Interprovincial Trade Barriers in Canada and Assessing Their Impact on Ontario's Agri-Food Exports to Other Provinces

Interprovincial trade barriers remain a significant obstacle to internal trade in Canada, particularly affecting the agri-food sector through non-tariff measures. Addressing these barriers has become increasingly important given rising trade tensions between Canada and its major trading partner, the United States, especially since the Trump administration. To ensure Ontario's domestic agro-food producers remain competitive nationally and globally, there is a growing need to reduce interprovincial trade barriers they face in other provinces. Recent developments, such as Ontario Premier's memoranda of understanding with Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, and the introduction of the Protecting Ontario Through Free Trade Within Canada Act, highlight the province's efforts to address these challenges. This project has two main objectives: first, to identify and measure the types of interprovincial trade barriers faced by Ontario agri-food producers; and second, to evaluate the impact of interprovincial trade barriers on Ontario's agri-food exports to other provinces.