



Dr. Ira Mandell Research Award

The Dr. Ira Mandell Research Award is presented annually by the Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO) upon the recommendation of the BFO Research Committee. Valued at \$2,500, this award recognizes exceptional research that advances the knowledge, innovation, and sustainability of Ontario's beef industry.

Eligible candidates include Master's and PhD researchers at recognized universities conducting research relevant to the Ontario beef sector. Candidates must be nominated or supported by their academic supervisor or principal investigator.

When multiple qualified candidates are under consideration, the BFO Research Committee will interview the top contenders to determine the recipient.

The award will be formally presented at the BFO Annual General Meeting (AGM) each February. As part of the award, the recipient will deliver a brief presentation to the BFO membership at the AGM, outlining their current research project and its potential benefits to Ontario's beef industry.

Eligibility Criteria

To be considered for the Dr. Ira Mandell Research Award, applicants must:

1. Be currently enrolled in a Master's or PhD program at a recognized Ontario university or college.
2. Be conducting research with direct relevance to the Ontario beef industry.
3. Demonstrate potential for the research to contribute to the advancement, sustainability, or competitiveness of the sector.
4. Provide a nomination or letter of support from their academic supervisor or principal investigator.
5. Be available to present their research at the BFO AGM in February (in-person or virtually), or at another BFO event in the event of a conflict.

Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on:

- Relevance to Industry – Clear alignment with the needs and priorities of Ontario's beef sector.
- Practical Application – The likelihood of the research leading to meaningful outcomes for beef producers.
- Communication Skills – Ability to explain the research and its implications to a non-academic audience.
- Candidate's Engagement – Demonstrated commitment to the beef industry and research excellence.

Application Instructions

1. Complete the Award Application Form (below).
2. Attach:
 - A current Curriculum Vitae
 - A summary of your research (maximum 2 pages) including:
 - Background and objectives, and any outcomes to date
 - Methodology
 - Expected outcomes and potential benefits to the Ontario beef industry
 - One letter of support from your academic supervisor or principal investigator
3. Submit all materials as a single PDF to barb@ontariobeef.com by end of day, November 4th, 2026.

Dr. Ira Mandell Research Award Application	
Name:	
Phone Number:	Email:
Institution:	Department:
Advisor Name:	Advisor Position:
Master's ☐ PhD Candidate ☐	
Title of Current Research Project:	
Please describe your current research project that you are working on.	

How does your project benefit the Ontario Beef Sector?

What do you think is the best way to get research into the hands of Ontario beef farmers?

How have you engaged with Ontario's beef industry, producers or other industry stakeholders through your research, work, education, or other activities?

How do you see your research and career contributing to the beef industry in the future?

Dr. Ira Mandell

As a professor and researcher in the department of animal biosciences at the University of Guelph, Dr. Mandell dedicated his career to advancing and addressing issues surrounding beef production and meat quality. Aside from his accomplishments in research and teaching, he will undoubtedly be remembered for his tireless work to ensure that critical beef research infrastructure projects materialized to help serve current and future generations of farmers, processors, researchers, and students, and the sector at large.

While dozens of leaders across industry, academia, and government are responsible for the revitalization of the Ontario Beef Research Centre, it was Dr. Mandell who quarterbacked much of the site development and facility layout efforts on behalf of the institution and its researchers, as well as the industry players who would one day use the facility. He travelled across North America to other livestock research facilities, and consulted with colleagues at other institutions across the globe to find the best designs and equipment to suit and support the Ontario/Eastern Canadian beef production system.

Another major vision Dr. Mandell had was to turn the 1960's era abattoir into a modern meat processing and value-add facility capable of simulating current and innovative meat cutting practices. As a result of Dr. Mandell's dedication and vision, the facility was fully refurbished and modernized in 2018 with the help of funds from the government and the University of Guelph. The new facility was designed with retail and innovation in mind, equipped to process wholesale or retail cuts, and processed meat products, as well as a smokehouse. In many respects, the Centre of Meat Innovation and Technology (CMIT), which utilizes the federally licensed Meat Lab facility for training and skills development courses, and to provide processors with space to test the suitability for new technologies for their facilities, owes a great deal of gratitude to Dr. Mandell's groundwork in the mid-late 2010's to what the facility has become today.

Beyond Dr. Mandell's teaching and research responsibilities, he played a vital role in connecting academia with the beef industry. Dr. Mandell played a critical role in the development of BFO's first research and innovation strategy, and was a critical contributor to its successor iterations. Dr. Mandell sat as an advisor on BFO's Research Committee for more than two decades, and played a critical role in discussions regarding beef research priorities, funding calls, and intellectual and physical capacity needs for the sector.