

# Food Tourism 101 & the Lethbridge Foodscape

Understanding the role your business plays

February 8, 2022

TOURISM   
Lethbridge



# Overview

*An industry exploration of the food tourism industry, where food and drink meet travel and hospitality.*

*Find out how your business can get involved in the food tourism value chain.*

# About Food Tourism Strategies



- Founded in 2018
- Over 30 years combined experience in culinary and tourism industries
- Awards:
  - Canadian Tourism Award (TIAC) for Best Culinary Experience
  - Alberta Tourism Award (Alto) for Best Collaborative Marketing – Cook It Raw Alberta
  - Finalist – Tourism Event or Festival of the Year 2019 (Alberta on the Plate)

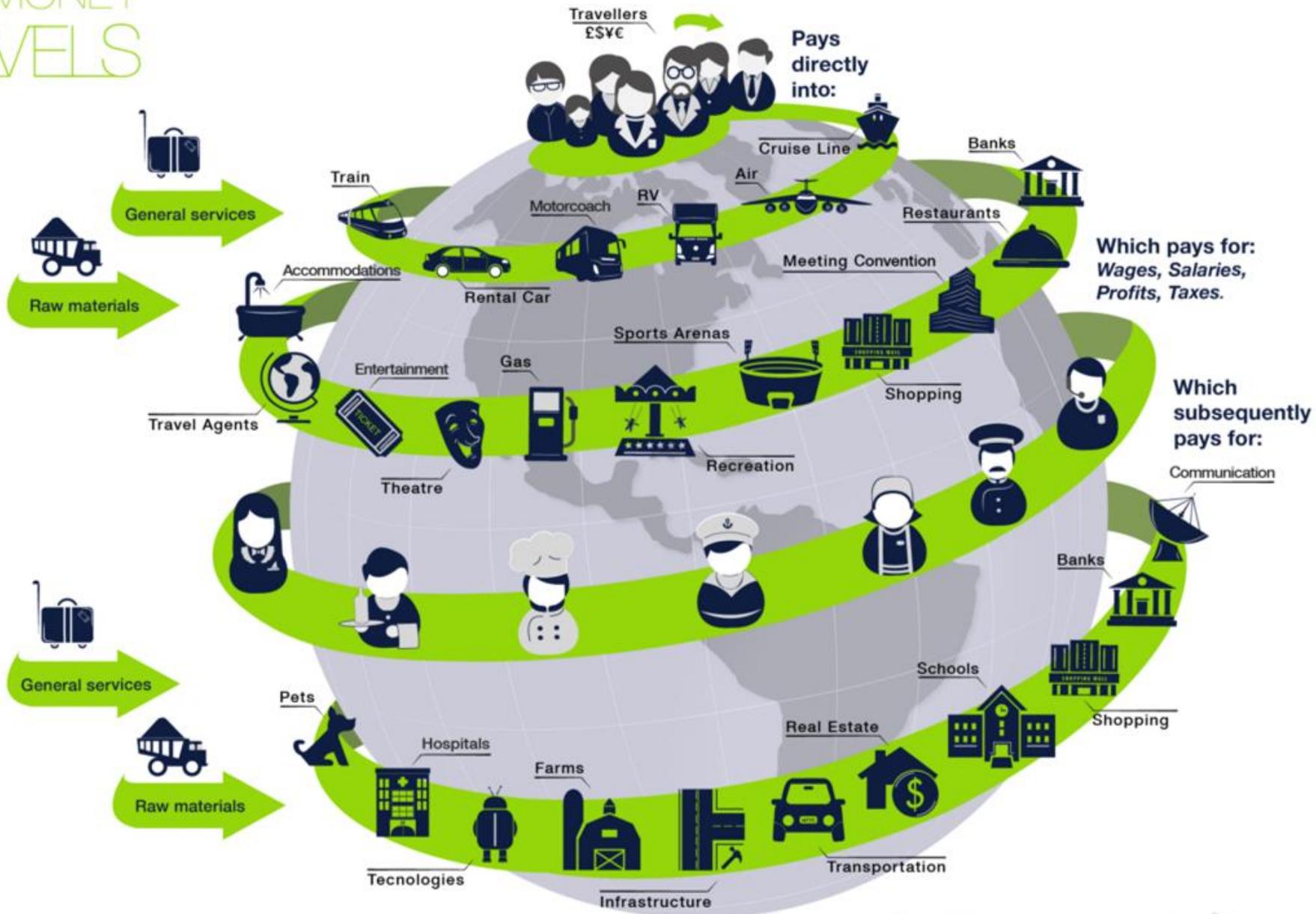


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# HOW MONEY TRAVELS



# STEP 1: Know the Industry

Understanding Food Tourism and where you fit

# STEP 1: Know the Industry

## **Food Tourism:**

*The pursuit of unique and memorable drinking and eating experiences as exploration of a destination.*

Typically cannot be reproduced in another location due to a combination of:

- Local ingredients
- Techniques
- History
- Landmarks

**Food Tourists:** *Travelers seeking the authenticity of the places they visit through food experiences.*



# STEP 1: Know the Industry



## Examples of Food Tourism Destinations

**Countries:** France, Italy, Spain, Japan

**Cities/regions:** New Orleans, Bangkok, Paris, New York, London, Tuscany, Portland



# STEP 1: Know the Industry

## Facts

- Over 1/3 of tourist spending is on food
- 88.2% of tourists consider food as an important factor in their travel decisions

## Opportunity

- Rural markets can develop programs to showcase local product.
- Developing Food Tourism is a high-value proposition for rural communities, many of which have struggled in the face of rapid urbanization.
- Communities generate:
  - income
  - employment opportunities locally
  - fuelling support for agriculture



# STEP 1: Know the Industry



Who is part  
of the  
Food Tourism  
Industry?



## CULINARY

- Chefs, restaurants, festivals, media, schools



## TRAVEL

- Airports, transit, travel trade, marketing, fuel



## DESTINATIONS

- DMOs/DMFs, regions, economic development, hotels, tour operators, attractions



## AGRICULTURE

- Farms, producers, growers, processors, commodities, markets, conservation sites

# STEP 1: Know the Industry

## What is Taste of Place (TOP)?

When a destination, business or brand utilizes local foods combined with skillful techniques to support an authentic experience true to that region.



# STEP 1: Know the Industry



## Foraging & Hunting

What's in your own backyard, living off the land



## Agri-Tourism

Visitors experience farm life and activities



## Processing

Creating artisan food products from local ingredients



## Gastronomy

End result with local goods

**PILLARS OF FOOD TOURISM**

# **STEP 2:** **Know Your Neighbours**

Building mutually-beneficial relationships

# STEP 2: Know Your Neighbours



- Connecting with farms, restaurants, markets, processors and businesses nearby can help to add value to your business by building meaningful relationships with them.
- Opportunities for cross-promotion can help not only your businesses, but the region as whole, creating a regional food tourism destination draw



## STEP 2: Know Your Neighbours

As you examine what's nearby, be mindful to consider the food tourism destination pull factors, as they can reveal potential partnerships you may not have considered.



# STEP 2: Know Your Neighbours



Take stock of what part(s) of your business may benefit from local products:

- Ingredients – swap for local where possible
- Retail areas – great for shelf-stable products
- Visitors – snacks, beverages, travel safe goods

Don't have purchasing power or food services? You can still support the local industry!

- Partnerships with local restaurants/producers
- Corporate gifting – use local products/gift certificates
- Promotional cards with listings of restaurants/grocers that use local
- Purchase tickets for local food events for promotions



# STEP 2: Know Your Neighbours



**Cluster Development:** *A group of independent businesses work together to maximize efficiency.*

**Examples:** Wineries in Napa Valley, Kentucky Bourbon Trail, Wines of Rioja



# **STEP 3:** **Know the Market**

Knowing your visitors and tailoring to them

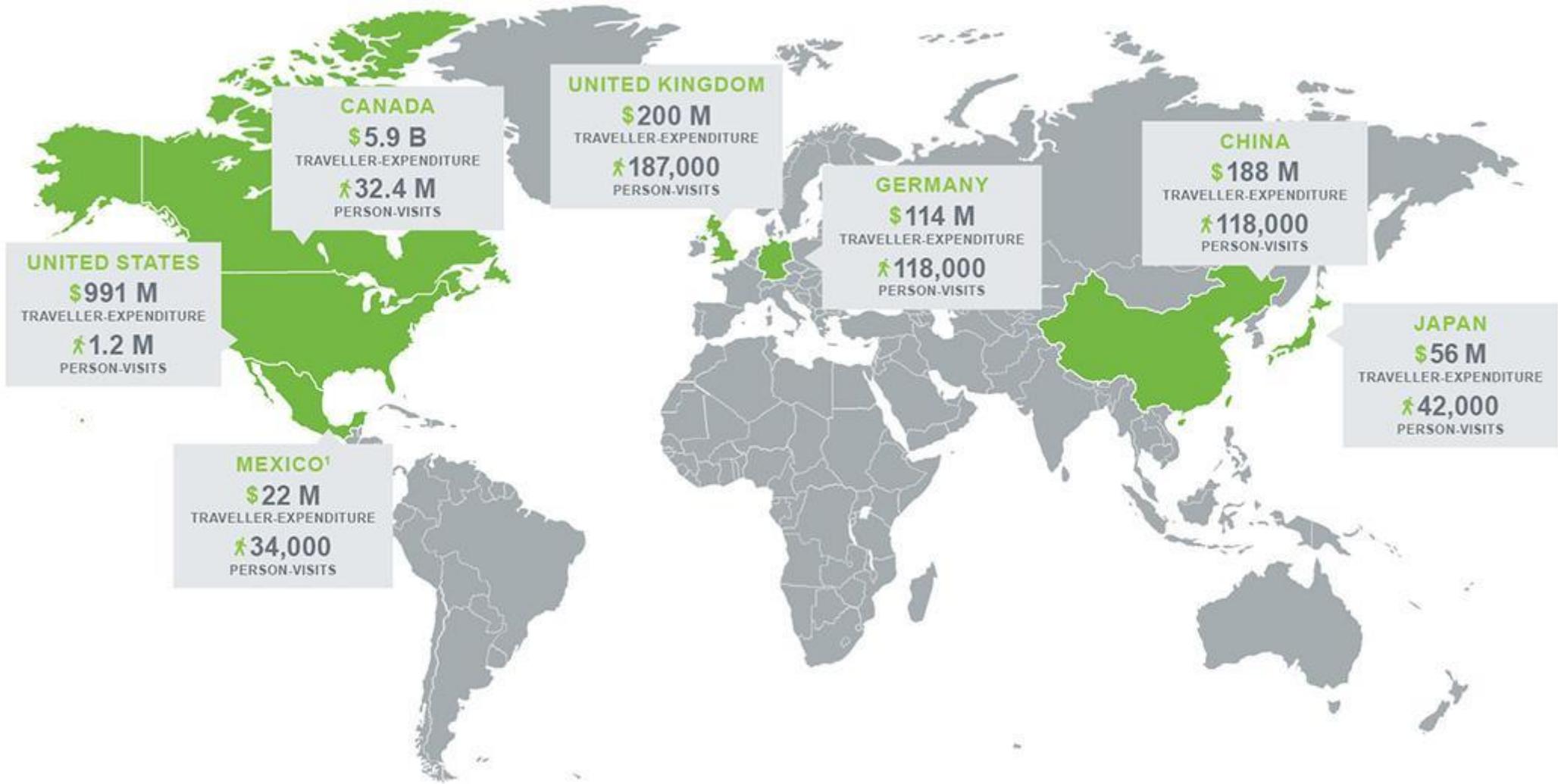
# STEP 3: Know the Market

## Tourism in Alberta

- \$8.2 Billion in tourism expenditures
- \$6.5 Billion contributed to Alberta's GDP
- 20,000 businesses
- 68,000 tourism jobs
- 34.7 Million person-visits



# 2019 TRAVELLER-EXPENDITURE AND PERSON-VISITS



Source: Statistics Canada, Visitor Travel Survey and National Travel Survey.  
<sup>1</sup>Small sample size. Data contain high margin of error and are subject to significant year-over-year fluctuations.

# STEP 3: Know the Market



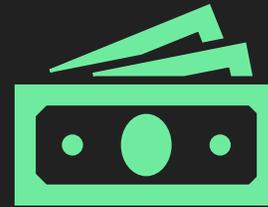
## REGION

- Albertans
- Other Canadians
- USA
- Other International



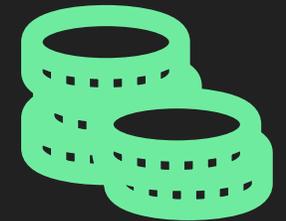
## # VISITS

- 83.5% (30.8 million visits)
- 11% (4.1 million visits)
- 2.5% (941,000 visits)
- 3% (1.1 million visits)



## EXPENDITURES

- \$4.8 Billion
- \$1.9 Billion
- \$847 Million
- \$1.2 Billion



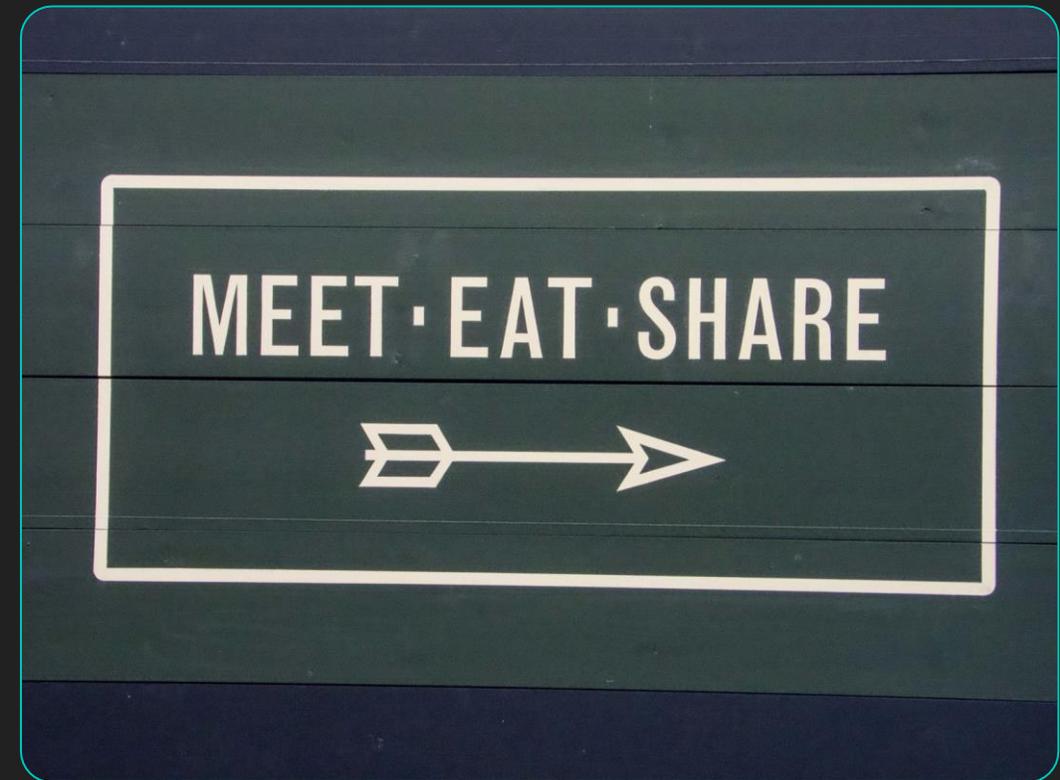
## AVG SPEND

- \$207
- \$471
- \$900
- \$1,180

# STEP 3: Know the Market

Food Travelers are...

- Educated
- Adventurous
- Curious



## STEP 3: Know the Market

**85%**

of Culinary Tourists  
enjoy learning about  
the local culture and  
cuisines.

**66%**

of Culinary Tourists  
want to try regional  
cuisines, culinary  
specialties and local  
wine, beer and spirits.

**70%**

of Culinary Tourists  
enjoy bringing back  
regional foods, recipes,  
wines from places they  
have visited to share  
with family and friends.

# **STEP 4:** **Be Tourism-Ready**

Providing exceptional experiences every time

## STEP 4: What is Tourism-Ready?

The easier it is for a consumer to visit you, the more likely they are to do that!

Ensure all basic consumer needs are met.

Once basic standards are set, you can focus on adding value to your experiences.



# STEP 4: Be Tourism-Ready

## Basic standards:

- Easy to access business contact and information (website, social media, phone number, address, etc.)
- Consistent hours of operation (always ensuring they are up-to-date)
- Easy to read directional signage (both on route to your business and while onsite)
- Adequate parking
- Visible entrance for visitors to check in
- Public washroom



# STEP 4: Be Tourism-Ready



Do you have:

- Easy to read signage along common travel route?
- Well informed and enthusiastic staff?
- Easy booking?
- Products, dishes or experiences you are showcasing?



# STEP 4: Be Tourism-Ready

## Once you've got the basics covered:

- Adding infrastructure for visitors (i.e. picnic tables, paved footpaths, permanent signage)
- Increasing capacity for visitors (i.e. more parking spots, parking for tour buses, guides/maps available in alternate languages, wheelchair accessibility)
- Expanding your offerings (i.e. scheduled tours, food and drink for purchase, loyalty cards, other local area products)

# STEP 5: Own Your Niche

Owning what you do well and singing your praises

# STEP 5: Own Your Niche



What are you already doing that is attracting visitors?

Be brilliant at the basics!

- Great farm store
- Award-winning products
- Fantastic tours
- Convenient location
- Fun activities
- Unique experiences



# STEP 5: Own Your Niche

Examine what makes you successful and unique

- Ask the questions of your visitors
- Thank and HEAR your critics
- Invite guests, friends, or outside companies to audit your experience



# STEP 5: Own Your Niche

## Tell everyone about it

- It's ok to brag!
- Use every opportunity to talk about what sets you apart from everyone else
- Talk outside of your normal connections
- Use social channels. If social is new to you, talk to someone to set-up your channels but have specific goals in mind.



# **STEP 6: BHAG**

# **Big Hairy Audacious Goals**

Setting your course

## STEP 6: BHAG

All organizations have goals. But there is a difference between merely having a goal and becoming committed to a huge, daunting challenge—like a big mountain to climb.

If you really want to grow in the food tourism business, you need to have goals, take some calculated risks, work together, and make collaboration part of the process.

Trying something new (provided it is planned well and thought through) can help to grow your business, and the business of the community.

# STEP 6: BHAG



Think back to one of the most memorable experiences you've had as a visitor/tourist...

- What made it stand out?
- What ideas of activities, processes, features made it an amazing experience?
- Can they be implemented in your business?

Not all new business activities have to be original, but they need to speak to **YOUR** strengths and **YOUR** authenticity



# FINAL RECAP



Know the Industry

Know Your Neighbours

Know the Market

Be Tourism-Ready

Own Your Niche

Big Hairy Audacious Goals



Interested in using Food Tourism to build your business or  
community?  
We are here to help!

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# Facilitated Q&A

Please submit your questions using the Q&A function