

Cookie it Up set to rise with Provincial dough



By Brock Weir

Cookie It Up has been one of Aurora's best kept secrets for over 30 years, but thanks to some provincial dough, the local bakery is set to let the world in.

Cookie It Up received a grant of \$27,000 from Ontario's Rural Economic Development Fund on Monday. Joining Newmarket-Aurora MPP Chris Ballard in making the presentation was Arthur Potts, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

With the grant money, the bakery hopes to create five new jobs while at the same time increasing competitiveness on the international export market.

"This program invests in corporations, municipalities and agencies that are supporting rural and economic growth," said Mr. Potts. "In this case, we essentially have an urban factory that is buying product from rural companies in order to help rural communities, farmers, etc., expand their operations."

Mr. Potts added this is all part of Premier Kathleen Wynne's commitment to create 127,000 new jobs by the year 2020 and these investments of more than \$187 million so far in over 600 products have retained over 37,000 new jobs.

"The aroma in Aurora is just spectacular," he added. "They are using a whole bunch of fresh, natural ingredients. When Paige Sillcox started this company in 1983, it was actually her way of creating employment for herself as she funded her studies at York University. Now, 30-odd years later, she has turned this over to Shane Smith and he is continuing in that direction to build the concept even further.

"[In this program] we can invest in an urban environment as long as the benefits are going through rural Ontario and there is a direct connection. With the ingredients that are being used here, that qualifies it."