



News Release

For immediate release

Helping farmers to reduce GHGs and improve resiliency to climate change

August 12, 2021 – Sherbrooke, Québec – Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Today, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, launched a call for proposals for the On-Farm Climate Action Fund, a new fund under Agricultural Climate Solutions. Starting this year and until 2024, the \$200-million Fund will provide direct support to farmers to adopt beneficial management practices that store carbon and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in three target areas: cover cropping, nitrogen management, and rotational grazing practices. These three on-farm actions not only reduce GHG emissions but also offer farmers a cost-effective solution to improve soil health and achieve other environmental benefits.

This year has demonstrated the extraordinary challenges farmers face on the front lines of climate change. Extreme weather events, like this year's drought, and other environmental impacts like challenges related to water availability and quality, soil health and biodiversity are projected to become more severe and costly for the sector in the coming decades. Farmers are already innovating and adopting more sustainable practices and technologies to improve their climate resiliency.

The Fund will follow an outcome-based approach in order to maximize new GHG emissions reductions. Activities supported through the Fund are expected to reduce GHG emissions by up to 2 million tonnes by 2024, and by 1 million tonnes per year ongoing, compared to current projections, and bring a total of 792,000 hectares of land under improved management practices.

Starting today, the On-Farm Climate Action Fund is seeking proposals from potential delivery partners to redistribute the funds to farmers undertaking eligible activities. Potential delivery partners for the On-Farm Climate Action Fund could include producer groups and associations, commodity organizations, Indigenous groups, non-governmental organizations, and provincial or territorial Crown corporations, among others.

Delivery partners will need to propose a delivery plan that would best achieve the targeted outcomes.

Direct support to farmers will fall under these target areas:

- Cover cropping: for example, payment-per-acre to cover adoption or related costs such as seeds and equipment. Cover crops are plants, like clover and alfalfa, that are planted to cover the soil rather than for the purpose of being harvested.
- Nitrogen management: for example, agronomic services to develop farm-specific nutrient management plans, equipment modifications for fertilizer application in fields, and soil sampling and analysis.
- Rotational grazing: for example, agronomic services to develop grazing management plans, interior cross fencing, water system infrastructure, legume and forage seeds. Rotational grazing is the practice of containing and moving livestock through pasture to allow forage plants to recover, deepen their root systems and improve soil health.

To request the call for proposals form, please email aafo.acs-sac.aac@agr.gc.ca. The application process will run until September 26, 2021.

The Government of Canada is committed to working with Canadian producers as they help Canada meet its national emissions reduction targets, protect the environment, and build the strength and competitiveness of our agricultural businesses and economy.



Quotes

"This year has shown us how much Canadian farmers are now seeing and experiencing the effects of a changing climate on a daily basis. With today's announcement, our Government is helping farmers to be more resilient to changes in climate and to contribute to reducing the greenhouse gases that cause climate change."

- The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food.

"The fight against climate change isn't only about reducing emissions, but adapting to changes that are already set in motion and caused by extreme weather events such as wildfires, flood, and droughts. Given the importance of the agriculture and agri-food sector, it is clear that more ambitious actions are needed to help build climate resilience. Through sustainable on-farm practices, the Government of Canada is investing in our farmers to support safer communities, a healthier environment, and a stronger economy as we continue to build resilience from coast to coast to coast."

- The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

"The impact of the current, devastating drought conditions many Canadian farmers and ranchers are enduring each and every day is another example of our farmers battling on the front-lines of climate change. Canadian farmers are deeply invested in not only mitigating climate change impacts but, at the same time, pushing to unleash our sector's potential as a natural climate solutions provider. The Climate Action Fund will support farmers in their sustainability efforts and assist in adopting on-farm practices that have the potential to enhance our sector's capabilities as a net carbon sink for Canada."

- Mary Robinson, President of the Canadian Federation Of Agriculture.

"This season has been devastating for many farmers across Canada, with severe heat, drought and fires; impacts that we know will only become more severe and more frequent because of climate change. The On-Farm Climate Action Fund empowers us to do something concrete on our farms to adapt to extreme weather and jump-start emission reductions. This new program is a first step in helping farmers meet the immense challenge of climate change."

- Karen Ross, Director, Farmers for Climate Solutions.

"Today's announcement, like the investments being made by several countries in this area, is a step in the right direction. Climate change will have major consequences for the agricultural sector. Producers are already taking proactive steps, but they need additional support in the face of the challenges they are experiencing and will continue to face. As such, the measures announced by the government will be welcomed."

- Marcel Groleau, General President, Union des producteurs agricoles.

Quick Facts

- The On-Farm Climate Action Fund is one of many important new initiatives being undertaken to promote improving long term climate resiliency in the agriculture sector, and is part of Canada's Strengthened Climate Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40-45 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030, and towards net-zero emissions by 2050. Canada's agriculture currently accounts for 10 percent of Canada's GHG emissions and has the potential to play a key role in reducing national GHG emissions and improving climate resiliency.
- The Fund will support expanding, sustaining and validating adoption of the identified beneficial management practices to enable GHG emissions reductions and/or carbon sequestration that would not have occurred otherwise.
- Funding for this new \$200 million On-Farm Climate Action Fund was first announced in Budget 2021.



- The Fund is part of the Government's Agricultural Climate Solutions (ACS) initiative, which is under the umbrella of the \$4 billion Natural Climate Solutions Fund, which includes Environment and Climate Change Canada's ten-year \$631 million Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund (NSCSF) and Natural Resources Canada's \$3.2 billion Two Billion Trees program. The NSCSF support projects that restore, enhance and conserve wetlands, peatlands, grasslands, and forests to capture and store carbon. These ecosystems are also critically important habitats for Canada's wildlife including migratory birds and species at risk.
- In the past year, the Government of Canada has announced \$550-million over 10 years to help Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector meet our emission targets and capture new opportunities in the green economy, including:
 - \$200 million for the Agricultural Climate Solutions – On Farm Climate Action Fund;
 - \$185 million for the Agricultural Climate Solutions – Living Lab program that is establishing a Canada-wide network of regional collaborations led by farmers and including scientists and other stakeholders to co-develop and implement farming practices to tackle climate change; and
 - \$165.7 million for the Agricultural Clean Technology Program to support research, development and adoption of clean technologies.
- Canada's Changing Climate Report, released by Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) in 2019, indicates that warming in Canada is approximately double the global average.

Additional Links

- [Agricultural Climate Solutions - Living Lab Program](#)
- [Natural Climate Solutions Fund](#)
- [Environment and Climate Change Canada funding programs](#)

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Backgrounder

Agricultural Climate Solutions – On-Farm Climate Action Fund

The \$200 million [On-Farm Climate Action Fund](#) (2021-2024) is one of the many important new initiatives being undertaken to promote environmental sustainability and economic resiliency in the agriculture sector.

Climate change is expected to compound many of the environmental challenges and risks associated with agricultural production, affecting including water quantity and quality, soil health, and biodiversity. [Canada's Changing Climate Report](#) indicates that warming in Canada is approximately double the global average and even higher in Canada's northern regions.

Taking immediate action against climate change is key to exceeding Canada's 2030 emission reductions target, and setting the foundation for a net-zero emissions economy by 2050. The benefits of these actions to Canada's economy and environment are clear, and producers are key partners in implementing climate solutions.

The On-Farm Climate Action Fund will support producers in adopting beneficial management practices (BMPs) that reduce greenhouse gases (GHGs) and store carbon, specifically nitrogen management, cover cropping, and rotational grazing practices. These practices also provide other environmental benefits such as improved biodiversity and soil health.

Many producers have already begun implementing these and other BMPs. The Fund will address barriers to wider adoption, including up-front implementation costs, lack of risk protection, minimal or delayed returns on investment and limited availability of information and agronomic services.

The Fund will be distributed through delivery partners. Recipient organizations will propose ways in which that funding can be delivered, based on their experience with participating producers.

Activities eligible for funding include:

- Nitrogen management: agronomic services to develop farm-specific nutrient management plans, equipment modifications for fertilizer application in fields, and soil sampling and analysis.
- Cover cropping: payment-per-acre to cover adoption or related costs such as seeds and equipment.
- Rotational grazing: agronomic services to develop grazing management plans, interior cross fencing, water system infrastructure, legume and forage seeds.

Other activities to support BMP adoption, like outreach, education, and training, will also be considered.

The Fund is part of the Government of Canada's Agricultural Climate Solutions initiative under the Natural Climate Solutions Fund (NCSF). The NCSF is implemented by Natural Resources Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

To request the call for proposals form, please email aaafc.acs-sac.aac@agr.gc.ca. The application process will run until September 26, 2021.