



Agriculture Business Advancer Program Guidelines

2021-2022

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

Programs and Business Risk Management (PBRM)

74 Research Drive

Bible Hill, Nova Scotia B6L 2R2

Tel: 902-893-6377 Toll free: 1-866-844-4276

Fax: 902-893-7579

Email: prm@novascotia.ca Website: <http://novascotia.ca/programs>

CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL PARTNERSHIP (CAP)

The governments of Canada and Nova Scotia are committed to ensuring farmers and processors have the tools they need to innovate, grow and prosper. The *Canadian Agricultural Partnership* agreement is part of a commitment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to promote productivity and profitability for the sector. The programs are designed to help the industry position itself to respond to future opportunities and to realize its full potential as a significant contributor to the economy. Programs are also tailored with the flexibility to meet diverse regional requirements.

The partnership is a five-year, \$3-billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments that aims to strengthen the agriculture and agri-food sector and ensure continued innovation, growth and prosperity. The partnership includes \$1 billion for federal activities and programs, and \$2 billion in cost-shared programs delivered by provinces and territories on a 60-40 basis. In Nova Scotia, \$37 million will be invested through provincially delivered programs focusing on Markets and Trade; Science, Research and Innovation; Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change; Risk Management; Value Added Agriculture and Agri-Food Processing; and Public Trust.

In addition to cost-shared strategic initiatives, the partnership includes several business risk-management programs to help farmers manage risks that threaten the viability of their farms.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Agriculture Business Advancer program will support the adoption of new technologies, processes or specialized equipment for the purpose of business growth. Projects are to focus on or support expansion into new crops, products or markets. Through the assessment, implementation or adoption, all projects should improve farm and industry competitiveness, productivity and profitability by:

- helping farms demonstrate and evaluate new agricultural practices and techniques;
- accelerating the adoption of progressive technologies; and
- sharing information acquired through the use/adoption of new practices and/or equipment on farm.

ELIGIBILITY

Farm:

- currently and properly registered in the correct income category under the *Farm Registration Act*;
- applicant is at least 19 years of age and actively farming in the program year;
- has generated an annual eligible gross commodity income of \$1,000,000. The eligible commodity income will be based on the Statement of Farming Activities (T2042, T1273 or Schedule 125 - Farm Revenue: detailing sales by commodity revenue code); and
- currently planning expansion and growth.

Note: projects must be large initiatives with an estimated cost of no less than \$750,000 and applicants must provide a business plan to support their business activities.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Applicants are eligible for **30%** funding assistance on total eligible project costs to a maximum of **\$300,000**. Applicants are eligible to receive only one approval throughout the life of CAP.

Note 1: Funding for the program is limited and the final decision to support will be determined by PBRM.

Note 2: No more than 100% of non-repayable funding can be received for any eligible project cost incurred and paid for by the applicant, regardless of source. Applicants are required to disclose all funding sources.

ASSESSMENT FACTORS FOR FUNDING ELIGIBILITY

Level of Innovation – Projects will involve the creation, development and implementation of a new product, process or service, with the aim of improving efficiency, effectiveness or competitive advantage.

Degree of Industry Reach – Degree to which project goes beyond the scope of the applicant's individual business. A higher consideration will be given to technologies/innovations that have the potential for broad reach within the Nova Scotia agricultural industry.

Level of Economic Impact – A higher consideration will be given to applications that reflect a significant economic impact to the applicant's business and the wider Nova Scotia agricultural industry.

Government Perspective of Risk – Refers to the perceived degree of risk to the sector or individual. Government contribution to the project is intended to help offset risk.

Other – Other factors deemed necessary.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

Adoption of Technologies / Equipment

Financial support will be provided to assist with projects that focus on the adoption of technologies (i.e. equipment) new to the current farm operation or new to Nova Scotia agriculture. Adoption of technologies in Nova Scotia that increase productivity, efficiency, and reduce labour are eligible, and require a strong business case when applying.

Adoption of New on Farm Processes, Practices and Techniques

Financial support will be provided to assist with projects that focus on the adoption of new/innovative on farm processes, practices and techniques. Technology/knowledge for this project should be shared with industry where possible.

Eligible expenses include:

- direct project costs;
- installation costs;
- consultants / professional fees / training;
- materials / supplies / rentals;
- specialized equipment / shipping;
- transfer of knowledge / sharing of information activities;
- other expenses with pre-approval.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

These include but are not limited to:

- administrative / general overhead;
- buildings / building modifications;
- tools;
- multiple pieces of equipment with the same function (e.g. two specialized sprayers);
- ongoing software licensing costs or fees;
- operating expenses / existing staff salaries;
- HST;
- in-kind contributions; and
- travel.

APPLICATION PROCESS

There is limited funding in the Agriculture Business Advancer program. Applications completed to the satisfaction of the PBRM office will be considered for approval on a case-by-case basis, subject to Program eligibility criteria, assessment criteria and funding constraints.

Contact the PBRM office to receive an application package. Complete the application package and submit to the PBRM office.

Note 1: Clients new to PBRM programs since 2018 must complete the Program Funding Registration form. Returning clients, must update the form as needed with any changes to business information including contact information, structure, commodities, environmental farm plan and Premise ID.

APPROVAL PROCESS

1. Applications are assessed based on the information and supporting documentation provided. If an application requires further assessment or information, PBRM staff will follow up with the applicant.
2. If approved, applicants will receive a **Letter of Agreement (LOA)** which identifies the eligible project activities, assistance offered, and the terms and conditions under which assistance is approved.
3. Review, sign and return the LOA to PBRM within **30 days** of the date of the letter or your funding will be forfeited.

CLAIMING PROCESS

1. Complete and claim your Agriculture Business Advancer projects prior to the deadline of March 1, 2022.
2. Complete and sign the **Program Claim Form** that you received with your LOA.
3. Attach copies of all invoices for eligible project costs incurred and paid for by the applicant.
4. Attach proof of payment for each invoice – debit slips, cancelled cheques, or credit card statements. (receipted invoices marked paid and signed by the supplier are not accepted)
5. Submit your claim with the required supporting documentation to PBRM by the claim deadline.

Payment Holdback: 25% of the submitted claim will be held back until the required Final Report, satisfactory to PBRM, has been submitted. The holdback payment will be processed for payment after the Final Report has been received.

FINAL REPORT

Projects approved for funding have the following mandatory reporting requirements:

- a Final Report is to be submitted to PBRM (template provided with LOA);
- the Final Report must be submitted at the time of the final claim;
- failure to submit a Final Report will affect future funding considerations by the PBRM office and eligible claim payment will be reduced by 25%;
- Final Reports may be made available publicly on the NSDA website; and
- a follow up review and/or inspection may be conducted after project completion.

LEASED LAND

Eligible projects must be directly applicable to the registered farm qualifying for the assistance on agricultural land owned or leased. A copy of the long-term lease (10 years) or rental agreement must accompany the Application for all physical projects applicable to the leased/rented land. It is a condition of approval that the lease be of at least 10 years duration. You must advise us immediately, in writing, if the lease is terminated, if the term of the lease changes or if the identity of the lessor changes in any way (for example, if the lessor assigns the lease or if the lease changes in composition).

ARM'S LENGTH TRANSACTIONS

Financial assistance will only be offered on transactions (invoices) that involve a supplier/service provider with an arm's-length relationship to the applicant for approved projects. For the purposes of Programs, arm's length is defined as individuals who are NOT connected by blood relationship, marriage, common-law partnership, or adoption.

AUTHORITY

NSDA shall have the authority to deny an application if there is evidence of misrepresentation of pertinent information or if NSDA believes that an application does not conform to the spirit of the Program.

EVALUATION AND AUDIT

Review and evaluation of projects may be carried out by NSDA, Government of Canada or other parties chosen by NSDA for the purpose of audit, analysis, evaluation, program development and determining financial assistance. This review and evaluation process may be conducted prior to project commencement, during work or upon project completion. Applicants may be asked to complete an evaluation survey related to their final claim.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Applicants consent to the release of their name and the amount of support received under the Program. This specific information is deemed to be public information, to be actively disseminated by NSDA. NSDA may provide any information from an applicant to another public body or a law-enforcement agency in Canada to assist in an investigation, undertaken with a view to a law-enforcement proceeding or from which a law-enforcement proceeding is likely to result. Any other information provided, unless disclosed in the manner and for the purposes stated above, will be subject to the confidentiality and disclosure provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP) Act.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please submit all documents related to the Agriculture Business Advancer Program to PBRM at the address, email or fax number below. For more information about the Program, please contact PBRM or your regional office.

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74 Research Drive
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Fax: 902-893-7579
Email: prm@novascotia.ca

PBRM: Telephone: 902-893-6377 Toll Free: 1-866-844-4276		
Western Region Offices	Cornwallis	902-638-2395
	Kentville	902-679-6021
	Lunenburg	902-634-7575
Eastern Region Offices	Truro	902-893-6575
	Antigonish	902-863-7180
	Sydney	902-563-2000