



Business Advisory Services Program Guidelines

2020-2021



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 objective of this program is to enhance Nova Scotia farms' and agri-businesses' ability to be more competitive, manage transition, develop risk management strategies and respond to change. The business advisory services offered under this program will enable the agriculture sector to be proactive in business development decisions.

ELIGIBILITY

Farm:

- applicant is at least 19 years of age and actively farming in the program year;
- currently and properly registered in the correct income category under the *Farm Registration Act*; and
- generates an annual eligible gross commodity income of \$30,000. 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).

Agri-Business:

- represents identifiable Nova Scotia agriculture and agri-food products;
- generates an annual gross agri-business income of \$30,000 or more; and
- conducts value-added processing of a raw Nova Scotia agriculture product which demonstrates a direct partnership and significant economic impact to the Nova Scotia primary agricultural industry.

Agricultural Industry Association:

- represents identifiable Nova Scotia agriculture and agri-food products; and
- demonstrates not-for-profit status by providing documentation.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Applicants are eligible for **50%** funding assistance on total eligible project costs to a maximum of **\$10,000** per program year.

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.

Note 3: Consultant quotes are required and must be provided with the application.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Consultant Services

Business Plan

Marketing Plan

Succession Plan

Feasibility / Marketing Study

Efficiency Improvement Plans (e.g. LEAN, Six Sigma)

Food Safety Plan

- Needs Assessment / Gap Assessment / Pre-audit Assessment
- HACCP Based Plan (e.g. Good Manufacturing Practices, Good Distribution Practices, Good Agricultural Practices, Food Safety Quality System)
- Regulatory Based Plan (e.g. Safe Food for Canadians, FSMA)
- Global Food Safety Initiative Plan (e.g. Canada GAP, Global Gap, SQF, BRC)

Farm Health & Safety Plan

- Needs Assessment / Gap Assessment
- Hazard Assessment / Risk Assessment
- Development of Farm Safety Plan (e.g. policies, safe work practices and procedures, inspections, record keeping, etc.)
- Occupational Hygienist Services (e.g. air and noise monitoring)
- Engineering Certification

Translation Services

- Food Safety Plan
- Farm Safety Plan
- Product Labels (does not include printing of labels)

Graphic Design for Product Packaging

- Domestic
- International

Over the duration of the program, applicants are eligible to apply and claim for each type of expense one time only, with the exception of the following for *new* projects and products:

- Graphic Design for Product Packaging
- Feasibility and Marketing Studies

Additional funding to update a section of a plan previously completed may be eligible. Contact PBRM for authorization.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

These include but are not limited to:

- administrative / general overhead;
- buildings / building modifications;
- HST;
- in-kind contributions;
- Nutrient Management Plans;
- operating expenses / existing staff salaries;
- tools;
- training and related courses;
- travel; and
- implementation (action items) of the approved plans are not eligible for assistance (see examples below).

Example 1: A Food Safety Plan may identify areas and/or items in a facility that require attention, such as hands-free hand washing units and proper floor surfacing for a Provincially Inspected facility. The program will not cover the cost to purchase and install these items.

Example 2: A Succession Plan will recommend multiple action items to implement the plan. The program does not cover the cost of implementing the plan, including:

- closing and financial arrangements;
- review of legal documents re: establishment of Farm Partnership;
- preparation of deed;
- land transfer activities;
- establishment of a trust;
- corporation fees; and
- sales documents.

Example 3: A Farm Safety Plan may identify training, monitoring equipment and/or items required for your farm. The program will not cover the cost to purchase or install these items.

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for the Business Advisory Services Program, complete and submit the Application including the consultant quote(s). Late applications will not be accepted. Eligible project expenses will be recognized within the activity period stated in the below table, however, expenses incurred prior to the date of project approval are at the applicant's risk.

Application Intake	Activity Period	Claim Deadline
February 1, 2020-December 31, 2020	April 1, 2020-March 1, 2021	March 1, 2021

Note: 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 will be reviewed by the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture (NSDA).
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. Claim deadline is noted in table above, in Application Process.
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.

Note: No payment will be made for claims under \$20.00.

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

The Department shall have the authority to deny an application if there is evidence of misrepresentation of pertinent information, or if the Department 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 the NSDA, Government of Canada or other parties chosen by the NSDA for the purpose of audit, analysis, evaluation, program development and determining 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 statement 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 Business Advisory Services Program to PBRM at the address, email or fax number below. For more information about the Program, please contact PBRM or your regional office.

Programs and Business Risk Management (PBRM)
 74 Research Drive
 Bible Hill, Nova Scotia B6L 2R2
 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