

# Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

Competitive. Innovative. Resilient.

## Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Agriculture Support Program Guidelines

2026-2027



## Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

The Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership is a 5-year, \$3.5-billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen competitiveness, innovation, and resiliency of Canada's agriculture, agri-food, and agri-based products sector. This includes \$1 billion in federal programs and activities and a \$2.5-billion commitment that is cost-shared 60% federally and 40% provincially/territorially for programs that are designed and delivered by provinces and territories.

In Nova Scotia, \$46 million will be invested through a federal-provincial partnership that is linked to five program streams: 1) Building Sector Capacity, Growth and Competitiveness; 2) Climate Change and Environment; 3) Market Development and Trade; 4) Science, Research, and Innovation; and 5) Resiliency and Public Trust.

We support the development of diverse and inclusive industries. All equity-deserving communities including but not limited to women, persons with disabilities, Black and African Nova Scotians, Mi'kmaq, Indigenous peoples, 2SLGBTQI+ and racialized individuals may apply to programming.

## Program Objective

The objective of the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Agriculture Support Program is to help individuals from underrepresented and underserved communities grow agricultural businesses by offering support for business advisory services, specialized equipment and building improvements.

## Eligible Applicants

- Persons with disabilities
- Women
- Black and African Nova Scotians
- Mi'kmaq
- Indigenous peoples
- Other racialized individuals

## Program Criteria

### Individuals must:

- be currently registered under the *Farm Registration Act*. If the applicant is not currently registered under the *Farm Registration Act*, please reach out to the Diversity Programming Specialist to explore available supports.
- be actively farming in the program year
- be 19 years of age or older.
- generate an annual eligible gross income of less than \$30,000. The eligible farming income will be based on the Farm Registration income level.
  - returning applicants who have reached \$30,000 of gross commodity income can choose to remain in the program but may not access other Department of Agriculture programs.

### Additional Requirements:

- Schedule A and Schedule B of a current (within the last 5 years) Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) are required when applying for Land Improvement projects. Consult with a Diversity Programming Specialist for more information about the EFP Program (see contact information at the end of guidelines).

## Financial Assistance

Applicants can apply to receive **80%** of eligible project expenses up to a maximum of **\$8,000** per program year. See Appendix A for eligible project expenses.

In addition to the **\$8,000 available per program year**, applicants may apply for supplementary funding for Business Advisory Services. This supplementary funding covers **up to 80% of eligible expenses** up to a maximum of **\$2,000** over the life of Sustainable CAP.

**Note:** This program is anticipated to be offered again in 2027-28. However, programs may be modified or discontinued based on budget availability, industry feedback, and government priorities.

**Note 2:** Quotes are required for all projects under this program and must be provided with the application.

## Eligible Expenses

Eligible expenses include farm building improvements and equipment to support farm growth. Refer to **Appendix A** at the end of this document for examples.

### Additional Expense Eligibility Requirements:

- Used equipment must be purchased from a recognized dealer and be in good condition. Applicants must identify at time of application if they are purchasing used equipment, and these applications will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- In-kind labour can be used towards specific projects including but not limited to pest control, site preparation for growing structures, and farm building improvements. A rate of \$27.60/hour will be used. A maximum of 15% of the total project cost is eligible up to \$750 per year.
  - **Example:** An applicant with a \$2,000 project cost will be eligible for up to \$300 in reimbursement for in-kind labour.
- All food and farm safety plans must include a needs assessment, gap assessment or re-audit assessment.
- Program funding will only be offered on transactions (invoices) that do not involve a supplier/service provider that is associated with the applicant, unless it is proven that an associated supplier/service provider is the only registered company providing that service in the area. In such cases that it is necessary to proceed with an associated supplier/service provider, the applicant must apply for a pre-approval from Programs before proceeding or submitting a claim to ensure that the associated costs will be approved for reimbursement.

## Ineligible Expenses

Ineligible expenses are expenses that will not be compensated under this program and include but are not limited to, the following expenses:

- travel expenses
- administrative/general overhead
- buildings/sea containers
- multiple pieces of equipment per applicant with the same function
- purchase of ongoing software licensing costs or fees
- purchase of standard software programs
- operating expenses/existing staff wages/salaries
- HST

## Application Process

To apply for the Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility Agriculture Support program:

1. Work with a Diversity Programming Specialists to complete the application prior to submitting to Programs. Refer to the last page of the Guidelines for contact information.
2. Submit a complete application and supporting documents (e.g. quotes, EFP for Land Improvement, etc.) to the Programs office by **August 31, 2026**.

Application Intake	Activity Period	Claim Deadline
April 01, 2026 – August 31, 2026	April 1, 2026 – December 31, 2026	December 31, 2026

**Note:** An applicant may only complete one application per year for this program.

**Note 2:** Applicants new to Programs since 2023 must complete the Program Funding Registration (PFR) form. Returning applicants 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. Complete applications will be reviewed by the Department of Agriculture as they are received.
2. If approved, applicants will receive a **Letter of Agreement (LOA)** that identifies the Program funding offered and the terms and conditions under which Program funding is approved.
3. The applicant is responsible for reporting any errors in the LOA, including the program funding amounts provided.
4. The applicant must review, sign and return the LOA to Programs within **30 days** of the date of the LOA or the Program funding will be forfeited.

**Note:** Approval of applications is subject to availability of Program funding. The total amount of Program funding awarded to each applicant, or to associated applicants, may be limited at the discretion of the Department of Agriculture to ensure opportunities for additional applicants to access Program funding.

## Claiming Process

A **Program Claim Form** will be sent to the applicant after the signed LOA is received.

To submit a claim, applicants must:

1. Complete and sign the Program Claim Form.
2. Attach copies of all invoices for eligible project costs which they have incurred and paid for.
3. Attach proof of payment for each invoice – e.g. e-transfer confirmation, debit slips, cleared cheques, or credit card/bank statements. (Invoices marked paid and signed by the supplier are not accepted).
4. Attach in-kind labour documentation identifying the date, task and hours completed (self identified) – e.g. spreadsheet.
5. Submit the claim with the required supporting documentation to the Programs office by **December 31, 2026**.

**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 Program funding on agricultural land owned or leased. A copy of the long-term lease of at least 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 and must last for at least 5 years after the project funding has been received. 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).

## Authority

The Department of Agriculture shall have the authority to deny an application if it does not meet the requirements described in the Program Guidelines or there is evidence of misrepresentation of pertinent information.

## Evaluation and Audit

Evaluation and audit of projects may be carried out by the Department of Agriculture, Government of Canada, or other parties chosen by the Department of Agriculture 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 and/or upon project completion. Applicants may be asked to complete an evaluation survey related to their final claim.

## Conflict of Interest

No current or former Federal public servant or public office holders will receive benefits from this funding except in compliance with Conflicts of Interest Act (Canada), the Conflicts of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons, or the Federal “Values and Ethics Code” for the public sector and the Federal “Policy on Conflicts of Interest and Post-Employment”. No Member of Parliament or Senator will be allowed to obtain financial benefit from this funding except in accordance with the Parliament of Canada Act.

## Appendix A

Examples of projects:

Category	Project
<b>Field and Farm Equipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mounted Sprayers</li> <li>• Hoists or Cranes</li> <li>• Tillers</li> <li>• Commercial Irrigation Equipment</li> <li>• Rippers</li> <li>• Grape Hoe Weeder</li> <li>• Power Harrows</li> <li>• Reverse Osmosis Machine</li> <li>• Seeders</li> <li>• Flail and Finishing Mower</li> <li>• Maple Harvesting Equipment</li> <li>• Harvester</li> <li>• Livestock Water System</li> <li>• Bush Hog (attachment to tractor)</li> <li>• UV lights/Rack System/Growing Microgreens</li> <li>• Paper Pot Transplanter System (transplanter/drop seeder/dribbler)</li> <li>• Weeding Equipment/Attachments (commercial grade, PTO attachment)</li> <li>• Commercial Grade Trellis System</li> <li>• Commercial Vacuum Pump</li> </ul>
<b>Pest Control/ Mitigation Equipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bird Bangers</li> <li>• Bird/Insect Netting</li> <li>• Bird Wailers</li> <li>• Fencing (field design required)</li> </ul>
<b>Processing Equipment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial Grade Wash Station Equipment</li> <li>• Commercial Kitchen Equipment (stove, oven, digital scale, stainless steel sinks, etc.)</li> <li>• Commercial Filtering System for Food</li> <li>• Maple Processing Equipment</li> </ul>

<p><b>Climate Control Equipment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial Refrigeration</li> <li>• Commercial Freezer</li> <li>• Walk-in Cooler and Cooling System (no buildings)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Growing Structures</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial Caterpillar Tunnel System</li> <li>• Commercial Greenhouse Kit</li> <li>• Trellis System for Greenhouse Growing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Farm Building Improvement(s)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fuel Tank (including pump)</li> <li>• Curtains (heat or ventilation)</li> <li>• Upgrading Electrical System or Adding Electrical Capacity</li> <li>• Livestock Handling System</li> <li>• Adding Water Supply (not new builds)</li> <li>• Accessibility upgrades to accommodate persons with disabilities</li> <li>• Generator</li> </ul>
<p><b>Land Improvement (EFP required)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surface and Sub-surface Drainage</li> <li>• Tile Drainage (tile drainage plan required)</li> <li>• Farmyard Runoff Management</li> <li>• Water Well</li> </ul>
<p><b>Food Safety</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enclosed Light Fixtures/Non-breakable Light Fixtures for Food Processing Areas</li> <li>• Water Treatment (UV/RO)</li> <li>• Floor Covering to meet Food Safety Requirements (no concrete work)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Marketing Activities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website Development and Adding E-commerce to a Website</li> <li>• Farm Signage</li> <li>• Graphic Design for Product Packaging, Logo, Product Labeling</li> <li>• Product Photography and Video</li> </ul>

<p><b>Business Advisory Services</b> (\$2,000 available over the lifetime of Sustainable CAP)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Business Plan</li><li>• Feasibility Study</li><li>• Emergency Preparedness Plan</li><li>• Food Safety Plan</li><li>• Lean Management</li><li>• Six Sigma</li><li>• Development of Farm Safety Plan (e.g. policies, safe work practices and procedures)</li><li>• Engineering Certification</li></ul>
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**Note:** If your proposed activity is not listed, please use the “Other items” category on your application

## Contact Information

Submit all documents to Programs at the address or email below. For more information, contact one of our Diversity Programming Specialists.

### **Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture**

#### **Programs Office**

74 Research Drive

Bible Hill, Nova Scotia B6L 2R2

Telephone: 902-893-6377

Toll Free: 1-866-844-4276

Email: [prm@novascotia.ca](mailto:prm@novascotia.ca)

Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture Diversity Programming		
Diversity Programming Specialists serving all Counties	email	AgEDIAprogram@novascotia.ca