

# Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

Competitive. Innovative. Resilient.

## On-Farm Automation and Innovation Program Guidelines

2024-2025



## Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

The Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) is a five-year (2023-2028), \$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 per cent federally and 40 per cent 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 priority areas: 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. We welcome individuals from 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, to apply to programming.

## Program Objectives

The On-Farm Automation and Innovation Program supports investments in innovative technologies that require testing and knowledge sharing in Nova Scotia before widespread adoption. These innovative technologies should align with the following Sustainable CAP priorities:

- Building Sector Capacity, Growth and Competitiveness (e.g. labour efficiencies and productivity enhancements)
- Climate Change and Environment (e.g. efficient input use, reduced GHG emissions)
- Market Development and Trade (e.g. technology for new product development)
- Resiliency and Public Trust (e.g. improved climate change resilience, farm safety, animal welfare)

## Eligible Applicants

- Registered farm
- Mi'kmaq conducting farming activities in Mi'kmaw Communities

## Program Criteria

- currently registered in the correct income category under the Nova Scotia *Farm Registration Act*
- applicant is at least 19 years of age and actively farming in the program year
- generates an annual eligible gross commodity income of \$30,000. The eligible commodity income will be based on the Farm Registration annual income.

## Financial Assistance

In the On-Farm Advancing Innovation Program, applicants can apply for a maximum of **50%** funding assistance to a maximum of **\$30,000** per program year. The maximum amount of funding an applicant can receive over the life of the Sustainable CAP program (2023-2028) is **\$60,000**.

### Assessment factors for funding eligibility:

- **Alignment with Sustainable CAP priorities** (20 points) - demonstrated ability to advance Nova Scotia agriculture in Building Sector Capacity, Growth and Competitiveness.
- **Level of Innovation** (20 points) – e.g. testing technologies or practices entirely novel or new to Nova Scotia; project addresses a need identified by industry for which there is currently no adequate solution.
- **Degree of Potential Impact** (15 points)- increase the competitiveness, sustainability, and profitability of Nova Scotia's agricultural sector.
- **Collaboration** (15 points) - with other industry stakeholders (including indigenous and other equity-deserving communities).
- **Effective Knowledge Transfer Plan** (20 points) – degree to which project reaches the wider Nova Scotia agricultural industry and creates a climate for innovation adoption.
- **Completeness of Application** (10 points) – degree of completeness of the Application and thoroughness of the Proposal. A thorough Application and Proposal will allow the project to be well understood by the reader and properly assessed for acceptance into the Program.

**Note 1:** This Program is anticipated to be offered again in 2025-26, 2026-27 and 2027-28. However, programs may be modified or discontinued based on budget availability, industry feedback, and government priorities.

**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. This applies to all Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture (NSDA) Programs.

## Eligible Expenses

Program funding will be provided to assist with projects that focus on innovative technologies that improve efficiency, reduce farm labour requirements, or pursue economic opportunities related to the bioeconomy. A knowledge sharing plan is required as part of the application.

Eligible expenses are:

- innovative equipment or new technology costs
- contracted labour that has a direct relationship to the project;
- transfer of knowledge/ sharing of information activities;
- training related to the new technology; and
- software purchases and/or subscriptions related to the new technology

Note: Leased equipment is eligible. The program funding will cover up to 50% of the cost of the first year of the lease and not the total value of the equipment.

## Ineligible Expenses

These include but are not limited to:

- administrative / general overhead
- buildings / building modifications
- small construction tools
- in-kind labour
- multiple pieces of equipment that perform the same function
- ongoing software licensing costs or fees
- operating expenses / existing staff salaries
- HST
- travel

## Application Process

To apply for the On-Farm Automation and Innovation Program:

1. Submit a complete application by **August 15, 2024**.
2. Eligible project expenses will be recognized within the Activity Period stated in the table below. Please refrain from making purchases before receiving a Letter of Agreement (LOA) from the Program's Office.

Application Intake	Activity Period	Claim Deadline
July 3, 2024 – August 15 2024	April 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024	December 31, 2024

**Note 1:** An applicant may only complete one application per year.

**Note 2:** Clients new to Programs from 2023 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. Complete applications will be reviewed by the NSDA.
2. If approved, applicants will receive an **LOA** which identifies the eligible project activities, program funding offered and the terms and conditions under which program funding is approved.
3. The client must review, sign, and return the LOA to the Program's office within **30 days** of the date of the letter or your program funding will be forfeited.

## Claiming Process

1. After Programs receives your signed LOA, a **Program Claim Form** will be sent to you.
2. Complete and sign the Program Claim Form by **December 31, 2024**.
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 – e-transfer confirmation, debit slips, cleared cheques, or credit card/bank statements. (Invoices marked paid and signed by the supplier are not accepted).
5. Submit your claim with the required supporting documentation to the Program's office 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 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

Program funding 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 intent 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.

## 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 (MP) or Senator will be allowed to obtain financial benefit from this funding except in accordance with the *Parliament of Canada Act*.

## 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 to Programs at the address, email, or fax number below. For more information, please contact Programs or your Regional office.

**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  
Fax: 902-893-75797  
Email: [prm@novascotia.ca](mailto:prm@novascotia.ca)

Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture Regional Offices		
Western	Yarmouth	902-223-8085
	Digby	902-638-2395
	Kentville	902-679-6021
	Lunenburg	902-634-7575
Eastern	Truro	902-893-6575
	Nappan	782-370-2278
	Antigonish	902-863-7180
	Sydney	902-563-2000