

Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

Competitive. Innovative. Resilient.

Planning New Opportunities 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 are also committed to the development of diverse and inclusive industries. We welcome individuals from all underrepresented and underserved 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 Objective

The objective of the Planning New Opportunities Program is to help farms, agri-businesses, and agricultural industry associations be more competitive, manage transition, develop risk management strategies, and respond to change. The business advisory services offered under this program also supports an agriculture sector that can be proactive in business development and risk management decisions.

Eligible Applicants

- Registered Farms
- Mi'kmaq conducting farming activities in Mi'kmaw communities
- Agricultural industry associations
- Agri-businesses

Program Criteria

Farms must:

- be currently registered under the *Farm Registration Act*.
- be actively farming in the program year and the applicant must be 19 years of age or older.
- generate an annual eligible gross farming income of \$30,000 or more. The eligible farming income will be based on the Farm Registration income level.

Agricultural industry associations must:

- demonstrate not-for-profit status by providing documentation
- represent identifiable Nova Scotia agriculture and agri-food products (see note below).

Agri-businesses must:

- represent identifiable Nova Scotia agriculture and agri-food products (see note below).
- generate an annual eligible gross income of \$30,000 or more based on 2025 or 2026 T2 Corporation Income Tax Return and/or internal Income Statement.
- use the table below to show proof of purchase of a certain level of local ingredients based on their income level.
 - example: An eligible applicant has \$55,000 in income, based on the table below they will need to show proof of \$10,000 in local inputs.

Proof of local ingredients:

Income Level	Minimum annual purchases of raw agricultural ingredients
\$30,000 - \$49,999	\$5,000
\$50,000 - \$99,999	\$10,000
\$100,000+	\$25,000

Note: Identifiable agriculture and agri-food products are products supporting economic growth using Nova Scotia primary agricultural ingredients.

Financial Assistance

Applicants can apply to receive Program funding up to **60%** of eligible expenses, to a maximum of **\$15,000**.

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

The following items are eligible in this program:

Consultant Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • business plan • succession plan • feasibility study • emergency preparedness plan • data analysis fees • engineering plan <p>Note: engineering plans for manure storage (BMP 71) must be applied for under the Environmental Stewardship and Climate Change Program.</p>
Process Improvement Plans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e.g. lean management, Six Sigma
Food Safety Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, GLOBALG.A.P., SQF, BRC)
Farm Safety Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • farm safety plan • food safety plan • product labels (does not include printing of labels)

Additional Expense Eligibility Requirements

- All food and farm safety plans must include a needs assessment, gap assessment, or re-audit assessment.
- Over the duration of the program, applicants are eligible to apply and claim for each type of expense one time only, except for the following for *new* projects and products: feasibility studies.
- Succession plans will be funded to a maximum of \$15,000 over a period of two years.
- 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 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/building modifications/sea containers
- in-kind contributions
- nutrient management plans/woodlot management plans
- training and related courses
- purchase of ongoing software licensing costs or fees
- purchase of standard software programs
- operating expenses/existing staff wages/salaries
- implementations (action items) of the approved plans (see examples below)
- HST

Example: 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

Example 2: 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 Planning New Opportunities program:

- Submit a complete application by **June 30, 2026**.

Application Intake	Activity Period	Claim Deadline
April 1, 2026 – June 30, 2026	April 1, 2026 – February 28, 2027	February 28, 2027

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. Submit the claim with the required supporting documentation to the Programs office by **February 28, 2026**.

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

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.

Contact Information

Submit all documents to Programs at the address or email below. For more information, 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

Email: prm@novascotia.ca

Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture Regional Offices		
<p style="text-align: center;">Western (Covering West Hants, Kings, Annapolis, Digby, Yarmouth, Shelburne, Queens, and Lunenburg counties)</p>	Yarmouth	902-223-8085
	Digby	902-638-2395
	Kentville	902-679-6021
	Lunenburg	902-634-7575
<p style="text-align: center;">Eastern (Covering Colchester, Cumberland, East Hants, Halifax - including HRM, Pictou, Antigonish, Guysborough, Richmond, Inverness, Cape Breton, and Victoria counties)</p>	Truro	902-893-6575
	Nappan	782-370-2278
	Antigonish	902-863-7180
	Sydney	902-563-2000