



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada

Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF)

Positioning Canada at the Leading Edge

The *Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food* (ACAAF) program is a five-year, \$255 million program aimed at positioning Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector at the leading edge to seize new opportunities. ACAAF was launched in April 2004 as a successor to the Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development (CARD) Fund, and will continue CARD's innovative and cooperative approach to funding projects at the national, multi-regional and regional level.

Under the ACAAF program, funding is provided for eligible projects identified and carried out by the agriculture and agri-food sector. The ACAAF program complements the objectives set out under the Agricultural Policy Framework (APF) and will further advance progress toward its goals by engaging industry stakeholders in undertaking new activities which complement existing programming. ACAAF will also encourage the sector to contribute to future agriculture and agri-food policy directions.

ACAAF Objectives

The objectives of the ACAAF program are to:

- Expand the sector's capacity to respond to current and emerging issues
- Position the sector to capture market opportunities
- Actively and continuously engage the sector to contribute to future agriculture and agri-food policy directions.
- Integrate sector-led projects tested and piloted under ACAAF into future government or industry initiatives.

The Three "Pillars"

The ACAAF program is delivered under the following three "pillars," which were confirmed through extensive consultation with industry:

Pillar I:

- ***Industry-led Solutions to Emerging Issues***, which supports projects that test or pilot approaches and solutions.

Pillar II:

- ***Capturing Market Opportunities by Advancing Research Results***, which supports projects that transfer research results into market opportunities.

Pillar III:

- ***Sharing Information to Advance the Sector***, which supports projects aimed at gathering, analyzing and sharing information to contribute to future agriculture and agri-food policy directions.

The goal of the Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (ACAAF) Program is to position Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector at the leading edge to capture new opportunities. Ideas that lead to better products, processes and technologies need to be developed, tested and advanced for use throughout the sector. Information needs to reach the right people at the right time. ACAAF is about the future of the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector and finding new approaches for advancement and innovation.

The agriculture and agri-food industry is constantly changing and requires flexibility and the capacity to address new issues as they emerge.

Pillar I— *Industry-led Solutions to Emerging Issues*

Pillar I of the ACAAF program, “*Industry-Led Solutions to Emerging Issues,*” expands the agriculture and agri-food sector's capacity to respond to current and emerging issues and to seize new opportunities through the implementation of national, multi-regional and regional projects that test new ideas and approaches. This includes the capacity to address new value-added products and processes which will enhance the sustainability of the agriculture and agri-food sector.

Pillar I provides the opportunity for industry-led projects which further advance progress to goals and objectives of a single or multiple elements of the APF (e.g. Environment, Food Safety and Food Quality, Science and Innovation, Renewal) in a complementary manner without duplicating existing programming. In addition, Pillar I activities can act as an incubator for pilots or projects which address emerging issues or hold promise for setting the direction of future policy or program approaches.

Funding for applied research on an emerging issue that is recognized as an industry priority would be considered, with the condition that the project proposal demonstrates how results will be shared broadly among stakeholders.

Pillar II— Capturing Market Opportunities by Advancing Research Results

Among the challenges facing the agriculture and agri-food sector is to make research readily transferable into the marketplace, and thereby foster the development of value added opportunities and generate economic growth. Governments and non-government institutions alike have been making large investments in agriculture and agri-food research, but moving the results of this research into mainstream industry practice requires adaptive research and various other pre-commercialization activities.

Pillar II of the ACAA program, “*Capturing Market Opportunities by Advancing Research Results*,” focuses on helping to create market opportunities within the agriculture and agri-food sector by supporting the transfer of research results from governments, industry, and educational institutions. This pillar is aimed at leveraging research results into market opportunities, strengthening the capacity of the sector to commercialize research results, encouraging business growth, and improving the sector’s international competitiveness.

Eligible Activities

A suite of activities may be considered under a Pillar II project, including:

- technical analysis and technical feasibility studies
- market and venture assessments
- economic feasibility studies
- adaptive research (eligible for partial funding)
- support for engineering prototypes
- strategic market plans and strategic business plans

Project proponents must be able to demonstrate that there is potential for market application of the product, process, or technology that has resulted from research. The project should be directed at benefiting the sector more broadly and at maximizing the “public good” (a good or service aimed at maximizing societal, community, environmental and/or economic benefits). As the focus is on pre-commercialization activities, ACAA funding under Pillar II is not provided for basic research and applied research projects.

Pillar III— *Sharing Information to Advance the Sector*

Given the increasing interdependencies within the agriculture and agri-food sector as well as with other sectors such as health, environment, and transportation, there is a need for timely and effective information dissemination throughout the sector. This is important so that new ideas and information on best practices, for example, can be communicated widely for the benefit of all and so that new market opportunities can be realized.

Pillar III of the ACAAF program, “*Sharing Information to Advance the Sector,*” focuses on enabling the sector to gather, analyze, and share information including support for projects that strengthen the sector’s ability to participate in the policy dialogue and shape the future of the sector. This pillar will also focus on projects that are identified by the sector as information needs or gaps, and if addressed, would contribute to the further advancement of the agriculture and agri-food sector.

Examples of eligible projects could include:

- \$ Projects that position the sector to participate in the policy dialogue, or that enable dialogue with other sectors to be broadened. For example, ACAAF could support bringing together representatives from a particular segment of the sector that has demonstrated a need to develop a strategy to address an emerging issue. Similarly, ACAAF could support meetings of national associations including organizations/sectors outside agriculture and agri-food to address or examine common issues impacting their respective areas.
- Projects that gather, analyze, and help disseminate information throughout the sector, enabling the sector to proactively develop responses based on this information. For example, ACAAF could support projects on demographics and environmental trends, and information-gathering projects on trends in agricultural technologies.

The ACAAF program would not support normal ongoing activities, including regular meetings of organizations.

Collective Outcomes

Increasing collaboration and forming new alliances throughout the sector will be key for future success. To foster and strengthen collaboration, while maximizing the benefits from the federal investment, the ACAA program will encourage and support “*collective outcome*” projects which demonstrate greater industry collaboration amongst national, multi-regional and regional stakeholders.

Specific collective outcomes for the ACAA Program will be identified through two methods:

- Industry-led councils will identify project proposals that have broad application, and in situations where more than one council shares the same priority, these projects may be considered under the collective outcomes umbrella. National organizations, working in collaboration with provincial/territorial sectoral groups and councils, where appropriate, would also play a key role in the identification and delivery of collective outcome projects; and,
- A proposed forum, whose composition would be drawn from across the agriculture and agri-food sector and other key stakeholders, would provide the venue for stakeholders to identify emerging issues and opportunities where a collaborative response would benefit the sector.

Program Principles and Criteria

Proposals to access ACAA funding must meet specified principles and be consistent with the program’s criteria:

Principles

- Consistent with Government of Canada policy directions, such as sustainable development, innovation and reporting results to Canadians.
- Within the mandate of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, as defined under the *Agriculture and Agri-Food Act*.
- Maximize benefits to Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector through collaborative efforts.
- Consistent with international trade commitments and minimizing the exposure to countervail.
- Respect the need for equity among regions and stakeholders.
- Respect those areas that are solely within provincial and territorial jurisdiction.
- Avoid duplicating, overlapping or replacing federal, provincial/territorial programs and delivery mechanisms.

Criteria

- Projects must fall within the parameters of the program's three pillars.
- Priority will be given to projects where the proposal demonstrates direct industry financial support and partnerships/alliances with others.
- Funding is not to be considered ongoing, but should be provided for a limited period to help the sector resolve an issue or capture opportunities.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate the economic viability and longer-term self-sufficiency of their proposal, where the nature of the project warrants.
- Applicants should demonstrate how their proposed project will contribute to the public good, including but not limited to, economic benefits for Canada.
- Funds will not be used as direct income support.
- Funding is not to support ongoing activities or normal commercial expansion.
- Funds may be used for projects that benefit the sector as a whole, as well as those aimed at specific provincial/territorial needs.
- Only Canadian applicants are eligible. This requirement refers only to the legal jurisdiction of the entities.
- Funding will not be provided for basic research (research aimed strictly for the advancement of knowledge).
- Funding is conditional on recipients meeting all program requirements, including adherence to the Federal Identity Program, **Official Languages Act**, and ACAA performance management and audit requirements.

Program Delivery

Under the ACAA program, projects are delivered using an innovative industry-led approach at both the national and regional levels. National initiatives are delivered by national industry organizations and other eligible recipients.

Industry-led Councils

Yukon

Yukon Agricultural Association

Telephone: (867) 668-6864

Internet: www.yukonaa.com

Northwest Territories

Territorial Farmers Association

Telephone: (867) 874-4706

Internet: www.farmnwt.com

Nunavut

Nunavut Harvesters' Association

Telephone: (867) 645-3170

Internet not available. E-mail address: brian@ndcorp.nu.ca.

British Columbia

B.C. Investment Agriculture Foundation

Telephone: (250) 356-1662

Internet: www.iafbc.ca

Alberta

Agriculture and Food Council

Telephone: (780) 955-3714

Internet: www.agfoodcouncil.com

Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan Council for

Community Development

Telephone: (306) 975-6847

Internet: www.sccd.sk.ca

Manitoba

Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council Inc.

Telephone: (204) 982-4790

Internet: www.mrac.ca

Ontario

Agricultural Adaptation Council

Telephone: (519) 822-7554

Internet: www.adaptcouncil.org

Quebec

Conseil pour le développement de l'agriculture du Québec

Telephone: (450) 679-0540, ext. 8353

Internet: www.cdaq.qc.ca

Fonds québécois d'adaptation des entreprises agroalimentaires

Telephone: (514) 858-2000

Internet: www.fqaea.qc.ca

Nova Scotia

Agri-Future Nova Scotia

Telephone: (902) 889-2323

Internet: www.agri-futures.ns.ca

New Brunswick

N.B. Agricultural Council

Telephone: (506) 450-3891

Internet: www.nbfarm.com/nbac-canb/

Prince Edward Island

PEI ADAPT Council

Telephone: (902) 368-2005

Internet: www.gov.pe.ca/af/agweb/index.php3?number=71842

Newfoundland and Labrador

Agri-Adapt Council Inc.

Telephone: (709) 747-4874

Internet: www.nlfa.ca

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