



On Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF) for Nova Scotia

OFCAF Program Guide 2026-2027

January 2026

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Purpose of this Guide

This guide will:

- Help you determine if you may be eligible for funding from Perennia Food and Agriculture Corporation, a third-party regional delivery organization for the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada **On-Farm Climate Action Fund** (OFCAF) in Nova Scotia.
- Provide explanations to assist you in completing an application for the program to Perennia Food and Agriculture Corporation.

Funding for this project has been provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Agricultural Climate Solutions - On-Farm Climate Action Fund.

Note: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) introduced changes to the On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF) effective April 1, 2025, and could make changes at any time going forward. Therefore, Perennia reserves the right to change program delivery processes, eligibility requirements, funding levels, assessment criteria, and claiming and reporting requirements. Please ensure you are using the most current version of the OFCAF Program Guide by visiting the program website at <https://ofcaf.perennia.ca>.

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About the On-Farm Climate Action Fund

First announced in Canada's Federal Budget 2021, the **On-Farm Climate Action Fund** (OFCAF) is an initiative to help farmers tackle climate change. The Fund is part of the Government of Canada's Agricultural Climate Solutions initiative, which falls under the \$5-billion Natural Climate Solutions Fund, a 10-year (2021-2031) initiative managed by Natural Resources Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

Perennia Food and Agriculture Corporation is a delivery partner distributing OFCAF program funding to farmers, co-operatives, and associations in Nova Scotia. (Applicants from other provinces and territories can visit <https://tinyurl.com/ytuf863e> <https://tinyurl.com/ofcafpartners> to find their OFCAF program delivery organization).

Program Objectives and Priorities

The objective of OFCAF is to support farmers in adopting and implementing beneficial management practices (BMPs) that store carbon and reduce greenhouse gases. The Program provides financial assistance through project-based payments or per-acre payments in the following specific areas:

- nitrogen management
- cover cropping
- rotational grazing

These practices also provide environmental benefits such as improved biodiversity and soil health.

Importantly, this program will only fund **new** implementation of BMPs, including expansion of BMPs to additional acreage, and/or improvement of existing practices in order to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve carbon sequestration. **The program will not fund ongoing practices on existing acreage.**

The expected result of the OFCAF program is a resilient food production system in Canada that:

- helps Canada meet national greenhouse gas reduction targets,
- protects the environment and improves soil health,
- improves farm resiliency in a changing climate,
- builds the strength and competitiveness of our agricultural businesses and economy.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants under OFCAF are:

- Farm or co-operative,
- Not-for-profit agricultural association,
- Regional or community pasture,
- Other agricultural producer group (group predates the onset of the OFCAF Program)
- Mi'kmaq conducting farming activities in Mi'kmaq communities
- Underrepresented group

Eligible applicants must:

- Be actively farming,
- Be capable of entering into a legally binding agreement and be 19 years of age or older,
- Be capable of paying 100% of the costs up front,
- Be headquartered in Nova Scotia and apply funds only to lands in Nova Scotia.

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Contribution Agreement with Perennia Food and Agriculture Corporation.

Eligible Activities

The OFCAF program will fund the new adoption and on-farm implementation of specific beneficial management practices (BMPs) that help farmers tackle climate change.

Improved Nitrogen Management

- Improving manure management to reduce volatilization (i.e. using hoses or equipment for shallow incorporation. Exception to shallow incorporation will only be made for operations with solid manure, thereby **only** allowing the eligibility of vertical beater manure spreaders **with scales** upon ruling by our Review Committee.)
- Assessments, creation of plans, and other agronomic supports or technical services
- Soil testing and soil mapping costs
- Increasing the use of fertilizer substitutes such as manure, compost, and digestates
- Increasing legumes in rotation
- Transitioning to banding, side dressing, or injection of fertilizer
- Trying stabilized nitrogen fertilizers. Must have both urease and nitrification inhibitors (e.g. SuperU[®], N-Force NBPT 50 and Agrotain Plus[®])
- Trying polymer coated urea (i.e. ESN[®], PurYield[™] or Osmocote[®])
- Trying split application of fertilizer with a reduced rate as a result of increased crop use efficiency

For more information on stabilized nitrogen fertilizers or polymer coated urea please read Perennia's factsheet on Enhanced Efficiency Nitrogen Fertilizers: <https://ofcaf.perennia.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2022/11/Enhanced-Efficiency-Nitrogen-Fertilizers.pdf>

Cover Cropping

- Start or increase the use of cover crops in rotation
- Start or increase the use of intercropping
- Services provided by professional agrologist (P.Ag.), agronomist, or Certified Crop Adviser to further cover cropping on the farm

Rotational Grazing

- Adding rotational grazing infrastructure (e.g. cross fencing, virtual fencing*, wildlife friendly fencing, temporary fencing, and waterers, including remote watering systems when powered by renewable energy) for eligible species
- Improving pasture composition, targeting high-quality forage
- Creation of grazing management plans, technical assessments, or engineered designs

*A professional agrologist must validate the use of virtual fencing by assessing terrain suitability, grazing goals and expected environmental benefits. This review should also include an economic comparison to conventional fencing options.

Applicants may apply for funding for more than one BMP area (nitrogen management, cover cropping, rotational grazing).

Eligible Costs

Eligible costs are the costs directly related to the project, which are recommended by a professional agronomist, agrologist, or Certified Crop Adviser and approved by the Review Committee.

Improved Nitrogen Management

- Difference between the cost of urea and the cost of polymer coated urea (PCU)
- Difference between the cost of stabilized fertilizer which includes both urease and nitrification inhibitors and urea (must **not** be applied to the same area as PCU)
- Plan, assessment, design work and consultancy fees and cost of other agronomic support/technical training
- Soil testing and soil mapping costs (only eligible when implemented with another BMP practice such as implementation of cover crops). Soil testing and mapping costs cannot exceed \$20,000 (combined). Additional data will be required from successful applicants
- Offsetting higher cost of adopting synthetic fertilizer substitutes (manure, compost, digestates)
- Split application of fertilizer with reduced rate as a result of increased crop use efficiency
- Seed and planting costs to increase legumes in rotation. Assistance is based on a flat rate of \$100/acre (paid out at 85%)
- Cost of fertilizer application equipment and equipment upgrades to allow for banding, side-dressing and injection*
- If transitioning to manure, costs associated with spreading, using hoses or equipment for shallow incorporation (to avoid volatilization). Exception will only be made for operations with mixed manure, thereby **only** allowing the eligibility of vertical beater manure spreaders **with scales** upon ruling by our Review Committee.)*

*Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada announced a change beginning in 2024-25, that all nitrogen management equipment purchases will be limited to no more than \$30,000 per producer or 85% of purchase cost, whichever is lower. Equipment (new or used) must be purchased from a recognized dealer (auction purchases are not eligible).

Cover Cropping

- Costs related to services provided by agronomists, Certified Crop Advisers, or agrologists
- Seed costs or per-acre payments for seeding costs with regionally- and commodity-appropriate seed (flat rate of \$100/acre paid out at 85%)
- Planting costs - equipment purchases and upgrades may be considered an eligible expense, and are limited to no-till drills, air seeders, broadcast seeders, vertical tillage implements **with** attached

seed box, drones or other tools directly required for planting cover crops, when trusted advisors validate that such equipment aligns with agronomic goals and is necessary, reasonable and that rental or custom options have been taken into consideration)*

*All cover cropping equipment purchases and upgrades will be capped at \$30,000 per producer for the duration of the program. Cover crop equipment will be funded at no more than 50% of purchase cost. Equipment (new or used) must be purchased from a recognized dealer (auction purchases are not eligible).

Rotational Grazing

- Species eligible for rotational grazing include: beef, bison, dairy, elk, goats, sheep and yak
- Rotational grazing infrastructure (e.g. cross fencing, virtual fencing, wildlife friendly fencing, temporary fencing, and waterers, including remote watering systems when powered by renewable energy). Labor costs for installation from a third-party company (proper quote/invoice required) will be considered an acceptable project expense
- Improved pasture composition targeting low methane species (seeding costs for alfalfa, bird's-foot trefoil, sainfoin). Assistance is based on a flat rate of \$100/acre (paid out at 85%)
- Grazing management plans, technical assessments or engineered designs

Please refer to **Annex B: Ineligible Costs** for a list of ineligible project expenses.

Funding and Cost-sharing

Maximum Funding Amounts

For farms and co-operatives, the maximum funding available is based on gross farming income for Income Tax and Benefits Return (line 9659 on T2042 - Statement of Farming Activities) or T2 Corporation Income Tax Return (line 9659 on Schedule 125).

The maximum funding amount is the most an applicant may receive for the sum of all projects over the course of the entire six-year program, which began in 2022 and ends March 31, 2028. Parent companies and subsidiaries are considered a single recipient.

| Gross farming income | Maximum funding |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Under \$10,000 | \$10,000 |
| \$10,000 - \$49,999 | \$25,000 |
| \$50,000 - \$99,999 | \$50,000 |
| \$100,000 - \$249,999 | \$75,000 |
| \$250,000 or more | \$100,000 |

The maximum funding available to non-profit agricultural industry associations and community pastures applying for the first time is \$75,000. Previously funded recipients in this category are eligible for up to \$100,000 over the length of the program.

Funding Limits for Specific Project Activities

- Development of 3-year N-based Nutrient Management Plans will be funded at \$1,500 for first 100 acres plus \$10 per additional acre, funded at 75% of actual costs to a maximum of \$4,000 per recipient over the full program.

Farmer Sally has a 600-acre farm and wants an NMP for 400 acres of arable land.

- \$1,500 for the first 100 acres
- \$10 per additional acre (300 x \$10) = \$3,000
- Totaling \$4,500
- \$4,500 at 75% is \$3,375

Farmer Steve has a 1200-acre farm and wants an NMP for 800 acres of arable land.

- \$1,500 for the first 100 acres
- \$10 per additional acre (700 x \$10) = \$7,000
- Totaling \$8,500
- \$8,500 at 75% is \$6,375
- Funding is capped at the maximum \$4,000

- Development of 1-year N-based Fertility Plans will be funded at \$500 for first 100 acres plus \$5 per additional acre, funded at 75% of actual costs to a maximum of \$2,000 per recipient per year.
- Seeding costs will be funded based on a flat rate of \$100 per acre and paid out at 85%.

Cost Sharing

Eligible costs related to projects started in 2025 and later will be cost shared between the OFCAF program and the successful applicant at a ratio of 85:15 (program:applicant) with the exception of nitrogen management and cover cropping equipment due to the \$30,000 cap and N-based Nutrient Management or Fertility Plans.

Applicants must clearly indicate all sources of funding for the project. Sources of funding can include cash contributions from:

- Applicant directly (your organization)
- Federal government programs
- Provincial/territorial government programs
- Municipal government programs
- Other sources of funding (loans, non-governmental grants, etc.)

The maximum level of **government** funding (federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal) that an applicant can receive will not exceed 100% of eligible project costs. Should your project be approved, you must provide evidence that all sources of funding are confirmed prior to a Contribution Agreement being signed.

OFCAF contributions are considered taxable income and are subject to income tax. An "AGR-1 Statement of Farm-Support Payments" will be provided to recipients for the year the payment was made; for example, if a project claim is paid out to a farm in January 2026, the AGR-1 tax slip will be issued in February 2027).

Planning Your Project

Projects are the activities carried out at your farm or location to meet the program objectives. Projects have clear start dates and end dates with measurable outcomes.

Projects must be completed and claimed by March 15 of each program year.

Examples of projects could include things like:

- "Interseed silage corn in Field 23"
- "Install cross fencing and gates in west pasture to create paddocks"
- "Install cross fencing in south pasture to create paddocks and install solar panels for waterer"
- "Plant winter rye cover crop after carrot harvest on 30 acres"
- "Try split application of fertilizer on 45 acres of Field 2B"

The OFCAF program only funds projects that result in adoption and implementation of **NEW** practices. However, an expansion of a BMP application on a farm, which furthers the farm's goals of sequestering more carbon or reducing more greenhouse gases, **may** be eligible.

As you plan your project, you may have an existing N-based nutrient management plan, cover cropping plan, or rotational grazing plan that will help you with selecting project activities and purchases. (If you don't have a plan, it might be a good idea to include plan development as part of your project. The OFCAF program can assist with costs).

Need more help?

If you would like some help planning your project, visit the Perennia OFCAF program website at ofcaf.perennia.ca where you'll find videos, podcasts, fact sheets and information about upcoming in-person and virtual events.

For assistance in selection of cover crop species suitable for your needs, please visit the Cover Crop Selection Tool available on Perennia's *Farm Data Tools* website;

<https://www.farmdatatools.perennia.ca/>

When developing your rotational grazing workplan, you may wish to consult the new pasture manual, in particular; Chapter 2 - Grazing Systems; Chapter 3 - Fencing and Livestock Watering Systems and Chapter 6 - Pasture Species Identification and Recommended Pasture Mixes.

<https://www.perennia.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Pasture-Manual.pdf>

<https://ofcaf.perennia.ca/Pasture-Manual-FINAL>

<https://ofcaf.perennia.ca/Pasture-Manual-FINAL> Over the past two years many Perennia OFCAF video resources (webinars and demonstration videos) have been developed and are now located in one convenient location. Visit our Perennia YouTube Channel to find these resources made available as a playlist for your perusal;

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWHYsBiZD_TIGTE8MoFa9ekEltx2WW98P

Contact the NS Institute of Agrologists or visit the Certified Crop Advisers page and use their 'Find a Professional' search function to find a professional agrologist or certified crop adviser near you.

<https://nsagrologists.ca/>

<https://www.certifiedcropadviser.org/certifications/professional-search/>

Questions related to the Perennia OFCAF program and project eligibility can be directed to programs@perennia.ca where they will be answered by the OFCAF team, or by phone to 902-678-7722 for redirection to the OFCAF team.

Project Planning Worksheets

Please use the project planning worksheets found on the Funding tab of the Perennia OFCAF website (<https://ofcaf.perennia.ca/funding/>) to develop a project plan for the BMP that you are applying for.

These worksheets are a **mandatory** part of the application, and we recommend that applicants review relevant Perennia OFCAF resources prior to completing the worksheets and submitting your application.

How to Apply

Applications for the 2026-2027 fiscal year will be accepted until June 30, 2026 or until funds are completely allocated.

- 1) **Complete and submit the Pre-screening Form** to express your interest in applying to the Nova Scotia On-Farm Climate Action Fund (Form available at: <https://ofcaf.perennia.ca/funding/>).
- 2) Perennia staff will review the pre-screening form and send a link for the online application to the email address on the pre-screening form if it appears as though the applicant may be eligible.
- 3) **Complete the application form** when Perennia provides you access.
- 4) **Send all required attachments and supporting documents** listed in Annex A of this guide to programs@perennia.ca.

Review the list of required attachments/supporting documents outlined in Annex A of this guide to ensure that you include all required documents with your application. **Your application must be complete before it can be assessed.**

If your submitted application is incomplete, you will be notified by a Perennia program official to provide the missing information. If we do not receive a response to our requests for missing information, your application will **not** be assessed.

An invitation to submit a full application does not constitute an offer of funding. The submission of an application creates no obligation on the part of the federal Minister, AAFC or Perennia to provide funding for the proposed project.

What Can You Expect After You Apply?

- 1) Once you submit your online application, you'll get a pop-up notification on the screen notifying you that your application has been submitted.
- 2) Perennia will send an email within two business days of receiving supporting documents to acknowledge that the documents were received.
- 3) Perennia staff will review the application and mandatory supporting documents provided for completeness. We will notify you that we require further information or that your application is complete and ready for the Review Committee.
- 4) A review committee made up of professional agrologists will meet regularly to review and approve applications. The committee's decisions will be final. That said, sometimes the Review Committee will request further clarifying information before a ruling can be made. If you receive such a request, this means the review committee is interested in your project and perhaps willing to fund it. Please reply in a timely manner.
- 5) If approved, you'll receive an email that outlines your funding amounts a few days after the review committee meeting. A letter with critical timelines and a contribution agreement will follow in a few weeks. Once you've reviewed the contribution agreement, sign and return the agreement by the deadline provided. If the agreement is not signed and returned by the deadline, we will assume the funding is not necessary for the project and we will close your file.

- 6) If your application is not approved, you will be notified by email within a few days of the review committee meeting. You may reapply if the intake is still open for a different project.

Assessment Criteria

An application must be complete to be assessed by Perennia. If further information has been requested, this means that your application is **not** considered complete. Complete applications will be assessed against the following criteria:

- eligibility (of applicant, activities, costs, and project timelines)
- alignment against the program's objective and priorities
- how the project will contribute to the adoption of beneficial management practices that store carbon and reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- capability of the applicant to successfully complete the project.

Educational Requirement

All recipients of OFCAF project funding are **required** to complete an educational activity related to the practice(s) being adopted, which can be done online or in person. Eligible training opportunities will be posted on our program website at <https://ofcaf.perennia.ca/training/>. Check the page frequently, as it will be updated as more training opportunities become available. Note: if you have projects under multiple BMPs, you will be required to do an educational component for each BMP.

Monitoring

Perennia may monitor, evaluate, or audit projects to ensure compliance with approved project activities. This may include site visits to evaluate the practices that have been implemented. Recipients are obligated to keep all invoices and proofs of payment, as per the terms of their Contribution Agreement for seven (7) years after the completion of the project for the purpose of financial review by the Federal government.

Reporting

Recipients will be required to report on expenditures, performance and results as part of the claim procedure.

Financial reports

Recipients must submit copies (and retain originals) of invoices and proofs of payment for eligible project costs incurred. An expenditure claim is required with requests for reimbursement. Note: quotes, purchase orders, or packing slips will not be accepted as an invoice. Examples of acceptable proofs of payment include sales receipts, cancelled cheques, wire payments, EFTs, and e-transfer payment confirmations. More details will be provided to successful applicants. Other reports may be required at Perennia's discretion.

Submitting Claims

Only expenses directly related to the project activities stipulated in the Contribution Agreement are eligible. Expenses that do not follow the guidelines are not eligible. If you are unsure about a particular expense, or if an expense is unusual, please check with program officials at Perennia before making a financial commitment.

All 2026-2027 activities must be completed and claims submitted by March 15, 2027.

Contact information

For more information on the OFCAF program in Nova Scotia:

<https://ofcaf.perennia.ca/>

902-678-7722

programs@perennia.ca

Annex A: Checklist of Required Attachments/Supporting Documents

In addition to the application form, the following documents are **REQUIRED** for all applications. Submit by email to programs@perennia.ca or by fax to 902-678-7266. They can also be mailed to 6-28 Aberdeen St., Kentville NS B4N 2N1, Attention: Helen Arenburg.

- Completed project worksheets (found at <https://ofcaf.perennia.ca/funding/>).
- Quotes, estimates, and/or contracts for all purchases and services valued at more than \$3,000.
- Proof of being a registered farm in Nova Scotia.
- Include PIDs for all fields included in your projects (found at <https://nsfa-fane.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Where-to-Find-Your-Land-PID.pdf>).
- Copy of most recent tax return page showing gross farming income (not required for associations)
 - for Income Tax and Benefits Return (line 9659 on T2042 - Statement of Farming Activities)
 - for T2 Corporation Income Tax Return (line 9659 on Schedule 125).
- When applying for rotational grazing infrastructure, 'before' photos of land where you plan to implement rotational grazing must be included. You must include a fencing plan diagram showing fence lines and gates when applying for fencing.

Annex B: Ineligible Costs

These include but are not limited to:

Nitrogen Management

- Costs related to management of nutrients other than nitrogen
- Costs of transitioning to manure application except when improved placement of liquid manure or vertical beater manure spreaders **with scales** (for semi-solid or solid manure) are used
- Costs related to application of lime
- Variable rate fertilizer equipment is not eligible

Cover Cropping

- Costs related to mechanical or chemical termination of cover crops
- Fertilizer and crop protection costs
- Planting crops that will be harvested or grazed leaving less than 15cm of cover crop growth over winter
- Planting crops that will be harvested in the next growing season intended for market
- Volunteer cover from seed loss from the preceding harvest or regrowth of previous crops
- Costs related to rejuvenation of existing forages, pastures or hay land

Rotational Grazing

- Perimeter fences if construction is not aligned with grazing plan
- Removing or replacing old or existing fences
- Non-renewable power sources such as generators
- Used fencing materials
- Texas gates
- Portable livestock corral panels
- On-going maintenance of rotational grazing infrastructure
- Annual software or subscription fees, training, monitoring and management for virtual fencing
- Costs associated with construction of a new water source (digging a pond or drilling a well)

For All Projects

- Projects commenced and costs incurred prior to **April 1, 2025**
- BMPs applied to a specific farm area prior to the program (Note, however, that an expansion of a BMP application on a farm area where these BMPs have not previously been employed is eligible)
- Invoices not issued in the applicant's name
- Any cost not specifically required for the execution of a project
- Normal operating costs associated with carrying out or expanding a business's current operations
- Materials from the applicant's inventory
- Tile drainage systems
- Crop storage facilities
- Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and associated components
- TMR mixers, feed pushers and automated feeding systems
- Fabricated items, equipment or materials not purchased from a recognized dealer (auction purchases are not permitted). A recognized dealer is typically defined as a business where manufacturing is a key service, or the business is an authorized dealer for certain item(s).
- Expenses considered regular replacement, repair or maintenance

- Warranties for equipment or components used to modify equipment
- Any equipment or equipment customizations that do not support an increase in soil carbon or a decrease in nitrogen loss
- Costs of ongoing activities
- Normal commercial expansion costs
- Lease of land, buildings and facilities for the purpose of starting up a new business or as part of normal operation or costs for rental of facilities, equipment or machinery
- Costs of travel, hospitality, meals and accommodations
- Permits and approvals
- Purchase or sale of land, buildings or facilities or associated taxes or fees (e.g., land transfer tax)
- New building construction
- Typical farm equipment (e.g., tractors, skid steers, combines, livestock trailers) and related accessories or attachments (unless specified as an eligible cost under one of the BMP areas)
- Trade-in allowances
- Mentoring or coaching services
- Hand or power tools or attachments
- Multi-use items (e.g., items that can reach beyond the scope of the project such as computers, printers, etc.)
- Labour costs, other than as part of installation costs, including wage subsidies
- Administration costs such as office supplies, materials, space, telecommunications and audiovisual
- Capital items not specifically required for the execution of the project
- Costs for activities that are deemed to be part of normal business practice for any recipient
- Costs related to marketing activities and business promotion
- Land purchases
- In-kind contributions and/or in-kind payment for third-party services
- Goodwill
- Legal fees
- Any services/transactions that are provided by a company or individual who is connected to the applicant by blood relationship, marriage, common-law partnership or adoption
- Any portion of any cost that, in Perennia's opinion, exceeds the fair market value for that cost item
- Any cost, such as amortization that would not result in a direct, out-of-pocket expense for the recipient
- Costs being reimbursed under an existing federal, provincial or territorial program
- Any other expenditure not specifically listed as eligible or otherwise approved as eligible
- Taxes, financing charges, loan interest payments, bank fees
- Any cost, including a tax, that is eligible for a rebate, credit or refund (e.g., a refundable portion of the Harmonized Sales Tax)
- Gifts and incentives
- Annual service fees of any type
- Costs related to activities that directly influence or lobby any level of government
- Costs of basic research
- Costs of training and skills development that fulfill any academic requirements towards completion of a professional certificate, diploma or degree program

Note: If you have questions about whether an item is eligible or not, please contact us at programs@perennia.ca.