

Join the fight against climate change!

# ON-FARM CLIMATE ACTION FUND



Support is available to reduce your greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture activities through the On-Farm Climate Action Fund Program!

# BACKGROUND:

Ecocert Canada and the Canada Organic Trade Association (COTA) have set up a specific project for organic - certified farms as part of the Government of Canada's Agricultural Climate Solutions program, under the On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF), delivered by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

The goal of the On-Farm Climate Action Fund is to help farmers adopt beneficial management practices (BMPs) to store carbon and reduce their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in three specific areas: nitrogen management, use of cover crops and pasture rotation.

The program aims to provide Canadian farmers with technical and financial support to implement on-farm actions that will accelerate the effect of climate change measures on net GHG emissions.

REDUCING YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT ALSO MEANS SUPPORTING BIODIVERSITY AND SOIL HEALTH.

## THREE COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECT:

1. Financial support for the adoption and implementation of beneficial management practices (BMPs) for nitrogen management and/or cover crops.
2. Farmer engagement and knowledge transfer activities training.
3. Conducting a greenhouse gas inventory of production activities.



## THE SELECTED FARMS WILL RECEIVE:

- A report of their greenhouse gas emissions to determine the impact of the BMPs on their GHG emissions.
- Tailored training on beneficial management practices for organic producers to reduce GHG emissions.
- Financial compensation for approved activities up to 85% of eligible costs. The maximum eligible funding is \$75,000 per operation for the length of the OFCAF program.
- An invitation to knowledge-transfer activities, such as field days and online training.

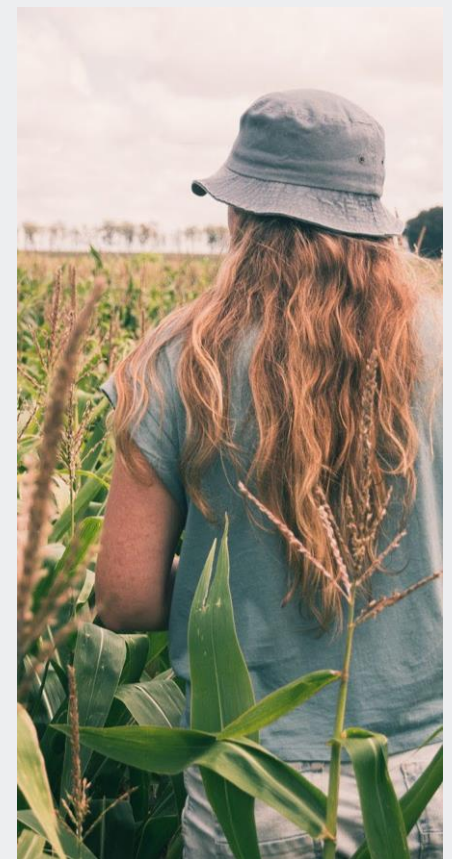


# OUR CONTRIBUTION:

Under the OFCAF program, Ecocert Canada has partnered with COTA to secure funding to help certified organic farmers adopt BMPs that reduce GHG emissions through cover crops and nitrogen management.

Led by COTA, a selection committee will ensure the farms' admission to the program, with impartiality and adherence to program requirements.

The goal of this program is for most of the funds to serve as direct financial assistance to farmers, to increase the adoption and implementation of on-farm BMPs.



# PROGRAM DETAILS

Funding for eligible expenses is available for implementing new beneficial management practices or increasing the acreage on which BMPs are being implemented. Funding allotment is based on the number of acres affected by the BMPs.

In order to meet program objectives, farms should seek the advice of a technical expert to identify the BMP that would be optimal for their farm.



## REQUIREMENTS OF SELECTED FARMS:

- The farm is required to make a minimum contribution of 15%, either cash or in-kind.
- Total direct support per farm cannot exceed \$75,000 for the entire program.
- The farms agree not to receive funding for the same BMPs from other organizations that are distributing funds under the OFCAF program.
- The BMPs must be recommended by an agronomic expert: agronomist, Professional Agrologist, or Certified Crop Advisor.
- The farms must cooperate to provide information needed for statistical reports or informational purposes.
- Farmer must be available for an on-site visit.
- The farms must allow Ecocert to share their information with COTA and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.
- The BMPs must be new practice, an improvement on current practices or a current practice implemented on additional land.
- GHG Emission reductions generated during the project period cannot be used in any current or future offset programs, except for voluntary programs.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- The applicant must be a legal entity.
- The farm must hold a current organic certificate.
- Eligible activity: in-field crop production.
- Eligible provinces: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia.

## APPLICATIONS WILL BE EVALUATED ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- Farm's project and eligibility to the program.
- Farm's motivation and commitment to adopt the BMPs.
- Potential impacts of the project's GHG reductions.
- 10% of funding will be allotted to underrepresented groups.

Applications will be reviewed by an impartial committee made of COTA and Ecocert representatives. Applications will continue to be reviewed until all funding has been allocated.

# ABOUT ECOCERT

*Working towards sustainable practices*

Ecocert Canada, a subsidiary of the Ecocert group, assists stakeholders in the implementation and promotion of sustainable practices through certification, consulting and training services.

Committed for over 25 years to organic agriculture, Ecocert has become the benchmark for organic certification in Canada.

With more than 100 employees and its 4 offices across the country, Ecocert Canada offers first-rate service in French and English to many sectors:



AGRI-FOOD



TEXTILES



HOME CARE



FORESTRY



COSMETICS

[www.ecocert.com](http://www.ecocert.com)



## What do we stand for?

We strive to enable production processes that respect the environment, better management of available energy and natural resources (water, air, soil fertility), are more socially responsible and have better product quality and safety. All of these elements are essential to address today's economic, social and environmental challenges in order to build tomorrow's world.

We work closely with you to develop tailor-made solutions that match your goals and values.

# ABOUT COTA

The Canada Organic Trade Association (COTA) is the membership-based association for organic agriculture, aquaculture and products in Canada. Its members include growers, processors, certifiers, farmers' associations, distributors, importers, exporters, consultants, retailers, and all points along the organic value chain.

COTA encourages farmers to convert to more sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.



[www.canada-organic.ca](http://www.canada-organic.ca)



With the expertise to achieve these goals, COTA lays out a clear path for farmers. Since Canada's organic sector continues to grow, COTA believes that it is key to develop and adopt innovative farming practices that follow the principles of organic agriculture, not only to expand the organic sector, but also to enable Canadian agriculture to meet the environmental challenges of our time while also contributing to jobs and economic growth.



# ELIGIBLE BMPs and EXPENSES

## NITROGEN MANAGEMENT:

The goal of these BMPs is to reduce volatilization of nitrous oxide, a powerful greenhouse gas, and to encourage nitrogen fixation into the soil. This also increases the soil organic matter creating a carbon sink in the soil.

Eligible BMPs for organic farmers under nitrogen management:

- Increase or introduce legumes into crop rotation.
- Upgrade manure practices to be more efficient through splitting application into more than one application and/or upgrading equipment to incorporate manure into the soil.

ELIGIBLE COSTS	INELIGIBLE COSTS, LIMITATIONS & EXPLANATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Planning, assessment, design work and consultancy fees and costs of other agronomic support/technical training;</li> <li>➤ Soil testing and soil mapping costs.</li> <li>➤ Seed and planting costs to increase legumes in crop rotation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ In the case of transitioning to better manure management, only activities that improve manure incorporation in the soil are eligible. Injection is preferred; however, if equipment for this is not available, other methods of incorporation as soon as possible after application are also eligible.</li> <li>➤ Determination of costs for using equipment and the associated fuel and labour required for the additional fertilizer application needs to be in line with local custom rates.</li> <li>➤ BMPs applied to a specific farm area prior to the Program are ineligible. Note, however, that an expansion of a BMP application on a farm area where these BMPs have not previously been employed is eligible.</li> </ul>

## COVER CROPS:

Cover crops are defined as those crops left standing outside of the typical growing year (ie. Winter months) and are at least 6” tall. This BMP is to conserve soil moisture by reducing runoff in the spring and reducing the GHGs released from the soil. This BMP is to introduce, improve or increase cover crops.

ELIGIBLE COSTS	INELIGIBLE COSTS, LIMITATIONS & EXPLANATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Costs related to services provided by agronomists, Certified Crop Advisors or Agrologists.</li> <li>➤ Seed costs or per acre payments with regionally- and commodity-appropriate seed as recommended by a professional agronomist, Agrologist or Certified Crop Advisor.</li> <li>➤ Cost of planting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Costs for cover crops where growing and leaving cover crops undisturbed over-winter is not new and has been a routine practice used by the farmer.</li> <li>➤ Costs related to mechanical or chemical termination of the cover crop.</li> <li>➤ Costs related to rejuvenation of existing forages, pastures or hay land.</li> <li>➤ BMPs applied to a specific farm area prior to the Program are ineligible. Note, however, that an expansion of a BMP application on a farm area where these BMPs have not been previously been employed is eligible.</li> </ul>

### HOW TO APPLY:

Applications are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis. Email [ofcaf@ecocert.com](mailto:ofcaf@ecocert.com) to receive the online application form.