

On-Farm Climate Action Fund



*Join the
fight
against
climate
change!*



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**. The program is funded under Agricultural Climate Solutions (ACS) program - On-Farm Climate Action Fund (OFCAF) 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 rotational grazing.

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. On-Site audit.

THE SELECTED FARMS WILL RECEIVE:

- Financial compensation for approved better management practices. The maximum eligible funding is \$100,000 per operation for the length of the OFCAF program.
- An invitation to knowledge-transfer activities, such as field days and online training.
- Tailored training on beneficial management practices for organic producers to reduce GHG emissions.



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 \$100,000 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. A recommendation letter from an AG expert is mandatory.
- 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.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- The applicant must be a legal entity.
- The farm must hold a current organic certificate, or land must be in transition to organic.
- Eligible activity: in-field crop production.
- Eligible provinces: British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Yukon territory.

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



What do we stand for?

We strive to enable production processes that respect the environment, manage available energy and natural resources (water, air, soil fertility) more effectively, are socially responsible, and ensure better product quality and safety. These elements are essential to addressing today's economic, social, and environmental challenges, paving the way for a better world tomorrow.

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



With the expertise to achieve these goals, COTA lays out a clear path for farmers. As Canada's organic sector continues to grow, COTA believes it is crucial to develop and adopt innovative farming practices that adhere to the principles of organic agriculture. This approach not only aims to expand the organic sector but also enables Canadian agriculture to meet the environmental challenges of our time while contributing to job creation 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 within 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 applications into multiple sessions, spring application rather than fall, and/or upgrading equipment to incorporate manure into the soil.



ELIGIBLE COSTS	INELIGIBLE COSTS, LIMITATIONS & EXPLANATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Planning, assessment, design work and consultancy fees and costs of other agronomic support/technical training. ➤ Soil testing and soil mapping costs. ➤ Seed and planting costs to increase legumes in crop rotation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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. ➤ Determining in-kind costs for using equipment and the associated fuel and labour required for the additional manure application needs to be in line with local custom rates. ➤ BMPs applied to a specific farm area prior to the program are ineligible. <i>Note: an expansion of a BMP application on a farm area where these BMPs have not previously been employed is eligible.</i>

ELIGIBLE BMPs and EXPENSES

COVER CROPS:

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

ELIGIBLE COSTS	INELIGIBLE COSTS, LIMITATIONS & EXPLANATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs related to services provided by agronomists, Certified Crop Advisors or Agrologists. Seed costs or per acre payments with regionally- and commodity-appropriate seeds as recommended by a professional agronomist, agrologist or certified crop advisor. Cost of planting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. Costs related to mechanical or chemical termination of the cover crop. Costs related to rejuvenation of existing forages, pastures or hay land. BMPs applied to a specific farm area prior to the program are ineligible. <i>Note: an expansion of a BMP application on a farm area where these BMPs have not previously been employed is eligible.</i>

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 on a first-come, first-served basis by an impartial committee made of COTA and Ecocert representatives. Applications will continue to be reviewed until all funding has been allocated.

HOW TO APPLY:

Email ofcaf@ecocert.com to receive the online application form.