Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

Competitive. Innovative. Resilient.

Assurance Systems Program

GUIDELINES

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The **Assurance Systems Program** is designed to improve the anticipation, mitigation and response to risks by providing assistance to address risks related to humans, animals and plants through project-driven and other outcome-based approaches.

The Assurance Systems Program will provide assistance for activities to support the implementation of recognized assurance systems on-farm, in food processing enterprises, and/or post-farm agri-food enterprises. This project-driven program will be primarily directed at agricultural industry groups and post-farm enterprises that market or modify raw agricultural products. Industry will set their priorities and lead producer adoption of systems that benefit the sector as a whole or benefit a large portion of the sector's producers. Submissions from individuals may be considered based on merit and potential benefit to the industry.

This program will also provide support for surveillance and emergency management preparedness and planning.

Assurance systems include, but are not limited to, the following:
- On-farm food safety programs;
- Food safety control programs, including nationally developed sector HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) programs and GFSI (Global Food Safety Initiative) recognized programs;
- Humane treatment of animals;
- Animal welfare codes of practice;
- Abattoirs and deadstock;
- Biosecurity protocols and/or standards;
- Anti-microbial usage and planning;
- Traceability implementation plans;
- Development of multi-commodity premises identification system;
- Development of assurance systems that provide verifiable claims to buyers domestically and internationally;
- Surveillance systems; and
- Other assurance systems that support market-pull attributes.

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Eligible Recipients

- Mi'kmaq First Nations and other Indigenous groups;
- Agriculture industry organizations, clubs, and associations;
- Public, private, and academic research bodies; and
- Others as determined by the Assurance Systems Program Review Committee.

Eligible Activities/Expenses

- Activities to support the implementation of recognized assurance systems, including:
    o Awareness and outreach;
    o Training and education;
    o Technical assistance;
    o Pre-audit and first audit assistance;
    o Maintenance and enhancement of provincial premises identification and traceability systems and databases;
    o Premises identification program management;
    o Implementation costs, such as equipment and infrastructure;
    o Consulting work;
    o Emergency management, mitigation, prevention and preparedness;
    o Surveillance initiatives; and
    o Initiatives related to antimicrobial resistance.

Ineligible Activities/Expenses

- Core provincial government activities such as on-going inspection services, reinforcement of regulations or on-going costs for organic or animal welfare systems/codes;
- Activities that are not compliant with the applicable National Farm Animal Care Council Codes or do not align with industry acceptable best management practices;
- Activities that use monetary incentives to encourage adoption of Premises ID or to report animal movements by producers;
- Activities whose primary objective is to subsidize the purchase of regulated identification devices such as ear tags;
- Emergency response and recovery costs;
- Surveillance activities related to human health issues;
- Animal welfare advocacy funding;
- Activities related to companion animals;
- Activities related to the pari-mutuel industry;
- BRM-type activities;
- Normal and on-going operating and maintenance activities;
- Purchase of common items that can be used for multiple purposes (e.g. digital cameras, GPS, smartphones, etc.), except as otherwise specified;
- Activities that do not provide a direct benefit to the Sector;
- Activities related to aquaponic food production, or to aquaculture, seaweed, fish and seafood production and processing (except international marketing and traceability activities for fish and seafood);
- Activities which provide tax credits or rebates; and
- Development and enforcement of regulations.

Funding

- Funding will be cost shared between eligible recipients and the Department. The level of support and total contribution will be determined by the Assurance Systems Program Review Committee.

CLAIMS PROCESS

Recipients shall maintain an accurate record of expenditures incurred and shall submit, upon completion of the project, the following:

- a claim form summarizing expenditures;
- copies of all paid invoices with verification of payment;
- a report on the project and its results in terms of project objectives; and
- copies of material produced (or when applicable, photos of material funded).

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- Recipients must meet the eligibility criteria and submit a complete application to the Department of Agriculture;
- Applications will be assessed on a *first come-first serve basis for merit and impact*;
- If the project is not approved, all incurred costs are the responsibility of the applicant; and
- Assistance will be available until funds are totally allocated within that year.

HOW TO APPLY

Completed applications may be submitted to the attention of the Program Officer via regular mail or email.

Email Applications:
Applications may be submitted via email to
assurance@gov.pe.ca
Please include the program name in the subject line.

Regular Mail Applications:
Applications may be submitted via regular mail at:
PEI Department of Agriculture
11 Kent Street
PO Box 2000
Charlottetown PE C1A 7N8
(902) 368-4880 (telephone)

PUBLIC TRUST

Projects approved for funding under the Sustainable CAP which have demonstrable links to increasing public trust may be eligible for additional project funding.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

Projects that are assessed to demonstrate benefits and impacts to more than one Atlantic province may be eligible for funding on a regional basis.

EVALUATION AND CONTROL

A complete evaluation of this program is planned to ensure that the objectives and results are achieved and to assess the relevance of its renewal. Program metrics are collected and reported on an on-going basis.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Sustainable CAP programs are available to all Canadians who are eligible to participate in those programs. Wherever possible, the needs of under-represented groups, including Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, and persons with disabilities, were considered during program development.