PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE

AGRICULTURAL CLIMATE SOLUTIONS ON FARM CLIMATE ACTION FUND 2024-2025

OFCAF

On Farm Climate Action Fund

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

April 15th, 2024

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Agricultural Climate Solutions On Farm Climate Action Fund is designed to encourage and provide assistance to the Prince Edward Island agriculture industry to implement beneficial management practices (BMPs) that mitigate agricultural contributions to climate change. The Program will provide solutions for mitigation by supporting both practices that reduce the amount of greenhouse gases (GHGs) released during or from an agricultural activity or that promote carbon sequestration in soils. The Program provides financial assistance for the adoption of BMPs through project-based payments or per-acre payments in the following;

1. Expanding adoption of cover cropping
2. Improving nitrogen management practices
3. Improving grazing management (adopting rotational grazing)

Funding for this program is provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Agricultural Climate Solutions Program, through the Natural Climate Solutions Fund.

PROGRAM OUTCOME

Reduce GHG emissions and increase carbon sequestration

WHO IS ELIGIBLE

- Mi'kmaq First Nations and other indigenous organizations
- Agricultural producers or groups of agricultural producers
- Community pastures

HOW TO APPLY

Application forms can be accessed here: www.peifa.ca/OFCAF
Completed applications may be submitted online, or via mail or email to a Program Officer

EMAIL APPLICATIONS:

OFCAF@peifa.ca

MAIL APPLICATIONS & FOR MORE INFORMATION:

PEI Federation of Agriculture 159 Sherwood Road Suite 100 Charlottetown, PE, C 1E DES
(902) 368-7289 (telephone)

FOR ANY QUESTION OR INQUIRIES

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APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must submit a complete application to be considered for funding. The application package consists of the application form, as well as any project details required for each BMP. Working with a qualified professional is a pre-requisite (Certified Crop Advisor, Professional Agronomist, or a Canada Forage and Grassland Association-trained Grazing Mentor)

APPROVAL PROCESS

Approvals will be made by a selection committee consisting of representatives from Prince Edward Island agriculture commodity groups. The committee's decisions will be final. Each OFCAF applicant can only receive a maximum of $75,000 for all OFCAF projects

EXPANDING THE ADOPTION OF COVER CROPPING

COVER CROPPING: FALL/WINTER COVER CROP BMP

PURPOSE

To provide per-acre payments to farmers for the adoption and on-farm implementation of cover crops that are recommended by a Professional Agrologist (P. Ag) or Certified Crop advisor. Cover crop establishment prior to winter will reduce nutrient loss events by retaining residual soil nutrients within the crop during the fall and winter. A well-established cover crop, maintained until the following spring, acts as soil cover by holding topsoil in place outside of the growing season when soil erosion caused by wind and water can be significant. Cover crops can also fix or retain nitrogen, decreasing nitrous oxide emissions, and can help build soil organic matter, sequestering carbon.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- Cost of establishing a fall/winter cover crop with regionally and commodity appropriate seed as recommended by a Professional Agrologist (P. Ag), or Certified Crop Advisor (CCA) following an annual or perennial crop
- Inter-seeding or broadcasting of a fall/winter cover crop during the growing season of a commercial crop (i.e. corn, edible beans, soybeans, etc.)
- Winter cereals [except fall rye] are eligible as a cover crop but require attestation that the crop will not be sold
- No-till, minimum-till or broadcast establishment of a fall/winter cover crop following either harvest of crops (potatoes, peas, carrots, cole crops, cereals, oilseeds, etc) or following late summer or early fall tillage of forage crops
- Services provided by Certified Crop Advisors, or Professional Agrologists (P.Ag.) for planning and technical assessments of cover crops
- Mountable cover crop seeders and inter seeders will be considered eliglible expense to establish cover crop
- 50% of the purchase of equipment to improve cover cropping to a maximum of $30,000, and equipment projects must also include the related BMP implementation

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- Planting crops that will be harvested or grazed leaving less than 6 inches (15cm) of cover crop growth over winter
- Planting crops that will be harvested in the next growing season intended for market
- Volunteer cover of seed ground loss from the preceding harvest (peas, cereals, etc.)or regrowth of existing crops
- Underseeding cereals with perennial forages, as this is standard practice on PEI
- Costs related to the rejuvenation of existing forages, pastures or hay land
- Costs for establishing cover crops that are routinely used by the farmer; all projects must support new activities and/or management strategies
- Cost of mechanical or chemical termination of the cover crop
- Fertilizer and crop protection costs

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

- Details of cover cropping plan, included with the application, supported by a Certified Crop Advisor, or Professional Agrologist (P. Ag), demonstrating the grower's cover cropping standard practice and change of practice; and the benefits and rationale for the change of practice
- All fields approved for projects through this BMP are subject to site visitations or satellite imaging which may occur in the summer, late fall and/or early spring in order to ensure that a commercial crop was grown and that a winter cover crop was established and maintained until the following spring
- All Property IDs and total acreage (Max 500) to be used for winter cover cropping must be included on the program application prior to approval

SUCCESSFUL APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS

SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS MUST:

- Agree to establish a cover crop following the growing season of a preceding crop
- Agree to establish the cover crop according to the crop parameters and timelines outlined in the cover crop plan submitted with the application
- Agree not to till or plow the cover crop following its establishment before the spring tillage
- Agree that field acreage will be determined based on GIS measurement
- Must provide all the essential documents (pictures, invoices, and payment receipts) as proof
- It is mandatory for recipients to take part in knowledge transfer workshops (online or in-person) relevant to their project

FUNDING

- $75 per acre for the cost of cover crop planting
- 85% of costs for relevant services provided by Certified Crop Advisors, or Professional Agrologists
- Maximum support for agronomist services is $5000
- Maximum OFCAF contribution of $37,500
- 50% of the purchase of equipment to a maximum of $30,000
- Project funds must be spent between April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

DEADLINES

- Cover crop application submission deadline is October 31st, 2024
- The deadline to submit the Ultimate Recipient Agreement for successful candidates is within one month of project approval
- Final reporting documents must be submitted before December 31st, 2024

IMPROVING NITROGEN MANAGEMENT

NITROGEN MANAGEMENT BMP

PURPOSE

To provide funding for the adoption and implementation of nitrogen management strategies that are recommended by a Professional Agrologist (P. Ag.) or Certified Crop Advisor. Reducing excess nitrogen can improve water and air quality and increase profit margins of farms. The design and implementation of projects under this BMP should ensure that crop requirements are achieved through responsible management practices that will meet target yields and quality without applying nitrogen in excess. Projects will lead to improved environmental sustainability and agronomy on a farm when designed by a Professional Agrologist (P. Ag) or Certified Crop Advisor.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- Planning, Technical Assessments or Engineered Designs including the development of a Nutrient Management Plan by a qualified Nutrient Management Planner; and other engineering or technical design work by a qualified professional
- Soil testing; plant tissue testing; amendment testing, soil mapping (e.g. grid sampling, SWAT mapping, Soil Optix, electrical conductivity mapping)
- Use of enhanced efficiency fertilizers (Ex. PCU's, nitrification and urease inhibitors) as recommended by a P. Ag or CCA
- Nitrification and Ureases inhibitors (approved and registered inhibitors) should be used together to be eligible
- Split application of fertilizer at seeding and top dress (all application within growing season) with reduced rate as a result of increased crop use efficiency
- Purchase of equipment for banding, injections or side dress application of nitrogen fertilizers and liquid manures
- Increasing legumes in rotations to account for N credit from legumes in subsequent crop
- Improved management of soil organic amendments and synthetic fertilizer substitutes (manure, compost, digestates)

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- Planning, assessment, design work and consultancy fees and cost of other agronomic support/technical training (e.g nutrient management plan)
- Soil testing and soil mapping costs associated with improved nitrogen management, including contracted services to collect samples and analytical laboratory fees
- The price difference between regular nitrogen fertilizer and enhanced efficiency nitrogen fertilizers

- Offsetting higher cost of adopting synthetic fertilizer substitutes (manure, compost, digestates), where applicable
- $75/ac flat rate to increase perennial forage legumes in rotation
- $15/ac flat rate for split application
- Improved placement of liquid manures, using hoses, dribble bars, or equipment for precise nitrogen placement
- 50% of the purchase of equipment for banding, injections or side dress application of nitrogen fertilizers and liquid manures to a maximum of $30,000, with the inclusion of related BMP implementation in the project

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- Costs of transitioning to manure application are not eligible
- Cost related to management of nutrients other than nitrogen are not eligible
- PCUs and dual inhibitors (nitrification and urease) should not be applied on the same acres. Both activities must be carried out on separate acres

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

- All activities must be supported by a Certified Crop Advisor, or Professional Agrologist (P. Ag), demonstrating the grower's nitrogen management standard practice and change of practice; and the benefits and rationale for the change
- If the applicant farm does not have a current nutrient management plan, PEIFA's OFCAF nitrogen management worksheet must be included in the application. The nitrogen management worksheet must be completed prior to the approval of the project and is only required to be completed for fields included in the project
- Successful applicants may be asked to provide yield results to improve understanding of nitrogen management BMPs in Prince Edward Island
- Selected relevant projects will be required to include multi-depth nitrate testing and/or GHG testing on split-field trials to increase understanding of nitrogen management BMPs in PEI
- All fields approved for projects are subject to site visitations and project audits and detailed invoices and proofs of payment must be included with the project's final report
- All Property IDs and total acreage to be used for nitrogen management must be included on the program application prior to approval

SUCCESSFUL APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS

- All property IDs that will be utilized for nitrogen management must be included in the application
- All approved projects through this BMP are subject to site visitations to ensure that the nitrogen management practice is being implemented for which this program provided financial assistance
- It is mandatory for recipients to take part in knowledge transfer workshops (online or in-person) relevant to their project

FUNDING

- 75% of eligible project costs with the exception of:
- 85% of planning, assessment, design work and consultancy fees and cost of other agronomic support/technical training (e.g nutrient management plan)
- Maximum contribution for agronomist services is $5000
- 85% of the price difference between regular nitrogen fertilizer and enhanced efficiency nitrogen fertilizers costs for enhanced efficiency fertilizer and split nitrogen applications, legumes
- $15/ac flat rate for split application
- Soil testing and mapping expenditures are limited to a maximum of $25,000 per producer for both practices and these activities must be accompained by some other OFCAF approved practice. Example of accompanying practices could include the application of an organic amendment, or improved fertilizer use
- Maximum of $30,000 for the purchase of equipment and upgrades to improve nitrogen and liquid manure placement

DEADLINES

- Nitrogen Management application submission deadline is November 30th, 2024
- The deadline to submit the Ultimate Recipient Agreement for successful candidates is within one month of project approval
- Final reporting documents must be submitted before Jan 30th, 2025

ELIGIBLE EQUIPMENT

- Fertilizer sider dresser with rate control
- Liquid Manure injection system
- Banding equipment

IMPROVING GRAZING MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

IMPROVING GRAZING MANAGEMENT BMP

PURPOSE

To provide funding for the adoption and implementation of rotational grazing strategies that are recommended by a certified grazing mentor, Professional Agrologist (P. Ag.) or Certified Crop Advisor. Managing pastures to control the timing and intensity of grazing animals can mitigate greenhouse gas emissions by maintaining healthier, younger grass that is more digestible for ruminant livestock. This increases feed-use efficiency in grazing ruminant livestock, and subsequently, reduces CH4 emissions from enteric fermentation processes. It also improves the soil and grass's ability to sequester CO2 emissions from the atmosphere, and reduces compaction and overgrazing.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- Development and implementation of an advanced grazing management plan
- Purchase and installation of grazing infrastructure (fencing, livestock watering systems) to improved grazing management
- Pasture overseeding/ no-till seeding to improve pasture composition (increased content of alfalfa, clovers, forages adapted to rotational grazing tannin-containing species such as birdsfoot trefoil)

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- Planning, technical assessments or engineered designs (e.g. rotational grazing plan, engineering or technical design work by a qualified professional)
- Rotational grazing infrastructure (e.g. cross fencing, wildlife friendly fencing, temporary fencing, and waterers, including remote watering systems when powered by renewable energy) as part of an approved advanced grazing plan
- No-till pasture overseeding, include seeding costs for pastures managed with improved grazing management (increase alfalfa, clover, high quality forages adapted to rotational grazing, and tannin-containing species

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- 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
- Barbed wire fence
- Fertilizer
- Lime

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

- A brief project summary that includes details regarding the pasture plan, improvement activities, and the timing and livestock density will be required with the application
- All approved projects through this BMP are subject to site visitations to ensure that the rotational grazing practice is being implemented for which this program provided financial assistance
- Detailed invoices and proofs of payment must be included with the project's final report

SUCCESSFUL APPLICANT REQUIREMENTS

- All property IDs that will be utilized for rotational grazing must be included in the application
- All approved projects through this BMP are subject to site visitations to ensure that the rotational grazing practice is being implemented for which this program provided financial assistance
- It is mandatory for recipients to take part in knowledge transfer workshops (online or in-person) relevant to their project

FUNDING

- 75% of eligible project costs with the exception of:
- 85% of planning, assessment, design work and consultancy fees and cost of other agronomic support/technical training (e.g grazing management plan)
- Maximum OFCAF contribution of $75,000
- Maximum contribution for agronomist services is $5000
- Flat rate of $25/acre for pasture reseeding with ATV and of $75/acre for pasture reseeding with drill
- 50% of the purchase of any machinery to a maximum of $30,000
- Project funds must be spent between April 1, 2024- March 31, 2025

DEADLINES

- Advanced Grazing application submission deadline is October 31st, 2024
- The deadline to submit the Ultimate Recipient Agreement for successful candidates is within one month of the approval of their application
- Project activities can be completed and reporting document must be submitted by Nov, 30th, 2024

ELIGIBLE EQUIPMENT

- Fencing infrastructures
- Renewable power sources (solar panels, wind)
- Water system (renewable source)
- No till pasture restoration