Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

Competitive. Innovative. Resilient.

Ontario Agri-Food Research Initiative (OAFRI)

Virtual Information Session
Nov 14, 2023 (2-4 pm)

Research and Innovation Branch, OMAFRA

Bioenterprise Corporation

Ontario

Canada

Agenda

Purpose: Ontario Agri-Food Research Initiative (OAFRI) Information sharing for potential applicants

2:00 – 2:05 PM Welcome

2:05 – 2:15 PM Overview of OAFRI streams

2:15 PM – 3:00 PM Details of OAFRI streams
- OMAFRA
  - Applied Research
  - Pilot and Demonstration
- Bioenterprise
  - Commercialization
  - Grow Ontario Accelerator

3:00 – 4:00 PM Question and Answer Period

Housekeeping:
- Mute yourself while another person is speaking.
- Raise hand, unmute and speak to ask your questions verbally.
- You can also type your questions in the Qs and As anytime.

Welcome

Ontario Agri-Food Research Initiative (OAFRI)
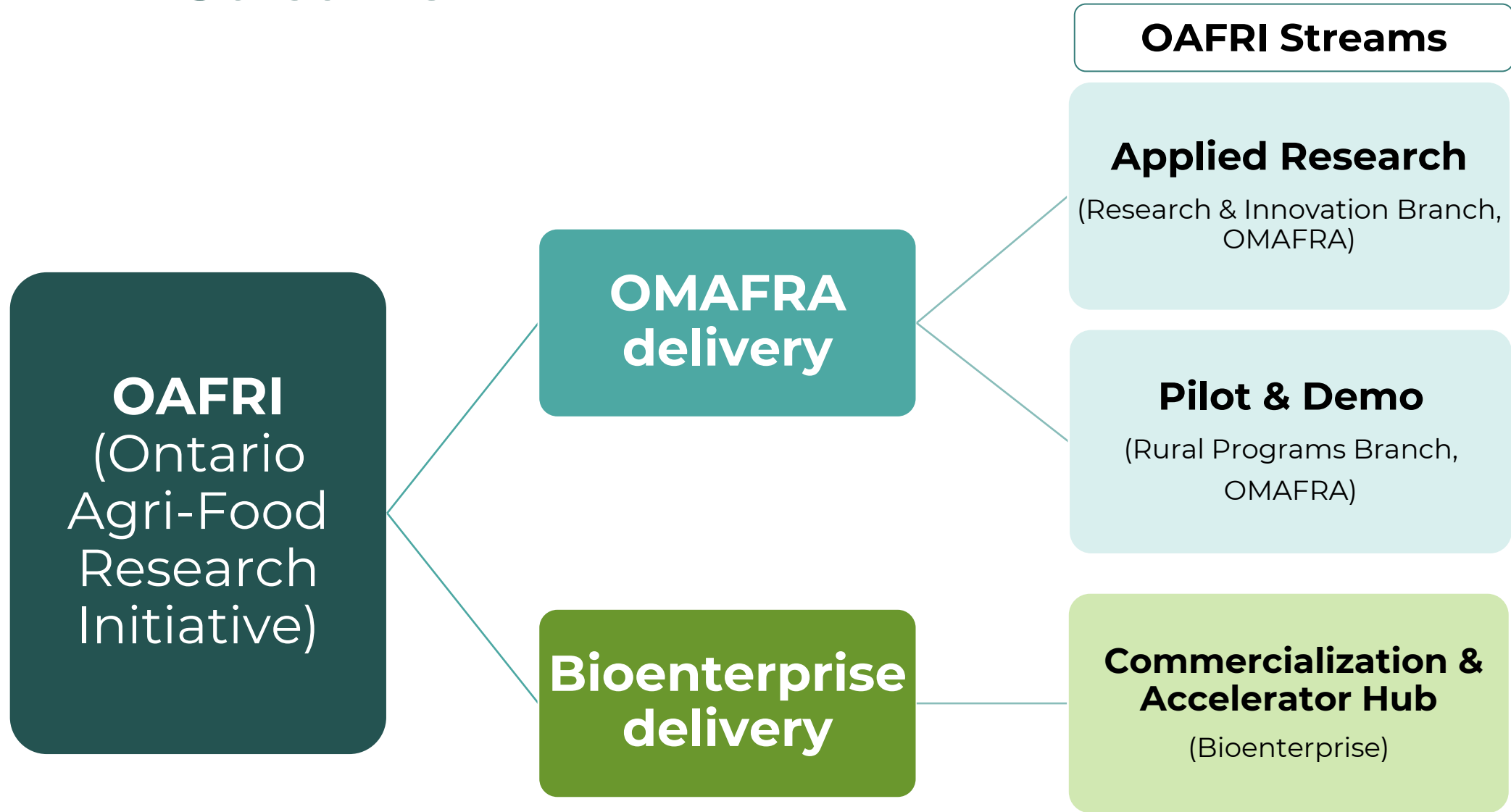Virtual Information Session

OAFRI Overview

The **Ontario Agri-food Research Initiative** (OAFRI) provides funding for agri-food research and innovation projects in Ontario, which is a key pillar of the provincial **Grow Ontario Strategy**.

Under OAFRI, Ontario strives to create an application process that adheres to the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and Indigenization. The goals of the initiative are to:

- fund demand-driven research and innovation activities in the agri-food sector
- support the sector's resiliency and facilitate sustainable growth
- improve knowledge or technology to address business challenges
- expand market opportunities locally and globally

The initiative is jointly funded by the Governments of Canada and Ontario under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP), a 5-year federal-provincial-territorial initiative.
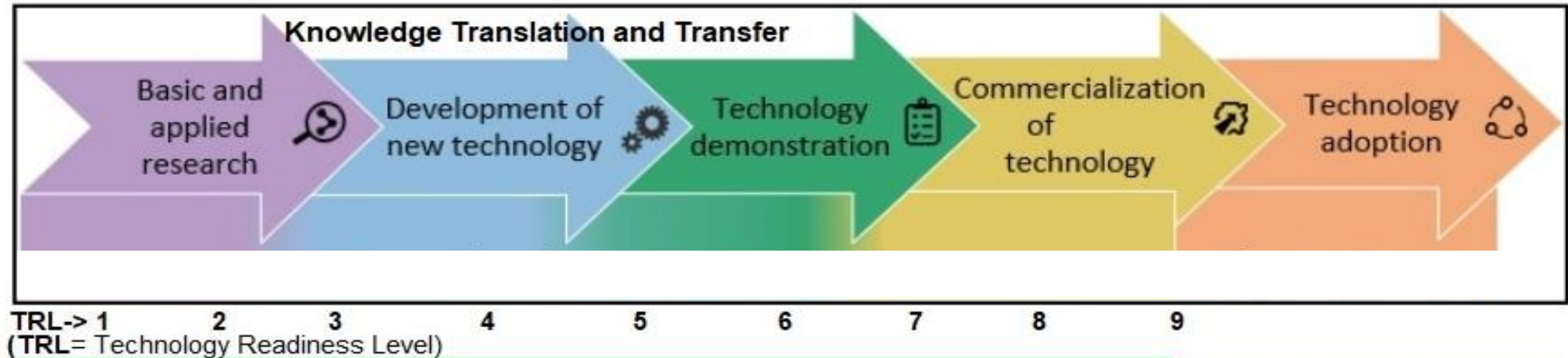
OAFRI Streams

OAFRI Streams

OAFRI
(Ontario Agri-Food Research Initiative)

OMAFRA delivery

Bioenterprise delivery

Applied Research
(Research & Innovation Branch, OMAFRA)

Pilot & Demo
(Rural Programs Branch, OMAFRA)

Commercialization & Accelerator Hub
(Bioenterprise)

** The OAFRI KTT stream of funding is **not** accepting applications for the 2023 year.*

OAFRI Streams Across Innovation Continuum

Past Project Examples

OAFRI streams	Type of projects solicited	Examples of projects solicited
Applied Research	Early stage applied research in the TRLs up to 5. Study leads to new knowledge that will advance or create new products, processes, or practices.	**Understanding nutrient application timing opportunities in wheat** Investigate nutrient uptake, partitioning, and removal in wheat to determine current uptake patterns, maintain high yield wheat. Results will inform *best practice recommendation.*
Pilot & Demo (not user demo for promotion of a tech)	Advanced stage of applied research entering TRL 6 ready with a prototype or model in small scale. *If a proposal may include components of lower TRL (4-5), it will be deemed fit, provided it aims to complete TRL6 (prototype development) at the end of the project.*	**Demonstrating recirculating air quality and pest exclusion for container farms** Involves the validation of a new pest exclusion and air circulation and re-conditioning system following *initial research and a proof of concept.*
Commercialization	Advanced stage TRL (7-9) Prototype-operational level; technology in final form, tested in operational condition. *If a proposal may include components of lower TRL (6), it will be deemed fit, provided it aims to complete TRL in the range of 7-9 at the end of the project.*	**Hyper-eye technology transforming the global hatchery industry** Projects involves last phase of commercialization of the technology. A prototype (not commercial grade) system was developed. Needs design, build, deployment and stress test a commercial system and use this beta system for promotion and demonstration.

All applications must align with an OMAFRA Research Focus Areas under one of the 10 Research Priority Areas

OAFRI – Key Dates

Nov 2, 2023	Nov 2 , 2023 – Jan 11, 2024	Jan 11, 2024	April 2024

OAFRI Streams intake open
- Visit OAFRI & Bioenterprise websites for guidelines and application forms

Prepare your application
- Read guidelines (separate for each stream)
- Attend OAFRI townhall (Nov 14)
- Complete application forms

Submit Applications
- Due January 11, 2024, at 11:59 PM EST for all 3 streams:
  - applied research
  - pilot & demo
  - commercialization

Anticipated project start

Intake for 3 streams opened on November 2, 2023
Application Deadline: Jan 11, 2024, 11.59 pm EST

OAFRI (Ontario Agri-Food Research Initiative)

1. Applied research – OMAFRA (Research and Innovation Branch)

2. Pilot & demonstration – OMAFRA (Rural Programs Branch)

Guidelines and application forms accessible through OAFRI website

3. Commercialization -
Bioenterprise

Guidelines and application forms accessible through Bioenterprise website

1. Applied research application: OAFRI website link to **Online Form** in Research Management System managed by Research and Innovation Branch, OMAFRA

2. Pilot & demo application: Download **PDF Form** from OAFRI website and submit after completion by email to Rural Programs Branch, OMAFRA

3. Commercialization application: Download the proposal templates from the Bioenterprise website. Complete the Intake Form, attaching your completed proposal templates, and click "Submit" at the bottom of the Intake Form.

Summary of OAFRI Streams: Priorities, Eligibility and Delivery Agents

prog	Applied Research (Contact: OMAFRA-RIB)	Pilot and Demo (Contact: OMAFRA-RPB)	Commercialization (Contact: Bioenterprise)
1. Eligible applicants	1. Applicants with Research and Innovation capacity and located in Ontario. 2. Research bodies (universities, colleges, research centres/orgs), industry organizations, producers, processors, municipal government, Indigenous organizations and communities, service providers, retailers/wholesalers. **(Federal & provincial government employees cannot submit Applications)**		
2. Max $/project	Up to $200K (max 3 years)	Up to $200K (max 3 years)	Up to $30K for Market Validation and $50K- 150K for Product Development (max 18 months)
3. Application templates & submission	Online Research Management System (login/ registration required)	PDF form by email to **SustainableCAP1@ontario.ca**	See details in Bioenterprise website
4. Research Priorities	Select one best fit Research Priorities Area (RPA) & Research Focus Area (RFA) (slides 30-31)	Select one best fit RPA & RFA (slides 30-31)	Select one best fit RPA (slide 32)
5. Eligible activities	Applied research TRL 1-5	Pilot and demo TRL 4-6	Pre-commercialization TRL 7-9
6. Eligible costs	a) Direct operating cost- salary, supplies, equipment, travel, other; b) Indirect cost:Research bodies and Industry organizations only	a) Direct operating cost- salary, supplies, equipment, travel, other; b) Indirect cost:Research bodies and Industry organizations only	a) Direct operating cost- salary, supplies, equipment, travel, other; b) Indirect cost:Research bodies and Industry organizations only
7. Ineligible costs	See details in specific Guidelines		

OAFRI Stream: Applied Research

Delivery agent: OMAFRA (Research and Innovation Branch)

Goal: To fund agri-food applied research projects (original investigation) that leads to new knowledge for advancing or creating new products, processes, or practices.

Eligible applicants: See slide 10

Type of projects:
- Technology Readiness Level: 1-5 ; up to 3-year duration; up to $200,000/project

How to apply:
- Read the guidelines (Ontario.ca or RMS copy)
- **Research Management System:** login and draft online application form & save frequently
- Follow instructions in the application form
- RMS tipsheets in applicant's portal
- **Applicant** submits > Applicant org's **Approver** reviews & **approves** before deadline

Contacts:
- Research.omafra@ontario.ca; RMS@ontario.ca; Nicole.rabe@ontario.ca; Rajib.Hazarika@ontario.ca

OAFRI Stream: Pilot and Demonstration

Delivery agent: OMAFRA (Rural Programs Branch)

Goal: To fund new pilot projects for the development, testing, validation and demonstration of a functional prototype or model of an agri-food technology (products or practices). On the Technology Readiness Level (TRL) scale, these projects are generally around TRL 4-6, meaning the applied research and development of experimental proof-of-concept for a technology prototype or model already completed.

Eligible applicants: See slide 10

Type of projects:

- Technology Readiness Level: 4-6; up to 3 years duration; up to 200,000/project

How to apply:

- From OAFRI landing page, access & read the **pilot and demonstration guidelines**.
- From the pilot & demo guidelines page, **download and complete PDF form.**
- Email your completed PDF form to **SustainableCAP1@ontario.ca** on or before deadline.

Contact: SustainableCAP1@ontario.ca

OAFRI Stream: Commercialization

BIOENTERPRISE® | **20 YEARS**

Bioenterprise offers a highly successful commercialization model that delivers a continuity of programs and services to entrepreneurs and businesses across Canada.

We build capacity across the ecosystem by providing:

Industry specific knowledge and expertise

Mentorship, coaching and advice

Access to Canada's Food & Agri-Tech Engine

Access to government funding programs

Access to international trade and global partnerships

Commercialization: Applicant Eligibility

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CANADA'S FOOD & AGRI-TECH ENGINE

Eligible applicants must:

- Be located in Ontario.
- Have project activities and costs that take place in Ontario with project partners and service providers located in Ontario.
- Be operating in the agriculture, agri-food, and agri-based products sectors.
- Have a product/technology/service that is unique to Ontario.
- Have projects that address at least one of the OMAFRA key research priority areas, and the Initiative objectives.

Commercialization: Eligible Project Types

Project Type A: Market Validation Grants

Conduct market research to determine the size and quality of the market opportunity for a new and promising technology, product, or service with the goal of determining if there is any market potential before more research funds are spent on the technology.

Funding Available : Up to $30,000 per project

Project Type B: Product Development Grants

Create prototypes, perform field trials, remove any barriers to a market launch or private sector adoption and optimize a minimum viable product that best meets the needs of customers.

Funding Available: $50,000-$150,000 per project

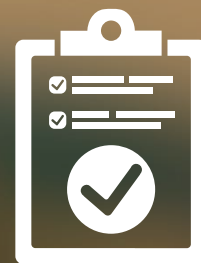# Commercialization: Project Details

Project Duration

Up to 18 Months.

Project Start

A project cannot start prior to the approved start date. Projects must start on or after April 1, 2024.

Project End

Projects must be completed no later than Sep 30, 2025, and final reports are due Oct 31, 2025.

Location

All Project Activities must take place in Ontario.

Commercialization: Eligible Project Costs

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CANADA'S FOOD & AGRI-TECH ENGINE

Must be:

- Directly related to the intent of the project.
- Reasonable and required to carry out the project.
- Incremental to the cost of doing business.
- Directly connected to the Project Milestone Plan.

Examples:

- Internal employee labour*
- Consulting and professional service provider fees
- Equipment (leased or purchased)*
- Consumables
- Travel
- Indirect costs

Commercialization: How to Apply

The proposal process is a one-phased full proposal consisting of:

- OAFRI – Initial Relevance Screen (optional)
- Proposal Workbook*
- Budget Workbook*
- OAFRI Intake Form*
- Supporting Documentation (optional but recommended)
- Please refer to the Proposal Tools & Templates section on the Bioenterprise website: https://bioenterprise.ca/programs/oafri/

Commercialization: Proposal Documents

PROPOSAL WORKBOOK – OAFRI COMMERCIALIZATION STREAM

Please submit your Proposal Workbook, Budget Workbook, and all supporting documentation online using this link: **OAFRI - Intake Form**

SECTION A: ORGANIZATION & TECHNOLOGY OVERVIEW (continued)	
Organization Name	
Brief Organization Description (100-word max.) *Non-confidential summary.*	

Use grey text boxes to insert responses. Please note the word limit on left beneath each question prompt.

Commercialization: Proposal Documents

| Project A - Market Validation | Project B - Product Development |

Please select the excel tab that corresponds with your Project Type (A or B).

Section D: Budget Workbook
Project Type A: Market Validation
Organization Name:

BUDGET WORKBOOK

Expenses Correlate to the Activities in Project Milestone Plan. Provide a cost breakdown: per item, per day, per hour, etc. Add more lines as required.	Activity Type	Total Activity Cost	Eligible Cost (OAFRI Contribution)
Activity #1			
Sub-Total:		$0.00	$0.00

Commercialization:

Submitting Your Proposal

- After preparing the Proposal Workbook and the Budget Workbook, complete the OAFRI Intake Form and attach all required documents.

- Upload supporting documents if available.

Full Proposal Attachments

To apply to the OAFRI Commercialization Stream, please attach and submit the following completed documents:
1. Proposal Workbook
2. Budget Workbook

To download the Proposal Workbook and Budget Workbook templates, please visit the Bioenterprise website **HERE** and scroll to the "Proposal Toolkit".

When naming attachments, refrain from using the following characters: " % & * : ? / | \ Otherwise, the form will not submit to Bioenterprise for review.

Please submit all attachments in PDF format.

Project Type: *
- ○ Project Type A: Market Validation
- ○ Project Type B: Product Development

Proposal Workbook *

[Choose File] No file chosen

Budget Workbook *

[Choose File] No file chosen

Commercialization: Questions?

Visit: https://bioenterprise.ca/programs/oafri/

Email: submissions@bioenterprise.ca

Contact: Alexis Dempsey, Program Manager
Alexis.Dempsey@Bioenterprise.ca

GROW Ontario Acceleration Hub (Hub)
Delivery Agent: Bioenterprise

BIOENTERPRISE | **20 YEARS**
CANADA'S FOOD & AGRI-TECH ENGINE

The Hub invites Ontario-based organizations in agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sectors to lead the advancement of solutions and technologies to market.

Eligible companies must:
- Be located, registered, and carrying on business in Ontario
- Be operating in the agriculture, agri-food, and/or agri-based products sector

Eligible applicants for the Hub must have products, services or solutions that:
- Address at least one of the Ontario agriculture research priority areas, and
- Align with the goals set out by OMAFRA through their Grow Ontario Strategy

Through the Initiative, eligible organizations can expect to receive access to the following:
- General mentorship & coaching services
- Dedicated business resource hub
- Contracted advisory services (25 hours of customized business readiness & support services)

OMAFRA Research Priorities

OAFRI is seeking applications in 10 Research Priorities Area (RPA)s:

- Each RPA has up to 7 Research Focus Area (RFA)s. An application must address one of the RFAs listed under an RPA. (see Guidelines for the description of RFAs)

- Priorities details are accessible on Ontario.ca and in stream guidelines
  - Read the full guidelines document to identify specific **RFA** for your application and to know the eligible activities and expenses etc.

Reseach Priority Areas (RPA)	Food Safety	Animal Health & Welfare	Plant Health & Protection	Soil Health	Water Quality & Quantity	Sustainable Production Systems	Productive Land Capacity	Competitive Production Systems	Innovative Products & Product Improvement	Trade, Market & Targeted Sector Growth Opportunities
Research **Focus** Areas (RFA)	1 2 ③ 4 5 6 7	**Each application must select one (best fit) of the RFAs listed in the guideline for the respective OAFRI stream**								

Enhanced Focus on Indigenous Agri-food System Research

OMAFRA is committed to supporting the success of Indigenous food systems and businesses.

- Participation by Indigenous Persons (Applicants or participants) is strongly encouraged to apply under all the 3 streams.

- To create opportunity, a broad Research Focus Area (Indigenous Agriculture and Food System) under each of the Research Priority Areas has been included (refer to Appendix A in the Guidelines) that acknowledges Indigenous Persons who are best positioned to speak to their own applied research needs.

- All applicants are encouraged to look at how Indigenization can influence the project.

- To better support the participation of Indigenous Persons, culturally sensitive research methods will be required as a central component of the proposed applied research project.

OAFRI Application Evaluation: Criteria

1. Fitness of the proposal to the Research Focus Area of a Priority Area (posted in the guideline)

2. Strength of the applicant and the team

3. Novelty/uniqueness of the proposal and its benefit to Ontario

4. Work plan and deliverables (project description, objectives and deliverables, methods/milestones, Knowledge Translation and Transfer (KTT), Intellectual Property (IP), etc., where applicable)

5. Appropriateness of the proposed budget and leverage (where applicable)

OAFRI Resources:

OAFRI website

- Access **Applied Research guidelines** and RMS application form

- Access **Pilot and Demonstration guidelines** and PDF application form

- Links to **Bioenterprise website**

Bioenterprise website

- Access **Commercialization** guidelines and PDF form

- Access **Accelerator Hub** information

Previously funded OMAFRA projects (active and completed)

- Ontario Agri-Food Research and Innovation Portal **(OAFRIP)**

- OAFRI **projects funded** from 2020 - 2023

- Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance **funded projects**

Q&A and Contacts

Generic information on OAFRI or OMAFRA SCAP programming:
ag.info.omafra@ontario.ca

Applied Research Stream:
research.omafra@ontario.ca
RMS@ontario.ca (RMS Support)

Pilot & Demo Stream:
SustainableCAP1@ontario.ca

Commercialization Stream
submissions@bioenterprise.ca

Grow Ontario Accelerator Hub:
theengine@bioenterprise.ca

APPENDICES:

- Research Priorities – For all OAFRI streams (slides 30-32)

- Frequently Asked Questions & Answers (slides 33-35)

- Bioenterprise-OAFRI commercialization stream details (slides 36-41)

- Sustainable-CAP Guelph Statement and *Science, Research and Innovation* priorities (slides 42-43)

Research priorities (1/3): Applied Research & Pilot & Demo Streams

Please note: In the application, the applicant will select a Research Priority Area (RPA) and one Research Focus Areas under the RPA relevant to the proposed project.

Research Priority Area (RPA)s	Research Focus Areas (RFA): An application must fit to one of the RFAs under an RPA.	
	Applied research	**Pilot and demo**
1. Food safety	1.1. climate change impacts and resiliency; 1.2. detection and surveillance; 1.3. innovative and disruptive technologies or practices (such as food safety improvements that also measurably reduce food loss); 1.4. pathway analysis (such as pathogen entry points in processed foods); 1.5 prevention and control: interventions throughout the supply chain (such as mitigation of pathogens in ready-to-eat fruits and vegetables); 1.6 validation of detection methods (such as DNA testing and value of metagenomics and other culture-independent diagnostic tests); 1.7 Indigenous agriculture and food systems	Same as Applied research
2. Animal health & welfare	2.1 best management practice (BMP) development; 2.2 emerging pathogens and pests; 2.3 health, welfare and productivity of young animals; 2.4 innovative and disruptive technologies or practices; 2.5 prevention and control of pathogens; 2.6 climate change impacts and resiliency; 2.7 Indigenous agriculture and food systems	Same as Applied research
3. Plant health	3.1 biology of current and emerging pests; 3.2 climate change impacts and resiliency; 3.3 Indigenous agriculture and food systems; 3.4 innovative and disruptive technologies or practices	Same as Applied research
4. Competitive production systems	4.1 Improved management processes: optimization of production systems to improve competitiveness and efficiency; 4.2 improved performance measurement: data driven solutions for the measurement of production efficiencies and environmental benefits (such as "omics" technologies for sheep/goat/beef, management decision derived from robotics, automation tools, precision agriculture and site-specific decision support systems); 4.3 climate change impacts and resiliency; 4.4 Indigenous agriculture and food systems; 4.5 innovative and disruptive technologies or practices	Same as Applied research
5. Trade, market & targeted sector growth	5.1 domestic market analysis; 5.2 targeted sector growth: in dairy goats, hazelnuts, greenhouse, maple syrup, processed vegetables, processed meats, baked goods and cannabis/hemp; 5.3 climate change impacts and resiliency; 5.4 Indigenous agriculture and food systems; 5.5 innovative and disruptive technologies or practices	Same as Applied research

Research priorities (2/3): Applied Research & Pilot & Demo Streams

OMAFRA Research Priority Area (RPA)s	Research Focus Areas (RFA): An application must fit to one of the RFAs under an RPA.	
	Applied research applications	**Pilot and demo applications**
6. Innovative products & products improvement	6.1 innovative and disruptive technologies or practices; 6.2 new product development; 6.3 Indigenous agriculture and food systems	Same as Applied research
7. Sustainable production systems	7.1 environmental impact of agri-food production: Understand and quantify the impact of agricultural production systems on the environment to help mitigate environmental impacts. 7.2 environmental impacts of management practices: environmental impacts of fertilizer, agricultural and non-agricultural soil amendments and pesticide use, nutrient management, integrated pest management, plastic and solid waste management; 7.3 impact of changing ecosystems on ; 7.4.climate change impacts and resiliency; 7.5 Indigenous agriculture and food systems; 7.6 innovative and disruptive technologies or practices; 7.7. BMP development	7.1 diminishes environmental impact of agri-food production; 7.2 diminishes environmental impacts of management practices (such as nutrient management, use of fertilizers, agricultural and non-agricultural soil amendments, integrated pest management and pesticide use); 7.3 minimizes impact of changing ecosystems on agriculture; 7.4 improves climate change impacts and resiliency; 7.5 Indigenous agriculture and food systems; 7.6 innovative and disruptive technologies or practices; 7.7 BMP development
8. Soil	8.1 baseline soil health information; 8.2 climate change impacts and resiliency; 8.3 Indigenous agriculture and food systems; 8.4 innovative and disruptive technologies or practices; 8.5 BMP development	8.1 facilitate the collection of baseline soil health information; 8.2 climate change impacts and resiliency; 8.3 Indigenous agriculture and food systems; 8.4 innovative and disruptive technologies or practices
9. Water	9.1 BMP development; 9.2 climate change impacts and resiliency; 9.3 environmental impact of management practices; 9.4 Indigenous agriculture and food systems; 9.5 innovative and disruptive technologies or practices	Same as Applied research
10. Productive land capacity	10.1 evidence to support land use policies: document evidence to inform land use policies that support the long-term success of the agri-food sector; 10.2 Indigenous agriculture and food systems	Same as Applied research

Research priorities (3/3): Commercialization Stream

1. **Food Safety**:
   - Enhance public confidence in the sector to deliver on food safety, animal health, plant health, emergency management, and animal welfare expectations and demands.
   - Anticipate, detect, mitigate and/or reduce food safety hazards along the supply chain.

2. **Animal Health & Welfare:**
   - Enhance public confidence in the sector to deliver on food safety, animal health, plant health, emergency management, and animal welfare expectations and demands.
   - Anticipate, detect, mitigate and/or reduce animal health hazards and antimicrobial use along the supply chain.

3. **Plant Health & Protection:**
   - Enhance public confidence in the sector to deliver on food safety, animal health, plant health, emergency management, and animal welfare expectations and demands.
   - Help strengthen the agri-food sector's sustainability and social license through increased utilization of integrated pest management (IPM) and other pest mitigation strategies.
   - Anticipate, detect, mitigate and/or reduce plant hazards along the supply chain, and improve plant resilience and resistance.

4. **Soil Health:**
   - Protect and enhance soil health and water quality, supporting improved public confidence in the sector to deliver on sustainability expectations.
   - Improve soil health and conservation to support agricultural productivity.

5. **Water Quality and Quantity:**
   - Protect and enhance soil health and water quality, supporting improved public confidence in the sector to deliver on sustainability expectations.
   - Strengthen the agri-food sector's sustainability and social licence through improved water use and water quality.

6. **Sustainable Production Systems:**
   - Strengthen the sustainability of the agri-food sector through (1) Soil health and conservation, (2) Improved water quality (e.g., reduced phosphorus runoff and pesticides), (3) Increased water/waste/energy efficiency and reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and (4) Increased utilization of 4Rs of Nutrient Stewardship (right source, right rate, right time, and right place).

7. **Productive Land Capacity:**
   - Reduce the rate of loss of farmland through improved land use planning to support agricultural viability.

8. **Competitive Production Systems:**
   - Improve production efficiency, productivity, competitiveness and public trust efforts through technology adoption and innovation and technology development such a labour-saving technology or practices, automation, waste reduction, recycling, and increased water/waste/energy efficiency and reduced GHG emissions.

9. **Innovative Products & Product Improvements:**
   - Enhance competitiveness, profitability, and growth of the agri-food sector through new or improved products.

10. **Trade Market & Targeted Sector Growth Opportunities:**
    - Growth of the overall agri-food sector through expansion of existing and access to new domestic and international markets.
    - Improve economic performance of identified priority sub-sectors and increased production of niche and/or value-add products.
    - Priority areas include dairy goats, hazelnuts, greenhouse, maple syrup, processed vegetables, processed meats, baked goods, and cannabis/hemp.

Questions and answers:

Q1. What types of applicants are best suited for each OAFRI stream?

A: OAFRI is designed to bring the best solutions forward and therefore the eligibility is the same for all the three streams. Eligible applicants are from Ontario with demonstrated capacity to perform quality research and innovation activities and be:

- a university or college
- a research organization, institute, or foundation
- an industry organization or business
- a non-government organization
- a municipal or Indigenous government or government agency.

Federal and provincial government researchers are not eligible to apply. These researchers may collaborate on a research project lead by another eligible lead applicant. Researchers outside the province of Ontario are also not eligible to apply. Researchers from other provinces may collaborate on a research project if the lead applicant for the project is in Ontario.

Q2. What have been the volumes of submissions in the past through each stream?

A: It may vary between streams and years due to changes in scope of the priorities. Based on past application submissions, we are expecting over 30 applications in each stream. The commercialization stream attracted higher number of applications.

Q3. How can an applicant demonstrate the research and innovation capacity?

A: The application completed by an applicant will reflect the research and innovation capacity. The information on the team membership and experience, organization's affiliation and/or partnership, physical infrastructure, project methodology and overall project plan will be evaluated by experts to determine the capacity to deliver.

Questions and answers

Q4. Can an Applicant reach out to OMAFRA staff to understand the fitness of a proposal to the published priorities or seek assistance in proposal development?

A. An applicant may reach out to OMAFRA for seeking clarification on the call guidelines or priorities or for collaboration in a project or for assistance in the application drafting. The staff from the funding program coordination branches (Research and Innovation Branch or Rural Programs Branch) can assist in clarifying priorities or other section of the call guidelines or addressing issues with application submission platform but cannot assist in the proposal development.
If an OMAFRA staff assists an applicant in proposal development or contribute to the project application, such staff will not participate in application evaluation.

Q6. What is the cost-share percentage for producers and processors?
A: The details are available in the program guidelines posted on Nov 2, 2023 in the OAFRI website.
There is no mandatory cost-share requirement for applications except for those from a single producer or processor (not producer/processor organizations like GFO, FBO). If a processor or producer applies to any OAFRI streams, there is 25% cost-share requirement for any equipment purchases with initiative funds, which means only 75% of the total cost of equipment will be reimbursed.

Applications with external funding/leverage/cost-share will be rated higher (evaluation assessment) than an application without any leveraged funding from external partner organizations (non-provincial funding).

Q7. Who are the program contacts for the OAFRI streams?
➢Applied research stream: please forward questions to research.omafra@onatrio.ca
➢Pilot and demo stream: please forward questions to SustainableCAP1@ontario.ca
➢Commercialization stream: please forward the queries to Bioenterprise (*Alexis.Dempsey@bioenterprise.ca*)

Questions and answers

Q8. What is counted in the external (non-provincial) sources of funding or leverage? Does this contribute to proposal's evaluation or success in the competition?

A. Applicant's ability to secure additional cash and in-kind support from potential co-funder(s) to fund/support project activities demonstrates stronger partnership/collaboration and likelihood of project's success. Such leveraged funding (cash or in–kind) can be included in the budget section of the OAFRI application supported by a brief justification and proper valuation. Therefore, applications demonstrating cash and/or in-kind support from co-funder with proper justification and valuation of the support (confirmed support letters) are likely to be rated higher than a similar project without leverage. However, the influence of this criterion towards overall evaluation score of an application is relatively small as compared to other evaluation criteria.

Q9. Can I apply to all three (3) streams?

A. You can apply to all streams. Please ensure that the objectives and deliverables of each application/ proposal is different, and each proposal meets the Technology Readiness Level criteria for the stream. Please do not submit the same proposal to all the streams.
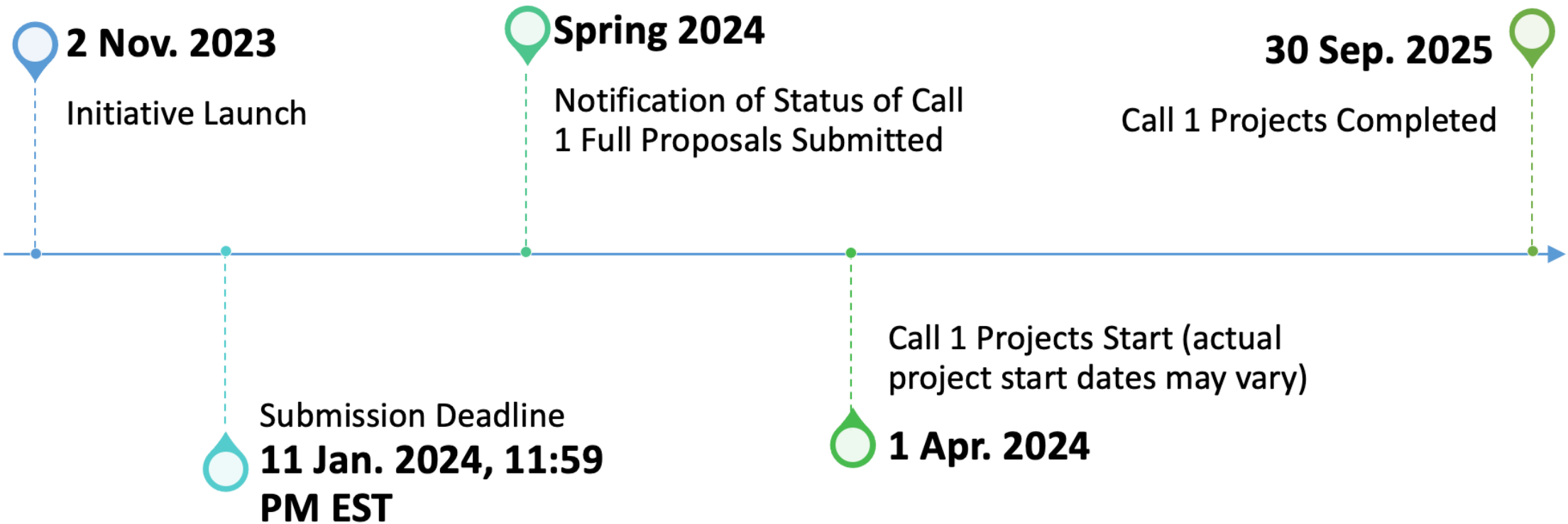
Project Type A – Market Validation

Eligible Activities:

- Conducting market research to determine the size and quality of the market opportunity.
- Comprehensive market analysis and competitive landscape assessment.
- Customer discovery research to determine industry needs and to identify optimal industry partners.
- Beta-testing early-stage technologies before transferring to industry (Technology Readiness Level 5+).
- Demonstrating proof of relevancy using a prototype made within the cost constraints determined by the market.
- Generating data (proof of concept) from a novel technology to support filing a patent application.
- Determining the technical merit, feasibility, and commercial potential of a technology, which could involve demonstrating proof of concept in the lab or proof of relevancy in the field.

Project Type B – Product Development (Technology Readiness Level 6+)

Eligible Activities:

- Prototype creation.
- Field testing and/or pilot testing prototypes/devices that have never been used outside the lab (does not cover human medical testing).
- Removing any barriers to a market launch or private sector adoption.
- Evaluating a significant advancement to an existing product, process or service.
- Testing or optimizing a minimum viable product that best meets the needs of customers.
- Evaluation and testing of late-stage technologies to support a regulatory approval submission.
- Exploring and advancing the certification of a product or process by a reputable association.
- Developing a new product for animals or agriculture based on existing technology for humans or non-agricultural purposes.
- Creating and utilizing an academic-industry research centre at an industry partner's site to co-develop and implement process improvements directly applicable to industry.

Assessment Criteria

The project's fit within the OMAFRA priority areas, the objectives of Bioenterprise, and key priorities under the Partnership.

How well is the barrier or gap defined and understood?

How clear is the plan to develop the product, technonology, or service?

How valuable is the potential innovation to society once the barrier is removed? What is the economic impact of the project?

What realistic benefits will the project deliver once completed as planned? Who will benefit in Ontario and beyond?

What is the level of uniqueness of the product, technology or service to Ontario? Technologies, products, and services that already exist in Ontario are not eligible through this Initiative.

Quality and clarity of methodology and overall project work plan. The review committee must understand the step by step process the project will use to achieve stated milestones.

The experience and expertise of the Applicant and project partners to produce the anticipated outcomes to benefit Ontario.

The completeness and appropriateness of the proposed budget, evidence of stakeholder support, and level of available funds from eligible sources (requested and confirmed) where applicable.

Important Notes:

- Applicants may submit more than one proposal if multiple unique technologies exist.

- Applicants who have received prior funding from OMAFRA but have outstanding required reports or have ongoing OAFRI Commercialization projects are not eligible for funding under this Initiative until OMAFRA and Bioenterprise have received and approved the outstanding reports and previously approved projects are completed. Previous recipients under OAFRI are eligible to apply for a different project than what was previously funded.

Sustainable Canadian Agricultural
2023-2028
Partnership

The Guelph Statement

A vision to 2028

Canada is recognized as a world leader in sustainable agriculture and agri-food production and drives forward to 2028 from a solid foundation of regional strengths and diversity, as well as the strong leadership of the Provinces and Territories, in order to rise to the climate change challenge, to expand new markets and trade while meeting the expectations of consumers, and to feed Canadians and a growing global population.

[Guelph Statement (PDF 492 KB)](#)

The priorities

- Tackling **climate change and environmental protection** to support GHG emission reductions and the long-term vitality of the sector while positioning producers and processors to seize economic opportunities from evolving consumer demands
- Continued and targeted investments in **science, research and innovation** to address key challenges and opportunities
- Supporting sustainable agriculture and economic growth by creating the conditions for Canadian businesses to meet evolving challenges of the interconnected **domestic and global marketplace**
- Building **sector capacity** and **growth** through realizing the potential of value added agri-food and agri-products
- Enhancing **resiliency** to anticipate, mitigate and respond to risks, including a robust suite of Business Risk Management programs

Ontario

Sustainable CAP Priorities and Focus Areas

Science, Research and Innovation (SRI)

Priorities and Focus Areas for the Next Policy Framework

Advancing Sustainable Agriculture and Agri-Food

The next policy framework will reflect the principles of sustainable development allowing the agriculture and agri-food sector to meet the needs of today, and grow for tomorrow, without compromising the needs of future generations.

Environment

Building Sector Capacity, Growth & Competitiveness
- Support new or emerging **primary, value-added and processing opportunities**
- Improve productivity through the development and adoption of **technology, digitization and artificial intelligence**
- Enhance **labour** attraction and retention, training, and automation
- Foster the **next generation of farmers,** considering economic, training and other barriers to entry
- Pursue economic opportunities through **efficiency improvements, reducing and recovering food and other wastes, and growing the bioeconomy**

Climate Change & Environment
- Prepare for and respond to a **changing climate by supporting Beneficial Management Practices and accelerating technological adoption**
- **Reduce GHG emissions,** and improve carbon sequestration
- Protect and regenerate **soil, water** and **air quality**
- Improve **biodiversity** and protect sensitive **habitats**

Science, Research & Innovation
- **Address challenges** such as climate change and pursue opportunities such as new markets
- Support research in **primary agriculture, agronomy, and value-added**
- Accelerate the development and **adoption of new technologies and finding energy efficiencies**
- Supporting **pre-commercialization and start-ups** in such areas as innovative labour solutions and bioproducts
- Enhance **data collection, extension activities, performance measures, knowledge exchange and transfer**

Market Development & Trade
- Collaborate to pursue and defend **Canadian trade interests and advance science-based trade rules**
- Support **market diversification** and efforts to remove barriers to interprovincial trade
- Support **export readiness** and identify and pursue **market development** opportunities abroad and domestically such as buy local
- **Meet domestic and international demand** for sustainable primary production and processing practices

Resiliency & Public Trust
- Build the **resiliency** of the entire food chain
- Provide **BRM** programs that are timely, equitable, and easy to understand
- Encourage and support **proactive risk management,** including climate risk
- Protect and enhance **plant and animal health and animal welfare, through a "One Health"** perspective
- Support the sector to develop, adopt, and enhance **assurance systems**
- Fostering awareness of sector commitment to the sustainable production of safe, high-quality food and building **public trust** while increasing sector awareness of the expectations of consumers
- Support and empower producers and agri-food workers to take care of their **mental health**
- Support **worker health and safety**

Economic / Social

Science, Research & Innovation

- **Address challenges** such as climate change and pursue opportunities such as new markets
- Support research in **primary agriculture, agronomy, and value-added**
- Accelerate the development and **adoption of new technologies and finding energy efficiencies**
- Supporting **pre-commercialization and start-ups** in such areas as innovative labour solutions and bioproducts
- Enhance **data collection, extension activities, performance measures, knowledge exchange and transfer**

Ontario