



Agriculture Funding Consortium

Tailoring Applications to Funder Priorities

Webinar – February 20, 2026

Presented by:

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Agriculture Funding Consortium Chair

Research Program Manager - Crops, RDAR

Outline



- Overview of the AFC structure
- Priorities of individual AFC members
- Tips for successful funding proposals, including:
 - Build Relationships with Funders
 - Understanding the Economic and Logistical Constraints of Farms
 - Industry Support
 - The Best Proposals
 - Diverse Teams
 - Best Practices
- 2026-27 AFC Timelines
- Q&A



Agriculture Funding Consortium

Structure

info@fundingconsortium.ca

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- MEMBERS
- HOW TO APPLY
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We are your one-window destination for Funding Agriculture Research in Western Canada.

www.fundingconsortium.ca

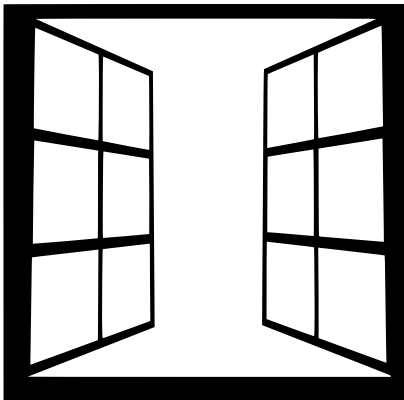
2024-25 AFC Research Projects

View the 2026/2027 Research Priorities



Agriculture Funding Consortium TERMS of REFERENCE...

- **Each member** is responsible for its **own strategic priorities** and **investment mandates**.
- AFC is a **one window approach** for applicants to submit applications and for funders **to review applications and coordinate funding**



VS





Agriculture Funding Consortium

The Agriculture Funding Consortium (AFC) provides coordinated funding and stimulates private/public sector participation for Research and Innovation that supports sustainability, diversification and long-term growth for agriculture and the food industry in Western Canada. **The AFC is an informal body that has no legal standing.** It is comprised of 20 organizations as follows:

- Alberta Beef Producers
- Alberta Beekeepers Commission
- Alberta Canola Producers Commission
- Alberta Chicken Producers
- Alberta Grains
- Alberta Innovates
- Alberta Pork
- Alberta Pulse Growers Commission
- Egg Farmers of Alberta
- Genome Alberta
- Manitoba Crop Alliance
- Manitoba Canola Growers Association
- Potato Growers of Alberta
- Prairie Oat Growers Association
- Results Driven Agriculture Research
- Saskatchewan Barley Development Commission
- Saskatchewan Oilseeds Development Commission
- Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission
- Western Dairy Research Collaboration, as represented by Alberta Milk, BC Dairy, Dairy Farmers of Manitoba, and SaskMilk*
- Western Grains Research Foundation

20 Members;

RDAR provides:

- Admin support
- ARGO Platform

* Western Dairy Research Collaboration is not a legal entity but represents these 4 groups. Funding decisions and contracts will be made independently by these 4 groups. There will only be 1 representative at AFC meetings on behalf of the 4 groups.



Agriculture Funding Consortium

**Priorities of the
Individual Members**

Learnings from 2025-26 AFC Call

- 74 out of 166 Letters of Intent (LOIs) were invited to Full Proposal (FP)- 45%
- 32 of the 166 LOIs were successful - 19%
- Top reasons for full proposal declines (by order of prominence):
 - Methodology Concerns identified by peer reviewers
 - Lack of (or poor) Economic Analysis plan within the project
 - Lack of a Commercialization Plan or research learnings that would be impractical to implement on-farm
 - Other deficiencies: lack of collaboration; gaps in the research team expertise; limited benefit to producers; gaps in regulatory approval plans; lack of alignment with provincial or national strategies

Member Organizations



- Individual members have their own process for selecting LOIs:
 - Processes may include some, or all, of the following:
 - Staff reviews by individuals with diverse skill sets
 - Technical reviews
 - Industry relevance reviews
 - Producer research committee reviews
 - Discussions between funding partners



Projects
MUST
address
funder
priorities

[Alberta Beef Producers](#) (No changes)

[Alberta Beekeepers Commission](#) (Updated 2026)

[Alberta Canola Producers Commission](#) (No changes)

[Alberta Chicken Producers Commission](#)

[Alberta Grains](#) (No changes)

[Alberta Innovates](#) (Updated 2026)

[Alberta Pork](#) (No changes)

[Alberta Pulse Growers Commission](#)

[Egg Farmers of Alberta](#) (No changes)

[Genome Alberta](#) (Updated 2026)

[Manitoba Canola Growers Association](#) (Further updates may be available in March)

[Manitoba Crop Alliance](#) (Updated 2026)

[Potato Growers of Alberta](#)

[Prairie Oat Growers Association](#) (No changes)

[Results Driven Agriculture Research](#) (No changes)


[Saskatchewan Barley Development Commission](#) also funds projects aligned with [CBRC's \(Canadian Barley Research Council\)](#)'s national barley research strategy

[Saskatchewan Oilseeds Development Commission](#) (Updated 2026)

[Saskatchewan Wheat Development Commission](#) (No changes)

[Western Dairy Research Collaboration](#) as represented by Alberta Milk, BC Dairy, Dairy Farmers of Manitoba and SaskMilk (Updated 2026)

[Western Grain Research Foundation](#) (Updated 2026)



*Proposals related to organic production would benefit from consultation from [Organic Alberta](#) to ensure the research aligns with the needs of organic producers.

ABP Research Priorities

- ABP is involved with developing, and takes guidance from, the 5 Year Beef Research and Technology Transfer Strategy to fund projects
 - Animal health & welfare, antimicrobial resistance
 - Feed grains & feed efficiency
 - Forage & grassland productivity
 - Food safety & beef quality
 - Environment
 - KTT
- <https://www.beefresearch.ca/research/canadian-beef-technology-transfer-strategy/>

2026 Research Priorities

Honey Bee Health and Resilience

- Improve bee stock quality with a focus on developing local stock and improving colony level traits
- Enhancing honey bee nutrition: improving supplements & focused crop breeding for nutrition
- *Tropilaelaps* preparedness and prevention

Honey: Market Position and Profile

- Development of a new standard for honey
- Ensuring authenticity of all imported honeys including organic
- Development of MRLs for Quinclorac and Glyphosate



2026-2027 FUNDING TARGETS

1. Diseases
2. Abiotic Stresses
3. Weeds
4. Plant Nutrition
5. Market Development
6. Insect Pests

Alberta Canola funds research that investigates the *best ways to grow* canola, finds *solutions to pest management*, and *increases the demand* for canola.



One Health: Food and Agriculture Innovation

Research Priorities

- Scaling Alberta-based innovations in life sciences, sustainable agriculture, and health to improve well-being, food security, and bioeconomy competitiveness.
- Our efforts focus on the following three areas:
 - One Health Approach
 - Sustainable Agriculture
 - Food Innovation



Plant Genetics Improvement

- Abiotic stress resilience (pre-harvest sprouting, drought, excess moisture, heat, freeze-thaw cycles)
- Disease/pest resistance (FHB, rusts, leaf diseases, BLS – cereals, sclerotinia, rust, downy mildew – sunflower)
- Lodging resistance
- Nitrogen use efficiency

Agronomy and Crop Production

- Profitable, resilient production systems
- Integrated disease, weed and pest management
- Soil health and nutrient optimization
- Water management
- Precision ag and digital tools with demonstrated ROI

Harvest, Post-Harvest and Quality Management

- Pre-harvest weed control and harvest optimization
- Grain drying, storage and handling efficiency (corn)
- Grain quality improvements and value-added opportunities
- Decision support tools to optimize harvest of late-season crops (corn, sunflower)

Profitability, Market Development and Decision Support

- Crop competitiveness and market expansion (sunflower, corn, winter wheat, flax)
- Value-chain and export opportunities
- Economic, sustainability and supply-chain assessments
- Data-driven decision tools for producers

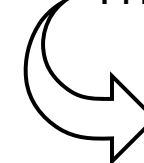
Projects should demonstrate ROI, economic impact and practical benefit to Manitoba producers. Collaborative, multidisciplinary proposals encouraged.



**MANITOBA
CROP
ALLIANCE**

RESEARCH PRIORITIES 2027

Detailed List of
Priorities





Research Objectives

1. Invest in research programs that will lead to increased grower profitability.
2. Fund, direct, develop and distribute practical, science-based research.
3. Work with researchers to ensure oats continue to be a healthy and safe component of the food chain.

Mandate:

To target **strategic investments** in **producer-led, results-driven** agriculture research to power the **competitiveness, profitability, productivity, and sustainability** of agriculture in Alberta.

Must Haves:

- Research results **MUST** provide economic benefits which can be adopted by producers.
- RDAR projects **MUST** include a clear plan to show how results will reach the “Final Mile”
 - reaching producers for adoption,
 - reaching a veterinarian's office,
 - a policy-maker, or
 - to the international markets for exports



Funding Sources

- **Sustainable CAP**



- Expenditure period to December 31, 2027
- Reporting due January 31, 2028
- The next FTP negotiations begin July 2026

- **“Main” Funds**



- Expenditure period to March 31, 2030
- RDAR investments in AFC 2026-27 projects starting April 1, 2027 will have:
 - Maximum 3-year time frame
 - Funding partners could provide co-funding beyond March 31, 2030



Research Priorities

Canola:

- 1) Agronomy-based research to optimize production and profitability for farmers
- 2) Pre-breeding genetics development and trait discovery
- 3) Developing new uses for oil and meal

Flax:

1. Breeding for yield and disease resistance

Please review our research priorities and previously funded research projects at <https://saskoilseeds.com>





Priorities

Variety Development

Genetics, pre-breeding, breeding for yield, biotic stress (e.g. FHB, rust), abiotic/physiological stress (ex. cold tolerance, lodging) and quality, testing/trialing.

Production

Agronomy (e.g. soil health, soil microbiome, crop rotations, crop management including genetics), integrated pest management (disease, weeds, insects), fungicide resistance, herbicide resistance, harvest management.

Post-Production

Storage, end-use (e.g. quality, processing, utilization), grain safety, economic and regulatory analysis, value-added initiatives.

Western Dairy Research Collaboration Research Priorities

1) Farm Sustainability (Economic, Social & Environmental)

- a. Sustainable feed crops & management, soil management
- b. Manage and reduce water footprint
- c. Improve farm efficiency, productivity & profitability

2) Animal Health, Care & Welfare

- a. Prevent & manage disease, antimicrobial stewardship
- b. Feeding & management strategies for productive longevity
- c. Improve genetics & reproduction performance

3) Milk Quality, Composition & Processing

- a. Improve management of udder health
- b. Understanding & management of milk quality & composition
- c. Advance value added dairy products & valorization of byproducts





WGRF Research Priorities

- **Production:** cropping systems, crop nutrition, pest management, production management, soil quality, water use efficiency, fertilizer use efficiency, climate change, crop quality, storage, storage pests, economic analysis.
- **Variety Development:** genetics, breeding methods, pre-breeding, breeding, pest resistance development, breeding for crop quality, variety trialing.
- Further details can be found on the WGRF website:
 - <https://wgrf.ca/research-programming/research-priorities/>

Member Organizations Agriculture Funding Consortium

- Each individual member organization has **their own process** for:
 - **Reviewing applications**
 - Processes differ by organization but may include some or all of the following:
 - Staff reviews by individuals with diverse skill sets
 - Technical reviews (peer reviews)
 - Industry relevance reviews
 - Producer research committee reviews
 - Discussions between funding partners
 - **Making funding decisions**
 - Research committee approvals and/or
 - Board approvals and/or
 - Senior Management
(depending on funding level requests)





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Tips for Successful Proposals

Build Relationships

- Understand funder's mandate, decision making and organizational values via:
 - Websites, social media, and funder's newsletters
- Understand funder's objectives and target funding requests
- Proposal reviews are streamlined when applicants have had preliminary discussions with funders.
- Well thought out applications stand out when they have been:
 - Developed over several months
 - Carefully planned
- If you are invited for a Full Proposal, please connect with the Project Liaison



Economics and Logistics Drive Most Farm Decisions

Truly understand:

- how farms work
 - what their constraints are
 - what logistical hurdles exist
- Spend extra care thinking about how research ideas impact real-world economics and logistics for farmers.



Industry Support

- Funders look for:
 - leverage through cash and in-kind
 - industry buy-in and investment
- Impactful Letters of Support:
 - well-written recommendations
 - specific references to important outcomes
 - cash contributions
 - true in-kind contributions: field trials, technical support, or disease nurse testing
- Template Letters of Support will be disregarded



The Best Proposals Outline:

- A clear framework of what the funding proposal will achieve
- Where the proposed work fits into the larger research framework
- Connections to previous work
- Supported by prior proof-of-concept work
- Outlines a path forward on next steps
 - Regulatory considerations
 - Licensing
 - Intellectual Property
 - Commercialization



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Diverse Teams

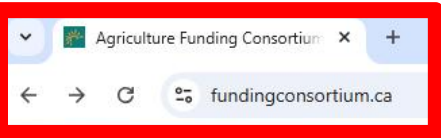
To overcome 'wicked problems,' it will be necessary to:

- Connect new ideas and work across disciplines
 - Combine knowledge and experience from multiple fields.
i.e. high quality scientific research, economics and extension
 - View challenges from multiple angles and provide diverse perspectives
 - Potentially link research to commercialization pipelines
 - Include individuals from multiple institutions
 - Avoid "team of one" approaches, which are strongly discouraged
 - Ensure **collaborators** are genuinely engaged and knowledgeable about the work; **funders may verify this**
-
- Recognize that working with diverse skill sets, viewpoints, and expertise can be complex, but it leads to stronger and more impactful results.



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Application Guidelines



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STEP 1: RESEARCH PRIORITIES

STEP 2: REVIEW APPLICATION GUIDELINES

STEP 3: ACCESS RESOURCES

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- **CLEAR, CONCISE, and EASY to UNDERSTAND.**
- Avoid **DUPLICATION** of current and past research
- Make **REALISTIC CLAIMS**. Do not overstate potential benefits
- **FULL DISCLOSURE/TRANSPARENCY:**
 - Relation to previous work - specify how the new proposal adds value and enhances previous learnings
 - Resubmission - highlight the rationale and significant changes that have been made
 - Fully disclose something that applicants may think funders do not want to hear, but disclosing all relevant aspects is far better than a funder figuring out things part way through the review process.
- Ensure **CONSISTENCY**. Check for conflicting replication numbers, inconsistent treatment numbers or variations of the treatment list in different sections of the proposal
- **BUDGET**. Explain and breakdown of all budget line items: staff costs, site costs, funds going to different institutions, link to objectives, more is better.

Multiple Intakes

- Many funders review funding proposals through multiple calls:
 - Agriculture Funding Consortium
 - Agriculture Development Fund
 - Industry Specific Calls
- Funders will only consider a proposal through one call
 - Funders watch for similar proposals in multiple calls
 - Be transparent about submissions
- Funders often catch resubmissions



2026-27



Revision...


- ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI):
 - AI should be a tool researchers use, but it is not a replacement for the researcher.
 - AI Hallucinations: Using generative AI (like ChatGPT) which could lead to ghost citations is grounds for automatic decline due to academic integrity concerns.

Literature Cited

[3200 Character Limit]

Use this section to provide a list of relevant literature references. All references must be complete and verifiable. Effective January 1, 2026, applications containing ghost citations (fabricated or non-verifiable references) will be declined. Include a DOI or stable URL where available and use a consistent citation format.

Suggested Reviewers

Add/Update 

Upload Attachments



Where available, include a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) for each reference. For sources without a DOI (e.g., reports, grey literature, policy documents), provide a URL or publisher information sufficient to enable verification. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that cited sources are accessible to reviewers (e.g., publicly available or obtainable through standard academic databases). Use a consistent citation style throughout the application.

2026-27 AFC Timelines



	2026-27 AFC Dates
LOI Call Opens	Wednesday, February 18, 2026 (same as 2025)
AFC Webinar – Overview and Advice	Friday, February 20, 2026 – 8:30am/9:30 SK/MB
LOI Deadline	Tuesday, April 1, 2026 (same as 2025)
Full Proposal Invite	Tuesday, June 2, 2026
Full Proposal Deadline	Thursday, July 23, 2026 (same as 2025)
Funding Decision Announcements	Targeting Pre-Christmas

QUESTIONS?



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