Controlled Environment Agriculture (CEA) Technology Adoption Stream

Administered by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) under the CEA Growth Pathway Program

Description

Part of the $650 million CEA Growth Pathway under Canada's National Food Security Strategy, this stream helps producers build, expand, and modernize greenhouses, vertical farms, and other CEA systems with automation, robotics, lighting, and digital tools to increase year-round fruit and vegetable production, diversify into novel crops, and strengthen food security.

Program Overview

Funding	**Type:** Non-repayable contribution where benefits extend beyond the recipient; otherwise repayable (interest-free) **Amount:** $100,000 to $10 million per project; one application per applicant **Cost-Share by Expense Category:** o **Standard:** AAFC up to 50% / applicant at least 50% in cash (in-kind only for Indigenous applicants) o **Enhanced:** up to 60% for import-replacing novel crops, or if led or majority-owned by Indigenous Peoples, youth (35 and under), women, visible minorities, or persons with disabilities; 70% if both o **Stacking:** total government funding capped at 85% of eligible costs (100% for Indigenous applicants)
Region	National; Quebec-based applicants must also demonstrate compliance with the M-30 Act
Eligible Applicant	o For-profit and not-for-profit organizations, Indigenous individuals and organizations (First Nations, Inuit, Métis), academia (late-stage variety testing only), and other levels of government o Operates in Canada in CEA or a related sector, or has the skills and experience to do so o Two years of audited or review engagement financial statements and a secured applicant contribution o Priority to projects whose benefits extend beyond the applicant and advance national food security
Eligible Projects	Adopting, expanding, or modernizing CEA facilities and technologies (greenhouses, vertical farms, hydroponics, and low-tech options such as passive heating or protective structures for orchards and fields): o Building, expanding, or upgrading CEA facilities to improve productivity, efficiency, or sanitation o Purchasing and installing automation, robotics, lighting, monitoring systems, and AI or data tools o Integration of advanced production systems and practices, including those for emerging or novel crops o Testing, adoption, and scale-up of novel crops and varieties, plus training that builds CEA skills **Ineligible:** ornamental plants, cannabis, animal feed, and other non-food production; research-focused projects
Eligible Costs	Costs incurred on or after June 11, 2026 that are included in the approved budget and work plan, including: o Capital expenditures: tangible assets purchased, constructed, developed, or acquired for the project o Project salaries and benefits, and contracted services (consultants, inspection, installation, construction) o Other direct costs: equipment rental, materials, freight, permits, translation, and economy travel **Ineligible:** costs outside the approved budget or work plan; administrative costs (Indigenous recipients: flat 10%)
Project Timeline	o Costs eligible from June 11, 2026; spending before the agreement is signed is at the applicant's risk o Up to three years, within fiscal 2026-27 to 2028-29 for this intake; the program ends March 31, 2033
Deadline	**Intake window:** October 30, 2026 to December 23, 2026 at 12:00 p.m. (noon) ET, or earlier if funding is fully committed; one Project Summary Form per applicant, with one year to submit the full application if invited
Application & Evaluation Process	➔ **Project Summary Form –** Submit online to AAFC; screened for eligibility and fit in 30 business days ➔ **Full Application –** If invited; detailed budget, financial statements, proof of financing, and quotes ➔ **Evaluation –** Capacity, costs, program fit, and repayment ability assessed within 100 business days ➔ **Approval & Agreement –** Decision letter and signed contribution agreement before costs can be claimed ➔ **Claims & Reporting –** Claims with financial reports, plus progress and performance reports; repayable amounts are repaid interest-free over up to 10 years, starting one year after completion

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