

Ministry of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs

Office of the Minister

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Ministère de l'Agriculture, de
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September 8, 2023

Cathy Lennon
General Manager
Ontario Federation of Agriculture
cathy.lennon@ofa.on.ca

Dear Cathy:

I am pleased to announce that on September 8, 2023, the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) will initiate the modernization of Ontario's Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) program.

The governments of Canada and Ontario have committed approximately \$4.1 million over five years through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) to support the delivery of EFP activities across the province, including the consultation process for modernizing this important program.

That process will begin this fall with written and verbal consultations to seek agriculture and food stakeholder feedback on a range of EFP-related topics, including:

- delivery options;
- the potential for EFP to support certification;
- opportunities to align with national and global sustainability assurance initiatives;
- and priorities the industry sees as important.

EFP is a voluntary on-farm environmental assessment and improvement program that was first launched in Ontario in 1993, and has since been adopted by all Canadian provinces, the Northwest Territories, and the Yukon. By completing an EFP, farmers can gain an understanding of their farm's environmental strengths, identify areas of environmental concern, and set realistic action plans with timetables to improve environmental conditions in up to 23 different areas. Environmental cost-share programs are available to assist in implementing these improvements.

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The EFP modernization process is funded through Sustainable CAP, a five-year (2023-2028), \$3.5-billion investment by federal-provincial and territorial governments to strengthen the competitiveness and resiliency of the agriculture, agri-food, and agri-based products sector. This includes \$1 billion in federal programs and activities and a \$2.5 billion commitment that is cost-shared 60 per cent federally and 40 per cent provincially/territorially for programs designed and delivered by the provinces and territories.

Ontario is proud to continue supporting the Environmental Farm Plan program. The consultations delivered by the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association will help to build sector understanding and provide vital perspectives on the proposed modernization of the EFP.

Should you have any questions about the program, please contact Barb Caswell, Director of Operations at Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association, via email bcaswell@ontariosoilcrop.org or phone 519-830-7314.

I look forward to continuing to work with you, as partners and stakeholders, to help meet the needs of Ontario's agri-food sector.

Sincerely,



Lisa M. Thompson
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Did you know about the Farmers' Wellness Initiative?

- Your mental health is important! If you're a farmer or a member of a farm family and in need of mental health support, please call 1-866-267-6255 and arrange to speak with a professional today.
- For additional resources visit: <https://farmerwellnessinitiative.ca/>.