



Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association

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MEDIA RELEASE

Ontario Farmers to Investigate Climate-Smart Practices Through Living Lab – Ontario

*Join the collaborative effort to develop on-farm solutions to climate change challenges:
Apply by October 2, 2023*

(September 26, 2023) Guelph, ON – Ontario farmers interested in exploring climate-resilient practices are invited to get involved in Living Lab – Ontario. This five-year project brings together farmers, scientists, sector organizations, and other experts to co-develop, test, and evaluate Beneficial Management Practices (BMPs) that address climate change challenges in livestock and cropping systems. Living Lab – Ontario is one of thirteen living labs across Canada that are part of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's [Agricultural Climate Solutions \(ACS\)](#) program. The project builds on the success of the previous living lab project in Ontario but with a revised focus on evaluating and adopting BMPs that have the potential to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and increase carbon sequestration on farms, including:

- Technologies and practices to increase nitrogen use efficiency and minimize nitrogen losses.
- Managing manure storages to reduce GHG emissions.
- Grazing practices to increase carbon sequestration.
- Profit mapping to improve land use decisions.
- Increasing carbon sequestration and environmental benefits in field boundaries and nonproductive lands.

The project is seeking motivated farmers who are willing to collaborate with researchers to co-develop and implement research and innovation trials aimed at addressing climate change challenges on their farms for up to four years, share pertinent management data for assessing BMP impacts on profitability, productivity, and the environment, and participate in networks and events to foster information sharing with their peers. The goal is to involve a diversity of operations, farming systems, regions, and commodity types from across Ontario agriculture.

Led by the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA), this collaborative partnership reflects the diversity of agricultural commodities and production systems in Ontario. The partnership includes Beef Farmers of Ontario, Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario, Grain Farmers of Ontario, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Ontario Pork, and Ontario Sheep Farmers. Each of these partners will be looking for members to become involved as farm cooperators.

Additional partners include the County of Wellington, Greenbelt Foundation, Livestock Research Innovation Corporation, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Soils at Guelph, University of British Columbia, and University of Guelph.

“At the heart of Living Lab – Ontario is the belief that innovation and change work best when farmers and researchers work together to create solutions designed and tested under real-life conditions,” said Tracey Ryan, Applied Research Coordinator, OSCIA. “By collaborating with researchers, agricultural organizations and other experts, farmers will play a pivotal role in identifying, testing and adopting beneficial management practices that positively impact their farms and the environment.”

Farmer cooperators selected to participate in the Living Lab – Ontario will benefit from:

- Access to expertise and support to make changes to on-farm practices.
- Opportunity to influence research and BMPs and share information with other farmers through networks and events.
- Access to economic and financial decision support tools, as developed.
- Compensation to offset costs for time invested in project meetings, planning activities, events and associated expenses.
- Being part of an exciting project where expertise and experience are valued.

Farmers interested in the opportunity to participate in Living Lab – Ontario are invited to complete and submit [this survey](#) by October 2, 2023.

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For more information:

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About Living Lab – Ontario:

Living Lab – Ontario is a partnership between the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association and Beef Farmers of Ontario, County of Wellington, Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario, Grain Farmers of Ontario, Greenbelt Foundation, Livestock Research Innovation Corporation, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Ontario Pork, Ontario Sheep Farmers, Soils at Guelph, University of British Columbia and University of Guelph. Funding for the project has been provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada under the Agricultural Climate Solutions – Living Labs program, and project partners.