



Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

2023–24

Departmental Plan

The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau
Privy Councillor, Member of Parliament
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada

Canada

2023–24 Departmental Plan

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From the Minister

Over the past three years, Canadian farmers and food processors have faced a multitude of challenges, with a global pandemic, Russia’s unjustifiable invasion of Ukraine, climate disasters, labour shortages, supply chain disruptions, animal disease, and high input costs. Despite these headwinds, they continued to provide Canada and the world with high-quality foods and beverages, pushing Canada’s agriculture and agri-food exports to a record high of \$82 billion in 2021, shattering our target of \$75 billion by 2025.



Our Departmental Plan for 2023–24 outlines how Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada will continue to help farmers and our entire agriculture and agri-food sector to strengthen their resilience in the face of challenges, capture new market opportunities, drive economic growth and competitiveness, combat climate change, and remain a reliable partner in global food security.

To give us a strong foundation and framework for future growth, on April 1, 2023, federal-provincial-territorial (FPT) ministers will launch the new Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a shared vision for the sector as a world leader in environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable food production. Over the next five years, the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership will drive \$3.5 billion in FPT investments, which includes a 25% increase in funding for cost-shared activities over the previous framework.

We know that farmers are on the front lines of climate change. From droughts, floods, and storms, our producers are the first to feel the impacts of extreme weather. That’s why the new Partnership will increase efforts to tackle climate change and improve the resiliency and competitiveness of Canadian farms. In order to achieve a three- to five-megatonne reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, the new Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program, backed by a \$250-million FPT investment, will help producers conserve and enhance the resiliency of agricultural landscapes such as grasslands, wetlands, river banks, and wildlife habitat.

We will also continue to deliver on other federal commitments, including \$1.5 billion for initiatives that will implement on-farm solutions to capture and store carbon, invest in clean technologies, and collaborate with researchers in ‘living labs’ to adopt new practices that are proven to work on different farm types across the country.

In 2023–24 we will work closely with the sector to develop Canada’s first-ever Sustainable Agriculture Strategy, a roadmap to help farmers adapt and build resilience to a changing climate.

Through concrete support, we will empower our sector to compete and meet global consumers’ growing demands for sustainable food, while strengthening food security – and meet our target of \$95 billion in agri-food and seafood exports by 2028.

To get there, we will continue to strengthen our ties with key markets. For example, we will open Canada’s first-ever agriculture and agri-food trade office in the Indo-Pacific region, to help Canadian farmers, food processors, and exporters maximize their opportunities and diversify their markets in the world’s fastest-growing economic zone.

Through our trade agreements with key markets around the world, Canadian farmers have preferential market access to about two-thirds of the global economy. We will continue to help the sector to compete, grow market access, and promote trade that is based in science and evidence.

At the same time, we have delivered on our promise to compensate Canadian producers under supply management, and processors of supply-managed commodities, for the impacts of recent trade agreements.

FPT Ministers have also committed to continue to make producers’ risk management programs faster, simpler, and more responsive to the changing risks they face in their operations. And to help the sector access the skilled workforce it needs to feed Canada and the world, I will launch our first ever National Agricultural Labour Strategy, based on extensive consultations held over the past year.

As well, our continued and targeted investments in science, research, and innovation in 2023–24 will help keep the sector on a strong growth curve – guided by our ten-year Strategic Plan for Science, to help Canada maintain its position as a leading producer of safe and sustainable foods.

Canada’s agriculture and agri-food sector is stronger when all voices are heard. We will continue to engage and support Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, racialized persons, persons with disabilities, official language minority communities, and 2SLGBTQI+ communities. It’s by learning from one another that we can make real progress.

The year ahead is full of opportunity for Canada’s agriculture and agri-food industry. I’m confident that our departmental plans for 2023–24 will help to build a competitive, sustainable, and inclusive future for the entire sector – placing Canada as a leading powerhouse in food production.

The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau
Privy Councillor, Member of Parliament
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food

Plans at a glance

The Canadian agriculture and agri-food system generates \$134.4 billion, or 6.8% of Canada's gross domestic product (including food retail and food services) and employed 2.1 million people in 2021. The entire agriculture and agri-food system, from producers and processors to food retail and food service providers, represents an integrated supply chain that is key to supporting Canada's future growth and is an important driver of Canadian exports. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) works in close collaboration with partners such as portfolio organizations, other government departments, provincial and territorial governments, industry stakeholders, and academia to create conditions for the long-term sustainability, profitability, and adaptability of the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector.

The [Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership](#)¹ (Sustainable CAP) is the new five-year (2023 to 2028) agricultural policy framework that comes into effect as of April 1, 2023. This new framework will provide a total of \$3.5 billion in federal, provincial and territorial funding for the agriculture and agri-food sector, an increase of \$500 million in funding available for cost-shared programming compared to its predecessor, the [Canadian Agricultural Partnership](#)² (2018 to 2023). Agriculture is a shared responsibility in Canada between federal, provincial, and territorial (FPT) governments. The Sustainable CAP will set the strategic direction for coordinated FPT programs and activities, while positioning the sector for continued success as a world leader in environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable agriculture.



It will enable an innovative, productive, and internationally competitive sector that can continue to meet the expectations of consumers among a growing global population, at a time when rising costs and global food security are significant concerns.

The Sustainable CAP includes both federal-only programs and activities, as well as programs that are cost-shared between the federal and provincial or territorial governments that are designed to address the specific needs in each jurisdiction. Together, these programs and initiatives advance the five agreed-upon priority areas under the Sustainable CAP, as outlined below, with a focus on achieving results for the sector and Canadians. These priority areas cross each of the Department's core responsibilities of Domestic and International Markets, Science and Innovation, and Sector Risk, as well as its Internal Services, while supporting the delivery of the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food [mandate letter](#)³ commitments, and broader Government of Canada priorities.

Departmental efforts across these priority areas in 2023–24, and throughout the duration of the Sustainable CAP policy framework, will also advance outcomes related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. AAFC will continue working to address barriers and support the participation of Indigenous Peoples and other underrepresented and marginalized groups in the sector, such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, racialized persons, 2SLGBTQI+ communities, and official language minority communities, including through its programs and

service delivery. In support of Government of Canada commitments to reconciliation, and recognizing the importance of Indigenous leadership in the effort to build a sustainable agricultural sector, AAFC will continue working to build and strengthen relationships and enhance engagement with First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The Department will develop and implement inclusive policies, programming and services under the Sustainable CAP to support sector participation and the Indigenous food systems. Additionally, as an employer, the Department remains committed to establishing a culture that values diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to strengthening its workforce in a way that reflects Canada's diversity.

Climate change and the environment

Agriculture plays a key role in meeting the Government of Canada's commitments related to clean growth and climate resiliency. Supporting the sector to adapt to the impacts of climate change, including to address challenges and enhance resiliency, is critical to its long-term viability and remains a key priority for AAFC. Under the Sustainable CAP, the Department will work to tackle climate change and environmental protection, including by seeking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by three to five megatonnes over the implementation period of the framework. These efforts will also help to position Canadian producers and processors to seize economic opportunities from evolving consumer demands related to sustainability requirements.

In 2023–24, the Department will continue to deliver ongoing initiatives such as the [Agricultural Climate Solutions Program](#)⁴ and the [Agricultural Clean Technology Program](#)⁵ to support the sector in developing and implementing practices and clean technologies to address climate change and improve resiliency, and build on efforts underway to meet emission reduction targets. The Department will also continue to advance the work to deliver a [Sustainable Agriculture Strategy](#)⁶, in line with the minister's mandate letter commitment, which further supports national and international commitments to meet reduction targets for greenhouse gas emissions, emissions from the application of fertilizers, and methane emissions.

Market development and trade

With over half of the value of Canadian agricultural production exported, the growth of the sector relies on its ability to seize global opportunities and conduct trade predictably. Canada is the fifth-largest agricultural exporter in the world and with increasing global demand for agricultural products, the Canadian agriculture, agri-food, and seafood sector is presented with continued opportunities for export growth. However, exporters can also be significantly impacted by requirements in international markets which, in some cases, can lead to increasing protectionism and unjustified barriers to trade.

Aligned with broader government objectives to increase and diversify Canadian exports, the Department will continue to support sustainable economic growth in the sector by creating the conditions for Canadian businesses to meet the evolving challenges of the interconnected domestic and global marketplace, including through the Sustainable CAP. AAFC efforts in 2023–24 will assist the sector to: mitigate risks to trade disruption; re-gain, maintain, and increase access to

international markets, including through the negotiation and implementation of trade agreements; assist businesses to take advantage of opportunities; promote Canadian agri-food and seafood products in key markets through market development and branding activities; and advocate for a predictable and stable trade environment based on science-based policies, regulations and international rules.

Building sector capacity, growth and competitiveness

The ability of the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector to successfully compete and prosper, both in domestic and international markets, requires strong collaboration and engagement between industry and government, as well as business development tools and services that support the sector in seizing market opportunities – particularly for value-added agri-food and agri-based products. Under the Sustainable CAP, AAFC will seek to build sector capacity and overall growth by providing national and regional strategic intelligence, sector expertise, and reliable market information and analysis to inform domestic and export activities, and support the sector in responding to policy and regulatory changes. Activities in this area will also address several key issues affecting growth in the sector, including labour shortages, supply chain and logistics challenges, lack of capital and research and development investment, barriers faced by Indigenous Peoples and other underrepresented and marginalized groups, global competition, and loss of farmland.

Science, research and innovation

Continued and targeted investments in science, research, and innovation support the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector in addressing key challenges and seizing opportunities. The Canadian agricultural science and innovation landscape is changing, driven by rapidly advancing technologies, leveraged by research investments. By increasing the sector's knowledge base, scientific research – including in the areas of primary agriculture, Indigenous food systems, processing, and value-added food and industrial products – improves productivity, strengthens the sector's innovation, profitability, and competitive advantage; while tackling challenges related to enhancing environmental sustainability, resilience, and performance.

In 2023–24, AAFC will implement its new [Strategic Plan for Science](#)⁷, which will guide the Department's science and research activities over the next decade by focusing on identified priorities. Through its ongoing programming and initiatives, the Department will continue working collaboratively on cross-sectoral challenges facing both the agricultural sector and Canadians alike, and will advance Government of Canada objectives to advance action on greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, carbon sequestration, and other environmental priorities. The Department's efforts related to science, research, and innovation will contribute to the overall sustainability, resiliency, and competitiveness of the agriculture and agri-food sector, while seeking to pursue economic growth opportunities, enhance food security, address climate change, and strengthen long-term resiliency.

Resiliency and public trust

The agriculture and agri-food sector continues to face significant risks that can threaten the viability of its operations, such as climate change and weather events, diseases and pests, and market and supply chain volatility. In 2023–24, the Department, in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments and industry, and in line with the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food's mandate letter commitments, will continue to deliver and make targeted improvements to its suite of [Business Risk Management programs](#)⁸. The Department is working with its partners to ensure that programs and services are timely, equitable, easy to understand, and support the competitiveness and sustainability of the sector. In addition, the [African Swine Fever Industry Preparedness Program](#)⁹ will enhance efforts to prevent and respond to risks of African swine fever from entering Canada and will help prepare for a potential outbreak.

Furthermore, both domestic and international consumers have grown increasingly interested in and aware of how their food is produced, including with respect to environmental, social, or health and safety considerations. The [AgriAssurance Program](#)¹⁰ will continue to enable the sector to make credible, meaningful and verifiable claims about its products and the manner in which they are produced, contributing to overall trust in Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector and helping to provide Canadian certified products with a competitive advantage. Through the Sustainable CAP, AAFC will continue to support the agriculture and agri-food sector in enhancing its resiliency to anticipate, mitigate, adapt, and respond to these risks and evolving consumer expectations, in order to remain competitive and maintain consumer confidence in the sector.

For more information on AAFC's plans, see the "Core responsibilities: planned results and resources, and key risks" section of this plan.

Core responsibilities: planned results and resources, and key risks

This section contains information on the Department’s planned results and resources for each of its core responsibilities. It also contains information on key risks related to achieving those results.

Domestic and International Markets

Description: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) provides programs and services and works in collaboration with the sector to support its competitiveness at home and abroad. AAFC also works to increase opportunities for the sector to export its products by maintaining and expanding market access and advancing agricultural interests internationally.

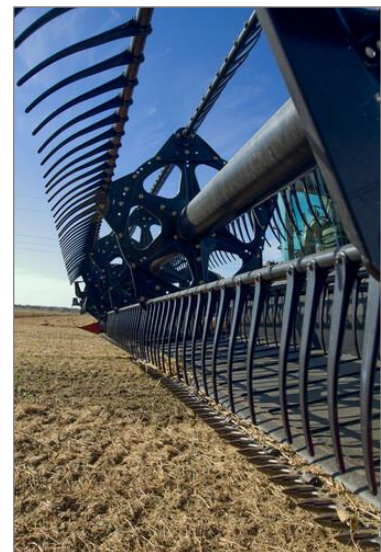
The Domestic and International Markets core responsibility is focused on advancing the following departmental results:

- The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector contributes to growing the economy.
- Access to international markets is increased by resolving or mitigating market barriers and advancing trade positions.

Planning highlights

Seizing opportunities in both domestic and international markets is critical to the growth and prosperity of the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector, which is a cornerstone of the Canadian economy. Through the new [Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership](#)¹¹ (Sustainable CAP), the five-year, federal-provincial-territorial agricultural policy framework which takes effect April 1, 2023, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) will continue working to enhance competitiveness and improve market access conditions, ultimately supporting the economic growth of the sector both domestically and internationally, while placing a greater emphasis on sustainability. Departmental efforts under the Domestic and International Markets core responsibility in 2023–24 will support broader Government of Canada trade diversification goals, as well as the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food’s [mandate letter](#)¹² commitments related to supply management, supply chains, and the Food Policy for Canada.

Market development and trade, and building sector capacity, growth and competitiveness, were identified as two of the priority areas under the Sustainable CAP. Results in these areas will be delivered through trade policy and market access initiatives; market development services; initiatives related to market information, innovation and regulations; as well as through the ongoing work of the [Agriculture and Food Trade Commissioner Service](#)¹³; the [Sector Engagement Tables](#)¹⁴; and the [AgriMarketing](#)¹⁵, [AgriDiversity](#)¹⁶, and [AgriCompetitiveness](#)¹⁷ Programs.



Result: The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector contributes to growing the economy

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of maintaining global supply chains for the benefit of Canadian producers, manufacturers and consumers. The demand for Canadian agriculture and agri-food products is strong, and AAFC plays an important role in supporting the sector to capitalize on opportunities and respond to challenges such as changing market conditions. Departmental performance is measured, in part, by the contributions of the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector to the growth of the broader economy. Canada's agriculture and agri-food exports reached over \$82 billion in 2021, despite sector challenges, exceeding the previous target to grow exports to at least \$75 billion by 2025. Under the Sustainable CAP, the Department will refocus efforts to see agriculture and agri-food exports reach \$95 billion and increase sector revenues to \$250 billion by 2028.

The success of the sector is dependent on its ability to compete both domestically and internationally over the long-term. This requires strong collaboration between industry and government, strategic market analysis, sector expertise, policy and regulatory responses to the economic environment, market development, and strong, stable relationships with trading partners that are science- and rules-based. AAFC will continue to lead a coordinated, cohesive, and flexible approach to market development and trade with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Global Affairs Canada, and provincial, territorial and industry partners. Through these partnerships, AAFC will continue to deliver a comprehensive range of market development initiatives and sustain its efforts to maintain and expand market access for the sector. These efforts are an essential support system for industry, small- to medium-sized enterprises in particular, enhancing the sector's ability to predictably trade and take advantage of global opportunities.

In 2023–24, AAFC will work to strengthen its market development and industry services in support of continued export growth. The Department's comprehensive range of market development programs and services includes facilitating Canada's presence at international trade shows; providing strategic market analysis; coordinating strategic promotion and business development activities in partnership with provincial and sector partners; leading targeted branding strategies through the refreshed [Canada Brand](#)¹⁸ program; and implementing the Agri-Food Trade Commissioner Service which provides tailored in-market support. Under the Sustainable CAP, some ongoing departmental programs will see an updated or expanded area of focus in support of domestic and international market objectives. For instance, the AgriMarketing Program will continue to assist Canadian national industry associations to take advantage of business development opportunities and to increase and diversify exports. The program will continue to support a wide range of activities and will prioritize applications that further market diversification – for example, by focusing more on high-growth, emerging markets where Canada currently has limited or no presence – to help ensure more stabilized trade opportunities in the face of potential market disruptions.

Understanding and adapting to a changing regulatory environment enables the sector to remain competitive, innovative, and contribute to Canada's economic growth. AAFC will

focus on enhancing industry-government dialogue to improve the regulatory environment so that it becomes more responsive to sector needs, and will help the agriculture and agri-food sector adapt to new policies and technical requirements. The Department collaborates directly with industry stakeholders and regulatory agencies to proactively identify challenges and provide analysis, advice, and recommendations on regulatory frameworks that are of interest to the agriculture and agri-food sector. To date, AAFC's efforts have helped to ensure that regulatory changes, such as food labelling, consider the economic impacts on industry and respond to sector priorities.

The Department also continues to work with government and industry partners to enhance the sector's competitive position. The Sector Engagement Tables (SETs) are intended to create purposeful dialogue between agriculture and agri-food sector representatives and government officials to collectively advance growth and competitiveness in Canada. Four thematic tables are now in place, which focus on cross-cutting issues affecting the sector as a whole (Agile Regulations; Consumer Demand and Market Trends; Sustainability; and Skills Development). In addition, Animal Protein, Field Crops, Horticulture, Seafood, and Food Processing tables were launched in 2022–23, and will look at implementing solutions to systemic issues in the context of these commodity groupings.

The tables have focused on developing strategic plans or advancing priorities, as well as on advancing education/information, measurement, and policy coherence in the context of sustainability. A leadership table is in development, which will serve as a focal point to guide the work of all tables in the SET model. It will consist of all SET co-chairs as well as the leads of other forums such as the [Canadian Agricultural Youth Council](#)¹⁹ and the [Canadian Food Policy Advisory Council](#)²⁰. In 2023–24, the SETs will continue to develop strategic plans and continue to expand membership to ensure representation in sectoral discussions from Indigenous Peoples and underrepresented and marginalized communities.

The Government of Canada has committed to supporting the supply-managed sector in adapting to the market changes resulting from the Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), and the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA). To date, over \$3 billion has been committed to compensate and support supply-managed sectors impacted by CETA and CPTPP. In compensation for the impacts of CUSMA, a further \$1.7 billion will be disseminated to supply-managed sectors beginning in 2023–24, through direct payments under the [Dairy Direct Payment Program](#)²¹ and investments through the [Supply Management Processing Investment Fund](#)²², and the [Poultry and Egg On-Farm Investment Program](#)²³. The Government also intends to invest up to \$300 million through a new dairy innovation program that will support the dairy sector's efforts to manage the structural surplus of solids non-fat, a by-product of milk processing.

In 2023–24, AAFC will continue working in collaboration with provinces and territories to improve supply chain relationships, including by monitoring the implementation of an industry-led Grocery Code of Conduct stemming from the [key findings](#)²⁴ of a joint federal,

provincial, and territorial working group on retail fees. Retail fees are payments made by a food manufacturer or supplier to a retailer in exchange for stocking the supplier's products. The Code of Conduct is a set of integrated measures, including an approach for governance and dispute resolution, which is principles-based and encourages positive trading practices. It is expected to enhance transparency, predictability, and fairness in supply chain relationships.

Wine Sector Support Program

The prosperity of Canada's wine sector has provided business opportunities for grape growers and wine makers while contributing to the economic vitality of rural communities. Canada has over 800 licensed wineries nationwide, the majority of which operate in British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia. Between 2015 and 2021, the wine industry saw significant gains with manufacturing sales almost doubling from \$1.1 billion to \$2.1 billion, and employment growing by 70% from 2015 to 2020.



Despite the rapid growth of the industry, the sector still faces challenges such as climate change impacts, labour shortages, and supply chain issues. In 2022–23, AAFC introduced the [Wine Sector Support Program](#)²⁵ under the AgriMarketing Program. This is a two-year, up to \$166-million program that will provide wineries with support to adapt to ongoing and emerging challenges that impact the financial resilience and competitiveness of the wine industry.

Result: Access to international markets is increased by resolving or mitigating market barriers and advancing trade positions

AAFC works to enhance access to global markets to support the sustained growth and profitability of Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector. Through trade agreements, Canadian companies have preferential access to 51 foreign markets and 1.5 billion people, and Canada is the only nation with free-trade access to all G7 countries. Canada is the fifth-largest exporter in the world of agriculture and food products (including raw agricultural materials, fish and seafood, and processed foods), behind the European Union, the United States, Brazil and China. Under the Sustainable CAP, the Department will continue to help the sector seize new trade opportunities, take advantage of existing ones, and respond to pressures in the international trading environment. Canada's ability to resolve or mitigate market access barriers and advance positions in trade negotiations are measures of success towards departmental results.

AAFC will also lead a harmonized approach as part of Sustainable CAP and undertake actions to support greater collaboration with provincial and territorial partners, including through programs and services that enable Canadian export activities. Working with partners to support reliable trade, including by maintaining and advancing agricultural trade interests and science-based trade rules, and supporting market diversification, supports the Government of Canada trade agenda to increase and diversify trade and investment.

Working closely with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Global Affairs Canada, the Department facilitates regular bilateral and multilateral engagement with key international partners to support market access, including through ministerial missions, technical missions, working groups, and audits of Canada’s animal, plant, and food safety systems. Through this work, the Department also supports industry competitiveness and adaptation to regulatory requirements, and works towards maintaining and expanding access to international markets in line with industry priorities. For example, AAFC and the CFIA engage regularly with the European Union (EU) to discuss European policies and the Canadian food safety system, in order to advocate for science- and outcomes-based approaches to sustainable food production and to ensure trade is not disrupted by new policy approaches.

Following the United Kingdom’s (UK) exit from the EU, Canada maintained preferential market access through the Canada-United Kingdom Trade Continuity Agreement. In March 2022, new negotiations were launched to formulate a permanent free trade agreement with the UK in which, at a minimum, Canada will seek to preserve and maintain the UK’s tariff elimination commitments from the Trade Continuity Agreement, which will be fully implemented by January 1, 2024. Canada will also seek additional preferential market access for certain products that provide better outcomes than the Trade Continuity Agreement. Four rounds of negotiations have taken place so far, both on this agreement, and with regards to the UK’s potential accession to the CPTPP. Canada will also continue to engage with other CPTPP Parties to assess the merits of negotiating the potential accession of other member economies.

The Department is actively contributing to other Government of Canada negotiations such as the India-Canada Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement negotiations, which formally relaunched in March 2022, and include consideration of an early interim agreement (Early Progress Trade Agreement). Canada seeks an agreement, with respect to the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector, that will grow and diversify agricultural trade with India, including for pulses. The Canada-India negotiations provide an opportunity to advance the food security goals of both countries and to strengthen trade and commercial ties. Additional negotiations with Indonesia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and MERCOSUR countries (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay) are also ongoing.

In addition to bilateral agreements and other established mechanisms with trading partners, the Department will continue to advance Canadian agriculture and agri-food interests at multilateral fora. At the World Trade Organization (WTO), Canada is leading a group of 14 WTO Members known as the Ottawa Group (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, European Union, Japan, Kenya, South Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, Switzerland, and the UK), in order to help address specific challenges that are putting the multilateral trading system under stress. The Department will continue to work with its partners to further discussions on technical barriers and address trade issues at the WTO, such as regulations pertaining to pesticides, contaminants, and genetically modified crops.

AAFC, along with other federal departments, will continue to engage with counterparts at the International Standard Setting Bodies to support the development and adoption of standards,

guidance, and recommendations that are based on scientific evidence and risk analysis, and to promote the incorporation of this information into the trade regulations of importing countries. Further departmental engagement involves the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the G7, the G20, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture. Environmental sustainability has become a dominant topic at several multilateral fora, and the Department will continue to advocate in favour of promoting a variety of innovative approaches to meet climate and environmental targets and sustainability goals, in a manner that facilitates trade.

Indo-Pacific Agriculture and Agri-Food Office

The Indo-Pacific region is comprised of 40 economies and over 4 billion people, representing the world's fastest-growing economic region and more than one-third of all global economic activity. By 2040, the Indo-Pacific is expected to account for more than half of the global economy, more than twice the share of the United States. In 2021, Canada's agri-food and seafood exports to the Indo-Pacific were valued at \$20.2 billion, with two-way agricultural trade worth \$26.5 billion.

The Government of Canada's [Indo-Pacific Strategy](#)²⁶ (IPS) will seek to deepen Canada's engagement in the Indo-Pacific region over the next decade, including to expand the presence of the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector, to take advantage of the significant market opportunities. The region is already home to six of Canada's top 13 trading partners: India, Japan, China, South Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam.

As part of the IPS, Canada will invest \$31.8 million to launch the first ever Indo-Pacific Agriculture and Agri-Food Office (IPAAO) to help Canadian producers, processors and exporters diversify their exports in the region and establish Canada as a preferred supplier. This new office will enable Canada to engage with stakeholders, regulatory counterparts, and policy decision-makers to deepen partnerships with Indo-Pacific economies that value sustained, meaningful, relationships, collaboration, and the sharing of expertise. The IPAAO will be well-positioned to increase Canadian trade, investment, and supply chain resilience, one of the strategic objectives under the Indo-Pacific Strategy.

Gender-based analysis (GBA) plus

Advancing diversity and inclusion in the agriculture and agri-food sector remains a priority in 2023–24. Under the Sustainable CAP, the Department will continue to work with provincial and territorial jurisdictions to better support Indigenous Peoples and other underrepresented and marginalized groups in the sector, including women, youth, racialized groups, persons with disabilities, 2SLGBTQI+ communities, and official language minority communities. The Department will also enhance data collection in support of GBA Plus, and strive for equitable access across all programs under the framework.

The Department continues to explore ways to enhance diversity by supporting the participation of Indigenous Peoples and other underrepresented and marginalized groups across the agricultural value chain, including through initiatives such as the Sector Engagement Tables, and programs such as AgriDiversity. To enhance diversity in the Sector Engagements Tables, AAFC will work towards achieving gender parity in the membership across all tables by the end of 2023–24, and

will continue to work towards having significant representation (30%) of underrepresented and marginalized groups.

In addition, the Department will continue to engage diverse voices through targeted mechanisms, such as the Canadian Agricultural Youth Council. The second cohort of the Council was announced in 2022–23, with a mandate to make recommendations and help find solutions to issues facing young people in the agricultural sector. The Council's main task is to ensure that the perspectives of youth in agriculture are well understood, and to help inform policy, programs, planning, and decision-making.

The Department will continue to offer targeted support for underrepresented and marginalized groups to strengthen sector capacity through the AgriDiversity Program. Under the Sustainable CAP, program modifications will incorporate greater flexibility in the program's design that will encourage greater participation by groups without an established national presence (e.g., official language minority communities, racialized groups, and 2SLGBTQI+ communities). It will include supports for regionally based initiatives, as well as those lacking capital to leverage government grants, or lacking years of experience.

The Department's [Youth Employment Skills Program](#)²⁷ will continue to support underrepresented and marginalized youth such as: Indigenous youth, youth with disabilities, youth from racialized communities, recent immigrant youth, youth who are single parents or from low income households, youth residing in remote areas, youth living in official language minority communities, 2SLGBTQI+ youth, and early school leavers.



AAFC continues to deliver the [Indigenous Pathfinder Service](#)²⁸, which connects Indigenous Peoples and communities with agricultural programs and services offered by the Department as well as federal, provincial or territorial partners. The service provides personalized, one-on-one assistance to help Indigenous organizations or individuals navigate programming and develop opportunities in the agriculture and agri-food sector.

The Department remains committed to applying thorough GBA plus to all trade agreements, working with Global Affairs Canada, to assess the impacts of Canada's Free Trade Agreement provisions.

Further information on the underrepresented and marginalized groups served by the Department's programs and initiatives can be found in the [GBA Plus supplementary information table](#)²⁹.

United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN Sustainable Development Goals

The [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)³⁰, adopted by Canada and all 193 United Nations member states in 2015, is a global framework centered around an ambitious set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), covering the interconnected economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda National Strategy, led by Employment and Social Development Canada, is a national vision that promotes a whole-of-society effort to the achievement of domestic SDGs. The Federal Implementation Plan articulates how the Government of Canada will contribute to advancing the National Strategy at the federal level, while the Canadian Indicator Framework measures progress on federal government ambitions and targets.

AAFC's efforts under the Domestic and International Markets core responsibility support Canada's efforts to address the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. Canada's agricultural trade policy encourages open trade and science-based approaches to governing food systems. This helps farmers around the world to reach customers, earn better incomes, and escape poverty and hunger, ultimately contributing to several of the SDGs:

- ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture (SDG 2);
- promoting inclusive and sustained economic growth, productive employment, and decent work for all (SDG 8); and
- ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns (SDG 12).

For example, efforts to diversify Canadian agricultural trade support the Government of Canada's Export Diversification Strategy which is aimed at helping Canadian businesses access new markets. This, in turn, helps advance SDG 8.

The ongoing delivery of initiatives under the [Food Policy for Canada](#)³¹ also contribute towards sustainable development objectives, notably by making linkages to the following SDGs:

- ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture (SDG 2);
- ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages (SDG 3);
- ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns (SDG 12); and
- taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts (SDG 13).

For example, the [Food Waste Reduction Challenge](#)³², introduced in 2020–21, encourages more solutions to food waste in Canada which can increase food availability, save consumers and businesses money, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and strengthen food systems. AAFC also continues to deliver the [Local Food Infrastructure Fund](#)³³ which invests in community

infrastructure to improve access to high-quality and healthy food. A new phase was launched in 2022 to meet the needs of Indigenous, Northern, and remote communities by providing funding to community-based and not-for-profit organizations to support the development of local food systems that will meet both current and future community needs.

Innovation

AAFC seeks ways to spark innovation and supports evidence-based decision-making to achieve the planned results for each of its core responsibilities. In 2023–24, the Department will continue testing new approaches to existing problems and will leverage innovation and emerging technology to guide the development and implementation of policies, programs, and partnerships that support the sector under the Domestic and International Markets core responsibility.

The Food Waste Reduction Challenge, a \$20-million initiative under the Food Policy for Canada, aims to encourage solutions to food waste occurring at all stages of Canada’s food systems. Challenge prizes are outcome-based—they shift the emphasis from paying for eligible costs of an approved project towards paying for results to solve problems. The competition and prizes also act as a catalyst to mobilize new talent from outside traditional communities and to surface new thinking, perspectives, and ideas. The variety of innovations and potential collaborations that emerge from the Challenge will allow for the establishment of a visible and better connected innovation network working to solve food waste in Canada.

The Challenge is expected to accelerate the development of solutions to food waste that can increase food availability, save consumers and businesses money, and strengthen Canadian food systems while reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The Challenge has three reporting stages where candidates demonstrate the effectiveness of their solutions. Innovators that are selected by an external committee of subject-matter experts will receive grant funding at each stage, as well as other benefits to help them succeed.

The Business Models streams (A and B) of the Challenge focus on innovative business model solutions ready for commercialization that prevent or divert food waste across the food supply chain. The 12 finalists will be assessed in May 2023, and two winners are expected to be announced in fall 2023. The Novel Technologies streams (C and D) focus on advancing technologies that extend the life of food or transform food waste. The six finalists in this competition are Canadian organizations with entries that span a diverse range of areas including green chemistry to create natural additives, edible coatings, or bioplastics. Each candidate will have their prototype tested within an operational environment, and two winners from the streams will be determined in spring 2024.

Key risks

The success of the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector depends heavily on the ability to export to other countries. While the sector’s exports have continued to grow, maintaining market access is increasingly challenging due to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well

as inflation, climate change, supply chain disruptions, and market volatility. Canada's ability to advance its trade objectives in free trade agreement negotiations is also challenged by protectionist policies and changing priorities from trading partners. AAFC will continue to support the Canadian agricultural sector in facing the risks created by this new reality as they pursue opportunities, including through deliberate, strategic efforts to diversify Canada's exports – both by destination and by product – and engagement with international bodies and other multinational and bilateral partners to address ongoing market access irritants and advance Canada's trade policy priorities.

Canada will continue to work through international fora, including the WTO, the G7, and the G20, to advance sustainable agri-environmental production and trade, including by highlighting the intersect between sustainability and food security, and by advocating that trade liberalization and environmental protection are mutually supportive. In addition, some departmental programs under the new Sustainable CAP will seek to improve the sector's environmental resilience and ability to respond to sustainability related measures being imposed by trading partners.

Chronic labour and skills shortages is an ongoing challenge to agricultural supply chains that has limited economic growth, affecting rural vitality and diminishing production capacity. Working with federal, provincial, and industry partners, the Department will support agriculture and agri-food businesses in sustaining a strong and skilled workforce, comprised of both foreign and domestic labour, through the launch of a [National Agricultural Labour Strategy](#)³⁴ in 2023–24. In line with commitments in the Minister's mandate letter, the Department will build on existing services and supports in the Strategy, while advancing innovative solutions to long-standing challenges. AAFC will also work with Employment and Social Development Canada and Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada on Budget 2022 commitments to ensure agriculture and agri-food employers have access to the workers they need.

In addition, the sector has become more digitized and connected across the supply chain, leading to the risk of cyber threats. Cyberattacks can have significant financial and economic repercussions, creating service disruptions, affecting the food security of Canadians, impacting animal welfare, affecting consumer trust, and hurting firms' profitability. AAFC will work to raise awareness in the sector and among other stakeholders of actions that can be taken to help address and mitigate cyber-risk.

Planned results for Domestic and International Markets

The following table shows, for Domestic and International Markets, the planned results, the result indicators, the targets, and the target dates for 2023–24, and the actual results for the three most recent fiscal years for which actual results are available.

Result: The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector contributes to growing the economy					
Departmental result indicator	Target	Date to achieve target	2019–20 actual result	2020–21 actual result	2021–22 actual result
Percentage change in the economic performance of the agriculture and agri-food sector	At least 2.5% ¹	December 2025	2.5% (1.6% based on revised 2022 data) ²	3.6% (1.7% based on revised 2022 data) ²	0.5% ²
Percentage change in agri-food products sold	At least 4.5%	December 2025	2.8% (3.5% based on revised 2022 data) ³	3.3% (3.4% based on revised 2022 data) ³	6.0% ³
Value of agriculture and agri-food exports	At least \$75 billion	December 2025	\$67.0 billion	\$73.9 billion	\$82.3 billion

Note: Actual results are reported for the fiscal year that data becomes available. Where indicators and/or targets reflect the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (2018–23), updates to reflect the new Sustainable CAP will be made in the coming year and reported in future Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports.

1. This aspirational target was established in 2019 based on provisional gross domestic product data. Following revisions to the Statistics Canada dataset, the Department is reviewing this target and expects to revise it for future reporting.
2. This indicator fell below its target for 2021–22 as the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector faced a number of challenges in 2021, notably the COVID-19 pandemic and extreme weather conditions that disproportionately affected crop production, which ultimately put downward pressure on the sector's economic performance. Data collected and calculations are as of June 2022. Statistics Canada data is constantly subject to revisions to reflect the most accurate and up-to-date information and, as such, reported numbers and target calculations based on those numbers may fluctuate from year-to-year and may not always be comparable to previous calculations. Based on June 2022 data, the results for previous years have been recalculated and are therefore different from what was reported in previous plans.
3. A number of factors contributed to the growth of this indicator in 2021–22, including: post-pandemic rebound in agri-food capacity; post-pandemic rebound in domestic and international demand for agri-food products; higher food prices; a favourable exchange rate relative to the United States dollar; and increased household disposable income. Data collected and calculations are as of June 2022. Statistics Canada data is constantly subject to revisions to reflect the most accurate and up-to-date information and, as such, reported numbers and target calculations based on those numbers may fluctuate from year-to-year and may not always be comparable to previous calculations. Based on June 2022 data, results for previous years have been recalculated and are therefore different from what was reported in previous plans.

Financial, human resources, and performance information for AAFC's program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#)³⁵.

Result: Access to international markets is increased by resolving or mitigating market barriers and advancing trade positions					
Departmental result indicator	Target	Date to achieve target	2019–20 actual result	2020–21 actual result	2021–22 actual result
Degree to which AAFC advances the resolution or the mitigation of market access barriers, WTO disputes, and technical trade issues	At least 80% ¹	March 2024	84%	85%	80% ²
Degree to which AAFC advances trade policy through negotiations, agreements and discussions	At least 80% ³	March 2024	87%	90%	90%

Note: Actual results are reported for the fiscal year that data becomes available. Where indicators and/or targets reflect the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (2018–23), updates to reflect the new Sustainable CAP will be made in the coming year and reported in future Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports.

1. Performance against this indicator and target is self-assessed based on a scale of 0% to 100%, whereby a score of 80% to 99% indicates the following: (1) that activities required to advance the resolution and mitigation of market access barriers are undertaken effectively; (2) that, with respect to World Trade Organization disputes and technical trade issues, all Canadian partners and stakeholders are engaged to understand issues; (3) that policy advice is provided in response to most requests; and (4) that frequent problem-solving discussions are held. Additional information on the scale and methodology used is available on GC InfoBase.
2. Although this indicator (80%) met the target to “maintain a score above 80%,” the 2021–22 result is lower than in previous years due to market access challenges including protectionism and shifting trade policies. In addition, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic limited the Department’s ability to advance or develop relationships in support of increasing trade.
3. Performance against this indicator and target is self-assessed based on a scale of 0% to 100%, whereby a score of 80% to 99% indicates strong engagement to bring Canada’s position forward; and evidence that key issues have been advanced in promoting or advancing Canadian policy positions. Additional information on the scale and methodology used is available on GC InfoBase.

Financial, human resources, and performance information for AAFC’s program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#)³⁶.

Planned budgetary spending for Domestic and International Markets

The following table shows, for Domestic and International Markets, budgetary spending for 2023–24, as well as planned spending for that year and for each of the next two fiscal years.

2023–24 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2023–24 planned spending	2024–25 planned spending	2025–26 planned spending
319,184,294	319,184,294	222,717,709	210,300,213

Note: The funding authorities for the new five-year Sustainable CAP were not yet approved at the time of publishing this Departmental Plan, and are thus not reflected in the spending amounts for 2023–24 or the future years provided in this report. Funding for the Sustainable CAP will be reflected in the 2023–24 Supplementary Estimates, as well as in the 2024–25 Departmental Plan and 2023–24 Departmental Results Report. The decrease in planned spending in 2024–25 reflects the expiry of the Wine Sector Support Program and the Food Policy Initiatives (Local Food Infrastructure Fund, Food Waste Reduction Challenge, and AgriCommunication Initiative) at the end of 2023–24. The decrease in planned spending in 2025–26 reflects a decrease in funding for the Youth Employment and Skills Program.

Financial, human resources, and performance information for AAFC’s program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#)³⁷.

Planned human resources for Domestic and International Markets

The following table shows, in full-time equivalents, the human resources the Department will need to fulfill this core responsibility for 2023–24 and for each of the next two fiscal years.

2023–24 planned full-time equivalents	2024–25 planned full-time equivalents	2025–26 planned full-time equivalents
528	490	488

Financial, human resources, and performance information for AAFC’s program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#)³⁸.

Science and Innovation

Description: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) conducts scientific research, develops new knowledge and new technologies, and transfers the results to the agriculture and agri-food sector. AAFC also works with industry and other partners to strengthen the sector’s capacity to develop and adopt innovative practices, products, and processes.

The Science and Innovation core responsibility is focused on advancing the following departmental results:

- The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector knowledge base is increased through AAFC supported scientific and innovative research.
- The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector is effective in transforming ideas into new products, processes or practices.

Planning highlights

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) conducts long-term scientific research that enhances agricultural productivity, efficiency, and sustainability; prevents diseases and pests; supports market access; increases environmental performance; and improves risk mitigation. A network of research centres with world-class scientific expertise is maintained across Canada to support scientific activities and collaboration with industry, academia, non-governmental organizations, and other government departments. The Department’s efforts accelerate the pace of innovation by funding research and development activities that facilitate the demonstration, commercialization, and/or adoption of products, technologies, processes, practices, and/or services. In turn, this enhances the economic growth, productivity, competitiveness, adaptability and sustainability of the Canadian agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector, and assists in capturing opportunities for the sector in domestic and global markets.

Science, research, and innovation was identified as a priority area under the new [Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership](#)³⁹ (Sustainable CAP), and will deliver results through the Foundational Science and Research initiative, and the [AgriScience](#)⁴⁰ and [AgriInnovate](#)⁴¹ Programs. AAFC has created a new departmental [Strategic Plan for Science](#)⁴² to help guide the department’s science and research activities over the next decade. This strategy focuses on sustainable agriculture and tackling the climate crisis, the emergence of new threats, and the development of new technologies.

The Department’s planned actions under the Science and Innovation core responsibility in 2023–24 are also aligned with government-wide priorities and the minister’s mandate letter commitments that prioritize clean growth and climate resiliency. The Department continues to work with provinces and territories to combat climate change, building on the Government of Canada’s strengthened climate plan, [A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy](#)⁴³, and the objectives of the [Natural Climate Solutions Fund](#)⁴⁴ to advance action on greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, carbon sequestration and other environmental priorities.

Strategic Plan for Science

The research priorities for the new 10-year AAFC [Strategic Plan for Science](#)⁴⁵ will be guided by four key missions:

- **Mitigating and adapting to climate change:** helping the sector to become more resilient and able to adapt to climate stressors and threats such as droughts, heat waves, pests, and diseases without reverting to dependence on external inputs (such as fertilizers, pesticides, etc.).
- **Advancing the circular economy:** for example, managing waste by developing value-added streams or rebranding waste as input for products using emerging technologies and innovations.
- **Increasing the resiliency of agro-ecosystems:** working with the sector on ways to evolve production systems, to make them resilient to stress, reducing losses in a pro-active way.
- **Accelerating digital transformation:** integrating bioinformatics with other data types to improve modelling and predictive capacity, reducing the impacts of threats and increasing productivity in the agriculture sector.



AAFC scientists will continue to work collaboratively on a project selection of large, cross-sectoral challenges facing both the agricultural sector and Canadians alike. In doing so, the Department will ensure a diverse and inclusive workforce for optimal creativity, and a focus on organizational excellence that will prioritize co-development of solutions to best mobilize knowledge, ensuring that AAFC science is applicable on-farm so end users can more quickly reap the benefits of the research.

Result: The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector knowledge base is increased through AAFC supported scientific and innovative research

Scientific and innovative research is necessary to maintain the longer-term sustainability and competitiveness of Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector. Working with industry, academia, and other partners, AAFC will continue to create opportunities for the sector through agricultural research and innovation. For example, to improve and increase the availability and awareness of alternative pesticides, the [Pesticide Risk Reduction Program](#)⁴⁶ will continue to develop systems-based approaches to pest management priorities, support the availability of biopesticides through regulatory support, and work to better understand how pest management practices affect larger ecosystems.

Collaboration with [Living Labs](#)⁴⁷ teams brings together producers, scientists and other partners across Canada to share knowledge, develop and implement beneficial management practices, and foster other innovative solutions to environmental issues. Using this approach, research and innovation activities may explore ways to collaborate in automation, precision agriculture, and the transformation of Canada's production systems.

Under the Sustainable CAP, the Foundational Science and Research initiative will build on successes achieved under previous policy frameworks and will focus on sustainability, resiliency, and other cross-sectoral challenges to support activities along the innovation continuum: from discovery science generating new knowledge, to applied science in support of developing innovations for sector application, and facilitating the introduction of innovations to the market.

The AgriScience Program will continue to mobilize partnerships between industry, government, and academia, and provide funding and support for pre-commercial science activities and research that benefit the agriculture and agri-food sector and Canadians. In 2023–24, the Program will explore three updated priority areas: environment and climate change; economic growth; and sector resilience. The Program includes two components: Clusters and Projects.

AgriScience Clusters support national not-for-profit, industry-led entities that assemble scientific expertise from industry, academia, and government to address sector- or commodity-specific priority issues with a five-year strategy. For example, the development of new generation spectrum LED lighting for use in the egg industry. AgriScience Projects are individual sector-led research activities or small groups of projects that are local or regional in scope. An example of a funded project includes the development of a compostable can system for agri-food applications.

Given the magnitude and urgency of climate challenges, science and innovation investments will increase the focus on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and carbon sequestration. In addition, better engagement of Indigenous Peoples and other underrepresented and marginalized groups in the sector will strive to address the unique perspectives, priorities, and challenges facing these communities. In 2023–24, the Department's Indigenous Science Liaison Office (ISLO) will continue to work with the AgriScience program team to implement an inclusive-by-design approach to enhance access to funding for Indigenous-led research, development, and technology transfer projects. The economic growth of the sector will remain an objective for AgriScience, with a need for greater research on automation and other emerging technologies to address labour challenges, boost productivity, and enable the creation of more value-added products and services in the agri-food sector.

Result: The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector is effective in transforming ideas into new products, processes, or practices

The Department's focus on collaborative science and technology efforts enhances the impact of government, industry, and academic expertise by reducing duplication of work and leveraging private-sector research capacities. Research partnerships make government investments more valuable and ensure that the research is relevant to Canadian industry. AAFC builds collaborative research by supporting investments in the commercialization and adoption of new innovations, which will then encourage the transformation of research-generated ideas into new business practices. These investments assist industry in addressing the gap between research and commercialization, and mitigate the risk inherent in applying new technologies to commercial-level production. For example, the renewed AgriInnovate Program under the

Sustainable CAP will incent investments of innovative projects that will impact the sector in four priority areas: value-added; productivity; labour; and market development.

Under the Government of Canada’s \$4-billion Natural Climate Solutions Fund, AAFC will continue to support farmers to increase soil carbon sequestration, reduce GHG emissions, and improve resiliency to climate change in 2023–24 through the [Agricultural Climate Solutions Program](#)⁴⁸ (ACS). Two program streams will support farmers in adopting beneficial management practices (BMPs) that best store carbon and mitigate climate change. This work will also help protect biodiversity, improve water and soil quality, and strengthen farmers’ bottom lines.

- The [ACS Living Labs](#)⁴⁹ stream is a \$185 million, 10-year program (2021 to 2031) that brings together farmers, scientists, industry organizations, not-for-profit organizations, and Indigenous groups on active farms to accelerate the co-development, testing, adoption, dissemination, and monitoring of technologies and practices, including BMPs that sequester carbon and/or mitigate GHG emissions. ACS Living Labs uses an interactive on-farm testing and research process that makes innovations more likely to be adopted because they have been demonstrated to be economically viable, technically feasible, and desirable for producers, in addition to being scientifically sound. The program launched nine living labs in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland in 2022–23, and it is expected to establish new living labs in Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and Prince Edward Island through 2023–24.
- The [ACS On-Farm Climate Action Fund](#)⁵⁰ stream is a \$200-million fund, initiated in 2021, that supports the adoption of BMPs that store carbon and reduce GHG emissions through nitrogen management, rotational grazing, and cover cropping. The program selected 12 recipient organizations that will support farmers in adopting and implementing immediate on-farm BMPs that store carbon and reduce greenhouse gases. The 2030 Emission Reduction Plan and Budget 2022 included an additional \$470 million investment to expand the Fund, and extend it to 2028.

The Government of Canada is also investing \$165.7 million over seven years beginning in 2021, in the [Agricultural Clean Technology Program](#)⁵¹ (ACT) which aims to support the development and adoption of agricultural clean technologies to achieve a low-carbon economy and promote sustainable growth in Canada's agriculture and agri-food sector. The [2030 Emissions Reduction Plan](#)⁵² and Budget 2022 included an additional \$330 million to triple funding for ACT. This includes support for expanding both the Adoption stream and the Research and Innovation stream of the program. The updated priority areas include: nitrogen reduction/efficiency technologies, methane reduction technologies, low carbon energy/fuel system, and emission quantification technologies.

In addition, in 2023–24, the Department will work towards the launch of a new Agricultural Clean Technology Challenge which will focus on finding solutions to reduce methane emissions within the sector, and the Sustainable CAP will mark the launch of the new Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program. This \$250-million cost-shared program will support producers to increase the

environmental resiliency of agricultural landscapes. This support will accelerate the adoption of on-farm land use and management practices that maximize ecological goods and services, such as maintaining and restoring grasslands and wetlands, and enhancing riparian and on-farm wildlife areas.

Gender-based analysis (GBA) plus

Advancing diversity and inclusion in the agriculture and agri-food sector remains a priority in 2023–24. Under the Sustainable CAP, the Department will continue to work with provincial and territorial jurisdictions to better support Indigenous Peoples and other underrepresented and marginalized groups in the sector, including women, youth, racialized groups, persons with disabilities, 2SLGBTQI+ communities, and official language minority communities. The Department will also enhance data collection in support of GBA Plus, and strive for equitable access across all programs under the framework.

The Department is committed to supporting science and innovation by hiring the next generation of federal research scientists and science professionals. Staffing will focus on addressing gaps among underrepresented and marginalized groups in the workforce and promoting national, diverse, cross-sectoral, and inclusive transdisciplinary collaboration. Through the development of a science human resources plan, AAFC will continue to ensure scientific recruitment is aligned with Government of Canada and departmental priorities and initiatives in emerging areas of science and innovation, while ensuring diversity and inclusivity in the Department for optimal creativity and collaboration.



In addition, in support of the government-wide priority to promote diversity, equity and inclusion, AAFC will continue to facilitate webinars and training sessions to increase the information available to reach, educate, and influence youth about possible career paths and inspire the next generation of Canadian women working in agricultural science. The Women in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) Network, an employee-led initiative established in 2015, will continue its work to support and celebrate the accomplishments of the women currently working in STEM fields, and to promote an environment at AAFC that is inclusive and welcoming. The Women in STEM Network continues to collaborate with the Department’s other diversity networks to address common issues and promote a diverse and inclusive workplace.

Under the Foundational Science and Research initiative, GBA Plus will be applied throughout the annual call for proposals process. A question on GBA Plus considerations has been included in the 2023 call for proposals asking researchers whether they anticipate GBA Plus impacts related to their project outcomes based on, for example, gender, age, ethnicity, income, region, or culture. Researchers will also be asked to consider the differences between sex and gender data whenever a project involves humans or human-derived samples. For the full proposal stage, researchers will

be required to further explore GBA Plus considerations in their proposal design.

AAFC will advance efforts to build relationships, engage, and ultimately co-develop research projects with Indigenous partners. The Department continues to provide Indigenous cultural awareness training as well as science-specific Indigenous cultural literacy and intercultural competency training to AAFC staff. The Indigenous Science Liaison Office (ISLO) also continues to: liaise between researchers and potential Indigenous partners; create guides and tools for building relationships and co-developing research projects; and facilitate Indigenous research partnerships. These actions contribute to reconciliation within the context of the Department's Indigenous Policy Framework.

In 2023–24, AAFC will continue to host the interdepartmental Indigenous Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (I-STEM) Cluster. I-STEM seeks to increase and expand support for Indigenous priorities in environmental stewardship, research, and technology development and transfer through departmental policies, programs and activities related to STEM disciplines. Priorities in 2023–24 include: increasing and coordinating Indigenous student hiring in STEM; further developing science-specific Indigenous cultural literacy and intercultural competency training, relationship-building, research activities, and guidance on how to support Indigenous data sovereignty for federal science departments and agencies; and co-developing the I-STEM approach between federal STEM leaders and the I-STEM Advisory Circle of external Indigenous scholars, professionals, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers.

In 2023–24, AAFC will also continue to use the Indigenous Agricultural Science Partnerships (IASP) funding mechanism to support and facilitate relationship-building with Indigenous partners, with the ultimate objective of co-developing science and innovation projects that leverage not only federal research expertise but also Indigenous scientific expertise, methodologies, and knowledge systems. IASP funds support activities such as exploratory workshops, the addition of new activities or Indigenous partners to existing projects, and advice and technology transfer.

Further information on the underrepresented and marginalized groups served by the Department's programs and initiatives can be found in the [GBA Plus supplementary information table](#)⁵³.

United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's activities under the Science and Innovation core responsibility support Canada's efforts to address the United Nations [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)⁵⁴ and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Department continues to modernize its delivery of science and technology to provide leadership in the growth and development of a competitive, innovative, and sustainable Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector. Overall, the Sustainable CAP and research priorities guided by the Department's science strategy contribute toward:

- ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture (SDG 2);
- ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (SDG 6);
- ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all (SDG 7);
- promoting inclusive and sustained economic growth, productive employment, and decent work for all (SDG 8);
- building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and fostering innovation (SDG 9);
- ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns (SDG 12);
- taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts (SDG 13); and
- protecting, restoring, and promoting sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably managing forests, combatting desertification, halting and reversing land degradation, and halting biodiversity loss (SDG 15).

Examples include the Agricultural Climate Solutions Program, which will help to develop and implement farming practices to tackle climate change through the Living Labs stream and the On-Farm Climate Action Fund stream; and the Agricultural Clean Technology Program, which provides farmers and agri-businesses with access to funding to help develop and adopt the latest clean technologies to reduce GHG emissions.

Innovation

In 2023–24, the Department will continue to develop and test innovative approaches to science programming in order to identify effective program delivery methods to achieve desired results. This includes the implementation of innovative program delivery approaches through the Agricultural Climate Solutions Program, including the Living Labs Stream and On-Farm Climate Action Fund.

In particular, the use of the living labs approach encourages innovation and adoption by bringing together producers, scientists, and other partners to co-develop, test, and evaluate innovative practices to accelerate their adoption by Canadian farmers. The approach is based on three core principles:

- focusing on farmers’ needs through user-centred innovation;
- engaging broad and diverse partnerships to bring a variety of perspectives to an innovation challenge; and
- testing the innovations in the users’ real-life context (on farm, under real agricultural conditions).

As a result, the practices are tested, evaluated, and further improved through a cycle of innovation that addresses risks and uncertainties, and increases the likelihood of broad adoption.

Science programming will continue to focus on increasing the capacity to analyze the results of past research to link data with results from provincial, territorial, and industry-led initiatives to inform program design. For example, the data gathered and the lessons learned on program delivery approaches in previous years informed the development of the Sustainable CAP, and will continue to be important through its implementation.

Key risks

The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector faces a variety of risks every year: unpredictable weather patterns and extreme weather events significantly affect Canadian agriculture with varying effects across regions, and climate change can create more favourable conditions for pest survival and migration. In the years ahead, Canada can expect more extreme weather events, higher than average temperatures, and changes in precipitation patterns that increase the risks of floods and droughts. The Department will continue to mitigate these risks through the design and support of scientific research and by providing programming that contributes to the agri-environmental resilience of the sector, particularly through the AAFC Strategic Plan for Science, which focuses on sustainable agriculture and tackling the climate crisis, the emergence of new threats, and the development of new technologies.

Science and innovation outcomes are at risk of being impacted or delayed due to financial constraints, reduced investment (including potential limitations around investments in laboratories and other critical infrastructure), and skilled labour shortages, leading to reduced development and/or adoption of innovation and new technologies within the sector. The Department continues to support knowledge-transfer activities to accelerate the adoption and prioritization of investments in science and innovation to strengthen competitiveness and resilience, and to help mitigate some associated risks. AAFC will continue to evaluate and prioritize its research to ensure that science capacity is maximized and that industry is supported to adopt practices that improve resiliency, with an emphasis on the environment and clean growth.

Planned results for Science and Innovation

The following table shows, for Science and Innovation, the planned results, the result indicators, the targets, and the target dates for 2023–24, and the actual results for the three most recent fiscal years for which actual results are available.

Result: The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector knowledge base is increased through AAFC supported scientific and innovative research					
Departmental result indicator	Target	Date to achieve target	2019–20 actual result	2020–21 actual result	2021–22 actual result
Percentage of AAFC scientific publications produced through collaboration	At least 75% Collaboration with external collaborators rises to at least 75% of AAFC peer-reviewed scientific publications	March 2024	77%	79%	77%
Number of citations as a proportion of AAFC scientific publications	An average of at least 15 citations per AAFC peer-reviewed publication in the span of 5 years is maintained ¹	March 2024	15 (based on citations from 2014–19, for peer-reviewed publications published in 2014)	17 (based on citations from 2015–20, for peer-reviewed publications published in 2015)	17 (based on citations from 2016–21, for peer-reviewed publications published in 2016)

Note: Actual results are reported for the fiscal year that data becomes available. Where indicators and/or targets reflect the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (2018–23), updates to reflect the new Sustainable CAP will be made in the coming year and reported in future Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports.

1. Indicator measures citations in the span of five years, between time of publication and citations.

Financial, human resources, and performance information for AAFC’s program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#)⁵⁵.

Result: The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector is effective in transforming ideas into new products, processes, or practices					
Departmental result indicator	Target	Date to achieve target	2019–20 actual result	2020–21 actual result	2021–22 actual result
Number of new technologies, products, practices, processes, or systems that are available for transfer to the sector	Average development of 100 new innovations annually with the goal of achieving 500 over the Canadian Agricultural Partnership framework (2018–2023)	March 2024	108	121	72 ¹
Percentage of revenues generated on farms adopting innovative practices	At least 55% of total Canadian agricultural gross revenues are generated by farms that adopt innovative products, processes, or practices between 2023 and 2025	December 2025 ²	Not available	64% (based on results from the 2019 Farm Financial Survey for the period 2017–19)	Not available (result available in 2023)
Percentage of processors developing and/or introducing innovations	75% of food processors with sales of \$1 million or more introducing at least one product, process, marketing or organizational innovation between 2021–23 ³	December 2023	72% (based on survey results for 2016–18)	Not available	Not available (result available in 2025)
Index of Agri-Environmental Sustainability (water, soil, air quality, biodiversity)	At least an Index of 71 ⁴	March 2030 ⁵	Not available	Not available	68 ⁶ (based on the 2016 Census of Agriculture)

Percentage change in the productivity of the agri-food sector	At least 0.2% Agri-food sector: Compound annual growth rate increases to at least 0.2% between 2016 and 2026	December 2026 ⁷	Not applicable	0.1% (compound annual growth rate from 2016 to 2017)	-0.2% ⁸ (compound annual growth rate from 2016 to 2018)
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Note: Actual results are reported for the fiscal year that data becomes available. Results that are “not available” are due to lag times in data availability, including as noted below. Where indicators and/or targets reflect the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (2018–23), updates to reflect the new Sustainable CAP will be made in the coming year and reported in future Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports.

1. This result fell under its annual target in 2021–22 due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, but results are expected to pick up again as normal work resumes.
2. Data from the Farm Financial Survey is available every two years with a two-year lag time.
3. Baseline and target were established based on the 2016–18 “Survey on Innovation in the Food Processing Industry” in 2019. The next reference period for the Survey will be 2021 to 2023, with data available in 2025.
4. The Agri-Environmental Sustainability Index ranges from 0-100, whereby 0-19 represents an “undesirable” status, 20-39 represents “poor,” 40-59 represents “moderate,” 60-79 represents “good,” and 80-100 represents “desired”. An index of 71 would indicate that overall water, soil, air, and biodiversity quality related to agricultural lands is rated as “good” or, in other words, that agri-environmental health is at low risk of being significantly degraded. The calculation of the Index is based on four sub-indices for water quality, air quality, soil quality, and biodiversity.
5. Indicator is dependant on Census of Agriculture data, which is collected every five years, and then has a five-year lag time for the data to be processed, analyzed, and reported.
6. The reported result of 68 marks a four-point increase from the Index’s baseline of 64 (2001), driven by increases across all sub-indices, and demonstrating progress towards achieving the target of 71 by 2030.
7. Indicator for the agri-food/processing sector has a four-year lag time; 2026 result will be available in March 2030.
8. Productivity typically grows in spurts and it is not uncommon to see slowdowns or even small negative trends in productivity over the short term. Although 2016–17 and 2017–18 growth rates were not trending towards the target, recent overall sector performance suggests the sector is still on track to meet the target by 2026.

Financial, human resources, and performance information for AAFC’s program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#)⁵⁶.

Planned budgetary spending for Science and Innovation

The following table shows, for Science and Innovation, budgetary spending for 2023–24, as well as planned spending for that year and for each of the next two fiscal years.

2023–24 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2023–24 planned spending	2024–25 planned spending	2025–26 planned spending
571,844,107	571,844,107	450,793,418	451,781,885

Note: The funding authorities for the new five-year Sustainable CAP were not yet approved at the time of publishing this Departmental Plan, and are thus not reflected in the spending amounts for 2023–24 or the future years provided in this report. Funding for the Sustainable CAP will be reflected in the 2023–24 Supplementary Estimates, as well as in the 2024–25 Departmental Plan and 2023–24 Departmental Results Report. The decrease in planned spending in 2024–25 reflects the expiry of the On-Farm Climate Action Fund stream of the Agricultural Climate Solutions Program at the end of 2023–24.

Financial, human resources, and performance information for AAFC’s program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#)⁵⁷.

Planned human resources for Science and Innovation

The following table shows, in full-time equivalents, the human resources the Department will need to fulfill this core responsibility for 2023–24 and for each of the next two fiscal years.

2023–24 planned full-time equivalents	2024–25 planned full-time equivalents	2025–26 planned full-time equivalents
2,639	2,632	2,632

Financial, human resources and performance information for AAFC’s program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#)⁵⁸.

Sector Risk

Description: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) provides tools to mitigate the financial impact of risks beyond producers’ control that threaten the viability of their operation. AAFC also works with the sector to ensure that systems, standards, and tools are developed to support its ability to prevent and control risks and address market demands.

The Sector Risk core responsibility is focused on advancing the following departmental results:

- The agricultural sector is financially resilient.
- The agriculture and agri-food sector is equipped with assurance systems and supporting tools.

Planning highlights

An effective suite of agricultural risk management tools helps ensure the continued growth and resiliency of the agriculture and agri-food sector. In 2023–24, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) will continue working with provincial and territorial governments to deliver programming and services that help farmers when they face risks beyond their capacity to manage. The Department will also continue supporting industry-led efforts to develop, implement, and promote assurance systems that respond to consumer demands for specific product attributes, while protecting the sector against threats to plant and animal health. Efforts related to the Sector Risk core responsibility are critical to maintaining a reliable supply of Canadian food products and public confidence in the agricultural supply chain, while also supporting commitments in the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food’s [mandate letter](#)⁵⁹ on supply chains, labour, and [Business Risk Management \(BRM\) programs](#)⁶⁰.

Resiliency and public trust was identified as a priority area under the new [Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership](#)⁶¹ (Sustainable CAP), and the Department will deliver results in this area through its suite of BRM programs, as well as the [AgriAssurance Program](#)⁶² and the [Minor Use Pesticides Program](#)⁶³.

Result: The agricultural sector is financially resilient

The financial health of Canadian farms serves as an indication of the agriculture and agri-food sector’s overall resilience to ever-evolving market and environmental conditions. Agricultural producers face a number of risks that can threaten the viability of their operations, such as extreme weather events, declining international or regional commodity prices, soaring production and supply chain costs, inflation, animal diseases (such as avian influenza), plant diseases, labour shortages, strained railway and port networks, and international crises such as the war in Ukraine.

Under the new Sustainable CAP, producers will continue to have access to a robust suite of national BRM programs to help manage the impacts of these kinds of risks, protect their livelihood and, ultimately, grow their business. BRM programs are tools that provide agricultural producers

with protection against income and production losses, helping them manage risks that threaten the viability of their farms:

- **AgriInsurance**⁶⁴ provides producers with insurance against natural hazards to reduce the financial impact of production or asset losses.
- **AgriInvest**⁶⁵ is a savings account that includes government-matched producer contributions. Balances can be used to help manage income declines or make investments that mitigate risks or improve market income.
- **AgriRecovery**⁶⁶ is a disaster relief framework that facilitates a coordinated federal, provincial, and territorial response to natural disasters and pest or disease outbreaks, to help producers with the extraordinary cost of activities necessary for recovery.
- **AgriStability**⁶⁷ helps to manage market and production risks by providing whole-farm, margin-based support, when producers experience a severe income decline.

To support the national suite of BRM programs, the Livestock Price Insurance Program helps cattle and hog producers in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba manage down-side price risk that can affect the financial viability of their farming. Overall, the Sustainable CAP represents a shared federal-provincial-territorial commitment to enhance sector resiliency, enabling producers to anticipate, mitigate, and respond to risks through a comprehensive suite of programs.



At their July 2022 meeting, federal, provincial, and territorial Ministers of Agriculture agreed that continuing to improve the BRM suite of programs remains a top priority. There was agreement by the Ministers for continued work and consultation with industry on a new AgriStability model that is faster, simpler, and more predictable. Some of the elements being considered include streamlining program calculations, refining the fee structure, advancing deadlines, and introducing coverage notices. To better support farmers in times of need, Ministers agreed to raise the AgriStability compensation rate from 70% to 80%, increasing support to farmers through the program by an additional \$72 million per year. There was further agreement by Ministers that in order to receive an AgriInvest government contribution, producers with allowable net sales of at least \$1 million would require an agri-environmental risk assessment (such as an Environmental Farm Plan) by 2025.

Through the **Advance Payments Program**⁶⁸, eligible agricultural producers will continue to have access to timely, low cost loans to assist with cash-flow needs over their production periods, offering more flexibility when finding the best markets for their agricultural products. In light of the difficult conditions and delays caused by the global pandemic and the war in Ukraine, AAFC temporarily increased the interest-free limit under the Advance Payments Program from \$100,000 to \$250,000 for the 2022 and 2023 program years. Over these two years, it is expected this will

save, on average, \$7,700 in interest costs to producers, with \$69 million in total savings for approximately 11,000 producers.

To help inform future program changes, a multi-year review of the impacts of climate risk across BRM programs will be taken by the Department, in consultation with provinces and territories. This review will include measures to encourage environmental sustainability, climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, as well as those supporting the fiscal sustainability of the programs. As part of a broader analysis of environmental effects through the strategic environmental assessment process, considering climate impacts of proposals remains at the forefront at AAFC. To further assess climate risks, the Department will work with Environment and Climate Change Canada on their initiative to ensure climate adaptation and mitigation considerations are integrated throughout federal government decision-making.

In addition to programming support, AAFC will work to encourage integrated, proactive strategies to effectively plan for, prevent, and mitigate production risks (including disasters that are associated with climate change such as wildfires and drought) and potential disruption in the supply chain that can impact human, animal, plant, and environmental health.

Result: The agriculture and agri-food sector is equipped with assurance systems and supporting tools

The term “assurance systems” is used to describe all production practices and standards, as well as other systematic activities processes and procedures, that can provide confidence and trust that associated risks along the food supply chain are adequately addressed with verifiable claims—for instance, that the food is safe, and meets or exceeds market requirements. AAFC works with the agriculture and agri-food sector to ensure that systems, standards, and tools are developed to support its ability to prevent and control risks and address market or industry-driven demands.

Assurance systems can assist in increasing producer credibility and consumer confidence, both domestically and abroad, by assuring that a product is produced as advertised. This is important as buyers are increasingly demanding that products have certain characteristics, are produced using specific methods (for example, organic, halal, or kosher), or can be traced within the supply chain, and expect industry to prove any such claims.



Under the Sustainable CAP, the AgriAssurance Program will continue to support the sector in developing assurance systems to address market and regulatory requirements (for example, food safety, plant and animal health, environmental sustainability, and quality standards) and enabling the sector to make credible and verifiable claims about the health, safety, and quality of Canadian agriculture products. To ensure resiliency, support to small- and medium-sized enterprises will be expanded in order to reduce potential market barriers and meet international market requirements.

In 2023–24, further efforts will be made by the Department to encourage and support industry associations to:

- develop commodity-level assurance vision and roadmaps for five to ten years to address existing and emerging gaps and opportunities;
- facilitate greater integration, adoption, and promotion of assurance systems and better coordination of programming nationally; and
- make meaningful advances towards addressing issues that are important to consumers and the public, such as improving the alignment of Environmental Farm Plans and Best Management Practices.

Building on existing collaboration with AAFC, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency’s activities support the development and implementation of assurance systems in areas such as food safety recognition, livestock traceability, and a biosecurity and surveillance focus on plant and animal health. By supporting resilience and risk management, the Department, in collaboration with federal partners, as well as provincial and territorial governments, will help build and maintain public trust in the agriculture and agri-food sector, and ensure ongoing confidence of Canadians in the agricultural supply chain.

Gender-based analysis (GBA) plus

Advancing diversity and inclusion in the agriculture and agri-food sector remains a priority in 2023–24. Under the Sustainable CAP, the Department will continue to work with provincial and territorial jurisdictions to better support Indigenous Peoples and other underrepresented and marginalized groups in the sector, including women, youth, racialized groups, persons with disabilities, 2SLGBTQI+ communities, and official language minority communities. The Department will also enhance data collection in support of GBA Plus, and strive for equitable access across all programs under the framework.

The Department will also work with its partners to continue to understand and enhance outreach of Business Risk Management programs in support of embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion in the sector. In order to advance policy and program development and ensure inclusive outcomes for the agriculture and agri-food sector, efforts are needed to improve the understanding of participation of Indigenous Peoples and underrepresented and marginalized groups in the sector and in Departmental programming. This will enable the identification of barriers, along with the necessary data requirements.

Following legislative reviews, the Advance Payments Program and the *Canadian Agricultural Loans Act*⁶⁹ revealed there is limited data on underrepresented and marginalized groups which may indicate low participation rates, and possibly barriers to participation in these programs. In support of advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion, AAFC will increase data collection for GBA Plus by adding voluntary self-identification questions to both of these programs’ forms in 2023 to assess participation barriers, and for future analysis.

Further information on the underrepresented and marginalized groups served by the Department's programs and initiatives can be found in the [GBA Plus supplementary information table](#)⁷⁰.

United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN Sustainable Development Goals

AAFC's activities and programs under the Sector Risk core responsibility support Canada's efforts to address the United Nations [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)⁷¹ and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and contribute towards SDGs such as:

- ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture (SDG 2); and
- promoting inclusive and sustained economic growth, productive employment, and decent work for all (SDG 8).

As an example, the [Pest Management Centre](#)⁷² will continue to support access to crop protection products for growers of minor use crops, which includes many fruits and vegetables essential for good health. These comprise a significant part of the agricultural sector in Canada and contribute to Canada's food security. Improving grower access to new minor use pesticides, crop-protection treatments such as herbicides and nematocides, usually used on low-acreage, high-value crops, provides Canadian growers with tools they need to protect their investments in the field, and to be agile in response to new and emerging threats in increasingly complex and unpredictable ecosystems.

In support of resilience and risk management, AAFC, in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments, also helps build and maintain public trust in the agriculture and agri-food sector, and ensures ongoing confidence of Canadians in the agriculture and agri-food supply chain. This could indirectly support SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and, specifically, target 16.6, which aims to develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels.

Innovation

In 2023–24, AAFC will continue using innovative approaches launched in previous years that enhance the delivery of risk management programs, or lead to the building of new risk management tools. For example, a two-year cash reference margin pilot was initiated in 2020–21 in select jurisdictions where the Department delivers the AgriStability program (Manitoba, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland and Labrador). In 2023–24, AAFC will continue to analyze results and assess the impact of the cash reference margins on the AgriStability program.

In addition, an AgriStability outreach position was launched in 2021–22 in Nova Scotia, jointly funded by AAFC and the Province of Nova Scotia on a two-year pilot basis. The ongoing objective of the position is to facilitate communications with agricultural producers and to encourage participation in the program.

A nudge project, launched in 2020–21, was designed in collaboration with the Privy Council Office Fellowship Program for the “[My AAFC](#)⁷³” account portal to generate more interest and uptake in the portal, and to default users to purely online interactions. Ongoing delays with re-platforming the portal have shifted the focus in 2023–24 to re-evaluating the efficacy of the new portal. As part of the overall electronic communications plan to increase portal uptake and transition to online interactions, a determination will be made as to whether the original nudge project is still relevant.

Key risks

Agricultural producers are confronted with a number of risks that can threaten the viability of their operations, such as extreme weather events (causing drought, floods, and wildfires), declining commodity prices, increasing input costs, labour shortages, pests, and animal diseases (such as avian influenza). Recently, consumer demand and global supply chain disruptions stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and the resulting rise in commodity prices, have all contributed to inflation. Higher inflation and interest rates, as compared to recent years, are expected to pose challenges for agriculture producers: inputs and carrying costs of inventory and debt will rise, and investment decisions in land, input purchases, and machinery will be impacted by the economic environment. The suite of BRM programs provide agricultural producers with protection against income and production losses, helping them manage such risks that can threaten the viability of their farms.

The Department continues to actively engage industry stakeholders, provincial and territorial governments, and other federal departments to enhance collaboration, and ensure timely sharing of information that will support effective emergency preparedness, mitigation, and response efforts during emergencies—for example, during extreme weather events or plant or animal disease outbreaks. AAFC recognizes the heightened urgency for continued collaboration and the benefit of developing best practices based on key risks to mitigate the impacts of reportable diseases, such as African Swine Fever (ASF). In line with the Minister’s mandate letter, the Department will support efforts to continue taking every necessary precaution to prevent the introduction of ASF within Canadian borders, and will continue to work with provinces, territories, and industry stakeholders on prevention and preparedness measures, including a cost-shared response plan.

In July 2022, federal, provincial and territorial Ministers of Agriculture renewed their commitment for a timely, coordinated approach that will support Canada’s hog sector to address anticipated market challenges caused by market closures, the halting of exports, and a domestic surplus of hogs, should ASF arrive in Canada or the United States. As part of advancing talks around ASF prevention and preparedness, Ministers discussed lessons learned from the recent Avian Influenza outbreak response. To enhance efforts to prevent ASF from entering the country and in preparation for a potential outbreak, the Minister announced funding of up to \$45.3 million over a two-year period, including \$23.4 million for the [African Swine Fever Industry Preparedness Program](#)⁷⁴, which was launched in November 2022 to support the industry’s prevention and mitigation efforts. In 2023–24, AAFC will continue working with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and other government departments, ensuring that programs and resources are in place in advance of a potential ASF outbreak, and to reduce the risk of entry in Canada. Further, if ASF is detected, the

Department will focus on the management of healthy surplus hogs and lessening the immediate and critical pressures on the hog sector.

Recognizing the potential for significant adverse impacts on the mental health of the agriculture community as a result of an ASF outbreak or other severe event, AAFC is also developing a mental health toolkit and providing agriculture literacy training for mental health professionals to address the unique needs and challenges in supporting the mental health of farmers.

As detailed in Budget 2022, reforms to the [Temporary Foreign Worker Program](#)⁷⁵ will further advance work to address labour shortages in the agriculture and agri-food sector. AAFC will collaborate with Employment and Social Development Canada, along with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, to ensure that implementation of the program meets the needs of agriculture and agri-food employers, while delivering on improved worker protections.

Planned results for Sector Risk

The following table shows, for Sector Risk, the planned results, the result indicators, the targets, and the target dates for 2023–24, and the actual results for the three most recent fiscal years for which actual results are available.

Result: The agricultural sector is financially resilient					
Departmental result indicator	Target	Date to achieve target	2019–20 actual result	2020–21 actual result	2021–22 actual result
Sector's income as a proportion of historical income	At least 85% Sector income is maintained above the threshold of five-year average income	March 2024 ¹	104% (for the 2017 program year)	91% (for the 2018 program year)	84% ² (for the 2019 program year)
Percentage of financially healthy farms	At least 90% Percentage of financially healthy farms is maintained at least at 90%	March 2024 ³	Not available	86% (based on data in the 2019 Farm Financial Survey for the period from 2017–19)	Not available (result available in 2023)

Note: Actual results are reported for the fiscal year that data becomes available. Results that are “not available” are due to lag times in data availability, including as noted below. Where indicators and/or targets reflect the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (2018–23), updates to reflect the new Sustainable CAP will be made in the coming year, and reported in future Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports.

1. The indicator demonstrates whether producers have been able to maintain their primary agriculture incomes, after accounting for BRM programs. A percentage less than 100% indicates that the sector's income is worse than the five year average.

2. There is a two-year lag in reporting this indicator due to the time to finalize BRM payment data; results for the 2021–22 program year will be available in 2024. In the 2019 program year, both net market income and BRM payments decreased. The decrease in net market income was not offset by an increase in BRM payments, mainly due to low participation in AgriStability and the fact that Agrilnsurance does not protect against increased expenses, which was the main driver of the decrease in net market income. The results for this indicator do fluctuate year over year. Based on preliminary and incomplete data, it is expected that in 2020 the target will again be met and/or exceeded as income rebounded strongly above the level from 2017.
3. Indicator has a two-year lag time; data is only available every two years based on the Farm Financial Survey.

Financial, human resources, and performance information for AAFC’s program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#)⁷⁶.

Result: The agriculture and agri-food sector is equipped with assurance systems and supporting tools					
Departmental result indicator	Target	Date to achieve target	2019–20 actual result	2020–21 actual result	2021–22 actual result
Percentage of implementation plans for assurance projects reported to be functioning	Range between 65% and 85%	March 2024	Not available ¹	Not available ¹	Not available ¹

Note: Actual results are reported for the fiscal year that data becomes available. Results that are “not available” are due to lag times in data availability, including as noted below. Where indicators and/or targets reflect the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (2018–23), updates to reflect the new Sustainable CAP will be made in the coming year and reported in future Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports.

1. Indicator has a lag time; actual results will be available in March 2023, due to the time required for participants to develop systems and for those systems to be taken up by the sector.

Financial, human resources, and performance information for AAFC’s program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#)⁷⁷.

Planned budgetary spending for Sector Risk

The following table shows, for Sector Risk, budgetary spending for 2023–24, as well as planned spending for that year and for each of the next two fiscal years.

2023–24 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2023–24 planned spending	2024–25 planned spending	2025–26 planned spending
794,201,282	794,201,282	772,619,743	772,619,743

Note: The funding authorities for the new five-year Sustainable CAP were not yet approved at the time of publishing this Departmental Plan, and are thus not reflected in the spending amounts for 2023–24 or the future years provided in this report. Funding for the Sustainable CAP will be reflected in the 2023–24 Supplementary Estimates, as well as in the 2024–25 Departmental Plan and 2023–24 Departmental Results Report.

Financial, human resources, and performance information for AAFC’s program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#)⁷⁸.

Planned human resources for Sector Risk

The following table shows, in full-time equivalents, the human resources the Department will need to fulfill this core responsibility for 2023–24 and for each of the next two fiscal years.

2023–24 planned full-time equivalents	2024–25 planned full-time equivalents	2025–26 planned full-time equivalents
420	413	413

Financial, human resources and performance information for AAFC’s program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#)⁷⁹.

Internal services: planned results

Description: Internal services are the services that are provided within a department so that it can meet its corporate obligations and deliver its programs. There are 10 categories of internal services:

- management and oversight services
- communications services
- legal services
- human resources management services
- financial management services
- information management services
- information technology services
- real property management services
- materiel management services
- acquisition management services

Planning highlights

In 2023–24, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) will undertake internal service initiatives, including those described below, that support the Department's mandate and strengthen its capacity to deliver results to Canadians. Fostering a healthy workplace that is inclusive, respectful, and harassment-free remains a priority for AAFC. The Department will continue to build a diverse workforce that reflects our society while creating equitable and accessible workplaces that fuel innovation and inspire creativity. In addition, as the flexible hybrid work environment continues to evolve, the Department will continue to encourage and recognize the variety of methods of collaboration in order to support a better work-life balance for employees and maintain productivity.

Prioritizing diversity and inclusion in our workforce and workplaces

The Department remains fully committed to implementing initiatives that help employees feel welcome, heard, and respected in a positive work environment. The Department launched its new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan (2022–25) to increase representation and belonging, create inclusive workplaces, and enhance leadership, accountability, and monitoring. Beyond fulfilling the legislative obligations to increase diversity, equity and inclusion, the new strategy includes a value proposition, strategic pillars, a three-year action plan, and a comprehensive monitoring and measurement framework. Among the initiatives being implemented, the Department is:

- promoting the Diverse Staffing Board Initiative, which provides hiring managers access to an inventory of volunteer board members from diverse backgrounds to help identify and mitigate potential barriers and biases at all stages of the staffing process;

- streamlining the student hiring process by identifying pre-qualified Indigenous students and students with disabilities;
- maintaining talent inventories (general, student rehire, and student graduate) with members of employment equity groups to address short-term hiring needs and to facilitate succession planning;
- aiming to increase participation of employment equity employees in targeted learning and development initiatives that support career advancement and retention through the use of a new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Consent Form;
- developing and implementing a strategy to increase representation for Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, racialized persons, and equity-seeking groups in the Executive cadre by more inclusive recruitment, and by supporting promotion and career development opportunities;
- working to increase awareness and engagement of employees through departmental Diversity and Inclusion Networks, Safe Spaces, and Gender Based Analysis Plus sessions, allowing employees to share experiences, perspectives, listen, learn, and be inspired on how to make the workplace more inclusive; and
- reviewing human resources policies and practices to ensure they are free from bias, discrimination, and other barriers to inclusion and that they reflect updates to the *Public Service Employment Act* and the *Employment Equity Act* review.

Along with other federal departments, AAFC continues to respond to the Clerk of the Privy Council’s [Call to Action on Anti-Racism, Equity, and Inclusion in the Federal Public Service](#)⁸⁰ and address the recommendations of the 2021 Employment Systems Review. Building a more diverse workforce and creating inclusive, equitable, and accessible workplaces, will inspire more creative policies, innovation, programs, and research at AAFC.

Enhancing employee wellness and engagement

The safety and well-being of employees is a top priority for the Department, whether teleworking or on-site at government facilities. The pandemic has fundamentally shifted workplaces and how and where employees work. AAFC is committed to providing an inclusive and flexible hybrid work environment that is adaptable to the diverse needs and situations of employees. Creating a variety of work environments will allow for further innovation, collaboration, and productivity among employees. In 2023–24, the Department will continue to provide employees and managers with services and resources to support healthy and safe work spaces, including the Employee and Family Assistance Program, flexible hybrid work arrangements, workplace accommodations, and ergonomic assessments.

AAFC will continue to adapt and modernize collaborative workspaces to accommodate employees at worksites, such as equipping more boardrooms with M365 technology to facilitate hybrid meetings. As well, the Department will be onboarding to [GCcoworking](#)⁸¹, allowing for more collaborative and in-office work options. GCcoworking locations are shared, alternative

Government of Canada workplaces across the country, serving as a temporary workspace for employees who telework, travel between meetings, or need access to boardrooms or other office amenities. The Department will maintain an open dialogue with employees to ensure that they are informed, engaged, and can contribute to making the hybrid workplace successful this year and beyond.

The Interim AAFC Accessibility Plan (2022–25) outlines the Department’s approach, in collaboration with persons with disabilities, to identify, remove, and prevent barriers in the workplace and in internal and external policies, programs, and services. Aligned with the *Accessible Canada Act*⁸², this Interim Plan focuses on culture change, education and awareness; employment; programs and services; the built environment; information and communication technology; and procurement.

AAFC is an early adopter of the *Government of Canada Workplace Accessibility Passport*⁸³, developed to advance Nothing Without Us, a roadmap to help federal organizations lead by example under the *Accessible Canada Act*. The Passport is a collaborative tool to help public servants identify and access the supports and equipment they need to succeed at work. The Passport streamlines the workplace accommodation process, and adaptive tools follow employees when they move to different positions within the Department or in other federal organizations.

Aligned with Bill C-65, an *Act to Amend the Canada Labour Code*⁸⁴ (in force as of January 1, 2021), the Department’s Harassment and Violence in the Workplace Policy provides guidance for the prevention of workplace harassment and violence, how to respond to situations where harassment and violence have occurred, and how to support victims (including navigating the resolution process). Throughout 2023–24, training will continue to be available to employees to gain knowledge of the risk factors contributing to harassment and workplace violence, as well as of the measures to prevent and mitigate these risks.

Managing departmental real property and assets

In 2023–24, AAFC will continue to improve the sustainable management of real property under its stewardship, based on recommendations resulting from the horizontal fixed asset review conducted from 2017–20, and towards achieving a sustainable 25-year real property strategy. The Department will continue to work towards ensuring the sound management of its assets, such



as buildings, land, and equipment, in order to meet operational requirements and deliver quality programs and services to Canadians. The Department continues to work in collaboration with other science departments and Laboratories Canada to modernize agriculture science and technology infrastructure in support of Government of Canada commitments to build a stronger, more sustainable, and more collaborative federal science and technology community.

AAFC will continue to implement the [Greening Government Strategy](#)⁸⁵, including contributions to the federal government greenhouse gas reduction target of 40% from its buildings and vehicle fleet by 2025, and at least 90% by 2050, relative to 2005. AAFC attained a 44% reduction in emissions in 2021–22, and the Department’s plans for further reductions include making energy efficiency improvements to its custodial buildings, procuring 100% clean electricity by 2025, and modernizing its fleet. Further information on the Department’s contributing actions to Greening Government can be found in the AAFC [Departmental Sustainable Development Strategy](#)⁸⁶.

Strengthening digital service delivery, data analytics and transparency

AAFC will continue working towards achieving the vision of a digital government that is able to seamlessly deliver quality programs and services that are client-driven, digitally enabled, inclusive, and accessible. To support its ongoing data and digital service delivery and transformation, the Department identified five key data and digital building blocks (people, digital infrastructure, cyber security, data, and enterprise architecture), each enabling a different facet of the transformation, which will support planning for new data management and analytics projects, and the launch of departmental cloud platforms. AAFC has also implemented an integrated grants and contributions digital platform that, together with the “[My AAFC](#)⁸⁷” account portal, will provide clients with increased online service delivery.

The Department will continue to incorporate client perspectives into service design and delivery improvements. For example, clients of federally delivered programs under the [Canadian Agricultural Partnership](#)⁸⁸ will be offered a satisfaction survey to provide a baseline for service performance for the [Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership](#)⁸⁹. AAFC will continue to explore the client journey of underrepresented and marginalized groups, to further support and increase sector participation.

In 2023–24, AAFC will continue to support digital government initiatives that cultivate internal expertise and knowledge, provide accessible digital tools for the workplace, and introduce new systems to support program delivery and improved client support. The Department continues to build digital trust through an increased focus on cyber security, working closely with other security departments and agencies, as well as the agriculture sector. Cyber security skills and tools will continue to be enhanced, while ensuring that new digital systems are thoroughly assessed and authorized with residual risks recorded, tracked, and systematically reduced.

AAFC is also working to manage a government-wide culture shift to support digital delivery by automating targeted manual processes to increase efficiency and alleviate administrative burden on employees. AAFC is embracing experimentation with data and digital technology as it strives to continuously improve service delivery based on client and user feedback.

Following the direction from Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, the Department is updating its internal data governance model to enhance the user experience and further support digital and data activities. In addition, AAFC continues to advance the Government of Canada’s Open Data and Open Information initiatives through information and data sharing internally, and with the

[Open Government Portal](#)⁹⁰, while launching new networks and tools, including a departmental data catalogue and data management platform.

Supporting Indigenous initiatives and advancing reconciliation

Reconciliation requires a whole-of-government approach. AAFC is committed to advancing reconciliation and supporting Indigenous-led agriculture through its programs and services and by working to support food system self-determination through broader federal commitments. This includes implementing the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*⁹¹ and the *Inuit Nunangat Policy*⁹². In order to build and maintain knowledge of outreach opportunities that will advance awareness and recruitment efforts, AAFC initiates and maintains strategic alliances with other federal departments, Indigenous organizations, non-profit organizations, and academic institutions. For example, the Department continues to foster relationship-building by bringing regional scientists together with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Indigenous community representatives to discuss strategies, programs, or projects that can benefit from both Indigenous knowledge and western science.

Updated in 2022, the Department’s Indigenous Policy Framework aims to provide a strategic and holistic departmental approach to reconciliation through the support of Indigenous agriculture and food systems. The Framework was developed to focus efforts on activities that support the Department’s commitment to three priorities, including cultural awareness and departmental capacity, fostering relationships and partnerships, and inclusive policies and programs. All branches of the Department play a role in implementing the Framework and, through a hub and spokes model, provide an Indigenous lens on programs and policies.

In 2023–24, the Department’s Indigenous Science Liaison Office (ISLO) will continue to support the implementation of an Indigenous-focused recruitment, staffing, and retention initiative for technical positions by using a candidate-centred approach developed in 2022–23. As recommended in the *Many Voices, One Mind: A Pathway to Reconciliation*⁹³ final report of the Interdepartmental Circles on Indigenous Representation, it is critical to take measures encouraging and supporting Indigenous Peoples to join the public service by extending outreach networks, including Indigenous public servants on external-facing recruitment teams, and by reducing barriers in applying to public service positions. The goal of this approach is to increase the representation of Indigenous Peoples in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines.

The Indigenous Support and Awareness Office (ISAO) at AAFC continues to implement the Indigenous Student Recruitment Initiative, deliver Indigenous awareness learning sessions to all employees, and support the work of the Indigenous Network Circle as they work through the priorities in their three-year strategic plan. While continuing to provide an Indigenous lens on programs, policies, and staffing activities within the Department, the ISAO will promote the departmental priority to hire Indigenous students, and advance outreach activities to Indigenous communities and organizations.

AAFC's Indigenous Network Circle supports all Indigenous employees and students in the Department, and provides them with safe spaces to network with other Indigenous employees and build meaningful connections. The Indigenous Network Circle also provides a platform for enhanced awareness and appreciation of Indigenous Peoples and culture, and is working to build allyship within the Department, including through the opening of the new Mikinàk Lodge. The Mikinàk Lodge is a safe space for Indigenous employees and Indigenous communities to come together, exchange ideas, and perform traditional ceremonies. It is a place of healing, tradition, and teaching. Non-Indigenous employees and members of the public who wish to learn more about Indigenous cultures are welcome.

The Indigenous Career Navigators Program was launched in December 2022 in support of the Clerk's Call to Action on anti-racism, equity and diversity, and in response to the *Many Voices, One Mind: A Pathway to Reconciliation* action plan. Under the guidance of two AAFC Indigenous Career Navigators, the program provides existing and prospective Indigenous employees with advice to help navigate their career from the perspectives of recruitment, retention, professional development, and career advancement. In addition, Indigenous Career Navigators provide managers with support in the recruitment and development of Indigenous employees. *Many Voices, One Mind* identified these key areas as requiring action for Indigenous employees.

Planning for contracts awarded to Indigenous businesses

AAFC has modernized its Procurement Strategy for Indigenous Business (PSIB) framework, to meet new obligations affirming the Department's commitment to increasing the participation of Indigenous businesses in federal procurement. As illustrated below, AAFC has forecasted an Indigenous procurement objective of 3% for fiscal year 2022–23 and plans to meet or exceed a 5% planned Indigenous procurement target for fiscal year 2023–24.

To support the Department's effort in meeting these targets, AAFC has established a PSIB working group consisting of key stakeholders from across the Department with the goal of planning and identifying Indigenous set-aside procurements. On a Government of Canada level, AAFC has ensured its continued participation in PSIB Interdepartmental Committees, and actively participates in the Treasury Board Secretariat's PSIB Tiger Team to ensure a consistent and unified approach to achieving the 5% target.

Direct engagement between AAFC's procurement community and Indigenous suppliers continues to foster participation in procurement opportunities while the Department seeks to identify commodities where opportunities exist to further expand its business with Indigenous suppliers. Indigenous company profiles are shared with business owner groups within the Department, encouraging set-aside procurements when qualified Indigenous suppliers are known to exist in the marketplace.

Keeping PSIB at the forefront, AAFC has leveraged mandatory training on Indigenous considerations in procurement for current and new materiel management staff, which promotes the use of PSIB and pre-established methods of supply that include PSIB considerations wherever

possible. This training is supported by a specific communications plan aimed at ensuring AAFC's procurement staff and business owners are aware of the Department's Indigenous procurement targets and the GOC's overall commitment to Indigenous communities.

The following table shows in percent the actual, forecasted, and planned value for the target.

5% reporting field description	2021–22 actual % achieved	2022–23 forecasted % target	2023–24 planned % target
Total percentage of contracts with Indigenous businesses	N/A	3%	5%

Note: These targets were derived from a four-year rolling average using AAFC contracting figures, which includes transactions done using departmental acquisition cards.

Planned budgetary spending for internal services

The following table shows, for internal services, budgetary spending for 2023–24, as well as planned spending for that year and for each of the next two fiscal years.

2023–24 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2023–24 planned spending	2024–25 planned spending	2025–26 planned spending
141,842,856	141,842,856	131,740,868	131,953,797

Note: The funding authorities for the new five-year Sustainable CAP were not yet approved at the time of publishing this Departmental Plan, and are thus not reflected in the spending amounts for 2023–24 or the future years provided in this report. Funding for the Sustainable CAP will be reflected in the 2023–24 Supplementary Estimates, as well as in the 2024–25 Departmental Plan and 2023–24 Departmental Results Report.

Planned human resources for internal services

The following table shows, in full-time equivalents, the human resources the Department will need to carry out its internal services for 2023–24 and for each of the next two fiscal years.

2023–24 planned full-time equivalents	2024–25 planned full-time equivalents	2025–26 planned full-time equivalents
1,481	1,458	1,457

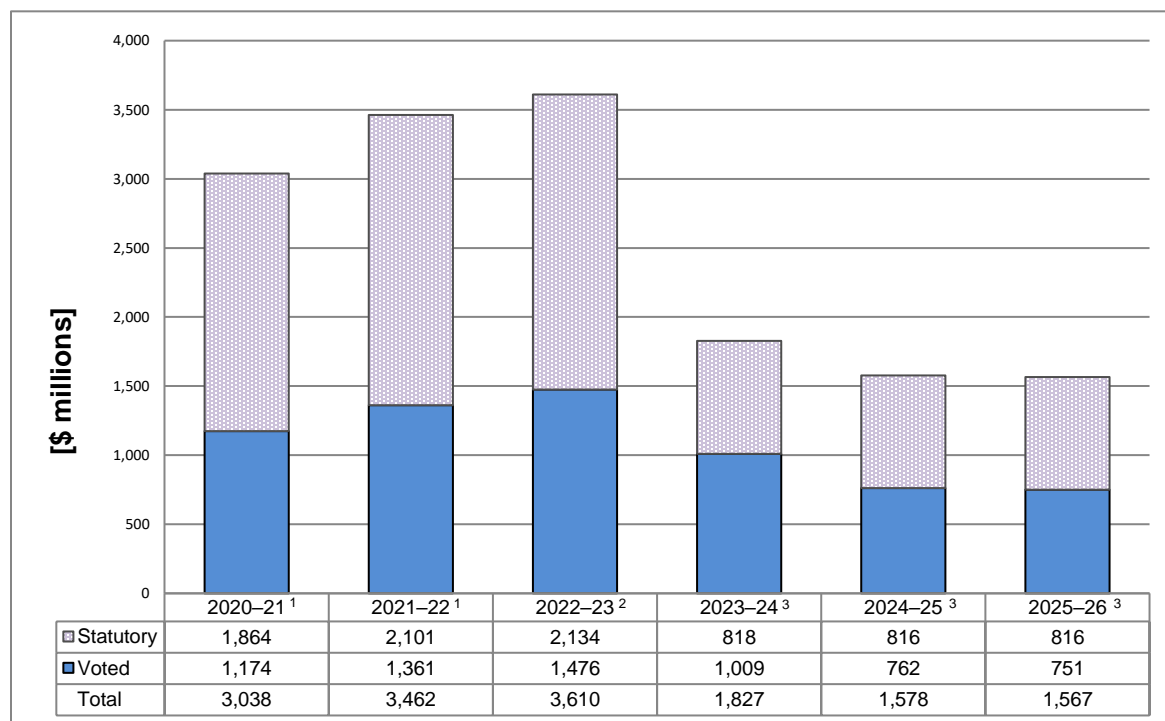
Planned spending and human resources

This section provides an overview of the Department’s planned spending and human resources for the next three fiscal years and compares planned spending for 2023–24 with actual spending for the current year and the previous year.

Planned spending

Departmental spending 2020–21 to 2025–26

The following graph presents planned spending (voted and statutory expenditures) over time.



1. Spending for 2020–21 and 2021–22 represents the actual expenditures incurred during the respective fiscal year, as reported in Public Accounts.
2. Spending for 2022–23 reflects the authorized funding levels to the end of the fiscal year.
3. Spending for 2023–24, 2024–25 and 2025–26 reflects funds already brought into the Department's reference levels, as well as amounts to be authorized through the Estimates process as presented in the Department's Annual Reference Level Update. It has not been adjusted to include new information contained in Budget 2023. More information will be provided in the 2023–24 Supplementary Estimates, as applicable.

Over the period 2020–21 to 2025–26, spending varies from a high of \$3.6 billion forecasted for 2022–23, to a low of \$1.6 billion planned for 2024–25 and 2025–26. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) programs and initiatives vary from year to year in response to changes affecting the agriculture, agri-food, and agri-based products sector, as outlined below.

Forecast spending is higher in 2022–23 as it reflects increased support for the Agricultural Climate Solutions Programs and the renewal of the Agricultural Clean Technology Program under the Emissions Reductions Plan, and it reflects new funding for the Wine Sector Support Program. This is offset by the expiry of the Dairy Farm Investment Program and the Dairy Processing Investment Fund at the end of 2021–22.

The decrease in planned spending starting in 2023–24 reflects that funding authorities for the new five-year Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) were not yet approved at the time of publishing the Departmental Plan. Funding for the Sustainable CAP will be reflected in the 2023–24 Supplementary Estimates, as well as in the 2024–25 Departmental Plan and 2023–24 Departmental Results Report. The decrease also reflects the expiry of the current Dairy Direct Payment Program.

The decrease in 2024–25 reflects the expiry of the On-Farm Climate Action Fund stream of the Agricultural Climate Solutions Program, the Wine Sector Support Program, the Food Policy Initiatives (Local Food Infrastructure Fund, Food Waste Reduction Challenge, and AgriCommunication Initiative) and the African Swine Fever Industry Preparedness Program at the end of 2023–24.

The decrease in 2025–26 reflects a decrease in funding for the Youth Employment and Skills Program.

Budgetary planning summary for core responsibilities and internal services (dollars)

The following table shows information on spending for each of AAFC's core responsibilities and for its internal services for 2023–24 and other relevant fiscal years.

Core responsibilities and internal services	2020–21 actual expenditures	2021–22 actual expenditures	2022–23 forecast spending ¹	2023–24 budgetary spending (as indicated in Main Estimates)	2023–24 planned spending ²	2024–25 planned spending ²	2025–26 planned spending ²
Domestic and international markets	905,392,316	884,355,981	892,560,711	319,184,294	319,184,294	222,717,709	210,300,213
Science and innovation	722,050,477	657,519,661	795,759,112	571,844,107	571,844,107	450,793,418	451,781,885
Sector risk	1,217,957,856	1,719,540,364	1,723,037,936	794,201,282	794,201,282	772,619,743	772,619,743
Subtotal	2,845,400,649	3,261,416,006	3,411,357,759	1,685,229,683	1,685,229,683	1,446,130,870	1,434,701,841
Internal services	192,214,746	200,508,479	199,128,987	141,842,856	141,842,856	131,740,868	131,953,797
Total	3,037,615,395	3,461,924,485	3,610,486,746	1,827,072,539	1,827,072,539	1,577,871,738	1,566,655,638

- Forecast spending reflects the authorized funding levels to the end of the fiscal year (not necessarily forecast expenditures).
- Planned spending reflects funds already brought into the Department's reference levels as well as amounts to be authorized through the Estimates process as presented in the Department's Annual Reference Level Update. Planned spending has not been adjusted to include new information contained in Budget 2023. More information will be provided in the 2023–24 Supplementary Estimates, as applicable.

Please refer to the explanatory note under the Departmental spending 2020–21 to 2025–26 table for further details of financial trends.

Planned human resources

The following table shows information on human resources, in full-time equivalents (FTEs), for each of AAFC's core responsibilities and for its internal services for 2023–24 and the other relevant years.

Human resources planning summary for core responsibilities and internal services

Core responsibilities and internal services	2020–21 actual full-time equivalents	2021–22 actual full-time equivalents	2022–23 forecast full-time equivalents	2023–24 planned full-time equivalents	2024–25 planned full-time equivalents	2025–26 planned full-time equivalents
Domestic and International Markets	519	523	537	528	490	488
Science and Innovation	2,614	2,631	2,614	2,639	2,632	2,632
Sector Risk	438	442	413	420	413	413
Subtotal	3,571	3,596	3,564	3,587	3,535	3,533
Internal services	1,294	1,388	1,472	1,481	1,458	1,457
Total	4,865	4,984	5,036	5,068	4,993	4,990

Note: FTEs reflect only those funded through the Department's appropriated resources. For example, in 2021–22, in addition to the actual FTEs of 4,984, there were 46 FTEs employed by AAFC for research funded through collaborative agreements with industry partners and 466 FTEs were employed as students.

The increase in FTEs from 2020–21 to 2023–24 is due to staffing required to support service delivery improvements and modernization of agriculture science and technology initiatives; the Food Policy for Canada, as announced in Budget 2019; new programs to support dairy, poultry, and egg supply-managed producers and processors; the renewal of the Agricultural Clean Technology Program and the new Agricultural Climate Solutions Programs under the Emissions Reductions Plan; the Wine Sector Support Program; as well as the African Swine Fever Industry Preparedness Program.

This is offset by the expiry of the current Dairy Direct Payment Program at the end of 2022–23. Although the new five-year Sustainable CAP funding authorities were not yet approved at the time of publishing the Departmental Plan, it is anticipated that FTEs will remain consistent with the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

Finally the decrease in FTEs starting in 2024–25 is due to the expiry of the Food Policy Initiatives (Local Food Infrastructure Fund and Food Waste Reduction Challenge); the On-Farm Climate Action Fund stream of the Agricultural Climate Solutions Program; the Wine Sector Support Program; and the African Swine Fever Industry Preparedness Program at the end of 2023–24.

Estimates by vote

Information on AAFC’s organizational appropriations is available in the [2023–24 Main Estimates](#)⁹⁴.

Future-oriented condensed statement of operations

The future-oriented condensed statement of operations provides an overview of AAFC’s operations for 2022–23 to 2023–24.

The forecast and planned amounts in this statement of operations were prepared on an accrual basis. The forecast and planned amounts presented in other sections of the Departmental Plan were prepared on an expenditure basis. Amounts may therefore differ.

A more detailed [future-oriented statement of operations](#)⁹⁵ and associated notes, including a reconciliation of the net cost of operations with the requested authorities, is available on AAFC’s website.

Future-oriented condensed statement of operations for the year ending March 31, 2024 (dollars)

Financial information	2022–23 forecast results	2023–24 planned results	Difference (2023–24 planned results minus 2022–23 forecast results)
Total expenses	3,221,982,071	2,829,225,050	(392,757,021)
Total revenues	62,229,750	63,751,112	1,521,362
Net cost of operations before government funding and transfers	3,159,752,321	2,765,473,938	(394,278,383)

The net cost of AAFC’s operations is projected to be \$2.8 billion in 2023–24, an expected decrease of \$394.3 million compared to 2022–23 forecast results. The decrease is primarily attributed to the funding authorities for the new five-year Sustainable CAP, which were not yet approved at the time of publishing the Statement, and lower authorized funding levels in Business Risk Management programs, which are demand-driven statutory programs.

Total expenses are projected to be \$2.8 billion in 2023–24. The majority of these expenses are in the form of transfer payments in Domestic and International Markets (43.1% or \$1.2 billion). Other expenses include \$780.6 million (27.6% of total expenses) in Sector Risk, \$572.6 million (20.2% of total expenses) in Science and Innovation, and \$256.4 million (9.1% of total expenses) in internal services.

Total revenues projected are relatively stable with \$63.7 million in 2023–24, compared to the forecast of \$62.2 million in 2022–23.

Corporate information

Organizational profile

Appropriate minister: The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau

Institutional head: Chris Forbes, Deputy Minister

Ministerial portfolio: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)

Enabling instruments: *Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food Act (R.S.C. 1985, c.A-9)*⁹⁶

Year of incorporation / commencement: 1994

Raison d'être, mandate and role: who we are and what we do

Information on AAFC's [raison d'être, mandate and role](#)⁹⁷ is available on the Department's website.

Information on AAFC's mandate letter commitments is available in the Minister's [mandate letter](#)⁹⁸.

Operating context

Information on the [operating context](#)⁹⁹ is available on AAFC's website.

Reporting framework

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada’s approved departmental results framework and program inventory for 2023–24 are as follows.

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD CANADA DEPARTMENTAL RESULTS FRAMEWORK							
Core Responsibilities	DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL MARKETS AAFC provides programs and services and works in collaboration with the sector to support its competitiveness at home and abroad. AAFC also works to increase opportunities for the sector to export its products by maintaining and expanding market access and advancing agricultural interests internationally.		SCIENCE AND INNOVATION AAFC conducts scientific research, develops new knowledge and new technologies, and transfers the results to the agriculture and agri-food sector. AAFC also works with industry and other partners to strengthen the sector’s capacity to develop and adopt innovative practices, products and processes.		SECTOR RISK AAFC provides tools to mitigate the financial impact of risks beyond producers’ control that threaten the viability of their operation. AAFC also works with the sector to ensure that systems, standards, and tools are developed to support its ability to prevent and control risks and address market demands.		INTERNAL SERVICES
Results	The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector contributes to growing the economy	Access to international markets is increased by resolving or mitigating market barriers and advancing trade positions	The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector knowledge base is increased through AAFC supported scientific and innovative research	The Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector is effective in transforming ideas into new products, processes, or practices	The agricultural sector is financially resilient	The agriculture and agri-food sector is equipped with assurance systems and supporting tools	
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage change in the economic performance of the agriculture and agri-food sector Percentage change in agri-food products sold Value of agriculture and agri-food exports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which AAFC advances the resolution or the mitigation of market access barriers, World Trade Organization disputes, and technical trade issues Degree to which AAFC advances trade policy through negotiations, agreements, and discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of AAFC scientific publications produced through collaboration Number of citations as a proportion of AAFC scientific publications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of new technologies, products, practices, processes, or systems that are available for transfer to the sector Percentage of revenues generated on farms adopting innovative practices Percentage of processors developing and/or introducing innovations Index of Agri-Environmental Sustainability (water, soil, air quality, biodiversity) Percentage change in the productivity of the agri-food sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sector’s income as a proportion of historical income Percentage of financially healthy farms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of implementation plans for assurance projects reported to be functioning 	

AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD CANADA PROGRAM INVENTORY (2023–24)

	DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL MARKETS	SCIENCE AND INNOVATION	SECTOR RISK	INTERNAL SERVICES
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trade and Market Expansion Sector Engagement and Development Farm Products Council of Canada Supply Management Initiatives Canadian Pari-Mutuel Agency Food Policy Initiatives Water Infrastructure Divestiture Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Cost-shared Markets and Trade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundational Science and Research AgriScience AgriInnovate Environment and Climate Change Programs Canadian Agricultural Strategic Priorities Program Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Cost-shared Science, Research, Innovation and Environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AgriStability AgriInsurance AgriRisk AgriInvest AgriRecovery Loan Guarantee Programs Farm Debt Mediation Service Pest Management Assurance Program Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Cost-shared Assurance Return of Payments African Swine Fever Response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management and Oversight Services Communication Services Legal Services Human Resources Management Services Financial Management Services Information Management Services Information Technology Services Real Property Services Material Services Acquisition Services

Changes to the approved reporting framework since 2022–23

Structure	2023–24	2022–23	Change	Reason for change
CORE RESPONSIBILITY	Domestic and International Markets	Domestic and International Markets	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Trade and Market Expansion	Trade and Market Expansion	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Sector Engagement and Development	Sector Engagement and Development	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Farm Products Council of Canada	Farm Products Council of Canada	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Supply Management Initiatives	Supply Management Initiatives	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Canadian Pari-Mutuel Agency	Canadian Pari-Mutuel Agency	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Food Policy Initiatives	Food Policy Initiatives	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Water Infrastructure Divestiture	Not applicable	New program	Note 1
PROGRAM	Federal, Provincial and Territorial Cost-Shared Markets and Trade	Federal, Provincial and Territorial Cost-Shared Markets and Trade	No change	Not applicable
CORE RESPONSIBILITY	Science and Innovation	Science and Innovation	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Foundational Science and Research	Foundational Science and Research	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	AgriScience	AgriScience	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	AgriInnovate	AgriInnovate	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Environment and Climate Change Programs	Environment and Climate Change Programs	No change	Not applicable

Structure	2023–24	2022–23	Change	Reason for change
PROGRAM	Canadian Agricultural Strategic Priorities Program	Canadian Agricultural Strategic Priorities Program	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Federal, Provincial and Territorial Cost-Shared Science, Research, Innovation and Environment	Federal, Provincial and Territorial Cost-Shared Science, Research, Innovation and Environment	No change	Not applicable
CORE RESPONSIBILITY	Sector Risk	Sector Risk	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	AgriStability	AgriStability	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	AgriInsurance	AgriInsurance	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	AgriRisk	AgriRisk	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	AgriInvest	AgriInvest	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	AgriRecovery	AgriRecovery	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Loan Guarantees Program	Loan Guarantees Program	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Farm Debt Mediation Service	Farm Debt Mediation Service	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Pest Management	Pest Management	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Assurance Program	Assurance Program	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Federal, Provincial and Territorial Cost-Shared Assurance	Federal, Provincial and Territorial Cost-Shared Assurance	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	Return of Payments	Return of Payments	No change	Not applicable
PROGRAM	African Swine Fever Response	Not applicable	New program	Note 2

Note 1: New Program created as per TB submission, “Funding for the Transfer of Federal Water Infrastructure in Saskatchewan.”

Note 2: New Program created as per TB submission, “Funding to support preparedness, prevention and trade continuity in response to African Swine Fever.”

Supporting information on the program inventory

Supporting information on planned expenditures, human resources, and results related to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada’s program inventory is available on [GC InfoBase](#)¹⁰⁰.

Supplementary information tables

The following supplementary information tables are available on Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada’s website:

- [Details on transfer payment programs](#)¹⁰¹
- [Gender-based analysis plus](#)¹⁰²
- [United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals](#)¹⁰³

Federal tax expenditures

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada’s Departmental Plan does not include information on tax expenditures.

Tax expenditures are the responsibility of the Minister of Finance. The Department of Finance Canada publishes cost estimates and projections for government-wide tax expenditures each year in the [Report on Federal Tax Expenditures](#)¹⁰⁴. This report provides detailed information on tax expenditures, including objectives, historical background and references to related federal spending programs, as well as evaluations, research papers and gender-based analysis plus.

Organizational contact information

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K1A 0C5

Telephone: 1-855-773-0241**TTY:** 613-773-2600**Fax:** 613-773-1081**Email:** aafc.info.aac@agr.gc.ca**Website:** agriculture.canada.ca

Appendix: definitions

appropriation

Any authority of Parliament to pay money out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

budgetary expenditures

Operating and capital expenditures; transfer payments to other levels of government, organizations or individuals; and payments to Crown corporations.

core responsibility

An enduring function or role performed by a department. The intentions of the department with respect to a core responsibility are reflected in one or more related departmental results that the department seeks to contribute to or influence.

Departmental Plan

A document that sets out a department's priorities, programs, expected results and associated resource requirements, covering a three-year period beginning with the year indicated in the title of the report. Departmental Plans are tabled in Parliament each spring.

departmental result

A change that a department seeks to influence. A departmental result is often outside departments' immediate control, but it should be influenced by program-level outcomes.

departmental result indicator

A factor or variable that provides a valid and reliable means to measure or describe progress on a departmental result.

departmental results framework

A framework that consists of the department's core responsibilities, departmental results and departmental result indicators.

Departmental Results Report

A report on a department's actual performance in a fiscal year against its plans, priorities and expected results set out in its Departmental Plan for that year. Departmental Results Reports are usually tabled in Parliament each fall.

full-time equivalent

A measure of the extent to which an employee represents a full person-year charge against a departmental budget. Full-time equivalents are calculated as a ratio of assigned hours of work to scheduled hours of work. Scheduled hours of work are set out in collective agreements.

gender-based analysis plus (GBA Plus)

An analytical tool used to support the development of responsive and inclusive policies, programs and other initiatives. GBA Plus is a process for understanding who is impacted by the issue or opportunity being addressed by the initiative; identifying how the initiative could be tailored to meet diverse needs of the people most impacted; and anticipating and mitigating any barriers to accessing or benefitting from the initiative. GBA Plus is an intersectional analysis that goes beyond biological (sex) and socio-cultural (gender) differences to consider other factors, such as age, disability, education, ethnicity, economic status, geography, language, race, religion, and sexual orientation.

government-wide priorities

For the purpose of the 2023–24 Departmental Plan, government-wide priorities are the high-level themes outlining the Government’s agenda in the 2021 Speech from the Throne: building a healthier today and tomorrow; growing a more resilient economy; bolder climate action; fight harder for safer communities; standing up for diversity and inclusion; moving faster on the path to reconciliation and fighting for a secure, just, and equitable world.

high impact innovation

High impact innovation varies per organizational context. In some cases, it could mean trying something significantly new or different from the status quo. In other cases, it might mean making incremental improvements that relate to a high-spending area or addressing problems faced by a significant number of Canadians or public servants.

horizontal initiative

An initiative in which two or more federal organizations are given funding to pursue a shared outcome, often linked to a government priority.

non-budgetary expenditures

Net outlays and receipts related to loans, investments and advances, which change the composition of the financial assets of the Government of Canada.

performance

What an organization did with its resources to achieve its results, how well those results compare to what the organization intended to achieve, and how well lessons learned have been identified.

plan

The articulation of strategic choices, which provides information on how an organization intends to achieve its priorities and associated results. Generally, a plan will explain the logic behind the strategies chosen and tend to focus on actions that lead up to the expected result.

planned spending

For Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports, planned spending refers to those amounts presented in the Main Estimates. A department is expected to be aware of the authorities that it has sought and received. The determination of planned spending is a departmental responsibility, and departments must be able to defend the expenditure and accrual numbers presented in their Departmental Plans and Departmental Results Reports.

program

Individual or groups of services, activities or combinations thereof that are managed together within a department and that focus on a specific set of outputs, outcomes or service levels.

program inventory

An inventory of a department's programs that describes how resources are organized to carry out the department's core responsibilities and achieve its planned results.

result

An external consequence attributed, in part, to an organization, policy, program or initiative. Results are not within the control of a single organization, policy, program or initiative; instead, they are within the area of the organization's influence.

statutory expenditures

Expenditures that Parliament has approved through legislation other than appropriation acts. The legislation sets out the purpose of the expenditures and the terms and conditions under which they may be made.

target

A measurable performance or success level that an organization, program or initiative plans to achieve within a specified time period. Targets can be either quantitative or qualitative.

voted expenditures

Expenditures that Parliament approves annually through an Appropriation Act. The vote wording becomes the governing conditions under which these expenditures may be made.

Endnotes

- 1 Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership: <https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/department/initiatives/sustainable-canadian-agricultural-partnership>
- 2 Canadian Agricultural Partnership: <https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/about-our-department/key-departmental-initiatives/canadian-agricultural-partnership>
- 3 Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food mandate letter: <https://pm.gc.ca/en/mandate-letters/2021/12/16/minister-agriculture-and-agri-food-mandate-letter>
- 4 Agricultural Climate Solutions Program: <https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/agriculture-and-environment/agricultural-climate-solutions>
- 5 Agricultural Clean Technology Program: <https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/agricultural-programs-and-services/agricultural-clean-technology-program-adoption-stream>
- 6 Sustainable Agriculture Strategy: <https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/environment/sustainable-agriculture-strategy>
- 7 Strategic Plan for Science: <https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/science/scientific-research-and-collaboration-agriculture/agriculture-and-agri-food-canadas-strategic-plan-science>
- 8 Business Risk Management programs: <https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/agricultural-programs-and-services/business-risk-management-programs>
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