

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Canada and Ontario Take Steps to Further Protect Farm Workers
Funding will help enhance health and safety measures
during COVID-19

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WOODSTOCK — The governments of Canada and Ontario are investing up to \$2.25 million to help farmers better protect employees and ensure the continued supply of healthy food products for consumers during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (the Partnership), the federal and provincial governments are launching the second intake of the Agri-food Workplace Protection Program to help farmers enhance health and safety measures to prevent the spread of the virus. The funding will be used for initiatives like purchasing personal protective equipment, enhanced cleaning and disinfection, and redesigning workstations.

Support is also available for farmers who experience unexpected costs for housing and transportation as a result of a COVID-19 outbreak among on-farm employees.

"We care deeply about the well being of farmers and are supporting the investments already being made on farms to keep employees safe," said the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. "This additional support will help Ontario farmers quickly adopt new on-farm measures and practices that follow the best public health guidance, so they can continue to focus on their critical work of feeding Canadians."

"Our farmers and their hard-working employees play a critical role in keeping our food supply chain strong, providing us with fresh, high-quality and nutritious food," said Ernie Hardeman, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. "Today's announcement is an important step in keeping our essential workers healthy and safe during the COVID-19 outbreak and beyond."

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) is now accepting applications and will expedite the approval process to help support workplace health and safety in the agri-food sector. Eligible applications will be received and assessed on a continuous basis, while funding is available.

Today's announcement is in addition to the [\\$2.25 million investment announced last week](#) to help provincially-licensed meat processors implement COVID-19 health and safety measures.

The Agri-food Workplace Protection Program builds on previous actions taken by the federal and provincial government to support the agri-food sector. This includes \$1 million to help Ontario farmers, food processors and other agri-food supply chain partners address labour shortages, as well as \$2.5 million to improve e-business opportunities for Ontario's agri-food sector.

Since June 2018, both the federal and provincial governments have committed support to approximately 2,500 projects through the Partnership to help eligible Ontario farmers, processors, businesses and sector organizations innovate and grow.

QUICK FACTS

More information about this targeted intake and other cost-share funding opportunities can be found online at:

<http://omafra.gov.on.ca/english/cap/index.htm> or by calling 1-877-424-1300.

OMAFRA delivers cost-share funding for the Agri-food Workplace and Protection Program. The Partnership is a five-year, \$3-billion commitment by Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments to support Canada's agri-food and agri-products sectors.

The Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development recently released [safety guidelines for employers](#) to help protect workers, customers, and the general public from COVID-19.

Health and Safety inspectors are now working with employers in the agri-food sector to help ensure the safety of employees, including temporary foreign workers.

The [Canadian Food Inspection Agency](#) provides information on COVID-19 for industry.

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