

PROGRAM UPDATE: COVID-19 FUNDING NOW AVAILABLE FOR BC FARMERS

In response to the COVID-19 situation and the increased need for safety precautions for the agri-food sector, the **On-Farm Food Safety Program (OFFS)** is offering COVID-19 funding for **April 2020 - March 2021**. Eligible companies can seek funding to acquire Personal Protective Equipment and other approved safety supplies for use at their facilities, in order to maintain a safe workplace and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19.

Program Eligibility

As per the standard program guidelines, eligible participants must be either federally or provincially registered businesses with an active GST number and must be based and operating out of British Columbia. The applicant must operate agri-businesses that handle food for human consumption and can be located on a farm premise. With applications for Personal Protective Equipment funding only, the mandatory Gap Assessment requirement is waived.

This list includes:

- Farmers/growers producing crops for human consumption.
- Producers/ranchers raising animals for human consumption.
- Packers or co-packers that handle food for human consumption.
- Eligible organizations are On-Farm facilities prior to basic washing, grading and packaging.

Funding Structure

Using the existing program funding structure, OFFS will reimburse 70% of the cost of funding up to \$7,500 for approved activities under **Food Safety Improvement COVID-19**.

Eligible Activities

Under the terms of the program, the regular or incremental “cost-of-doing-business” are not supported while “one-time” costs to support the initiation of new ‘good practice’ or processes are eligible. Considering the heightened urgency of the situation, the program will extend funding for critical supplies that relates to mitigating COVID-19 in an operation to meet Health Canada and/or Canadian Food Inspection Agency policies or guidelines regarding COVID-19 expectations for the agri-food sector. Applications for PPE funding only will have the mandatory Gap Assessment waived. **Eligible expenses may include and are not limited to:** Disposable gloves, Face masks/shields, Lab coats (re-usable), Body temperature remote sensors, thermometers and cameras, etc.

The request for supplies must be accompanied by a suitable justification and meet Health Canada and/or other recognized guidelines. Applicants must also declare any other support received to ensure there is no duplication of funding. The COVID-19 related expenses are only eligible for the 2020- 2021 funding year.

How to get started

For new applicants – complete the Part A Application and select ‘Yes’ to the question ‘Is this application for special PPE funding to address COVID-19 related food safety standards?’

For existing participants in the program, log into your www.myonfarmprofile.com and request an amendment to your existing workplan.