PROGRAM GUIDES

MAPLE PRODUCTION IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE

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Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

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Not Accepting Applications

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PROGRAM AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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View Program Online →

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

To support maple syrup producer productivity, efficiency and growth in Ontario, through funding for equipment and woodlot management.

INTAKE DATES

INTAKE	INTAKE DATES	ELIGIBLE PROJECT START DATE (INVOICE DATE)	ELIGIBLE PROJECT COMPLETION DATE	CLAIM DEADLINE	PREVIOUS INTAKE GUIDE
1	Intake opened: November 9, 2023, 9 AM, ET. Due to high demand, this Initiative is now fully subscribed and applications are no longer being accepted.	April 1, 2023*	March 1, 2024, for costs incurred on or before February 29, 2024 November 29, 2024, for costs incurred March 1 – November 29, 2024	March 1, 2024, for costs incurred on or before February 29, 2024 November 29, 2024, for costs incurred March 1 – November 29, 2024	

* All project costs must be incurred, invoiced, and paid for by the approved farm business within the eligible project start and completion dates for the application intake a project is approved in. Costs incurred, invoiced and/or paid for outside of these dates will not be eligible for cost-share.

COST SHARE SUMMARY

50% cost-share funding up to a maximum of $20,000 per project

PROGRAM DETAILS

Who is Eligible to Apply?

To be eligible, an applicant must:

1. Be a Maple Syrup Producer in Ontario with a minimum of 1,000 taps as of April 1, 2023

2. Have a valid **Farm Business Registration Number (FBRN)** *For information on registering a farm business and/or a religious exemption, visit Overview (agricorp.com).*

   OR

   Have a Religious Exemption Letter provided by the OMAFRA Appeal Tribunal*

   OR

   Have a Cultural Exemption Letter provided by Indian Agricultural Program of Ontario to First Nations farmers, verifying the farm business operates in a First Nations community*

   OR

   Be enrolled in the **Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP)*** *For information on the MFTIP visit: https://www.ontario.ca/page/managed-forest-tax-incentive-program*

   OR

   Have **Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification*** *For information on FSC Forest Management Certification visit: https://ca.fsc.org/ca-en/get-certified/forest-management-certification*

   * Supporting documentation must be provided with your application submission
3. Have a valid **Premises Identification Number (PID)** *For information about the Provincial Premises Registry, what you need to register a premises, or how and when to update your PID, visit About the Provincial Premises Registry · REGISTRY (ontariopid.com)* for the property where the proposed project will be completed. Note that PID Numbers must be kept up to date. To update or obtain a PID Number, visit www.ontariopid.com or call 1-888-247-4999.
4. Have a business implementation plan that includes a cost of production spreadsheet if the business has **less than three (3) seasons' experience** collecting maple sap and processing syrup. The business plan must meet the program minimum requirements shown here.

   OR

   Have a business expansion plan that includes a cost of production spreadsheet if the business has **three (3) seasons' experience or more** collecting maple sap and processing syrup. The business plan must meet the program minimum requirements shown here.
5. Be in compliance with all requirements of the law and remain in compliance for the duration of the project.

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Eligible Activities and Costs

The following costs are eligible and can be incurred retroactive to April 1, 2023:

Purchase and installation of new or used equipment or technology from an equipment dealer or supplier, that increases productivity, efficiency, and growth:

        - Remote monitoring technology
        - Generators for remote operations operating off the electrical grid
        - Sap collection systems including: lateral lines and main lines and their required supporting structures, fittings/parts (couplings, Y-fittings, adapters, check valves, tees, spouts, yearly adapters, extractors/releasers, manifolds, moisture traps, hooks, hose clamps, wire ties, valves, tubing grips, plugs, disconnects, vacuum gauges)
        - Sap collection pumps (vacuum and transfer)
        - Sap coolers (e.g., temperature control tank, repurposed milk cooling equipment)
        - Reverse osmosis equipment
        - Evaporator and evaporator monitoring systems
        - Preheater attachments for evaporator
        - Steam hood for evaporator
        - Holding tanks for sap and permeate
        - Reverse flow mechanisms and pans
        - Sap/syrup processing pumps
        - Filter presses
        - Syrup bottling/packaging/labelling equipment
    - Rental of equipment necessary and directly related to installation of the above listed eligible equipment or technology
    - Planning for tubing systems conducted by third-party service providers (e.g., certified maple equipment dealer or independent maple consultant)

    Woodlot improvements conducted by a qualified third-party service provider (e.g., certified tree markers, registered professional forester), including:

- Tree marking
- Development of a forest plan (not including plans required for the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program)

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Ineligible Activities and Costs

The following activities and costs are ineligible:

- Costs related to normal, ongoing business operations and/or maintenance costs (e.g., filter papers, bottles, labels, etc.)
- Building improvements or modifications
- Ancillary equipment or facility modifications, including electrical or plumbing upgrades required for the operation of eligible equipment listed under Eligible Activities and Costs
- Activities that support the retail, marketing or tourism related aspects of a maple syrup operation
- Value-added processing equipment (e.g., maple butter or maple creamers, candy making equipment)
- Common items that can be used for multiple purposes (e.g., digital cameras, printers, shovels, computers, tablets, smartphones, measuring tapes, etc.)
- Refrigerators, walk-in coolers, freezers
- Costs associated with planting new trees
- Any activities related to plans required for the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program
- Establishing a water source (e.g., drilling a well, accessing a municipal water supply or irrigation pond)
- Any costs incurred, including taxes, for which the applicant has received, will receive or is eligible to receive, a rebate, credit or refund

- Equipment or technology that is not purchased from an equipment dealer or supplier (e.g., used equipment purchased from another maple producer)
- In-kind contributions
- Activities and expenditures as detailed in the section, Other Ineligible Costs and Activities.

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How Much Cost-Share Funding Is Available?

An applicant is eligible to receive 50% of approved, eligible project costs, up to a maximum of $20,000 in funding per application.

Note: An applicant can have a maximum of one (1) active application under the Maple Productivity Improvement Initiative at any given time. Upon completion of an approved project (e.g. claim submission and payment), or withdrawal of a submitted application, an applicant may submit a subsequent application.

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What Do I Need to Apply?

Applications are only accepted during the application intake.

Before you can apply, you need to visit osciaportal.org to create a user account. Once you have created a user account, if the intake is open, you will be able to enrol your business and apply.

All information listed under Documentation Required With the Application must be included with the application submission. Applications are evaluated based only on the information received and will not be considered if they do not meet the eligibility criteria or if they are incomplete.

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Documentation Required with the Application

- A Farm Business Registration Number (FBRN), or documentation that supports an eligible FBRN religious exemption or cultural exemption; or, documentation to show Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification, or enrolment in the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP), in the name of the applicant business.
- If the applicant business has less than three (3) seasons' experience collecting maple sap and processing syrup, **a business implementation plan** that includes a cost of production spreadsheet must be provided. Minimum requirements for the business plan are shown here.
- If the applicant business has three (3) seasons' experience or more collecting maple sap and processing syrup, **a business expansion plan** that includes a cost of production spreadsheet must be provided. Minimum requirements for the business plan are shown here.
- Quotes (or copies of invoices for costs incurred back to April 1, 2023) to support all proposed costs.

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How Do I Submit My Application?

The enrolment and application form, and all required documentation can be submitted electronically through osciaportal.org while the intake is open.

If the intake is not currently accepting applications, you may still visit osciaportal.org to create a user account and be ready for upcoming opportunities.

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Limits of the Cost-Share Funding

- Cost-share is available to approved projects that were initiated on or after April 1, 2023, and will be completed before November 29, 2024. Costs incurred, invoiced, and/or paid, including deposits, before April 1, 2023 or after November 29, 2024, are not eligible for cost-share.

- If the applicant initiates the project before receiving final approval from OSCIA, they do so at the risk of forfeiting the cost-share if all terms and conditions are not satisfied.

- OSCIA issues payments after projects have been completed and required claim documentation is received. The project must be paid for in full by the applicant prior to cost-share being issued.

- All invoices for the approved project must comply with the eligible invoice dates as outlined in a letter of approval issued by OSCIA for the proposed project. OSCIA cannot issue cost-share payments for incomplete or partially complete projects.

- If a project is approved with costs in two program years (e.g., costs before March 1, 2024, and costs after March 1, 2024), one (1) claim is required to be submitted in each program year that costs were proposed and a cost-share allocation approved. The claim submission deadlines for each program year are indicated above, and are shown on the approval or partial approval letter issued by OSCIA for the successful application.

- Applicants are responsible for securing all necessary approvals and permits for the proposed project before starting and complying with all applicable municipal bylaws and provincial or federal regulations. OSCIA may require copies of permits obtained for some projects before issuing cost-share payments.

- OSCIA reserves the right to require additional documentation and ultimately accept or reject submitted project invoices and proof of payment for cost-share consideration.

- Stacking of Sustainable CAP cost-share funding from one or more business and/or one or more sources of Sustainable CAP funding towards the same project is not permitted. Stacking with other programs outside of Sustainable CAP up to 100% of the project cost, is permitted if the other program allows stacking and at least 15% of the project costs come from non-government sources. All funding for a project from additional off-farm sources, excluding financing, must be listed on the claim form for an approved project.

- A cost-share allocation is based on the eligible project costs outlined on the approved Application Form. Accurate estimates to the best of the applicant’s ability must be reflected in the total project cost submitted on the Application Form. If final project costs exceed the original estimate or the scope of the project changes, there is no obligation by OSCIA to extend cost-share beyond the original allocation and/or project scope.

- All goods and services must be purchased from an entity that is at arm’s length from the farm business. An entity is considered arm’s length if they are not related, not affiliated persons or otherwise controlled by another member or members. Parent/child and siblings, through blood or marriage, or businesses owned by the same individual(s) are not considered arm’s length. Refer

to Section 251 of the Income Tax Act (Canada) for the additional detail on determining arm's length relationships.

- Projects that have received cost-share funding are routinely inspected. The decision to inspect may be based on project type, project value, or any other criteria selected by OSCIA. Projects may also be inspected randomly. Inspections are carried out before the claim is paid. Biosecurity protocols are followed by all representatives of OSCIA.

- Information presented is the best available at the current time. In the event of a conflict between anything set out in this program guide and/or any other program material and the Minister's Order, the Minister's Order will prevail. Errors and Omissions Excepted. Check with OSCIA for applicable updates. Material is subject to change without notice as the cost-share program evolves.

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Other Ineligible Costs and Activities

- Projects that promote Ontario products explicitly over those of another province or territory
- Costs related to Ontario government promotional campaigns or branding
- Projects that involve directly influencing or lobbying any level of government
- Projects that have the sole purpose of coming into or maintaining compliance with Requirements of the Law that pertain to current business operations
- Projects that support basic research (experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge without a commercial or other specific application in view)
- Any capital item that is funded by government sources at 75 per cent or more
- Any cost not set out as an Eligible Activity and Cost and not specifically required for the execution of a project
- Multipurpose items (e.g., small tools, computers or tablets, vehicles such as tractors, wagons, trailers, ATVs)
- Applicant's staff/ employee salary or wages

- Gifts and incentives
- Costs of sponsorship for conferences and learning events or initiatives
- Applicant’s costs of travel, hospitality, meals, and/or accommodations
- Permits and approvals
- Purchase or sale of land, buildings or facilities, and associated taxes or fees (e.g., land transfer tax)
- Lease of land, buildings, and facilities, or new building construction
- Extended warranties, taxes, legal fees, financing charges, loan interest payments, bank fees
- Materials or products produced by the applicant’s farm business
- Invoices not issued in the applicant’s name and/or payment not made by the approved applicant
- Materials or services purchased outside of the eligible invoice dates indicated in the application approval letter
- Any cost purchased from a supplier who is not at arm’s length from the applicant (i.e., businesses owned the same individual(s), or by siblings or parents, through blood or marriage)

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How Do I Submit a Claim?

If an application is approved for a cost-share allocation, written confirmation will be provided from OSCIA by email. This approval letter will confirm:

- Any costs from the application that were deemed ineligible
- Eligible invoice dates and project completion and claim submission deadlines
- Information required with the claim submission
- Links to the necessary documents (e.g., Claim Form, Electronic Funds Transfer Form, Claim Questionnaire, etc.)

- Information on how to submit the claim

  The project must be ***complete, operational, and fully paid for before a claim is submitted.*** As part of an eligible project, every claimed cost must be supported by an invoice in the name of the applicant business and one of the following proofs of payment:
- Copy of front and back of cancelled cheque
- Cash register receipt showing itemized purchase and payment received.
- Electronic image of processed cheque
- Statement from banking institution indicating to whom the processed cheque was written, or electronic payment made, and for what amount.
- Third-party confirmation (e.g., email confirmation) of an e-transfer/electronic payment that shows who paid, who was paid, how much was paid and the date the payment the transfer was successfully completed.
- Credit card or debit card receipt clearly identifying amount and to whom the payment was made. Credit card or debit card numbers and other information, including costs that are unrelated to the project, should be blacked out.

  Cash payments for project costs are strongly discouraged, as they may not meet requirements for proof of payment. If proof of payment by the applicant is not provided, OSCIA cannot support the cost.

  OSCIA may request any additional information from the applicant that OSCIA deems necessary (e.g., copies of any audit reports, plans or permits obtained by the applicant in conducting the project) to support their claim.

  Cost-share payments are made by electronic funds transfer (EFT) in the name of the legal business. All cost-share funding is considered income to the business for tax purposes. OSCIA will issue a tax form (AGR-1) and report the amount paid to the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA); this is why an applicant's Social Insurance Number (SIN) is collected if the applicant does not have a CRA Business Number. Only one claim can be submitted per project per program year, and only one payment will be made per claim.

  If you have any questions about project timelines, claim submission dates, or submitting a multi-year application, contact OSCIA at:
  s-cap@ontariosoilcrop.org.

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