

## APPENDIX 7 – CROP PEST RESPONSE FUND

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Alias: Fund 2015

### OVERVIEW

The Crop Pest Response Fund is a pilot program to support rapid response to crop-related pest and disease threats within Alberta. The program is to screen proposals and make available funds to address or minimize production risks. Approved projects should be relevant to administration of the *Alberta Agricultural Pests Act*, the *Alberta Weed Control Act*, and associated regulations.

For the purpose of this initiative, projects are to be related to agricultural or commercial horticultural production.

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*“Weeds function as an unseen tax on the crop harvest.”*

– Earl M. Hildebrand From ‘War on Weeds’, Science (19 Apr 1946), 103, No. 2677, 465.

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***Pest:*** a weed, disease, insect identified as noxious, prohibited or economically threatening affecting an agricultural or commercial horticulture crop.

For illustration of the intent of the program:

- Novel strains of clubroot disease in canola, which overcomes all current forms of resistance, highlight the vulnerability of crop production.
- Changing crop mixes and climate patterns increases the impact of *Fusarium* Head Blight (*Fusarium graminearum*) with severe impact on human consumption and livestock feeding products.
- Cereal leaf beetle infestations are increasing. Their impact on yield security is not yet known.
- Spotted Knapweed is expanding in Alberta and is known for degradation of large tracts of rangeland in the northwestern US and southern BC. Knapweed roots exude a chemical that inhibits the root growth of other plants.

Responding to these forms of threats relies on skilled people making quick and accurate decisions. Once a confirmed or potential outbreak is identified, it is quick response is essential to limit impact.

### PROGRAM FUNDING

As a trial program, this fund begins with \$500,000. Expenses for operations will come primarily from the fund, or drawn from Fund 2012 at ACIDF discretion. Projects are expected to typically be less than \$100,000 each, with approved amount at full discretion of the ACIDF Board.

## OBJECTIVES

The Fund provides financial support to eligible applicants to improve production security through pest and disease control and prevention, where enhanced pest response is required for regulated pests or new invasive crop pests are establishing or expanding in the province. Proposals may address any of:

- Establishing the presence and geographic distribution of new or novel plant pests
- Assist in the costs to develop a control strategy
- Support the implementation of an eradication plan
- Support the implementation of a control plan

*Crop Yield Security relates to production quantity, quality, and most importantly, consistency.*

## DECISION CRITERIA

Baseline information is contained in Appendix 1, and applies to all applications under this initiative.

Proposals will be prioritized when possible and selected to meet the following criteria:

- Clearly defined deliverables and identifiable benefit to one or more of Alberta's crop industry sectors.
- Identified priority to the industry or legislation with a measurable chance of success.
- Exemplify superior scientific design and delivery.
- Includes a well-designed team with appropriate qualifications and access to appropriate resources for the task.
- Reasonable cost-to-benefit ratio.
- Applicants show activities comply with all applicable laws including environmental and species-at-risk legislation.
- Detailed results reporting on the activity and its effectiveness

**Review Process** — This is a competitive process, detailed in Appendix 1 of this Business Plan. At the discretion of the ACIDF Board, an expert committee may be established to review proposals and make recommendations on approvals.

All Board decisions are final. There is no appeal process.

Granted funding will be subject to a significant holdback to ensure quality reporting.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Eligible Proposals under this initiative are activities relating to the Objectives above, that are expected to contribute to yield security crop industry in Alberta.

Eligible activities may include:

- Identifying the presence and geographic distribution of new, or emerging crop pests that are establishing or expanding within Alberta
- Developing pest control plans for new or emerging crop pests
- Implementation of pest control plans for new or emerging crop pests
- Implementation of pest eradication plans for new or emerging crop pests where appropriate.
- Extension activities may be eligible if the activity is part of a larger, qualifying proposal for this initiative

Ineligible activities include:

- Crop pest control, monitoring, eradication or extension activities involving pests that are not crop pests, or are not establishing or expanding their presence
- Regular, on-going pest control programs

## **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

This list supersedes that in Appendix 1. Eligible applicants are:

- Band (as defined in the *Indian Act*)
- Local Authority (as defined in the *Alberta Municipal Government Act*)
- Métis Settlement
- Not-For-Profit agriculture-based organization registered under a federal or provincial Act
- Post-secondary educational institution

## **ELIGIBLE COSTS**

This list is somewhat modified from that in Appendix 1. Eligible research costs can include:

- Cost of surveys to establish the presence and spread of new or emerging pests
- Cost to develop or test mitigation strategies
- Reasonable costs relating to informing producers or stakeholders of the activity, risks or process
- Costs of implementing eradication and/or control programs
- Costs of implementing programs to limit spread or impacts of new or emerging pests

Costs that are **not** eligible include:

- Current salaries of permanent employees
- Teaching component of researcher salaries
- Cost of land, buildings or roads.
- Cost of heat, light and utilities
- Consulting time from colleagues eligible to be part of the project team
- Costs incurred transferring portions of the grant to co-applicants or project partners.
- Scholarship and bursaries.
- Any overhead applied to portions of the grant transferred to co-applicants.
- Any cost incurred before March 1 2016.
- Marketing, sales development or promotion
- Refundable portions of expenses from other sources, including Goods and Services Tax (GST)

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## **SPECIFIC OUTCOME BASED PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR THE CROP PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE**

As this fund is designed to support novel and responsive proposals, ACIDF has no way of proactively searching out or initiating proposals. Setting numerical objectives is impractical.

ACIDF does agree to provide:

1. Detailed activity and financial reporting of the Fund
2. Stewardship of granted funds following the Investment Policy Statement established with the Ministry
3. Industry input and feedback on supported activities and their effectiveness
4. Statistical reporting on supported projects, funding, matching funding from industry and results from the activity.