

CALL FOR LETTERS OF INTENT

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND PRODUCTION ECONOMICS

The Beef Cattle Research Council (BCRC) invites letters of intent (LOI) for proposals focused on projects **related to knowledge and technology transfer and production economics** that support the sustainability and competitiveness of the Canadian beef industry.

The deadline to submit letters of intent is August 19, 2022 at 11:59 PM MT.

The purpose of this call for proposals is to address some of the greatest opportunities for improvement in beef and forage production in Canada. Applicants are encouraged to develop new, or enhance existing, resources and/or boost the adoption of cost-effective, sustainable production and management practices related to the identified problem statements.

Please refer to the problem statements listed on page 2 before deciding to submit an LOI. Only LOIs submitted to the BCRC that work toward addressing the listed problems will be reviewed by the BCRC. Applicants will be notified if they are invited to submit a full proposal.

Preference will be given to proposals that plan to:

- Utilize existing content, tools, methods, and other resources where possible, or modify or develop resources as appropriate to improve awareness, understanding and adoption
- Include economic analyses or other decision-making supports to help producers weigh the costs and benefits of adopting technologies or management practices and determine the impact on their operation
- Develop innovative web-based resources to be housed on www.BeefResearch.ca

Timelines

August 19, 2022 - deadline for submitting letters of intent

September 2022 - applicants will be notified if they have been invited to submit a full proposal

November 14, 2022 - deadline for submitting invited full proposals

December 2022 - applicants will be notified of the funding decision

Application Forms and Information

LOIs must be prepared using the file entitled 'BCRC Letter of Intent Form - Technology Transfer' provided by the BCRC and submitted electronically to proposals@beefresearch.ca. **The form, as well as instructions and guidelines for submission, can be downloaded from beefresearch.ca.**

Applied research activities and policy-related work are NOT eligible under this Call for Proposals. In these cases, refer to the Research Project Call for Proposals to be launched later in 2022.

Regional field days/workshops or other demonstration events will be considered if they are a necessary component of a larger comprehensive extension proposal focused on development and delivery of resources that are applicable over the long-term, curriculum development for recurring events, or as innovative pilot events.

Limitations

Projects may be up to two years in duration, with a maximum BCRC contribution of \$50,000 per project, regardless of project duration. The BCRC will provide a maximum of 50% of the project budget, but those projects where applicants demonstrate BCRC funds would be leveraged on a 1:2 or a 1:3 basis will be viewed more favorably.

A webinar will be hosted by the BCRC prior to the LOI submission deadline to provide further explanation, examples of projects, and opportunity for a Q&A session around the Target Outcomes for this call. [Subscribe to the BCRC Blog](#) to receive event details and a webinar link.

PROBLEM STATEMENTS

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND PRODUCTION ECONOMICS

Proposed project outputs and deliverables related to addressing one or more of the problems below must be clearly identified and defined. This may include development of content, tools, methods, or other resources.

Problem #1

Forage management is a critical aspect of beef production systems across the country. Tools available to producers are diverse and varied including rotational grazing and rejuvenation of older stands.

Rotational grazing is considered a beneficial management practice as it improves and maintains pasture productivity, soil health, and biodiversity through more intensive management than continuous, season-long grazing. According to the 2016 Census of Agriculture, only 43-58% of beef cattle producers across Canada had adopted the practice of rotational grazing.

In many cases, rejuvenation of older forage stands is necessary to improve productivity. The proportion of Canadian producers rejuvenating tame pastures every 1-5 years has decreased in recent years, and the proportion rejuvenating after 11 or more years has increased. In western Canada, the proportion who do not rejuvenate at all has increased to 33%.

Challenge Statement:

Increase the adoption of rotational grazing management practices and utilization of grazing plans among beef producers across Canada, including a focus on, but not limited to, forage species identification, balancing forage demand and supply, and rest and recovery, with plans optimized for regional variability and availability of infrastructure and labour. Emphasis should also include demonstrating effect on forage production, animal performance, and economic benefits.

Challenge Statement:

Improve the understanding of various forage rejuvenation techniques among beef cattle producers across Canada, including benefits, risks, associated costs, and potential return on investment, and develop resources to assist producers in determining when and how best to rejuvenate forage stands.

Problem #2

Reproductive failure in the cowherd is extremely costly for producers and is the most common reason associated with culling females from the breeding herd. Increasing the percentage of females that are cycling at the start of the breeding season and limiting the factors that interfere with conception or cause loss of the fetus are important management aspects for beef producers to focus on.

Challenge Statement:

Identify management practices that will economically optimize heifer and cow reproductive rates and develop resources to assist producers' evaluation of which of those practices to implement on their operation.

Problem #3

Canada's Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Beef Cattle is a guideline promoting sound management and welfare practices for housing, care and other animal husbandry practices. It is important that producers are aware of and understand the practices outlined in the Code to ensure that animal welfare standards and production practices are aligned with science and societal expectations.

Challenge Statement:

Enhance understanding of and compliance with the requirements and recommendations in the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Beef Cattle, which may include:

- ***avoiding and minimizing acute and chronic pain***
- ***minimizing stress during weaning***
- ***optimizing transportation decisions to prevent injury and stress***
- ***assisting in lameness diagnosis and treatment***
- ***using accurate assessments (e.g., decision tree to inform timely euthanasia decisions)***
- ***confirming death immediately after euthanasia***
- ***other topics addressed in the Code of Practice.***