



Supporting Research and Innovation in the Canadian Produce Industry

Goal

An enhanced research and innovation commitment to the fresh fruit and vegetable industry by the Government of Canada. Renewed efforts and commitment to identify, develop, evaluate and facilitate the adoption of new produce-related technologies and provide approval of new technologies for pest management, genetic and germplasm advancement, post-harvest and food safety related technologies, new growing environments, and others.

Action Needed

- Ensure agricultural research continues to be an important area of focus under the Next Agricultural Policy Framework with enhanced consultation and commitment to produce.
- Implement industry-requested and industry-responsive Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) reviews, providing access to new chemistry, and ensuring that new applicable chemistry is available to fruit and vegetable producers before current approvals are withdrawn.
- Support for innovation in fruit and vegetable production that safely decreases input costs, enhances the efficiency of production, improves growing capacity in harsher climates and improves yields.
- Ensure that companies of all sizes have access to the new technologies and equipment.
- Adopt an innovation and research mandate that aligns the Canadian produce industry's stated and emerging needs with Government of Canada targets, including such things as climate change adaptation, soil conservation, and water use efficiency, amongst others.
- Consistent consultation with industry on needs, as well as reporting on progress.

Impact

- A strong Canadian fruit and vegetable industry with a culture of innovation and access to new technologies that allow the industry to remain competitive in the global marketplace.

Background

- The fresh fruit and vegetable sector is built on innovation - from production all the way through to the delivery of fresh produce to Canadians at retail and food service operations.
- From the inputs to grow crops, how crops/fields are monitored and augmented, the transportation of produce, new product development, data sharing, produce identification and much more, all aspects of fresh produce depend on technology and innovation.
- The Government of Canada has a role in supporting research and innovation in the produce sector and beyond, through sound policies and programs to fund and support research both internal and external to government, and innovation in an ongoing, collaborative fashion.
- Expanding Canada's capacity for research and innovation is an important element of ensuring business competitiveness and industry growth into the future.
- Supporting innovation in the produce industry can enable social entrepreneurship in the sector that will reduce food insecurity and help bring cheaper, healthier food to all Canadians.
- Overly long or complex regulatory processes for approval of new technologies, such as those relating to pest management, can put Canadian industry at a competitive disadvantage.
- Research facility, staff and resource reductions combined with the long-term trend in the continuing loss of professional research and science capacity is a grave concern to the produce sector.

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