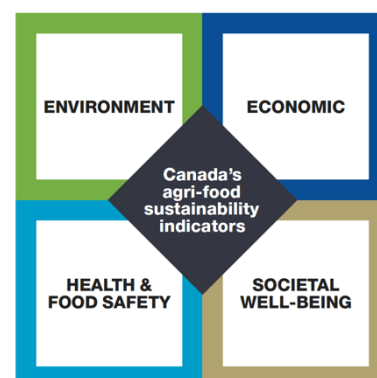


## Update on Progress to Develop the National Index on Agri-Food Performance

December 14, 2021

A diverse coalition of private and public partners (see p. 2) are working together to develop Canada's first agri-food sustainability index. The current phase of work occurring from October 2021 to May 2022 ("phase 2C") is on track and a summary is offered below (see also Figure on projects).

**Intent of phase:** The coalition's intent is to develop the National Index with relevant and credible indicators and metrics across the four sustainability blocks at right (on environment, health/food safety, economic, and societal well-being). Current work is also about demonstrating the utility and value of this Index in a series of policy and research papers. A synthesis (final) report on this phase will be produced in May 2022 (project 7).



This phase is about sufficiently advancing this work so to enable an Index pilot ("version 1.0") to be launched later in 2022. Ultimately, the aim is to attract even broader support and funding required to establish a proposed Centre for Agri-Food Benchmarking in 2023. This Centre would manage and evolve the Index (version 2.0) going forward. (The Business Case for the National Index, published in June 2021 and available on the coalition's website, elaborates on this matter.)

Project #:	Initial results for four cases	Ongoing outreach
Indicators, data & benchmarking	Policy & marketplace implications	Communications & engagement
1A – Case study: Environment	4 – Domestic & global policy ecosystem	7 – Synthesis (final) report
1B – Case study: Health & Food Safety	5 – Consumer Trust	8 – Outreach
1C – Case study: Economic	6 – ESG	9 – Website
1D – Case study: Societal Well-Being		
1E – Academic review		
2 – Data platform roadmap		
3A – Global organization review		
3B – Global verification roadmap		

*All underway*

*Launched: agrifoodindex.ca*

*About to lift off; refined terms of reference*

### Phase 2C:

- **Partners:** The coalition has grown from 44 to 70 partners since September, with more expected.
- **Website:** Coalition website launched: agrifoodindex.ca (project 9).
- **Working groups:** To enable all work, 12 partner working groups have been actively advancing most projects. Each group has two co-leads.
- **Developing the Index indicators: projects 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E & 3A**
  - Draft Index indicators have been developed by the partners in four cases on sustainability: environment (1A), health/food safety (1B), economic (1C), and societal well-being (1D).
  - Each case is guided by a partner working group. Partner and non-partner experts were invited into these discussions for specific subjects. As well, partner task groups enabled progress on specific environmental sub-indicators (1A): on pesticides, fertilizer and biodiversity.

- A few indicators remain in development: e.g., food waste/loss and plastic/packaging (both in 1A).
- Partners are now reviewing the initial outline of some 18 indicators and an associated 45 sub-indicators and over 100 related metrics. (Review deadline: January 19, 2022.)
- These cases will be concurrently reviewed by several Canadian academics (project 1E), thanks to the Deans Council, Agriculture, Food & Veterinary Medicine, a partner.
- The cases will be also reviewed by a consultant and feedback will be solicited from four global organizations involved in benchmarking and global agri-food goals (project 3A).
- **Meanwhile other projects are lifting off: 2, 3B, 4, 5, 6, 8**
  - Project 2 is exploring how consolidated metrics/indicators can be collected from across the country; it will generate a roadmap to consider how best to do so.
  - Project 3B is examining our process to credibly develop our work, including an outline of a roadmap to ultimately verify our approach globally by meeting global best practices (in phase 3).
  - Project 4 is considering how the Index can become an essential lens on domestic and global policy choices, such as for the federal-provincial CAP agreement, on innovation, and trade/market access.
  - Project 5 is looking to consumer trust research to inform Index development and how enhancing trust may shape how this Index is used.
  - Project 6 is assessing how investor driven ESG (environmental, social, governance) factors being deployed in capital markets can also shape the Index and inform investment practices and policy.
  - Project 8 is about outreach. Engaging key stakeholders in Canada and abroad is helping to build profile for Canada's National Index, build momentum and get input.



Alberta Agriculture, Forestry & Rural Economic Development

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs

Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation, Québec

Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada