PROGRAM GUIDES

HONEY BEE HEALTH INITIATIVE

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Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

Generated on November 4, 2026

Not Accepting Applications

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PROGRAM AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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View Program Online →

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

To help support beekeepers in maintaining healthy honey bee colonies as well as grow their number of colonies to increase the sustainability of the beekeeping industry in Ontario.

INTAKE DATES

INTAKE	INTAKE DATES	ELIGIBLE PROJECT START DATE (INVOICE DATE)	ELIGIBLE PROJECT COMPLETION DATE	CLAIM DEADLINE	PREVIOUS INTAKE GUIDE
1	Intake Opened: September 15, 2023 Intake Closed: April 12, 2024, 5 pm Intake reopens: June 3, 2024, 9 am ET Intake Closes: January 24, 2025, 5 pm	Date indicated in approval letter*	December 15, 2024 February 15, 2025	December 15, 2024 February 15, 2025	

*The eligible project **start date** is the date a written approval or partial approval letter is issued by OSCIA for each successful application, unless otherwise specified under Eligible Activities and Costs. Eligible costs can only be incurred, invoiced, and/or paid by the applicant on or after the **start date** specified on the approval or partial approval letter. Costs incurred, invoiced, and/or paid for outside of these dates will not be eligible for cost-share. The only exception are costs for new honey bee stock, where costs are eligible retroactive to April 1, 2023, for applications that were approved before May 1, 2024; and April 1, 2024, for applications approved after June 3, 2024.

COST SHARE SUMMARY

50% cost-share funding up to a maximum of $25,000 per registered commercial beekeeper and $4,500 per registered hobbyist beekeeper

PROGRAM DETAILS

Who is Eligible to Apply?

Ontario beekeepers holding a valid **certificate of registration** *To learn about first-time registration and registration renewal requirements for beekeepers in Ontario, visit Ontario beekeeper registration | ontario.ca* issued under the Ontario Bees Act .

To apply, applicants must:

- Have ten (10) or more colonies registered with the Provincial Apiarist for the current beekeeping season
- Have completed a pest management course related to honey bees, specific to Ontario, from a recognized institution within the last two years (e.g., the Ontario Beekeepers' Association's Technology Transfer Program) or have completed a diploma or degree in beekeeping from a recognized institution within the last five years (e.g., University of Guelph, Niagara College). Eligible courses can be found here.
- Be in compliance with all requirements of the law and must remain in compliance for the duration of the project; Applicants must be compliant with the Bees Act and Regulation 57 during the current and previous beekeeping season, including but not limited to, beekeeper and yard registration, reporting pests and disease, permits, location of honey bee colonies, no exposed honeycomb, or no referrals for further compliance action.

Visit Apiculture | ontario.ca to find information about honey bee health and beekeeping in Ontario, including information on regulations, registration, permits and resources.

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Eligible Activities and Costs

Operational improvements for the purpose of reducing biosecurity risks, overwinter loss and to manage or prevent the introduction and spread of honey bee pests and disease.

- Costs for hive health management practices:
    - Baseline laboratory testing at a recognized facility for disease (e.g., Nosema, tracheal mites) as part of a disease management plan
    - Testing (e.g., Pettis testing) at a recognized facility for determining varroa mite resistance to registered treatments

    - Field testing for hygienic behaviour or other beneficial traits in managed honey bees
- Purchase of new beekeeping equipment or modifications to existing hive management systems, for example:
    - Winter wraps
    - Indoor overwintering facilities
    - Queen banking overwintering facilities
- New construction of or modifications to a honey house, including the purchase of equipment (e.g., doors, windows, climate control systems) to make the honey house bee tight, improve biosecurity, improve cleaning and disinfecting practices and prevent robbing.
- Purchase of new, disease-free drawn foundation or frames to reduce biosecurity risks.
- Installing pest control devices or deterrents for named* pests such as small hive beetle traps or purchasing pest monitoring equipment such as diagnostic test kits, varroa mite shakers or a microscope for disease monitoring onsite.
- New construction of or modifications to freezing facilities, including the purchase of equipment for processing wax (e.g., wax moulds, wax spinners, bottlers) to mitigate the introduction, spread and impact of pests such as small hive beetle and wax moth.
- Honey extraction equipment to improve the timing of extraction and the storage of honey supers to help with cleanliness and avoid biosecurity risks.
- Establishing disease resistant, healthy honey bee colonies through the purchase of disease-free honey bee stock**, such as:
    - Hygienic/tracheal mite resistant queens and queen cells
    - Nucleus colonies, full size colonies and honey bee packages
    - Retroactive costs for replacement bee stock, including queens, may be eligible if incurred on or after April 1, 2024.

      ****Note**: For approved projects, **honey bee stock must be in your possession at the time of your claim**. Approved applicants are required to provide a valid Import Permit for stock purchased from vendors outside of Ontario, or a valid Seller's Permit or Queen and Nuc Permit from the vendor from whom the stock was purchased within Ontario, issued by the Provincial Apiarist, with their claim submission. To learn about permits and

requirements for selling honey bees and used beekeeping equipment in Ontario, click here.

- In-kind costs up to $2,000

*"named" means those diseases and pests listed in section 2 and 2.1, respectively, in Regulation 57 under the Ontario *Bees Act*.

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Ineligible Activities and Costs

- Bear fencing or demarcation of parts of the operation that are not subject to biosecurity measures or protocols
- Washers, dryers, furniture or equipment for transition areas that are not directly related to biosecurity
- Modifications related to increasing production, health and safety requirements or reasons not directly related to improving biosecurity
- Ongoing consumables (e.g., treatments, disposable coveralls, boot covers, gloves, masks, disinfectant, soap, bait, mouse guards), general clothing and equipment (e.g., coveralls, boots, buckets, brushes)
- Beekeeping supplies (e.g., beekeeping suits, smokers, new hive boxes or lids, honey creamers)
- Modifications and repairs as part of routine maintenance (e.g., replacing old surfaces with the same material; replacing/repairing doors; repairs to roof, exterior walls or foundation)
- Multipurpose items (e.g., small tools, computers or tablets, vehicles such as tractors, wagons, trailers, ATVs)
- Establishing a water source (e.g., drilling a well, accessing a municipal water supply or irrigation pond)
- Time to complete cleaning/disinfecting activities
- Training, materials and skills development projects that fulfill any academic requirements towards the completion of a professional certificate, diploma or degree program

- Professional services not directly related to the eligible activity
- Ongoing routine activities, such as:
    - Sampling and testing costs to maintain or monitor health status
    - Diagnostic and treatment costs (e.g., costs of medications, treatments, vaccinations, post-mortems)
    - Repeat services for the same hives
- Activities and expenditures as detailed in the section, Other Ineligible Costs and Activities.

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What You Need to Know About In-Kind Contributions

Reasonable hours of labour invested by the applicant, his/her dependents, and business partner(s) may be claimed as in-kind contributions for cost-share funding. Eligible in-kind contributions will be considered equivalent to cash payments for purchased goods and services. As such, the cost-share level and maximum funding level for the project category apply to eligible in-kind contributions.

Eligible in-kind contributions are invested in the project in the form of **unpaid** labour and/or use of equipment owned by the business (registered beekeeper) and may be claimed as follows:

- The maximum eligible labour rate is $25 per hour. OSCIA will make a final determination on what a reasonable number of hours claimed is based on the project and the nature of the work performed.
- The maximum eligible in-kind equipment rate for a tractor/truck is $75 per hour of operation. Applicable in-kind operator charges may be claimed along with the in-kind equipment rate, at up to the accepted maximum hourly labour rate.
- Applicants can claim up to $2,000 in eligible in-kind contributions per claim; the maximum cost-share payment for in-kind labour and equipment per claim is $1,000.

Examples of **eligible** in-kind contributions:

- Applicant assembling replacement frames

- Applicant labour to make modifications to a honey house for improved biosecurity
- Applicant/business partner installing winter wraps
- Applicant's truck to pick up extraction equipment (in place of shipping costs)

Examples of **ineligible** in-kind contributions:

- Staff or employee time
- Time invested for education, project planning, supervision, or administration
- Use of equipment purchased as part of an approved application
- Equipment costs for use of hand power tools

If an applicant plans to claim in-kind contributions, accurate estimates to the best of their ability should be reflected in the project costs submitted with the application.

Claims for in-kind contributions must be supported by an In-Kind Claim Declaration Form, which details specific hours worked, who performed the work, dates the work was performed, and the hourly rate(s) charged.

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How Much Cost-Share Funding Is Available?

50% of approved project costs, up to a maximum of $25,000 per registered commercial beekeeper, and $4,500 per registered hobbyist beekeeper

- Commercial beekeepers are those with 50 or more hives as of the date of their first approved application to the intake.
- Hobbyist beekeepers are those with less than 50 hives as of the date of the first approved application to this intake.

Funding caps are inclusive of all applications approved since the intake opened, September 15, 2023. There is no limit to the number of applications an eligible beekeeper may submit to the intake. Eligible applications are approved on a continuous basis while funds remain available.

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What Do I Need to Apply?

Applications are evaluated based only on the information submitted and will not be considered if they do not meet the eligibility criteria or if they are incomplete.

Be sure to carefully review the Honey Bee Health Initiative program details in entirety. Before you can apply, you will need to visit osciaportal.org and create a user account. Once you have created a user account, if the intake is open, you will be able to enrol and submit an application.

You must include all of the information listed under Documentation Required With the Application with your application submission. If documentation is not received with the submission, the application may be considered incomplete and will not be assessed.

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Documentation Required with the Application

- Valid certificate of registration issued under the Bees Act (in the name of the applicant)
- Proof of having completed a pest management course related to honey bees and specific to Ontario within the last two (2) years; or proof of completing a diploma or degree in beekeeping within the last five (5) years from a recognized institution
- Quotes or proposals for all proposed activities to support costs

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How Do I Submit My Application?

Applications are only accepted during application intakes, which can be found above.

The **Honey Bee Health Initiative** Enrolment and Application Form, and all required documentation can be submitted electronically through the osciaportal.org:

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

- 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.
- The eligible **start date** for your project is the date specified on the approval or partial approval letter issued by OSCIA for each successful application. Projects cannot be started before that date. Eligible costs can only be incurred, invoiced, and/or paid by the applicant on or after the date specified on the approval or partial approval letter. The only exception are costs for the purchase of new bee stock, where costs may be eligible retroactive to April 1, 2023.
- Deposits that are fully refundable, made by the applicant before the eligible start date to secure goods or services needed to complete the project, with the balance payable after the eligible project start date, may be eligible. The claimed invoice must be dated within the eligible timelines indicated in the approval or partial approval letter and must not indicate the deposit as non-refundable. If the invoice does not clearly indicate the payment as a deposit, or if the deposit is non-refundable, the amount is ineligible for cost-share. Any deposit or payment made prior to April 1, 2023, is not eligible under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) program.
- 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 (e.g. the AgriRecovery initiative through Sustainable CAP), 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 and quotes are required to support all proposed project costs. 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.

- Facilities developed with cost-share funding may not be used for anything other than the purpose set out in the application.

- 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
- Normal operating costs associated with conducting or expanding a business's current operations, including annual service fees of any type
- Any cost that is eligible for a rebate, credit, or refund (e.g., a refundable portion of the Harmonized Sales Tax)
- Gifts and incentives
- Costs of sponsorship for conferences and learning events or initiatives
- 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, unless specified as an Eligible Activity and Cost
- 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
- 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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