



## NEWS RELEASE

### New 5<sup>th</sup> edition Environmental Farm Plan helps Ontario farmers build future-ready, sustainable farms

**July 2, 2025, Guelph, Ontario** – A new 5<sup>th</sup> edition Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) will be available to Ontario farmers starting July 14, 2025. The updated edition reflects current regulatory requirements and latest science on best management practices, includes links to new tools and new areas of focus like biodiversity and farming in a changing climate.

The EFP is a confidential and voluntary environmental risk assessment tool that helps the owners of all types of farms—large or small—take a whole-farm view and identify incremental improvements that support long-term sustainability, profitability and productivity. There is no cost to farmers to participate. Since its first edition was published in 1993, the EFP program has helped farmers develop comprehensive plans for their lands to help them achieve their goals as good stewards of the land.

“Our government is proud to support the development of the newly updated Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Workbook which helps farmers identify and apply the latest farm management practices to improve productivity, protect the environment, and strengthen the long-term success of Ontario’s agriculture,” said Trevor Jones, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness. “The EFP is an important tool to assess, enhance and protect the environmental sustainability of Ontario farmlands and provides valuable information and guidance to Ontario farmers.”

Development of the 5<sup>th</sup> edition relied on technical expertise from staff at the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA) and other provincial ministries and federal departments and has been supported by the farm organizations that originally launched EFP as co-chairs of the former Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition (OFEC). These founding leaders — Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, Farm & Food Care Ontario, and the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association — remain committed to the EFP’s fundamental principle of helping farmers adopt innovative and sustainable best management practices.

“We encourage all farmers to complete the updated edition. An EFP provides farmers with the opportunity to assess their farm’s environmental impact using new tools that ultimately improve long-term productivity, profitability and sustainability,” says Melanie Hunter, Field Services Manager,

OSCIA. “Even if a farmer has completed an EFP before, updating it ensures decisions are based on current operations and environmental conditions.”

The EFP consists of two parts: a confidential self-assessment of the farm operation and a farm-specific action plan. Through this process, farmers highlight their farm’s environmental strengths, identify areas of concern, and develop realistic action plans with timelines to improve environmental conditions. Funding programs may be available to assist farmers in implementing improvements identified in their EFP action plan.

“An EFP helps farmers adapt to changing environmental conditions and plan for the long-term success of their farms,” says Hunter. “But attending a workshop or webinar and completing an EFP are first steps—once a farmer begins implementing best management practices, we recommend they also explore cost-sharing programs to help offset implementation costs.”

Farmers can complete an EFP, using the new 5<sup>th</sup> edition workbook, in one of three ways:

- In-person: Attend a two-day workshop led by knowledgeable OSCIA staff, with opportunities to network with fellow farmers.
- Virtual sessions: Participate in two, two-hour online interactive webinars delivered by OSCIA staff.
- Electronic EFP (eEFP): Renew a previously-verified 4<sup>th</sup> edition EFP independently online.

For more information on the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the EFP, or to find available workshops and webinars, visit the [EFP webpage](#). A [frequently-asked-questions](#) resource is also available outlining the key updates, cost-share eligibility and more.

*The 5<sup>th</sup> edition EFP is funded through the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP), a 5-year (2023-2028), \$3.5-billion investment by federal-provincial and territorial governments to strengthen competitiveness, innovation, and resiliency of Canada’s agriculture, agri- food and agri-based products sector. This includes \$1 billion in federal programs and activities and \$2.5 billion in cost-shared programs and activities by federal, provincial and territorial governments.*

Completion of an EFP may be an eligibility requirement for accessing different cost-share funding opportunities, with EFP requirements varying by program. While farmers are encouraged to update their farm’s plan to the new 5<sup>th</sup> edition EFP as soon as possible to learn about the latest practices, the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness will continue to accept completed 4<sup>th</sup> edition EFP as part of eligibility requirements for stewardship programming for the remainder of the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership until March 2028.

## QUOTES FROM PARTNERS

*“Collaboration is the foundation of the EFP’s success. The CFFO is proud to support the EFP, which reflects our commitment to voluntary on-farm stewardship. With this important update, the EFP will help farmers address the environmental stewardship challenges facing agriculture today and tomorrow.”* — Henk Vaarkamp, President, CFFO

*“The EFP program is such an Ontario agriculture success story and is one that Farm & Food Care Ontario promotes often in our public outreach work. The EFP isn’t just a plan; it’s a commitment by farmers to continuous improvement and a testament to their dedication to responsible food production.”* — Janelle Cardiff, Chair, FFCO

*“Ontario farmers have a long-standing commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability. The updated EFP provides farmers the tools and insights they need to strengthen environmental practices, adapt to climate change, and build more resilient farms for future generations. The OFA is proud to support the EFP and the valuable collaboration that continues to drive positive change across our industry.”* — Drew Spoelstra, President, OFA

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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