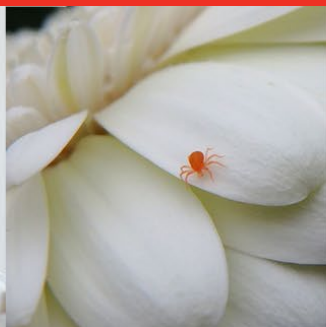




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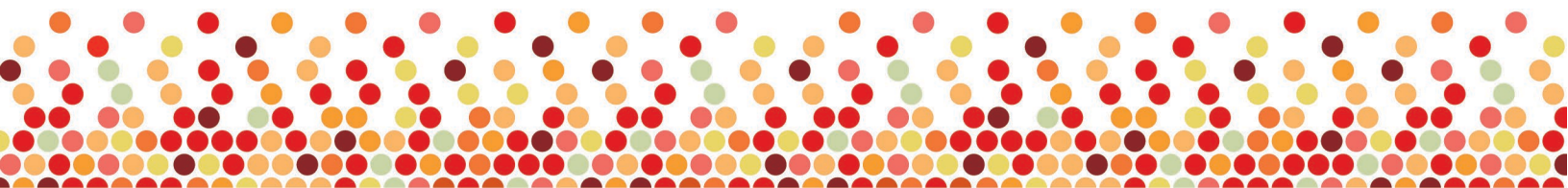
Emergent Horticulture Opportunities Fund (EHOF)

February 2024



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1 Description of the Emergent Horticulture Opportunities Fund

1.1 About the Fund

In Vineland Research and Innovation Centre's (Vineland) Sustainable Agricultural Partnership Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) with the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Vineland is committed to 1) coordinating input from the industry to establish research priorities and 2) ensuring that research priorities are relevant to stakeholders and that it addresses real-world problems and opportunities.

Vineland is also committed to creating a fund to support small projects for emerging needs for alternative horticultural sectors. The Emergent Horticulture Opportunities Fund (EHOF) has a target audience of growers, associations and other related industry members producing specialty crops. The specialty crops sector consists of over 100 different commodities that are typically grown on small acreages in Ontario¹ (see the full listing in [Appendix B](#)). These include, but are not limited to, sweet potatoes, peanuts, tigernut, okra and other specialty vegetables, specialty fruit including haskap, kiwiberries and pawpaw, medicinal herbs including culinary herbs, lavender, hops, truffles, hazelnuts and other tree nuts.

To be considered for funding in the EHOF, projects should fit in at least one of four priority areas² that were identified through the industry consultation process:

1. Sustainable/enhanced production practices
2. Address persistent and emerging pests and diseases
3. Variety development and evaluation
4. Automation of labour and increasing operational efficiencies

This fund is designed to help the specialty crops sector access 'seed' money and expertise to address pressing needs and opportunities and/or ultimately setting proponents up to access larger funding opportunities by providing evidence-based foundational information.

Supported activities under EHOF include:

- Evaluating new production practices
- Evaluating new integrated pest management (IPM) systems
- Sensory research
- Market development research
- New technology development and demonstration
- Technology roadmaps
- Feasibility studies

¹ See OMAFRA's information on specialty crops <https://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/CropOp/en/index.html>

² A more fulsome description of priorities for specialty crops can be found in the [2023 Ontario Horticulture Research Priority Report](#).

Eligible project costs include:

- Vineland staff salaries required for project deliverables
- Goods and services necessary for the project
- Travel necessary to carry out the project (subject to OMAFRA TPA travel guidelines)
- 20% of project costs for Vineland administration/overhead

Unsupported cost and activities include but are not limited to:

- Refundable taxes; costs of land; building or capital purchase; financing; depreciation or amortization expenses; rent; debts; fines or penalties; lawyer fees or intellectual property costs; administration costs; hospitality and entertainment costs.

1.2 How Funding Works

- 1:1 matching; 50% maximum of total eligible project costs from \$15,000 - \$50,000
- Minimum Vineland Research and Innovation Centre contribution (funded through Sustainable CAP) \$7,500 per project
- Project duration can be between six months up to two years
- Cannot be leveraged with other federal or provincial grant programs
- In-kind contributions can be used to demonstrate industry support but are not eligible for matching funds
- Projects conducted solely by Vineland
- No cash transferred to applicants

1.3 Eligibility Requirements

Project must:

- Address at least one of the four previously outlined priorities for specialty crops
- Include two or more of the following project contributors categories :
 - Grower(s)
 - Association partner(s)
 - For-profit entities
 - Third party, arms-length contributors (i.e. consultants)
 - OMAFRA crop specialists

Industry match must be in cash contributions to the project*; 50% due when the agreement is executed, the balance will be dependent on the scope and duration of the project. Industry match will be subject to applicable taxes.

*If proponents are invited to submit a full proposal but are challenged to find the required contributions, Vineland's Business Development Office may provide support to match proponents with companies interested in participating in the project.

1.4 Research Partner

Leverages the unique capabilities at [Vineland Research and Innovation Centre](#).

1.5 How to Apply

- Fill out an [Expression of Interest \(EOI\) form](#) * **Please note that completion of this form does not constitute an application for funding.**
- After you submit your EOI form, you may be invited to complete a full proposal. Vineland will pair you with one of our researchers to co-develop the [proposal](#) and complete the application (the proposal).

2 Assessment Process and Criteria

2.1.1 Application Process and Timelines

The EHOFF launches in February 2024. The final intake will be February 2025. All projects need to be completed by December 31, 2025.

2.1.2 Evaluation Process

The EHOFF is a discretionary, non-entitlement fund with limited funding. All proposals will undergo a review process that has been validated by OMAFRA, where proposals will be assessed against fund objectives and assessment criteria.

The opportunity will be evaluated for eligibility and suitability for the EHOFF. If the opportunity suits both, Vineland will work with the project proponent to co-develop the proposal.

All submissions are subject to a signed contractual agreement between Vineland and the applicant.

2.2 Evaluation Criteria

For greater detail and examples of metrics for the criteria, please see [Appendix A](#).

- Funding alignment (i.e. fit with fund priorities)
- Level of commitment from the industry association/fund partners (confirmed cash contributions and in-kind)
- Potential for delivering impact to the sector (i.e. economic, social, environmental benefits)
- Clear and effective knowledge and/or technology transfer plan (as per the evaluation criteria)

2.3 Project Activation

Upon approval, the project contributors will enter into a service agreement with Vineland Research and Innovation Centre.

This agreement will:

- Outline the roles and responsibilities of all the project contributors
- Specify the contributions of each party
- Outline payment terms, in particular, will specify that 50% of the applicant's payment must be received before the work can begin
- Specify terms for Intellectual Property

2.4 Contacts

BDOadmin@vinelandresearch.com

2.5 Reporting Requirements

Vineland reports the following to OMAFRA:

- Number of projects and total dollars committed under the fund

Recipients of EHOFF will be expected to report on the outcomes and metrics identified in the project proposal (Delivering Impact and Knowledge Transfer/ Communication Plan).

3 Appendix A

3.1.1 Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Category	Description
Funding Alignment	Does the proposal address at least one of the priority areas?
Commitment from Industry	Total cash contributions meet or exceed application requirements Total in-kind contributions meet or exceed application requirements Commitment (financial) is evident from across the value chain (i.e. grower AND product supplier)
Delivering Impact	Economic benefits may include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced inputs (i.e. \$/acre) • Improved yields (i.e. kg/acre) • Number of jobs created (estimated) • Operation profitability Social benefits may include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing food security (i.e. increasing access to fresh produce) • Improving worker health and safety (i.e. reduction in exposure to chemical pesticides due to IPM programming) Environmental benefits may include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling access and/or introduction of new bioproducts • Improving soil health while reducing inputs (i.e. increasing soil organic matter and reducing synthetic fertilizer use) • Water management (i.e. improved water efficiency or water quality) • Energy use (i.e. energy efficiency, renewable energy use, greenhouse gas reductions) • Waste management (i.e. waste diversion from landfill, waste repurposing)
Knowledge Transfer/ Communication Plan	Examples of knowledge transfer activities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration plantings • Effective scale-up plan (i.e. plan to detail testing and validation to other operations) • Webinars • On-farm training events • Fact sheets

	<p>Examples of metrics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total number of industry members included in outreach plan • Percentage of farms by crop type that have access to improved practices/results • Percentage increase in acreage where practices/processes have been adopted at farm scale
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4 Appendix B – List of Specialty Crops

- [Amaranth – Grain](#)
- [Amaranth – Leaf](#)
- [Angelica](#)
- [Anise](#)
- [Artichoke - Globe](#)
- [Artichoke - Jerusalem](#)
- [Baikal Skullcap](#)
- [Basil](#)
- [Bee Flower](#)
- [Belgian Endive/Witloof Chicory](#)
- [Bergamot](#)
- [Bitter Melon](#)
- [Black Cohosh](#)
- [Blue Cohosh](#)
- [Bok Choy](#)
- [Borage](#)
- [Bottle Gourd](#)
- [Brassica Carinata](#)
- [Brilliant Melon](#)
- [Broccoli - Chinese](#)
- [Buckwheat](#)
- [Cabbage - Chinese Flowering](#)
- [Cabbage - Chinese \(Napa\)](#)
- [Calendula](#)
- [Camelina](#)
- [Carinata](#)
- [Carrots – Coloured](#)
- [Castor](#)
- [Celtuce](#)
- [Centrapalus](#)
- [Chia](#)
- [Chicory - Root](#)
- [Chicory - Witloof](#)
- [Chinese Broccoli](#)
- [Chinese Cabbage/Napa Cabbage](#)
- [Chinese Flowering Cabbage/Flowering Edible Rape](#)
- [Chives](#)
- [Chrysanthemum – Edible](#)
- [Cilantro](#)
- [Cilantro/Coriander](#)
- [Cohosh – Black](#)
- [Cohosh – Blue](#)
- [Coloured Carrots](#)
- [Coriander](#)
- [Corn Gromwell](#)
- [Crambe](#)
- [Cucumber – Oriental](#)
- [Cup Plant](#)
- [Cuphea](#)
- [Daffodil](#)
- [Dill](#)
- [Dinkel/Spelt](#)
- [Echinacea](#)
- [Edamame](#)
- [Edible Chrysanthemum](#)
- [Eggplant - Specialty](#)
- [Elderberry](#)
- [Euphorbia](#)
- [Fennel - Florence](#)
- [Fennel - Sweet](#)
- [Fenugreek](#)
- [Filbert/Hazelnut](#)
- [Florence Fennel](#)
- [Flowering Edible Rape/Chinese Flowering Cabbage](#)
- [Fuzzy Melon/Hairy Gourd](#)
- [Ginseng](#)
- [Globe Artichoke](#)
- [Gobo/Japanese Burdock](#)
- [Goji Berry/Wolf Berry](#)

- [Goldenseal](#)
- [Grain Amaranth](#)
- [Hairy Gourd/Fuzzy Melon](#)
- [Haskap](#)
- [Hazelnut/Filbert](#)
- [Heartnut Walnuts](#)
- [Hemp](#)
- [Hops](#)
- [Japanese Burdock/Gobo](#)
- [Jerusalem Artichoke](#)
- [Kenaf](#)
- [Kiwi - northern](#)
- [Kohlrabi](#)
- [Lavender](#)
- [Leaf and Heading Mustards](#)
- [Leaf Amaranth](#)
- [Lemon Balm](#)
- [Lesquerella](#)
- [Lettuce – Oriental](#)
- [Lovage](#)
- [Luffa](#)
- [Maca](#)
- [Marjoram](#)
- [Marjoram/Oregano](#)
- [Meadowfoam](#)
- [Mint](#)
- [Miscanthus](#)
- [Mousemelon](#)
- [Mustards – Leaf and Heading](#)
- [Napa Cabbage](#)
- [Northern Kiwi](#)
- [Okra](#)
- [Oregano](#)
- [Oriental Cucumber](#)
- [Oriental Lettuce](#)
- [Oriental Radish](#)
- [Pak Choy \(Shanghai\)](#)
- [Parsley](#)
- [Pawpaw](#)
- [Peanut](#)
- [Pennycress](#)
- [Peppers – Specialty Hot](#)
- [Perilla](#)
- [Popping Corn](#)
- [Potato - Sweet](#)
- [Quinoa](#)
- [Radish – Oriental](#)
- [Rainbow Swiss Chard](#)
- [Rice – White](#)
- [Rice – Wild](#)
- [Root Chicory](#)
- [Rosemary](#)
- [Russian Dandelion](#)
- [Sage](#)
- [Savory - Summer](#)
- [Savory - Winter](#)
- [Sea Buckthorn](#)
- [Sesame](#)
- [Shanghai Pak Choy](#)
- [Skullcap - Baikal](#)
- [Skullcap - Virginian](#)
- [Specialty Eggplant](#)
- [Specialty Hot Peppers](#)
- [Spelt](#)
- [St. Johns Wort](#)
- [Starflower](#)
- [Stevia](#)
- [Summer Savory](#)
- [Sweet Fennel](#)
- [Sweet Potato](#)
- [Switchgrass](#)
- [Tah Tsai](#)
- [Tallgrass Prairie](#)
- [Tarragon](#)
- [Thyme](#)
- [Tomatillo](#)
- [Valerian](#)
- [Virginian Skullcap](#)
- [White Rice](#)
- [Winter Gourd](#)
- [Winter Savory](#)
- [Witloof Chicory/Belgian Endive](#)
- [Wolf Berry/Goji Berry](#)
- [Yard Long Bean](#)

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