

# The Canada-British Columbia Water Supply Expansion Program

## Ensuring long-term access to good-quality water

### Why do we need to expand our water supply?

Depending on the weather alone to provide enough water to support their farm operations is a chance few Canadian producers can afford to take. In fact, producers often have to deal with water shortages and drought situations as a result of Canada's variable climate. Therefore, reducing the risk of water shortages by securing a long-term water supply simply makes good business sense.

### The objectives of the National Water Supply Expansion Program

The National Water Supply Expansion Program (NWSEP) is a four-year, \$60-million Canada-wide initiative that will help improve the capacity of Canada's agricultural community to address water supply concerns. The NWSEP was introduced in 2002 and during the program's first year of operation, \$10 million was used to help develop high-priority water supply projects in drought-affected areas. In addition, a one-year National Scoping Study was funded through the NWSEP to determine agricultural areas of Canada experiencing or anticipating water shortages.

### The Canada-British Columbia Water Supply Expansion Program

Results from the National Scoping Study are being used to help create the foundation for federal-provincial agreements under the NWSEP across Canada. In British Columbia, the agreement is the Canada-British Columbia Water Supply Expansion Program (CBCWSEP). Through this initiative, British Columbia producers have access to support – both technical and financial – for the planning and development of projects that will improve their ability to develop and enhance long-term, sustainable agricultural water supplies.

Canada



## Who can participate in the program?

Eligible applicants for CBCWSEP assistance in British Columbia include:

- individuals and/or incorporated groups of farmers and ranchers;
- agricultural and conservation groups;
- rural communities and municipalities;
- agri-businesses and rural enterprises;
- educational institutions; and
- provincial government departments, agencies, and Crown corporations.

## What kinds of projects are eligible?

The CBCWSEP will support three types of projects:

- **Tier One – On-farm water infrastructure projects:** individual on-farm water projects such as wells, dugouts, water storage systems, and pipelines.
- **Tier Two – Multi-user infrastructure projects:** larger scale projects which provide water to a number of water users, such as tank-loaders and regional pipelines, and that will lead to growth in the agricultural sector.
- **Tier Three – Strategic work projects,** which include:
  - ▶ activities (e.g. regional groundwater studies, groundwater exploration or testing, regional water management planning and feasibility studies, information extension activities, etc.) that will serve to increase opportunities for strategic partnerships and to enhance understanding of the operational and developmental limitations to the water resources in their communities and/or regions.

**In addition, projects must comply with all of the following criteria:**

- reduce the risk of future water shortages for agriculture;
- target priorities identified through the National Scoping Study;
- be scientifically, technically, and financially feasible;
- be environmentally acceptable;
- enhance the potential for rural economic growth; and
- result in a long-term water-supply solution.

## What financial assistance is available?

- For **Tier One – On-farm infrastructure projects**, Canada will contribute up to one-third of the eligible costs, to a maximum of \$5,000 per project.
- For **Tier Two – Multi-user infrastructure projects**, Canada will contribute up to one-third of the eligible costs.
- For **Tier Three – Strategic work projects**, cost-sharing arrangements may vary and will be determined and approved on a project-by-project basis.

In total, the Government of Canada is providing \$5.6 million for projects in British Columbia over five years. The Province of British Columbia will provide in-kind support through technical and administrative assistance.

## What is the application deadline?

Deadlines to submit applications for all three Tiers are: **January 1, April 1, June 1 and September 1**. The CBCWSEP ends on March 31, 2008.

## How to apply

To apply for assistance under the CBCWSEP, complete the *Application for Assistance* form and send it to the designated CBCWSEP location (*please see following page for information on where to submit applications*). In addition to providing information such as name, address and relevant contact telephone numbers, applicants must also provide initial project information such as location, description, estimated start and completion dates, estimated project costs, and sources of funding.

For copies of the form, please contact or visit the nearest Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration office, any BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands office, or the British Columbia Agriculture Council. The form is also available on the NWSEP Web site at:  
[www.agr.gc.ca/h2o/](http://www.agr.gc.ca/h2o/)

## Where to send your application

Completed **Tier One Applications Only** can be submitted to: Canada-British Columbia Water Supply Expansion Program, C/O British Columbia Agriculture Council, #140 - 32160 South Fraser Way, Abbotsford, BC V2T 1W5

Completed **Tier Two and Three Applications Only** can be submitted to: Canada-British Columbia Water Supply Expansion Program, C/O Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, #104, 1005 - 104<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Dawson Creek, BC V1G 2H9

## Reviewing your application

A CBCWSEP committee consisting of federal, provincial and industry representatives will assess all proposals based on the quality of each project plan, the degree to which project plans are incremental or complementary to other existing federal programs, and the degree to which projects provide broad-based public or environmental benefits.

All applications will be screened, reviewed and rated to ensure program funds are directed to those projects which best meet CBCWSEP objectives and priorities. Before approving a proposal, the CBCWSEP committee will ensure that the proposed project addresses and enforces all technical and environmental standards for water-development projects.

***Note: You must receive written approval for your project prior to beginning the proposed work. Any projects started before receipt of written approval are not eligible for funding.***

Once a project is approved for financial assistance, the applicant will receive a letter specifying the amount of assistance they are eligible to receive, as well as a deadline for which to complete the project. If you do not complete the project by the deadline, you may not receive any financial assistance.

***For program and application information, please contact:  
Tier One – On-farm Water Supply Projects: (866) 522-3447  
Tiers Two and Three: (250) 782-3116  
Or, applicants can visit the Web site at [www.agr.gc.ca/h2o/](http://www.agr.gc.ca/h2o/)***



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