

Canadian Organic Research Needs and Priorities Assessment Process 2016-2017

About the research needs and priorities assessment process

A clear list of research priorities is needed to guide provincial and national funding initiatives and inform researchers as to where they should direct their efforts. The Research Needs Task Force of the [Organic Value Chain Roundtable](#) is leading this initiative; data is being collected and summarized by the [Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada](#), [Dalhousie University](#).

This process is important!

There are many research needs, but only limited funds. This process will identify where research funding should be directed and how the sector approaches funding sources. The results of this process may be used to:

1. Target research activities for a national research program, the [Organic Science Cluster](#)
2. Identify provincial or regional research priorities
3. Identify research priorities for special interest or commodity groups
4. Identify research needs within a business

Who should carry out this assessment?

All stakeholders within the organic sector in Canada are invited to participate in this process. Since the goal is to set priorities, provincial/regional organizations or commodity groups are encouraged to coordinate efforts within their groups.

While individuals are encouraged to consider their own research needs, the process of prioritizing research is most effective when working in groups with a similar field of interest/work (e.g. apple growers in BC, grain processors in ON). This provides opportunities for in-depth discussions and considerations before prioritizing future research directions.

The information that you provide will be compiled anonymously with entries from groups and individuals across the country. Maintaining a consistent format through the use of this document will allow results from various sectors of organic agriculture from across Canada to be compiled.

Promoting the needs assessment process

Forms can be accessed at: www.dal.ca/oacc. To facilitate sharing, some short captions for Twitter, Facebook and newsletters are provided below.

Twitter/Facebook: We want your input! Help influence organic research in Canada by participating in the 2016-17 organic research needs assessment. www.dal.ca/oacc

Newsletters/websites: We want your input! Have your say in guiding research priorities for Canada's organic sector. Collect your thoughts with a group of peers and participate in the 2016-17 assessment of organic research needs and priorities. www.dal.ca/oacc

Should you have any questions about how to complete the research needs assessment and forms, please contact Joanna White at joanna.white@dal.ca or (902) 896-2249. Please submit completed assessment documents by **February 28, 2017**.

For information on previous research needs assessments and current research, please visit www.dal.ca/oacc.

Instructions

Step 1. Break into focus groups, as needed.

Larger groups are encouraged to break into sub-groups that focus on specific subject areas (e.g. a grains group might break into groups for wheat, barley, oats, pulses, etc.). A maximum group size of ten is recommended to allow everyone to contribute. If you are facilitating a session, we suggest minimal interruption once groups have been established. Each sub-group will complete their own brainstorming and identification of their Top 5 research priorities.

Step 2. Provide us with some information about yourselves

Complete the **Submitter Information** page. Here, you will be asked to provide information about the size, makeup and representation of the group completing the research needs process. This information is important in categorizing and weighting the information as it is compiled.

Step 3. Brainstorm research questions

Take some time to contemplate the question **“What research is needed to support the evolution and growth of the organic sector in your province/region and/or in Canada?”** Think about this question in the context of your production system or area of interest/expertise. We encourage you to use the tables provided to record your brainstorming ideas, and ask that you also submit the brainstormed ideas along with the Top 5 research questions.

Carefully consider whether each research idea issue identified is one that requires new research to address, or whether the issue is based on the need for extension and education. While we acknowledge the importance of extension, we are seeking input on research needs.

Step 4: Identify the Top 5 research questions

Vote or prioritize within your group to narrow down the research questions list. You need only identify the top 5 questions - there is no need to rank.

Step 5. Provide information on your Top 5

Complete a **Research Question** table for each of the identified priorities. The priorities can be presented in no particular order (i.e. do not need to be ranked). Examples for guidance are included below. For each priority research question, you are asked to:

1. Provide a clear, detailed **research question**. Provide as many details as possible to clearly define the scope of the question. Be as specific as you can be when describing the research question. Examples are provided below for reference.
2. Provide up to **5 keywords or phrases** that relate to and further define the research question. These will be used to categorize the research questions, so please be detailed and descriptive. Please use descriptors that are in addition to those used in the research question.
3. Provide a short description of **why this research question is a priority**. Any comments or notes that clarify the intent of the research question can also be included here.
4. Quickly complete the **checkboxes**, checking all that apply. If “Other” is selected as a response in any of these categories, please give details in the space provided. This is intended to be a section that can be quickly completed, so no need for lengthy debates.

Step 6. Submit your priorities **by February 28, 2017.**

Completed forms (Brainstorming and Top 5) can be emailed to joanna.white@dal.ca or mailed to:

Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada
ATTN: Joanna White
Dalhousie University
Faculty of Agriculture
PO Box 550
Truro, NS B2N 5E3

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EXAMPLE Research Question 1

What research is needed to support the evolution and growth of the organic sector in your province/region and/or in Canada?

EXAMPLE Research Question 1:

Can organic potatoes be successfully grown on the planet Mars?

Keywords or phrases (up to 5):

Potato, Mars, low moisture, low oxygen

Why is this a priority?

This can be an opportunity to set a precedence for organic production on a new planet. Given the lack of water, low soil organic matter, lack of (known) soil organisms, and thin atmosphere on Mars, can we develop a model for organic potato production to support future research missions and colonies on Mars? Can organic production, which is based on a holistic system reliant on healthy soils, be successful on a barren planet? There are opportunities for recycling waste resources, and pest problems should not be a concern (although potato beetles certainly are resourceful creatures).

The project will need to examine the growing medium, fertility sources, water supply, atmosphere needs, and economics of an organic production system on Mars. Alternative crops can also be examined.

Select all appropriate boxes in each category:

Impact

- International
- National
- Regional
- Provincial
- Specific business

Research Target

- Specific farm
- Specific industry partner
- Commodity group
- Whole organic sector
- Whole agricultural sector
- Policy
- Consumers
- Public good
- Basic knowledge
- Other: _____

Type of Research

- Producer-led
- Business-led
- Researcher-led
- Other: _____

Location

- On-farm
- On-business
- Research station
 - University
 - AAFC
 - Other
- Other: _____

Non-Governmental Funding

- Uncertain
- Funding partner not easily identified
- Funding partner likely
- Funding partner identified: _____

** Government funding agencies may require from 0-50% matching funding from non-governmental sources**

Region

- All of Canada
- NL ON
- NS MB
- PEI SK
- NB AB
- QC BC
- Other: Mars

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EXAMPLE Research Question 2

What research is needed to support the evolution and growth of the organic sector in your province/region and/or in Canada?

EXAMPLE Research Question 2:

What cover crop mix (cocktail mix) works best for nutrient supply and weed suppression in annual grain rotations in the Brown soil zone?

Keywords or phrases (up to 5):

annual cropping system, Alberta, Brown soil zone, soil fertility, weed management

Why is this a priority?

While the benefits of cover cropping are well known, moisture limitations in the Brown soil zone can cause producers to approach cover cropping with caution. We have heard many people are beginning to experiment with cocktail mixes (4-12 species) that can provide multiple benefits from one cover crop – nitrogen fixation, weed suppression, soil health benefits, etc. We feel that if a water conscious cover crop mix can be developed, that can deliver multiple benefits, producers are more likely to adopt this practice. We are also interested in exploring the possibility of including warm-season crops in the mixes (such as cowpea, sunn hemp, lablab) that are novel in this region, as they would not normally reach maturity in a prairie climate.

Developing a successful mix, and providing information about the general performance (nitrogen supply potential, weed suppression abilities, soil moisture use, cost of production for each cocktail mix) could encourage uptake, which in turn can protect soils, boost biodiversity and improve yields.

Select all appropriate boxes in each category:

Impact

- International
- National
- Regional
- Provincial
- Specific business

Research Target

- Specific farm
- Specific industry partner
- Commodity group
- Whole organic sector
- Whole agricultural sector
- Policy
- Consumers
- Public good
- Basic knowledge
- Other: _____

Type of Research

- Producer-led
- Business-led
- Researcher-led
- Other: _____

Location

- On-farm
- On-business
- Research station
 - University
 - AAFC
 - Other
- Other: _____

Non-Governmental Funding

- Uncertain
- Funding partner not easily identified
- Funding partner likely
- Funding partner identified: _____

** Government funding agencies may require from 0-50% matching funding from non-governmental sources**

Region

- All of Canada
- NL ON
- NS MB
- PEI SK
- NB AB
- QC BC
- Other: _____

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Submitter Information

Date of session: _____

Location: _____

Contact if needed for clarification purposes:

Name: _____ Email: _____ Phone: _____

I am submitting this on behalf of:

- A group
- Myself

Please indicate who contributed to developing these research priorities (please choose the best category for each participant):

# _____ Organic farmers	# _____ Researchers	# _____ Retailers
# _____ Transitioning farmers	# _____ Extension agents	# _____ Policy
# _____ Non-organic farmers	# _____ Consultants	# _____ Consumers
# _____ Processors	# _____ Input/equipment suppliers	
# _____ Other (please indicate): _____		

If your answers represent the views of a larger organization than those that have participated in this assessment, please indicate:

Organization name: _____

Are these priorities formally endorsed by this organization?

- Yes
- No

The organization represents # _____ people, and includes:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farmers | <input type="checkbox"/> Researchers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Processors | <input type="checkbox"/> Extension Agents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retailers | <input type="checkbox"/> Consumers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please indicate): _____ | |

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Identifier: _____

Date Received: _____

Date Recorded: _____

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2016-2017

Brainstorming/identification of research questions that did not make the Top 5.

Please submit this form along with the completed Top 5 Research Questions

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Identifier: _____ Recorded: _____

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Brainstorming/identification of research questions that did not make the Top 5.

Please submit this form along with the completed Top 5 Research Questions

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Identifier: _____ Recorded: _____

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Research Question 1

What research is needed to support the evolution and growth of the organic sector in your province/region and/or in Canada?

Research Question 1:				
Keywords or phrases (up to 5):				
Why is this a priority?				
Select all appropriate boxes in each category:				
Impact <input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Regional <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial <input type="checkbox"/> Specific business	Research Target <input type="checkbox"/> Specific farm <input type="checkbox"/> Specific industry partner <input type="checkbox"/> Commodity group <input type="checkbox"/> Whole organic sector <input type="checkbox"/> Whole agricultural sector <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Consumers <input type="checkbox"/> Public good <input type="checkbox"/> Basic knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	Type of Research <input type="checkbox"/> Producer-led <input type="checkbox"/> Business-led <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher-led <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ Location <input type="checkbox"/> On-farm <input type="checkbox"/> On-business <input type="checkbox"/> Research station <input type="checkbox"/> University <input type="checkbox"/> AAFC <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	Non-Governmental Funding <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner not easily identified <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner likely <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner identified: _____ <small>** Government funding agencies may require from 0-50% matching funding from non-governmental sources**</small>	Region <input type="checkbox"/> All of Canada <input type="checkbox"/> NL <input type="checkbox"/> ON <input type="checkbox"/> NS <input type="checkbox"/> MB <input type="checkbox"/> PEI <input type="checkbox"/> SK <input type="checkbox"/> NB <input type="checkbox"/> AB <input type="checkbox"/> QC <input type="checkbox"/> BC <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Canadian Organic Research Needs and Priorities Assessment Process 2016-2017

Research Question 2

What research is needed to support the evolution and growth of the organic sector in your province/region and/or in Canada?

Research Question 2:				
Keywords or phrases (up to 5):				
Why is this a priority?				
Select all appropriate boxes in each category:				
Impact	Research Target	Type of Research	Non-Governmental Funding	Region
<input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Regional <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial <input type="checkbox"/> Specific business	<input type="checkbox"/> Specific farm <input type="checkbox"/> Specific industry partner <input type="checkbox"/> Commodity group <input type="checkbox"/> Whole organic sector <input type="checkbox"/> Whole agricultural sector <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Consumers <input type="checkbox"/> Public good <input type="checkbox"/> Basic knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Producer-led <input type="checkbox"/> Business-led <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher-led <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ Location <input type="checkbox"/> On-farm <input type="checkbox"/> On-business <input type="checkbox"/> Research station <input type="checkbox"/> University <input type="checkbox"/> AAFC <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner not easily identified <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner likely <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner identified: _____ <small>** Government funding agencies may require from 0-50% matching funding from non-governmental sources**</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> All of Canada <input type="checkbox"/> NL <input type="checkbox"/> ON <input type="checkbox"/> NS <input type="checkbox"/> MB <input type="checkbox"/> PEI <input type="checkbox"/> SK <input type="checkbox"/> NB <input type="checkbox"/> AB <input type="checkbox"/> QC <input type="checkbox"/> BC <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

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Research Question 3

What research is needed to support the evolution and growth of the organic sector in your province/region and/or in Canada?

Research Question 3:				
Keywords or phrases (up to 5):				
Why is this a priority?				
Select all appropriate boxes in each category:				
Impact <input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Regional <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial <input type="checkbox"/> Specific business	Research Target <input type="checkbox"/> Specific farm <input type="checkbox"/> Specific industry partner <input type="checkbox"/> Commodity group <input type="checkbox"/> Whole organic sector <input type="checkbox"/> Whole agricultural sector <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Consumers <input type="checkbox"/> Public good <input type="checkbox"/> Basic knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	Type of Research <input type="checkbox"/> Producer-led <input type="checkbox"/> Business-led <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher-led <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ Location <input type="checkbox"/> On-farm <input type="checkbox"/> On-business <input type="checkbox"/> Research station <input type="checkbox"/> University <input type="checkbox"/> AAFC <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	Non-Governmental Funding <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner not easily identified <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner likely <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner identified: _____ <small>** Government funding agencies may require from 0-50% matching funding from non-governmental sources**</small>	Region <input type="checkbox"/> All of Canada <input type="checkbox"/> NL <input type="checkbox"/> ON <input type="checkbox"/> NS <input type="checkbox"/> MB <input type="checkbox"/> PEI <input type="checkbox"/> SK <input type="checkbox"/> NB <input type="checkbox"/> AB <input type="checkbox"/> QC <input type="checkbox"/> BC <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

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Research Question 4

What research is needed to support the evolution and growth of the organic sector in your province/region and/or in Canada?

Research Question 4:				
Keywords or phrases (up to 5):				
Why is this a priority?				
Select all appropriate boxes in each category:				
Impact	Research Target	Type of Research	Non-Governmental Funding	Region
<input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Regional <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial <input type="checkbox"/> Specific business	<input type="checkbox"/> Specific farm <input type="checkbox"/> Specific industry partner <input type="checkbox"/> Commodity group <input type="checkbox"/> Whole organic sector <input type="checkbox"/> Whole agricultural sector <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Consumers <input type="checkbox"/> Public good <input type="checkbox"/> Basic knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Producer-led <input type="checkbox"/> Business-led <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher-led <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ Location <input type="checkbox"/> On-farm <input type="checkbox"/> On-business <input type="checkbox"/> Research station <input type="checkbox"/> University <input type="checkbox"/> AAFC <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner not easily identified <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner likely <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner identified: _____ <small>** Government funding agencies may require from 0-50% matching funding from non-governmental sources**</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> All of Canada <input type="checkbox"/> NL <input type="checkbox"/> ON <input type="checkbox"/> NS <input type="checkbox"/> MB <input type="checkbox"/> PEI <input type="checkbox"/> SK <input type="checkbox"/> NB <input type="checkbox"/> AB <input type="checkbox"/> QC <input type="checkbox"/> BC <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Canadian Organic Research Needs and Priorities Assessment Process 2016-2017

Research Question 5

What research is needed to support the evolution and growth of the organic sector in your province/region and/or in Canada?

Research Question 5:				
Keywords or phrases (up to 5):				
Why is this a priority?				
Select all appropriate boxes in each category:				
Impact	Research Target	Type of Research	Non-Governmental Funding	Region
<input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Regional <input type="checkbox"/> Provincial <input type="checkbox"/> Specific business	<input type="checkbox"/> Specific farm <input type="checkbox"/> Specific industry partner <input type="checkbox"/> Commodity group <input type="checkbox"/> Whole organic sector <input type="checkbox"/> Whole agricultural sector <input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Consumers <input type="checkbox"/> Public good <input type="checkbox"/> Basic knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Producer-led <input type="checkbox"/> Business-led <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher-led <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ Location <input type="checkbox"/> On-farm <input type="checkbox"/> On-business <input type="checkbox"/> Research station <input type="checkbox"/> University <input type="checkbox"/> AAFC <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Uncertain <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner not easily identified <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner likely <input type="checkbox"/> Funding partner identified: _____ <small>** Government funding agencies may require from 0-50% matching funding from non-governmental sources**</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> All of Canada <input type="checkbox"/> NL <input type="checkbox"/> ON <input type="checkbox"/> NS <input type="checkbox"/> MB <input type="checkbox"/> PEI <input type="checkbox"/> SK <input type="checkbox"/> NB <input type="checkbox"/> AB <input type="checkbox"/> QC <input type="checkbox"/> BC <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____