Egg Farmers of Ontario

Call for Research Proposals

April 7, 2026

A. INTRODUCTION

Egg Farmers of Ontario (EFO) is the marketing board for eggs and pullets in Ontario under authority delegated to it by the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission.

EFO represents the province's 525 egg and pullet farming families who ensure the production of high-quality eggs for the table and processing markets.

Ontario's egg industry represents farm cash receipts of over $500 million annually and support approximately 7,000 jobs in the province.

Each year, EFO invests in research that supports improvements in the egg industry and drives innovation in egg production and pullet rearing.

B. RESEARCH PRIORITIES

In support of its Strategic Plan, EFO has established the following research priority areas:

1. Bird nutrition, health and welfare;
2. Food safety, human nutrition and health;
3. End of flock management for extended lay;
4. Environment and sustainability;
5. Innovative egg-based solutions;
6. Precision agriculture and technology advancement; and
7. Public policy.

Additional details regarding EFO's research priorities are included in Appendix 1. Alignment with these priorities will guide EFO's funding decisions.

C. FUNDING PROCESS AND TIMELINES

A full proposal must be submitted **no later than July 6, 2026** via the Livestock Research Innovation Corporation (LRIC) research management system at the following link: https://lric.smartsimple.ca.

For assistance with registration to the system, please contact LRIC's Director of Operations Jean Howden, at jhowden@livestockresearch.ca.

Proposals will undergo a technical review and evaluation by EFO's Research and Innovation Committee based on the following:

Criteria	Weight (points)
1. Scientific merit: ▪ The proposed methodology is appropriate to achieve the intended outcomes. ▪ The research question is clearly defined and justified. ▪ The proposed approach outlines a logical and feasible path to achieving the study objectives. ▪ The sample size (animals/tests) is sufficient to address the research question(s). ▪ The selection of animal type and age, along with the chosen tests and outcome measures, are appropriate to support the study objectives.	10
2. Value to Ontario's egg industry: ▪ Sufficient information is provided to support the project's value to the industry. ▪ The project is aligned with EFO's research priorities. ▪ The expected outcomes have practical benefit to Ontario's egg and pullet farmers.	10
3. Economic impact: ▪ Calculations of economic benefit were provided with a description of how they were obtained. ▪ The project: ✓ demonstrates a clear and meaningful economic benefit to the egg industry; ✓ supports or enhances industry productivity and competitiveness; ✓ proposes solutions that are practical to implement under commercial conditions; and ✓ reflects cost-effectiveness and affordability relative to expected outcomes. ▪ Non-economic benefits are described and supported with references.	10
4. Budget: ▪ Project costs are reasonable and sufficiently justified. The budget includes adequate detail to clearly explain how costs were determined. ▪ Costs for animals and/or tests are aligned with known or standard rates. ▪ Travel and conference expenses are appropriate in scope, timing, and value. ▪ Salaries and stipends are appropriately allocated (e.g., students, technicians, producers, consultants). ▪ Budget details are consistent with the proposed methodology (e.g., number of animals, number of tests).	10
5. Knowledge Translation and Transfer (KTT) ▪ A detailed plan for KTT activities is included in the application. ▪ The KTT activities described are impactful and meaningful. ▪ Potential collaboration with EFO to disseminate information is included, as applicable.	10
6. Industry support and collaboration: ▪ The researcher has engaged non-academic industry stakeholders (e.g., feed companies, animal health companies, other suppliers, etc.) through input, guidance, collaboration, or formal support (such as letters of support).	5
7. New or novel research: ▪ Aspects of the project are new or novel.	5
8. Additional funding: ▪ Funding from other sources has been obtained or applications have been/will be submitted.	5

As part of the proposal evaluation process, principal investigators may be required to provide a short presentation to EFO's Research and Innovation Committee or asked to provide additional information or clarification within a specified timeline.
Funding decisions will be made at EFO's sole discretion communicated to the principal investigators no later than November 30, 2026. Funding will be subject to the signing of an agreement and other conditions such as matching funds being secured (where applicable), provision of interim and final reports, among others.

D. RESEARCH PROPOSALS

Every section of the application must be completed and include detailed information about the project. Please note the following:

a) Budget information
Applicants must download the budget template included in the application and complete all sections.

EFO may provide up to $20,000 in funding per year, per project, over a maximum of five years.

The proposal must include a total project budget, clearly itemizing all costs, including salaries (identifying personnel), equipment, supplies, animals, laboratory testing, rental fees. Other expenditures above $500 per item must be itemized. For projects extending beyond one year, applicants must provide detailed budget information for each year of the project. Any overhead fees to be paid by EFO must be included.

Funds requested or obtained from sources other than EFO must be disclosed in the research proposal, including the status of each of the applications.

Capital expenditures are not eligible for funding by EFO.

E. RESEARCH AGREEMENT

An agreement between EFO, LRIC and the research institution must be entered into with the acknowledgement of the principal investigator.

The agreement defines the rights and obligations of each party, including but not limited to:

- Project funding and conditions;
- Payment schedule;
- Project management;
- Performance;
- Project reports;
- Intellectual property;
- Publication;
- Project funding acknowledgement;
- Publicity; and
- Confidentiality.

F. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any inquiries for further information should be directed to Colleen McElwain at cmcelwain@getcracking.ca, Pam Kuipers at pamk@getcracking.ca or Maria Leal at mleal@getcracking.ca.

get cracking
Egg Farmers of Ontario

APPENDIX 1

July 2025

Research at Egg Farmers of Ontario

Each year, Egg Farmers of Ontario (EFO) invests significantly in research that supports improvements in the egg industry and drives innovation. EFO intends to issue a Request for Proposals every spring and encourages academic institutions and researchers to use the following set of Research Priorities as a guide when developing proposals.

Research priority areas	Details/examples	Link to EFO's Strategic Plan
Bird nutrition, health and welfare	▪ Bird health in alternative housing systems (e.g., gut and bone health) ▪ Pathogen exposure from inputs throughout the supply chain ▪ Bird behaviour in aviary systems ▪ Emerging diseases (e.g., Avian Metapneumovirus in layers) ▪ Research gaps to inform the Code of Practice	▪ Sustainable farming practices ▪ Policies – housing transition ▪ Reinforce importance of biosecurity
Food safety, human nutrition and health	▪ Zoonotic diseases ▪ Salmonella Enteritidis (e.g., on-farm risk factors, contamination pathways and prevention strategies) ▪ Shelf stable healthy foods derived from eggs ▪ Impact of transition to alternative housing systems on farmer health with a "One Health" approach ▪ Impact of severe weather events on egg safety and quality	▪ Sustainable farming practices ▪ Stimulate market growth
End of flock management for extended lay	▪ Pullet management/strategies for extended lay success ▪ Strategies to maintain shell integrity and egg quality during extended lay ▪ Older flock welfare (e.g., feather coverage) ▪ Transportation and housing changes for flocks in lay	▪ Extended lay
Environment and sustainability	▪ Manure management ▪ Energy use modelling ▪ Alternative waste streams ▪ Water use and optimization practices ▪ Impact of chemical and drug treatments used in disease control ▪ Nutrient use and alternative feeds	▪ Sustainable farming practices
Innovative egg-based solutions	▪ Egg shell upcycling ▪ Biomedical applications ▪ Unconventional applications	▪ Stimulate market growth ▪ Sustainable farming practices
Precision agriculture and technology advancement	▪ Advancement of outcomes related to research and industry priorities through the use of technology and analytics ▪ Implementation/testing of new technologies	▪ Flock verification ▪ Sustainable farming practices
Public policy	▪ Public awareness and perception of supply management ▪ Succession planning ▪ Workforce sustainability	▪ Government advocacy in support of egg industry ▪ Increase public trust

Note: Economic viability remains a central consideration across all streams of research. The egg industry must remain productive and competitive, and proposed solutions must be both practical and affordable. As such, the potential economic impact of each research proposal will be considered in funding decisions.