



## Call for Proposals – Human Nutrition and Health

### Dairy Research Cluster 4

### 2023-2028

Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) is a non-profit organization, funded by dairy farmers across Canada and representing Canada’s dairy farms. Our organization plays a leadership role on behalf of the industry in several important areas, including funding and support of research in dairy production and in human nutrition and health. DFC has a long-standing commitment (over 30 years) of investing in research to drive innovation and ensure a sustainable future for the dairy sector.

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#### INTRODUCTION

Since 2010, DFC has been a partner of the Canadian AgriScience Clusters Initiative of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) as part of the strategic framework Growing Forward 1 (2010-2013), Growing Forward 2 (2013-2018) and Canadian Agricultural Partnership (2018-2023). The Clusters program allows to address national dairy research priorities in a coordinated and strategic approach in partnership with sector partners, academic institutions and government.

In anticipation of the renewal of the Clusters program under AAFC’s next agricultural policy framework, which would cover the period of April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2028, DFC is launching this Call for Proposals in Human Nutrition and Health in preparation for the Dairy Research Cluster 4 application. The Canadian scientific community is invited to submit proposals for innovative and structured projects focusing on industry and government priorities as presented in the **Appendix**.

Research projects to be included in the Dairy Research Cluster 4 application will be selected through a **two-step evaluation process (Intent to Submit and Full Proposal [FP])** based on the relevance for the dairy sector and on the scientific quality.

*NB: Please note that funding will be pending AAFC’s approval under the next AgriScience Cluster program, which has not been announced yet. Therefore, there are no guarantees with regards to funding, or even the possibility of funding, at this time.*

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Researchers from Canadian universities and from AAFC research and development centres are eligible to apply to this Call for Proposals. Non-Canadian researchers could be considered as co-investigators or collaborators. A researcher cannot submit two proposals under this Call for which they are the Principal Investigator (PI).

The PI is responsible for the complete direction of the project and other activities associated with its efficient execution. The role of the co-investigator(s) and collaborators in the project must be clearly defined. Graduate students and postdoctoral fellows are not eligible to act as co-investigators.

(Please note that commercial product research and development is not eligible).

## **PROJECT BUDGET AND TIMEFRAME**

The budget for research projects should be planned for the period from **July 1, 2023 to December 31, 2027**.

The maximum budget allocated for a project is up to \$ 1 million dollars. The maximum duration of a project is up to 4.5 years.

## **SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE INTENT TO SUBMIT**

**The Intent to Submit Form is available on the [DFC's website](#).**

Please comply with the space and format limitations as presented in the Form. Do not use photo-reduced type. The font is Arial and the size is 11 points. The body of the Form is self-contained and must not include additional pages and/or attachments.

**Intent to Submit Forms must be sent to [dairyresearch@dfc-plc.ca](mailto:dairyresearch@dfc-plc.ca) by March 3, 2022 (11:59 p.m. – local time zone of PI).**

Forms submitted in French will be translated to English; the PI and/or their team may not review the translation.

## SELECTION PROCESS

### STEP 1 – Intent to Submit

The Intent to Submit will be reviewed for relevance and alignment with the priorities as outlined in the **Appendix**. Only selected candidates will be invited to submit a full proposal.

### STEP 2 – Full Proposal

The Full Proposal (FP) will be evaluated based on its scientific merit and feasibility, team expertise, training opportunities, knowledge translation and transfer opportunities, and budget.

Decisions on selected projects to be included in the Dairy Research Cluster 4 application will be communicated to the PIs in the Fall of 2022.

### IMPORTANT DATES

March 3, 2022	Deadline for the Intent to Submit (11:59 p.m. – local time zone of PI)*
Week of March 21, 2022	Notification to PIs if they are invited (or not) to submit a FP
June 30, 2022	Deadline for FP (for invited PIs)
November 2022	Decision on selected projects to be included in the Dairy Research Cluster 4 application communicated to PIs
Winter 2023	Review of Cluster application by AAFC

*\*A confirmation of reception will be sent by email within three business days.*

All inquiries for additional information pertaining to any of the above points should be directed to [dairyresearch@dfc-plc.ca](mailto:dairyresearch@dfc-plc.ca).

## APPENDIX

### Health Claim Priorities

Under the Clusters program, AAFC will only consider funding Human Nutrition and Health research projects (including human clinical trials) that support **disease risk reduction and therapeutic health claims** (as defined by Health Canada) for which stakeholders will seek to obtain a Health Canada pre-market approval or recognition of the validity of the health claim.

A **health claim** is considered as *any label or advertising that suggests a relationship between a food or an ingredient and a person's health.*

**Disease risk reduction claim** is a statement that links a food or constituent of a food to reducing the risk of developing a diet-related disease or condition.

**Therapeutic claims** are a type of disease risk reduction claims about the treatment, or mitigation of a disease or health-related condition, or about restoring, correcting or modifying body functions.

In assessing projects, AAFC (and Health Canada, where appropriate) will evaluate that the applicant has demonstrated a body of evidence that is broadly supportive of the claim and that the literature review and human clinical trial design and conduct are deemed to be methodologically robust enough to meet Health Canada standards.

Projects should demonstrate a robust body of background evidence and clearly outline how the new research proposed will address important gaps and limitations.

Studies based on a biomarker/surrogate marker/risk factor, as opposed to the disease itself as an outcome, should clearly indicate the link to the disease.

### **Milk Products and Osteoporosis**

- Projects that address the role of milk products (milk, yogurt, cheese) in **reducing the risk of osteoporosis** in individuals under 50 years of age are of specific interest, particularly children, adolescents, and young adults.
- Please note that it will be important to clearly indicate how bone mass (i.e., BMD/BMC) is linked to reducing the risk of osteoporosis, especially in the younger age groups.
- Longer term RCTs in children and adolescents are of particular interest.

The following reference may also be useful with regards to best practices related to nutrition and bone outcomes: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30926984/>

## Milk Products and Obesity

- Projects that address the role of milk products (milk, yogurt, cheese) in **reducing the risk of obesity**, including excess adiposity/weight gain, in children and adolescents will be considered.
- Please note that projects in the context of “weight loss” **will not be considered** as claims related to weight loss are reserved for special food products as outlined in Division 24 of the *Food and Drug Regulations*.

## Milk Products and Type 2 Diabetes

- Projects that address the role of milk products in **reducing the risk of type 2 diabetes** will be considered with a special focus on yogurt and cheese.

## Additional Information

- Please refer to Health Canada’s website for more details related to Health Claims: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/food-labelling/health-claims.html>
- Please also refer to Health Canada’s Guidance Document for relevant information related to Health Claim substantiation: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/legislation-guidelines/guidance-documents/guidance-document-preparing-submission-food-health-claims-2009-1.html>