



## CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE COVER CROPPING COMPONENT 2023

The purpose of the Agrisolutions climat project is to implement beneficial management practices on farms in order to reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions generated by the agricultural sector. For farm businesses, it is an opportunity to help mitigate climate change.

### Component objectives:

- Increase the number of businesses and the amount of surface area with cover crops
- Improve soil fertility and promote nutrient cycling
- Develop cover cropping knowledge and skills



### Am I eligible?

- If you operate a field crop business that produces grains, regardless of production method (conventional, organic, or other), and wish to plant cover crops, you are eligible.<sup>1</sup>
- Your business must be duly registered with the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ) and have both a ministerial identification number (NIM) and a UPA number.

### When do I register?

#### There are four registration windows for the 2023 season:

- From the opening announcement to June 30
- From July 1 to 31
- From August 1 to 31
- From September 1 to 30

### What conditions apply?

In the Agrisolutions climat Cover Cropping component, the *Guide des cultures de couverture en grandes cultures*<sup>2</sup> serves as the reference document for planting and managing cover crops. Participants will need to refer to it to understand the desired conditions for success associated with this beneficial management practice.

### General conditions:

- The surface area for the cover crops must be at least 20 hectares.
- The crop rotation for the proposed plot must include grains.
- The business must receive coaching from an advisor who can certify that the cover crop planted complies with program requirements.
- Financial assistance is provided based on the area of cover crops planted.
- Both the business and the advisor must commit to adhering to the conditions set out in this document.

### Conditions for disqualification:

- Plots that already receive funding for cover cropping through a provincial or federal government program are not eligible.
- Plots in which cover crops are fully or partly for sale (e.g., crops that are mown to be made into commercial hay, grain harvested for sale) are not eligible.
- The project officer reserves the right to disqualify plots for reasons other than those stated in this document.

<sup>1</sup> Cover crops: crops established specifically to cover soil to protect it from erosion and nutrient loss via leaching and runoff (Reeves, 1994; Dabney et al., 2001; Frick et al., 2017). Such crops may improve soil, water, and air quality as well as nutrient capture, cycling, and management or play a role in integrated pest management systems (Delgado et al., 2006).

<sup>2</sup> Vanasse, A., Thibodeau, S., and Weill, A., 2022, *Guide des cultures de couverture en grandes cultures*. This guide (in French only) will be provided free of charge to all producers and agrologists upon request until the copies purchased through the project run out.

### Seeding:

- Seeding dates and rates are to follow the recommendations in the *Guide des cultures de couverture en grandes cultures*.

### Destruction, burial, and harvesting:

- Cover crops must cover the soil over the winter, and funded plots must not be tilled under in the fall of the year they are seeded.
- Cover crops may be destroyed the following spring using any appropriate method (e.g., mechanical, chemical, winterkill).
- Cover crops may be mown in the fall if a height of at least 15 centimetres is left.

### Soil improvement and pedology:

- The soil must not be tilled, drained, or graded after the cover crops have been seeded.
- Certain conditions may cause plots to be disqualified (e.g., recent clearing or rehabilitation, landslides, soil filling or excavation, etc.).

### Crop management:

- Proper management practices should be used, especially with respect to pests.
- Crop management must meet all applicable environmental and regulatory requirements that apply to farming activities.
- There are no restrictions with respect to fertilization practices.

### What financial assistance is available?

- Farmers receive \$95/hectare to plant cover crops, to a maximum of \$22,800 (240 hectares).
- Advisors receive \$577 plus \$45 for travel allowance per business.<sup>3</sup>
- Aboveground biomass analysis expenses for plots involved in the project are covered.
- Financial assistance is provided on the condition that the end-of-season report is received and accepted.

### How are applications analyzed and assessed?

Applications will be assessed based on the conditions for success for ensuring cover crops are able to get established and protect the soil over the winter. The reference document for assessing applications is the *Guide des cultures de couverture en grandes cultures*.

### What is the registration process?

1. The farm business representative expresses interest in participating in the project to the advisor.
2. The advisor completes and submits the registration form available from the PGQ Agrisolutions climat site. [PGQ-Agrisolutions-climat](https://pgq-agrisolutions-climat.com)
3. For eligible plots selected for funding, two agreements are signed: one with the business and one with the advisor or their employer. These agreements set out the parties' obligations along with the conditions that apply to financial assistance and payment.

### For further information and to register for the project:

Sustainable Production Team - [agro@pgq.ca](mailto:agro@pgq.ca)/450 679-0540, ext. 8328 or 8414

<sup>3</sup> Only advisors recognized through the Agriconseils networks will receive the funds and travel allowance.