
Appropriation 3 (f) – Agri-Food Innovation and Adaptation

Agri-Food Innovation and Adaptation (AFIA) is a knowledge centre whose primary concerns are developing and delivering the province's programs with regard to science and innovation in support of growth and sustainability in the agri-food and rural sectors. Innovation Services provides leadership and coordination for the province by way of awarding financial support to institutions, organizations, businesses, and individuals engaged in the development of new knowledge and technology. In addition, Innovation Services staff are engaged directly in conducting applied field investigations into crop diversification and utilization on behalf of producer organizations. The Agri-Energy Office provides leadership and coordination of renewable energy programming pertaining to agriculture's ability to be both a supplier and consumer of non-fossil energy.

Innovation Services represents government's contribution of leadership, policy and programming to the development of the bio-economy in Manitoba. Focus areas include: functional foods and nutraceuticals, bio-energy and bio-materials.

The Agri-Food Innovation and Adaptation Knowledge Centre achieved the following results in 2006/2007:

- Support in the evaluation of 53 proposals to Agri-Food Research and Development Initiative (ARDI) of which 28 were awarded funding by the ARDI Council. A total of \$1.75 million was awarded during the fiscal year.
- The University of Manitoba grant enabled 126 projects in areas determined to be high priority by AFIA and other Knowledge Centres of the Department.
- The grant to Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute (PAMI) was administered with oversight provided by AFIA.
- The Science and Innovation pillar of the Agricultural Policy Framework was successfully administered including the following projects relevant to Manitoba and with Manitoba proponents received funding:
 - Potato Innovation Network
 - Flax 2015 Phase II
 - Canola Product Research Fund
 - Pulse Innovation Program
 - Commercialization of Biofibres for Composite Applications

Staff continued to facilitate and support innovation-based economic development. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Manitoba and the Jewish National Fund to promote technology exchange with Israel. Work continued to assist Parkland Biofibre in establishing a hemp processing plant in Dauphin. A fibre procurement study was designed to support future processing of agricultural fibre. Significant effort has been expanded in developing the functional food sector including research projects and the delivery of commercialization roadmap training for entrepreneurs. Funding was provided for equipment at the Richardson Centre for Functional and Nutraceuticals (RCFFN). The Manitoba Agri-Health Research Network was implemented to coordinate outreach activities of the Functional Food Cluster which consists of RCFFN, Canadian Centre for Agri-Food Research in Health and Medicine and Food and Development Centre.

Funding was provided to the University of Manitoba's Glenlea Farm Education Centre to establish a public facility geared toward educating consumers about food production.

Staff supported the funding and operation of four industry and producer led diversification centres;

- Parkland Crop Diversification Foundation;
- Westman Agricultural Diversification Organization;
- Prairies East Sustainable Agriculture Initiative;
- Canada-Manitoba Crop Diversification Centre.

In 2006/2007 applied research was conducted at these centres in support of the following industries:

- Forage Seed
- Hemp
- Pulses
- Barley
- Alfalfa
- Saskatoon Berries
- Flax
- Biofuel Feedstocks
- Canola
- Corn
- Potatoes

Results were distributed through GO Teams, newsletters, and field demonstrations.

The Manitoba Crop Variety Evaluation Team (MCVET) program was administered by AFIA staff and the Crop Industry Knowledge Centre resulting in the province-wide evaluation of crop varieties. Results were provided to producers and the industry through the publication *Seed Manitoba* which was distributed directly to 15,000 farmers in cooperation with the *Farmers' Independent Weekly* newspaper.

The Agri-Energy Office has, in cooperation with Science, Technology, Energy and Mines (STEM), developed and delivered programs and information in the rapidly evolving area of bio-energy. This includes:

- Biodiesel
- Ethanol
- Methane from anaerobic digestion
- Wind Power
- Biomass

Staff focused on the collection, interpretation and dissemination of agronomic, engineering, economic and environmental information in support of policy development, community projects and increasing the technical competency of Manitoba in bio-energy. AFIA and the MAFRI Agri-Energy team function as the main resource for agri-energy information for Manitobans.

Staff worked with clients on 25 proposals for ethanol and biodiesel plants. Business and technology assessments were provided and several support projects were brokered. Staff supported the activities of the Biodiesel Board. A tour was conducted of Minnesota renewable energy projects with 40 representatives of community and private agri-energy initiatives participating. Staff developed or participated in 25 extension meetings outlining opportunities in renewable energy for producers and communities. Projects were developed with individual entrepreneurs in the area of biomass energy and bioproducts including an interdepartmental effort to facilitate the future operation of the strawboard plant at Elie.

3 (f) Agri-Food Innovation and Adaptation

Expenditures by Sub-Appropriation	Actual 2006/2007 \$(000s)	Estimate 2006/2007 FTEs	Estimate 2006/2007 \$(000s)	Variance Over/(Under) \$(000s)	Expl. No.
(1) Salaries and Employee Benefits	983.5	17.80	1,252.9	(269.4)	1
(2) Other Expenditures	219.2		279.1	(59.9)	
Total Sub-Appropriation	1,202.7	17.80	1,532.0	(329.3)	

1. The under expenditure is mainly due to expenditure management to meet government's fiscal restraints and offset increased departmental program and operating costs.