



Advancing the Sustainable Growth and Prosperity of Quality
Farmed Seafood Production

Oyster Aquaculture Transition (OAT) Fund

Application Guidelines for 2026

Purpose

The purpose of Oyster Aquaculture Transition (OAT) Fund is to subsidise the cost of purchasing hatchery reared oyster seed for PEI oyster aquaculture businesses that have been impacted by MSX and or Dermo.

Assistance Provided

The OAT Fund may provide successful applicants with an annual financial contribution in form of a non-repayable reimbursement of up to 100% of eligible expenditures, for the acquisition of hatchery reared oyster seed.

Please note, approval of an application is in no way a guarantee of oyster seed availability from any hatchery provider. Should the hatchery be unable to fulfill an order the applicant will not be eligible for further funding.

Assessment Criteria

- The number of seed to be purchased will be reviewed against the recent production levels (2023-2025), and production capacity, i.e. bag numbers and lease acreage.
- Applicants purchasing seed directly from a hatchery will need to confirm ownership of, or access to, a nursery system (FLUPSY, Up-weller etc.)

Eligibility

An eligible applicant is any individual (Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident), company, partnerships, and sole proprietorships (registered in PEI), involved in oyster aquaculture production in Prince Edward Island. Applicants must hold all necessary permits, licenses or lease contracts.

Commercial nursery operations, who will be raising hatchery seed and re-selling ARE NOT eligible to apply for subsidies under the OAT Fund

Applicants purchasing seed from a commercial nursery **are** eligible for funding, however contributions this will be capped at the same maximum level as the hatchery seed subsidy set for that year.

Growers operating on sublet lease acreage must provide **a notarized, legal sublet agreement**, valid for at least the duration of the current lease approval, to be eligible for funding.

The intent is to ensure funds are directed to separate business entities and that each business entity receives no more than the maximum allowable funding. Situations where business ownership is unclear may require further review after the completed application is received. To determine an applicant's eligibility, as a single business entity, for funding under the OAT Fund, the **PEIAA reserves the right to request additional information from an applicant.**

Providing false information will result in the immediate rejection of the application and ineligibility for the life of the program.

Guidelines

1. The application must be submitted using the supplied form, with any required supporting documentation. The proposal must show enough detail to allow satisfactory assessment by the Program Management Committee (PMC).
2. Applications are not considered received until they are complete, as assessed by the PEIAA.
3. Any expenses incurred prior to December 23rd, 2025, will not be eligible for assistance. Purchases following the date of receipt and prior to the possible approval of the project are at the applicant's own risk.
4. If the proposal meets the satisfaction of the PMC, a contract will be sent outlining terms and conditions of the assistance. The applicant will have 14 days to accept the contract in writing or the contract will be rescinded.
5. Taxes and other fees are not eligible for assistance.
6. Applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis
7. The PMC may limit financial assistance based on the severity of the economic impact, overall size of the seed order or other such criteria considered applicable, and the level of contribution may vary.
8. If there are more applications than funding can provide for over the life of the program completed applications will be assessed in order of acceptance.
9. The applicant must submit acceptable verification of payment (such as copies of cleared cheques).
10. Cash payments in excess of \$500 will require verification of payment. A payment verification form will be provided and must be signed by both the vendor and the program applicant.
11. In any matter of difference between the PMC/PEIAA and the applicant through the life of the project, the PMC/PEIAA decision will be final.

12. Project activities must meet the stipulations of the proponent's aquaculture lease agreement with DFO and do not require amendments to the existing lease agreement to accommodate the proposed work.
13. Project activities will take place on active aquaculture leases that are in good standing with the Aquaculture leasing division of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.
14. Applicants must adhere to all applicable provincial/federal regulatory and legislative requirements while undertaking aquaculture activities
15. Prior to any claim being paid, if a copy of an I&T permit must be supplied, **if one is required**, for the seed transfer, i.e. hatchery to nursery and / or nursery to grow out site.
16. Applicant documents and information may be shared with ACOA as for the purpose of monitoring and compliance with the funding agreement.

Reporting Requirements

- Successful applicants will be required to submit progress reports bi-annually.
 - In October / November (i.e. before “ice-in” and lease sinking), and;
 - April / May (i.e. after “ice-out” and cages raised).
- Reports will include observations on mortality levels, growth, and any other factors deemed relevant by the applicant or requested by the PEIAA.
- The applicant must agree to allow access to the operation by a representative of the PEIAA for the purpose of monitoring the progress of the project

Funding for the OAT Fund is made available by the Atlantic Canada
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