

# CANADIAN ROUNDTABLE FOR SUSTAINABLE CROPS

## Terms of Reference Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Crops

### SUMMARY

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The Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Crops (CRSC) is a national, multi-stakeholder initiative dedicated to advancing sustainable production practices and outcomes across Canada's cereals, oilseeds, pulses and special crops sector (hereafter referred to as the 'grains' sector)<sup>1</sup>. The CRSC serves as a forum for facilitating cross-commodity collaboration and coordination on sustainable agriculture issues and opportunities facing grains sector participants. Value chain stakeholders, including growers, industry, customers, consumers and governments, are the focus of CRSC efforts; which involve assessing and responding to marketplace objectives and requirements, and showcasing Canada's investment and performance, in the area of sustainable production.

The CRSC will accomplish its objectives through multi-stakeholder engagement and collaboration and the pursuit of market-driven, science-based initiatives that are founded on the principle of ongoing improvement and respect the economic imperatives of all value chain participants.

The CRSC is currently structured as an informal, voluntary collaboration of interested parties and is not intended to disproportionately benefit any one individual or organization. This Terms of Reference outlines the vision, mission, objectives and operating parameters which will guide the activities of the CRSC until such time as a more formal governance structure is established.

### VISION

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***The Canadian grains sector is recognized globally to be economically viable, socially responsible and a leader in the adoption of environmentally sustainable production practices.***

### MISSION

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***Create value for all members of Canada's grains sector by providing a national forum for advancing, reporting on and communicating the sustainability of Canadian grain production.***

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

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The following principles are conditions to be satisfied in the implementation of CRSC initiatives aimed at enhancing and demonstrating the environmental sustainability, economic viability and social responsibility attributes of Canada's grains sector:

- National in scope
- Industry-led<sup>2</sup>
- Inclusive

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<sup>1</sup> The scope of the mandate and activities of the CRSC does not include forage or horticulture crops.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of conducting CRSC business, 'industry' refers to the growers of grains, oilseeds, pulses and special crops and the value chain links involved in supporting, handling, processing, distributing and marketing their production.

- Transparent
- Market-responsive
- Science-based
- Consensus-based<sup>3</sup>
- Promotes ongoing improvement<sup>4</sup>
- Costs and benefits are shared across the value chain<sup>5</sup>

## AREAS OF FOCUS

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- 1) Identify gaps in sector knowledge and data in the area of sustainable production.
- 2) Identify and raise value chain<sup>6</sup> awareness of existing and planned sector approaches for meeting marketplace objectives and requirements related to environmental, social and economic sustainability.
- 3) Engage Canada's grains sector in the development and assessment of marketplace objectives and requirements related to environmental, social and economic sustainability.
- 4) Facilitate the development of sustainability metrics reporting platforms adaptable for all members of Canada's grains sector.
- 5) Contribute to the development of a domestic policy environment that supports the sustainability and market access objectives of Canada's grains sector.
- 6) Raise awareness of the CRSC and its activities among grains sector stakeholders.
- 7) Raise awareness among domestic and global audiences of Canada's investment and performance in supplying sustainably grown crops.

## ROUNDTABLE MEMBERSHIP

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### Membership Eligibility:

Membership in the CRSC will be open to organizations or companies that are involved or interested in Canada's grains sector and wish to participate in a national forum for addressing environmental, social and economic sustainability issues and opportunities relevant to sector stakeholders.

Eligibility for membership will be dependent on a prospective member committing to:

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<sup>3</sup> Everyone discusses the issue and has an opportunity to be heard; effective communication takes place prior to the decision; every member can live with and support the decision even if it may not be their first choice; and ultimately everyone speaks with 'one voice'. Where consensus cannot be reached on a specific issue, provision will be made for a majority vote, and, if necessary, to allow for member dissension from a group position.

<sup>4</sup> Ongoing improvement is defined as a continuing effort to improve products, services or processes at the respective level of individual sector participants; typically improvement occurs over time on an incremental basis.

<sup>5</sup> In general, costs and benefits are shared across the value chain; however, in support of its overall objectives, the CRSC may from time to time commission crop- or location-specific projects that involve only a subset of value chain stakeholders.

<sup>6</sup> For the purposes of the CRSC, the grains value chain includes growers, industry (e.g., grain handling companies, crop input suppliers), customers (e.g., food manufacturing, distribution, retail and restaurant), consumers and governments.

- 1) Support the Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles of the CRSC and work constructively toward the achievement of CRSC objectives; and
- 2) Contribute financially to the operation of the CRSC by paying annual membership dues.

Each member is entitled to one seat on the CRSC and to identify one alternate representative (e.g., grower, director, staff) to serve in the event of the primary representative's absence. CRSC members will register in one of the following six categories:

- Grower association (provincial, regional or national)
- Value chain council/commodity association
- Grain handler/crop input supplier/processor association
- Grain/crop input/life science/seed/exporter/processing company
- Food manufacturing/distribution/retail/restaurant company
- Environmental non-government organization (NGO)

#### **Ex-Officio Members and Observers:**

##### ***Ex-Officio Members***

An Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) official will serve as a government liaison between the Department and the CRSC. Representatives of other federal or provincial government departments or agencies may participate as non-voting observers or technical experts as requested by the CRSC.

##### ***Observers***

From time to time, the CRSC may include non-voting participants or 'observers' (e.g., academics, subject matter experts, third party oversight bodies) to provide advice or perspective on a particular issue. Observers may be expected to attend CRSC meetings or discussions at their own expense or may have all, or a portion, of their expenses paid, subject to the determination of the CRSC.

#### **ROUNDTABLE GOVERNANCE**

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##### **Steering Committee:**

A Steering Committee will provide day-to-day management input on the activities of the CRSC between meetings of the full Roundtable. In so doing, the Steering Committee will act on behalf of and be accountable to the Roundtable membership.

The Steering Committee will be comprised of a representative cross section of value chain members and at least one non-government organization/consumer association. An AAFC official will serve as a government liaison between the Department and the CRSC Steering Committee. Observers may also participate on the Steering Committee. New Steering Committee members may be added at the discretion of the current Steering Committee membership and Co-chairs.

Organizations registered in any of the six membership categories represented on the Roundtable will be eligible for membership on the Steering Committee. The current membership of the CRSC Steering Committee is attached in Annex A.

The Steering Committee will be co-chaired by two member organizations of the Roundtable, which will be approved by the Steering Committee and Roundtable membership. One organization will be a grower association, and the other the Canada Grains Council. Each organization will appoint a representative to serve as Steering Committee Co-chair. These individuals will also serve as the Co-chairs of the Roundtable.

The role of the Steering Committee will include:

- Overseeing and providing guidance on CRSC activities;
- Providing support to the Co-chairs as needed; and
- Overseeing the management and distribution of membership funds.

## **ROUNDTABLE OPERATIONS**

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### **Decision Making:**

Decisions regarding the direction, activities and finances of the CRSC will be made on a consensus basis. Roundtable members will work cooperatively and in good faith to achieve a consensus position on the issue being considered. In the event consensus cannot be reached, a vote of the members will be held, with a 2/3 majority required to pass a motion. In any decision being made by the Roundtable, each member organization will be entitled to one 'vote'.

Where discussion occurs or a decision is reached on an issue or opportunity before the Roundtable, an assumption will be made that each member will communicate the discussion or decision-making outcomes to their respective organization.

### **Dissent Policy:**

Should a member choose to dissent from a majority decision taken at a meeting of the Roundtable at which the member was present, the member must request a dissent to be entered in the minutes of the meeting or provide a written dissent to the secretary of the meeting.

Should the dissenting member intend to communicate externally a position that is not consistent with the majority decision of the Roundtable; the member should inform the Roundtable in writing of its intention and the basis for its disagreement and provide reasonable advance notice to enable the Roundtable to respond. Internal discussion should then take place in an attempt to resolve the identified differences. If the differences cannot be resolved, the Roundtable will recognize the right of the member to pursue its own position externally. When presenting its position to others, the dissenting member shall make clear that it speaks for itself and not for the Roundtable as a whole.

### **Meetings:**

The CRSC will meet in person a minimum of one time per year and a maximum of two-times per year at a location agreed to by a 2/3 majority of Roundtable members. Where the assigned representative of a member organization is unable to attend a meeting of the Roundtable, the organization's identified alternate may attend on his or her behalf. Alternatively, the organization may participate remotely where teleconference or videoconference capabilities are available.

### **Sub-Committees and Working Groups:**

The CRSC may form Technical Sub-Committees or Working Groups to conduct specific activities on its behalf. Initial Sub-Committee/Working Group members will be selected by the CRSC Steering Committee, with any additional members to be selected by the Sub-Committee/Working Group. Sub-Committees and Working Groups will be chaired or co-chaired by an individual or individuals selected annually by Sub-Committee/Working Group members.

Each Sub-Committee/Working Group will develop Terms of Reference describing its mandate, method of operation and funding considerations. Sub-Committees/Working Groups will report to the Steering Committee as required and to the Roundtable on an annual or semi-annual basis.

The current Sub-Committees/Working Groups of the CRSC are identified in Annex A.

### **Secretariat:**

The Canada Grains Council will manage and function as the Secretariat for the CRSC, its Steering Committee, and any Technical Sub-Committees or Working Groups. Responsibilities will include:

- Coordinating and providing technical and administrative support for CRSC, Steering Committee and Technical Sub-Committee or Working Group meetings, in cooperation with member organizations and with assistance from AAFC as required;
- Providing technical and administrative support necessary for the ongoing operation and activities of the CRSC, Steering Committee and any Technical Sub-Committees or Working Groups, with assistance from member organizations and AAFC as required; and
- Developing budgets, administering funding, preparing financial reports, facilitating private, non-profit and public sector fundraising initiatives and collecting membership fees and project partner contributions as necessary for the ongoing operation and activities of the CRSC, Steering Committee and any Technical Sub-Committees or Working Groups.

### **Funding Responsibilities:**

Funding for the operation and activities of the CRSC will be generated through a combination of targeted member fundraising, project-specific contributions from industry partners, government funding applications, and annual membership dues (see schedule in Annex B). Financial requirements and budget allocations will be determined, and fundraising strategies implemented, by the CRSC Steering Committee membership in cooperation with the CRSC Secretariat. Annual membership fee collection will be managed by the CRSC Secretariat.

The cost of hosting in-person meetings of the full Roundtable or Steering Committee, including meeting room rental, A/V, and snacks and/or lunch, will be borne by the CRSC. Where possible, meetings will be held in government or member facilities to conserve costs.

Members will be responsible for 100% of travel and accommodation costs associated with in-person participation in CRSC, Steering Committee or Sub-Committee/Working Group meetings.

## ANNEX A

### CURRENT STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

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The initial membership of the CRSC Steering Committee includes the following organizations:

- Barley Council of Canada
- Canada Grains Council
- Canola Council of Canada
- Canadian Canola Growers Association
- Cargill Limited
- Cereals Canada
- CropLife Canada
- Fertilizer Canada
- Flax Council of Canada
- Grain Growers of Canada
- Grain Farmers of Ontario
- Les Producteurs de grains du Québec (PGQ)
- McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Limited
- Prairie Oat Growers Association
- Pulse Canada
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (Advisor)

### CURRENT TECHNICAL SUB-COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

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The following Sub-Committees have been established to support the activities of the CRSC:

- **Communications Committee** – Reporting to the CRSC Steering Committee, this committee will provide recommendations and facilitate the implementation of initiatives aimed at raising awareness of the CRSC among internal and external stakeholder audiences; raising awareness of what sustainability means and why it is important for Canada's grains sector; and creating a positive sustainability profile for Canada's grains sector.
- **Research and Assessment Committee** – Reporting to the CRSC Steering Committee, this committee will have the lead responsibility for addressing a range of technical issues associated with advancing and reporting on the sustainability of Canada's grains sector. Emphasis will be placed on identifying, assessing, facilitating research initiatives and encouraging cross-sector dialogue on crop sustainability issues and requirements.

## ANNEX B

### MEMBERSHIP DUES

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Membership dues will be assessed annually on the basis of membership category. The table below identifies the membership dues established for the first full year of CRSC operation.

Member Category	Membership Dues*
Grower association	\$1,000
Value chain council/commodity association	\$1,000
Grain handler/crop input supplier/processor association	\$1,000
Grain/crop input/life science/exporter/processing company	\$1,000
Food manufacturer/distribution/retail/restaurant company	\$1,000
Environmental non-government organization	\$500
Ex-Officio and Observer	No Charge

\* Membership dues are payable on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

### MEMBER WITHDRAWAL

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Any CRSC member may withdraw from the Roundtable by providing written notice to the Chair or Co-chairs of the Roundtable (Voluntary Withdrawal).

Any member deemed to be neglecting its responsibilities can be required to withdraw from the CRSC (Involuntary Withdrawal) with the support of a 3/4 majority of voting members. Failure to pay annual membership dues is cause for Involuntary Withdrawal.