

GTA Agricultural Action Committee Implementation

1. Preamble:

- 1.1 A core component for the implementation of the GTA Agricultural Action Plan is the formation of a Agricultural Action Committee (Action Item #7). The Committee is envisioned to be a multi-stakeholder umbrella organization that will provide overall co-ordination of the Plan implementation. The body will also provide advice to all levels of government, farm organizations and the broader industry on agriculture and rural issues.
- 1.2 The GTA Agricultural Action Committee is referenced as a lead or participant in 12 of the 37 action items contained in the Action Plan.
- 1.3 The structure mandate and operations of the Committee are provided in the attached Terms of Reference.

2. Approach

The GTA Agricultural Action Committee should be viewed with a three year life span. In the short term, there is considerable merit in spreading ownership for GTA Agriculture issues across many interest groups and provide a single forum for developing partnerships. However, a stand alone/independent organization/body may not be sustainable in the long term. The Committee should establish, generate momentum, deliver on the action plan, report back to the agriculture community at large and look for long term home for GTA Agriculture Action Plan.

3. Recommended Implementation Option

3.1. Dedicated Executive Director with Administrative Support

The Agricultural Action Committee could be serviced through the hiring of staff (Executive Director) and either contracting with another organization for administrative support (i.e. OFA) or hiring an Executive Assistant. The Executive Director (ED) could be a secondment opportunity from the Province, Regions or Federations/Industry, but ideally would be selected based on a competitive process. The ED would support the Committee with the preparation of agendas and tracking of actions arising from meeting, liaison with implementers of the 37 actions, pursue funding options, and monitor and report on progress in Plan implementation.

4. Work Plan Structure

Year One

- Establish the Agricultural Action Committee
- Confirm Terms of Reference, mandate, leadership and three year objectives
- Hire Executive Director and set up administrative practices
- Region's transfer ownership of initiative to the ED and Committee
- Prepare detailed work program, financial management strategy and budget based on the Plan
- Develop status database/tracking tool on the 37 Actions
- Begin implementation of priorities to ensure measurable success in year one
- Develop a communication strategy to report progress to stakeholders, including an annual report card
- Engage in long term strategic planning for Plan and Committee

Year Two

- Evaluate Year One objectives
- Confirm Year Two objectives
- Implement work program priorities based on workplan
- Explore partnership opportunities for longer-term governance
- Prepare annual report card

Year Three

- Evaluate Year Two objectives
- Confirm Year Three objectives
- Continue delivery of workplan objectives
- Develop Transition Plan to stable governance/funding structure
- Prepare annual report card

5. Budget

The annual budget should be established to cover the salary costs of the Executive Director, and potentially an Executive Assistant. The Committee may consider the need to hire short-term/project specific staff, such as summer students or consultants to drive implementation. Funding will also be allocated on a project specific basis and used to leverage other sources of funding. In-kind contribution will continue from the four Federations of Agriculture and Regional Municipalities. Office space should be secured from one of the partnering agencies/organizations involved with the Committee. For example, the OFA has previously extended an offer for space and administrative assistance.

Year 1:	\$225,000
Year 2:	\$300,000
<u>Year 3:</u>	<u>\$275,000</u>
Total:	\$800,000

The above amount is based on the firm commitment from the Province to provide seed money for the initiative and does not include contributions from the Regions or GTA Federations of Agriculture. Along with in-kind services, the Regions may consider budgeting for specific projects, particularly where partnering is required. The Federations should consider a nominal annual contribution to assist with Plan implementation (eg. \$5,000 per GTA Federation).

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