

Save a Billion Dollar Industry

Call for Expression of Interest: Solving Root Rot Complex in the
Canadian Prairies

DUE: July 31st, 2024



SECTION I

GENERAL INFORMATION

Introduction

The Canadian Root Rot Task Force (RRTF) is globally inviting interested parties to submit Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for developing innovative technologies and solutions to mitigate risk and eradicate infections of root rot complex in pulse crops across the Canadian prairies.

Background

In Canada, root rot complex poses the single greatest threat to the \$1.3 billion CAD pea and lentil industry (Statistics Canada, 2014). Peas and lentils are grown on more than 6.7M acres (2.7M hectares) of Canadian agricultural land. Greater than 90% of these acres/hectares are in the prairie provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta (Statistics Canada, 2022; Pulse Canada, 2021; Saskatchewan Pulse Growers, 2023). Of this production, more than 80% is exported globally as plant-based protein sources, making western Canadian peas and lentils major players in the \$10.8 billion CAD global plant protein market (Statistics Canada, 2022).

Root rot complex consists of *Fusarium spp.*, *Pythium*, *Rhizoctonia*, and the pathogen of most concern, *Aphanomyces eutiches*. *Aphanomyces eutiches* was identified in Alberta and Saskatchewan in the early 2010's (Banniza et al., 2013; Chatterton et al., 2015). Since its identification, root rot complex, specifically *Aphanomyces eutiches*, has caused a rapid continual reduction in pea and lentil seeded areas and farmers have been forced to rethink their production strategies (Banniza et al., 2015).

The RRTF, consisting of the Saskatchewan Pulse Growers, Alberta Pulse Growers, Manitoba Pulse and Soybean Growers crop commissions, and the Canadian pulse industry have been exhaustive in our attempts to find solutions that mitigate and/or control root rot complex, namely *Aphanomyces eutiches* and *Fusarium spp.*, in pea and lentil. To that end we are seeking parties beyond our existing scope to leverage those unique skills, technologies, products, biologicals, practices, etc. that may provide a solution to this dire situation.

Purpose

This Expression of Interest will allow selections of a project or projects that propose new or novel approaches to mitigate the risk and eradicate infections of root rot complex in peas and lentils. Projects that aim to control or eliminate oomycete infections and/or provide plant protection to peas and lentils utilizing unique approaches in genetics, metagenomics, and molecular, chemical or biological technologies are preferred. Multiple projects will be considered for the one million dollars of available funds and projects can be up to three years in length.

Root Rot Task Force (RRTF)

The Root Rot Task Force consists of members from the three provincial nonprofit farmer-directed pulse crop development commissions in the Canadian prairies; the Saskatchewan Pulse Grower (SPG), Alberta Pulse Growers (APG), and the Manitoba Pulse and Soybean Growers (MPSG). The RRTF membership reviews and funds research projects that target activity on root rot complex pathogens collaboratively. Thus far our research investments in this space have been exhaustive and our current research and investment pipeline is at capacity with both direct and leveraged funding mechanisms working tirelessly to find solutions. Part of the RRTF strategy is to expand the scope and scale of our research network with the sole purpose of finding the key to eliminating the risk of root rot in pea and lentil acres/hectares.

SECTION II

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Statement of Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure

Principal investigator (PI) agrees to standard business practice related to the confidential treatment of information provided by RRTF while this agreement is in effect, and at all times thereafter, the successful principal investigator and any officers, employees, or agents of the successful principal investigator:

- Will treat as confidential all information, data, documents, and materials acquired or to which access has been given in the course of, or incidental to, the performance of the agreement,
- Will not disclose or permit to be disclosed, to any person, corporation, or organization such information, data, documents, or materials without first obtaining written permission from the RRTF; and
- Will comply with any rules or directions made or given by RRTF with respect to safeguarding or ensuring the confidentiality of such information, data, documents, or materials.

This document must not be copied in whole or in part for any reason other than in the course of providing the information requested, without the expressed written permission of the RRTF.

2. Principal Investigator Information Usage

In completing and submitting this EOI the principal investigator and RRTF understand and agree to the following:

- Principal investigator’s confidential information must be clearly identified as “Confidential Information”. Subject to any rights of RRTF pursuant to this document to release or disclose information, the RRTF will treat in a confidential manner any information submitted in the proposal which is clearly identified in writing by the principal investigator as confidential.

3. Proposal

The principal investigator offers to provide to the RRTF, upon the terms and conditions set out in this EOI, the services detailed herein and at the price set out in the proposal (the “Proposal”) or otherwise agreed to by the parties.

4. Price Quotation/Evaluation Period

The principal investigator agrees that the prices quoted in its Proposal are firm and must be valid for acceptance by RRTF for sixty (60) days from the EOI submission closing date. All prices must be quoted in Canadian dollars.

5. Schedule of Events – Critical Dates

Release of EOI	May 30 th , 2024
EOI due date	July 31 st , 2024
Decision on EOI on or before	Sept. 30 th , 2024
Full proposal due date	Dec. 1 st , 2024
Funding award and work to begin	upon approval in 2025

6. Proposal Acceptance

The RRTF reserves the right to award the EOI in whole or in part to the best interest of the task force membership. The highest rated, lowest priced, or any proposal will not necessarily be accepted.

The principal investigator, if successful, agrees by submitting a proposal to abide by the terms and conditions of the EOI as specified. The principal investigator also agrees to enter into an agreement with the RRTF. Both the EOI and the principal investigator’s proposal form part of the contract.

Negotiation sessions may be held to work out contract details and other expectations of the parties applicable to the services/work, based on the EOI and the proposal(s) submitted.

7. Response Disqualification

Proposals received from a principal investigator after the closing deadline will not be accepted.

RRTF reserves the right to reject any and all responses.

Proposals that are incomplete, conditional, illegible, obscure or that contain irregularities of any kind may be rejected.

RRTF does not accept bids through facsimile transmission.

8. Evaluation of Responses

All responses to this EOI will be evaluated as per the evaluation criteria in Section V.

9. Proposal Costs and Expenses

This EOI does not commit RRTF to pay any cost incurred in the submission of Proposals, or the cost incurred in making necessary studies for the preparation thereof, or to contract for any services.

10. Conditional Approval

The Agreement resulting from this EOI may be conditional on the approval of the RRTF's individual commissions Board of Directors.

11. Publicity and Corporate Identification

A principal investigator shall not use RRTF or Canadian Lentils corporate identification or name in any advertisement, promotion, or otherwise without the prior written consent of the RRTF, which may be delayed or withheld without explanation.

12. Governing Laws

This EOI is governed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the Province of Saskatchewan and the federal laws of Canada applicable therein.

13. Contact

Although we have tried to be as thorough as possible, we recognize that you may need clarification or additional information in certain areas. Therefore, we invite you contact the following person:

Sherrilyn Phelps

Saskatchewan Pulse Growers

235-415 Wellman Cres., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada

Cell: 1-306-480-9767

E-mail: sphelps@saskpulse.com

14. Cancellation of EOI

RRTF reserves the right to cancel the award of this EOI for any reason upon thirty (30) days written notice without liability to principal investigators and reasons for cancellation need not be given.

15. Right to Approve Subcontractors

RRTF reserves the right to approve any subcontractors used by the principal investigator related to this EOI or the subsequent agreement.

SECTION III

INSTRUCTIONS TO PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

This section describes the Proposal requirements.

Principal Investigators are cautioned to carefully read and follow the procedures required by this EOI, and to comply with all requirements. Deviation from these requirements may be cause for rejection.

1. Submission of Proposals

This EOI, with answers provided, required documents attached and optional supporting materials, constitutes a complete proposal. Please submit proposals electronically to the contact person above.

No later than 5:00:00 p.m. local time in Saskatchewan, Canada (Central Standard Time) on **July 31st, 2024**, principal investigators should make sure they receive confirmation of the successful receipt of their submission.

Principal investigators must describe how their approach will address the requirements described in Section IV – Statement of Work. They must also provide cost information as it is described in Section VI – Part 3 – EOI Response requirements.

All proposals received by RRTF will then be in the custody of the RRTF. Therefore, proposals shall not be returned to principal investigators.

RRTF intends to make the selection of the successful candidate by **September 30th, 2024** and the successful vendor(s) will be notified of the decision.

2. Responding to EOI Items

2.1 Complete Proposals

- A submission must propose full specifications for all of the relevant requirements detailed in Section IV - Statement of Work of this EOI. Submissions that do not present complete proposals may be at a disadvantage or may be disqualified.

2.2 Additional Specifications/Alternative Approaches

- Submissions may include additional specifications for items not covered by the EOI that the principal investigator considers necessary and integral to its Proposal. Information on these additional items should be clearly distinguished.
- Principal investigators must give detailed rationale as to why these specifications should also be considered for adoption.
- Principal investigators may provide alternate EOI item definitions, categorizations, and groupings so long as the rationale for doing so is clearly stated.

3. Format of EOI Submissions

Submissions that are concise and easy to read will receive more consideration. Submitted documentation should be confined to that directly relevant to the items requested in this EOI.

All EOI submissions should include:

- A cover page carrying the following information:
 - The full name of the submission.

- An inventory of all accompanying documents, with short descriptions.
- Completed form in Section IV

- Primary and alternate contact points authorized by the principal investigator to officially state the principal investigator's position relative to the submission.

- Overview or guide to the material in the submission.

- Experience Summary
 - Describe the contractor's technical experience.
 - Describe their interest in exploring solutions to root rot complex in western Canada.
 - Describe who will be dedicated to this project, along with their technical capabilities (qualifications) and experience.

- Cost Estimate (in \$CAD)
 - Provide expected cost for completion of entire project with breakdown of cost itemized where applicable.
 - Describe in detail your fee schedules as they relate to project deliverables.

SECTION IV EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORM

1. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Name:
Institution:
Address:
Phone:
Fax:
Email:

2. PROJECT TITLE

3. CO-INVESTIGATORS (People working directly on the project and their contact information)

Name:
Institution:
Address:
Phone:
Fax:
Email:

Name:
Institution:
Address:
Phone:
Fax:
Email:

4. TOTAL AMOUNT REQUESTED FROM RRTF: \$CAD _____

5. TOTAL AMOUNT CONTRIBUTED FROM OTHER SOURCES (confirmed or pending): \$CAD _____

6. KEYWORDS (provide a maximum of five (5) words or phrases for each category)

Research Area:

Research Design/Methodology:

7. RESEARCH GAP ADDRESSED (clearly demonstrate how the research is aligned with the areas identified in the Request for Proposals (EOI) document or what research problem you are solving. Maximum **250** words)

8. DESIGN/METHODOLOGY (briefly describe objectives, hypothesis to be tested, research plan, methodology and expected results. Maximum **400** words)

9. IMPACT TO THE PULSE INDUSTRY (how the research results address the research problem/gap and/or benefit the growth and sustainability of the Canadian pulse industry, including potential economic returns to the producers funding this research. Maximum **400** words)

