



Contract Opportunity – Living Labs Director

Location: Alberta, flexible, remote-based
Start Date: May/June 2022

Status: Full-time, 5-year contract
End Date: March 2027

Background

The Living Laboratories Initiative is a \$185 million, 10-year program intended to establish a Canada-wide network of Living Labs, where regional leaders will bring together agricultural producers, stakeholders, and scientists to co-develop, test, and monitor beneficial management practices (BMPs) to enhance climate resiliency. Living Labs are based upon three core principles: focusing on producer needs, broad and diverse partnerships, and testing in the real-life context under real agricultural production conditions. For more information please visit: <https://agriculture.canada.ca/en/agricultural-science-and-innovation/living-laboratories-initiative>.

Alberta Beef Producers is the lead applicant on a Living Labs proposal “*Integrating beef, forage and cropping systems to improve soil C sequestration & reduce GHG emissions.*” If successful, this project has several overarching objectives:

- Assess the ability of new, or adjustments to current, beneficial management practices (BMPs) to permanently sequester C and address climate change goals.
- Identify barriers to adoption of and find solutions to increase adoption of BMPs and Agriculture Nature-Based Solutions (Ag-Nbs) to sequester C and address climate change goals;
- Conduct farm-level, regional, and industry-level economic analyses of BMPs and Ag-Nbs and extend economically sustainable practices to encourage producer adoption;
- Develop simple outcomes- and systems-based approaches for producers to quantify the costs and benefits of environmental BMPs;
- Share accurate on-farm measurements of C sequestration and GHG emissions to support C sequestration prediction mapping, GHG modelling, and life-cycle analysis;
- Inform federal and provincial policy on the effectiveness, economics, and adoption potential of Ag-Nbs and current BMPs for climate change solutions across the beef, forage, and cropping sectors; and
- Build a producer-orientated mentorship network.

BMPs that may be considered for implementation on-farm fall under the following broad categories, which were developed with producer engagement and input:

1. Crop rotations and cropping systems (e.g., diversifying rotations, fall seeded crops, use of cover, relay, and intercrops, residue management, optimization of tillage, increased yields, incorporation of livestock grazing, etc.);
2. Land use changes (e.g., conversion of marginal land to perennial or annual forages, conservation/restoration of wetlands, forages/vegetative buffer strips, etc.);
3. Grazing management (e.g., planned livestock grazing on crop or marginal land, managed grazing strategies, etc.);
4. Livestock feeding (e.g., feed additives to reduce GHG emissions, diet formulation strategies, precision feeding, etc.);
5. Nutrient management (e.g., 4R nutrient management, variable rate fertilizer, nitrification inhibitors, manure application on no-till systems, composting, arrangements between crop and livestock producers for manure use, etc.); and
6. Increasing carbon on the whole farm (e.g., recognizing that farms are heterogenous in their ability to sequester C and using manure to optimize where storage occurs).



The project is targeting approximately 51 beef, forage, and cropping producers as core participants, two to three feedlots, and two to three Indigenous communities, primarily located in three geographical regions (Peace region, Edmonton/Central region, Lethbridge region).

Position Responsibilities:

The Living Labs Director will be responsible for the oversight and scientific coordination of all Living Labs activities and will report to the Core Project Team consisting of project partners who have contributed financially to this initiative. Specific responsibilities include:

- Oversight and coordination of project contract staff including: KTT/Engagement Lead, Engagement Facilitators, and Indigenous Engagement Lead, as well as Living Lab Activity Leads
- Liaise with AAFC Living Labs Coordinator
- In conjunction with Living Lab Activity Leads, AAFC Living Labs Coordinator, KTT/Engagement Lead, Engagement Facilitators, Indigenous Engagement Lead, and producer cooperators, develop and execute yearly Living Lab activities including planning meetings, co-development workshops, and feedback sessions
- Populate and oversee Living Labs Scientific Advisory Group
- Ensure data collection and analysis quality control procedures are in place
- Identify gaps in knowledge that require controlled research activities
- Develop reports and presentations
- Assist with financial management and oversight as required
- Some travel required
- Other activities and tasks that may be identified through the course of the contract period

Position Qualifications:

- Demonstrated experience managing large, multidisciplinary, applied agricultural research projects with ability to work successfully with producer collaborators and diverse stakeholders
 - Broad knowledge of nature-based climate solutions related to greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sequestration is an asset
- Demonstrated experience managing large budgets
- Strong interpersonal skills, including conflict resolution
- Strong oral and written communication skills
- Strong problem-solving skills
- Strong attention to detail, time management, and organizational skills
- Ability and experience with managing a team while being self-motivated
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office 365 programs and video conferencing platforms, including Powerpoint, Excel, Word, Sharepoint, Teams, Zoom, etc.
- Valid drivers license, access to vehicle, and appropriate computer hardware/software

Position is contingent upon receipt of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) funding. A funding decision is expected late May. Only those applicants selected for interviews will be contacted.

If interested in this position, please submit a cover letter, resume/CV, and compensation expectation to Karin Schmid at karins@albertabeef.org. Position will remain open until filled.