

Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) 5th Edition FAQs

General Information

What is new in the EFP 5th edition? The EFP 5th edition workbook has been updated to strengthen the focus on maintaining soil cover, awareness of species at risk and biodiversity, reflect current legislative requirements, offer support for energy efficiency and address adaptations for farming in a changing climate.

Is the EFP 5th edition longer? Will it take more time for farmers to complete?

Completion of the EFP 5th edition will take the same amount of time and follows the same approach as the 4th edition. The EFP 5th edition includes the same number of worksheets (23) and contains a similar number of questions (up to 351 questions compared to 348 in the 4th edition). However, farmers are not required to answer all 351 questions. They only complete the worksheets relevant to their farm operation, and within those, only the questions that apply.

Why should I update to the new EFP 5th edition? Farmers are encouraged to complete the updated EFP to ensure their practices accurately reflect any changes made on the farm, such as the addition of new commodities, expansion of acreage or adoption of new practices. Updating also provides an opportunity to refresh and deepen knowledge of the program's content and recommendations. Even if major changes have not occurred, a regular review helps keep environmental planning up-to-date and aligned with current best practices.

Is there a cost to complete the EFP 5th edition? No, there is no cost to a farmer to complete the workbook or to attend an in-person, two-day EFP workshop or two-session EFP webinar. Participation in the EFP is voluntary.

Will my answers to the environmental risk assessment questions or my action plans be shared? No. Completion of the EFP remains confidential. Upon completion of your EFP workbook (paper or electronic), it will be submitted to an OSCIA Field Representative for confidential verification. They will review the EFP for completeness and ensure that you have included relevant action plans for high-risk activities on your farm but will not share that information. OSCIA does, however, collect and report on basic demographic data, including participant county, watershed and primary commodity.

I have heard that EFP 5th edition includes information about climate change. Is it part of the Net Zero initiative? No. The EFP 5th edition content includes information to educate farmers about farming in a changing climate, in the same manner that it contains information about other best management practices aimed at reducing environmental risks. As with other sections of the workbook, the answers provided and associated action plans are confidential.

How long will my completed EFP 5th edition be valid for? The EFP in Ontario does not have an expiration date, however, different organizations or cost-share programs may set their own requirements for which version of EFP they require for program participation. Generally, it is recommended that producers renew their EFP every five years.

How can I participate in the EFP? Please refer to the EFP page on the OSCIA website (<https://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/canada-ontario-environmental-farm-plan/>) for information on how to sign up for an in-person workshop or a virtual webinar. Note all EFP workshops and webinars scheduled after July 11, 2025 will use the EFP 5th edition workbook.

What if I have further questions not addressed below? To whom should I reach out?

For more information about the EFP, please see the EFP page on the OSCIA website (<https://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/canada-ontario-environmental-farm-plan/>) or email questions to scap@ontariosoilcrop.org.

Completing an EFP

How can I complete the EFP 5th edition? The EFP can be completed either by participating in a two-day, in-person workshop, a two-session webinar or by completing the standalone electronic EFP (the latter is recommended only for renewing participants). Visit <https://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/canada-ontario-environmental-farm-plan/> for more information or to start the process.

All participants must submit their EFP 5th edition workbook (paper or electronic) for confidential verification by an OSCIA Field Representative before a completion certificate will be issued.

I have completed EFP editions 1 to 4; do I really need to attend a workshop? Can you mail me the workbook or can I complete the eEFP? While you can complete the standalone eEFP, it is recommended that you attend a workshop or webinar to learn about updated content. Hard copy workbooks are only available to those participating in in-person workshops.

How do I know if I should complete a paper or electronic EFP (eEFP)? There are three ways to complete an EFP: the 2-day, in-person workshop, two 2-hour live webinars or independent on-line renewal (an eEFP).

Farmers are strongly encouraged to attend an in-person workshop or webinar to gain a full understanding of the content. However, the eEFP is available for producers who have previously completed a workshop and are familiar with the EFP process.

eEFP participants must be comfortable using a computer and web browser and be able to upload files, such as maps, to complete the electronic workbook. While support is available for technical issues, users are expected to complete the workbook content

independently. In certain cases, arrangements may be made to provide hard copy workbooks to webinar participants upon request.

What kind of support is available if I complete the eEFP on my own? The eEFP is intended for independent completion; however, support is available for users who experience technical difficulties. If assistance is needed, participants can:

- a) contact the OSCIA Field Representative assigned to them when they created their eEFP account; or
- b) email **EFP.Help@ontariosoilcrop.org**.

Hard copy workbooks are typically only available to farmers attending in-person workshops. In certain cases, arrangements may be made to provide hard copy workbooks to webinar participants upon request.

Eligibility and Requirements for Funding Programs

Will my EFP4 certificate of completion still be valid to support Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) funding applications for 2025-2026? Yes, your EFP4 certificate of completion will continue to be accepted as part of eligibility requirements for stewardship cost-share programs for the remainder of the Sustainable CAP until March 2028.

How long will the EFP4 certificate of completion be accepted as a cost-share eligibility requirement? Each funding organization determines the guidelines and eligibility requirements for their funding programs, including EFP eligibility. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA) will continue to accept the EFP4 as part of eligibility requirements for stewardship funding programs for the remainder of Sustainable CAP framework, until March 2028.

Do I need to complete an EFP 5th edition for AgriInvest? Please contact Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada for information on AgriInvest program requirements.

I am required to complete the EFP to maintain compliance with industry standards for my agricultural commodity. Will I need to complete the EFP 5th edition? Please contact your commodity organization to confirm their standards regarding EFP completion.

Will 1-day EFP renewal workshops be available for the EFP 5th edition? At this time, the 1-day EFP renewal workshop will not be offered to complete an EFP 5th edition. Farmers may choose to complete their EFP 5th edition workbook in a variety of ways, either by attending a two-day, in-person workshop, through a two-session EFP webinar or by completing the standalone electronic EFP (an eEFP is only recommended for participants renewing a previous EFP edition).

Transitioning from the EFP 4th to EFP 5th edition

Will my electronic EFP (eEFP) 4th edition automatically upgrade to the eEFP 5th edition platform? No. You will need to start a new workbook to complete your eEFP 5th edition.

Workbook questions have been updated (e.g., old content deleted, questions consolidated/combined, new questions added) and farmers will need to assess their operations using the updated EFP 5th edition. Sketch maps used to create your eEFP4 can be reuploaded into the eEFP 5th edition platform if the information contained in them has not changed.

I am currently working on an EFP4. How long do I have to complete the workbook and submit it for verification? No new EFP4 electronic or paper workbooks can be started after July 11, 2025; however, if you have already started filling out an EFP4 workbook (electronic or paper), you will be able to complete and submit it for OSCIA verification until December 1, 2025.

What happens if I submit my completed EFP4 workbook for verification after the December 1, 2025 deadline? OSCIA will not be able to accept any EFP4 workbooks for review and verification after December 1, 2025. After this date, you will be required to restart your EFP with a new workbook using the 5th edition platform for electronic EFP completions or hardcopy workbook.

Can I bring my EFP4 binder to the workshop to aid me in completing my EFP 5th edition? Yes. Sketch maps can be reused or updated, and knowing the soil characteristics of your farm as completed in your previous workbook will be helpful. However, questions throughout the workbook have changed. For example, some have been deleted or consolidated, and some contain new information, so you cannot simply answer all the questions with the same rating that you selected in the previous version.

Will I be able to access my EFP4 after the EFP 5th edition has launched? Yes. Your EFP4 will remain available for viewing, but after December 1, 2025, you will not be able to update it for reverification.

Funded in part by the Government of Canada under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal, provincial, territorial initiative.