

## Funding dairy research through innovation fund

### Introduction:

The dairy industry is one of the largest food industries in Canada and is an important contributor to the country's economy. In 2017, the industry fetched \$6.56 billion in total net farm cash receipts and produced 89.8 million hectolitre milk. As of August 2018, there were 10,593 dairy farms in country. The industry is also vital for many Western and Atlantic rural communities. Given the importance of the sector in the country, it wishes to stay updated in terms of latest technology and innovative practices.

### Intervention:

The government funds its research in the sector through Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI). The CFI makes financial contributions to Canada's universities, colleges, research hospitals and non-profit research organizations to increase their capability to carry out high-quality research. CFI contributes up to 40% of a project's research infrastructure costs. Matching funds are often provided by provincial governments in combination with the host institution or private partners. Between 1998 and 2015, CFI invested in cutting-edge labs, facilities and equipment for 18 dairy research projects at seven universities, totaling \$11.3 million. The investment is spread across a wide spectrum, such as, acquisition of state-of-the-art research equipment, funding for creation of Institute of Nutrition and Functional Foods (INAF), and funding of research on the effect of nutrients on the metabolism of ruminants.

### Impact:

- CFI investments in dairy infrastructure have resulted in social benefits through improved animal welfare practices and food health and safety, economic benefits through improved efficiency in milk and cheese processing as well as new feed research, and environmental benefits through the development of sustainable practices.
- The variety in focus of these dairy projects has resulted in the acquisition of diverse types of infrastructure. The breadth of infrastructure shall advance specific areas of dairy farming research.
- A noteworthy aspect of the research projects is the interconnected networks between dairy researchers and the dairy sector. In some cases, through collaborations, industry partners have adopted and implemented innovative solutions developed with the CFI-funded infrastructure.
- The strong alignment of research projects with industry needs creates an ideal training environment and contributes to the knowledge and skill development of the next generation of researchers.
- The availability of CFI infrastructure has enabled Canadian researchers working in dairy to secure additional funding to advance their research.

### Learnings for India:

A unique and important aspect of CFI is that it enables investment from private players, and the governments. This ensures that the government does not bear 100% of the cost of research funds.

It also ensures that the research is relevant to industry requirement. Creation of a dedicated research fund, with collaboration from multiple parties can support research in Indian animal husbandry and dairy sector.

*Source: Dairy Reporter, Largest US research dairy set for Idaho, Dairy Reporter.co, retrieved from <https://www.dairyreporter.com/Article/2019/09/02/Largest-US-research-dairy-set-for-Idaho>, accessed on 29 December 2019; The Spokesman Review, University of Idaho plans for largest research dairy in the US, 14 March 2019, retrieved from <https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2019/mar/14/university-of-idaho-plans-for-largest-dairy-in-the>*