



Service Offer

Purpose

This document provides an overview of the types of partnerships and services that The Bauta Family Initiative can provide to collaborators in order to increase the impact of research and education activities in the field of advancing seed sovereignty for organic/ecological farmers in Canada.

Context

The Bauta Family Initiative for Canadian Seed Security (BFICSS / the Bauta Family Initiative), a program of SeedChange, partners with farmers and organizations across the country to deliver regionally-adapted field programs to increase the quality, quantity, and diversity of Canadian-grown seeds that are adapted to agroecological and climate-resilient farming practices.

The Bauta Family Initiative works with over 200 farmers to implement participatory on-farm seed conservation, variety improvement, and variety development programs. These programs are complemented by extensive knowledge transfer activities providing technical support and learning opportunities for farmers.

One of the core principles of our program is to deliver our work in partnership - in partnership with farmers, farmer-led associations and nonprofits, as well as universities, government agencies and philanthropic groups involved in the field of sustainable agriculture, organic/ecological seed production, and plant breeding.

Core Programs

Participatory Plant Breeding and Seed Conservation:

We coordinate participatory plant breeding, variety trialing, and seed conservation programs across Canada in partnership with universities, research institutions, and agricultural non-profits. These on-farm research programs help farmers develop and adapt varieties of field crops and vegetables that excel in agroecological and climate-resilient farming conditions. Farmers who require varieties that are well-adapted to climate-resilient farming practices are underserved by traditional breeding programs and the seed market. The Bauta Initiative's farmer-led plant breeding and seed conservation programs are the only ones of their kind in the country and are working to build the capacity of farmers and all stakeholders in the sector to fill this gap.

Farmer-to-Farmer Training:

In collaboration with agricultural nonprofits and universities across Canada, we facilitate farmer-to-farmer learning on seed conservation, seed production, and plant breeding. We

have built a strong track record of empowering farmers to participate in peer learning, overcoming barriers of isolation or resource and time shortages, by providing support, facilitation, and access to expertise. The combination of skillfully delivering technical programming while building strong social networks is a powerful model. Our training programs offer a powerful model for expanding farmer capacity through cultivating community connection.

Farmer-led Seed Policy Research:

The regulatory framework of Canada's seed system is complex and challenging for farmers to navigate. Informed by our comprehensive field program, a principled approach to farmer engagement, and sound technical analysis, we focus on high quality policy translation for farmers. The goal of our policy research services is to empower farmers to understand Canada's seed system so they can more effectively conserve and develop varieties that are adapted to climate-resilient farming environments.

Partnership Structure

The Initiative's structure is partnership-based, nationally-coordinated, and regionally-driven. SeedChange leads the Bauta Initiative at the national level, supporting its design and delivery through core national and regional partners. We work with research institutions, farmer associations, and non-profits through formal and informal partnership agreements. Our core partners deliver a combination of on-farm research and farmer training activities on seed conservation, seed production, and plant breeding.

- **Seeds of Diversity Canada (National):** seeds.ca
- **FarmFolk CityFolk (British Columbia):** farmfolkcitfolk.ca
- **Organic Alberta (Prairies):** organicalberta.org
- **Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario (Ontario):** efao.ca
- **Sème l'avenir Québec - SeedChange Quebec (Québec):** onsemelavenir.org
- **Atlantic Canadian Organic Regional Network (Atlantic Canada):** acornorganic.org

Partnerships are central to the success of all of our programs and our preferred model of program delivery. All new partnerships with the Bauta Initiative will involve working with one, or a combination, of the above partners to deliver the goals and objectives of the collaboration.

Types of Services:

For agricultural non-profits, research institutions, universities, and other organizations interested in integrating seed conservation, seed production, and plant breeding programs into their own, The Bauta Family Initiative has the capacity to support you from project design to program implementation and delivery. Our program staff is strategically located in agricultural regions throughout Canada and has a multidisciplinary skill set and 10 years of experience delivering a regionally-driven, field-based seed diversification programs in Canada. Our primary services are detailed below:

Participatory Seed Research Project Design and Coordination

- Project design and coordination support for participatory plant breeding and variety trials for field crops and vegetables
- Organize farmer consultations/surveys to understand crop selection, breeding goals, selection methods, and commercialization
- Develop systems to manage and implement multi-location variety trials including, but not limited to, systems for seed orders and shipping, trial protocol development, trial design, and results interpretation
- Accession storage for breeding material at Seeds of Diversity Canada and Plant Gene Resources of Canada
- Contributions towards academic publications and research briefs

Farmer-to-Farmer Learning and Knowledge Transfer

- Coordination of in-person learning events and integration of learning opportunities at existing farmer training events (i.e. field days, conferences, workshops, etc.)
- Coordination of virtual learning events and integration of learning opportunities at existing farmer training events (i.e. webinars, virtual advisory meetings, podcasts, online conferences, etc.)
- Coordination of in-person and virtual mentorship programs matching mentees with experienced seed growers and plant breeders
- Support with workshop, field day, and/or curriculum design for all training activities associated with seed conservation, seed production, plant breeding, and seed policy
- Post-production capacity of online training events and development of educational materials and research briefs
- Coordination of tasting events for grains and vegetables where varieties are evaluated for culinary or end-use qualities

Fundraising and Strategic Support

For all types of partnerships we are able to offer the following types of strategic support:

- Grant writing, proposal development, and donor stewardship
- Networking and outreach to farmers, farming organizations, plant breeders, research institutions, and value chain actors
- English to French/French to English bilingual document translation (fee-based service)
- Guidance on interpreting Canada's seed regulatory framework including variety registration systems, intellectual property rights, and open source seed
- Expertise on seed sovereignty and participatory research methodologies in Canada

All services are offered at a rate of \$75/hour (rate negotiable depending on the complexity of the project and the capacity of the partner) with a minimum contract of \$7,500.