

FY 2027 Request for Pre-Proposals: Pre-Harvest Beef Safety Research

Beef farmer- and rancher-supported research helps fill gaps to ensure the body of pre-harvest beef safety knowledge continues to grow -- particularly as applied research funding opportunities become more limited. These research considerations represent the first stage of a broader five-year roadmap for advancing pre-harvest beef safety research. Priorities are expected to evolve over time as knowledge gaps are addressed, technologies advance, and industry needs continue to emerge.

Investigators are encouraged to think broadly about how their capabilities, methods, or findings could translate across multiple research solicitations and disciplines, fostering collaboration and strengthening overall impact.

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), a contractor to the Beef Checkoff, is soliciting research pre-proposals in Pre-Harvest Beef Safety Research covering these applied and basic science topics for FY 2027:

EXPLORATORY RESEARCH TOPICS: SHORT-TERM, PILOT PROJECTS, PROOF OF CONCEPT, COMPILATION

- Apply updated methodologies and newly gained knowledge to utilize existing datasets and/or samples for enhanced understanding of pre-harvest beef safety and expanded contextual information and interpretation.
- Given evolving cattle demographics, management strategies, and pathogen profiles, what existing pre-harvest beef safety findings warrant reinvestigation?

Other topic areas of interest include but are not limited to:

- Relationships between environmental weather patterns and climate variability influence on pre-harvest beef safety risks across production
- Technology advancements to advance pre-harvest beef safety
- Pathogen co-occurrence and competition in pre-harvest beef systems

- Considerations for safe food production, focused on the pre-harvest environment, in areas where more than one food source is raised/produced
- Opportunities to reduce chemical hazards associated with the preharvest safety environment

IMPORTANT DATES AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR EXPLORATORY SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH:

- Pre-Proposal Submission Date: **May 31, 2026**
- Funding Notifications: **Late Fall**
- Project Duration: 12 months or less
- Project Start Date: As early as **January 2027**
- The RFP question addressed should be noted in the objectives section of the submission.
- Budget Limit: \$50,000; Elevated budget requests may be considered when appropriately aligned with the proposed scope, methodology, and experimental design, and when they offer clear potential to advance scientific knowledge or increase project impact. Inclusion of preliminary data or supporting evidence is strongly encouraged for proposals requesting higher funding levels.
- Research ideas should be novel, applicable to industry, and have a high potential impact. The primary objective of all projects must be to improve beef safety (not beef production and/or cattle health). Collaboration is strongly encouraged where relevant.

EXISTING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT TOPICS: GAP ANALYSIS, LITERATURE REVIEW, EXISTING DATA ANALYSIS, OR EVIDENCE REVIEWS.

Topic ideas of interest include but are not limited to:

- Environmental and management-related vectors involved in the inoculation and reinoculation of foodborne pathogens prior to harvest
- Non-traditional or emerging pre-harvest beef safety hazards that may not be adequately addressed by current paradigms
- Relationship between cattle disease and circulating pathogens of public health interest within/on the animal, carcass, or end-product. It can also include potential vectors for disease transmission that may be under-researched.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR EXISTING RESEARCH ASSESSMENT:

- Pre-Proposal Submission Date: **May 31, 2026**
- Funding Notifications: **Late Fall 2026**
- Project Start Date: As early as **January 2027**
- Budget limit: \$10,000
- Project timeline should be 12 months or less

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS:

The Beef Safety Research Program follows a two-part application process, including the submission of a pre-proposal. Pre-proposals are intended to be a brief overview of the proposed project. Pre-proposals must meet the submission deadline and follow the guidelines in the RFP to be considered. Pre-proposals should clearly state their relevance to the beef industry.

Leveraged funding through collaborations with industry, foundations, government, and other sources with matching funds is encouraged. In addition, collaboration with additional researchers or institutions is encouraged where appropriate. Accepted pre-proposals will then be considered for full proposal submission. Accepted full proposals will be funded (or funded in part) by the Beef Checkoff.

PRE-PROPOSALS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY **May 31st** at 11:59 pm EDT via the BeefGrants system.

National Cattlemen's Beef Association, a contractor to the Beef Checkoff, utilizes an online portal, BeefGrants, to manage the grants process and facilitate the submission and review of grant materials. All portal users will need to set up an account. Please visit https://ncba.BeefGrants.com/s_Login.jsp to register and apply for a grant.

PRE-PROPOSAL OUTLINE:

- Lay Project Title
- Research Project Title
- Timeline
- Budget
- Objectives
- Problem/Research Need

- Abbreviated Materials and Methods
- Industry Impact
- Collaborators/ In-kind Support
- Preliminary Data (optional)

REVIEW CRITERIA:

Pre-proposals will be reviewed by a panel of independent industry experts. Pre-proposals will be evaluated for: clearly defined hypothesis and objectives, research needs within the industry, and convincing evidence that the proposed research will change the concepts, methods, or technologies that drive this field.

All PIs will be notified of pre-proposal outcomes in mid-June. Pre-proposals selected to submit full proposals will receive further instructions and shall be submitted via the BeefGrants system. Full proposals will include a more robust description of the intended project and be evaluated within the same criteria listed above.

PUBLICATION COSTS:

Publication of all research is expected regardless of outcome, however financial support for manuscript publication is considered separate from research contracts. Once your project is completed and final report is submitted, please reach out to NCBA staff to receive more information on the new publishing guidance.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS:

PIs should review completed Pre-Harvest Beef Safety projects to avoid submitting an idea that already has been covered. Completed project summaries are available at <https://www.beefresearch.org>.

We understand that PIs do not know the nature of ongoing research projects. However, a list of ongoing projects cannot be made available due to contracting sensitivity. Please understand this limitation and use your best judgment to submit proposals that are both novel and relevant. If you have questions, please feel free to reach out.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES:

Project deliverables will include, at a minimum, a final technical report with a full listing of research results and implications, and an abbreviated executive summary highlighting key points from the full technical report. Final technical reports must follow a standard outline and

be thorough and interpretive in nature. Deliverables will also include a final statement outlining all project expenditures from the institution's business office. *Funds cannot be spent beyond the project end date established in the project contract.* Deliverables will be due on or before the project end date established in the contract.

DISCLAIMER:

We are aware that academic institutions have financial obligations for administering the research grants awarded to their faculty members. However, overhead costs, principal investigator salaries, tuition and equipment purchases will not be considered as part of the funds made available for this research. View the full indirect cost statement [here](#).

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE:

Reserve a time to visit about research proposals [here](#).

If you are new to submitting research proposals to our system we recommend [you join a meeting on setting up a profile in the system](#).

Please share this RFP with interested colleagues.

Visit www.beefresearch.org for additional information on the Checkoff-funded Beef Pre-Harvest Beef Safety Research program.