Interim Management Report of Fund Performance

# **AGF US Sector Rotation Fund**

March 31, 2024



# Management Discussion of Fund Performance

This management discussion of fund performance represents the portfolio management team's view of the significant factors and developments affecting the fund's performance and outlook.

#### **Results of Operations**

For the six months ended March 31, 2024, AGF US Sector Rotation Fund (the "Fund") returned 18.8% (net of expenses) while the S&P 500 Net Return Index ("S&P 500 Net Index") returned 22.9%.

The Fund under-performed the S&P 500 Net Index due to its defensive position of cash holdings (including short-term investments), which averaged 10.3% during the reporting period. The sector allocation effect has been neutral; however, the Fund's holdings in the Fidelity sector ETFs have smaller market capitalizations than those in the benchmark, resulting in negative security selection effect in a period when large capitalization stocks out-performed, especially via Information Technology ETF. From sector allocation perspective, Energy was the biggest detractor from performance owing to an unfavourable overweight allocation to the sector, while Health Care was the biggest contributor to performance resulting from a favourable underweight allocation to the sector. Utilities and Communication Services also contributed, driven by underweight and overweight allocations to the sectors, respectively.

Through the reporting period, the Fund remained focused on its objective of protection in down markets, while participating in up markets.

The sector positions remained unchanged in the last calendar quarter of 2023. During the quarter, a favorable underweight allocation to the Health Care sector contributed the most to results. Energy was the biggest detractor due to an unfavorable overweight allocation to the sector.

During the first calendar quarter of 2024, the Fund underwent a sector change due to sector rank changes triggered by the introduction of a new machine learning factor. In particular, the Energy and Consumer Staples sector ranks deteriorated due to the new machine learning factor, ranking the two sectors near the bottom. On the other hand, the Health Care sector rank improved, resulting from favorable ranking by the new machine learning factor as well as improving valuation. The Fund's current sector weights are listed below:

- Overweight in Communication Services, Consumer Discretionary (up from neutral), Health Care (up from underweight) andInformation Technology; - Neutral weight in Financials, Energy (down from overweight) and Industrials (up from underweight); and

- Underweight in Consumer Staples (down from overweight), Real Estate, Materials (down from neutral) and Utilities.

In the first calendar quarter of 2024, the Fund added value in four of the sectors. Being underweight Real Estate and Utilities added the most value to the Fund, while being overweight Consumer Staples detracted the most value from the Fund. In addition, the adverse selection effect from the Information Technology and Communication Services sectors caused by the higher tracking error of the ETFs against S&P 500 GICS ("Global Industry Classification Standard") sectors were the largest detractors from performance.

The Fund has gradually exited its defensive positions over the reporting period. In the final calendar quarter of 2023, the Fund reduced its cash holding from approximately 16.0% to 10.0%, and added to equities to be in line with the market risk model. In the first calendar quarter of 2024, the Fund gradually exited the cash position and became fully invested in equity stock by the end of the reporting period except for a cash management buffer of approximately 3.0%. The portfolio manager will continue to monitor the risk through the lens of Market Risk Model.

The Fund had net subscriptions of approximately \$67 million for the current period, as compared to net subscriptions of approximately \$29 million in the prior period. The portfolio manager does not believe that subscription activity had a meaningful impact on the Fund's performance or the ability to implement its investment strategy.

#### **Recent Developments**

Global equities rallied strongly during the reporting period. The major central banks of the developed world stopped hiking rates as global inflation levels began slowly coming down from record highs. As the impact of higher interest rates were felt in the U.S. and Europe, the expectation of possible rate cuts and avoiding a recession in 2024 became a real possibility. Throughout 2023, the excitement around the advances in artificial intelligence took the world by storm and gave impetus to the stellar performance of some of the biggest technology companies in the world, narrowing market leadership quite noticeably. However, towards the end of calendar year 2023, market leadership had widened as a surge in energy prices due to production cuts brought energy companies back into the spotlight. During the last calendar guarter of 2023, a renewed conflict in the Middle East added concerns about a new disruption to global activity and return of sustained volatility in the market. Fortunately, the fallout did not have too much of an impact

This interim management report of fund performance contains financial highlights, but does not contain either the interim or annual financial statements of the investment fund. You can get a copy of the interim or annual financial statements at your request, and at no cost, by calling 1888 226-2024, by writing to us at AGF Investments Inc., CIBC SQUARE, Tower One, 81 Bay Street, Suite 4000, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5J 0G1, or by visiting our website at www.AGF.com or SEDAR+ at www.sedarplus.ca.

Securityholders may also contact us using one of these methods to request a copy of the investment fund's proxy voting policies and procedures, proxy voting disclosure record, or quarterly portfolio disclosure.

on global markets. China's economic revival continued to falter as the country's property sector dragged performance and stimulus packages from the government did little to improve the situation.

In the U.S., despite expectations of a potential recession for a better part of 2023, the U.S. economy ended the calendar year strongly, with a gross domestic product growth figure of 3.4% during the final calendar quarter of 2023. As inflation continued to decline steadily through the reporting period, the U.S. Federal Reserve has been careful not to cut rates too fast. Unemployment in the country largely remained low throughout the reporting period, spiking suddenly in February 2024. Non-farm payrolls also added 200,000 jobs on average every month till February. The equity market continued to perform strongly through the reporting period, buoyed by expectations that interest rate cuts may be approaching. Till the end of March 2024, the S&P 500 Index recorded a new record level, forcing leading market analysts to reassess their 2024 target for the index. This rally was largely powered by the performance of several stocks named the 'Magnificent 7' throughout. From a sector perspective, Information Technology and Communication Services performed well during the reporting period, while Utilities dragged on performance. The U.S. government's 10-year yield, having hit a peak of 5.0% in mid-October 2023, began a steep decline and ended 2023 at 3.9%.

Subjective forecasts of market outlook do not have a role in the Fund's investment methodology, except as can be implied from portfolio positioning, which is based on the output of quantitative models.

The Fund remains focused on its objective of protection in down markets, particularly against heightened volatility in U.S. markets, and participation in up markets. The Market Risk Model continues to monitor market risk on a daily basis to dynamically adjust the Fund's equity exposure to protect the portfolio from drawdowns. The Sector Allocation Model continually scores sectors based on well-known drivers of equity market returns. The sector allocation is based on a blending of momentum, value, sentiment, quality, profitability, size as well as the regime factor and machine learning macro factors into a composite ranking from which over/under weights are assigned to the sectors; this is done benchmark relative. In the first calendar guarter of 2024, the Fund added a new component, which ranks the sectors by their predicted returns using existing factor ranks and other complementary variables as inputs. The prediction is based on machine learning models to capture the dynamic relationship between factors and returns.

#### **Related Party Transactions**

AGF Investments Inc. ("AGFI") is the manager ("Manager") and trustee of the Fund. Pursuant to the management agreement between the Fund and AGFI, AGFI is responsible for the day-to-day business of the Fund. AGFI also acts as the investment (portfolio) manager of the Fund, managing the investment portfolio of the Fund. The Fund was also party to an investment advisory agreement with AGFI and AGF Investments LLC. AGF Investments LLC acts as the investment advisor and provides investment advisory services to the Fund. Fees payable to AGFI for such services are payable directly by unitholders and are not expenses of the Fund.

AGFI pays for all of the operating expenses relating to the operation of the Fund, except for certain costs as disclosed in the current prospectus, in exchange for a fixed rate administration fee. The administration fee is calculated based on the Net Asset Value of the Fund at a fixed annual rate of 0.32%. Administration fees of approximately \$168,000 were incurred by the Fund during the six months ended March 31, 2024.

AGFI and AGF Investments LLC are indirect wholly-owned subsidiaries of AGF Management Limited.

#### **Caution Regarding Forward-looking Statements**

This report may contain forward-looking statements about the Fund, including its strategy, expected performance and condition. Forward looking statements include statements that are predictive in nature, that depend upon or refer to future events or conditions, or that include words such as "expects", "anticipates", "intends", "plans", "believes", "estimates" or negative versions thereof and similar expressions.

In addition, any statement that may be made concerning future performance, strategies or prospects, and possible future Fund action, is also a forward-looking statement. Forward-looking statements are based on current expectations and projections about future events and are inherently subject to, among other things, risks, uncertainties and assumptions about the Fund and economic factors.

The forward-looking statements are by their nature based on numerous assumptions, which include, amongst other things, that (i) the Fund can attract and maintain investors and has sufficient capital under management to effect its investment strategies, (ii) the investment strategies will produce the results intended by the portfolio manager, and (iii) the markets will react and perform in a manner consistent with the investment strategies. Although the forward-looking statements contained herein are based upon what the portfolio manager believes to be reasonable assumptions, the portfolio manager cannot assure that actual results will be consistent with these forward-looking statements.

Forward-looking statements are not guarantees of future performance, and actual events and results could differ materially from those expressed or implied in any forwardlooking statements made by the Fund. Any number of important factors could contribute to these digressions, including, but not limited to, general economic, political and market factors in North America and internationally, interest and foreign exchange rates, global equity and capital markets, business competition, taxation, changes in government regulations, unexpected judicial or regulatory proceedings, technological changes, cybersecurity, the possible effects of war or terrorist activities, outbreaks of disease or illness that affect local, national or international economies (such as COVID-19), natural disasters and disruptions to public infrastructure, such as transportation, communications, power or water supply or other catastrophic events.

It should be stressed that the above-mentioned list of factors is not exhaustive. You are encouraged to consider these and other factors carefully before making any investment decisions and you are urged to avoid placing undue reliance on forward-looking statements. Further, you should be aware of the fact that the Fund has no specific intention of updating any forward-looking statements whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, prior to the release of the next Management Report of Fund Performance.

## **Financial Highlights**

The following tables show selected key financial information about the Fund and are intended to help you understand the Fund's financial performance for the six months ended March 31, 2024 and the past five years as applicable.

#### Net Assets per Unit<sup>(1)</sup>

For the periods ended	Mar 31, 2024 (\$)	Sept 30, 2023 (\$)	Sept 30, 2022 (\$)	Sept 30, 2021 (\$)	Sept 30, 2020 (\$)	Sept 30 2019 (\$
Net Assets, beginning of period <sup>(1)</sup> Increase (decrease) from operatior	28.66	25.17	25.00*	-	-	-
Total revenue	0.32	0.61	0.20	_	-	
Total expenses	(0.10)	(0.20)	(0.07)	-	-	
Realized gains (losses)	0.33	0.13	(0.05)	-	-	
Unrealized gains (losses)	5.00	2.10	(1.61)	-	-	
Total increase (decrease) from						
operations <sup>(2)</sup>	5.55	2.64	(1.53)	-	-	
Distributions:						
From income (excluding dividends)	-	-	-	-	-	
From dividends	(0.28)	(0.16)	-	-	-	
From capital gains	-	(0.01)	-	-	-	
Return of capital	-	-	-	-	-	
Total annual distributions <sup>(3)</sup>	(0.28)	(0.17)	-	-	-	
Net Assets, end of period <sup>(4)</sup>	33.73	28.66	25.17	-	-	

#### Ratios/Supplemental Data<sup>(1)</sup>

	Mar 31,	Sept 30,				
For the periods ended	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Total Net Asset Value (\$000's)	154.016	69.272	11.208			
Number of units outstanding (000's)	4,567	2.417	445	-	_	_
Management expense ratio <sup>(5)</sup>	0.43%	0.44%	0.44%	-	-	-
Management expense ratio before waivers or						
absorptions <sup>(6)</sup>	0.43%	0.44%	0.44%	-	-	-
Trading expense ratio <sup>(7)</sup>	0.04%	0.06%	0.27%	-	-	-
Portfolio turnover rate <sup>(8)</sup>	26.64%	41.62%	0.00%	-	-	-
Net Asset Value per unit	33.73	28.66	25.17	-	-	-

#### Explanatory Notes

(1) a) This information is derived from the Fund's audited annual financial statements and unaudited interim financial statements. Under International Financial Reporting Standards ("IFRS"), investments that are traded in an active market are generally valued at closing price, which is determined to be within the bidask spread and most representative of fair value. As a result, there is no difference between the net assets per unit presented in the financial statements ("Net Assets") and the net asset value per unit calculated for fund pricing purposes ("Net Asset Value").

- b) The Fund commenced operations in July 2022, which represents the date upon which securities were first made available for purchase by investors.
- (2) Net Assets and distributions are based on the actual number of units outstanding at the relevant time. The increase/decrease from operations is based on the weighted average number of units outstanding over the financial period.
- (3) Distributions were paid in cash/reinvested in additional units of the Fund, or both. The characterization of the distributions is based on management's estimate of the actual income for the year.
- (4) This is not a reconciliation of the beginning and ending Net Assets per unit.
- (5) The management expense ratio ("MER") is calculated in accordance with National Instrument 81-106, based on all the expenses of the Fund (including Harmonized Sales Tax, Goods and Services Tax and interest, but excluding foreign withholding taxes, commissions and other portfolio transaction costs) and the Fund's proportionate share of the MER, if applicable, of the underlying funds and ETFs in which the Fund has invested, expressed as an annualized percentage of average daily Net Asset Value during the period.
- (6) AGFI waived certain fees or absorbed certain expenses otherwise payable by the Fund. The amount of expenses waived or absorbed is determined annually at the discretion of AGFI and AGFI can terminate the waiver or absorption at any time.
- (7) The trading expense ratio represents total commissions and other portfolio transaction costs, including the Fund's proportionate share of the commissions, if applicable, of the underlying funds and ETFs in which the Fund has invested, expressed as an annualized percentage of average daily Net Asset Value during the period.
- (8) The Fund's portfolio turnover rate ("PTR") indicates how actively the Fund's portfolio advisor manages its portfolio investments. A PTR of 100% is equivalent to the Fund buying and selling all of the securities in its portfolio once in the course of the year. The higher a fund's PTR in a year, the greater the trading costs payable by the fund in the year, and the greater the chance of an investor receiving taxable capital gains in the year. There is not necessarily a relationship between a high turnover rate and the performance of a fund.

PTR is calculated based on the lesser of the cumulative cost of purchases or cumulative proceeds of sales divided by the average market value of the portfolio, excluding shortterm investments.

\* represents initial Net Assets (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7) and (8) see Explanatory Notes

## **Management Fees**

The Fund is managed by AGFI. AGFI is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Fund, which include providing investment and management services as well as other administrative services required by the Fund. The management fees for such services are payable directly by the unitholders, not by the Fund.

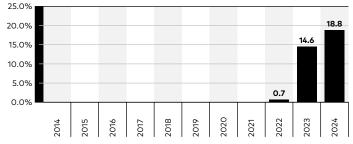
## **Past Performance\***

The performance information shown assumes that all distributions made by the Fund in the periods shown were reinvested in additional securities of the Fund. Note that the performance information does not take into account sales, redemption, distribution or other optional charges that would have reduced returns or performance. How the Fund has performed in the past does not necessarily indicate how it will perform in the future.

All rates of return are calculated based on the Net Asset Value.

#### Year-By-Year Returns

The following bar chart shows the Fund's annual performance for each of the past 10 years to September 30, 2023 (interim performance for the six months ended March 31, 2024) as applicable, and illustrates how the Fund's performance has changed from year to year. The chart shows, in percentage terms, how much an investment made on the first day of each financial period would have grown or decreased by the last day of each financial period.



Performance for 2022 represents returns for the period from July 6, 2022 to September 30, 2022.

# Summary of Investment Portfolio

As at March 31, 2024

The major portfolio categories and top holdings (up to 25) of the Fund at the end of the period are indicated in the following tables. The Summary of Investment Portfolio may change due to ongoing portfolio transactions of the Fund and the next quarterly update will be in the Quarterly Portfolio Disclosure as at June 30, 2024. The prospectus and other information about the ETFs are available on the internet at www.sedarplus.ca and/or www.sec.gov/edgar.shtml, as applicable.

Portfolio by Country	Percentage of Net Asset Value (%)
United States	99.2
Cash & Cash Equivalents	3.1
Other Net Assets (Liabilities)	(2.3)

Portfolio by Sector	Percentage of Net Asset Value (%)		
ETFs – United States Equity	99.2		
Cash & Cash Equivalents	3.1		
Other Net Assets (Liabilities)	(2.3)		

Portfolio by Asset Mix	Percentage of Net Asset Value (%)
United States Equity	99.2
Cash & Cash Equivalents	3.1
Other Net Assets (Liabilities)	(2.3)

Top Holdings	Percentage of Net Asset Value (%)
Fidelity MSCI Information Technology Index ETF	30.5
Fidelity MSCI Health Care Index ETF	13.5
Fidelity MSCI Financials Index ETF	13.0
Fidelity MSCI Consumer Discretionary Index ETF	12.5
Fidelity MSCI Communication Services Index ETF	11.0
Fidelity MSCI Industrials Index ETF	8.8
Fidelity MSCI Energy Index ETF	3.9
Cash & Cash Equivalents	3.1
Fidelity MSCI Consumer Staples Index ETF	3.0
Fidelity MSCI Utilities Index ETF	1.0
Fidelity MSCI Materials Index ETF	1.0
Fidelity MSCI Real Estate Index ETF	1.0
Total Net Asset Value (thousands of dollars)	\$ 154,016

<sup>\*</sup> The indicated rates of return shown here are the historical returns including changes in security value and reinvestment of all distributions and do not take into account sales, redemption, distribution or other optional charges by any securityholder that would have reduced returns or performance. Mutual funds are not guaranteed, their values change frequently and past performance may not be repeated.



For more information contact your investment advisor or:

AGF Investments Inc. CIBC SQUARE, Tower One

81 Bay Street, Suite 4000 Toronto, Ontario M5J 0G1 Toll Free: (888) 226-2024 Web: AGF.com

Securities of the funds are offered and sold in the United States only in reliance on exemptions from registration. No securities regulatory authority has expressed an opinion about these securities. It is an offence to claim otherwise.