



Outbreak Support Network (OSN)

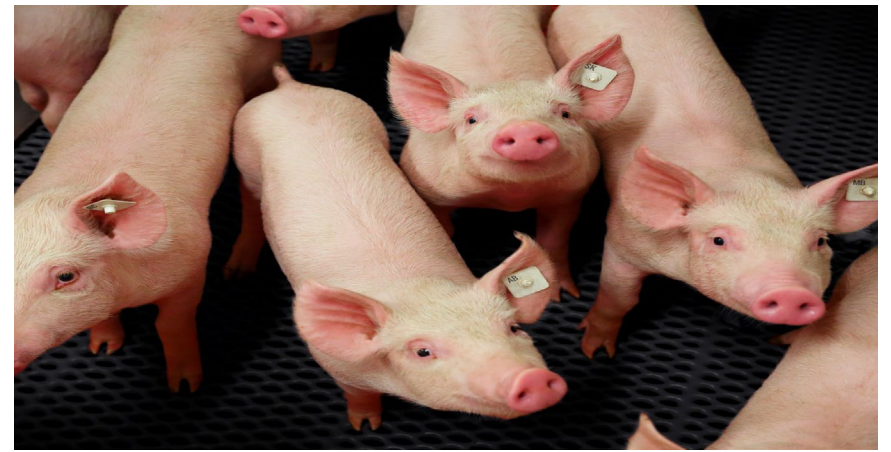
Phase 1 Preliminary Findings and Next Steps

Animal Health Canada Forum

September 24, 2025

Betty Althouse, DVM

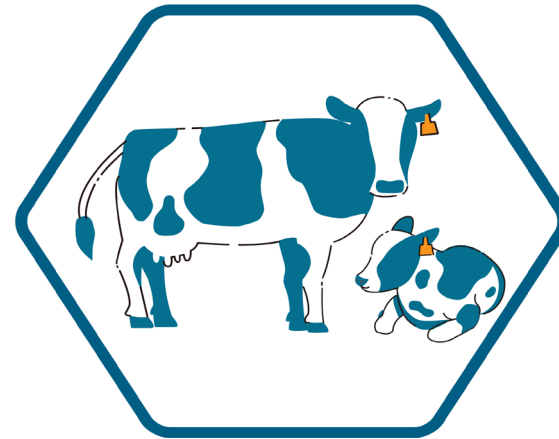
Outbreak Support Network Collaboration



**Canada West
Swine Health
Intelligence Network**



**Western Canadian
Animal Health
Network**



Goals of Outbreak Support Network

Establish a framework for supporting veterinary practitioners and producers dealing with suspect or confirmed cases reportable to CFIA:

- Bovine TB
- Blister cases (vesicular diseases)
 - start with swine
 - Seneca Valley A virus can mimic FAD
- Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) **in poultry**

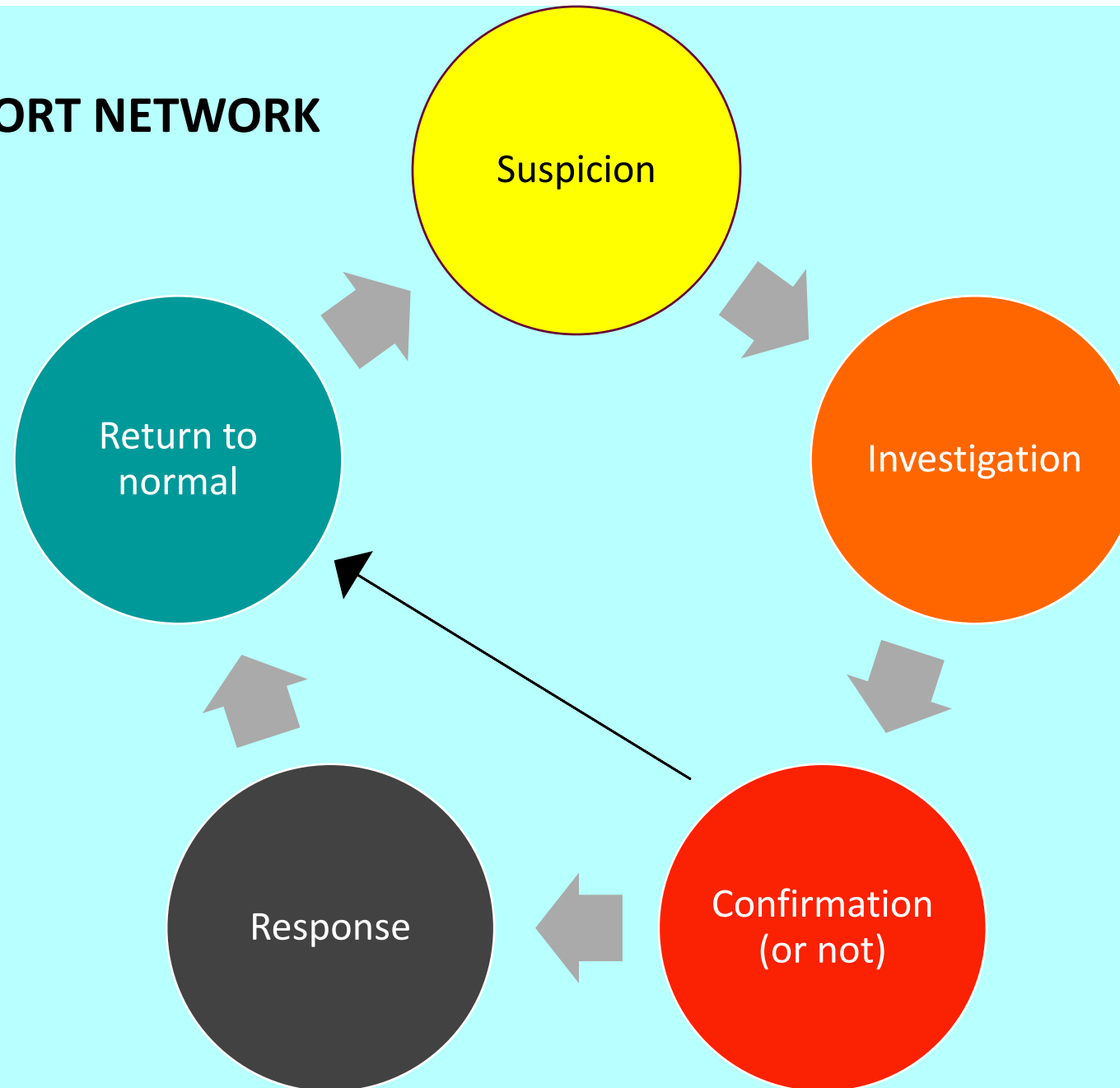


Outline

- Introduction to Outbreak Support Network
- Some of the findings
- Some recommendations
- Things each partner can do

OUTBREAK SUPPORT NETWORK

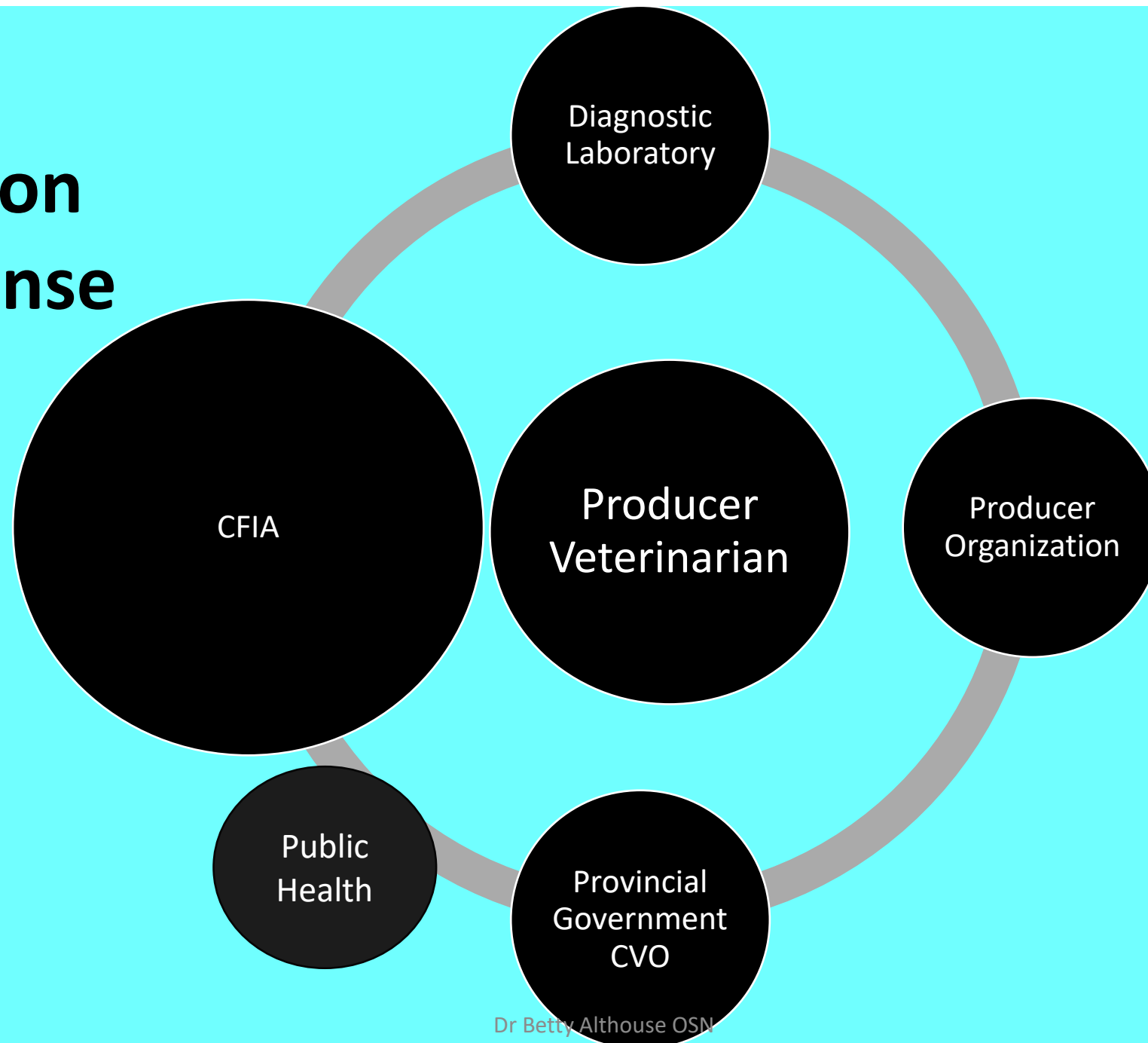
Support for:
Producers
Veterinarians



Potential FAD

Goals:
*roadmap,
toolbox,
expert group,
network,
other solutions*

Disease Investigation and Response Process



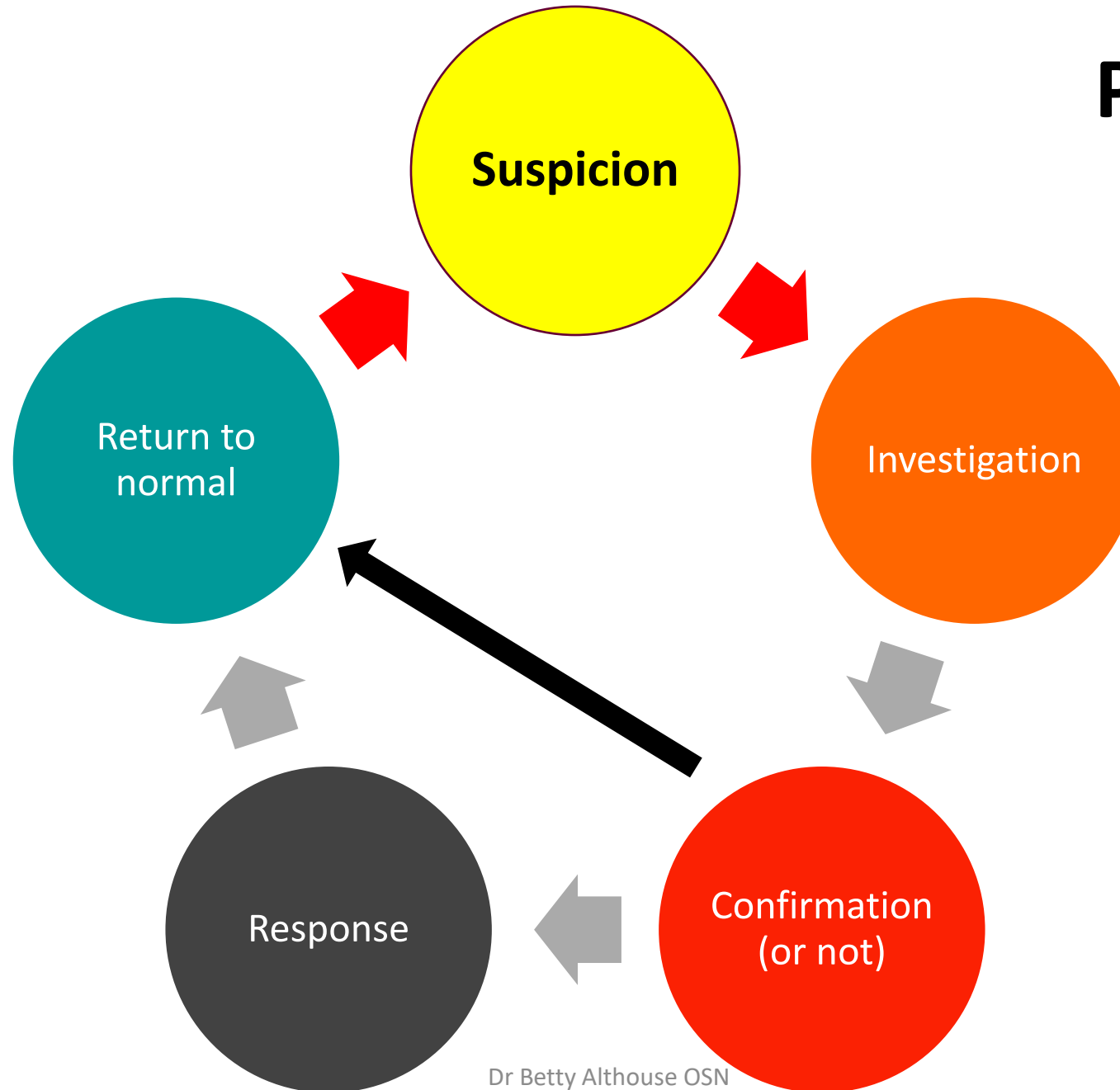
OSN Project Timelines: Phase 1



Phase 2-funded to 2028-develop further

Potential FAD

Private
Veterinarians



Suspicion

Who to call?

Contact the CFIA by telephone - i x +

https://inspection.canada.ca/en/about-cfia/contact-cfia/contact-cfia-office-telephone

* Service request is related to: (required)

+ Animal health

* Select your province: (required)

Saskatchewan

Continue

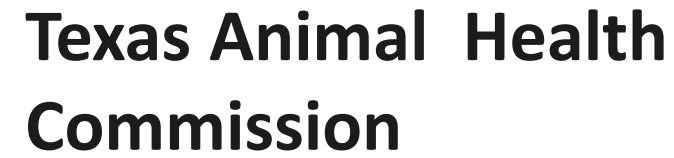
Saskatchewan – Animal health

Hours of operation: 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

- Battleford: 306-937-3633
cfia.battlefordanimalhealth.acia@inspection.gc.ca
- North Portal: 306-927-2255
cfia.NorthPortalAH-SA.acia@inspection.gc.ca
- Regina: 306-780-5220
cfia.ReginaAnimalHealth.acia@inspection.gc.ca
- Saskatoon: 306-385-4949
cfia.SaskatoonAH-SaskatoonSA.ACIA@inspection.gc.ca
- Swift Current: 306-778-5030
cfia.SwiftCurrentAnimalHealth.acia@inspection.gc.ca
- Yorkton: 306-786-5300
cfia.yorktonanimalhealth-santedesanimaux.acia@inspection.gc.ca

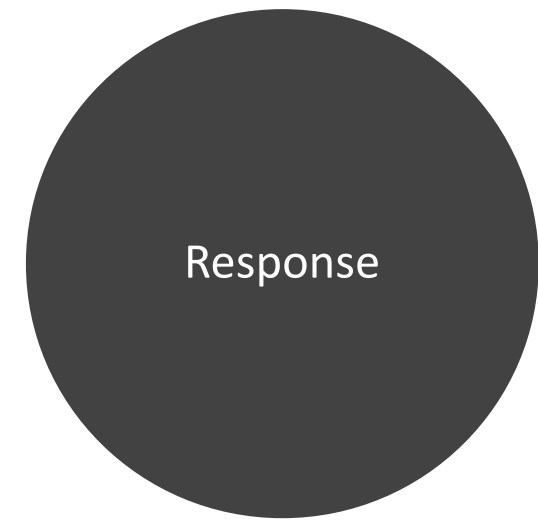


North
Portal



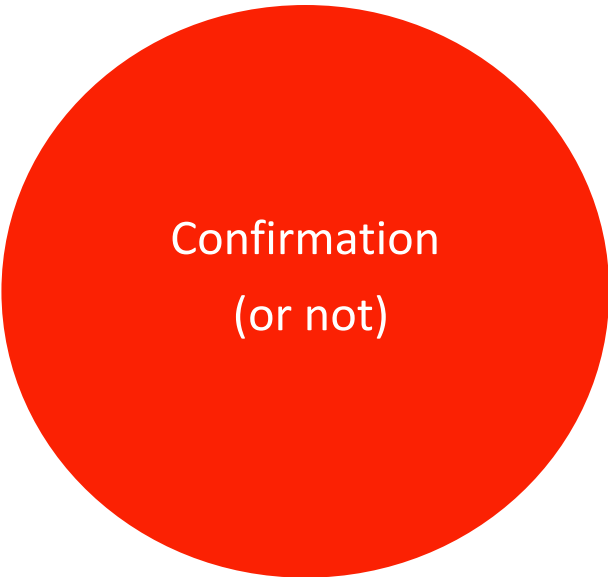


Investigation/ Response



- Not privy to response program details and decision making that impacts client
- Not being kept in the loop on what was happening on client farms
 - Privacy, information-sharing
- Not allowed to take on larger role in investigations.
 - Assist sampling, info-gathering, herd history....
- Providing (unpaid) support to producer

Test Results- FAD ruled out

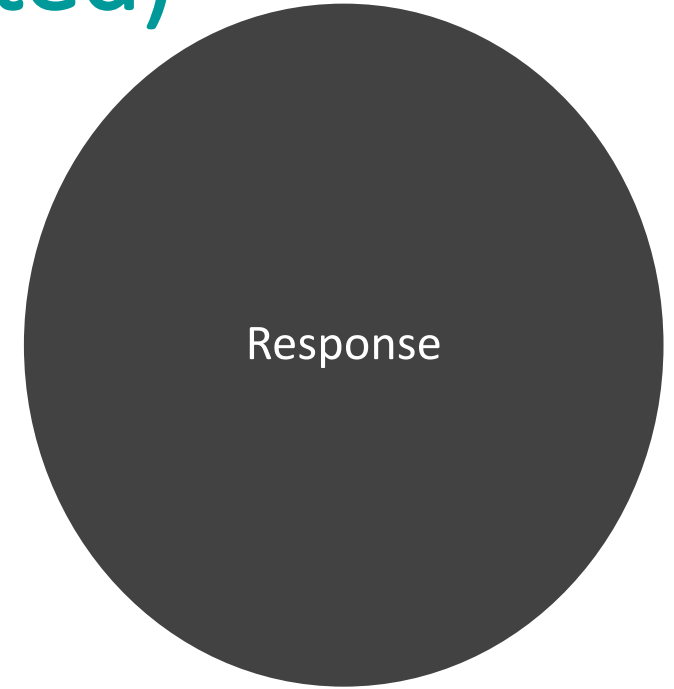


Confirmation
(or not)

- The private vet needs the test results
 - Client Information Sheet (CIS)
 - Necessary to submit further samples to a provincial lab
- Can the producer request that CFIA share the results with their vet?
 - Information Sharing Agreement
 - CASV developed simple template

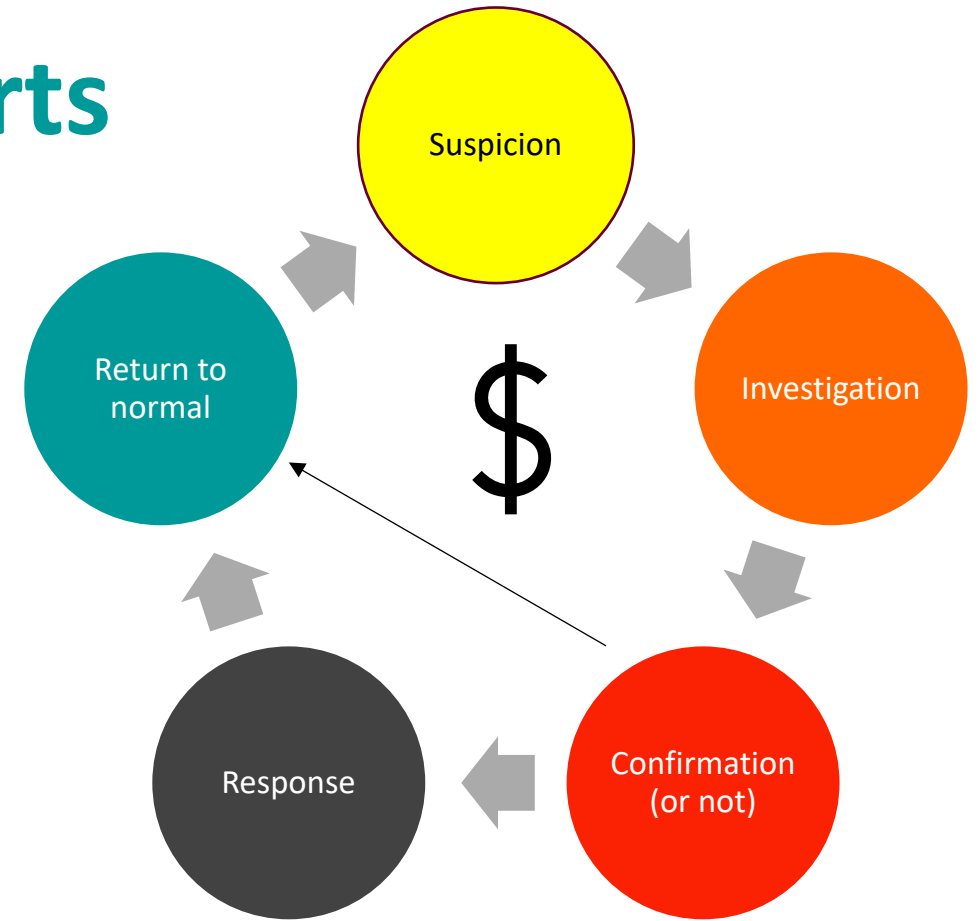
Response (private vet, non-regulated)

- Depopulation
 - Excess production, border closures
 - Planning, over-seeing
- Loss of business
 - Biosecurity concerns
 - Loss of routine surveillance and vaccination
 - Barns all depopulated



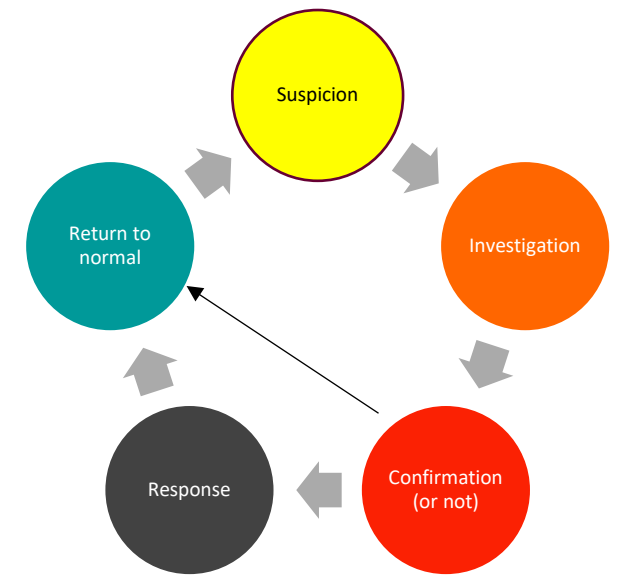
Veterinary/Technical experts Compensation

- Sampling
 - CanAISS example
- Supporting producers
- Time on working groups,
meetings, networks



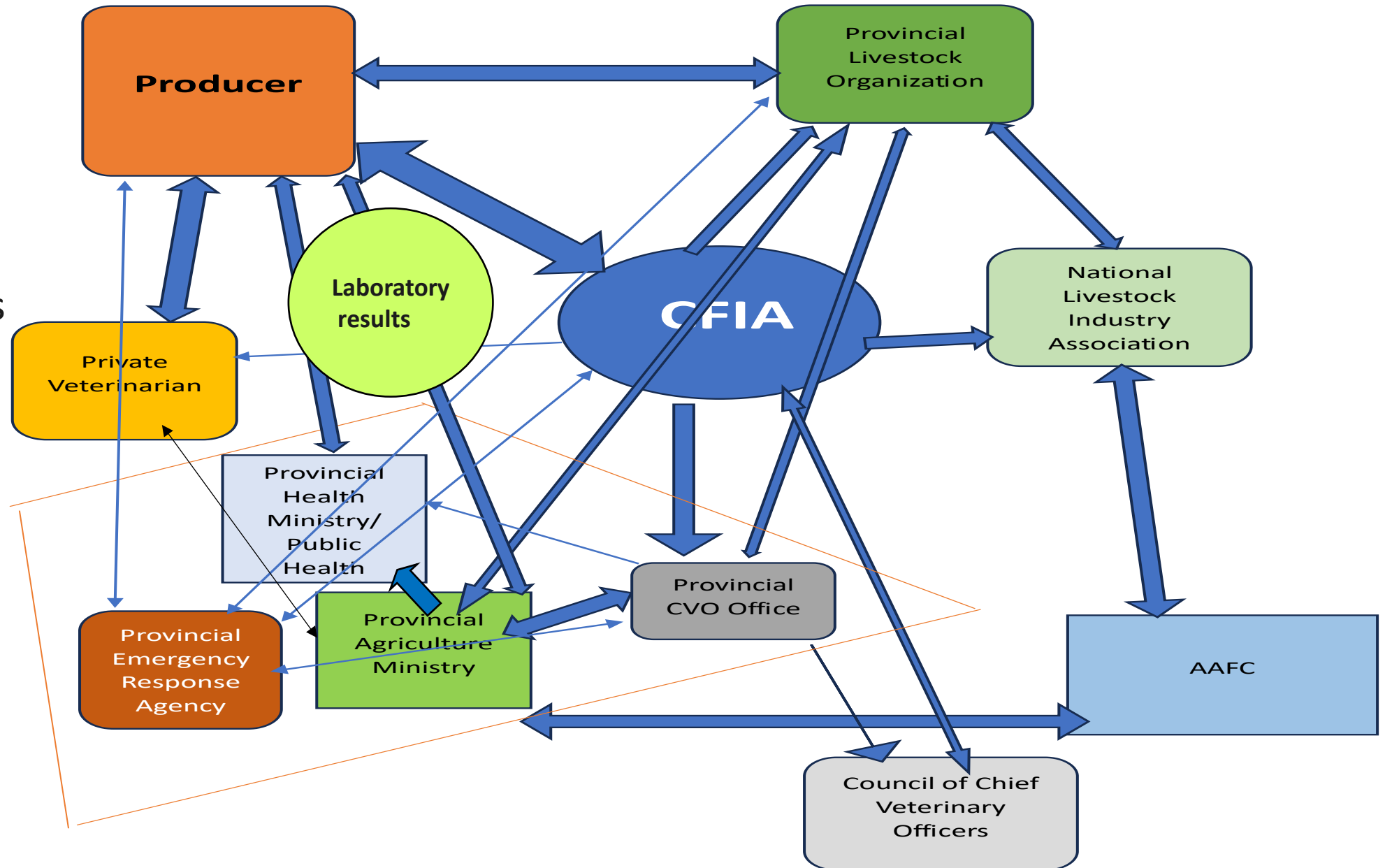
Producer Issues

- Communications and information-sharing (top priority)
- Disease response policy
- Disease response structure
- Timing of response
- Lack of empathy for producers from regulators
- Lack of Agricultural Wellness supports
- Compensation issues and lack of financial supports for other costs
- Understanding public health roles in zoonotic diseases



Information Sharing

Communications During Disease Investigation and Response



Information Sharing

Highest concern

- Privacy vs transparency
 - Producer not identified
- Information-sharing agreements
 - CFIA-Producer-vet- info-sharing agreements
 - CFIA-province- info sharing agreements (can, don't have to!)
 - CFIA-Public Health

When information-sharing works well often based on individual relationships.

Disease Response Policy- Swine vesicular suspect

2023

- SVAv investigations in west
 - USDA restrictions on exports
 - Specific swine export permit
 - Accredited vet procedures
 - Assembly Yard procedures
- Further diagnostic options unclear.

2024-25



Disease Response Policy Bovine TB

- Policy incomplete- bTB Hazard-Specific Plan still a draft
- Policy documents not shared with industry, provinces
- Risk-based response, so variable
- Traceability gaps
- Producer concerns
 - Accuracy of tests, false positives
 - Wildlife risks

Disease Response Policy Poultry HPAI

Eradication model generally well-understood

2022-23

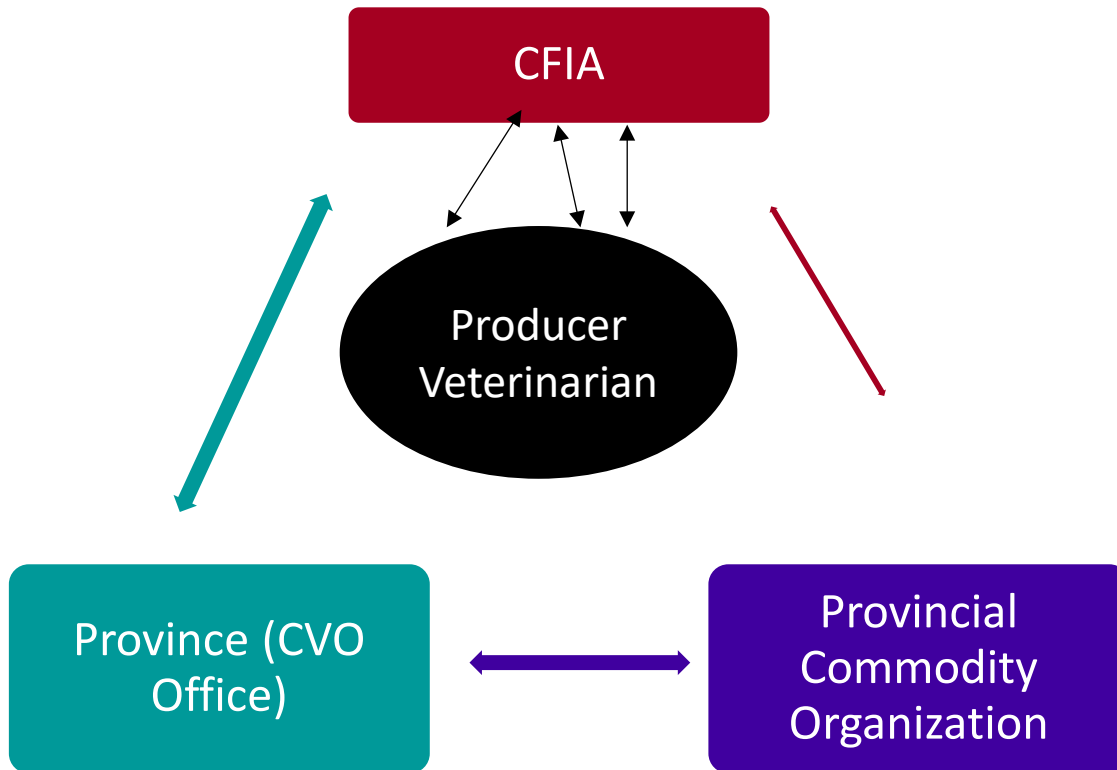
- Depopulation options limited
- Not full use of private veterinarians or other industry experts
- Policy evolution from 2022-2024
 - More transparency, more industry involvement
 - Updated testing, zoning
- Producer compensation concerns
 - Not paid if did work themselves
 - Complex- barn-specific costs

2024-25

- Google Drive- document sharing, industry access to CFIA DC docs and updates.
- Policy changes- reflect WOA and industry input
- Move to producer dead bird surveillance- decreased need for vet samplers
- Changes to Zoning (BC) to expedite movements
- Changes to Compensation Regs:
 - paid for own work, expanded compensation for things.
 - still concerns with process, details, complexity.

• Eradication vs vaccination

Disease Response Structure



Swine-VD suspect

- No formal structure in place.
- Informal-CFIA, provincial CVO office, veterinarian, client.
- Privacy Legislation
 - Restricts info sharing

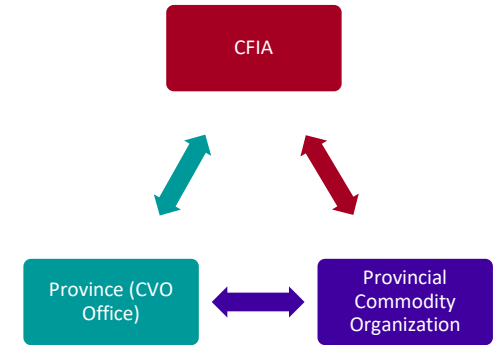
Disease Response Structure- bTB

2023

- No formal response structure
- Delayed information sharing
- SK IP producer did not reach out to provincial cattle orgs. or province
- MB used provincial Disease Investigation program to support contact herd

2024-25

- Early notification of CVO and Commodity org.
- More formal structure in place-Liaison
- Regular update calls
- Private vet looped in
- SCA providing Producer Support



Disease Response Structure Poultry-HPAI

2022

- Industry excluded from (CFIA) Area EOC
- Provinces wanted more or less involvement!
 - FADES plans not in place or not updated
- Not using available private veterinary resources
 - Sampling, working groups, expertise
- Unprepared for the scale:
 - supply issues; e.g. CO2
- **expanded industry role needed**
 - exercises that include industry

2024

- Separate industry EOC (BC)
- Industry led depopulation, identifying permitting needs/pre-slaughter testing
 - CO2 storage option
- Industry liaison, support worker examples

Timing of Response

Swine-VD suspect

- Suspect vesicular disease investigation-usually same day rapid response.
- Timing for submission of additional samples confusing.

Poultry-HPAI (2023)

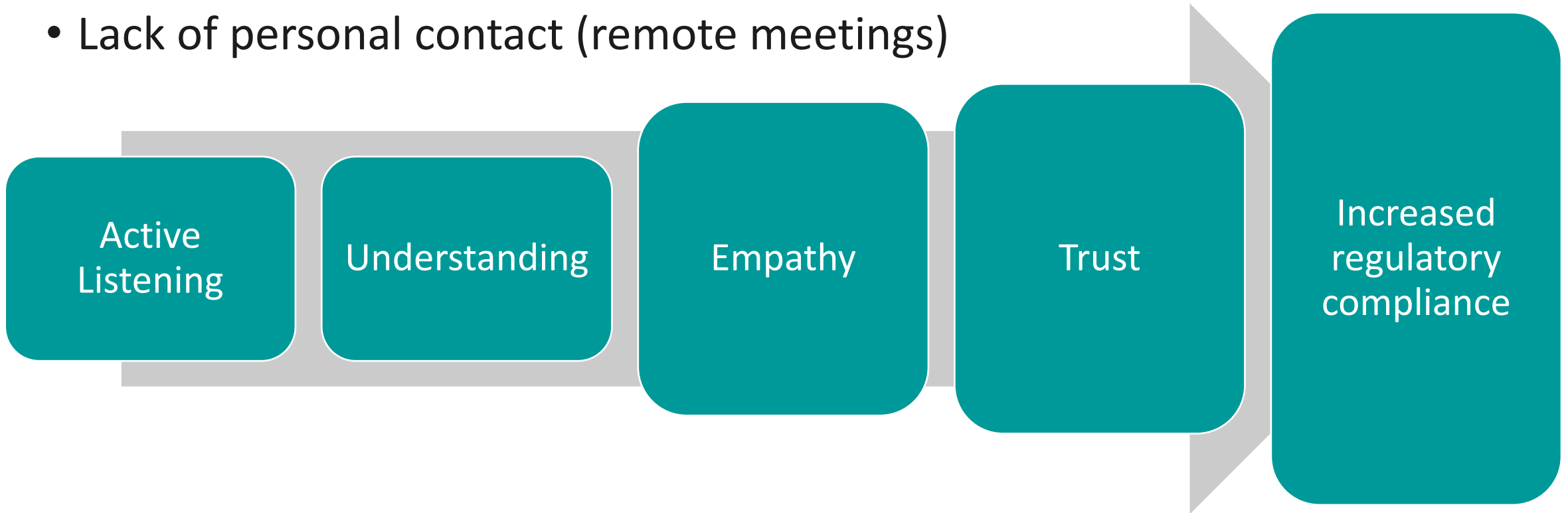
- Reporting-call line slow
- Depopulations delayed
 - Lack of equipment, crews, CO2
- Pre-slaughter testing delays
- Improved for 2024

Bovine TB

- Long time from suspicion to confirmation
- Tracing
 - Positive animal(s) life line(s)
 - Contact herds, trace-ins, trace-outs
- Timing of testing
 - Weather, pregnancy, pasture, feed shortages

Lack of Empathy by Regulators

- Regulatory stick
- “Threatened not thanked”
- Lack of personal contact (remote meetings)



Lack (of Awareness of) Agriculture Wellness Supports

AGTALK: domore.ag/agtalk

Online support and connection, with 24/7 clinical moderators

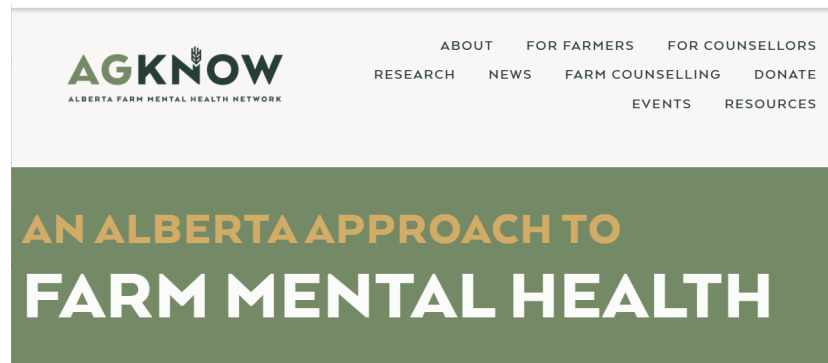
Producers

- Lots of options
- Are they:
 - Agriculture-informed?
 - Evidence-based?
 - Available, accessible?

National Farmer
Crisis Line
(1-866-FARMS01)
1-866-327-6701

Veterinarians

- All 4 western VMAs have mental wellness supports, counselling programs.
- Depop. Resiliency Tool



Compensation

Lots of concerns from interviews in 2024- May interim report
Mostly resolved.

C & D
excluded

Regulatory update December 2024

- owners' personal labour used in the destruction and/or disposal of their animals or things ordered destroyed
- costs associated with the disposal of additional things ordered destroyed
- BUT-still some concerns with complexity of poultry compensation.

Concerns spring 2025 with cattle compensation values:

- Update-June 2025- increase max compensation levels for cattle

Notice to industry: Amendment to the Compensation for Destroyed Animals and Things Regulations now published – maximum amounts for cattle

On June 18th, 2025, an amendment to the *Compensation for Destroyed Animals and Things Regulations* (CDATR) was published in [Canada Gazette, Part II](#).

The CDATR are the regulations that set the parameters and eligibility for compensation that may be provided to owners (such as producers or farmers) who have been ordered to destroy their animals or things. The objective of the CDATR is to encourage the early reporting of animal disease and the cooperation of owners in eradication efforts.

This amendment updates the maximum amounts for cattle to reflect the current market conditions and estimated future market growth. Cattle ordered destroyed may now be compensated up to a higher maximum amount, specifically:

- registered cattle (*bos taurus* and *bos indicus*): \$16,500 (from \$10,000, set in 2015)
- non-registered cattle (*bos taurus* and *bos indicus*): \$10,000 (from \$4,500, set in 2015)

Public Health Roles zoonotic diseases

HPAI

- Public Health importance
- WHO guidelines
- Monitor exposed people
 - Follow up perceived as excessive
- Sample anyone with symptoms

Bovine TB

- *Mycobacterium bovis* vs *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*
 - Fear
 - Exposure risks
 - Other species

Limited information shared by CFIA to Public Health.
PH would prefer to get more information

Existing Resources- awareness-promotion

**Why
aren't
they
used?**

- AHEM on-farm producer booklets
- Depopulation Resiliency Tool, Ag wellness resources
- Psychological First Aid training for responders (case officers; advocates)
- CCAW training (west vs east)
- OH&S resources- farm worker safety
- CFIA website- info easier to navigate
 - Printable/downloadable PDF versions
- Reportable Disease Update Training-Vets
 - Joint FAO-CFIA courses- FMD, HPAI, ASF- excellent
 - bTB update-CE available on SVMA website

Psychological
First Aid Training

Possible Solutions

- Lessons “that should have been” learned
 - HPAI 2004, 2014- industry involvement
 - BTB Alberta 2016- lessons learned debrief- never released
 - BTB 2023 response survey results???
- TRACEABILITY
 - Identified as issue with beef tracing in each outbreak
- Improved awareness of disease context and history
 - Vaccination for eradicated disease- NO
 - Blaming wildlife- lack of evidence

Possible Solutions--Vets

- Easier reporting and navigating CFIA website:
 - Mapping of District Offices
- Awareness of existing preparedness tools and training
 - Reportable Disease awareness/training, AHEM tools
 - Fill gaps
- Information-sharing agreements/templates
- Promote depopulation-resiliency tools, PFA training, agricultural wellness discussions with clients
- Payment for private vet involvement
- Networks for responders- new or utilize existing

Example: Vesicular Disease Suspects

Awareness

- Barn posters
- Recognition training for staff
- Vet training/updates on disease recognition and response
 - Available tools
 - E.g. EU FMD resources



Action

- Developed tools
 - Flow charts
 - Checklists
 - SVV webinar
 - SVV diagnostics
 - SVV management

Possible Solutions- producers

- **Producer advocate** position
 - Additional to/complement CFIA Case Officer
- Expanded definition/role for **Industry Liaison** in ICS.
- Proposed development of **Producer Information Package** to complement CFIA information
- **Agricultural wellness** awareness, adequacy and access

Other Tools

- Network for responders
 - Ad hoc, disease-specific
- Town Hall meetings
- Educational webinars
- Utilize existing networks- CWSHIN, WeCAHN

How do we improve the experience for producers and veterinarians involved in a reportable disease investigation?

Different every province and commodity

- Context, industries changing rapidly- what you knew about a sector 5-10 years ago could be very different today
- Inclusion of industry makes a better response
- Focus on information-sharing, transparency and trust-building

Actions to take to improve response

Producers

- Suspect FAD farm plans
- Staff training-When to report what to do if...
- Self-identify
- Share information
- Look after wellness
 - Seek support

Veterinarians

- Connections with District Vets
- Clinic farm records-
 - Include location, PID, DV contact
- Support client- attend with CFIA
- Options to be more involved
 - Exercises, networks
 - GET PAID

Actions by Provincial Commodity Orgs

- Support for prevention/preparedness
- Information-sharing agreements
- Roles in sampling, pre-movement test coordination, euthanasia- Poultry
- Communications
 - Calls, town hall meetings, etc.
- Support for impacted producers
 - Producer Advocate
 - Information packages
- Traceability system support
- Collect information in support of an Agri-Recovery program
- Explore disease insurance options



Actions by Provincial CVO/EMO

- Provincial veterinary labs
- Support liaison role
- Communication with Prov Commodity orgs/producers
- Ag extension supports to producers
- Provincial Disease Investigation funds
 - Support for vets to attend PIQ's and testing
- Training- vets, producers
- Shared funding for Producer Advocate
- FADES plans/info sharing with CFIA
- Agreements for inter-provincial resource sharing
- Role in Agri-Recovery implementation

Actions by National Commodity Organizations

- Preparedness/Response
 - ASF
 - FMD- vaccine bank
 - HPAI-destruction methods
 - vaccination

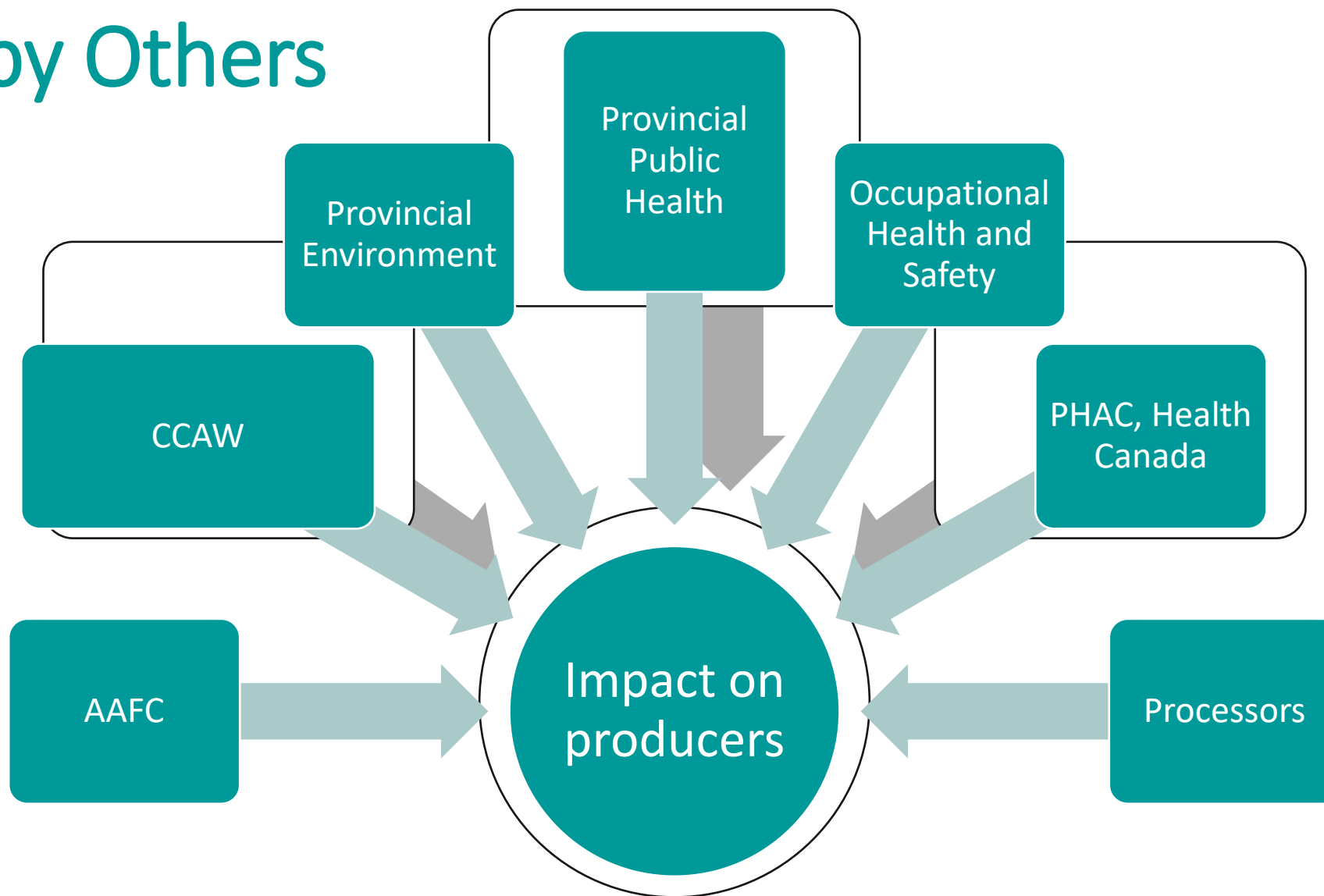
Plans that include roles
for private vets

- Compensation
 - Beef- maximum not sufficient- new updated amounts by June 2025
 - Poultry- complex- detailed- hard for multi-commodity farms
 - Swine- untested
- Traceability improvements- beef
- Insurance programs (explore)
 - Disease incursion (SE example)
 - C & D expenses
 - Extra-ordinary expenses

Actions by CFIA

- Information sharing- openness to, agreements, templates,
- Transparency- policies, decisions
- Include industry in response and exercises
- Web-site improvement
- Case Officer training- Psychological First Aid (PFA), disease response details
- Staff training- empathy, risk communications
- Stay current on industry practices- get out into the field; listen
- Resource- sharing agreements
- Utilization of private vets- simple contracting process

Actions by Others



Next Steps for OSN:

- Draft final report (end Sept)
- Review by CWSHIN technical committee (October)
- Send to selected stakeholders for review (November)
- Final report and recommendations for Phase 2 (December)

Phase 2

- Phase 2 workplan for Jan 2026- March 2028
- Identify Phase 2 contractor



Ministry of
Agriculture
and Food



Sustainable Canadian
Agricultural Partnership

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

CWSHIN would not exist without:

- The participation and support of swine practitioners, laboratories, governments and swine health experts
- The funding from pork boards and governments



SaskPork





Outbreak Support Network acknowledges the great support, trust and sharing from all the interviewed participants.

Anyone with additional issues or ideas, please contact me:
dr.betty.althouse@gmail.com
306-231-7609



SaskPork

