



AnimalHealthCanada

ANNUAL REPORT

ADVANCING ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE IN CANADA



animalhealthcanada.ca

2023/24

About Us

Animal Health Canada (AHC) is the only national organization that brings together industry, federal, provincial and territorial partners to provide collaborative guidance on a cohesive, functional and responsive farmed animal health and welfare system in Canada.

Founded in 2010, AHC is a not-for-profit corporation jointly funded by members which include federal, provincial, and territorial governments, industry organizations, and other partners working in animal health and welfare in Canada.

Vision

A sustainable agriculture and agri-food sector strengthened by an inclusive industry-governments partnership protecting the health and welfare of farmed animals.

Mission

AHC provides leadership in building a collaborative, multi-partner model that clarifies the respective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of each partner implementing an animal health strategy for Canada, beginning with emergency management.



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AHC Co-Chairs:



KEITH LEHMAN DVM
AHC Government Co-Chair
Government of Alberta



**LEIGH ROSENGREN
DVM, PhD**
AHC Industry Co-Chair
Canadian Cattle Association

AHC Board of Directors 2023/24:



DAVE TAYLOR
Vice-Chair, Board Member
Dairy Farmers of Canada



RYDER LEE
Canadian Cattle Association



LUCE BÉLANGER
Board Member
Chicken Farmers of Canada



DR. HENRY CELEN DVM
Canadian Veterinary Medical
Association



GABRIELA GUIGOU
Canadian Pork Council



**DR. NINA VON
KEYSERLINGK**
Animal Welfare Program
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JEAN-MICHEL LAURIN
Dairy Processors
Association of Canada



NORINE MOORE
Sheep Farmers of Canada

FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL (FPT) GOVERNMENTS ADVISORY COUNCIL

Federal Government:



MARY JANE IRELAND DVM

Canadian Food Inspection Agency,
Executive Director of the Animal
Health Directorate, Chief Veterinary
Officer for Canada, WOAHA Delegate
for Canada



DONALD BOUCHER

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada,
Director General, Sector
Development and Analysis

Provincial/Territorial Governments:



LUC BERGERON DVM

Chief Veterinary Officer,
Ministère de l'Agriculture, des
Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation
de Québec



NICOLE WANAMAKER DVM

Chief Veterinary Officer,
New Brunswick Department of
Agriculture, Aquaculture and
Fisheries



THERESA BURNS DVM

Chief Veterinary Officer,
Government of British Columbia

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS (2023-24)

Primary Members – Commodity Groups

- Canadian Cattle Association
- Canadian Hatching Egg Producers
- Canadian Pork Council
- Canadian Sheep Federation
- Chicken Farmers of Canada
- Dairy Farmers of Canada
- National Cattle Feeders Association
- Egg Farmers of Canada
- Equestrian Canada
- Turkey Farmers of Canada

Associate Members

- Animal Nutrition Association of Canada
- Canadian Animal Health Institute
- Canadian Veterinary Medical Association
- Deans Council – Agriculture, Food & Veterinary Medicine

Primary Members – Processors

- Dairy Processors Association of Canada
- Canadian Meat Council
- Canadian Poultry and Egg Processors

Primary Members – Government

- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- Government of Alberta
- Government of British Columbia
- Government of Manitoba
- Government of New Brunswick
- Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Government of Nova Scotia
- Government of Ontario
- Government of Northwest Territories
- Government of Prince Edward Island
- Government of Quebec
- Government of Saskatchewan
- Government of Yukon
- Public Health Agency of Canada



CO-CHAIRS' MESSAGE



KEITH LEHMAN



LEIGH ROSENGREN

As the AHC Co-Chairs, we have an amazing viewpoint of the incredible accomplishments achieved within Animal Health Canada this past year.

We have watched the team grow from a handful to 14, who all bring different perspectives and skillsets to the table. They have a common goal to support us in creating a cohesive, functional, and responsive farmed animal health and welfare system in Canada.

We have watched the establishment of the Emergency Management division as it takes the helm to enhance the emergency management capabilities of Canada's livestock industry. We have seen the dedication of the working groups and sub working groups on the African swine fever planning and preparation since 2019, and thanks to that hard work, we are able to take the learnings from that model to plan and prepare for a potential foot-and-mouth disease outbreak in Canada. We know this is just the beginning of the work that can be accomplished to improve the readiness of Canada to react to animal health emergencies.

We would be remiss if we did not say a huge thank you for the efforts these past few months to keep the industry, government members and animal health stakeholders informed of the latest updates on highly pathogenic avian influenza detected in dairy cattle situation in the United States. Thankfully, we have not seen it enter Canada, but if it did, we are well-equipped to quickly collaborate and share information thanks to the network of networks created through the Canadian Animal Health surveillance System (CAHSS), and the relationship between CAHSS and the Emergency Management division, which allows for a greater depth of knowledge and a broader network of connections to deliver on this emerging issue.

We see the work taking place within the National Farm Animal Care Council engaging in meaningful dialogue to finalize not one but five Codes of Practice for the care and handling of farmed animals.

We had a front row seat at the two membership engagement sessions held earlier this year where we heard words like "we are better prepared because of this unprecedented work" and "collaboration is our strength."

We have re-engaged the Industry-Government Leadership Group to ensure the big picture goals of AHC continue to be meaningful and actioned in a way that resonates with the membership.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we want to express our thanks for the work that takes place behind the scenes to keep moving initiatives forward. We are excited to continue to watch the growth and successes of Animal Health Canada.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

**COLLEEN MCELWAIN**

Executive Director, Animal Health Canada

I am so very proud of what we, as an AHC team, were able to achieve in the past year! The year started out with the unanimous endorsement of our role in emergency preparedness and support for continued investment in our work. Working with our members, we have been able to accomplish a lot through the unprecedented and collaborative model that we use in all of our work. The incredibly successful track records of both of our more established divisions, NFACC and CAHSS, have proven that the model drives forward progress for the shared space we all inhabit within animal health and animal welfare. When it comes to our new Emergency Management division, we are beginning to change the landscape as we shift and learn from our coordination role in support of the African swine fever Executive Management Board (ASF EMB) to broaden our mandate further into foot and mouth disease FMD and highly pathogenic avian influenza HPAI preparedness planning.

The important work of AHC requires resilient operations and a skilled staff team to meet and exceed member expectations. Over the past year we were very pleased to have received federal project grants and industry contributions to support the rapid expansion from a small team of four on April 1st 2023 to a team of eleven (and counting) by March 31st, 2024. The AHC Board of Directors and the FPT Governments Advisory Council have taken the direction of the members to create a robust organizational foundation for AHC to heart, and more will come over the next year in relation to further supports which may be needed to assist AHC to thrive beyond five-year funding cycles.

As promised to members, AHC was able to put a greater emphasis on membership engagement over the course of the year. A new Membership Charter was developed and accepted late in the year, as well as a renewed focus on the strategic goals for AHC. Since the end of the year, it has been a busy time gathering member feedback in preparation for strategic plan renewal activities planned for this fall. The main goal will be to consider how our existing mandates, project commitments meet short term key performance indicators, while also building a longer-term vision for AHC. I sincerely look forward to this exercise as together we think bigger than we already have and to boldly embrace the spirit of collaboration to solidify industry-government partnerships to protect the health and welfare of Canada's farmed animals.

DIVISION REPORTS

ENHANCING THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CAPABILITIES OF CANADA'S LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY

Animal Health Canada's Emergency Management division is a year old!

In August 2023, Erica Charlton was hired as the Division Director. Two other hires were made before the end of the 2024 fiscal year. The division welcomed Project Manager, Michelle Follensbee, and Project Lead Afolakemi Adeniji.

The division has been busy balancing the need to advance project work, funded by its three concurrent federal grant streams while also considering strategic and governance needs and work prioritization to meet the needs and expectations of AHC members. There are multiple partners who support the work of this complex division. To enhance AHC's subject matter expertise and support specific projects, additional third-party contractors have been hired.

Division structure and governance

In Spring 2024, a draft-proposed structure was shared with the ASF EMB and then to the AHC Board of Directors for consideration. The proposed division structure offers the flexibility to manage any foreign animal disease, including emerging diseases, by modelling disease planning and preparedness as found in the ASF Executive Management Board and leveraging structures used by the Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS) division. More will follow in the coming months as AHC considers how best to operationalize the strategic analyses created as the value proposition for the division was developed.




African Swine Fever (ASF) Planning and Preparedness

Since 2019, work is being completed under a multi-faceted project initiated to mitigate the potential impact of African swine fever if it were to enter Canada. AHC coordinates the planning, preparedness, and readiness for response for all FPTI partners.

Invasive wild pigs in Canada

A Wild Pig Leadership group was established at the end of 2022-23 to focus on ASF planning and preparedness specifically regarding to Canada's invasive wild pigs.

Key achievements for 2023/2024:

-  Moving forward on a wild pig information hub to be hosted by the Canadian Council on Invasive Species (CCIS). The hub is set to be completed in March 2025.
-  Developing and actioning the Leadership Group's work plan based on the 10-year Canada's Invasive Wild Pig Strategy and to begin work on an initiative to coordinate wild pig mapping objectives across Canada.
-  With funding from AHC, CCIS has hired an indigenous relations expert to develop a plan for gathering indigenous input into Canada's Invasive Wild Pig Strategy.

Delivering the first Canadian Wild Pig Summit

The division worked with Manitoba Squeal on Pigs and Assiniboine Community College to deliver the first Canadian Wild Pig Summit, held in Brandon, Manitoba, in April 2024. A range of participants from across the country attended, including provincial, federal and Métis government officials. Stakeholders with agriculture interests as well as those with wildlife and public parks concerns also attended in Brandon rounding out the attendance to 90. The agenda included a field day to Spruce Woods Provincial Park and a variety of presentations on new technology and trapping strategies, research projects, an overview of the CanSpotASF surveillance program, collaborative wild pig communication programs and lessons from United States and Germany. The summit provided a platform for stakeholders to share best practices and knowledge about wild pig populations and eradication efforts in Canada. Discussions are already underway regarding the second Canadian Wild Pig Summit.

CANADIAN WILD PIG SUMMIT



Canadian Wild Pig Summit participants go on a field trip to Spruce Woods Provincial Park to see traps and trapping tools on display and tour through wild pig habitat.

Livestock and Poultry Emergency Management Outreach

The EM Division is compiling the list of provincial contacts to consolidate a livestock and poultry emergency management network/working group with which to share updates, enhance its understanding of relevant stakeholders' needs, and share emergency management resources.



A demonstration on traps and trapping tools is given during the Canadian Wild Pig Summit.








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CanSpotASF

CanSpotASF is the enhanced African Swine Fever (ASF) surveillance program targeting swine populations, such as commercial swine, smallholders, pet pigs and wild pigs.



Key achievements for 2023/2024:

-  The Wild Pig Surveillance Working Group, established in 2023, has been providing leadership and guidance in developing a process and plan for implementing ASF surveillance in wild pigs.
-  As part of the implementation process for surveillance in wild pigs, the development of risk-based surveillance testing was initiated. This included:
 - drafting eligibility criteria for testing and developing technical documents that outline the surveillance activities and protocols
 - the risk-based surveillance testing of wild pigs to launch in July 2024
 - early implementation testing of wild pig samples had already been conducted in two provinces prior to the official launch. Early testing helped to support zoning agreements with international trading partners and contributed to capacity building.
-  An epidemiological surveillance evaluation on CanSpotASF is being conducted by a third-party consultant will conclude in December 2024. This assessment aims to determine whether the program's goal of improving early detection of ASF is being met. It will guide future program decisions. A subcommittee was created to provide technical guidance to the consultant.
-  Continuation of risk-based testing:
 - at approved laboratories focused on performing ASF rule-out testing from commercial and small-scale domestic pigs where ASF is not suspected. This testing can be requested by a herd veterinarian or pathologist
 - of condemned carcasses at participating abattoirs focused on ASF testing on carcasses condemned under certain dispensation codes.
-  Work was started on an information poster for abattoir inspectors to enhance their understanding and awareness of ASF risks. The final poster scheduled to be ready in July 2024.
-  The CanSpotASF 3rd Annual Report (2022/2023) is published on the AHC website with the fourth Annual Report (2023/2024) in development.
-  Several CanSpotASF technical documents were being revised and updated allowing for flexibility in condemnation codes to increase sample submissions. A publication date of July 2024 was set.

ASF Exercises

Cross-Border Feral Swine Exercise

In late October 2023, AHC, in collaboration with Canadian industry and the CFIA participated in a cross-border exercise with U.S. partners. The exercise titled the Pacific Northwest Cross Border Tabletop Exercise: Feral Swine Encroachment & Cross Border Communication took place in Spokane, Washington. The event's primary focus was to explore the communication pathways and response coordination measures needed in the event of an invasive species incident and agricultural emergency involving the threat of a transboundary disease outbreak along the US-Canada border. The exercise addressed the triggering mechanisms and early response activities associated with a localized incursion of suspect diseased feral swine along the US-Canada border of the Pacific Northwest.

CFIA ASF exercises

Since November 2023, AHC supported and participated in CFIA ASF exercises, testing various outbreak response scenarios to improve ASF preparedness on a continuous basis.

1. November 2023: CFIA's communication pathways exercises.
2. January 2024: CFIA tested the national lab capacity.
3. February 2024: A CFIA-led scenario focused on meat product in-transit.
4. June 2024: An exercise was organized test the stakeholder notifications.

AHC hosted a national ASF exercise in Ottawa

In February 2024, AHC hosted a national ASF exercise in Ottawa over two days. Sandhurst Consulting was contracted to lead and focused on testing communication pathways prior to confirmation of a positive case. Consistent use of terminology, privacy, information sharing abilities and sequences, managing international relationships and triggers for provincial activation were incorporated into the exercise. Early in the new year, AHC began planning a traceability exercise (for September 2024), and a multi-jurisdictional exercise (for November 2024), that will incorporate exercise activities across the country.

Foot and Mouth Disease planning and preparedness

Amid the ongoing African Swine Fever work, the Emergency Management division also began ramping up the Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) efforts. It officially launched with a FMD kick-off meeting in March 2024. The premise of the kick-off meeting was to showcase the African Swine Fever Executive Management Board structure and processes as a proposed model for approaching FMD or any foreign animal disease.

Developing the Vaccination Implementation Support Structure

For 18 months, a core group of industry stakeholders, Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), facilitated by Serecon Consulting, has made significant progress in the development of the Vaccination Implementation Support Structure (VISS), which will form a complete chapter in the Integrated Emergency Response Plan (IERP), for Foot and Mouth Disease.

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The VISS will contain protocols and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) necessary for the implementation of CFIA's vaccination policy and strategies. It will be built to be leveraged as a foundation for use in other disease vaccination situations, if necessary. The livestock commodities have each been developing SOPs specific to their operational realities.

Developing of the Foot and Mouth Disease Integrated Emergency Response Plan

Running concurrently to the VISS project, is the development of the Foot and Mouth Disease Integrated Emergency Response Plan (IERP). The FMD IERP is leveraging the significant amount of work already completed as part of the ASF IERP. This work will focus on clarifying, developing and defining roles and responsibilities for Federal, Provincial and Territorial Governments and Industry Partners (FPTI) in the event of a foreign animal disease outbreak.

Additionally, CFIA is collecting and using baseline data provided by stakeholders from national commodities in the FMD Vaccine Strategy Working Group for disease modelling. With farm locations and animal movement information, models can predict foreign animal disease spread over time.

In the coming months, working groups will be struck to focus on things like biosecurity, depopulation and disposal. To do this will, it is anticipated that this FMD work will expand to require broader subject matter expertise and inclusion of commodities both within and beyond the Animal Health Canada membership.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI)

In poultry

Conversations are ongoing with CFIA on AHC's roles in coordinating a third-party expert committee for the review of avian depopulation methods. An agreement for proposed work was established with the national poultry group (NPG - which includes Chicken Farmers of Canada, Turkey Farmers of Canada, Canadian Hatching Egg Producers, Egg Farmers of Canada, Canadian Poultry and Egg Processors). With the finalization of a terms of reference document, a technical committee will be struck. Other emergency management support opportunities have been identified working with the NPG and CFIA which will be included in the division's forward work plan.

In dairy

In March 2024, highly pathogenic avian influenza (H5N1) was detected in dairy cattle herds in several states in the United States. At the time of publication of this annual report, there have been no cases detected in Canadian dairy cattle. Animal Health Canada with its divisions have been working closely with FPT governments, industry, veterinary associations, regional/national surveillance partners, and laboratorians to ensure preparedness for this emerging animal health issue.

AHC established regular, twice-weekly meetings with members and CFIA to keep them updated on the U.S. situation and prevent and prepare for a potential outbreak in Canada. AHC's Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS) division met with the dairy network members to provide technical updates on the U.S. outbreak, testing and surveillance progress, while the Emergency Management division coordinated HPAI information meetings with stakeholders and CFIA.

New Biosecurity Resources

The progression of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) requires heightened biosecurity measures at the farm to prevent its introduction.

The EM Division collaborated with Dairy Farmers of Canada to create a biosecurity recommendation infographic for producers.



Click image to view

Animal Health Canada collaborated with a working group of several provincial chief veterinary officers, dairy industry experts, CFIA and the Public Health Agency of Canada to create biosecurity guidance documents for organizers and exhibitors to help prevent highly pathogenic avian influenza spread to cattle at fairs and exhibitions. Multiple infographics were designed for organizers, exhibitors and patron audiences and shared with 4-H Canada and the Canadian Association for Fairs and Exhibitions.

E-learning Platform

The value of intellectual property is growing rapidly and the Emergency Management division is considering its existing resources for inclusion in AHC's e-learning Campus. This has the potential to provide RACE-approved continuing education credit for veterinary professionals in addition to business-critical programs that support the livestock industry to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from animal health and welfare-related emergencies – while generating revenue for the organization's financial sustainability.

To boost success, the division is working with an instructional design and education strategy consultant to conduct a review, catalogue and analyse gaps of all AHC emergency management materials to repackaging and optimize the sharing of e-learning assets; to identify which resources could be updated and how; and to propose new templates and tools for audience-specific development.

Feasibility studies will be prepared for a variety of courses and bundles, including Transportation of Dangerous Goods with WHMIS training; collaborative training with FAO to support veterinary practitioners; and Incident Command Systems – level 100 and possibly, beyond.

Recognizing wide ranging skill sets of the AHC's membership, the Emergency Management division will strike a Training Advisory Committee and seek subject matter expertise to assist in target audience identification, the program design considerations and content development.



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Conferences and Summits

Attending PNWER July 20, 2023

The Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) 32nd Annual Summit was held in Boise, Idaho from July 16 to 20, 2023 where legislators, business leaders, academics, and policymakers from the U.S. and Canada discuss regional economic best practices and trade concerns. Animal Health Canada attended with particular interest on the cross-border emergency preparedness session, “Ensuring Border Resiliency: Emergency management and response at our ports-of-entry”, conversations on Cross Border Livestock Health and the feral swine session and transboundary feral swine working group meeting that took place on the last day of the event.



Exhibiting at the Banff Pork Seminar

In January 2024, the Emergency Management division attended and hosted an exhibitor booth at the Banff Pork Seminar. This gave the new and growing division an opportunity to attend sessions and learn more about the Canadian swine industry and network with key industry stakeholders. The division’s resources and materials, including those related to CanSpotASF, were on display at the AHC booth to raise awareness and enhance understanding of the division and work related to the swine industry and African Swine Fever.



ADVISING ON NATIONAL ANIMAL HEALTH SURVEILLANCE PRIORITIES AND DISEASE PATTERNS

Canadian
Animal
Health
Surveillance
System



CAHSS

DIVISION OF ANIMAL HEALTH CANADA

The Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS) is a distinct division of AHC. CAHSS has a shared national vision leading to effective, responsive, integrated animal health surveillance in Canada. CAHSS brings together and uses data-driven information to demonstrate animal health, minimize impacts of disease, and guide planning on national animal health priorities.

The CAHSS Core Team

The CAHSS team has grown in the past year! The surveillance division is proud to have a core team with diverse skillset, expertise, and professional interests. Dr. Doris Leung was acting as the CAHSS Division Director at the end of 2022-23 and officially stepped into this role in the fall of 2023. She is a veterinary epidemiologist with experience in disease surveillance, participatory-based research, and qualitative research methods. Dr. Murray Gillies was hired in early 2024 as a CAHSS Coordinator. He is a bovine practitioner, dairy producer, and has been leading the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in dairy cattle file within CAHSS. Dr. Marianne Parent was also hired in early 2024 as a veterinary epidemiologist working part time for CAHSS.



Moving forward with CAHSS

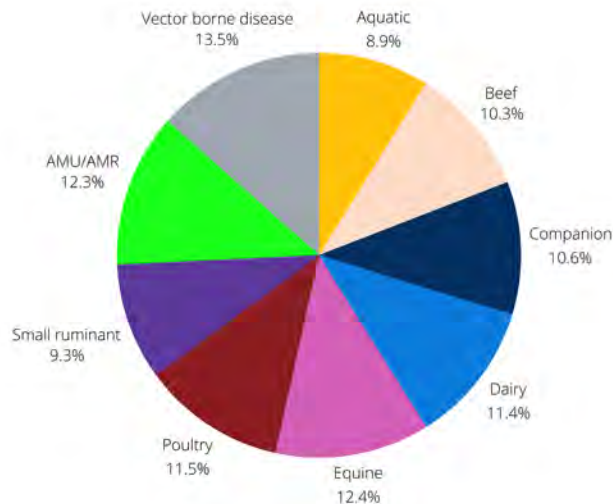
Building upon existing relationships and strong partnerships previously established within national, regional, and multi-sectoral surveillance networks, CAHSS plans to expand its surveillance network of networks, with information and intelligence sharing amongst Canadian stakeholders to address critical animal and One Health related challenges. Increased surveillance capacities of the project will support emergency management of large-scale animal health scenarios in Canada, while working alongside AHC's emergency management (EM) division.

Activities taking place under CAHSS allows it to be uniquely positioned to advance focus areas of sustainable agriculture, animals, and agri-food, including: building sector capacity, growth and competitiveness, climate change and environment, science, research and innovation, market development and trade, as well as resiliency and public trust.

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Growth of the CAHSS Community

The CAHSS surveillance community continues to grow – as of spring 2024, there are 850 CAHSS members, close to 30% increase in new membership since the previous year. Members sit on one or multiple CAHSS network groups and participate regularly at quarterly meetings. A strong line of communication is maintained via email listserv in between scheduled meetings.



CAHSS is a Centralized Information Hub

CAHSS continues to use its website (<http://cahss.ca>) as a centralized information hub for all updated resources relevant to animal health and surveillance within the Canadian context. From 2023 to 2024, there were close to 37,500 page views on the website, with the topmost landed on pages that included: disease alerts, equine network page, resources library, reportable and notifiable disease tool, and the poultry network page. Interestingly, of approximately 12,500 CAHSS website users, approximately 80% were from Canada, 11% were from the United States, and the remainder from other international countries.

Exciting New Ventures for CAHSS

New working groups have been created in the past year for CAHSS to explore ways to advance animal health surveillance in Canada. This includes a Wildlife Domestic Animal Interface (WDAI) working group and a Therapeutics/ alternatives to antimicrobials for small ruminants working group. Both working groups are meeting regularly for the next year to define the scope of work and move forward with the creation of information products and resources as identified by the groups.

CAHSS has been working closely with AHC's Emergency Management division and exploring opportunities on how to improve surveillance capacity during largescale animal emergency scenarios or health related events. CAHSS and EM Divisions have been meeting regularly and discussing methods to foster collaboration and develop plans for reliable communication channels for rapid dissemination of information and alerts for future emergency events.



New projects and initiatives of CAHSS include the creation of national recommendations on surveillance and management of Salmonella Dublin, identifying priority topics (issues/diseases) for each of CAHSS' nine network groups, expanding the CAHSS national data platform, organizing risk communications exercises for the community, creating a comprehensive list of tick-borne surveillance programs within Canada, and more. Updates on project progress can be found on the CAHSS website.

COLLABORATIVELY LEADING FARM ANIMAL CARE AND WELFARE IN CANADA

The [National Farm Animal Care Council \(NFACC\)](#) division brings together a diverse array of stakeholders who are committed to progressive and achievable advances in farm animal welfare. NFACC's [members and partners](#) champion deliberative dialogue and a commitment to consensus decision-making in the development of Codes of Practice and Animal Care Assessment Programs.



Canada's Codes of Practice provide critical guidance for the care and handling of farm animals. The Codes serve as our national understanding of animal care requirements and recommended practices. They are informed by science, practical considerations, and societal expectations for responsible animal care. Animal care assessment programs are based on the Codes and demonstrate that a Code is being followed.

Coming Together - Collaborating Together

NFACC's commitment to consensus decision-making was reinforced and strengthened in 2023-2024 period through a full governance review and renewal. Clearer procedures are in place to support the consensus mindset, make decisions, resolve disputes, enhance director onboarding, and communicate more effectively.

WHAT DOES CONSENSUS MEAN AT NFACC?



AGREEMENT

Characterized by the absence of sustained opposition to substantial issues.

Consensus does not necessarily imply complete agreement.



ALL PARTIES INVOLVED

Consensus is the result of a process that takes into account the interests and concerns of all parties.

Everyone has the opportunity to be heard.

Any latent issues must be explored to the satisfaction of all involved.



THE CONSENSUS MINDSET

Ideas proposed must consider and reflect all party's interests. Those involved must ask themselves: "Can I live with the proposal under discussion?"

If they cannot, they must suggest a solution that also considers the interests of others.

NFACC follows a consensus decision-making model for Codes of Practice, as well as for its own policies, membership, and activities related to its goals and objectives. The process rests on the fundamental belief that each person has a piece of the truth. Each member of the group, therefore, must be given a fair opportunity to be heard and each must be listened to with respect. See [About NFACC](#) for more on consensus.

DID YOU

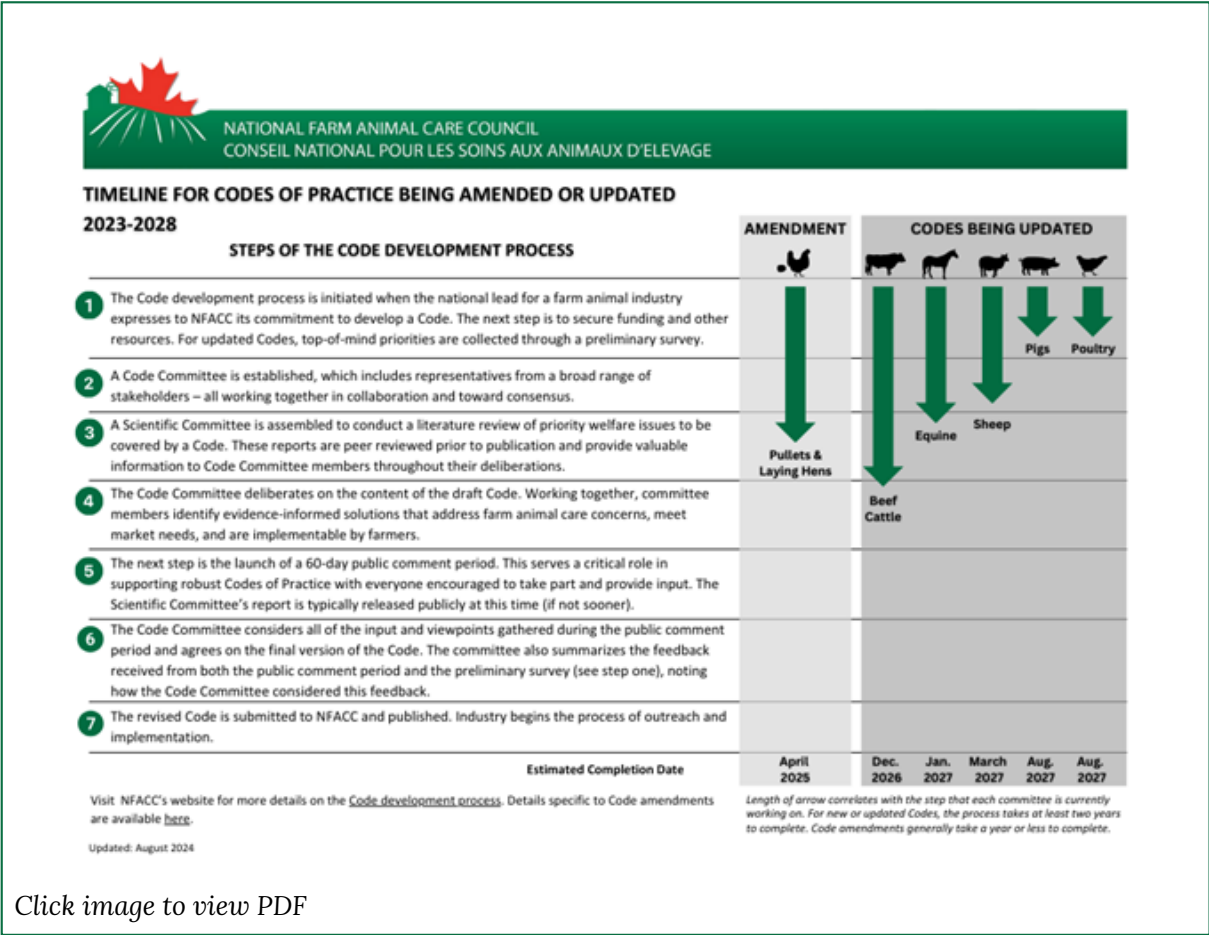
NFACC's operations are funded through membership fees. Every primary and associate member of NFACC, except for governments and researchers, contributes to NFACC's annual budget.

KNOW?

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Promoting Sustainable Animal Welfare Advances Through Codes of Practice

In 2023, updates to five Codes of Practice were initiated: [beef cattle](#); [sheep](#); [equine](#); [hatching eggs, breeders, chickens and turkeys](#); and [pigs](#). Additionally, an amendment to the [pullets and laying hens](#) Code is underway. Progress updates on each Code are available from the respective Code’s webpage. See the summary chart below for an at-a-glance view of progress to date.



The full Code development and amendment process is available from: www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice.



Stay fully informed of all things NFACC by signing up for NFACC Information Updates [here](#).



PROVIDING INTERACTIVE ONLINE TRAINING FOR THE CANADIAN ANIMAL AGRICULTURE SECTOR

The **Animal Health and Welfare Training Centre** is to be the go-to site for livestock and poultry animal health and welfare training. By developing and providing a suite of courses to its members, AHC will be supporting the farmed animal industry in Canada to address training gaps, to offer more options for training and to increase the consistency of access and content across the country. To support this effort, the learning management system will be undergoing an upgrade to enhance the user and trainer experience in the first half of 2024-25.

It is anticipated most of the content for the new Animal Health and Welfare Training Centre will be generated through the work of the divisions and in collaboration with AHC members. In 2023-2024, the Animal Health and Welfare Training Centre expanded its course offerings to media training, as well as many other courses pertinent to animal health and welfare.

Canadian Livestock Transport Certification Program (CLT)

The Canadian Livestock Transport (CLT) certification program is a comprehensive training course offered under Animal Health Canada's Animal Health and Welfare Training Centre. It is for livestock and poultry transporters, shippers and receivers. In May 2023, the new CLT program was re-released to deliver a better multimedia experience accessible 24-7, so people could get certified using their smartphone, tablet or computer. Additionally, the new e-learning platform now features a validation tool to verify CLT certification.



2023-24 CLT CERTIFICATION PROGRAM STATS

- 563 people completed the CLT course; an increase of 56% from last year!
- Currently, there are 1,766 people actively certified.



campus.animalhealthcanada.ca

Further upgrades to the program are planned for early 2024-25, including further improvements to delivery, testing and a Spanish version of the program is currently underway. Additionally, AHC has renewed its agreement with the Producteurs de bovins du Québec to share [Working Through the New Transportation Regulations](#) in English and French for a few more years.

What we heard from course participants:

- I was satisfied with the pace of the course - 3.83 out of 5.00
- The course content was relevant to my business and the species I handle and or transport - 4.01 out of 5
- The training material was delivered in a way that was clear and easy to understand - 4.01 out of 5
- I was able to navigate the course and platform without assistance - 3.97 out of 5
- I would recommend the CLT online certification course - 3.88 out of 5.

WORK AREAS REPORTS

SHAPING THE VISION AND STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE IN ANIMAL HEALTH

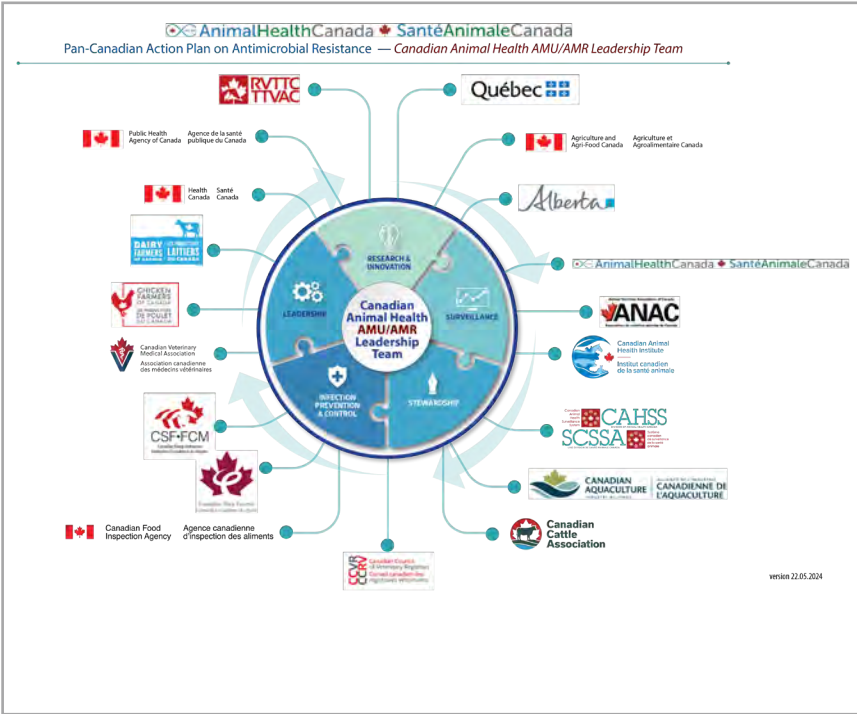
In June 2023 the Government of Canada released the Pan-Canadian Action Plan (PCAP) on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) which includes five pillars of action across the One Health spectrum. AMR is well recognized as a One Health issue. Efforts to address AMR and promote responsible antimicrobial use (AMU) is a shared responsibility between human and animal health stakeholders to effectively address its complexity. This includes those working in animal welfare, food safety, and the environment.

AHC initiated the process to collectively collaborate with multiple industry, government, and industry-government working groups within animal health tasked with AMR, antimicrobial stewardship, and policy development to build a five-year forward plan to support PCAP implementation of priority actions.

On November 22, 2023, AHC hosted an inaugural and highly successful AMR hybrid strategy session.

This event brought together a diverse group of 80+ animal health stakeholders, and Federal, Provincial, Territorial (FPT) governments to discuss the essential structures and mechanisms needed to foster leadership, collaboration, and coordination for the successful implementation of the PCAP for AMR from an animal health perspective. This was followed by a stakeholder survey to clarify objectives with 70 participants representing 40+ organizations representing various sectors responding.

A strategic activity identified during the session was the need to develop a leadership structure to strengthen domestic AMR governance that supports the inclusion of animal health and agriculture partners in PCAP implementation across all pillars. The Canadian Animal Health AMU/AMR Leadership Team was created with their initial meeting March 5, 2024. They continue to meet working towards a five-year PCAP implementation plan.



Click image to enlarge

Activities completed above were in partnership with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through a ‘network of network’ project called “Supporting animal health antimicrobial resistance (AMR) governance and the implementation of the Pan-Canadian Action Plan (PCAP)”.

In March 2024, the AHC board approved and initiated the start of a summary report to review current Canadian stakeholder trends and sentiments regarding AMR/AMU in Canada. This includes consultation with Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture Alliance (RUMA) in the UK and provincial representatives from Alberta and Quebec to better understand some of the proactive and innovative approaches employed within these jurisdictions. The report will assist AHC in planning coordinated action, aligned with the PCAP for AMR.

ANIMAL HEALTH CANADA FUNDED PROJECTS SUMMARY

Building Resilient Animal Health Surveillance Through a One Health Lens

Lead: Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS)



May 2023 – March 2028

Under this project, CAHSS is committed on supporting the following activities:

1. *Data integration and synthesis in a One Health context:*
 - To leverage and promote data sharing from multiple sources within CAHSS surveillance networks (FPT government, industry, provincial diagnostic laboratories, academia, regional/ national surveillance partners).
 - To continue to focus on the ability to access and collate diverse data sources to improve detection, monitoring, prevention, and control of endemic as well as emerging animal and zoonotic disease threats at the human-animal-environment interface at regional and national levels.
 - To explore how the national CAHSS Data Platform project could be further developed, where existing raw data (e.g., abattoir condemnation data and laboratory diagnostic data) could be further analyzed, interrogated, and incorporated into a reporting process that addresses national surveillance network priorities.
2. *Enhancing and building core competencies within CAHSS networks:*
 - To hone existing or desired capabilities into organization-wide strengths.
 - To collaborate across CAHSS' network of networks to obtain the highest possible competencies in collaboration.
 - To support the transfer of core competencies from more experienced network components to those emerging or with evolving scopes and foster greater innovation and more sustainable solutions for animal health surveillance in the Canadian context. The core competencies considered of highest priority to CAHSS are grouped into three pillars: delivery-related (e.g. achieving results), inter-professional (e.g. building trust and partnerships within CAHSS networks), and strategic (e.g. planning for the future of Canadian animal health surveillance).
3. *Strengthening surveillance for animal health emergency scenarios:*
 - To provide support to AHC's emergency management division to improve the readiness of Canada to react and respond to animal health related emergencies. It will do so by leveraging the early detection, warning systems, and rapid, transparent information sharing that occurs across its networks. CAHSS will refine existing tools and create new resources to assist with early warning systems and data sharing that are conducive to surveillance requirements during large-scale animal health emergencies.

The three activities allow CAHSS to be uniquely positioned to advance all five sustainable CAP priorities and focus areas to advance sustainable agriculture, animals, and agri-food, including: building sector capacity, growth and competitiveness, climate change and environment, science, research and innovation, market development and trade, as well as resiliency and public trust.

Funding through the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

ANNUAL REPORT

Promoting Sustainable Animal Welfare Advances Through Codes of Practice



Lead: National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC)

December 2023 - March 2028

Under the NFACC division, this project centers around updates to the following five existing Codes:

- Beef cattle
- Sheep
- Equine
- Hatching Eggs, breeders, chickens, and turkeys
- Pigs

The Pullets and Laying Hens Code of Practice will also be amended.

We are also simultaneously advancing communication and supporting activities that promote public trust and showcase the structured, inclusive and collaborative process for Code review and development.

Funding through the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

Animal Health Canada Emergency Management Project

Lead: Emergency Management

One of three related projects being led by this new division to promote increased emergency preparedness within the livestock and poultry sector, beginning with foreign animal diseases (i.e., African swine fever, foot and mouth disease and highly pathogenic avian influenza).

May 2023 - March 2028

The project includes:

1. *Exploring potential information management:*
 - Environmental scanning
 - Relationship mapping and system compatibility assessment
 - Building sector wide agreements and inventories
2. *Tools for success, resource development:*
 - Opportunities to bridge skill and information gaps identified
 - New partners engaged and targeted emergency management resource opportunities identified and tested
 - Improved AHC emergency management document accessibility
3. *Spreading the word, awareness, outreach, training:*
 - Communication and marketing campaigns to promote existing/future resources
 - Workshop/training opportunity identification, delivery, and evaluation


Funding through the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

ASF Executive Management Board Coordination and Support Project

Lead: Emergency Management

 African Swine Fever
Executive Management Board



Conseil exécutif de gestion
de la peste porcine africaine 

The second of this division's three projects, this project addresses priority work items established by the ASF EMB.

June 2023 to March 2025

The project includes:

- Wild Pig Coordination
- Industry Stop Movement Protocols
- Defining Partner Roles
- Indigenous Engagement
- ASF Communication Plan



Funding through the Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's African Swine Fever Industry Preparedness Program.

Enhancing Canada's preparedness for foreign animal disease incursions, specifically African swine fever (ASF) and foot and mouth disease (FMD)

Lead: Emergency Management

The third of three projects coordinated by the Emergency Management division, this project has five (5) sub-projects focused on integrated FPTI animal health emergency preparedness planning and program excellence.

August 1, 2023 to March 31, 2025

This project is comprised of five distinct sub-projects, each contributing to the overall objective of enhancing Canada's preparedness for foreign animal disease incursions, specifically African swine fever (ASF) and foot and mouth disease (FMD).

1. CanSpotASF Epidemiologic Surveillance Analysis
2. African Swine Fever Large-Scale Depopulation Training Project
3. ASF/FMD - Defining FPT Governments and Industry Partners Roles and Responsibilities Project
4. Foot and Mouth Vaccine Strategy Preparedness Efforts - Phase 1
5. African Swine Fever and Foot and Mouth Disease Exercises and Drills

Funding through the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's Federal Assistance Program.

AHC INITIATIVES

2023 AHC Forum

Resilient Together: Building Sustainable Canadian Systems for People, Animals and the Environment



The AHC Forum took place between September 19 and 20, 2023 in Ottawa, Ontario, and, once again, was a vibrant meeting place for stakeholders in Canada's animal health and welfare. Day one began with a keynote speech from one of Canada's most influential leaders and experts on climate change and the transition to a net-zero economy, Dr. Bruce Lourie. It followed with a presentation on extreme weather and a panel to discuss smallholder communications, mitigating health risks from wildlife and conservation considerations.

Day two began with Keynote speaker, Dr. Hélène Carabin, the Canada Research Chair in Epidemiology and One Health at the University of Montreal - Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, to discuss One Health influences. Dr. Harpreet Kochhar, CFIA President, spoke about working together to reach animal health and animal welfare goals and Dr. Katie Clow gave an engaging discussion on One Health Systems Thinking. This was followed by Dr. Desmond Maguire, Directorate-General for Health & Food Safety to talk about Better Training for Safer Food. A Panel discussion ended the two-day Forum on Using Vaccines for Foreign Animal Diseases. You can view the presentation from the 2023 AHC Forum at animalhealthcanada.ca/forum-2023.

2023 Animal Health Canada Awards

Carl Block Award

Dr. Jean-Pierre Vaillancourt

A specialist in farm biosecurity and infectious disease control strategies, Dr. Vaillancourt is a highly respected researcher and teacher. His career bears witness to his leadership as a veterinary surgeon, his commitment to the animal industry, particularly pig and poultry production, and his strong determination to contribute to improving animal health and welfare.



Carl Block Award



Jean Szkotnicki

Jean Szkotnicki was recognized posthumously for her lifetime achievements. Jean built a distinguished career which included leading the Canadian Animal Health Institute for almost 30 years. She received many accolades for her work, including being inducted into the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame in 2017 and receiving an honorary degree from the Ontario Veterinary College in 2022 for championing the responsible use of antimicrobials in animals. Jean's award was accepted by her brother, Gord Surgeoner.

Leadership in Collaboration Award

Dr. Hélène Trépanier

Dr. Trépanier is a recognized leader in Quebec for her work in animal health and welfare. During her 30-year career with the Quebec government, she developed and implemented the Quebec Animal Health and Welfare Strategy. She was also involved in the creation of ANIMA-Québec, a not-for-profit organization whose goal is to improve cat and dog welfare through communication and certification.



COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH

At the end of 2023, Animal Health Canada added the role of Communications Manager to enhance the flow of information to its members and stakeholders. The Communications Manager has been working closely with the Executive Director and the divisions and work areas to support projects and activities through the development of communication plans and tactics that raise awareness of the work within divisions.

SOME EARLY ACHIEVEMENTS ARE:

Revitalizing the monthly newsletter

The online newsletter structure was revamped and relaunched its monthly e-news for the beginning of April 2024. The newsletter is the third Friday of every month sent to AHC members and 3,000+ subscribers to the AHC mailing list. The monthly newsletter helps AHC members and those interested in the work of AHC stay up to date on projects and initiatives within the divisions and work areas.

Restructuring the AHC home page

The Animal Health Canada home page now includes a news and updates section to provide a space to share updates on projects and initiatives within Animal health Canada and its divisions. The home page is also the home to all updates regarding the US Detections of H5N1 in Dairy Cattle. The space also includes an area to promote key projects such as the CanSpotASF program.

Increasing social media presence

Since the start of 2024, Animal Health Canada has increased its social media presence on X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn, and Instagram. In the first month, AHC gained over 100 followers on LinkedIn. Engagement continues to grow.

Media relations

The Communications Manager keeps track of key issues through media monitoring, which is shared to the leadership team when relevant. All media inquiries and articles are also tracked. Since January 2024, 22 articles mentioned Animal Health Canada or its divisions. Fifteen of those were from a news release announcing that Animal Health Canada received over \$1.5 million in federal funding to continue its work to prepare for foreign animal disease outbreaks.

Work on raising awareness on AHC and its divisions is only beginning with more initiatives planned.





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