

Emergency Preparedness & Response

Theme 1

From disease outbreaks to climate crises, emergencies that threaten the health and welfare of farmed animals, the livelihoods of those that raise them, and the stability Canada's agriculture and agri-food sectors, have challenged the resilience of plant and animal industries. Over recent years, a common area of focus for Canadian organizations has been preparing for, and in some cases responding to, animal health and welfare emergencies. Notable examples discussed during interviews included the prioritization of Avian Influenza (AI), a highly relevant and pressing issue in the Canadian poultry sector, past experiences and lessons learned dealing with Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), and the impact of drastic climate events, such as extreme flooding in Western Canada. Above all, African Swine Fever (ASF) was the most commonly mentioned foreign animal disease that Canadian agriculture groups are working towards preparing for. Interview participants often described how a more deliberate emphasis has been placed on emergency preparedness during peacetime phase of emergency response; a proactive approach that will enable both government and industry to mount a more timely and efficient response to an emergency, and facilitate recovery and reconstruction. The case studies presented below showcase some of the major strides that have been made in relation to emergency response and preparedness in the Canadian context.

