

“What we heard” – NFAHW Council Forum 2011

December 6, 2011

SUMMARY

Session 1

Governance

Guidance Questions (provided to facilitators):

1. What are we trying to fix? Please collect a bullet list of what the breakout group thinks are governance problems in the system.
2. Does the breakout group support in principle a shared governance approach for Canada?
3. What issues would need to be managed in a collaborative system?
4. Are there other models that should be considered?

Q1 - What are we trying to fix? Please collect a bullet list of what the breakout group thinks are governance problems in the system.

- Integration, Coordination, Collaboration
 - There is lots of governance but little coordination
 - Decision making
 - involve all partners
 - Historic lack of influence in decision making
 - Common goals – common understanding, common objective
 - Ability to work together in collaborative way
 - Unanimous prioritization so we can move together
 - What are the criteria for prioritization
 - Integration of programs (food safety, food security, biosecurity) is lacking
 - Fix interface – (labs/biosecurity/data)
 - Jurisdiction
 - Determine who is responsible in advance – public health, animal health, industry
 - Trust must be developed between stakeholders

- Variation between provinces -
 - Animal health policy varies by province – may be disease specific
 - Some provinces have more influence
 - Capacity varies between provinces – need ability to share capacity to assure uniform programming
- Avoid working in silos
- Need an integrated approach by federal and provincial governments and industry – a plan that connects the activities currently underway and moves them forward
- Need a model to prioritize the rest of the issues – emerging, zoonotic and endemic disease
- The Australian Animal Health model may be a good place to start to help improve role definition, communication and funding/compensation
- Solutions must be for the good of all – producers, society, others
- Roles and Responsibilities
 - Need to determine a way to make a process of defining roles and responsibilities move forward
 - Not clear responsibilities pre and post events with regard to financial responsibilities. Need to have the tough discussions between industry and government and between governments
 - For issues outside federal mandate – harmonization of regulations, compensation, etc.
 - We need an understanding of how each provincial legislation deals with agriculture, wildlife and the environment
 - There are national issues without a home
 - Legislative base gaps re emerging, zoonotic and endemic diseases
 - Financial means determined before incident
 - There is a vacuum at the interface between animal health and public health
- Communications
 - Engagement of producers
 - Much is misunderstood due to lack of information
 - Push back on federal programs because of lack of understanding
 - Good communication, trust and leadership required
 - Roles in communication must be defined
- Resources
 - There is a lack of money in industry
 - There is a need to develop human resource (e.g. people with risk assessment experience)
 - Government lacks money and the ability to hire human resources

- A compensation framework is required
- Get people working in areas that are not their mandate
- Identify champions – a strong will is required
- Government funding priorities direct industry activities – are we losing focus on animal health needs?
- Coordinated efficient use of resources by collaborative initiatives
- Loss of corporate memory leads to less sharing as relationships are lost
- Legislative base has a trade focus and addresses 2% of issues while using a majority of resources
- Invest in prevention as a priority rather than response and recovery
- Data
 - Data and information sharing is difficult
 - Privacy legislation is a big barrier to sharing information in a disease outbreak
 - Information sharing must respect the privacy concerns of each organization
- Technology
 - Technology is beyond our ability to use it
 - Technology should allow us to collaborate
- Other
 - Data sharing
 - Government staffing levels
 - Ability to use technology
 - Inertia
 - FPT groups often bog down when the representatives go back to their “day” jobs
 - Inequity of voices among food producers
 - Council decision making
 - Non representative
 - Need to engage wildlife and environment in the system
 - The makeup of Canada is an inherent problem
 - Fear of a Council having decision making power – need a mandate and implementation
 - The system must have decision making power according to its mandate
 - We need a philosophical shift to innovative and proactive away from reactive and ad hoc historical
 - Need to deal with the lag time from identification to confirmation of disease.

Q2 - Does the breakout group support in principle a shared governance approach for Canada?

- All nine tables supported in principle a shared governance approach for animal health and welfare in Canada – some tables had a “but” with further comments which are included below
- National not federal approach
 - The structure will need to accommodate competition between provinces
 - Holistic, global approach
 - Federal government has final say because of authority and funding
- If shared governance means shared responsibility, we are already there (e.g. industry lead in identification)
- Shared – not just collaboration but decision making – include technical committees
- We must not build more bureaucracy but efficiency across the system
- Producers may not be ready to see commonality of issues
- Need resource and infrastructure investment – perhaps a strong plan will facilitate this
- Need cabinet level buy-in
- Private corporation model (Animal Health Australia) would keep the dollars in the system
- What about shared costs – another level of bureaucracy?
- Competition within the membership of the Council
- Equity between partners – i.e. a national program does not equal a federal program
- Must be comprehensive and cover from gate to plate (value chain)
- Leadership style
 - Collective leadership like a wolf pack
 - Move ahead with further examination and adoption of the Animal Health Australia model
- How to get there?
 - Identify the appropriate stakeholders
 - Build trust, accountability, communication and prioritization
 - Shared vision – action plan
 - Identify under what authority
 - Identify legal gaps (CFIA authority has gaps)

- Develop cabinet level buy-in in all federal and provincial departments and agencies
- Ensure adequate communication to facilitate change
- Develop trust
- Identify and obtain resources (dollars and people)
- Develop shared decision making
- Establish accountability
- Industry may have to keep this moving along
- Consider roles of the Council of Chief Veterinary Officers, the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council, Canadian Animal Health Coalition and other existing groups when determining roles and responsibilities
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- Other
 - Agri-recovery framework is a cautionary tale about having a framework without financial commitments fully spelled out and understood
 - Talking money first will likely frustrate and stall it right off
 - A private corporation would keep committed dollars in this area
 - Until we go through a disaster, there will be lack of understanding
 - Leadership at all levels – must be willing to take a risk to do the right thing
 - Australian compensation model will be difficult for industry to buy into
 - Need to avoid risk aversion
 - There are different authorities for an emergency – need a command system
 - Skilled analysis and decision making will be required when consolidating – need individuals capable of integrating key concerns, recommending options, predicting impacts (sectoral ramifications) or issues for immediate action.

Q3 - What issues would need to be managed in a collaborative system?

- Champion
 - Government of Canada must see this as a priority
 - Need champions from each partner
 - Need a common purpose
- Funding
 - Must facilitate planning and budget priorities for governments and industry
 - Agriculture has a low priority in Canada
 - Investment to create equity where lacking
 - Economics – costs and compensation
- Human resources
 - Facilitate staff sharing and resources to achieve mutual goals
 - Identified roles and responsibilities
- Priorities
 - Issues of shared need
 - Cataloguing of initiatives and gap analysis
 - Benchmarking required – what is there – what are the gaps
 - System needs to change –
 - Anticipation
 - Sensitization and education of producers
 - Revision of disease list
 - Ensure a process to assess what works well and how best to implement it for all sectors including:
 - Policy and regulations
 - Science and technology
 - Education and training
 - IT
 - Decision making
- Trust
 - Trust will develop slowly - focus on issues for which there is clear consensus they should be addressed first
 - Demonstrate that data and information that are collected will be analysed and shared with others (re animal health)
 - In a national approach, who gives?
 - Managing negative response of another sector
- Authority
 - Should not pressure government agencies but should provide strong arguments which agencies can use internally to formulate policies and programs under their authorities

- How does partnering fit with existing authorities?
- System will need independence of authority and decisions
- Regulatory controls
- Market impact
- Public perception
- Accountability
 - Identify and describe accountability in the system
 - Who? Reporting structure?
- Representation
 - who, what skills are required
 - Roles and Responsibilities (e.g. Animal Health Australia – 7 directors)
 - A process to feed in suggestions
 - Ensure small groups are included
- Risk Management
 - Which diseases?
 - Managing your share of the risk – e.g. biosecurity implemented appropriately
 - Need research on prevention
 - Build anticipation capability
- Risks
 - Collateral damage – the impact of responses when one sector’s mitigative measures impact other sectors negatively (both disease and business risk mitigation measures)
 - Impact on markets – this is the biggest challenge to offset
- Communication
 - Sensitization of producers about infectious diseases and biosecurity
 - Use communications to build understanding of accountabilities and other components of the system to maintain engagement
- Other
 - Give today’s Council more decision making and confidence

Q4 - Are there other models that should be considered?

- Aboriginal talking circle - respect
- Cooperative model – European Union – EU Food Safety Authority (bluetongue incursion response)
- Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre – good principle, no funding
- Adapt the Council to facilitate change
- Canadian Swine Health Board
- Need to do a lot of work exploring options
- Made in Canada solution
- The federal government can't manage it on their own
- Models should be considered on rewards and responsibilities
- Need to work on commonality of issues
- Ensure non-government stakeholders are at the table