

Animal Health Canada

Progress Report – May 2020

ACHIEVEMENTS IN BRIEF

- The Animal Health Canada (AHC) initiative has made significant progress and remains within budget.
- A gap analysis project, led by Synthesis Agri-Food Network was completed in January 2020. Webinars were held in French and English in February 2020 and recorded for those unable to participate. For more information on the findings please review the [report](#) or view the [webinar](#).
- The AHC working group and CEO Champions Committee met in December 2019 where Governance Solutions Inc (GSI) presented preliminary recommendations on animal health governance in Canada based on both comparator research and stakeholder interviews.
- The GSI governance report, completed in January 2020, proposed a straw dog governance model based on consultation and the examination of existing collaborative governance models, nationally and internationally.
- The GSI report was used to help inform the development of 3 possible governance model options for Canada, working with Synthesis Agri-Food Network.
- Working group members continue to utilize the lessons learned in the African Swine Fever Executive Management Board, and the COVID-19 response to inform the further development of Animal Health Canada.
- Engagement with partners working in animal health in Canada and presentations to stakeholders on Animal Health Canada is currently underway.
- Refinement of the proposed governance models based on stakeholder feedback is underway.

KEY UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- June 2020 – Presentation of the proposed governance models to the CEO Champions Committee
- June 2020 – Further refinement of proposed governance models, and follow up with stakeholders
- TBD 2020 – Presentation of the proposed governance models to the FPT Ministers
- Ongoing – Continue outreach to industry, and federal, provincial and territorial government partners to seek support and engagement

Animal Health Canada

Vision

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

Purpose

The purpose of Animal Health Canada is to provide a formal structure for the industry-government partnership required to successfully implement animal health components of the Plant and Animal Health Strategy.

Contributions to Date

Industry support of \$155,000, government support of \$70,000

Questions

Additional information can be found at <https://www.ahwcouncil.ca/work-areas/animal-health-canada>

Please contact Dr. Megan Bergman at megan@ahwcouncil.ca if you have any additional questions

Gap Analysis

- The AHC working group and CEO Champions met in December 2019 to review the findings of the Gap Analysis and the preliminary findings of the Governance Model Review.

The Animal Health Canada Gap Analysis was completed in January 2020. The final report and a webinar on the findings of the Gap Analysis can be found [here](#). The overall findings of the Gap Analysis identified Structural and Organizational Gaps, along with Technical Gaps in how animal health events are managed in Canada.

Overall, the largest gap is the lack of a cohesive national approach that can provide stronger FPT government and industry collaboration.

The current fragmented structure leads to inefficiencies, missed opportunities for synergies and slower decision making. The end result of the current structure is increased risk and overall cost for both government and industry.

Structural and Organizational Gaps at a Glance



Technical Gaps at a Glance

Major Progress Needed in the following areas...



Technical Gaps at a Glance



Governance Review

- The AHC working group met in February 2020 to review the final [Governance Model Report](#) from GSI, and to begin to develop proposed model options for consideration in Canada with the support of Synthesis Agri-Food Network.

GSI examined existing collaborative governance models nationally and internationally that could be developed or adapted to inform a collaborative governance model for Animal Health Canada and proposed a straw dog for consideration and further development by Animal Health Canada. The recommendations from the GSI work noted:

- The “status quo” is not sustainable: recent incidents have taught us that we need to be more systematic, integrated and forward-planning in the management of animal health.
- A “virtual network” is not tangible enough to be viable: several of these exist, and have been tried: while they do create voluntary collaborations, they lack the teeth to mandate behaviour, and they do not create a funded, sustainable organization, nation-wide and cross-sectoral. An example given was “Trace Canada”.
- To most stakeholders (but not all), a full-fledged arms-length “regulatory agency” is too far a stretch and is neither necessary nor addresses the real issues: ultimate legal accountability should continue to rest with FPT governments as the ultimate “guarantor” to consumers and trade partners.
- A form of “public-private partnership” has the most support and fits best: a true partnership collaboration of industry, governments and academia. In order to succeed, every partner should have something substantial to gain and/or to lose by joining and remaining in the partnership.
- The culture issue is at least as important as the structure: embracing mutual respect, active engagement and collaboration, moving beyond individual roles and rights (blame and remedies) to a collective mandate and mindset (“us” vs. “them”).
- No single comparable model is a direct fit for Canada: instead, we will graft pieces of best practice onto a made-in-Canada solution for AHC.
- AHC and NFAHWC are not sustainable as separate entities (from a resourcing and mandate perspective): in fact, the best solution may be for AHC to be the successor of NFAHWC, in which case you will need to address any responsibilities or programs of NFAHWC that are not within the purview of AHC.

GSI also suggested that a successful Animal Health Canada governance model will encompass the federal government, all provinces, all major industry sectors, as well as veterinary groups and academia. This “big tent” approach is the favoured way¹ to establish Animal Health Canada, to be inclusive. This does pose some practical challenges that will need to be addressed:

Using the GSI recommendations, proposed straw dog and key decision points identified in the report, the Animal Health Canada working group worked with Synthesis Agri-Food Network to expand upon the model options and develop three possible approaches to enhancing Canada’s animal health governance for consideration by animal health partners. The consultation process for these options was initiated in April 2020. The proposed options will be further developed and refined based on the feedback from these consultations.

The AHC working group will present the proposed model options to the AHC Champions Committee in June 2020 for input and review.

Industry and Government Engagement

- AHC Working Group members have made presentations to key departments, industry associations and animal health stakeholders including the Pork, Sheep and Beef Value Chain Roundtables, the Feather Boards, the Canadian Council of Chief Veterinary Officers, the Industry Government Advisory Committee, the Canadian Animal Health Institute, The Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System, the Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases, the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council Forum, the Beef Industry Conference, the Canadian Animal Health Coalition, the National Farm Animal Care Council, the Canadian Global Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank, and the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Regulatory Assistant Deputy Ministers

AHC Working Group Members

Industry

Canadian Animal Health Coalition // Canadian Cattlemen’s Association // National Cattle Feeder’s Association // Canadian Meat Council // Canadian Pork Council // Canadian poultry industry // Canadian Sheep Federation // Canadian Veterinary Medical Association // Dairy Farmers of Canada // Dairy Processors Association of Canada // National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council // National Sheep Network // Maple Leaf Foods

Government

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada // Canadian Food Inspection Agency // BC Ministry of Agriculture // Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture // Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs // Ministère de l’Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l’Alimentation du Québec

AHC CEO Champions and Co-Chairs

Bob Lowe, Canadian Cattlemen’s Association (Co-Chair) // Greg Meredith, OMAFRA (Co-Chair) // Rick Bergmann, Canadian Pork Council // David Colwell, JBS Canada // René Dufresne, MAPAQ // Chris Forbes, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada // Michael McCain, Maple Leaf Foods // Dr. Siddika Mithani, Canadian Food Inspection Agency // Wes Shoemaker, BC Ministry of Agriculture // David Wiens, Dairy Farmers of Canada