

AnimalHealthCanada



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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## 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.

The work of AHC's Divisions and Projects would not be possible without funding through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, AgriAssurance Program. We gratefully recognise this program's support for the following projects:

1. Animal Health Emergency Management II Awareness, Capacity, Confidence
2. CAHSS - Enhance Collaboration, Data Integration, Analysis and Reporting
3. CLT Program - Enhancing Poultry and Livestock Handling and Transportation Training
4. NFACC - Advancing Animal Welfare and Public Trust Through Codes of Practice.

## 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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# GOVERNANCE

## Board of Directors



**RENÉ ROY**  
AHC Co-Chair,  
Canadian Pork Council



**DAVE TAYLOR**  
Dairy Farmers of Canada



**DR. NINA VON KEYSERLINGK**  
University of British Columbia,  
Animal Welfare Program



**LUCE BÉLANGER**  
Chicken Farmers of Canada



**DR. JIM FAIRLES**  
Canadian Veterinary Medical  
Association



**DR. CATHERINE FILEJSKI**  
Canadian Animal Health Institute



**DR. LEIGH ROSENGREN**  
Canadian Cattle Association



# FPT GOVERNMENTS ADVISORY COUNCIL

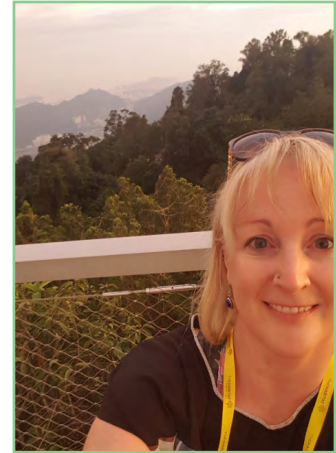
## Federal Government:



**DR. MARY JANE IRELAND**  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Executive Director of the Animal Health Directorate, Chief Veterinary Officer for Canada, WOAHP Delegate for Canada



**LUC MARCHAND**  
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Director of the Animal Industry Division



**DR. CAROLEE CARSON**  
Public Health Agency of Canada's Centre for Food-borne, Environmental and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases

## Provincial/Territorial Governments:



**DR. KEITH LEHMAN – AHC CO-CHAIR**  
Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation, Chief Veterinary Officer for Alberta



**DR. SCOTT ZAARI**  
Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development, Chief Veterinary Officer for Manitoba



**DR. NICOLE WANAMAKER**  
New Brunswick Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries, Chief Veterinary Officer for New Brunswick

## MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS (2022-23)

- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- Canadian Animal Health Institute
- Canadian Cattle Association
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- Canadian Hatching Egg Producers
- Canadian Pork Council
- Canadian Sheep Federation
- Canadian Veterinary Medical Association
- Chicken Farmers of Canada
- Dairy Farmers of Canada
- Egg Farmers of Canada
- Equestrian Canada
- 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 Nunavut
- Government of Ontario
- Government of Prince Edward Island
- Government of Quebec
- Government of Saskatchewan
- Government of Yukon
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Turkey Farmers of Canada

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

### AHC Operations:

- Colleen McElwain, Executive Director
- Samantha Benattar, Executive Assistant
- Liz McConnell, Administrative Assistant
- Nicole Baker, Finance Manager

### Divisions:

#### CAHSS

- Dr. Doris Leung, Interim CAHSS Division Director

#### NFACC

- Jackie Wepruk, NFACC Division Director
- Caroline Ramsay, Assistant Division Director
- Liz McConnell, Administrative Assistant
- Code Development Teams

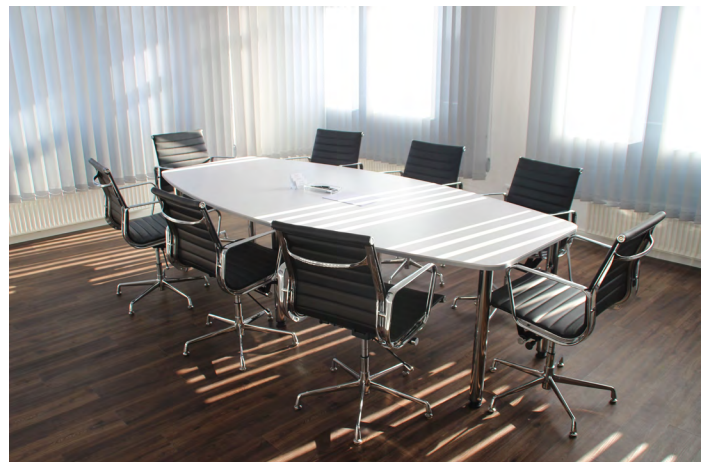
### Projects:

#### Animal Health Emergency Management

- Mikki Shatosky, Project Co-Manager
- Bob Burden (Serecon), Project Co-Manager
- Team Members: Ron Barker, Project Advisor; Shauna Mellish, Facilitator

#### African Swine Fever Executive Management Board Coordination

- Dr. Rayna Gunvaldsen, National Project Manager
- Project leads: Dr. Danielle Julien, Dr. Lucie Verdon

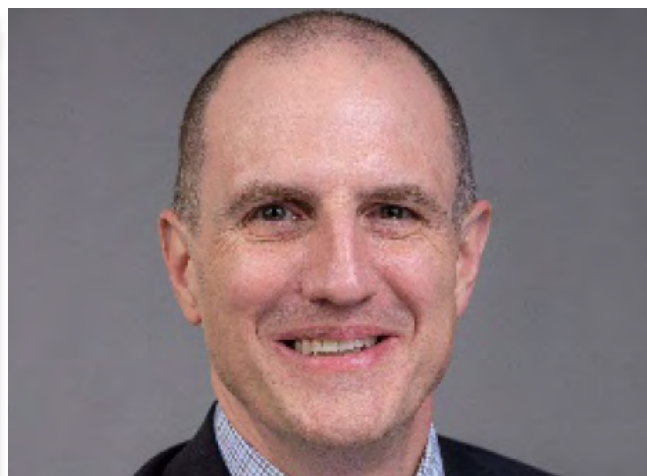




## CO-CHAIRS' MESSAGE



**RENÉ ROY**



**DR. KEITH LEHMAN**

As the AHC Co-Chairs, we are pleased with the increased momentum of AHC's transition over the last twelve months. After multiple consultations through the fall and winter with our industry and government members, we have increased member fees to keep up with inflation and to better support the direction received from our members with respect to animal health and welfare. The details of the progress made to implement the AHC transition are included in this annual report.

It took a team effort to get here - working with the membership on the refinement of AHC's value proposition, its role in emergency management, and the important progress and lessons learned we have collectively made to move the [Pan-Canadian Framework for the Prevention and Control of African Swine Fever \(ASF\)](#) forward were key milestones. These, along with the work to establish our organization's governance and financial frameworks, led to the unanimous endorsement by the FPT Ministers of Agriculture in July of our organization and the work that it does. Similarly, our Industry members have been championing the vision for AHC, embracing the spirit of collaboration needed for emergency preparedness planning, supporting our efforts to build on the network of networks approach for animal disease surveillance, and engaging in meaningful dialogue to finalize Codes of Practice for the care and handling of farmed animals.

The commitment and dedication of our entire membership to bring the vision of Animal Health Canada to fruition has never been clearer. It is now time for the Board of Directors, our staff team and membership to pursue the work to establish effective measures of success to ensure the organization delivers on this vision.

Building on this strong relationship with our members, AHC is now working on a new Membership Engagement and Accountability policy and Member Charter which will ensure the Board is in a better position to collaborate effectively on key issues, setting strategic priorities and establishing common goals. More will come over the next year as this approach is refined and implemented. Further, the Industry-Government Leadership Group, formerly the Champions Group, is being re-engaged 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'd like to thank the staff team for the fantastic work that they do everyday behind the scenes. We look forward to the coming year, which is shaping up to be an important and exciting one for AHC.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



What a year! There is so much to celebrate and be proud of this year. When I stepped into the role of Executive Director on an interim basis last fall, the magnitude of the work to be done was apparent. Fortunately, as Dr. Melanie Barham offboarded from AHC to pursue a new opportunity, she ensured a smooth process for me to pick up the reins. As always happens when navigating a change initiative, the path forward took the occasional dip or sidestep, but the commitment and dedication of our Co-Chairs, Board and FPT Government Advisory Council to the vision for Animal Health Canada are unwavering.

Likewise, I am very proud of the dedication and hard work of our AHC team over the last year. With the closing of the Canadian Agricultural Partnership program at the end of March 2023, our team has been working hard to ensure the key deliverables of projects were completed and shared. They were also working very closely with our division leadership teams and members to develop longer term work plans that align with the AHC Strategic Plan and to meet member needs for the next few years. This is not a small undertaking, but the amazing can-do spirit within our staff teams is a true asset to AHC!

On behalf of the AHC Board of Directors and team, it is my pleasure to present the 2022-23 Annual Report. This past fiscal year was critical to lay the foundation for AHC to be able to meet membership goals and expectations in terms of its role in animal health and welfare for Canadian animal agriculture. As noted by our Co-Chairs, our significant progress forward took a team of committed members, stakeholders and staff to get here. I look forward to taking the outcomes of our many discussions and building forward to implement them into day-to-day operations of AHC.

As the year comes to a close, it is incredibly important to take a moment to reflect on how far we have come in the last couple of years. Change is hard, but we have collectively risen to the challenge because the gains we will receive together as we continue on this journey of collaboration are worth the effort. Heading into the fall, as a team we are poised to deliver on the vision for Animal Health Canada.









# AHC TRANSITION OVERVIEW

## Strategic Plan and Re-Branding

Significant progress has been made over the last couple of years and the substantive implementation work to transition the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council (Council) to take on the role of Animal Health Canada (AHC) has been completed. As a part of this, AHC was pleased to release its first Strategic Plan for 2022-2025 as a key component of its transition.



**The document also incorporates the new association brand, which incorporates the following elements:**

-  an infinity symbol brand icon which stands for the infinite care Canadian farmers provide their animals and reflects the concept of connectivity and unlimited collaboration
-  a softer green which represents rebirth and renewal and is the perfect colour for an organization that is re-imagining its role
-  the addition of blue, which is a natural complement to the earthiness of green by reflecting the colour of the sky and water, highlighting the role of animal agriculture in a One Health and One Welfare concept, and
-  lastly, a neutral grey to underscore AHC's supportive role in convening and promoting multistakeholder projects in support of its members.

# ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

## By-Laws

Culminating a number of discussions, consultations and expert engagement AHC is pleased to be bringing a revised By-Law #3 to the membership for a ratification vote. The new by-laws will allow AHC to pilot its new governance and membership structures as a supportive framework to begin delivering and expanding on the work it was been tasked with by the membership.

## Board of Directors

Based on the newly revised by-laws, the AHC Governance Committee has been working hard to set up a member nominations and selection process to support the first vote on AHC's Board of Directors under the new structure. Further, a new Terms of Reference has been outlined for the Board to better define its collaborative, working relationship with the FPT Governments Advisory Council at a working level.

## Member Fees

As a part of the consultations mentioned above, it was agreed that AHC would increase its membership fees. This is the first increase since 2019, which was much more modest and has not kept up with inflation. The new increase, implemented for fiscal year 2023-24 will better support AHC to increase its capacity to support its new activities and explore new revenue generating opportunities through events and the development of a training centre. This new fees structure will be revisited as AHC pilots its new role since the organization continues to rely on project funding for much of its work.

## Expanded Membership

Since the beginning of the new fiscal year, AHC has been pleased to welcome a number of new members. These are the Canadian Meat Council, Dairy Processors Association of Canada, Animal Nutrition Association of Canada, National Cattle Feeders Association, and the Deans Council - Agriculture, Food and Veterinary Medicine.



## Membership Engagement and Accountability

AHC is an organization built on equal industry and FPT governments responsibility for animal health and welfare in Canada. Inspired by Statement of Intent established among stakeholders when the concept of AHC began, mechanisms are being created to strengthen trust, transparency and mutual respect among all members. This builds on the lessons learned from Plant and Animal Health Strategy, as presented to the membership in 2022, and will include:

- agreements and letters to support a common understanding of member services and deliverables
- consultations and engagement to support strategic planning, project planning and oversight, and the sharing of lessons learned
- better and more frequent exchanges so that industry and government perspectives and needs can be registered and considered before decisions taken by AHC
- individual engagement sessions for FPT governments, and industry, with the Board, as well as altogether as a broader membership, and
- the addition of a Membership Charter to define accountabilities of AHC to its members and vice versa, as well as act as a touchstone or foundational document for AHC and which will be posted publicly on the AHC website.

## Operations Development

- The new Emergency Management Division is being developed based on member direction to expand AHC's activities in relation to animal health emergency preparedness planning and to grow its role in an animal health emergency. This will leverage the successes of AHC coordination for the African Swine Fever Executive Management Board, supportive structures in development for Foot and Mouth Disease and leverage the resources developed through the Animal Health Emergency Management Project.
- Based on the new Strategic Plan, AHC developed its first annual Operational Plan which details the work to be undertaken to move toward strategic goals. This will be revisited in the coming months as funding is confirmed. Working with the membership, shared key performance indicators will be further defined to enable benchmarking in the coming year.

## 2022 FORUM

Evolving to Meet the Needs of Tomorrow



*It was wonderful to meet in person once again with the membership at Forum 2022 to network, share updates and hear from speakers on matters that impacted animal agriculture in recent years.*

**Mary Jane Ireland**, CVO for Canada, shared perspectives from the COVID-19 pandemic, the outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza and disasters in British Columbia. **Stephani Roy McCallum**, leadership coach on how to harness the power of conflict shared how disagreement can lead to positive change. By far the most impactful discussions arose following the panel discussion on the **impact of the BC floods** and other climate related climate-related disasters. Producers, veterinarians and responders shared their firsthand experiences dealing with animal health and welfare crises with attendees. The event was enriched by strong attendance, candid conversations and sponsorship support.

Presentations for this session are available on the AHC website at [www.animalhealthcanada.ca/forum-2022](http://www.animalhealthcanada.ca/forum-2022).

### Dr. Jim Fairles, Carl Block Award



### Dr. Glen Duizer, Leadership in Collaboration Award





# CROSS-POLLINATION

## at Animal Health Canada

Animal Health Canada (AHC), officially launched in 2022, is comprised of senior leaders in industry and government to engage collaboratively on One Health and One Welfare issues. AHC has a small staff to lead project activities and then relies heavily on industry, government, and independent experts and stakeholders to deliver project objectives. This relationship ensures that all parties whether government, industry, association, public or private are committed to the successful completion and extension of the activities funded.

Four divisions within AHC report to the Executive Director with some divisions also having leadership groups who provide technical and strategic oversight. AHC acts as the lead agency for each division's application, oversight, and reporting on government-funded projects. Directors within each division lead and work relatively autonomously to deliver on their division's projects and objectives.

In the past year, as one organization, the four divisions have worked together to bring a greater depth of knowledge and a broader network of connections to deliver on important topics such as animal welfare, emerging diseases, animal health emergency preparedness, animal health surveillance, and antimicrobial use/resistance. Each division acts with its members to be the leaders, convenors, and collaborators for the Canadian farmed animal sector. This means identifying important issues across the industry, bringing together stakeholders to solve those issues, and communicating with the broader community.

As the umbrella under which the divisions operate, AHC holds the ultimate oversight role for its four divisions and leads the strategy development for the organization. Efforts to organize and structure AHC are beginning to allow for easier cross-pollination between the divisions and projects AHC undertakes. In turn, farmed animal sectors, and federal, provincial and territorial government partners are starting to benefit from a more coordinated structure to help to identify, strategize and address the animal health and welfare needs in Canada. This approach is leveraging the well-respected models used by the National Farmed Animal Care Council and the lessons learned from the African Swine Fever Executive Management Board (ASF EMB).

The 2022-2025 strategic plan has four areas of focus, which reflect the work of the divisions and AHC as a whole:

- disease surveillance
- emergency management – preparedness and response
- animal welfare, and
- resilient governance and operations.

## Overarching AHC Highlights for 2022-23 Include:

- continuation of the transition to Animal Health Canada from the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council, as summarized above
- unified the Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS), the CAP-funded Animal Health Emergency Management (AHM) project and coordination of the ASF EMB, the Canadian Livestock Transport (CLT) training program, and the National Farmed Animal Care Council (NFACC) to create one nationally focused organization focused on animal health and animal welfare
- organized and hosted collaboration opportunities between government and industry through various meetings and events including the AHC Forum, Plant and Animal Health Strategy Review, Strategic Planning Sessions, webinars, an in-person ASF Executive Management Board Meeting, and an Avian Influenza Workshop
- began the development of a strategic communications plan to articulate and promote the importance and interconnectedness of disease surveillance, animal welfare, and emergency management.

The four divisions are:

- Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS)

- National Farmed Animal Care Council (NFACC)

- Emergency Management – division structures in development

- Animal Health and Welfare Training Centre – early stages of development.

# CANADIAN ANIMAL HEALTH SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM (CAHSS)



**THE VALUE OF CAHSS** comes through the sum-total of all its activities and economies-of-scale. A single network, information product, or dashboard could only have minimal impact in the prevention and response to an outbreak. The “network of networks” approach and the CAHSS centralized information hub with its reporting dashboards, disease alerts, resource library, and podcast series all contribute to an effective, responsive, and integrated animal health surveillance system in Canada. Through its networks, CAHSS observes, connects, detects, and protects the agriculture and agri-food industry in Canada. This AHC division creates social networks and relevant tools to advance animal health, and builds capacity for national surveillance.

**HOW DO THE NETWORKS WORK?** The CAHSS networks and tools are used to inform leaders across Canada, and across all farmed animal species, for improved disease outbreak planning, coordination, and response. There are nine well-established network groups centered on a commodity group (aquatic, beef, companion animal, dairy, equine, poultry, small ruminant) or topic (antimicrobial use and resistance, vector borne diseases). Network membership varies, but generally includes federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) governments, animal and agri-food industry organizations, animal health laboratories, academia, veterinary practitioners, provincial and regional surveillance networks, among others working in the One Health space. The network approach provides access to expertise and

encourages buy-in for the work being done and funded by the organizations supporting the network. Quarterly meetings are held for each network creating a consistent touchpoint to CAHSS, where members could share information and resources related to animal health and surveillance. Information sharing becomes critical during large scale animal health scenarios, such as the occurrence of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) across Canada.

**SHARING INFORMATION ON ANIMAL HEALTH** The CAHSS website is a centralized information hub for network communications, disease information dashboards, disease alert distribution, resource library, surveillance initiatives, and other relevant information products. CAHSS uses the surveillance data they collect from their reporting platforms and built relationships with their network members and other surveillance organizations to generate innovative solutions to address gaps related to animal health and surveillance. Key work areas of CAHSS include building people networks, information sharing, building national capacity, and creating collaborative surveillance projects. Surveillance data is used for trend analysis, network discussions, and to alert the industry to changing disease patterns and disease outbreaks for informed decision making at all levels of the industry. Synergies between networks and economies-of-scale are generated with CAHSS creating and maintaining surveillance networks and surveillance tools for multiple commodity groups and topics.

*In the 2021 AHC impact survey CAHSS received a score of 7.4 (excellent) from stakeholders.*



Dr. Doris Leung (Interim Division Director, CAHSS), Andrea Osborn (Senior Scientific Specialist, CEZD), and Afolakemi Adeniji (Intern, AHC) at the 2023 CAHLN (Canadian Animal Health Laboratorians Network) conference in Saskatoon, SK.

# CANADIAN ANIMAL HEALTH SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM (CAHSS)

## Major Accomplishments of CAHSS for 2022-23 Include:

- connected with 600+ CAHSS members that provide expertise and knowledge on various commodity groups and topics. CAHSS membership is representative of most Canadian provinces and territories
- continued supporting the third year of the [CanSpot African Swine Fever \(ASF\) surveillance system](#), which combines surveillance activities aimed at protecting the commercial swine sector from the impacts of ASF. CanSpotASF builds confidence that Canada is truly free of ASF, directly supporting market access
- developed the CAHSS National Database Dashboard (Abattoir Project) to track monthly condemnation records of swine, beef, and poultry for surge capacity, trend analysis, and syndromic surveillance. The dashboard uses data submitted from provincially inspected abattoirs in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba
- launched the [Fish Health Tracker Tool](#), a collaborative, community science program made with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative (CWHC) that encourages anglers and public members to submit normal and abnormal fish observations to better understand fish health in Canadian waters
- maintained and hosted various dashboards (e.g., CFIA equine disease dashboard, CEZD One Health dashboard, SARS-CoV-2 in animals dashboard), several of which were made in collaboration with animal health and One Health partners; with data that could be used for trend analysis and alerts
- sent 45 [disease alerts](#) to over 600+ CAHSS members alerting them of relevant animal diseases, including highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), equine infectious anemia (EIA), equine strangles, and more
- continued to promote the CAHSS podcast series, "[Animal Health Insights](#)", which has released 11 new podcast episodes to expand their outreach across the farmed-animal industry
- completed the CAHSS governance review and developed a new charter.

**WANT TO PROTECT FISH SPECIES IN CANADA?**

Become part of a community science program now! Participate by reporting your sightings through our website and mobile app! We encourage reports on both normal and abnormal sightings! You can start by either scanning the QR code, clicking the website link or downloading the app.

**YOU OBSERVE YOU REPORT WE RESPOND!**

Logos: CFIA-ACIA, CAHSS, CANADIAN WILDLIFE HEALTH COOPERATIVE

SCAN QR CODE

WEBSITE LINK

DOWNLOAD APP

Start reporting by scanning this QR code.

Start reporting by clicking on the website link here.

Download the Wildlife Health Tracker app on the Apple App store or Google Play Store for free.

More information on the community science program can be found on the CAHSS website [fishfish.ca](#).

### CAHSS & WECAHN SMALL FLOCK POULTRY COURSE 2023 - STATS

This six part course occurred from April to May 2023 with Drs. Gigi Lin and Victoria Bowes. The course was provided as a component of strengthening Canada's preparedness for highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) and to support Canadian veterinarians and veterinary staff on small flock medicine and production. Recordings from this course are available upon request.

**Participant Type**

**Participants by Province**

**470**  
Total Participants

**315**  
Canadian Veterinarians

**9**  
Hours of learning/  
RACE CE credits

**INFORMATION PRODUCTS**

- Video recordings
- Course reference material
- Direct communication with course instructors
- Q & A master document
- Listserv of Canadian veterinarians + veterinary staff interested in small flock poultry

**PARTICIPANT QUOTES**

"The Q&As were so informative. I see pet birds all the time but this made me much more confident with poultry."

"Just wanted to send a note of appreciation for this series – this has been among the best CE I have ever done in terms of organization and supplementary materials."

"I wanted to thank you all for a very informative 6 week course. I enjoyed it and learned a lot."



# NATIONAL FARM ANIMAL CARE COUNCIL (NFACC)



*NFACC received an Impact Score of 7.9 (excellent) from the AHC community. This was the highest score achieved among all the AHC divisions and projects.*

**THE NATIONAL FARM ANIMAL CARE COUNCIL (NFACC)** creates and oversees the processes by which those with the jurisdiction, influence, or responsibility in farm animal welfare come to consensus on standards of care that can be applied on all farms in Canada. NFACC is best known for publishing the Codes of Practice for the care and handling of farmed animals. However, it is the process by which those Codes and animal care assessment programs are developed, along with the relationships fostered between diverse individuals with diverse perspectives, that is the real magic of NFACC.

NFACC's Achievements Report 2022-2023 provides more details and is available at: [www.nfacc.ca/achievement-reports](http://www.nfacc.ca/achievement-reports).

## Code Development Process

The Code development process is collaborative, transparent, and consensus-based. NFACC supports two committees for each Code of Practice being developed/updated, creating a network of invested people in the welfare of farmed animals.

- Code Committees – established to develop or update a Code of Practice. The committee is in place for the duration of the Code development/update process (approximately two years).
- Scientific Committee – established to review the latest scientific literature and prepare a scientific report to inform the Code Committee discussion.

Based on the premise that diversity leads to better decisions, Code Committees consist of a wide group of invested people including farmers, animal welfare organizations, government, processors, veterinarians, animal welfare researchers, food companies, and others. The rules of engagement for the committees are clear, with a focus on collaborative and consensus-based decision making. Together with a Code manager, the committee works through the established process to develop a draft Code. They identify evidence-based solutions that address farm animal care concerns, meet market requirements and are implementable on farms. A 60-day public comment period plays a critical role in refining and supporting a robust Code of Practice. All comments are carefully reviewed leading to the finalized version of the Code. The Code development process is lengthy (two-year process) but leads to a practical and fair tool that diverse groups can support. **Today there are 15 Codes of Practice in place for farmed animals in Canada.**

Codes of Practice are the foundation of farmed animal welfare in Canada. Codes are used as extension tools, referenced in federal and provincial regulations, used as a resource by enforcement officials in the courts, and form the basis of animal care assessment programs. Increasingly, markets are requesting that Code of Practice requirements be met through on-farm assessment programs for market access. The Codes are critical to facilitate balanced and productive conversations when contentious issues arise around the welfare of farmed animals.

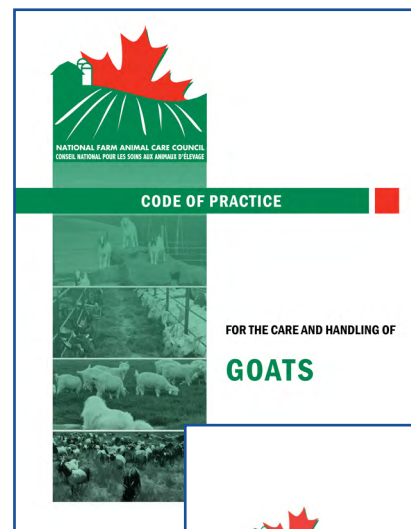
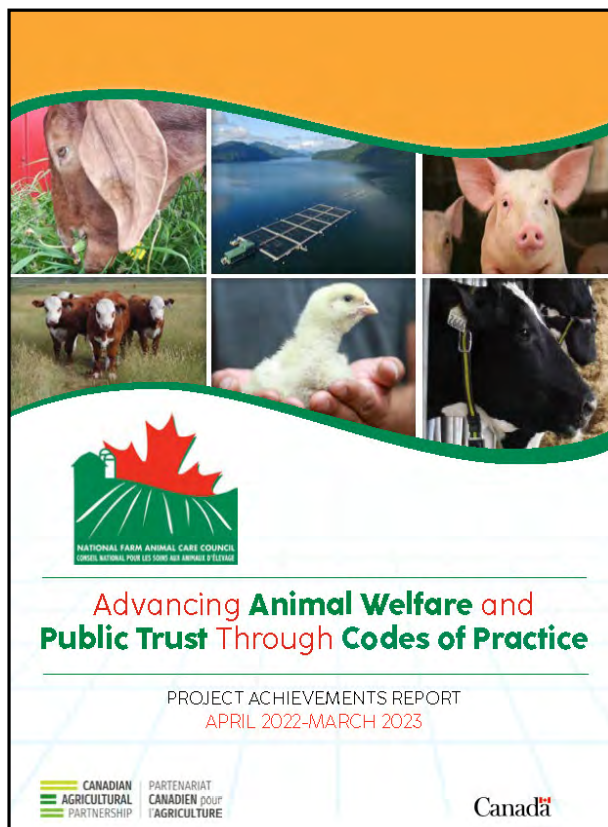
# NATIONAL FARM ANIMAL CARE COUNCIL (NFACC)

## NFACC is supported by its membership consisting of:

- **Primary members** – national associations (or provincial associations where no national association exists) representing farmed animal groups, food companies, processors, animal welfare groups, and the veterinary community
- **Associate members** – companies or provincial associations with an investment in the welfare of farmed animals
- **Ex-officio non-voting members** – government and the research community.

## Major Accomplishments of NFACC for 2022-23 Include:

- updated and published the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Goats
- updated and published the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle
- hosted two in-person NFACC member meetings and one board-only meeting, which provided important forums for information sharing and relationship building between farmed animal associations, agri-food industry, government, academia, and animal welfare groups
- stakeholder consultation and wind down of the Transport Code of Practice after conducting a risk assessment and collaboration planning exercise to ensure the decision to do so was as comprehensively informed as possible.



# EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIVISION

Ongoing dialog on emergency management creates awareness and leads to quicker recognition and response to emergencies. The strategy development, training (courses, webinars, workshops), and tangible resources (frameworks, plans, protocols, handbooks, factsheets) keep animal health emergency management front-of-mind for all players in the industry from producers to policymakers.

Based on membership discussions, the AHC Strategic Plan, and the Role in Emergency Management sessions held in November 2022, the African Swine Fever (ASF) Executive Management Board was formally incorporated into the **new Emergency Management Division** in April 2023, along with the Animal Health Emergency Management (AHEM) project and the Foot-and-Mouth Vaccine Strategy Working Group. A staffing plan and new governance structure will be developed to take on the recommendations from the November sessions (see below) and to leverage the many successes and lessons learned from AHC's emergency management activities in the past few years.

## Role of AHC in an Emergency

In response to a request from the FPT Deputy Ministers of Agriculture in June 2022, AHC held two stakeholder sessions in November 2022 to clarify its role in an emergency. In total, approximately 150 stakeholders from FPT governments and industry participated in the sessions and it was agreed that:



- AHC's role is principally in prevention, planning and preparation for animal health emergencies (disease, disaster, disruption)
- AHC **is** a key resource to assist with primary response activities. As examples, this may be by:
  - including in senior leadership emergency management discussions and meetings outside of the national or regional emergency operations centres
  - acting in a coordinator or convenor role to help guide response activities through sharing of plans, resources and, as needed, AHC could serve as a mediator.
  - as AHC grows into its role, resources could become available to support incident command/management structures and/or task specific groups
- primary response falls to the regulatory authority and/or the impacted industry sector(s); unless these groups decide to delegate AHC to take on a larger role and this would need to come with the resources to undertake this responsibility.

## Specific recommendations from these sessions included:

- the four pillars approach used for the ASF EMB (see below) is a useful structure to guide multistakeholder collaboration with respect to emergency preparedness activities
- harvesting the lessons learned from emergencies and ensuring they are shared broadly with FPT governments and industry partners and that gaps and identified next steps are addressed
- AHC to review the applicability of the AHA National Management Group structure and determine how best to integrate the main structures in the context of the Canadian animal health system
- AHC should focus on areas where no single agency has a clear and defined responsibility. Examples:
  - horizon scanning and leadership in the development of system-wide One Health plans to respond to specific diseases of particular risk to Canada
  - engagement with indigenous communities, smallholders and environmental representatives in relation to the management of wildlife as it relates to disease
  - work with stakeholders to ensure that mental health supports are developed for producers and disease responders; and
  - encourage, track, and synthesize results from investment in R&D related to animal health emergency management.



# ANIMAL HEALTH EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (AHM) PROJECT

# AHEM

Animal Health Emergency Management Project



*AHEM received an impact score of 7.1 indicating the excellent value it provides.*

**AHEM**, a CAP-funded project, was charged with developing industry-relevant emergency management resources, which are available at [www.animalhealth.ca](http://www.animalhealth.ca). The objectives of the project were to strengthen emergency preparedness, response, and recovery, through increased industry awareness, capacity, and confidence.

## Animal Health Emergencies – Disease, Disasters, Disruptions

Emergencies in the animal agriculture industry can stem from a variety of reasons including disease introduction and spread, facility issues (e.g., barn fire), natural disasters, supply chain interruptions impacting feed accessibility or processing capacity, and unrelated trade disruptions that reduce or close market access. Working with industry associations, producers, governments, and subject matter experts a number of tools and resources were developed. The goal of these is to raise the collective level of awareness and capacity to manage emergencies more effectively across the country, in all regions and all sectors.

An often-overlooked aspect of emergency response is the physical and mental health of those responsible for the care of farmed animals during an emergency e.g., producers, their families, and employees, veterinarians, and disaster response teams. AHEM resources were developed from a One Health and One Welfare perspective, and therefore include resources for mental health and guidance on animal welfare considerations.

## Major Project Accomplishments for 2022-23 Include:

- held 260+ well received virtual webinars and in-person meetings
- a 61% increase in website visits in FY 2023 compared to FY 2022
- engaged eight (8) species groups (pigs, dairy, beef, bison, goats, sheep, equine, poultry) across nine (9) provinces and territories (BC, AB, SK, MB, ON, QC, NB, NS, PEI) to collaboratively develop thirteen national frameworks and provincial association-level plans, as well as nine sets of producer-level handbooks by the end of the project
- developed emergency response protocols, factsheets, and producer workbooks for planning at the farm level customized to the specifics of each commodity and region
- offered training courses tailored to agriculture, including: incident command system, mental health resiliency, emergency management, and an introduction to the media
- collaborated with the CFIA, CVMA, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and the European Commission for the Control of Foot-and-Mouth Disease to offer foreign animal disease recognition and response training to private practitioners and industry staff which led to 150 registrants in the avian influenza course alone, and over 600 participants in Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) and African swine fever (ASF) training events
- created a prototype guide for developing mutual aid agreements.



## FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE VACCINE STRATEGY WORKING GROUP

*The role of this group is expected to increase rapidly with the March 2023 announcement that CFIA would work with the provincial and territorial governments to establish a Canadian FMD vaccine bank. This commitment was reaffirmed by the FPT Ministers of Agriculture in July 2023.*

Working closely with CFIA, as well as representatives from the beef, dairy and hog industries and provincial governments, the AHEM team has leveraged the ASF EMB model to begin coordination activities in relation to foot and mouth disease (FMD). To reduce duplication and to create opportunities for synergy, the work of this group has focused on the development of tools and resources to support the use of a vaccine to control FMD should it be found in Canada.

### Accomplishments in 2022-23:

- facilitated a small working group to develop a Canadian FMD vaccine bank approach that includes the identification of critical success factors to be considered for an effective roll-out and use of vaccines when they become available
- creation of a broader FMD Vaccine Strategy Working Group, including a Terms of Reference and Work Plan.

## AFRICAN SWINE FEVER EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT BOARD COORDINATION PROJECT



*With an impact score of 7.6, credit for work well done is due to all collaborators working to implement the ASF Action Plan.*

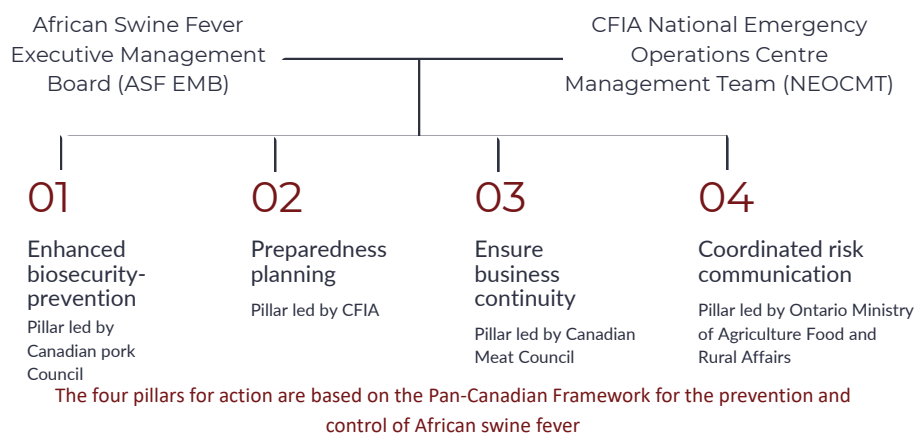
The introduction of African swine fever to Canada would have such a devastating effect on the swine industry that a multi-faceted project was initiated in 2019 to mitigate the potential impact. Working closely with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, AHC coordinates Canada's ASF planning, preparedness, and readiness for response.

With the objective to prevent entry and mitigate the impacts of ASF in the Americas, a [Revised framework for the Prevention and Control of African Swine Fever](#) was developed collaboratively with federal, provincial-territorial (FPT) and industry partners. To ensure a multistakeholder approach, the ASF EMB has been Chaired and coordinated by Animal Health Canada.

Animal Health Canada was built as a public-private collaboration to provide a formal structure for the industry-government collaboration needed to successfully implement animal health and welfare programs to address specific issues like African swine fever (ASF). Over the last few years, unprecedented progress has been made to prepare Canada should ASF be detected. A large amount of work has already been completed and new tasks are underway through all partners to close any remaining gaps and to ensure the integrated emergency response plan will be ready. Moving the Pan-Canadian Framework for the Prevention and Control of African Swine Fever Forward, a full report on the progress of the ASF EMB to-date is [here](#).

*The ASF Executive Management Board (ASF EMB) brings together federal, provincial, and territorial governments and industry representatives to provide guidance and prioritize activities across governments and industry to address the risk of ASF introduction and establishment.*

## Pillar Overview



## PILLAR 1

### Enhanced Biosecurity and Prevention

Tightening border security, increasing awareness through campaigns directed to farmers and international travellers, updating biosecurity requirements with current science for Canadian farms and developing and implementing an eradication strategy for wild pigs are required to prevent the introduction and spread of ASF in Canada.

#### Accomplishments in 2022-23:

- CPC led biosecurity working group has develop voluntary standards and a pilot which will be expanded into 2023-24
- the final draft of the evergreen Canada's Invasive Wild Pig Strategy (2022-2032) was released
- the Wild Pig Leadership Group was established toward the end of 2022-23 and work planning is underway to bring the strategy's goals and objectives to life
- participation on two North American feral swine working groups for information sharing and cross-border collaboration.



## PILLAR 2

### Preparedness Planning

Having strategic surveillance and emergency plans that consider both the needs and the consequences of the response activities to the animals, people, businesses, industry, community, government, and the environment is key to ensuring early detection and a timely coordinated response to prevent the spread of ASF.

#### Accomplishments in 2022-23:

- a gap analysis was conducted and set of recommendations were developed to support training capacity to undertake a depopulation, along with supporting decision trees to make this decision, were completed
- recommendations were developed for a voluntary stop movement in the event of that a highly suspected or confirmed case of ASF were was detected to stop any further spread of the virus
- the CanSpotASF program was extended to smallholders, in addition to abattoir and commercial farm testing.



## PILLAR 3

### Ensure Business Continuity

Resilience through the emergency response and the post-outbreak re-building, or recovery, period is important to industry and government. FPTI working groups have been established to develop herd reduction strategies, negotiate the recognition of zoning standards with trading partners, and to develop programming to maintain business continuity.

#### Accomplishments in 2022-23:

- surplus swine depopulations plan released and its parameters were used in a tabletop exercise organized by AAFC in May 2023
- new sub working group created to develop program support options for during a response, which would support producers, processors and supply chain partners in order to promote more coordinated action and faster recovery.

## PILLAR 4

### Coordinated Risk Communications

Timely, coordinated communications both internally within organizations, as well as between FPTI stakeholders, and externally to pork producers, the broader agriculture and food industry, the general public, and international trading partners helps control the narrative of the emergency situation. Input has been sought from FPTI stakeholders to coordinate the various emergency communication plans into an over-arching communication guide to be used in the event of a suspected or confirmed case.

#### Accomplishments in 2022-23:

- communications plans have been created by CFIA, CPC and CMC and these have been shared to support common approaches
- feedback from provinces and provincial pork organizations has been sought by CFIA to refine its planning
- a third-party facilitator's report detailing information sharing needs and hard recommendations on organization roles and responsibilities based on stakeholder feedback for initial review by the ASF EMB
- the pillar has been split into two working groups:
  - a Communications Working Group to create an inventory of assets and provide a mechanism for the sharing of key messages to support collaboration; and
  - a new Information Sharing Working Group has been established to clarify the stakeholder notifications processes CFIA will use from a presumptive positive to post confirmation.



*In March 2023, AHC was pleased to be able to host the first in-person ASF EMB meeting since before the pandemic in Ottawa.*

# ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE TRAINING CENTRE / CANADIAN LIVESTOCK TRANSPORT (CLT)



AHC has completed the background work to establish the Animal Health and Welfare Training Centre to be launched later in 2023-24. The new training centre vision is to be both the go-to site for livestock and poultry animal health and welfare training and a source for non-dues revenue for AHC. The move from offering one course, Canadian Livestock Transport (CLT), to providing a suite of courses, allows the farmed animal industry in Canada to address training gaps, to offer more options for training and to increase the consistency of access across the country. 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 is excited to expand their its course offerings including training on the transportation of dangerous goods, media training, as well as many other courses pertinent to animal health and welfare. Targeted communication with the industry will help develop awareness of the new training center and its expanded course options. Check us out at [www.campus.animalhealth.ca](http://www.campus.animalhealth.ca).

## Canadian Livestock Transport Certification Program



[Click to watch the 'Better, Safer, Canadian' video.](#)

The CLT training program is the flagship program for the training centre and a proven source of revenue generation for AHC. Animal welfare training is required for anyone transporting livestock and poultry in Canada (including farmers). Recognized across Canada and the United States, CLT is an easily accessible, standardized online program offering humane animal transportation certification in English and French. CLT training is valid for three years and it is the only Canadian course. It and it addresses both Canadian regulations and industry standards not covered by other courses. In the 2022-23 fiscal year, 362 people completed the CLT courses and currently there are 1,257 people actively

certified. Exit surveys from course participants stated that 79% of respondents would recommend the training courses to others.

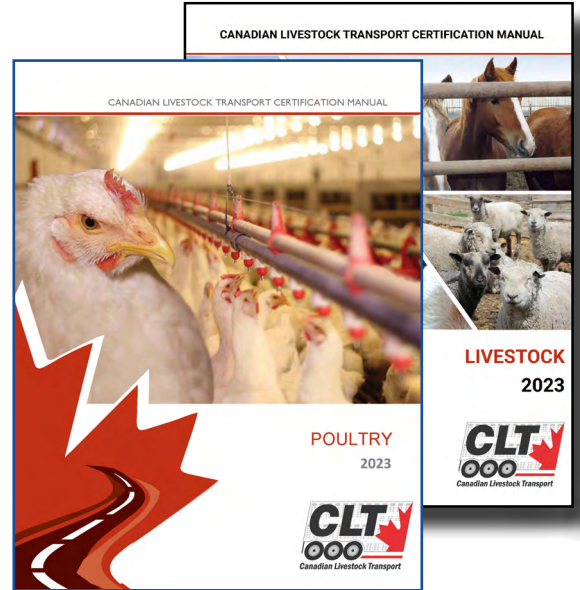
Over the course of the last year, the CLT program was completely updated and re-launched in May 2023. The update, based on the most recent regulations, revamped the core training materials to make the training program more engaging and user-friendly. With the help of subject matter experts and the CLT Advisory Committee, the manuals were rewritten, and re-positioned and a biosecurity module was added. Working with the e-learning platform providers, the format for learning was overhauled and made more engaging and accessible. Additionally, the new e-learning platform now features a validation tool to verify CLT certification.

At the same time as the re-launch of CLT, an awareness campaign named 'Better Safer Canadian' was released with a new wordmark to help generate increased interest in the program. The Better Safer Canadian campaign focuses on three key messages:

- the new CLT program delivers a better multimedia experience accessible 24-7. You can get certified using your smartphone, tablet or computer
- training is also a key to safety handling and transportation of animals; and CLT training helps both you drivers and the animals they transport
- CLT is the only program based on Canadian regulations and is valid in the US.

**Training Centre highlights of 2022-23:**

- needs assessment and request for proposals process was undertaken to establish and launch the platform for the Animal Health and Welfare Training Centre
- established a relationship with the online learning platform provider to host additional course offerings
- updated CLT program content to ensure regulatory compliance, add a module about biosecurity and increase value for learners
- re-launch of the program along with the Better Safer Canadian campaign
- translated the entire program into Spanish.



**AHC appreciates the continued support for the CLT program from the national livestock, poultry, and meat trade associations.**

**Contact Us**

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 [www.animalhealthcanada.ca](http://www.animalhealthcanada.ca)