

The National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council 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. The Council engages expertise to address important topics such as animal welfare, emerging diseases, animal health surveillance, antimicrobial use and resistance, and the emerging theme of “one welfare”. The Council hosts a forum annually which is the premiere event for industry and government representatives to find opportunities for partnership and to share information on issues, activities and accomplishments in animal health and welfare in Canada.

**Animal Welfare**

After wide consultation ending in 2012 the Council developed 22 recommendations to strengthen and harmonize farm animal welfare in Canada (A National Farm Animal Welfare System for Canada 2012), followed by a progress report on these recommendations in 2015, and, updated recommendations in 2019.

The Council has also made recommendations to better harmonize animal welfare law in Canada, reviewed Canada’s animal welfare research capacity and convened expert meetings to advise on improved management of vulnerable animals including cull dairy cows and male dairy calves.



**ACHIEVEMENTS:**

**Animal Health and Welfare Strategy:**  
The Council published Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy 2020 to help guide the advancement of animal health and welfare in Canada from 2015 to 2020.



**NEW INITIATIVES**

**Antimicrobial Use and Resistance:**

Recognizing the rising global challenges arising from the use of antimicrobials in humans and animals, the Council has been active in this work area since 2012. The Council has published a study of Antimicrobial Use and Resistance Initiatives in Humans and Animals in Canada, Strategies for Animal Agriculture, recommendations on stewardship in animal agriculture, and a report on these recommendations as well as stakeholder activities.

**Emerging Issues:**

The Council evaluated challenges associated with emerging diseases and provided recommendations to help Canada better prepare for disease events, while at the same time undertaking a more in-depth evaluation of the impacts to market access resulting from the emergence of Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea in Canada. These activities also led to the exploration of slaughter capacity in Canada in the face of a disease event.

**One Welfare:**

Council recognizes that the well-being of farm animals is closely linked to the well-being of the farming community and the various professions that work with them. In 2017 the Council began to explore these “one welfare” links and has since published an interim report, as well as presented recommendations to the Agricultural Standing Committee in 2019 on how to enhance Canada’s Agricultural Well-being Through a One Welfare Approach.

**NEW INITIATIVES**

- 1 Plant and Animal Health Strategy:**  
Since the development of the Council’s Farmed Animal Health and Welfare 2020 Strategy, the broader Canadian Plant and Animal Health Strategy was developed in 2017. The Council has been asked to lead the coordination and reporting on Canada’s animal health progress as it pertains to the Plant and Animal Health Strategy. As a result, the Council is now working towards transitioning the tools and information collected under the Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy to an approach that can be utilized to advance activities under the animal health component of the Plant and Animal Health Strategy.
- 2 Surveillance:**  
The Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS) is an initiative of the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council (NFAHWC), with broad based collaborative support of industry and governments. It has been designed to fill the need for strengthened animal health surveillance in Canada, as identified in the NFAHWC’s report, “Surveillance in a Time of Transition in Farmed Animal Health”. CAHSS is now transitioning to the NFAHW Council in order to fully realize the vision to strengthen animal health surveillance in Canada through a true partnership among animal health stakeholders. The Council submitted a funding application developed through collaboration with surveillance partners to the Canadian AgriAssurance Program to support Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System activities. Federal Assistance Funding was utilized to support 2018/2019 CAHSS activities. More information can be found in the CAHSS Annual Report. The Council also partnered in an application for funding to Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada’s Strategic Innovation Fund to enhance animal health diagnostics and surveillance in Canada.
- 3 Animal Health:**  
The Council has been supporting the initiative of Animal Health Canada to explore enhanced partnerships with government and industry and new governance models for Animal Health in Canada.

**GENERAL COUNCIL ACTIVITIES**

- The Council is also updating and modernizing its bylaws and terms of reference to better align with partners working in the animal health and welfare sphere including the Canadian Animal Health Coalition and the National Farm Animal Care Council.
- An Executive Director has been hired to provide full time leadership that will allow the Council to take on its new roles in the Plant and Animal Health Strategy and the Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System, and to enhance the Council’s outreach and engagement.
- Effective communication is a critical tool for any organization. The Council’s annual Forum allows significant sharing of information among stakeholders; Forum 2019 will be focused on risk management in animal health and welfare in Canada. The Council is also exploring new ways to engage and consult with stakeholders. This includes an updated quarterly newsletter, a blog to allow the Council and its stakeholders to share information, and webinars beginning with one hosted in May 2019 on “Antimicrobial Stewardship in Food Animals in Canada: Progress on Recommendations and Stakeholder Activities”.