



PREPARING FOR AN EMERGING ISSUE

*Emergency preparedness in the event of an emerging issue affecting
Canada's farmed animal industry*

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NFAHW 
COUNCIL

This document was prepared by the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council. The Council was formed in 2010 to advise governments and all other stakeholders in animal agriculture on matters of the health and welfare of farmed animals in Canada. The Council is funded jointly by non-government organizations with an interest in animal agriculture and federal, provincial and territorial governments. Council members are designated by their constituency because of broad expertise in animal health and welfare, public health and an interest in approaching topics and developing advice in the context of One Health.

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1. What is an emerging issue?

An emerging issue, especially in the early stages, is often not well defined which may result in conflicting reports about the issue's scope and potential impact. In many cases these problems are novel and as such may fall outside of the established regulatory authority for either the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) or provincial ministries/departments of agriculture.

Emerging issues are not limited to disease events. They could be antimicrobial resistance (AMR), bioterrorism or other environmental hazards e.g. extreme weather, floods, earthquake, toxic or chemical in nature or market or trade issues driven that have animal health and welfare implications. Potential impact on human health must also be considered.

An emerging issue, the 2014 Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea (PED) outbreak in Canada resulted in difficulty with domestic market access in PEI, ON, MB and QC which stimulated the NFAHW Council to consider this issue. The market access issues related to the PED outbreak were studied and the report "[Study of Domestic Market Access in the 2014 Porcine Epidemic Diarrhea Outbreak](#)" was published in 2016. The report includes recommendations to mitigate the risk and impact of a similar event and to ensure cohesive response and continuous improvement of outcomes in the face of an emerging issue. From the outset, the intent was to utilize the report of the PED outbreak to consult with other commodities to ensure the recommendations translated effectively and would be applicable across commodities.

2. Industry input

This document provides recommendations for animal agriculture in Canada developed following consultation with industry organizations and stakeholders. This process helped to ensure the recommendations for managing the impact of emerging issues and the associated risk of loss of market access reflected the experience and perspectives across commodities. The active participation of the individuals and groups identified in this document was essential to ensuring that the recommendations would resonate with all stakeholders.

- The Canadian Animal Health Coalition is currently managing a project that will develop plans for provincial organizations in animal agriculture and develop or identify provincial/regional emergency management coordination organizations.
- Organizations with emergency management plans were open to sharing with other organizations.

3. Related Canadian Initiatives

Other initiatives are underway in Canada's animal agriculture sector to assist with early identification and recognition of emerging issues, as well as coordinated, collaborative response. These projects involve federal and provincial governments and industry. Prevention and risk mitigation are key criteria for these initiatives.

- The **Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS)** is being developed as a network of networks, providing independence for the participating networks with a national focus on important issues.
- The **Centre for Emerging and Zoonotic Disease – Integrated Intelligence Response** project was completed in early 2016 and is now in an implementation phase for 2 years to develop sustainable program based on the project outcomes.
- The **Livestock Market Interruption Strategy** is the first comprehensive, national strategy to address the market impacts of a large-scale market interruption in Canada
- The **Emergency Management Framework** was developed as a result of direction in July 2014 from the FPT Ministers of Agriculture to develop a comprehensive and collaborative approach to emergency management. This Framework recognizes the current realities faced by the agriculture sector, and proposes a stronger, more collaborative approach to emergency management, with an increased focus on prevention and mitigation.
- The **Plant and Animal Health Strategy** is being developed by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

4. Recommendations to Enhance Preparedness

In this report, the “Canadian Animal Agriculture Industry” is all participants (groups or individuals) in the value chain, including producers, producer organizations, processors, transporters, livestock and poultry service providers, veterinarians, feed industry and other allied industry services.

These recommendations:

- are focused on early identification, risk mitigation, response and recovery in the event of an emerging disease,
- recognize the integrated and collaborative nature of the industry and FPT governments in animal agriculture and make recommendations to stakeholders as a whole, and
- must not be considered in isolation, but rather be taken into consideration with other emergency preparedness and risk mitigation activities underway nationally, provincially and within industry to ensure duplication of effort is avoided, and these activities are cohesive and well integrated with each other.

A proposed lead(s) is suggested but it is not intended that the lead will operate independently as all stakeholder groups will need to be engaged for each of the recommendations to come to fruition.

Industry in the context of the recommendations means industry organizations and processors, the two groups which have most impact on communication and implementation of standards.

- 1. The Canadian animal agriculture industry, provincial governments and federal government should develop a coordinated approach to risk mitigation for an emerging disease. (Lead Federal and Provincial governments)**
 - Early Detection/Surveillance - Ensure a robust national surveillance program with rapid reporting is in place.
 - Intelligence - Ensure national intelligence networks are well developed and active.
 - Emergency Preparedness planning – ensure a national approach for emerging diseases.
 - Communication planning

- 2. The Canadian animal agriculture industry and government should support, communicate and exercise effective and practical enhanced biosecurity with their producers and service providers. (Lead – industry)**
 - Continue the development of sound, science based national standards for on farm biosecurity for those commodities which do not currently have biosecurity standards.
 - Ensure programs are in place to implement the biosecurity standards and provide producers with guidance on biosecurity and enhanced biosecurity when necessary. Consideration should be given to measures being practical and achievable. Application should be adequate and consistent through the value chain.
 - Develop biosecurity standards beyond the farm gate for transportation, assembly and processing.
 - The CFIA Office of Biosecurity could work collaboratively with industry and the provinces/territories to assist.

- 3. The Canadian animal agriculture industry, provincial governments and federal government should commit to development, communication and exercising emerging disease emergency preparedness. (Lead – Industry and Provincial government)**
 - Preplanning and exercising scenarios with all stakeholders in the value chain are an important part of preparedness. The importance of established networks and plans in advance of a disease event cannot be overemphasized.
 - Identify a national body to coordinate emergency planning and preparedness initiatives of the federal government, provinces/territories and industry.
 - Utilize the FPT Emergency Management Framework to leverage development.
 - Investigate the use of the Food Sector Network of the Critical Infrastructure Forum.
 - Advance work on options, technology, training and availability for humane large scale euthanasia.

- 4. The Canadian animal agriculture industry should ensure there is adequate financial and personal support for producers and others impacted by a disease outbreak. (Lead – Provincial governments, Provincial Organizations, Producer Groups, Federal government)**
 - Components include financial (response and recovery), market access, service provision, as well as mental health programming (behavioral health).

**5. The Canadian Animal Agriculture industry should ensure continued development and international acceptance of risk mitigation measures, early detection and intelligence.
(Lead – Federal Government)**

- Active leadership in international forums for policy development and recognition.
- Development of innovative solutions using new technologies.
- Establishment of communication networks.
- Advance ongoing negotiation with trading partners to facilitate export and expedite market access recovery.

**6. The Canadian animal agriculture industry should investigate the potential of assured access to slaughter/processing plants in a disease outbreak under specific conditions.
(Lead – Provincial governments and Industry)**

- Establish conditions and a protocol for accepting animals for slaughter which will allow producers and processors to maintain biosecurity, efficiency and product segregation.
- Conduct an investigation of slaughter options with consideration for biosecurity, plant efficiency and product movement in the face of an emerging disease when there may be a lack of knowledge of risk factors to animal and human health.

5. Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation	Lead	Emergency Management Role
1. The Canadian animal agriculture industry, provincial governments and federal government should develop a coordinated approach to risk mitigation for an emerging disease.	Federal government Provincial governments	Prevention
2. The Canadian animal agriculture industry and government should support, communicate and exercise effective and practical enhanced biosecurity with their producers and service providers.	Industry	Preparedness
3. The Canadian animal agriculture industry, provincial governments and federal government should commit to development, communication and exercising emerging disease emergency preparedness.	Industry Provincial Government	Preparedness
4. The Canadian animal agriculture industry should ensure there is adequate financial and personal support for producers and others impacted by a disease outbreak.	Provincial governments Provincial organizations Producer groups Federal government	Prevention, Preparedness, Response, Recovery
5. The Canadian Animal Agriculture industry should ensure continued development and international acceptance of risk mitigation measures, early detection and intelligence.	Federal government	Prevention
6. The Canadian animal agriculture industry should investigate the potential of assured access to slaughter/processing plants in a disease outbreak under specific conditions.	Provincial governments Industry	Preparedness