



A National Farm Animal Welfare System for Canada



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 the animal-source food industries on all aspects of the health and welfare of farmed animals in Canada, in support of Canada's *National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy*. The Council is funded jointly by Canada's animal production sector, the federal government, and provincial-territorial governments. It consists of members drawn principally from government and the animal production sector. Members are appointed because of broad expertise in farmed animal health and welfare and related fields including public health. This document is the result of two years of discussion and consultation with a wide range of organizations and individuals.

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Executive summary

Background

Public attention to the welfare of farm animals has been increasing for the past half century in the industrialized countries, and world-wide especially during the past decade. This has resulted from cultural changes that have caused animals to be more valued, from economic pressures that have required producers to limit production costs, and from the practical recognition that attention to animal welfare often leads to improved animal health and productivity. A result of these and other developments is an increasing expectation, both domestic and international, that animals will be raised, transported and slaughtered humanely, and that suppliers will be able to demonstrate adherence to appropriate standards.

This strategy paper proposes a series of actions to achieve the following vision:

For Canada to have a comprehensive farm animal welfare system that ensures the welfare of farm animals, reflects Canadian values, involves national standards that are informed by timely scientific research, and includes a suite of compliance tools and activities sufficient to ensure domestic and international confidence in the welfare of farm animals in Canada.

The system envisioned should:

- Help to promote a high standard of animal welfare for farm animals in Canada (as a benefit in itself) together with correlated benefits in animal health and productivity
- Allow Canada to provide assurance of farm animal welfare standards to domestic and international customers

Risks of failing to have such a system include:

- A fractured and incoherent situation as different producers, retailers and jurisdictions adopt different standards and compliance programs
- Erosion of public trust in the animal-source food system
- Pressure to adopt simplistic measures that may not be consistent with animal health and welfare, environmental sustainability and food safety
- Possible future difficulty accessing certain markets

Necessary components of the system are: (1) leadership and coordination, (2) research, (3) standards, (4) education/extension/communication, and (5) compliance assurance.

Leadership and coordination

The welfare of farm animals is influenced most closely by the tens of thousands of individuals who raise and handle animals directly on farms, ranches and beyond the farm gate. Major national leadership and coordination of these activities is currently provided by the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC). Its most visible activity is the revision of the *Codes of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals*. It also provides important communication among sectors of the animal-source food system and is facilitating the development of Animal Care Assessment programs.

Leadership is also provided by:

- The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA)
- Provincial and territorial governments
- The Federal-Provincial Animal Welfare group (FPAW)
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC)
- The Canadian Council of Chief Veterinary Officers (CCCVO)
- The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA)
- Various species-specific veterinary organizations
- The Canadian Federation of Humane Societies (CFHS)
- The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC)
- National producer associations
- Several universities
- Provincial farm animal care organizations
- The National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council (NFAHWC)

Despite the many activities, significant gaps and weaknesses remain:

- NFACC has great potential to provide national leadership, but its roles and communication channels need to be clarified, and long-term funding is required
- FPAW appears well positioned to provide expertise on governmental issues such as regulatory coordination, but it lacks the official mandate that would allow it to bring technical advice to appropriate decision-making levels
- No mechanism exists to create national policy
- Many organizations lack personnel with specific training in animal welfare
- Some industries and professions that serve animal production (e.g., animal breeders, engineers, feed manufacturers) have important effects on farm animal welfare but are not adequately integrated into a national farm animal welfare system
- Progress toward the vision needs to be monitored and evaluated

Research

Animal welfare research is needed in support of standards, animal management practices, communication materials and compliance-assurance activities. Currently several universities and government agencies are conducting animal welfare research on some but not all farm animal species, funded in part by producer organizations. However, some sectors lack an effective national process for identifying research needs, and there is little cross-commodity communication regarding shared concerns and best practices for funding and communicating research. Specific gaps include a shortage of research on transport and slaughter for some species, a lack of economic analysis of animal-welfare-related policies, and a lack of social science research, both to track the values of Canadians as input into standards and to assess effective methods of extension and communication.

Standards

National standards currently in place include:

- The Criminal Code of Canada
- Provincial and territorial animal protection laws
- Federal Transportation of Animals Regulations
- Federal and provincial regulations for humane slaughter
- National Codes of Practice

Further needs and opportunities include:

- Partly because of the long distances involved, animal transportation remains a controversial topic in Canada. In recent years the federal Transportation of Animals Regulations were the subject of a 'pre-consultation'; although this attracted considerable attention and participation, proposed regulatory changes have not yet been published
- Because of the mixture of federal and provincial regulations for humane slaughter, Canada lacks a harmonized standard in this important area
- The Codes of Practice, being a central part of Canada's farm animal welfare system, need to be reviewed and updated regularly, and some means needs to be found for setting basic standards for minor groups of animals for which development of a full Code of Practice would not be feasible
- As Codes come to be used for Animal Care Assessment programs and other purposes, it will be important for Codes to maintain a clear distinction between 'requirements', which identify acceptable and unacceptable practices, and 'recommendations' which encourage a high level of animal care
- Confusion over the application of codes may arise because provinces and territories vary in whether and how they reference the Codes in animal protection law

Education, extension and communication

Current activities related to education, extension and communication include:

- National farm animal welfare conferences
- Provincial, regional or local gatherings
- Forums organized by the NFAHWC

Communication remains a major challenge because:

- With tens of thousands of animal producers in Canada, sharing of information and ‘best practices’ is difficult, especially when many provinces have reduced their extension staff
- Because of the decentralized nature of extension activities in Canada, valuable educational resources (presentations, publications, training courses) developed in one part of the country may be unknown in others
- Communicating the complexity of animal welfare to the public is challenging, partly because many people equate animal welfare simply with certain production systems such as ‘free-range’ rather than with comprehensive science-informed standards and practices
- Some retail and food service companies are making requirements intended to ensure a high level of animal welfare, but without sufficient communication with other players in the farm animal welfare system
- The availability of trained staff has not kept pace with the rapidly rising need for communication
- There is little research to evaluate the effectiveness of different communication methods such as presentations, publications, on-farm bench-marking (voluntary-participation programs that compare farms on metrics such as disease incidence and productivity) and producer focus groups

Compliance assurance

Tools and activities designed to achieve and assure compliance with standards include:

- Educational programs
- Animal Care Assessment programs
- Enforcement of humane slaughter and transport regulations
- Enforcement of other animal protection law
- Producer-driven compliance activities such as hot-lines and cooperation with support services for producers experiencing difficulties
- In-house measures by some slaughter and processing companies
- Requirements by some supply-management regulatory bodies that producers comply with animal care standards
- Requirements by some slaughter, processing, restaurant and retail companies that producers comply with animal care standards as a condition of purchase

Concerns about compliance assurance include:

- Animal Care Assessment programs could form a central element of a national farm animal welfare system. These need to be developed at a national level and with cross-sector communication to ensure as harmonized an approach as possible
- Slaughter remains an area of public concern partly because there is insufficient assurance of the quality and consistency of enforcement, to the point that some food service companies conduct their own inspection of slaughter plants
- Transportation also remains an area of public concern because it is not clear that a satisfactory and consistent level of enforcement occurs in all parts of the country
- The level of enforcement of animal protection law is thought to vary among different parts of the country, partly because enforcement is conducted by different agencies in different jurisdictions (police, NGOs, government officials) with no national standards or metrics of success. A parallel concern exists over the adequacy of the animal protection provisions in the Criminal Code
- Despite the promise shown by producer-driven compliance activities, these occur only in some provinces and their effectiveness is not known
- Because some serious animal welfare problems arise from producers facing illness, deterioration or stress, the provision of social services to producers in need could be an important part of a national farm animal welfare system

Summary of recommendations

Leadership and coordination

It is recommended:

1. *That NFACC: (a) define its roles and responsibilities in more detail as a basis for clarifying how it can best contribute to a national farm animal welfare system, (b) evaluate the adequacy of its membership and its capacity to consult with stakeholders, and (c) ensure that it has adequate means of communication with provincial/territorial governments, perhaps using the CCCVO and FPAW as conduits for communication and consultation*
2. *That relevant government agencies, producer organizations and all sectors of the animal-source food system ensure that NFACC has secure funding to continue providing national leadership, including the continued updating of Codes, once the specific roles and responsibilities of NFACC have been defined and agreed*
3. *That NFAHWC, through appropriate communication with NFACC and other groups, (a) lead consultations on how best to develop national policy on farm animal welfare, and (b) conduct periodic review of progress and additional needs in Canada's national farm animal welfare system*
4. *That FPAW formalize its terms of reference, and that senior management of the respective agencies give official recognition to the work of the committee, perhaps by constituting it as a sub-committee of the committee of regulatory assistant deputy ministers*

5. *That all organizations that provide leadership in animal welfare review their needs and hire appropriately trained individuals or secure training for existing personnel*
6. *That national producer organizations ensure the involvement of relevant service industries (e.g., breeding companies, nutrition companies, engineers) in addressing animal welfare*

Research

7. *That AAFC facilitate consultation among sectors on the full range of animal welfare research in Canada with the goals of identifying research needs and opportunities (taking international work into account), promoting communication, identifying efficient funding mechanisms, and moving Canada toward a comprehensive and well-targeted program of animal welfare research including relevant social-science research.*

Standards

8. *That NFACC (a) review Codes of Practice at least every five years, and update them at least every ten years, and (b) consider feasible alternative methods of generating standards for minor groups of farmed animals for which full development of a Code is not practical*
9. *That relevant government agencies and all sectors of the animal-source food system ensure the financial means for regular review and updating of Codes of Practice*
10. *That CFIA publish proposed regulatory changes based on the pre-consultation which it conducted on the federal Transportation of Animals Regulations*
11. *That FPAW, through appropriate consultation, (a) review and recommend options for moving toward uniform humane slaughter standards across the country, and (b) review how Codes are used and referenced in different jurisdictions, together with the legal implications of the different approaches, with the view of identifying an approach that can be recommended to all provinces and territories*
12. *That committees developing Codes of Practice maintain a clear distinction between 'requirements' which refer to regulatory requirements or industry-imposed expectations outlining acceptable and unacceptable practices, and 'recommendations' that promote continuous improvement and encourage a high level of care*

Education, extension and communication

13. *That national producer organizations, NFACC and other organizations help to disseminate available, high-quality education/extension resources across provinces and industry sectors*
14. *That as national animal producer organizations update Codes and implement Animal Care Assessment programs, they also develop plans on how to communicate the value of these activities to a broad public audience*
15. *That retail and food service companies become involved in the Canadian farm animal welfare system so as to ensure that any animal-welfare-related purchasing requirements they create are well informed and likely to support good animal welfare, and that NFACC and producer organizations facilitate this involvement*

16. *That industry organizations and extension services review the adequacy of their capacity for animal welfare education/extension and hire trained individuals or secure appropriate training for existing personnel*
17. *That producer and other organizations encourage and support research on the effectiveness of animal welfare extension activities*

Compliance assurance

18. *That NFACC lead consultations on (a) producer-driven compliance activities such as industry hot-lines and cooperation with enforcement personnel, and recommend whether and how to extend such programs to other industry sectors and jurisdictions, and on (b) the benefits of involving medical and social services in cases of serious breakdown in animal care, and how best to secure such services when they are needed*
19. *That the CCCVO, with appropriate consultation, (a) consider and recommend options whereby provincial/territorial officials could be empowered to participate in enforcing federal Transportation of Animals Regulations, and (b) lead a consultation to identify appropriate means and levels, best practices, and practical metrics of animal welfare enforcement*
20. *That national producer organizations in all animal production sectors develop Animal Care Assessment programs suited to the specific nature of their sector, and that this be done in consultation with NFACC so as to achieve sharing of effective methods and approaches across sectors*
21. *That CFIA conduct and publish audits to demonstrate that federal inspectors conduct humane slaughter enforcement to a satisfactory and consistent national standard at federally inspected facilities*
22. *That FPAW lead a consultation to determine whether existing capacity to enforce federal Transportation of Animals Regulations is sufficient for a uniform and satisfactory level of enforcement*

Background

In the industrialized countries, public attention to animal welfare¹ has been increasing since strong citizen pressure led to the passing of the Humane Slaughter Act in the United States (1958) and a similar Act in Canada (1960) and to the first Canadian regulations on humane transportation. In the early stages, public concern was focused on the welfare of animals after they had left the farm. The welfare of animals on farms was not a major concern, partly because many people were directly involved in, or familiar with, on-farm animal production, and the resulting trust in ‘family farming’ helped exempt animal production from criticism. Since then, however, with increasing urbanization and the intensification of animal production, far fewer Canadians have any personal connection to the animal-source food system. Moreover, confinement production methods, long-distance transport and controversial practices have attracted negative publicity that has tended to erode public trust.

In addition, cultural values in the industrialized countries have shifted over the past half-century toward much greater scrutiny of all aspects of animal use. The treatment of animals in biomedical research, in zoos and aquaria, and in the entertainment industry has increasingly fallen under regulatory or quasi-regulatory control, and in Canada provincial/territorial animal protection laws have been revised with remarkable frequency during recent decades. Experience also shows that animal welfare has the potential to become a flash-point for public opinion and political reaction; in 2011, for example, the Australian government imposed an abrupt ban on cattle export to Indonesia after negative publicity about Indonesian slaughter plants, and the government of British Columbia changed its Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act after a much-publicized instance of inhumane killing of sled dogs.

Especially since 2000, attention to farm animal welfare has spread well beyond the industrialized countries. Most notably, in 2005 the 170 member nations of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) unanimously passed their first animal welfare standards, and in 2009 the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) began visible engagement in promoting animal welfare among their member countries, especially in the developing world. Global corporations have also become involved, often requiring their suppliers to demonstrate adherence to specified standards as a condition of purchase. Animal welfare has also played some role in international trade, with Canadian seal and fur products

¹ In this document, the term ‘animal welfare’ is used in accordance with the definition adopted by the World Organisation for Animal Health: ‘Animal welfare means how an animal is coping with the conditions in which it lives. An animal is in a good state of welfare if (as indicated by scientific evidence) it is healthy, comfortable, well nourished, safe, able to express innate behaviour, and if it is not suffering from unpleasant states such as pain, fear, and distress. Good animal welfare requires disease prevention and veterinary treatment, appropriate shelter, management, nutrition, humane handling and humane slaughter/killing. Animal welfare refers to the state of the animal; the treatment that an animal receives is covered by other terms such as animal care, animal husbandry, and humane treatment.’

being blocked from some markets because of concern over animal welfare, and with farm animal welfare starting to play a role in some international trade agreements.

The result of these developments is an increasing expectation, both domestic and international, that animals will be raised, transported and slaughtered humanely, and that suppliers will be able to demonstrate adherence to appropriate standards. In fact, means of demonstrating humane standards are becoming embedded in the value chain of animal production: in the future, many producers may find it necessary to be part of assurance programs in order to participate in main-stream markets.

The response to these expectations has differed from country to country. Many European countries have created a large body of legislation bolstered by international agreements designed to harmonize standards across the members of the European Union. New Zealand has created codes of practice for farm animals plus national legislation that recognizes the codes as appropriate standards. Australia has created a National Animal Welfare Strategy which involves a formal agreement among the national and state governments to work toward harmonized standards. In the United States, where coordination at the national level has been weak, advocacy organizations have mounted referenda ('ballot initiatives') which have led to a variety of legal restrictions that vary from state to state.

In Canada, demonstrating adherence to animal welfare standards is challenging. Although Canadian regulations and Codes of Practice generally conform to global standards such as those of the OIE, the responsibility for compliance and enforcement is divided among many agencies and is conducted differently in different jurisdictions and different sectors of the animal-source food system. The regulatory framework also varies, for example between federally and provincially inspected slaughter plants, and between provinces/territories because of their different animal protection laws.

As a further complication, animal welfare needs to be seen in the context of other public-good issues including food safety, environmental sustainability and price. These need to be balanced in policy decisions. In particular, measures to improve animal welfare are not likely to be accepted by the public or producers if they jeopardize food safety or environmental sustainability; and for any measures that cause significant increases in production costs, acceptability to all levels of the value chain will need to be assessed.

In addition to meeting societal expectations, promoting animal welfare has many benefits for both animals and people in the food industries. Many animal welfare problems – such as stress, lameness, infectious diseases, lack of physical and thermal comfort – translate into economic losses. Moreover, most people who raise animals as their livelihood have a strong interest in the welfare of animals, and take satisfaction from working in a system with high animal welfare standards. Hence, there are important human and economic reasons for promoting the welfare of farm animals.

In view of these considerations, the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council ('the Council') considered it timely to review the situation in Canada. This document is intended as a strategy document which proposes a series of actions that would help to create a national farm animal welfare system in Canada. It includes a brief review of progress to date in key areas, and identifies where further action is needed. It is meant to build on the more general *National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy*². The Council intends to provide more detailed recommendations on specific aspects of the system in the future.

Vision

Based on consultation and its own deliberations, the Council proposes the following vision for a national farm animal welfare system:

For Canada to have a comprehensive farm animal welfare system that ensures the welfare of farm animals, reflects Canadian values, involves national standards that are informed by timely scientific research, and includes a suite of compliance tools and activities sufficient to ensure domestic and international confidence in the welfare of farm animals in Canada.

Benefits

The system envisioned should:

- Help to promote a high standard of animal welfare for farm animals in Canada (as a benefit in itself) together with correlated benefits in animal health and productivity
- Allow Canada to provide assurance of farm animal welfare standards to domestic and international customers through a system that has the confidence of all types of actors in the food system including producers, processors, retailers and consumers

Risks of failing to have such a system include:

- A fractured and incoherent situation as different producers, retailers and jurisdictions adopt different standards and compliance programs
- Erosion of public trust in the animal-source food system
- Pressure to adopt simplistic measures that may not be consistent with animal health and welfare, environmental sustainability and food safety
- Possible future difficulty accessing certain markets

² *National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy*. CCCVO/Farmed Animal Industry Joint Working Group, 2009. Available at: animalhealth.ca/Document-Item.aspx?id=474

Necessary components

Necessary components of the system are:

1. Leadership and coordination

- National leadership is needed to provide coordination among all types of participants in the animal-source food system, including producers, breed associations, animal breeding companies, processors, retailers, and consumers, together with government (federal, provincial, territorial), the veterinary profession, the animal protection movement (humane societies, SPCAs), science, and other relevant professions.
- There is a continuing need to develop future leaders through a combination of practical experience and specific training in animal welfare science, policy, practice and communication.

2. Research

- Well targeted multi-disciplinary animal welfare research is needed as a basis for science-informed practices and standards together with communication materials and compliance-assurance activities.
- Research is also needed to track values and attitudes of Canadians as a means of ensuring that practices and standards conform to the values of both producers and the non-producing public.

3. Standards

- The system needs to include a suite of timely national standards that are informed by science, outcome-based wherever possible, reviewed and revised regularly, in compliance with relevant international standards, and developed and revised through a recognized process that is open and consultative.
- The standards should be recognized and applied in a consistent manner throughout the country.

4. Education/extension/communication

- There is a need for sharing of information and experience within and between sectors of the animal production system and across jurisdictions.
- There is a need to inform all players who may influence animal welfare (breeders, producers, veterinarians, truckers, processors, retailers, the food service industry) about standards, including both requirements and recommended practices.
- There is a need to inform the public about farm animal welfare and the farm animal welfare system in Canada.
- These forms of communication will require education/extension staff knowledgeable in animal welfare practices and policy.

5. Compliance assurance

- The system requires a suite of compliance-promoting activities such as quality-assurance programs, hot-lines, enforcement, and means of ensuring producer engagement.

1. Leadership and coordination

Progress to date

The welfare of farm animals is influenced most closely by the tens of thousands of individuals who raise and handle animals directly on farms, ranches and beyond the farm gate. Broader leadership and coordination related to farm animal welfare is currently provided by a wide range of organizations. These organizations emerged at different times to serve specific functions, but without an overall vision or planned system. As a result, there is a need to coordinate certain efforts and to fill certain gaps.

The National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) provides major national leadership for farm animal welfare. Its member organizations include most of the relevant national-level animal producer organizations plus other stakeholders such as relevant government agencies, the animal protection movement, the veterinary community, food processors and (to some extent) food distributors and consumers. NFACC was formed through a lengthy process of consultation and needs-identification that began with the *Farm Animal Welfare and Codes of Practice Consultation Workshop* held in Gatineau in 2002. The Workshop identified the need for ‘a cohesive, capable body with an infrastructure and staff support’ which would ‘link consumers, processors, retailers, producers and other groups’ to achieve national coordination of farm animal welfare activities.³ NFACC has made significant progress toward obtaining the broad multi-stakeholder involvement that is required to fulfill this role. Its most visible activity is the revision of the *Codes of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals*, but it also organizes national educational events, provides significant communication among sectors of the animal-source food system, and is facilitating the development of Animal Care Assessment programs.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) enforces the Transportation of Animals Regulations which apply to the transportation of animals entering and leaving Canada and within Canada, and the federal Humane Treatment and Slaughter Regulations in federally registered slaughter plants. CFIA is also mandated to ensure the humane killing of animals in the event of disease outbreaks in Canada. The Agency also participates in the development of national and international standards such as the Codes of Practice, the animal welfare standards of the World Organisation for Animal Health, and the International Air Transport Association's Live Animals Regulations.

Provincial and territorial governments are the responsible authority for animal welfare in each province or territory. Most provincial and territorial governments have some form of animal protection legislation. Some governments enforce the legislation directly through government staff, and some delegate enforcement to the police or to an animal protection agency.

³ *Farm Animal Welfare and Codes of Practice Consultation Workshop - Report of Proceedings*. Available at: <http://www4.agr.gc.ca/AAFC-AAC/display-afficher.do?id=1184936758641&lang=eng>

The Federal-Provincial Animal Welfare group (FPAW) consists of technical officials of the federal and provincial governments who have responsibility for aspects of animal welfare in their respective jurisdictions. The group meets informally, mostly by monthly teleconference, to help improve communication about animal welfare within and between governments. This sharing of information allows governments to build awareness and response-capacity for animal welfare issues.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) promotes a collaborative, multi-stakeholder approach to addressing animal welfare issues, in part by funding and participating in the development of Codes of Practice, by providing guidance on issues related to regulation, trade and international coordination, and by undertaking animal welfare research at certain of its research establishments.

The Canadian Council of Chief Veterinary Officers (CCCVO) is a committee consisting of the Chief Veterinary Officer from each federal, provincial and territorial jurisdiction. It provides a national forum for intergovernmental discussion of animal health and welfare issues in Canada. The CCCVO promotes science-based policy on animal health and welfare issues including zoonotic diseases, and provides recommendations on animal health and welfare to senior levels of government and to non-government bodies.

The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) provides national leadership in animal welfare through a range of activities. The CVMA Animal Welfare Committee prepares science-informed position statements on animal welfare issues and develops educational tools for CVMA members on issues such as pain management. The CVMA also participates in the development of Codes of Practice and develops standards and guidelines for other aspects of the care and treatment of animals; it also provides continuing education in animal welfare for veterinarians.

Various species-specific veterinary organizations provide important guidance, especially on animal care and health practices.

The Canadian Federation of Humane Societies (CFHS) promotes communication and cooperation among animal protection NGOs across Canada, including many organizations that carry out enforcement of animal protection law. The Federation also represents the animal protection movement on NFAACC, in the development of Codes of Practice, and in other national matters.

The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) is an independent, quasi-regulatory organization that oversees the use of animals in science in Canada. It sets standards, provides educational materials, and conducts inspections of scientific facilities. It is relevant to farm animals in that its standards apply to all animals used in scientific research and teaching.

National producer associations provide national-level leadership on animal welfare by taking part in the development of standards, commissioning and funding research, producing educational materials, and organizing meetings and educational events. Some national associations are currently implementing or developing Animal Care Assessment programs, as described below.

Several universities conduct research on animal welfare, provide leadership development through courses on animal welfare to agricultural and veterinary undergraduates, and provide in-depth training in animal welfare science and policy at the post-graduate level.

Provincial Farm Animal Care organizations, although focused at a provincial level, play important roles by creating communication among sectors, holding educational events, and encouraging compliance-related activities. Such organizations exist in several provinces.

The National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council (NFAHWC), which is composed of individuals drawn principally from relevant government agencies and industry, advises governments and industry on all aspects of the health and welfare of farmed animals in Canada in support of the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy.

Issues and further actions regarding leadership and coordination

A. NFACC

- With its broad membership and its mandate to provide ‘a national coordinated approach’ to farm animal care, NFACC is well positioned to play a central leadership role for many aspects of farm animal welfare in Canada. Because NFACC is still evolving, the exact roles and responsibilities it is capable of fulfilling are not yet well defined. *It is recommended that NFACC define its specific roles and responsibilities in more detail (noting the suggestions below) as a basis for clarifying how it can best contribute to a national farm animal welfare system.*⁴
- Although some of its day-to-day operations are funded by membership dues, NFACC currently relies greatly on temporary and largely project-based funding related to the revision of the Codes of Practice. There is significant risk that a lack of consistent and predictable funding will prevent NFACC from fulfilling its potential leadership role. There is also a risk that industry support for animal welfare activities will become diluted over various and competing initiatives that lack the broad focus and consensus-building approach that NFACC provides. Even the funding of Codes of Practice could be a concern, especially for smaller sectors such as sheep and goats, if the federal

⁴ Because of the decentralized nature of animal welfare activities in Canada, there is no single national agency with the mandate and resources to carry out all the actions recommended in this document. Therefore, the document attempts to identify the most appropriate agencies (NFACC, FPAW and others) for various actions, and requests that those agencies find the means to carry out the tasks as a contribution to an effective national system.

government declines to fully fund code development in the future. *It is recommended that relevant government agencies, producer organizations and all sectors of the animal-source food system ensure that NFACC has secure funding to continue providing national leadership, including the continued updating of Codes, once the specific roles and responsibilities of NFACC have been defined and agreed.*

- Depending on the roles that NFACC will ultimately play, its membership and capacity to foster communication will need to be evaluated. For example, does NFACC have the capacity to foster communication between the production sectors and the retail and food service sectors which are increasingly becoming involved in animal welfare assurance, and is there sufficient connection to public values apart from those represented by the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies? *It is recommended that NFACC, having defined its roles and responsibilities, evaluate the adequacy of its membership and its capacity to consult with stakeholders.*
- Because many aspects of animal welfare are managed at a provincial/territorial level, communication with provincial/territorial bodies is particularly important in national-level leadership. The national producer organizations represented on NFACC provide a natural conduit to their provincial counterparts. For government bodies, NFACC has one member who is intended to bring a provincial perspective. However, such an individual would not be able to speak on behalf of all provinces and territories. *It is recommended that NFACC ensure that it has adequate means of communication with provincial/territorial governments, perhaps using the CCCVO and FPAW as conduits for communication and consultation.*

B. FPAW

The Federal-Provincial Animal Welfare group, with its focus on animal welfare and with staff from the various provincial and federal agencies, would seem well positioned to provide expertise and leadership on governmental issues such as regulatory coordination, especially where there is a need for the involvement of different jurisdictions. However, FPAW currently functions only as an informal group that meets voluntarily without any official mandate or recognition. If properly constituted and empowered, FPAW could play an important role in Canada's farm animal welfare system. *It is recommended that FPAW formalize its terms of reference, and that senior management of the respective agencies give official recognition to the work of the committee, perhaps by constituting it as a sub-committee of the committee of regulatory assistant deputy ministers.*

C. National policy and strategy development

Partly because animal welfare involves so many different organizations and government agencies, there is no mechanism for developing national animal welfare policy to guide the development of standards, quality-assurance programs, international negotiations and other initiatives. Australia, faced with a similar division of responsibilities, developed a National Animal Welfare Strategy as a formal agreement and mechanism to

harmonize actions and standards among jurisdictions. This approach could suggest a model for Canada. *It is recommended that NFAHWC, through appropriate communication with NFACC and other groups, lead consultations on how best to develop national policy on farm animal welfare.*

D. Leader development

The existing university programs in animal welfare are all quite recent, and it will take time before people with training in animal welfare come to occupy the appropriate leadership positions. *It is recommended that all organizations that provide leadership in animal welfare review their needs and hire appropriately trained individuals or secure training for existing personnel.*

E. Related industries and professions

Some industries and professions that serve animal production have important effects on farm animal welfare. The role of veterinarians and processors is well recognized, and these groups appear to be integrated into animal welfare activities. Less well recognized are the roles of animal breeding and genetics companies, feed manufacturers, and engineers, all of whom can make important contributions to animal welfare, for example by breeding animals that are less susceptible to illness, by formulating diets that promote health, and by designing buildings that comply with the Codes of Practice. Poultry catchers, animal transporters and auction facilities play crucial and sometimes visible roles in farm animal welfare. Because the relevant animal welfare issues are likely to differ among different animal species and production systems, producer organizations are best positioned to engage with the relevant service industries. *It is recommended that national producer organizations facilitate the involvement of relevant service industries (e.g., breeding companies, nutrition companies, engineers) in addressing animal welfare, and that NFACC facilitate this communication by engaging with relevant national bodies.*

F. Evaluation of the system

As a national farm animal welfare system evolves, a process will be needed to evaluate progress, identify gaps, and recommend further action. *It is recommended that NFAHWC, in consultation with NFACC and other bodies, conduct periodic review of progress and additional needs in Canada's national farm animal welfare system.*

2. Research

Progress to date

Animal welfare research is needed in support of standards, animal management practices, communication materials and compliance-assurance activities.

Several universities and government agencies are conducting animal welfare research on some animal species. Teams of several scientists and their trainees, including research positions funded in part by producer organizations, have been created to research the welfare of dairy cattle and poultry. Smaller efforts, typically involving single scientists and their trainees, are underway on the welfare of other species and on aspects of animal transportation. In addition, a small amount of research is being done to track public and producer values related to animal welfare.

Some sectors of the animal-source food system have systems in place to establish national research priorities for their sectors and to fund research.

Issues and further actions regarding research

A. Needs identification, communication and funding

Formerly the Expert Committee on Farm Animal Welfare and Behaviour, created in 1986 and reporting to the then Canadian Agricultural Services Coordinating Committee, provided a national forum to identify research needs, including cross-sector needs, and to promote communication among animal welfare scientists. Currently the onus falls mostly on individual sectors and their research providers to maintain active communication to identify needs and coordinate activities. However, some sectors lack a national system for identifying research needs and directing research funding accordingly. Moreover, some sectors distribute a good deal of their research funding in small grants at the provincial level. This results in duplication of effort as different provinces create their own processes to receive and review grant applications, and it obliges scientists to use large amounts of research time in writing applications and reports for small grants.

B. Areas requiring special research effort

Three important areas currently attract very little research attention in Canada:

- *Research on transport and slaughter.* Despite some progress, research related to animal transportation is very limited in Canada, and research on humane slaughter is extremely limited. The CFIA plays a major role in enforcement related to humane slaughter and transportation, but there appears to be little correlated program of research in support its regulatory functions especially for slaughter. There is scope for partnerships between the CFIA and research institutions to meet these needs.

Such work should, of course, take account of relevant international research and expertise.

- *Research on economics.* Some animal welfare policies and practices are likely to have economic consequences that are poorly understood. Practices intended to improve animal welfare may reduce production costs (for example by reducing death losses and injury) or increase costs (for example if stocking rates are reduced). Where a sector changes from one production system to another, operating costs may differ, and the conversion cost can range from small to large depending on how quickly the transition occurs. There is a need for economic analysis of the costs and benefits of different options as input into decision-making.
- *Social science research.* If animal welfare standards are to reflect Canadian values, there is a need for research to track those values including the values of producers. Public funding of such research is needed, for example through social science granting agencies. There is also a need for research into effective methods of extension and communication to achieve adoption of animal welfare practices and standards.

C. Team development

A team approach, whereby a group of scientists and their trainees share resources and expertise, is generally considered more productive than individual scientists working in isolation. Many university departments are limited in their ability to mount focused teams because of the priority they place on having expertise in a wide range of fields. Partnerships between universities and government research institutions have emerged as one route for creating multi-scientist teams; partnership arrangements between different universities, and between universities and industry bodies, provide other options.

The above observations lead to the following general recommendation. The management, coordination and funding of animal welfare research is a complex topic that will require specialized consultation and deliberation involving relevant government agencies, industry, scientists, the CFIA, and other relevant groups, and that must be conducted with full recognition of research being done elsewhere in the world. AAFC has experience and expertise in research coordination, and it commonly conducts periodic reviews of its own research programs on a sector-by-sector basis. *It is recommended that AAFC facilitate consultation among sectors on the full range of animal welfare research in Canada with the goals of identifying research needs and opportunities (taking international research into account), promoting communication, identifying efficient funding mechanisms, and moving Canada toward a comprehensive and well-targeted program of animal welfare research including relevant social-science research.*

3. Standards

Progress to date

National animal welfare standards currently include criminal and non-criminal animal-protection law, regulations for transportation and slaughter, and Codes of Practice principally for on-farm production.⁵

The Criminal Code of Canada prohibits certain behaviour including willful abuse and neglect of animals.

Provincial and territorial animal protection laws, while varying among jurisdictions, in many cases prohibit people from causing or permitting farmed animals to be in ‘distress’, but the laws generally exempt distress that occurs in the course of ‘generally accepted practices’ of animal management.

Federal Transportation of Animals Regulations (Part XII of the Health of Animals Regulations) apply to all animals transported in Canada, and those entering or leaving Canada.

Regulations for humane slaughter include federal Humane Treatment and Slaughter Regulations (included in Part III of the Meat Inspection Regulations) which apply to federally registered slaughter plants. These plants include all facilities whose products cross provincial, territorial or international borders, and they are believed to process the great majority of meat produced in Canada. Provincial humane slaughter regulations exist in some provinces and apply to provincially registered plants whose products do not cross provincial or national borders. In some jurisdictions, there is a third category of plants, generally small plants with local clientele, that fall under no federal or provincial slaughter regulations.

National Codes of Practice for on-farm production have been published for most species, and a special Code was published for animal transportation. The Code for dairy production was revised in 2009 according to NFACC’s consultative, science-informed process. Codes for other species are out of date by years or decades, but a number are currently being revised. The Codes of Practice were written as voluntary guidelines and they have achieved a broader degree of recognition in two ways. First, they serve as the basis of national, industry-driven Animal Care Assessment programs for some species. Second, requirements specified in Codes may provide guidance for courts in identifying generally accepted practices of animal

⁵ Under the Canadian constitution, criminal law is a federal responsibility; hence, criminal mis-treatment of animals is an area of federal jurisdiction. In contrast, non-criminal mis-treatment of most animals falls to sub-national governments except in the case of agriculture where jurisdiction is shared between national and sub-national levels.

management; hence, adherence to the requirements of Codes may provide a potential defense from prosecution.

Issues and further actions regarding standards

A. Standards for humane transportation

The transportation of animals is a controversial topic in Canada. Reasons for concern include: (1) the lengthy journeys permitted in Canada may make it difficult to meet the animals' needs, (2) media exposure has focused public attention on the issue, and (3) the regulatory requirement for off-loading and resting on long journeys is opposed by many in the animal industries. In recent years the federal Transportation of Animals Regulations were the subject of a 'pre-consultation'; although this attracted considerable attention and participation, proposed regulatory changes have not yet been published. *It is recommended that the CFIA publish proposed regulatory changes based on the pre-consultation which it conducted on the federal Transportation of Animals Regulations.*

B. Standards for humane slaughter

A desirable vision for the future would include a uniform set of humane slaughter standards that apply to products sold domestically and abroad. At present, although the federal Humane Treatment and Slaughter Regulations apply to all federally registered plants, standards may be different or lacking at provincially registered or other plants. A step toward a uniform national standard might be achieved if the provinces and territories were to harmonize with the federal standards. Further consultation between CFIA and provincial governments will be needed to identify how best to achieve this, possibly by referencing federal regulations in provincial/territorial statutes. *It is recommended that FPAW, through appropriate consultation, review and recommend options for moving toward uniform humane slaughter standards across the country.*

C. Codes of Practice

- Because Codes of Practice play a central role in Canada's farm animal welfare system, they need to be updated regularly. *It is recommended that NFACC review Codes of Practice at least every five years, and update them at least every ten years, and that relevant government agencies and all sectors of the animal-source food system ensure the financial means for this process.*
- Certain groups of animals (e.g., commercial rabbits, ratites, elk) are not currently covered by Codes of Practice, and may even lack widely accepted recommendations on such critical issues as transport, lairage and slaughter. Moreover, in some cases there is no national or other organization positioned to provide leadership on such standards. Once the major Codes have been completed, *it is recommended that NFACC consider feasible alternative methods of generating standards for minor groups of farmed animals for which full development of a Code is not practical.*

- As noted above, the Codes of Practice, although written as voluntary guidelines, are sometimes used to identify ‘generally accepted practices’ in provinces where provincial animal protection law makes special provision for such practices. Concern is sometimes expressed that any use of the Codes for legal purposes may result in code-development committees including only the most minimal provisions. However, a potential solution is provided by the *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle*. This document makes a clear distinction between ‘requirements’ which ‘refer to either a regulatory requirement, or an industry imposed expectation outlining acceptable and unacceptable practices’ and recommendations that ‘strive for continuous improvement and encourage a higher level of care’.⁶ This distinction should allow a Code to serve as an aid to distinguishing between acceptable and unacceptable practices through its ‘requirements’, while also recommending forward-looking improvements through its ‘recommendations’. *Therefore, it is recommended that committees developing Codes of Practice make a clear distinction between ‘requirements’ which refer to regulatory requirements or industry-imposed expectations outlining acceptable and unacceptable practices, and ‘recommendations’ which promote continuous improvement and encourage a high level of care.*
- Some provinces reference the Codes in provincial animal protection law whereas others do not, and the wording used to reference the Codes varies among jurisdictions. Moreover courts may, at their discretion, use the Codes of Practice to identify generally accepted practices whether or not the Codes are specifically referenced in provincial/territorial law. This lack of consistency creates a potentially confusing situation. There is a need for a comparative study of how Codes are referenced and used in different jurisdictions and the legal implications of the different approaches. Because this analysis will require close communication among provincial/territorial governments and enforcement personnel, FPAW would seem the logical group to undertake it. *It is recommended that FPAW, through appropriate consultation, review how Codes are used and referenced in different jurisdictions, together with the legal implications of the different approaches, with the view of identifying an approach that can be recommended to all provinces and territories.*

⁶*Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle*. Dairy Farmers of Canada and the National Farm Animal Care Council, Ottawa, 2009. Available at: <http://www.nfacc.ca/pdfs/codes/Dairy%20Code%20of%20Practice.pdf>

4. Education, extension and communication

Progress to date

National farm animal welfare conferences, spanning all species and sectors, provide an important means of making industry leaders aware of global developments, new research, and other issues related to farm animal welfare. NFAACC has convened several such meetings.

Provincial, regional and local events are crucial for a national animal welfare system because they have the capability of reaching a large number of producers and other players in the animal-source food system. Such activities include:

- Multi-species provincial animal care conferences. These are often convened by provincial Farm Animal Care organizations in provinces where these exist.
- Single-species provincial or regional conferences and seminars where animal welfare may be part of the agenda. These are often organized by industry organizations or extension services.
- Single-species local meetings, also with animal welfare as part of the agenda. These are often organized by extension specialists or local veterinary practices.
- Training events for specific skills such as livestock transportation or livestock emergency response. These are often provided by professional trainers under the auspices of a Farm Animal Care organization, producer organization or extension service.

NFAHWC began in 2011 to hold an annual forum where individuals involved in all parts of the animal-source food system can discuss topics of national importance for farm animal health and welfare, partly as input into government and industry policy and partly to guide the Council's own advice to governments and industry.

Issues and further actions regarding education, extension and communication

A. Communication within the animal production system

With tens of thousands of independent animal producers in Canada, sharing of information and 'best practices' poses a major communication challenge, especially at a time when some provinces and other organizations have reduced their traditional efforts in agricultural extension. Moreover, timely sharing of information and experience will be important for some of the transitions that seem likely, for example to group-housing systems for pregnant sows. Because this information needs to reach a large number of producers and others, it needs to be available at a local or provincial/territorial level; and because it tends to be specific to a single species or production system, it is most logically delivered by producer organizations or extension workers. However, with Canada's long distances and jurisdictional boundaries, educational material developed in one part of the country may be unavailable or

unknown in other parts of the country, with the result that opportunities are lost or efforts are duplicated. It could be very beneficial if educational initiatives and materials could be made more widely available. An example is the Certified Livestock Transport training program supported originally by Alberta Farm Animal Care and now planned to expand to a national level. *It is recommended that national producer organizations, NFACC and other organizations help to disseminate available, high-quality education/extension resources across provinces and industry sectors.*

B. Communication with the public

Communicating with the public presents another challenge. The public often associates high animal welfare simply with certain production systems such as ‘free-range’, whereas science-informed standards generally involve multiple variables including disease prevention, nutrition and handling skill, and they often specify desirable outcomes rather than prescribing specific production methods. Hence, science-informed standards do not necessarily correspond to widely held public beliefs about good welfare. As Canada moves toward a comprehensive farm animal welfare system based on science-informed standards and Animal Care Assessment programs, there will be a need to communicate the nature and significance of this system to the public. *It is recommended that as national animal producer organizations update Codes and implement Animal Care Assessment programs, they also develop plans on how to communicate the value of these activities to a broad public audience.*

C. Involvement of the retail and food service industries

Some retail and food service companies are requiring that their suppliers meet certain specifications designed to ensure a high standard of animal welfare. Some such requirements (e.g., that slaughter plants pass recognized humane-slaughter audits) are predictably and demonstrably linked to animal welfare. However, for other requirements (e.g., that laying hens have access to the outdoors), the animal welfare outcomes are likely to be uncertain or to depend strongly on additional factors such as weather, space and management skill. *It is recommended that retail and food service companies become involved in the Canadian farm animal welfare system so as to ensure that any animal-welfare-related purchasing requirements they create are well informed and likely to support good animal welfare, and that NFACC and producer organizations facilitate this involvement*

D. Communication personnel

A missing component of an effective farm animal welfare system is a cadre of extensionists and educators trained in animal welfare and capable of facilitating information-sharing in the different industry sectors together with public education. The availability of trained staff has not kept pace with the rapidly rising need for communication about animal welfare. To address the lack of trained personnel, industry organizations and provincial extension services could identify staff positions with a

mandate for animal welfare extension, and either hire trained staff or provide existing staff with suitable training, for example through educational leave. *It is recommended that industry organizations and extension services review the adequacy of their capacity for animal welfare education/extension and hire trained individuals or secure appropriate training for existing personnel.*

E. Research and development related to communication

Traditionally extension related to animal welfare has occurred through conferences, presentations and publications, but little is actually known about the effectiveness of these methods compared to alternatives such as farm visits, on-farm bench-marking and producer focus groups. With appropriate encouragement and funding, it should be possible for research organizations with social science expertise to conduct research on effective methods. *It is recommended that producer and other organizations encourage and support research on the effectiveness of animal welfare extension activities.*

5. Compliance assurance

Progress to date

Currently there are several tools and activities designed to achieve and assure compliance with standards.

Educational programs can make industry players aware of Codes and performance standards, as well as sharing information that will facilitate compliance. Educational programs often take the form of conferences, meetings, training events and on-farm bench-marking.

Animal Care Assessment programs, sometimes involving objective ('third-party') verification, are intended to assess and ultimately demonstrate good animal care practices. These have been developed by some industry organizations, and others are being developed under the auspices of NFACC based mostly on selected provisions in the Codes of Practice.

Enforcement of humane slaughter regulations is done by CFIA inspectors at federally registered plants. Inspection at provincially inspected plants may be done by provincial inspectors or delegated to CFIA inspectors, sometimes using periodic rather than continuous inspection.

Enforcement of the Transportation of Animals Regulations is also a responsibility of the CFIA. In addition, these regulations may be enforced by provincial/territorial officials and/or the enforcement staff of animal welfare NGOs in jurisdictions where the federal regulations are cited in the relevant provincial/territorial statutes or where the CFIA delegates authority to another agency.

Enforcement of other animal protection law is intended to deal with cases of neglect and other unacceptable treatment of animals. Enforcement is done by provincial/territorial officials and other law-enforcement and animal protection officers, mostly using provincial/territorial legislation where it exists and the Criminal Code of Canada in a minority of cases. Enforcement generally occurs only on the basis of complaints.

Producer-driven compliance activities exist in some jurisdictions. Notably, the Alberta Farm Animal Care Association formed the Alberta Livestock Protection Network in partnership with the Alberta SPCA, provincial government, the CFIA and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The Network creates communication between producers and enforcement personnel. As a result, producers may for example help to monitor situations after an animal welfare intervention, with the consent of the animal owner. In addition, some provincial Farm Animal Care organizations operate 'hot-lines' which allow producers or members of the public to report animal welfare concerns. Hot-lines allow the animal production system to exercise a degree of

self-correction through producers (with consent) helping fellow producers to resolve animal welfare problems.

Some slaughter and processing companies have in-house measures to ensure compliance in their own facilities, including video surveillance of the stunning and slaughter areas.

Some supply-management regulatory bodies require producers to comply with certain animal welfare standards. For example, the Chicken Farmers of Canada's Animal Care Program was developed based on the Code of Practice and requires producers to provide birds with the amount of barn space specified in the Code and to meet other requirements. Failure to comply can lead to a removal of certification and, in some jurisdictions, a reduction in production allocation or even suspension of the producer's license.

Some processing, retail and food service companies require their suppliers to meet specified animal welfare standards, for example by passing the humane slaughter audit of the American Meat Institute, as a condition of purchase.

Issues and further actions regarding compliance assurance

A. Animal Care Assessment programs

Industry-driven Animal Care Assessment programs could form a central element of a national farm animal welfare system. These should be developed at the national level so as to achieve a common approach across the country. Communication among sectors would allow sharing of experiences and effective methods and approaches. *It is recommended that national producer organizations in all animal production sectors develop Animal Care Assessment programs suited to the specific nature of their sector, and that this be done in consultation with NFACC so as to achieve sharing of effective methods and approaches across sectors.*

B. Slaughter enforcement

Despite the historical public support for government enforcement of humane slaughter, there is little public reporting to indicate the success and consistency of such enforcement. Perhaps as a result, some retail and food service companies conduct their own humane slaughter audits in addition to government inspection. Because of the leading role of the CFIA in humane slaughter enforcement, and because the large majority of meat in Canada comes from federally inspected plants, assurance of consistent, high-quality enforcement by the CFIA is a critical part of a national farm animal welfare system. *It is recommended that CFIA conduct and publish audits to demonstrate that federal inspectors conduct humane slaughter enforcement to a satisfactory and consistent national standard at federally inspected facilities.*

C. Enforcement of Transportation of Animals Regulations

- Although all animal transportation in Canada is covered by federal regulations, and although CFIA is empowered to enforce the regulations, there is a common perception that the CFIA does not have the capacity to conduct a uniform and satisfactory level of inspection and enforcement throughout the country. Consultation is needed to quantify the gap, if any, between the existing capacity and desirable capacity, as a step toward closing any such gap. Because this will require input and knowledge of enforcement across the country, FPAW would seem the logical group to lead the consultation. *It is recommended that FPAW lead a consultation to determine whether existing capacity to enforce federal Transportation of Animals Regulations is sufficient for a uniform and satisfactory level of enforcement.*
- Many provinces/territories have animal protection enforcement officials who, although active in areas where animal transportation occurs, are not empowered to enforce the federal Transportation of Animals Regulations. Empowering provincial/territorial authorities to participate in enforcing the regulations could potentially augment the amount of surveillance and enforcement, thus complementing (but not replacing) the efforts of federal inspectors. This might be achieved, for example, by referencing the federal regulations in provincial/territorial animal protection statutes, or by delegation of authority by the CFIA, although the agencies would also require appropriate resources and coordination of efforts. *It is recommended that the CCCVO, with appropriate consultation, consider and recommend options whereby provincial/territorial officials could be empowered to participate in enforcing federal Transportation of Animals Regulations.*

D. Enforcement of animal protection law

Mechanisms used for animal protection enforcement vary greatly among jurisdictions. For example, in Alberta the provincial government funds the Alberta SPCA to conduct inspections and enforcement; in Manitoba enforcement is done by provincial officials or by veterinarians on contract to the province; and in some provinces enforcement is delegated to an animal protection organization but the provincial government covers little or none of the cost. Such variation creates significant challenges in achieving a coherent national program of animal protection enforcement. It has also led to major disagreement on whether enforcement is best done by government officials, police, or animal protection NGOs. There is also a lack of metrics that could be used to assess the adequacy of enforcement success. A national stock-taking and consultation is needed to establish appropriate levels of enforcement effort, best practices, and suitable metrics. The CCCVO, whose members represent many government agencies that conduct animal protection enforcement, would be a logical body to lead such a consultation, in cooperation with enforcement agencies, including NGO enforcement agencies, across the country. *It is recommended that the CCCVO lead a consultation to identify appropriate means and levels, best practices, and practical metrics of animal protection enforcement.*

E. Criminal Code provisions

The animal-related provisions of the Criminal Code are seen as an important part of animal protection law in Canada, but various enforcement agencies, together with the CFHS and the CVMA, have repeatedly criticized the provisions as making successful prosecution so difficult (for example, because of the need to demonstrate intent) as to weaken the animal protection system in Canada.⁷ Inasmuch as problems with the Criminal Code are perceived as weakening enforcement, it is intended that the CCCVO should consider the Criminal Code provisions in their consultation on animal protection enforcement.

F. Producer-driven compliance activities

Producer-driven compliance activities such as ‘hot-lines’ and formal cooperation with enforcement personnel would appear a promising approach that could improve compliance, increase public trust, and promote industry self-regulation. However, these approaches are limited to certain jurisdictions; their effectiveness has not been formally evaluated; and the effects of producer involvement on public confidence in the enforcement system is unknown. There is a need for consultation and stock-taking to compare the various initiatives, to assess the need and scope for greater cooperation between enforcement and industry organizations, and make recommendations. Because of its connections with producer organizations, relevant government agencies and the animal protection movement, NFACC would seem a logical body to lead such a consultation. *It is recommended that NFACC lead a consultation on producer-driven compliance activities and make recommendations on whether and how to extend such programs to other industry sectors and jurisdictions.*

G. Support for producers in difficulty

Serious breakdown of animal care sometimes occurs when owners are experiencing illness or deterioration, or financial or family hardship. Hence, a pro-active approach to animal protection is likely to benefit from links to ancillary (medical, social support) services. For example, the Alberta Farm Animal Care Association worked closely with rural social services in 2003 when drought and concern about Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy caused serious hardship for western cattle producers. *It is recommended that NFACC lead a consultation on the benefits of involving medical and social services in cases of serious breakdown in animal care, and how best to secure such services when they are needed.*

⁷ For example: Appearance of the CVMA before the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs in relation to its study of Bill S-213: Monday, December 4, 2006, 2:30 p.m. Available at: http://canadianveterinarians.net/Documents/Resources/Files/547_Bills13SenateE.pdf

Names of organizations and abbreviations

AAFC	Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
CCAC	Canadian Council on Animal Care
CCCVO	Canadian Council of Chief Veterinary Officers
CFHS	Canadian Federation of Humane Societies
CFIA	Canadian Food Inspection Agency
CVMA	Canadian Veterinary Medical Association
FPAW	Federal-Provincial Animal Welfare group
NFACC	National Farm Animal Care Council
NFAHWC	National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council
OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health