



**NATIONAL FARM ANIMAL CARE COUNCIL  
CONSEIL NATIONAL POUR LES SOINS AUX ANIMAUX D'ÉLEVAGE**

June 7, 2013

National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare (NFAHW) Council  
c/o Canadian Animal Health Coalition  
660 Speedvale Avenue West, Suite 205  
Guelph, Ontario  
N1K 1E5

ATTENTION: Co-Chairs Wayne Lees and Rob McNabb

Dear Wayne and Rob,

The National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) appreciates the extensive consultations and analysis the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare (NFAHW) Council undertook in developing its strategic advisory paper, *"A National Farm Animal Welfare System for Canada."* NFACC's directors have examined the advisory paper with respect to recommendations involving NFACC. We are pleased to report that NFACC has already made efforts toward fulfilling some of the recommendations made.

NFACC would like to formally advise the NFAHW Council of its deliberations relative to progress in meeting recommendations contained in the advisory paper and areas where alternative approaches were identified. What follows are the recommendations from the advisory paper that NFACC considered and the outcomes of NFACC deliberations.

*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.*

- NFACC's new business plan will address most of this recommendation
- The NFACC Executive has initiated discussion with the NFAHW Council relative to using the CCVO as a conduit for communication with the provinces. FPAW is represented on NFACC.
- It was recognized that involving "the public" is an ongoing challenge as no single group can adequately provide that representation. However, NFACC is very pleased with the involvement of the Canadian Restaurant and Food Services Association, Retail Council of Canada and some large retail and food service companies in NFACC's work. These downstream stakeholders are directly in touch with consumers, and along with CFHS, are NFACC's conduit to "the public."

*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.*

- Unknowns remain relative to initiatives that will be funded through GFII project funding and those requiring ongoing support from non-governmental NFACC members.

- While NFACC is valued and seen as delivering results; its ongoing sustainability remains tenuous.

3) *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.*

- NFACC directors confirmed that this distinction will be maintained. Further clarifications relative to what requirements entail and the intended purpose of recommended practices have been approved. These clarifications will be incorporated into an updated Code development process. NFACC’s Code of Practice brochure, available [here](#) contains the updated wording.

4) *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.*

- A potential Code schedule was developed from this recommendation and it was agreed that it should serve as our “roadmap” to help organizations set milestones and see that they are part of a bigger process and timetable. However until resource issues have been dealt with, this document must remain a draft.
- What constitutes a “review” versus an “update” needs to be defined. Reviews should include an assessment as to when a next Code revision is needed. Some Codes may be updated sooner than others depending upon circumstances within each industry. We need to avoid another bottleneck of eight Codes being updated at once. Two or three Code updates proceeding at once were proposed as the maximum for manageability.
- It was agreed that for minor groups of farmed animals NFACC’s Code development process should be utilized, but some arrangements (e.g., financial) can be creatively arranged. The factors that result in a credible Code under the NFACC system needs to be maintained (e.g., multi-stakeholder committee).

5) *That national producer organizations, NFACC and other organizations help to disseminate available, high quality education/extension resources across provinces and industry sectors.*

- The budgetary implications of this recommendation need to be considered
- The existing work and role of the provincial FAC groups in meeting this recommendation needs to be recognized
- While NFACC can enable nationally consistent messaging and offer a central repository for information, it will not be involved in the actual dissemination of resources across provinces and industry sectors.

6) *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.*

- NFACC is very pleased with the involvement of the Canadian Restaurant and Food Services Association, Retail Council of Canada and some large retail and foodservice companies in NFACC’s work, but still has the goal of encouraging further participation and engagement at an association level. Efforts have been made to consult with retailer and foodservice groups on the Codes. However, further discussion is needed around how to more formally incorporate retail and foodservice input into the Code development process.
- It was agreed that this should be considered work in progress.

7) *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.*

- This is an aim of the Animal Care Assessment Model and is in progress.
- An additional consideration: need to better integrate the development of Codes and the development of animal care assessment programs, i.e., as future iteration of codes are developed we need to look at them through an ACAM lens.

8) *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.*

- The FAC groups work closely together and the existing work and role of the provincial FAC groups in meeting this recommendation needs to be recognized.
- The budgetary implications of this recommendations need to be considered
- NFACC's role would be limited to that of facilitator
- This topic has been added to NFACC's 2013 conference agenda

Thank you to the NFAHW Council for developing the animal welfare advisory paper. It brings together the many activities (code development, research, training and enforcement) into a coherent, national approach for addressing farm animal welfare issues and concerns.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me.

Best regards,



Jackie Wepruk  
NFACC General Manager