



Farm Animal Welfare

David Fraser

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NATIONAL FARMED ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE COUNCIL

Farm animal welfare involves:

- producers and their associations
- farm staff
- veterinarians
- transporters
- auction staff
- processors
- slaughter plant workers
- retailers
- regulators
- scientists
- governments



Complementary leadership

National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC)

- coordinating body
- member organizations
- leads the development of Codes of Practice
- develops the process for Animal Care Assessment Programs
- forum for open discussion of farm animal welfare issues



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National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council (NFAHWC)

- advisory body
- individuals appointed for experience and expertise
- evaluates issues on all aspects of animal health and welfare
- reports to/advises senior levels of government and industry



NFAHWC activities in farm animal welfare

2010-12	National consultation → “National Farm Animal Welfare System for Canada”	22 recommendations
2014	Review of animal welfare research	4 recommendations
2015	Progress Report on the 2012 recommendations	
2016	Advisory document on public-good research	1 recommendation
2016-17	National consultation on management of cull dairy cows	19 recommendations
2018	Advisory document on aligning animal welfare law	8 recommendations
2018-19	National consultation → Revised “National Farm Animal Welfare System for Canada”	



Animal welfare law in Canada



Variation in animal protection law

- Different provincial/territorial laws
- Codes of Practice are referenced in some provinces
- Some federal requirements are referenced in some provinces
- Federal-Provincial cooperation agreements exist in some provinces
- Differences in:
 - enforcement tools
 - enforcement systems
 - basic definitions

**Greater alignment of animal protection law could:**

- lead to efficiencies in enforcement
- simplify the work of producers, veterinarians, transporters and others who work in different jurisdictions
- maintain confidence of the public and trading partners that Canada has a coherent system for the protection of animals



Recommendations (condensed)

1. That provincial and territorial regulations cite the same suite of codes and guides consistently so that the same basic standards of animal care apply throughout the country
2. That provincial marketing regulations and other programs that license or certify producers incorporate codes in uniform ways
3. That provinces and territories cite the federal humane slaughter regulations so that these become the standard for both provincially and federally inspected abattoirs
4. That provinces and territories cite the federal transportation of animals regulations so that both provincial and federal officials enforce a common set of transportation standards

**Recommendations (condensed)**

5. That federal, provincial and territorial governments consider creating enforcement collaboration agreements
6. That provinces and territories consider adopting enforcement tools that authorize immediate action to protect animal welfare
7. That development of new standards be done at a national level to minimize the ad-hoc development of jurisdiction-specific standards
8. That provinces and territories pursue shared definitions of common terms such as “distress”, “duties of owners”, and “generally accepted practices”



Subsequent steps

- The recommendations were presented to the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Regulatory Assistant Deputy Ministers of Agriculture by teleconference in October 2018.
- The full report is available on the NFAHW Council website
- A detailed comparison of provincial/territorial animal protection law is also available on the website or from me



Leadership and Coordination

Observations:

- that the continued functioning of NFACC is crucial
- that Codes need regular revision
- that standards are needed for some sectors and service industries
- and that retail and food service sectors need to remain/become part of the system.

***Leadership and Coordination***

Recommendations:

- that all players ensure that NFACC has the funding it needs to continue providing national leadership, and for Codes to be updated at least every 10 years
- to create standards to protect animal welfare in the production of “antibiotic-free” products (where applicable) in future revisions of Codes of Practice
- to find feasible means of generating standards for sectors and service industries that lack a Code of Practice, within the NFACC process wherever possible
- to ensure that retail and food service companies continue to be involved in NFACC and that their purchasing requirements are based on recognized standards



Capacity building

Observations:

- that organizations need well trained people to lead the issue
- that some service industries, such as breeders, feed companies, engineers, animal handlers are crucial for animal welfare but in some cases are not well integrated into the system

***Capacity building***

Recommendations:

- that organizations that provide leadership in animal welfare – such as the larger national producer organizations – review their needs and secure appropriate training for existing personnel or hire appropriately trained individuals
- that national producer organizations, NFACC and regulators involve breeders, feed companies, engineers, animal handlers and others in addressing animal welfare



Research

Observations:

- that serious inefficiencies occur because much research funding comes in small grants from provincial or other agencies that have different priorities, procedures and deadlines
- that industry-based funding is mostly for short-term research to address immediate needs, with little support for longer-term and policy-relevant research
- that there is limited research on human determinants of animal welfare (skill, staffing levels etc.)



Research

Recommendations:

- that all sectors use or develop coordinated methods of funding research that will be cost-efficient for the sector and for researchers
- to direct some funding to long-term and policy-relevant research
- and to fund social science research on:
 - human determinants of animal welfare (skill, knowledge, staffing levels)
 - the values of Canadians
 - experience with Animal Care Assessment Programs
 - economic implications of animal welfare measures



Compliance assurance

Observations:

- that there is a lack of uniformity in animal welfare law and enforcement from province to province
- that Animal Care Assessment Programs are at different stages of development in the different sectors
- there are some valuable producer-driven compliance activities but these exist in only some sectors and some provinces



Compliance assurance

Recommendations:

- that the Council of Chief Veterinary Officers (CCVO) provide advice on:
 - means of achieving more uniform recognition of Codes of Practice
 - options for aligning transport and slaughter standards
 - options for more effective and uniform enforcement of animal transport
- that Animal Care Assessment Programs:
 - be developed for all sectors, using the NFACC process as much as possible
 - that experiences of these programs be shared among sectors
 - that outcomes of assessment programs be reported
- that NFACC lead in creating awareness of producer-driven compliance activities that could be extended to other sectors and jurisdictions



Extension and education

Observations:

- that there are some good educational materials (euthanasia, compromised animals etc.) that are not widely known
- that we need educational materials for small-scale, urban and hobby producers
- there is a lack of public awareness of the systems and progress being made to promote farm animal welfare in Canada

***Extension and education***

Recommendations:

- that high-quality education/extension resources on animal welfare/handling be:
 - identified by producer and extension organizations
 - made readily available by NFAHWC through a webpage
- that educational materials for small-scale, urban and hobby production be developed by a process involving provincial governments, producer organizations, animal welfare organizations, scientists, and municipalities
- that all stakeholders seek ways to communicate the value of Canada's animal welfare system to a broad public audience



Two projects for NFAHWC

High-level needs that are not currently being met:

- to ensure the involvement of social/medical services in cases of animal neglect, and when disaster or disease eradication create serious problems for producers and animals
- to achieve better coordination of players in complex marketing systems: farm → transport → auction → slaughter

***Two projects for NFAHWC***

Recommendations that NFAHWC:

- lead a consultation on ways of involving medical and social services
 - in cases of breakdown in animal care
 - in circumstances such as disease outbreaks and disasters
- lead a review of animal welfare and biosecurity throughout the marketing process from farm to slaughter



Next steps

- Receive any additional suggestions
- Finalize document in 2019
- Continue to communicate with the organizations that are being asked to act

