

# Canadian Sheep Federation

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Dear Reader,

We realize it's been some time since we've touched base, and we wanted to take a few minutes to update you on what the Canadian Sheep Federation has been working on recently.

The following is a brief sampling of some of the more recent initiatives. Please feel free to contact us about any of these items, or other questions you might have.

We frequently post updates and news on the Canadian Sheep Federation Facebook page. Follow along!

## **Developing a National Maedi Visna Program for Canada**

The CSF Board of Directors recently elected to develop a national Maedi Visna program for producers who may not currently have access to one. In addition to support from its members, the CSF reached out to other industry groups and the CFIA for their input on the program. Work is underway to put together a Working Group that will develop and draft the program. If you are interested in being part of the process, please contact us at [info@cansheep.ca](mailto:info@cansheep.ca).

More details to come.



## **Key Meetings**

### August

U.S. Congressional Staffers Tour

### July

NAFTA Trade Negotiation Team

Market Access Secretariat

AAFC's Post-National Policy Advisory Committee meeting

All Canada Classic – Mexican Delegation

### June

MAPAQ Chief Veterinary Officer

Treasury Board of Canada – Regulatory Cooperation Council

Agri Benchmark Conference

Canada's Food Summit

Health Canada / Veterinary Drug Directorate

## More Important News

### The Canadian Verified Sheep Program

The Canadian Verified Sheep Program (CVSP) is a quality assurance program developed by producers and industry representatives for sheep producers in Canada. CVSP is composed of three chapters; Food Safety, Animal Care, and Biosecurity.

The CVSP has been developed to give producers a way to be recognized for implementing responsible production practices on their farms. Quality assurance programs provide transparency for producers, and help to improve social trust and perception of livestock production practices in Canada.

Each chapter is composed of Good Production Practices or GPPs that need to be implemented at the various stages of production. The implementation of Good Productions Practices is verified through record keeping, flock health plans, and self-assessment checklists, and are validated through on-farm audits.

To become certified on the Canadian Verified Sheep Program you must first:

- Take the training either online or in person;
- Implement the program requirements;
- Keep accurate record for one years (or one full production cycle);
- Contact the Canadian Sheep Federation to request an audit.

For more information on the Canadian Verified Sheep Program please visit [www.cansheep.ca](http://www.cansheep.ca) or email us at [verifiedsheep@cansheep.ca](mailto:verifiedsheep@cansheep.ca)

### Working Towards Scrapie Eradication

In 2016 Scrapie Canada launched the Scrapie Eradication Strategic Plan Delivery Project. The project objective is to eradicate scrapie from Canada in an effort to mitigate economic losses to producers, reduce the cost of disease control actions to the Canadian sheep and goat industries, and regain market access lost as a result of the BSE crisis of 2003. The Scrapie Eradication Strategic Plan Delivery Project will focus on three key components:



## Upcoming Events

### National Sheep Industry Meeting

September 6-7, 2017. The Canadian Sheep Federation has worked with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, along with a number of stakeholders to help organize this meeting of key industry folks. Participants will help chart a course forward for a strong and unified industry.

### Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Agri-Risk Forum

Ottawa, September 20-22, 2017.

### Farm Management Canada's Agricultural Excellence Conference

Ottawa, November 21-23, 2017.

### National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Forum

Ottawa, November 28-29, 2017.

- Establishing a promoted national scrapie surveillance strategy;
- Expanding the Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program; and
- Engaging and educating stakeholders from all sectors of the sheep and goat industry about scrapie.

Collectively, these three strategies aim to advance the Canadian sheep and goat industries towards increased marketability and opportunities in trade and export. Eradicating classical scrapie from the national sheep flock and goat herd and supporting the claim of scrapie-free status in Canada as described by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), is an essential component for growth and prosperity for sheep and goat producers nationwide. Many other countries, including the USA and Great Britain, are already working to reduce the incidence of scrapie and eventually eradicate it from their flocks. To remain competitive, it is in Canada's best interest to continue the pursuit of scrapie eradication. The Scrapie Eradication Strategic Plan Delivery Project is dedicated to advancing the Canadian national sheep flock and goat herd towards the internationally recognized World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) standard of scrapie-free status.

For Canadian sheep and goat producers interested in joining the scrapie eradication effort, Scrapie Canada offers producers the opportunity to participate in the Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program (VSFCP). The VSFCP is a national flock/herd scrapie risk management program available to any sheep or goat producer who agrees to meet the requirements of the program. The primary advantage to VSFCP enrolled producers is the individual risk protection against scrapie in their flock/herd. Over time, producers will have their flock/herd recognized as being at a much lower risk for scrapie than the rest of the farms in the national flock/herd. This recognition can increase trade opportunities within Canada and allows increased access to the import of live animals from the United States. The long-term benefit of program participation is contributing to, and accelerating, the scrapie eradication process from the national flock and herd. For more information, please visit [www.scrapiecanada.ca](http://www.scrapiecanada.ca) or call 1.888.684.7739

### **Changes in Access to Veterinary Drugs are Coming**

In May 2017, Health Canada amended the Food and Drug Regulations to address antimicrobial resistance as it relates to the use of veterinary drugs. New regulations will affect the own use importation (OUI) of vet drugs, the importation and quality of active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) and provide a facilitated pathway for the approval of veterinary health products. Producers will be directly impacted by changes to OUI regulations that come into force November 13, 2017. Currently, veterinary drugs including over the counter antimicrobials, can be imported to Canada for personal use purposes. Effective November 13<sup>th</sup>, only drugs already approved for use in Canada can be imported, except for a few specified drug products to be determined by Health Canada and the Veterinary Drug Directorate.

In the face of ever increasing oversight of veterinary drug use, the CSF is working closely with Health Canada and the Veterinary Drug Directorate to increase the number and range of vet drugs approved for the use in sheep in Canada. These efforts have led to the approval of 5 new products in the past 2 years, including Glanvac 6 (2017), Metacam (2016), Flukiver (2016), Liquamycin LA-200 (2015), and Deccox (2015).

For more information about antimicrobial resistance and animals, visit the [Government of Canada's website](#).

### **Building Markets in Mexico**

The 2017 All Canada Classic was host to the latest trade meetings between Canadian and Mexican sheep industry representatives. With the help of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, the Canadian Sheep Federation and Canadian Sheep Breeders' Association hosted a delegation of sheep folks from Mexico. The delegation included a sheep farmer from Mexico's northern state of Chihuahua, a Director from the State of Nuevo Leon's Ministry of Agriculture & Livestock, and the manager of a prominent Mexican food packaging and distribution company interested in Canadian sheep and lamb products. In addition to a farm tour, the delegation visited the Classic show and sale, meeting with Canadian Sheep Federation Chairman and Directors, the Canadian Cooperative Wool Growers, OC Flock and the Canadian Katahdin Sheep Association.

### **Strengthening U.S. Ties**

As partners in the North American Free Trade Agreement prepare for its renegotiation, the Government of Canada hosted a June visit from U.S. Congressional staffers. The Canadian Sheep Federation was pleased to arrange a sheep farm tour for group, thankful to Benacres Farms and the Bennett family from Kingston, Ontario, for opening their farm gates. The group of Congressional staffers toured farms from Montreal to Toronto, only two of which were livestock operations. The visit generated great discussions on Canada-U.S. sheep and lamb trade issues, and some appreciation of how the two countries could work together

## CSF HOSTS MEXICAN DELEGATION



## CSF HOSTS U.S. CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS



to cultivate a strong North American industry. Communications continue between CSF and Congressional staffers, and we were pleased to learn that the group enjoyed Canadian lamb during their visit to Toronto!

### **Canada's Sheep Industry in a Global Perspective**

The 2017 Agri Benchmark Sheep Conference took place in Saskatoon this past June. Agri Benchmark is a global, non-profit network of agricultural economists, advisors, producers, and agricultural and horticultural specialists. They use internationally standardized methods to analyze farms, production systems and their profitability. Collected farm-level data is combined with an analysis of international commodity markets and value chains. In this way, they are able to provide scientifically consistent and soundly based answers on strategic issues to decision-makers in policy, agriculture and agribusiness. The conference brings together industry representatives from around the world to discuss trends in production, profitability and trade around the world. This year marked the first time the Canadian sheep industry participated in the international conference, with the CSF introducing this country's industry to the rest of the world. The CSF and Saskatchewan Sheep Development Board partnered in organizing a farm tour and lamb barbecue for Conference participants. Participating countries included Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, UK, Spain, France, China, Brazil and Uruguay. Canada was invited to become an Agri Benchmark member.

### **Traceability Planning Underway Despite Delays in Regulatory Amendments**

With the drafting of new traceability regulations underway, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada work on implementation strategies for traceability in the ovine, bovine, caprine and cervid industries. The pig industry saw changes to their traceability regulations in July 2015. This latest round of traceability consultations began in the fall of 2013, and continue as the future regulation's finer details are worked out. During early consultations, there was some expectation that new regulations would be in place by now but consultation timelines have proven to be very fluid. Most recently, we've heard that regulations may not change before April 2019.

The Canadian Sheep Federation has been heavily involved in the consultation process and remains the sheep industry's representative on 4 industry-government groups managing the regulatory amendment. Earlier this spring, the CSF drafted a Traceability Administration Proposal for AAFC and CFIA's consideration. The Proposal set out a plan for implementing traceability for the sheep industry, where the sector would oversee its own program. The Proposal would allow sheep producers to manage program elements, direction and cost, as opposed to leaving it to the direction of those who have no interest in the sector's success. More importantly, the proposal would ensure that sheep industry stakeholders are prepared for new regulations when they do come into force. AAFC and CFIA have yet to make a decision on the proposal.

## A National Plant and Animal Health Strategy for Canada

Over the last year, governments, industry, academia and others who play a role in plant and animal health, came together to chart a path to collaboratively safeguard Canada's plant and animal resources through development of the *Plant and Animal Health Strategy for Canada*. In July of this year, the federal-provincial-territorial ministers of agriculture endorsed this Strategy as an effective action plan for protecting plant and animal resources and unleashing the potential for growth in Canada's agriculture sector. The CSF was pleased to be a *National Plant and Animal Health Strategy* Steering Committee member, partnering in the development of a comprehensive strategy that will help protect the national sheep flock. To learn more about the Strategy, visit the [Canadian Food Inspection Agency's website](#).

## Canadian Agricultural Partnership; Funding Opportunities for Producers and Industry Stakeholders

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) announced the next round of agricultural funding, the *Canadian Agricultural Partnership*, July 21, 2017. In all, this next agricultural policy framework will see \$3 billion invested by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen agriculture, agri-food and agri-business in Canada. The *Canadian Agricultural Partnership* will focus on six priority areas:

- **Science, research, and innovation** – to help industry use science and innovation to improve resiliency and increase productivity.
- **Markets and trade** – to open new markets and help farmers and food processors improve their competitiveness through skills development, improved export capacity, underpinned by a strong and efficient regulatory system.
- **Environmental sustainability and climate change** – to help the sector reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, protect the environment and adapt to climate change by enhancing sustainable growth while increasing production.
- **Value-added agriculture and agri-food processing** – to support the continued growth of the value-added agriculture and agri-food processing sector.
- **Public trust** – to build a firm foundation for public trust through solid regulations, improving assurance systems and traceability.
- **Risk Management** – to enable proactive and effective risk management, mitigation and adaptation to create a resilient sector.

Under the *Canadian Agricultural Partnership*, BRM programs will continue to help producers manage significant risks that threaten the viability of their farm and are beyond their capacity to manage. Find out about the [Canadian Agricultural Partnership – Business Risk Management Programs](#).

The partnership will be in place by April 1, 2018, with Growing Forward 2 funding remaining in place until then.

Consultations on this round of funding took place through 2016-17, and was something the CSF worked closely with AAFC on. As the *Canadian Agricultural Partnership* launch date approaches

and funding becomes available, the CSF will continue to work with AAFC to ensure the program serves producers' needs.

### **Changes on the horizon for Canada's AI Program**

Earlier this year, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) proposed changes to the small ruminant artificial insemination program. Notably, the CFIA is proposing a 3-tier program, each tier allowing own use collection, export to all but EU-member countries and export to the EU member countries, respectively. With input from its members and industry stakeholders, the CSF recommended elements to the new program that would help support sheep farms interested in accessing AI technology for their own farms and for export.

### **Introducing the Canadian Quality Assurance Program Alliance**

Canadian agriculture commodity groups are all facing similar challenges, as Canadian consumers become more concerned about how the food they purchase and consume moves through processing. Canadian commodity organizations have developed quality assurance programs to provide transparency in production practices on farm, and to help improve public trust in Canadian agriculture. Quality assurance programs contain various modules focused on food production, including food safety, animal welfare, biosecurity and environmental sustainability.

The Canadian Quality Assurance Program Alliance (CQAPA) was formed to serve as a resource for improving quality assurance programs as a whole. The Alliance is composed of representatives from a wide range of on-farm quality assurance programs. The Alliance will address key challenges in farm-level quality assurance programs and work to improve program delivery for producers and consumers. Some of the group's goals include developing a stronger auditor training platform and network, bridging crossover multi-specie farms and optimising cross-compliance among various farm-level programs.

For more information about the Canadian Quality Assurance Program Alliance please contact CQAPA Chairperson and Canadian Verified Sheep Program Coordinator, Kristy House.

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