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

NFACC Information Update: June 2019

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UPDATE ON CODES OF PRACTICE UNDER REVISION/DEVELOPMENT

Farmed Finfish Code

During their inaugural meeting (held in May) the Code Committee and Scientific Committee considered an analysis of the findings from the top-of-mind survey of fish welfare concerns (open from February 25 – March 17). A summary of the analysis is available here. Thank you to everyone who participated in this engagement opportunity and provided their input on farmed fish welfare.

Both committees also reached consensus on a final list of priority welfare issues that will be the focus of the Scientific Committee report. The final list has been posted on this Code's webpage.

The farmed finfish Scientific Committee is supported by research writer, Michelle Lavery. Michelle is a Ph.D. candidate in Animal Behaviour and Welfare at the University of Guelph under the supervision of Dr. Georgia Mason. She is investigating the effects of environmental enrichment on zebrafish welfare and cognition. Michelle previously completed an MSc in aquatic ecology with Dr. Rick Cunjak at the University of New Brunswick focused on the winter ecology of incubating Atlantic salmon embryos. She enjoys working with the Scientific Committee, since the experience combines her interests in animal welfare, fish biology, and science communication!

Transportation Code

With new Code Managers in place, the process of updating the 2001 *Recommended Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals: Transportation* is under way. The rosters for both the Cattle and Pig Working Groups are complete, and the Pig Working Group held its inaugural conference call in late May. The Cattle Working Group continues to work on finalizing a date for its initial call. Both Working Groups are managed by Kate Cooper. The *Poultry Catching and Transport* and the *Hatchery Transport* Working Group rosters are now complete. The initial conference call for the Poultry Working Group has taken place and planning for the Hatchery Transport Working Group's first calls and meetings are in the works. Both the Poultry and Hatchery Transport WGs fall under the leadership of Code Manager Lucie Verdon. Both Kate and Lucie are in the process of scheduling calls and presentations of the relevant sections of the Scientific Committee Report, while researching and writing content for their respective Code sections.

The Mink/Fox/Rabbit Working Group has been fully populated and has been turned over to Lucie to manage. It is expected that the Sheep/Goats Working Group will be fully populated by mid-June, and the Bison/Deer and Equine Working Groups will be populated and ready to work by mid-summer. In an effort to manage both NFACC resources as well as those of industry/sector stakeholders, other Working Groups, such as those responsible for Intermediary Sites and Common Elements are scheduled to become operational in mid to late fall of 2019.

A series of orientation webinars took place in early June for participants on active Working Groups. More orientation webinar options will be made available as other Working Groups are populated.

Goat Code

The first meeting of the goat Code Development Committee was held in May and included members of the Scientific Committee. Preliminary findings from the top-of-mind survey (open from April 11 – May 2) were discussed and a summary report will be released in July. The Code Committee will refer back to these important insights as it progresses through the update to this Code of Practice.

A key outcome from the meeting was the identification of priority welfare issues for the Scientific Committee report. The final list has been posted on this Code's webpage.

The goat Scientific Committee is supported by research writer, Melissa Moggy, DVM. Melissa completed her bachelor's in animal science at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College, followed by her DVM at the Atlantic Veterinary College and an internship at Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine. In 2013, she pursued her Master's degree at the University of Calgary. Afterwards she focused on livestock research and extension and decided to start her own consulting business in 2018. She has always had a passion for the goat industry, in her professional and personal life.

Dairy Cattle Code

The Code Development Committee and Scientific Committee are in place, and their first meeting has been scheduled for July.

An analysis of the feedback from the top-of-mind survey of dairy cattle welfare concerns (open from March 29 – April 19) is still underway, and will be presented to the committees in their upcoming meeting.

The dairy cattle Scientific Committee is supported by research writer, Steve Mason, PhD, PAS. Steve operates AgroMedia International Inc., a business that works with dairy industry partners in the delivery of production information and services to primary producers. Sub-enterprises include AgInformatics, providing data management support for research, and Farm Animal Care Associates, providing support to milk producers in the implementation of improved animal health and welfare practices.

Current affiliations include Alberta Milk, where Steve serves as Research and Extension Associate, the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Calgary where he is an Adjunct Associate Professor with the Production Animal Health Department and Alberta farm Animal Care where Steve serves on the board of directors.

For information on the steps of the Code development process and progress of the Codes being updated follow this link.

TRANSPORTATION CODE OF PRACTICE: ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN OF REGULATORY AND OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS UPDATED

The report, Environmental Scan of Regulatory and Operational Considerations, was originally prepared in June, 2017. It has now been updated as of May, 2019. The report provides a common background and context for NFACC's Transportation Code Development Committee members and Working Group participants. It contains an overview of regulatory requirements, operational background information, and considerations relative to the scope of the Transportation Code of Practice.

MOURNING A LIFE LOST TOO SOON – DR. FIONA RIOJA-LANG

[Dr. Fiona Connell Lang](#) passed away suddenly, and far too soon, on April 29, 2019.

Fiona was part of the NFACC family. She came on board to be the research writer for the bison Scientific Committee. Most recently, she was the research writer for the transportation Scientific Committee – a complex endeavour hemmed in by tight timelines and word count limitations. Fiona took all of these challenges in stride with great patience and good humour.

Even when her contracts with NFACC were done, she took the initiative to broaden the reach of the reports she had helped develop; working to have them published in scientific journals.

She was an endearing, lovely person. Fiona was passionate about animal behaviour, animal welfare, and improving farming practices. She was originally from Scotland, worked frequently with Canadians (she had a soft spot for Saskatchewan), and lived in Mexico with her husband and son. Very sadly, complications following the delivery of a healthy daughter led to her untimely passing.

Dr. Christy Goldhawk and friends have set up an email account to collect stories and pictures of the many connections people had with Fiona. These will be collected and formatted into a book that will be printed and sent to her children. The initiative was started in April 2019, and will be accepting material for a few months to give it time to reach her colleagues and friends around the world. If you'd like to contribute, email your story or pictures of Fiona to lettersoffiona@gmail.com.