

National Farm Animal Care Council

2005 – 2006

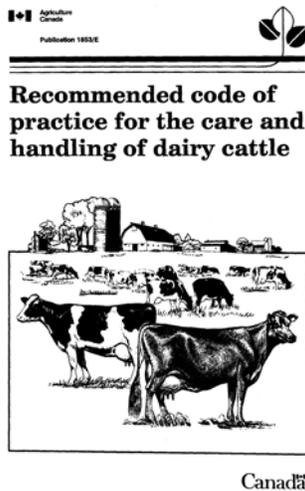
ANNUAL REPORT



THE NATIONAL FARM ANIMAL CARE COUNCIL

... A national coordinated approach promoting responsible farm animal care.

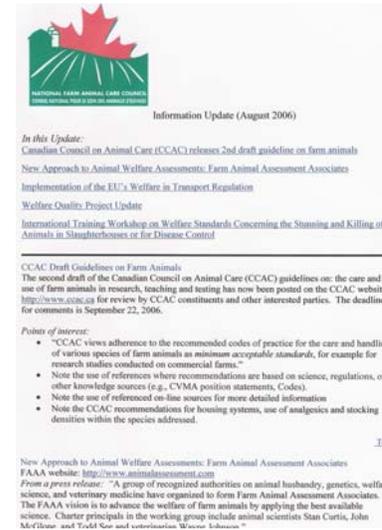
Collaborate



Monitor



Facilitate



Implementing a comprehensive and strategic approach, promoting responsible farm animal care, which will position the value chain by:

- ✓ Making best use of resources and capabilities through improved coordination
- ✓ Adding value to stakeholders by collaborating, communicating and sharing tools, approaches, knowledge and information/experience
- ✓ Facilitating proactive approaches to livestock care

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The National Farm Animal Care Council is grateful for secretariat services as provided by the Canadian Animal Health Coalition and financial assistance as provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through its Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food Program.

The funding for secretariat services, and other support by the Canadian Animal Health Coalition to the National Farm Animal Care Council, is provided through a Contribution Agreement for a project between AAFC and the Coalition.

'Initiating a National Farm Animal Care Council' is a project funded by AAFC's Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food (ACAAF) Program. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada is pleased to participate in the production of this communication. AAFC is committed to working with our industry partners to increase public awareness of the importance of the agriculture and agri-food industry to Canada. Opinions expressed in this document are those of the Canadian Animal Health Coalition and not necessarily of AAFC.



A MESSAGE from the CHAIR

A long-standing belief in the need for a national animal care organization became a reality with the inaugural meeting of the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) in August 2005.

I am a firm believer in the total industry uniting to address issues that cross species and sectors. Without a doubt animal care is one of these issues. In 1987, meetings were held resulting in the formation of the first provincial animal care council, the Ontario Farm Animal Council (OFAC) in 1988. In the early 1990's I participated in meetings in both Alberta and Saskatchewan, leading to the development of their councils. Manitoba's farm animal council held their first meeting in 1991.

The provincial farm animal care councils in Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario and Saskatchewan have consistently delivered the message that farmers care for their animals and promoted responsible animal care. While both their independent and collaborative efforts clearly illustrated how industry working together can be the lead in improving animal care, it also showed the gaps because there was no unified effort through a national organization.

We must remember that progress takes time. We all share in the responsibility of improving farm animal welfare, and must educate ourselves, and others, on the challenges involved. There are no simple answers, and animal welfare is often filled with many grey areas. I encourage everyone at the NFACC table to continue working together to understand each other's perspectives, particularly where they differ.

NFACC is unique. We should all take pride in this distinctly Canadian approach to addressing farm animal care, where industry – producer, processor, transporter, retailer, restaurateur, veterinarian, researcher, government and humane organization work in partnership on a common issue. It is a formula that promises to bring real progress on responsible farm animal care, while helping to ensure animal agriculture is viable in a climate of increasing market demands.

My sincere appreciation to Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada for their ongoing support of NFACC. The federal government has indicated its commitment to improving farm animal welfare through this support and I encourage the government to continue in this role, as we strive to provide public assurance of our farm animal care.

Thanks also to the Canadian Animal Health Coalition for providing secretariat support to NFACC. The Coalition has enabled NFACC to function in an independent fashion, while providing the necessary infrastructure to give NFACC a firm foundation.

I would like to especially thank Jackie Wepruk for her excellent work as our Coordinator. Her knowledge and ability to methodically work through complex issues has been a great asset to us.

Significant progress has been made in just one year, but of course there is much more work to be done. As our livestock and poultry industries increasingly face challenges, domestically and internationally, on how we care for our animals, I believe that NFACC will serve as an invaluable forum for meeting these challenges.

The development and creation of NFACC has been an achievement of which I have been very pleased to be a part. I would like to thank all NFACC members for giving me the opportunity to serve as NFACC's first Chair. I have enjoyed working with so many progressive individuals, committed to both farm animal welfare and Canada's animal agriculture industries. I wish you much success in the future as you deal with animal welfare issues and the development and revision of the Codes of Practice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gordon Coukell".

Gordon Coukell
NFACC Chair

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

I feel very fortunate to have been a part of the National Farm Animal Care Council's planning, inception and progress to date. It has been a year of learning curves and challenges as the Oversight Committee, and now the National Farm Animal Care Council, has brought diverse perspectives to the table, sharing information and collaborating on common issues relating to farm animal care.

The nitty-gritty chores of establishing a governance structure, terms of reference, a long-term funding plan, membership criteria, Codes process etc., are starting to come together and NFACC is taking shape. These basic requirements have been challenging as NFACC is a rather unique entity when it comes to approaches to farm animal care - a partnership that is industry driven, but inclusive.

The Annual Report provides highlights of NFACC's accomplishments over the past year. In particular, progress has been made in re-establishing the Code of Practice development process. NFACC has consulted with stakeholders throughout the course of developing a new Code process, taking all perspectives into consideration. The Codes are an important component of:

- providing assurances that Canadian farm animals are raised humanely;
- educating producers on sound management and welfare practices.

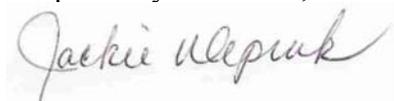
NFACC has also built partnerships with the four provincial farm animal councils in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta through the *'Putting Farm Animal Welfare on the Agenda'* project. This is an exciting venture that will build on existing farm animal welfare communication initiatives and broaden their impacts.

I would like to thank the Canadian Animal Health Coalition team for all the behind the scenes help with contracts, finances, and for reminding me of the 'bigger picture'. They have been a great group of people to work with.

The NFACC Executive has worked extremely hard on behalf of the broader group, putting in innumerable hours to build this new organization. They have been valuable guides as I work to serve the diverse groups that make up the Council. In particular, I am very appreciative of Gordon Coukell, as NFACC's first Chair. He has been a person I could always turn to for sage advice – and I turned to him often!

There is still a lot of work to be done, but NFACC has great strength in the skills of its representatives and their constituent organizations. I look forward to the coming year.

Respectfully submitted,



Jackie Wepruk, NFACC Coordinator

2005 – 2006 HIGHLIGHTS

NFACC held its inaugural meeting on August 11 & 12, 2005. A motion was passed to accept the Business Plan as the basis for the formation of the Council, recognizing that certain outstanding issues within the plan still needed to be addressed. The Business Plan was formally approved by NFACC at its December 5, 2005 meeting, including 3 strategic objectives.

OBJECTIVE #1:

Collaborate with respect to farm animal care issues

NFACC Meetings

- The Council has met 3 times since August 2005;
- The open discussion, amongst members from across the value chain, has been recognized as one of the values of NFACC;
- Presentations on key issues in farm animal care:
 - Dr. Jeff Rushen – ‘Review of the Scientific Support for Animal Welfare Standards’ project update
 - Dr. Gord Doonan, CFIA – ‘Proposed Amendments to the Health of Animal Regulations, Part XII – Humane Transportation’ update
 - Dr. Dan Weary – update on the OIE’s Animal Welfare Working Group
- Approval of the Business Plan, NFACC Terms of Reference and an MOU with the Canadian Animal Health Coalition;
- Several organizations have requested to attend NFACC meetings as observers, indicating an interest in NFACC’s work. Observers have contributed significantly to the discussions around the NFACC table, providing valuable insights and additional experience.

The NFACC Executive will be presenting recommendations to NFACC at its September 2006 meeting on interim and long-term funding strategies, membership categories, and membership criteria to further establish NFACC for the future.

Codes of Practice

- Consultations on a Code sub-committee report and Code Guideline document received significant feedback from stakeholders, indicating the importance of Codes and the role NFACC can play in re-establishing a Code process;
- A researcher workshop in June 2006 resulted in a researcher report with recommendations on how science could be incorporated into the Code development process
- A DRAFT Code Guideline outlines guiding principles for Code development
- A DRAFT Code Development Process has been developed
- Dairy Farmers of Canada passed a motion to support the revision of the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle through the National Farm Animal Care Council process

A Code 'package' will be presented to NFACC for its consideration at the September meeting, which will include the Code Guideline document, recommended Code Development process, researcher report/recommendations and a strategy for initiating the first Code revision through NFACC.

Animal Care Assessment/Verification

- The NFACC table has served as a forum for discussing perspectives across the value chain; building an understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by all concerned
- Commodities that are more advanced in developing animal care assessment tools have been invited to share their experiences with developing animal care programs. The Canadian Pork Council presented their animal care assessment tool to NFACC at its April 2006 meeting.

The September 2006 NFACC meeting will feature presentations from Chicken Farmers of Canada and the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency on their animal care assessment programs. A further discussion on NFACC's role in this area is on the September NFACC meeting agenda.

OBJECTIVE #2:

Facilitate information sharing and communication

NFACC Logo

To facilitate recognition of information coming from NFACC, a logo has been developed and is used with all communications coming from the Council.

Industry Animal Care Initiatives

An 'Industry Animal Care Initiatives' chart keeps all NFACC members aware of what other members are doing and provides a means for measuring progress over time. The chart includes information on Code revision status, verification program status and any other animal care initiatives that industry may be undertaking. The chart is reviewed at each NFACC meeting and updated as needed.

Animal Care Messaging and Media Contacts

- NFACC has developed its own media messaging based on the animal care messaging of its members;
- Key media contacts from across the value chain have been compiled in a reference document. As NFACC will not speak on behalf of its members, the media contact list will be used to refer any media calls to the appropriate organization.

Farm Animal Welfare Awareness Project

In keeping with NFACC's aim of complementing work already underway and collaborating with existing initiatives, NFACC is involved in a project with the four provincial farm animal councils (OFAC, MFAC, FACS & AFAC).

This joint communication effort to ‘put animal welfare on the agenda’ will ensure a collaborative approach to information sharing, avoid duplication of effort and present a strong unified industry voice on issues related to animal care. Initiatives within the project that NFACC will be involved with include:

- www.livestockwelfare.com website (enhanced access to research and information on animal care);
- Speakers Bureau (information available at www.livestockwelfare.com);
- Livestock Welfare Insights publication (available at www.livestockwelfare.com).

OBJECTIVE #3:

Monitor trends and initiatives in the international and domestic marketplace

Information Updates

Over 30 email information updates have been circulated to all NFACC members. Updates can include single or multiple issues. A format has been developed for multiple issue information updates that facilitate finding information of interest (hyper-linked titles that take readers directly to the article of interest). Select information of interest to particular NFACC members is circulated to those organizations as required.

OIE Developments

The activities of the OIE’s Animal Welfare Working Group have been monitored. Developments have been shared with NFACC, both through an NFACC meeting presentation by Dr. Dan Weary and information updates.

National Animal Health Strategy (NAHS)

NFACC Chair, Gordon Coukell, sat on an Oversight Committee facilitating the development of a concept paper for a Canadian NAHS. The concept paper outlined all the specific issues to be considered in developing an overall strategy. A National Farmed Animal Health Strategy (NFAHS) is a component of the broader NAHS. As farm animal care is being considered within a NFAHS, the involvement of NFACC’s Chair was an important link to the bigger picture and for building the value of NFACC.

Conferences

The Chair and Coordinator have attended several conferences/seminars/workshops related to farm animal welfare. The events serve a number of functions:

- Information gathering with updates provided to NFACC members;
- Raising the profile of NFACC and building networks with others involved with farm animal care;
- Events included: American Meat Institute Animal Care and Handling Conference, annual meetings/conferences of Farm Animal Council of Saskatchewan, CARC Expert Committee review meeting, Ontario Poultry & Livestock Council conference, Alberta Farm Animal Care Association & Ontario Farm Animal Council, Dairy Farmers of Canada meeting (update on NFACC provided by the Chair), Poultry Welfare Workshop, Paul Hemsworth workshop on stockperson-animal interactions and training courses.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Activity (from ACAA Work Plan)	ACAAF Approved Budget (June 05 - March 31, 2007)	Actual Expenses to June 30, 2006	Balance Remaining	Industry In-kind to June 30, 2006*
1) Establish a National Farm Animal Care Council - includes secretariat services, coordinator fees, meeting expenses, associated translation	\$226,300.00	\$104,399.53	\$121,900.47	\$67,470.00
2) Code of Practice and Assurance System Development - includes development of Code criteria guidelines, and a forum for dialogue on research needs and a framework and principles for assurance systems	\$26,300.00	\$1,611.03	\$24,688.97	not yet calculated
3) Implementation of a communication strategy - includes travel to meetings/conferences, print material, translation, other messaging vehicles	\$32,000.00	\$12,217.03	\$19,782.97	\$5,775.00
4) Administration - financial reporting, performance reporting, GST, annual project audit	\$30,227.00	\$7,828.61	\$22,398.39	\$0.00
TOTALS	\$314,827.00	\$126,056.20	\$188,770.80	\$73,245.00

*In-kind reflects the requirements of the ACAA contract and relate to the specific activities of this contract. For example, industry in-kind for observers and support staff attending NFACC meetings are not included within these figures.

NFACC MEMBERS AS OF SEPTEMBER 2006

Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada
Canadian Bison Association
Canadian Broiler Hatching Egg Marketing Agency
Canadian Cattlemen Association
Canadian Cervid Alliance
Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors
Canadian Federation of Agriculture
Canadian Federation of Humane Societies
Canadian Meat Council
Canadian Pork Council
Canadian Poultry and Egg Processors Council
Canadian Restaurant and Food Services Association
Canadian Sheep Federation
Canadian Turkey Marketing Agency
Canadian Veterinary Medical Association
Chicken Farmers of Canada
Dairy Farmers of Canada
Equine Canada
Ontario Trucking Association, Livestock Transporters Division
Provincial Farm Animal Care Councils (AFAC, FACS, MFAC, OFAC)
Provincial Governments (represented by Manitoba Agriculture)
Researcher Representative (University of British Columbia)

NFACC has had a number of organizations participating as observers at its meetings. These observer organizations have contributed to discussions around the NFACC table, offering their insights on farm animal welfare topics.

NFACC wishes to thank the following organizations for their participation:

Canadian Animal Health Coalition
Canadian Council on Animal Care
Canadian Egg Marketing Agency
Canadian Broiler Hatching Egg Marketing Agency
Canadian Turkey Marketing Agency
Chicken Farmers of Canada
Canada Mink Breeders Association
Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada, Animal Welfare Task Force