



## **NFACC Information Update: December 2020**

### **In this issue:**

- A Final Farewell and Note of Appreciation from NFACC to the Canadian Animal Health Coalition
- Update on Codes of Practice under revision/development
- An Update on Proposed Amendments to the 2014 Pig Code of Practice
- An Update on Amendments to the Farmed Mink Code of Practice
- NFACC in the news
- Upcoming events

### **A FINAL FAREWELL AND NOTE OF APPRECIATION FROM NFACC TO THE CANADIAN ANIMAL HEALTH COALITION**

NFACC was born through the Canadian Animal Health Coalition (CAHC) in 2005. Under the umbrella of CAHC, NFACC evolved to be the national lead for farm animal care and welfare in Canada. The CAHC was critical for fostering NFACC's early development and provided a space for NFACC to establish itself.

On April 1, 2020 NFACC officially became a division of the NFAHW Council, transferring its operations from the CAHC. The financial transition from the CAHC to the NFAHW Council continued beyond this date as the CAHC needed to complete its 2020-2021 financial audit before a final transfer of NFACC's operational funds could occur (i.e., those funds generated through membership fees).

As of July 1, 2020, NFACC's Codes Project (CAP-AAPN-001 – Advancing Animal Welfare and Public Trust Through Codes of Practice) was transferred to the NFAHW Council (from CAHC). The project's name, work plan, and team have not changed, but it now bears the project number CAP-AAPN-050.

Despite pandemic-related issues that delayed the transition timelines, the close-off of the project through CAHC was smooth and issue-free. The now closed-off project through CAHC has been audited by an independent auditor (BDO). In addition, throughout the project, AAFC conducted its own spot audits each quarter. Project number CAP-AAPN-001 was concluded in good standing having complied with all AAFC requirements.

With NFACC's relationship with CAHC now ended, much appreciation is warranted for the efforts of the CAHC board in facilitating NFACC's transition to the NFAHW Council. Notably, CAHC Chair Jennifer MacTavish and board member Shannon Brownrigg have been exemplary. Thank you Jenn and Shannon for your commitment and hard work.

### **UPDATE ON CODES OF PRACTICE UNDER REVISION/DEVELOPMENT**

#### **Farmed Salmonid Code**

The [comment period for the farmed salmonids Code](#) began on November 2 and the draft Code will be open for public comment until January 7, 2021.

The Code Committee hopes to see widespread participation during the comment period and met in October to discuss the best strategies to promote the opportunity within their stakeholder groups. The Canadian Aquaculture Industry Alliance, which initiated the development of this Code, prepared key communications for social media and other

platforms, including an industry Q & A available [here](#).

The Scientific Committee's [research report](#) on priority welfare issues was published alongside the draft Code. An important resource during the development of this Code, we encourage others to review the report as they consider the proposed requirements and recommended practices in the draft Code. Participants may also wish to review the results of [NFACC's 2019 survey](#) on top-of-mind welfare topics for farmed salmonids.

Previous progress reports are available [here](#).

### Dairy Cattle Code

The Code Committee has been busy this fall with four meetings of the entire committee and eight subcommittee meetings. Recent meetings have included presentations from committee members (producers, processors, animal welfare advocates, researchers, and industry advisors) primarily focused on housing topics. Initially intended to help us adapt to online meetings with such a large group, the presentations have evolved into a nice way to lean on the team's experience and expertise, build understanding across this diverse group, and allow for different proposals to be brought forward for consideration.

A series of focus groups with dairy producers across Canada is also underway, and it is hoped the results will help the Code Committee gain deeper insights on producer perspectives on housing topics. These learnings will build on the insights we have from all stakeholders who offered top-of-mind thoughts on dairy cattle welfare in [NFACC's 2019 survey](#).

The Scientific Committee's report on [priority welfare issues](#) is now finalized following its peer review. The report will be released publicly when the draft Code is released for public comment.

Of note, the draft dairy Code references the Scientific Committee's report at least 70 times so far. An impressive number that is a testament not only to the dairy industry's long-time culture of funding research in animal welfare but also a reflection of the quality of the Scientific Committee's report and the Code Committee's commitment to producing an evidence-based Code of Practice.

Additional details as well as previous progress reports are available [here](#).

### Goat Code

Since September, the Code Development Committee has held several online meetings to firm up all aspects of the draft Code of Practice for goats. **The committee is now pleased to announce that the public comment period for this Code will start on December 18, 2020 and run until February 22, 2021.** On December 18<sup>th</sup>, all stakeholders will be able to access the draft Code through the online system at <https://www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/goats>. A press release will also announce the beginning of the public comment period.

The Scientific Committee's research report on [priority welfare issues](#) is now finalized following a peer review, and it will be released publicly when the draft Code is released for its public comment period.

Beyond the findings of the report and the knowledge and hands-on experience of Code Committee members, the draft Code was informed by the results of [NFACC's 2019 survey](#) asking stakeholders for their top-of-mind thoughts on goat welfare. The public comment period is a critically important second outreach to all stakeholders and one that will allow direct input on proposed requirements and recommendations developed through the Code Committee's nearly two-year collaborative effort.

Previous progress reports are available [here](#).

## Transportation Code

The 23-member Code Development Committee (CDC) met for the first time in its entirety in mid-September. Prior to that, the CDC had only met virtually in smaller groups of between 7 and 12 members over a series of 5 meetings comprised of 11 sessions. Of course, due to restrictions linked to the pandemic, the meeting of the full CDC was held in virtual format, and that in and of itself presented several challenges for such a large group. As such, the 2-hour session was used to “kickoff” the process and to introduce CDC members who represent the primary users of the Transportation Code of Practice: livestock and poultry transporters.

The four transporters were given the opportunity to talk about the industry at-large, as well as their own personal backgrounds and experiences in order to provide relevant and important insights into their day-to-day experiences. Amongst other topics, transporters talked about the impact of the myriad of trucking- and welfare-related regulations that need to be balanced, in both typical and post COVID-19 worlds. The session was hosted by Code Manager Jeff Spooner (our resident facilitator-extraordinaire), who posed questions to the transporter panel, and then moderated a Q&A session for all participants.

Three of the five CDC sub-committees have been targeted to complete their work earlier than the other two. The first meeting of the *Loading and Unloading* sub-committee has been scheduled for late November. Planning for inaugural meetings for the other two sub-committees are currently in the works.

Two orientation sessions for the *Intermediary Sites* Working Group (WG) were held in October. Work is currently underway to organize an online session at which relevant content from the Scientific Committee report will be presented.

Some species-specific WGs continue work on their sections. A sub-group that is responsible for drafting poultry catching content continues to meet, as does the over-arching *Poultry Transportation and Catching* WG that is tasked with reviewing content advanced by the sub-group. The *Hatchery* WG continues to review content drafts, and is expected to hold a virtual meeting in January, 2021. The *Mink/Fox/Rabbit* WG is tying up loose ends on its section, and is also expected to meet in January. The *Bison/Cervid* WG has determined that it has gone as far as it can without common content from the CDC, and has decided that it will join other walk-on species WGs in “pause” mode while the CDC and its sub-committees continue their work.

Previous progress reports are available [here](#).

***For information on the steps of the Code development process and progress of the Codes being updated follow this [link](#).***

***Funding for this project has been provided through the AgriAssurance Program under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a federal–provincial–territorial initiative.***

## AN UPDATE ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE 2014 PIG CODE OF PRACTICE

The [Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pigs](#) was released in 2014. In March 2019 a Code Technical Panel was established to undertake the pig Code’s 5 year review. Subsequently, amendments to the Code were proposed.

The [Five-Year Review Summary Report – Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pigs](#), completed in August 2020 outlines the complexities of the issues deliberated by the CTP, the agreements and recommendations made (including proposed amendments to the pig Code), projections for group housing, and a detailed literature review of research priorities and gaps that were identified during the 2014 pig Code’s development. It is a broad summary of the work undertaken by the CTP and provides important context for the proposed amendments to the pig Code. This substantial 137 page report has been summarized into a “[What You Need to Know](#)” clickable document.

Proposed amendments to the pig Code were open for a Public Comment Period (PCP) from September 21, 2020 – November 19, 2020. The PCP garnered a total of 1,122 submissions from across Canada, the U.S.A, and around the world. The majority (62%) of respondents identified themselves as members of the general public with 24% identifying themselves as animal welfare advocates. While less than 2% of respondents identified themselves as being affiliated with the pork sector, a number industry associations provided input on behalf of the producers they represent.

The Code Amendment Committee is now considering the feedback received toward finalizing amendments to the pig Code. The final Code of Practice will be released by early 2021.

## **AN UPDATE ON AMENDMENTS TO THE FARMED MINK CODE OF PRACTICE**

This fall, the mink Code Amendment Committee has had three additional meetings focused mainly on the euthanasia and housing topics identified as part of the amendment to the 2013 mink Code of Practice. **The committee is now pleased to announce that the public comment period for the proposed amendments will start on December 7, 2020 and run until February 4, 2021.**

On December 7<sup>th</sup> all stakeholders will be able to access the draft amendments through the online system at [www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/farmed-mink](http://www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/farmed-mink). A new release will also announce the beginning of the public comment period. The committee has worked hard to consider the issues with respect to all stakeholder viewpoints and looks forward to feedback from the public consultation.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **National Animal Welfare Conference by Humane Canada**

April 6 - 8, Online Conference

<https://humanecanada.ca/nawc/>

If you have an animal welfare event that you would like us to feature, please email Liz ([liz@nfacc.ca](mailto:liz@nfacc.ca)).

Questions or comments should be directed to NFACC's General Manager, Jackie Wepruk at [nfacc@xplornet.com](mailto:nfacc@xplornet.com)