



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



Addressing Domestic and International Market Expectations Relative to Farm Animal Welfare*

National Farm Animal Care Conference
Ottawa, Ontario

October 5 - 6, 2011

*a project made possible through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Agricultural Flexibility Fund

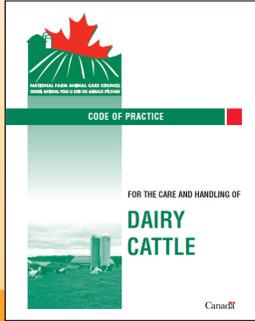
Canada's Codes of Practice

The Codes of Practice are guidelines for the care and handling of farm animals

- ▶ Our national understanding of farm animal care requirements and recommended best practices
- ▶ Scientifically informed, practical, and reflect societal expectations for responsible farm animal care

The Codes of Practice serve as

- ▶ Education tools
- ▶ Reference materials for regulations
- ▶ Foundation for animal care assessment programs




www.nfacc.ca

Canada's Codes of Practice

History of Canada's Code of Practice development process

- ▶ Most farmed animal species in Canada have a Code
- ▶ Initiated in 1980 through Canadian Federation of Humane Societies
- ▶ Canadian Agri-Food Research Council led process from 1993-2003
- ▶ Federal government funding ceased 2002
- ▶ NFACC created in 2005 with mandate to re-establish the Code of Practice development process

"I am extraordinarily patient, provided I get my own way in the end."

– Margaret Thatcher



Canada's Codes of Practice

Renewed Code development process

- ▶ A uniquely collaborative approach
- ▶ Ensures credibility and transparency through scientific rigour, stakeholder collaboration and a consistent approach
- ▶ Stakeholder commitment is key to ensure quality animal care standards are established and implemented



"Difficult things take a long time, impossible things a little longer."

- Author Unknown



Canada's Codes of Practice

The team

- ▶ **Code Development Committee - facilitated by a Code secretary**
Farmers / producers, transporters, veterinarians, animal welfare and enforcement agencies, retail and food service organizations, processors, governments and researchers
- ▶ **Scientists' Committee – facilitated by a research writer**

RESULTS: science- and consensus-based Code



The Code Development Process

7 Steps



2+ years to complete

The development process begins when an industry group or specialized industry group identifies need for Code revision



Step 1: Initiation

1

- ▶ Industry group initiates the process with NFACC
- ▶ NFACC announcement start of revision of the Code
- ▶ Industry group / specialized industry group selects members for the Code Development Committee (CDC) per NFACC's process guidelines
 - Producer
 - Retail / food service organization
 - Transporter
 - Processor
 - Veterinarian
 - AAFC/CFIA
 - Animal welfare organization
 - Researcher/academic (Chair of Scientists' Committee)
 - Animal welfare regulatory enforcement body
 - Technical expertise as required



Step 2: Priority Welfare Issues Identified

1

2

- ▶ NFACC solicits national veterinary and research associations for members of Scientists Committee (SC)
- ▶ CDC and SC each identify list of **priority welfare issues**
- ▶ Committees combine, compare and finalize the priority welfare issues lists



Step 3: Work Begins on Draft Documents



- ▶ CDC begins drafting Code
- ▶ SC reviews scientific literature for each priority welfare issue and develops a report



Step 4: Peer Review



- ▶ SC report goes to the CDC – the committee ensures all the priority welfare issues have been addressed
- ▶ SC report goes for peer reviewed and is finalized
- ▶ CDC continues drafting Code using the SC report to develop requirements and recommendations around the priority welfare issues



Step 5: Draft Code



- ▶ Final draft of Code is submitted to NFACC
- ▶ NFACC makes Code available for 60-day public comment period
- ▶ NFACC publishes SC report



Step 6: Public Consult (60-days)



- ▶ Following the public comment period the CDC considers feedback and revises draft as needed



Step 7: Publication



- ▶ CDC submits final Code to NFACC
- ▶ NFACC publishes and prints the revised Code
- ▶ Industry begins efforts to ensure implementation of Codes



Canada's Codes of Practice

Big picture success requires

- ▶ Active participation
- ▶ Collaboration
- ▶ Patience
- ▶ Consensus

*"If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail."
—Abraham Maslow*



Canada's Codes of Practice

Deliverables: Originally 5 Codes finished, 3 initiated

Species	Estimated Completion
Beef Cattle	Mar 2013
Mink	Oct 2012
Ranched Fox	Oct 2012
Pigs	May 2013
Equine	May 2013
Sheep	Jul 2013
Poultry (chicken, hatching egg, turkey)	~ 2014
Transport – has been identified as a priority for revisions	



Canada's Codes of Practice

A quasi-SWOT analysis from a scientist's perspective

- ▶ **S** trengths
- ▶ **W** eaknesses
- ▶ **O** pportunities
- ▶ **T** hreats



Canada's Codes of Practice

Strengths

- ▶ **Canada has a relatively large internationally recognized scientific community in animal welfare**
- ▶ Scientific personnel per million inhabitants
- ▶ *Nordic countries 4.61*
- ▶ *UK + Eire 1.98*
- ▶ *Canada 1.93*
- ▶ *ANZ 1.42*
- ▶ *Benelux 1.11*
- ▶ *USA 0.27*
- ▶ *Latin America 0.02*



Canada's Codes of Practice

Strengths

- ▶ **Close inter-linkages between scientists and links between scientists and stakeholder groups (including research funding)**
- ▶ *Dairy Farmers of Canada*
- ▶ *Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Novalait*
- ▶ *Valacta*
- ▶ *Whole Foods*
- ▶ *BC SPCA*



Canada's Codes of Practice

Strengths

- ▶ **Experience with animal welfare standard setting in other jurisdictions**
- ▶ *World Animal Health Organization (OIE)*
- ▶ *Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)*
- ▶ *European Food Safety Authority*
- ▶ *North American Food Animal Well-being Commission*
- ▶ *US National Pork Board*
- ▶ *American Humane Association, Animal Welfare Approved*
- ▶ *Food and Marketing Institute, National Council of Chain Restaurants, McDonalds, Burger King, Whole Foods*



Canada's Codes of Practice

Strengths

- ▶ Canada has an internationally recognized scientific community in animal welfare
- ▶ Close inter-linkages between scientists
- ▶ Links between scientists and stakeholder groups (including research funding)
- ▶ Experience with animal welfare standard setting in other jurisdictions
- ▶ **A national strategy for linking animal welfare research to Codes of Practice**



Canada's Codes of Practice

Weaknesses

- ▶ Many important topics in animal welfare have not been adequately researched. Most done in Europe.
- ▶ Funding for research in animal welfare is erratic and unpredictable. No long term vision.
- ▶ Research is uneven across commodities
- ▶ Absence of an animal welfare assessment infra-structure e.g. assessment methods, assessor training



Canada's Codes of Practice

Opportunities

- ▶ The Codes of Practice serve as an extension tool to transmit results of research to end users
- ▶ Convince funding organizations of the value of research in animal welfare
- ▶ Build a network of research in farm animal welfare
- ▶ Greater integration with international developments in animal welfare.
- ▶ “Business opportunities” in developing an animal welfare assessment infrastructure



Canada's Codes of Practice

Threats

- ▶ Codes will be ignored
- ▶ Unwillingness by industry, public, government and animal welfare groups to accept research that disagrees with preconceptions
- ▶ Science of animal welfare will fall into disrepute if process not transparent and even handed
- ▶ Perception that the Codes are the final solution
- ▶ Overtaken by competitors, especially Latin America



"If you want to go fast, travel alone, but if you want to go far, travel together."
 – African proverb

www.nfacc.ca



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada