



NFACC Information Update: October 2024

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ANIMAL HEALTH CANADA SECURES FUNDING TO SUPPORT FARMED ANIMAL HEALTH AND WELFARE INITIATIVES

Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Francis Drouin attended the 2024 Animal Health Canada (AHC) Forum in Ottawa to announce the organization will receive over \$13,000,000 in funding to continue its collaborative work with federal, provincial, territorial governments, industry and animal health partners to advance animal health and welfare in Canada. This includes funding for Code of Practice updates. See the full press release [here](#).

UPDATES ON CODES OF PRACTICE UNDER REVISION/AMENDMENT

Beef Cattle Code Update

This fall, subgroups of the Code Committee are meeting (virtually) to discuss draft updates to three chapters of the beef cattle Code of Practice: Animal Environment, Feed and Water, and Transport. This work will allow them to consider, in greater detail, some of the main themes that were identified through the [top-of-mind survey](#) notably ensuring cattle receive sufficient feed and water, protection from the elements, and proper care and handling in preparation for loading and transport. One focus of their work on the transport chapter will be to further update it to align with the 2019 federal animal transport regulations.

In keeping with the Code process, other Canadian and international standards or assessment tools that may have implications for Canadian beef producers are being reviewed. The Code Committee has worked to ensure it considers a broad range of relevant standards covering all facets of beef production and any production type applicable to the Canadian context.

Lastly, in-person and online meetings of the full Code Committee have been scheduled for January and May, and work on the Scientific Committee's report on [Priority Welfare Issues](#) is also underway. Two chapters of this report will be prepared in advance of the January Code meetings and, after that research has been presented, the Code Committee will begin deliberating on specific ways to incorporate the research findings into the updated Code of Practice.

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

Equine Code Update

Both the Equine Code Committee and the Equine Scientific Committee met jointly in Calgary on August 28 & 29, 2024. This was the first face-to-face meeting associated with the Code update. Over the course of two days several important deliberations took place. Most notably, both committees were able to agree on a finalized list of [Priority Welfare Issues](#)

(i.e., explicit research topics that the Scientific Committee will review, synthesize, and report on by May 1, 2025).

Following the meeting, Code committee members voluntarily agreed to assume respective roles on numerous Code sub-committees (sub-committees are tasked with reviewing, proposing, and sharing prospective updates to existing Code content on a chapter-by-chapter basis). All sub-committees are currently reviewing and discussing existing Code content. Prospective edits or updates to any existing chapters will be presented for full committee deliberations during the second face-to-face Code meeting (scheduled for November 2024).

Results of the top-of-mind survey undertaken at the outset of this Code's update will soon be published on the [equine Code webpage](#). Previous progress updates are available [here](#).

Sheep Code Update

The [Code Committee](#) has been finalized and work is underway. All members of both the Code Committee and Scientific Committee have attended online orientation meetings. The orientations provided an overview of the [NFACC Code Development Process](#), an overview of some administrative activities, and an outline of the anticipated timelines for the project.

The first in-person meeting has been set for December 11th and 12th in Ottawa. Some initial work toward identifying Priority Welfare Issues (PWI) has begun. Both committees will provide input before the meeting and then come together to reach a consensus on the final PWI list at the December meeting. Reaching consensus on the PWIs for the Scientific Committee is a key part of the December meeting, so after the meeting the Scientific Committee can begin working on their report. The 2012 Scientific Report is available [here](#).

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

Hatching Eggs, Breeders, Chickens, and Turkeys

The official announcement for the Code's update was released on October 4th, 2024 along with a top-of-mind survey. Both the Code Committee and the Scientific Committee are in place; members can be found [here](#).

An important preliminary step in this process is to invite the industry, general public, and all other interested individuals to submit their top-of-mind thoughts on the welfare of hatching eggs, breeders, chickens and turkeys. This input will help to inform the Code update. **The top-of-mind survey deadline has been extended; it will now be open for input until November 8th, 2024.** You can access the survey [here](#).

Work is underway to schedule virtual orientation meetings for all committee members in November 2024. It is anticipated that the first in-person meeting for this Code update will be in the first quarter of 2025.

Pullets and Laying Hens Code Amendment

The Code (Amendment) Committee and Scientific Panel met in Ottawa September 23-24, 2024. The Scientific Panel's draft report was presented to the Code (Amendment) Committee and deliberations were based upon the conclusions from the draft report. Subsequently a specific workplan was developed with key milestones toward consensus in relation to the [three amendment topics](#). As a reminder, Code amendments are limited in scope; more information is available [here](#).

Several online meetings are planned with another in-person meeting scheduled for early in 2025. The public comment period is now tentatively scheduled for March-April 2025. The Scientific Panel's draft report is being prepared for peer review, which should be completed by year's end.

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

Pig Code Update

An Update to the 2014 Code of Practice for the care and handling of Pigs has also been initiated and will be underway soon. Watch for an official announcement.

The overall plan and timeline for all Code updates and the amendment can be viewed [here](#).

Financial support was provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the AgriAssurance Program under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

ANIMAL HEALTH CANADA HONOURS DESERVING RECIPIENTS AT THE ANNUAL AHC AWARDS

Animal Health Canada recognized four individuals making a difference in Canadian farmed animal health and welfare at the AHC Awards 2024 Ceremony in Ottawa, Ontario. Details on all four awards and their recipients is available [here](#). Two of the awards were bestowed upon well-known contributors to the field of farm animal welfare.

Dr. Ed Pajor was presented with the Carl Block Award for his outstanding contributions to advancing animal health through research, tireless commitment to animal welfare, and dedication to shaping the next generation of veterinary professionals. Dr. Pajor's research drives advances in areas like pain management during castration, neonatal calf care, and cattle transport conditions, ensuring that animal welfare remains a priority in livestock industries. He currently sits on the beef cattle Code Scientific Committee and has contributed to several other NFACC Scientific Committees. Read the full news release [here](#).

The Farm Animal Welfare Leadership Award honours individuals who promote high standards in farmed animal care and work collaboratively to build trust both within Canadian animal agriculture and beyond. Dr. Mike Petrik was recognized this year for his passion to improve farm animal welfare on farms, hatcheries, classrooms, and meeting rooms across Canada. Mike currently sits on the pullets and laying hens Code Amendment Committee and has contributed to other NFACC Code and Scientific Committees. Read full news release [here](#).

Congratulations to all AHC award winners!

NFACC IN THE NEWS

For media coverage featuring NFACC in the news click [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

- The National Symposium on Agricultural Mental Health
November 28, 2024 – Virtual
[Registration](#)

If you have an animal welfare event that you would like us to feature, please email Liz at liz@nfacc.ca

Questions or comments should be directed to NFACC's General Manager, Jackie Wepruk at nfacc@xplornet.com