



Canadian On-Farm Food Safety Working Group Groupe de travail du Programme canadien de salubrité des aliments à la ferme

Meeting Report - December 2005

The Canadian On-Farm Food Safety Working (COFFS) Working Group met in Ottawa on 7 December 2005. This report highlights the matters discussed, key issues and the directions taken during the Working Group meeting.

Workplan for 2006/7

The Working Group reviewed in detail a proposed workplan for 2006/7. Among the activities agreed to were the following:

- **Activity #1 - Meetings and Monitoring:** This activity contains several elements, including holding regular COFFS WG meetings; liaising with AAFC on programs and with other stakeholders such as CFIA, the FPT subcommittee on on-farm food safety, Can-Trace, etc; identifying and providing information reports on provincial and national issues surrounding on-farm food safety and the implementation and sustainability of OFFS programs; orientation procedures for new COFFS WG members; monitoring, reporting, and if appropriate commenting on emerging issues that impact on-farm food safety and OFFS programs; monitoring, reporting and if appropriate, commenting on emerging international trends; providing comments and information into Canada's positions on international food safety guidelines; and, monitoring common infrastructure initiatives to ensure that they are performing in the manner that is needed.
- **Activity #2 - 4th National Farm Leaders' Meeting:** To share of information about the Canadian approach, provide direction on key issues and facilitate collaboration between commodity groups, provincial and national general farm organizations, provincial and federal government officials, and other stakeholders.
- **Activity #3 - Communication and Promotion of the Canadian Approach to On-Farm Food Safety:** Implementation of the Working Group's communication and promotion strategy, on-going support for the website, participation as an exhibitor at various agriculture and food industry events and the joint workshop with the Canadian Supply Chain Food Safety Coalition at the annual meeting of the International Association for Food Protection in Calgary (August 2006).
- **Activity #4 - Official Recognition Framework:** On-going participation by the Working Group in the development of this framework by the FPT Subcommittee on On-Farm Food Safety.
- **Activity #5 - Risk Management:** Preparations for further research on producer liability insurance (dependant upon acceptance of application by AAFC's Private Sector Risk Management Program) and subsequent reporting and discussions; and, a status report to the COFFS WG stakeholders on Risk Management.

- **Activity #6 - Common Good Production Practices for Medicated Feeds:** Finalization of the GPPs in conjunction with the final publication of the new regulations by CFIA.
- **Activity #7 - Development of additional common program elements for on-farm auditors:** Restructuring of the national auditor training course using a distance learning approach to delivery.
- **Activity #8 - Planning for on-going research related to On-Farm Food Safety programs:** Meetings of the Task Group to investigate and report to the Working Group on matters related to research. The development of a concept paper on baseline research, its presentation to the Working Group and associated stakeholders and subsequent discussion. Review of options for funding common and commodity-specific OFFS research.
- **Activity #9 - Planning for on-going training needs related to OFFS programs:** Meetings of the Future Training Needs Task Group to review the 2003 on-going training needs report and dialogue with other stakeholders, such as AAFC, AIC, CVMA, colleges and universities to develop an action plan.

It was agreed that the 2006/7 application for funding from the Canadian Food Safety and Quality Program would be developed on the basis of these activities, circulated for review by the Working Group members and approved on a conference call in early January.

Official Recognition - Developments

The Working Group reviewed various issues related to current practices in the **Technical Review - Part 1** process. Of particular concern were matters relating to Form 11 and projects that had already obtained their letter of completion, the importance of arriving at an agreement quickly on the process for tracking changes to programs and changes to Form 8. There was agreement to communicate these concerns to CFIA.

An update on the status of various projects was provided by Germain Brazeau (CFIA). Dairy Farmers of Canada had volunteered for the pilot project of **Technical Review - Part 2** (gap analysis of management system). The update noted that further work on the assessment of 3rd party audit options had been delayed until the new fiscal year. If such an audit was required in the short-term, a contingency plan involving an audit by CFIA was being considered.

Canadian Food Safety and Quality Program

As a follow-up to the November meeting, a memorandum covering suggested changes to the **On-Farm Implementation Program** had been circulated by Albert Chambers (Working Group Co-ordinator). This was discussed as were several changes to the eligibility criteria. It was agreed that a letter would be prepared, circulated for comment and sent to AAFC.

Future funding initiatives were also discussed. It was agreed that a list of concerns and options would be developed, circulated and submitted. Parallel initiatives by the

national producer groups were also discussed. It was suggested that this initiative should take place in the post-election period.

Project Updates

The report from the Task Group on Research was discussed and its recommendation to proceed with the **baseline research project** on the basis of a proposal from a researcher at the University of Saskatchewan was agreed to. CFA was requested to enter into a contract so that this work could be completed under the current funding application.

The Working Group was informed that its initial application to AAFC's Private Sector Risk Management Program had been approved. The Working Group agreed to proceed with the establishment of a task group and the preparation of a detailed application for a **project on producer liability**.

An update was provided on the **Delivery Options Project - Phase 4**. AAFC had approved funding for Activities 1 to 4 based on the responses agreed to at the November meeting. The composition of the steering committee was agreed to and Working Group's members selected. The other stakeholders would now be asked to name their representatives.

It was noted that the new **Certifarm Project** had also received funding approval. The commodity groups participating in that project were in the process of forming a steering committee and planned a conference call later in December to initiate the project.

Communication and Promotion Activities

There was a brief discussion of the forthcoming presentation to the annual veterinary medicine students conference in Saskatoon and volunteers from the livestock and poultry groups were encouraged to participate.

International Developments

Anne Fowlie (CHC) provided an update on the **2006 Eurepgap conference**. She noted that it had been attended by more than 400 participants from Europe, Japan, Africa, the US and South American countries. Eurepgap continues to gain adherents especially in small countries that are exporting to the European Union. She briefly summarized the high points but noted that over 100 presentations had been made. These can be accessed at: www.eurep.org/Languages/English/pcspecials.html

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