



# THE CHICKEN FARMER

## Next Steps for the Antimicrobial Use Strategy

**Chicken Farmers of Canada has been implementing a comprehensive Antimicrobial Use Strategy since 2012, and the Board of Directors has reiterated its commitment to the Strategy and to working towards further reduction steps.**

For Chicken Farmers of Canada, antimicrobial resistance and use has been a critical priority – as seen with the elimination of the preventive use of Category I antibiotics in May 2014. Further to this, decreasing the use of antibiotics of human importance continues to be a key component of the industry’s five-year strategic plan.

Chicken Farmers of Canada Directors have now decided on the next steps in the Antimicrobial Use Strategy. The decision was made that the industry should next work towards reducing the preventive use of Category II and III antibiotics. To accomplish this, work plans on seven key action items have been developed, (see page 2) which will be necessary to ensure that future reduction steps are done successfully, while protecting bird health and welfare.

This decision takes into consideration the feedback that was received through an industry-wide consultation. The majority of those consulted did not feel that the industry was ready to set a date for further reduction steps. It was felt that progress

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## Key Action Items

- 1) Harmonize the feed alternative regulatory process to ensure Canadian farmers have access to similar antibiotic alternative products as in other countries.
- 2) Conduct pilot projects to evaluate the impact on bird health and mortality, the pressures on increased use of other antibiotics, the impact on therapeutic use, and to determine best practices for successful antibiotic reduction.
- 3) Determine the economic costs for all of industry for eliminating the preventive use of Category II and III antibiotics.
- 4) Provide education to producers and industry on antimicrobial resistance and use and the strategy to reduce use.
- 5) Disseminate good production practices required for reduced use.
- 6) Work with the supply chain to ensure good chick quality and examine different methods of reducing use.
- 7) Determine a time to re-assess the reduction strategy in 18 to 24 months.

## THE DECISION WAS MADE THAT THE INDUSTRY SHOULD NEXT WORK TOWARDS REDUCING THE PREVENTIVE USE OF CATEGORY II AND III ANTIBIOTICS.

on several issues needed to be resolved prior to setting the implementation dates. The reasons for this were multi-faceted, but revolved heavily around the issue of the lack of availability and labelling for alternative products in Canada – such as probiotics, microbial products, and acidifiers – that would assist with transition.

Other concerns that were raised included the unintended consequences of such a ban (for example increased pressure on other antimicrobials and increased use of antibiotics for treatment that are of greater importance to humans), animal welfare concerns, and the lack of time required to perform necessary steps to meet the proposal.

Antimicrobial resistance and use was again ranked as a critical priority for 2017 as part of Chicken Farmers of Canada’s annual strategic planning, which reinforces the level of importance that Directors continue to place on the above action plans.

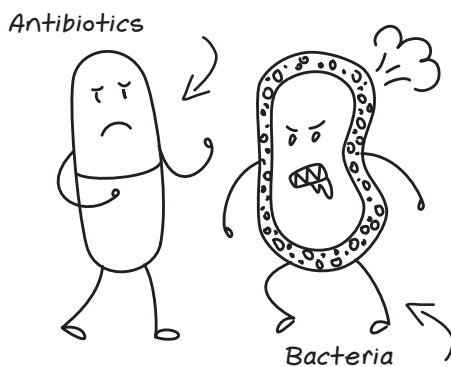
While the proposed strategy does not deal with “Raised without the use of antibiotics” or RWA

production, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency did recently make a welcome change to their definition. RWA production in Canada may now include the use of chemical coccidiostats, bringing Canada’s definition in line with the U.S. and other countries.

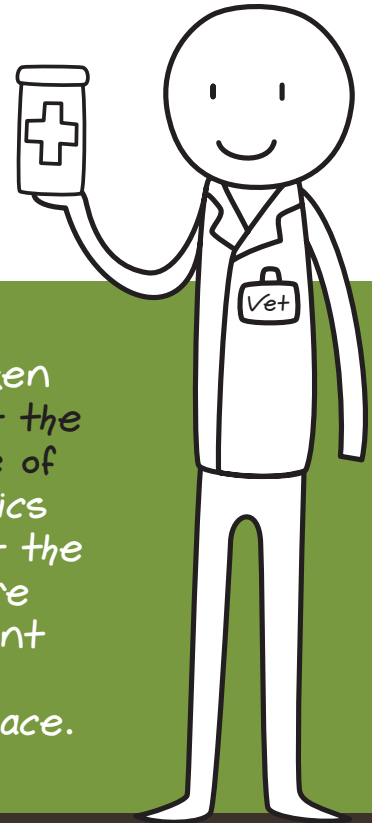
Communication – to stakeholders, consumers, and to farmers – is a key component that underscores our entire Strategy, and will continue to be a focus of efforts as the above action plans are carried out.

Chicken Farmers of Canada recently developed short “whiteboard style” videos for consumer education on the topic, as well as an accompanying print brochure. These resources can be found online at [www.chickenfarmers.ca/what-we-do/antibiotics](http://www.chickenfarmers.ca/what-we-do/antibiotics). Stay tuned as we continue to develop additional resources going forward.

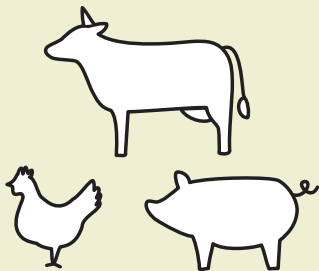
Antimicrobials are classified based on their importance in human medicine. Categories I, II, and III are important to humans, but Category IV antimicrobials are not used at all in human medicine.



# Can farmers use antibiotics?



**YES.**



Farmers can use antibiotics in chicken farming to protect the health and welfare of the birds. Antibiotics are given to treat the birds when they are sick, and to prevent them from getting sick in the first place. However...

**Antibiotics are not all created equal.**

They are categorized according to their importance to human medicine

## Antimicrobials listed by importance to humans\*

Human Importance	Trade Name
Very High Importance (Category I)	Ceftiofur (Excenel™), Baytril™
High Importance (Category II)	Gentamycin™, Linco-Spectin™, Tylan™, Pot-Pen™, Penicillin G procaine™, Stafac™, Virginiamycin™, Uniprim™
Medium Importance (Category III)	Bacitracin™, BMD™, Sulphamethazine™
Low Importance (Category IV)	Ionophores (Flavomycin™, Monteban™, Maxiban™, Aviax™, Bio-Cox™, Saccox™, Coxistac™, Avatec™)
Chemical Coccidiostats*	Coyden™, Deccox™, Clinacox™, Zoamix™, Stenerol™, Nicarb™, Robenz™

\*Although chemical coccidiostats are not antimicrobials, they are classified as drugs and have been included in this table for information.





# Hill Watch

CHICKEN FARMERS OF CANADA ENCOURAGES FARMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS TO SUBMIT THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE NEXT POLICY FRAMEWORK TO AAFC AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

## Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Next Policy Framework Consultations

Agriculture ministers for Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) governments are working to develop and implement the Next Agricultural Policy Framework. The goal of the framework is to continue to deliver agriculture-driven programs and services for primary producers, industry organizations, and the processing sector from coast to coast to coast. FPT ministers met in July and this resulted in the *Calgary Statement*, which will be the basis for consultations going forward.

The *Calgary Statement* identified the key priority areas that governments will focus on in the development of the framework:

- Science, Research, and Innovation
- Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change
- Markets and Trade
- Risk Management
- Value-Added Agriculture and Agri-Food Processing
- Public Trust

The current framework is set to expire in March 2018 and FPT partners are aiming to announce the new framework by late 2017, or early 2018.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) has been leading stakeholder engagement sessions since June in order to ensure the agriculture community

is thoroughly involved in the planning of the next framework. Chicken Farmers of Canada was represented at all in-person consultation sessions and will continue to engage with government officials on our requests for the next framework.

Keeping the *Calgary Statement* in mind, Chicken Farmers of Canada has identified the following priorities for the chicken industry:

### PUBLIC TRUST

**A FPT recognition program for animal care, similar to our On-Farm Food Safety Assurance Program (OFFSAP)**

- This would continue to be based on the Codes of Practice under the National Farm Animal Care Council.
- Social licence communications, requiring the government to

- take the lead and provide financial support in getting messages to consumers.
- Funding for life cycle analysis.

## INNOVATION

### **Research funding**

- There are currently no AAFC poultry research stations or scientists; government is already making strides in innovation, and the government mandate is focused on growth in this area.
- Cluster funding should be increased for those that don't benefit from AAFC research stations and scientists.
- Approval of antibiotic alternatives.
- gFARAD funding.

## SHARED RESPONSIBILITY + SHARED BENEFIT = SHARED COST

### **Long-term consistent funding by government that represents their share of responsibility and benefit on consumer and industry-driven initiatives**

- Continued funding for OFFSAP 3<sup>rd</sup> party audits of the system, and expand these to include the Animal Care Program.

Chicken Farmers of Canada encourages farmers and other stakeholders to submit their recommendations on the Next Policy Framework to AAFC as soon as possible. The online questionnaire is live until November 30<sup>th</sup>, but written submissions can be sent by mail or email.

For the addresses and more information on the framework process, please visit [www.agr.gc.ca](http://www.agr.gc.ca). 




## **New Euthanasia Training Resources Available to the Poultry Industry**

The Poultry Industry Council's (PIC) *Practical Guidelines for On-Farm Euthanasia of Poultry* manual has been completed and is now available to farmers!

This resource identifies acceptable euthanasia methods for each species, and provides step-by-step instruction on how to properly carry out each method. Background information on the importance of euthanasia is also included, along with notes about proper handling and restraint. The creation of this manual is based on significant collaboration and consultations with various industry experts and provincial and national feather boards, including Chicken Farmers of Canada.

The manual is available in English and French on PIC's website at [www.poultryindustrycouncil.ca/resources/euthanasia-resources-training-materials](http://www.poultryindustrycouncil.ca/resources/euthanasia-resources-training-materials). Hard copies of the manual have been made available to all chicken farmers through the provincial boards.

The goal for this project was to develop a resource that was practical and of use to farmers and farm workers and the manual is a first of its kind in focussing on the specific aspects of how to perform euthanasia on-farm. To qualify as euthanasia, a method must be humane, and this manual describes the steps needed to ensure that. Euthanasia is one of the most difficult chores to perform on the farm, but also one that is critical to an effective animal care program. Having confidence in one's technique makes it easier and more humane, and following the steps in this manual helps provide that confidence.

Using the manual as a basis, Chicken Farmers of Canada has organized two "train-the-trainer" sessions so each province can have trained individuals to validate farmers' techniques. One session took place in Alberta on September 28<sup>th</sup> and the other was in Nova Scotia on November 10<sup>th</sup>. Chicken Farmers of Canada is currently in the process of revising the Animal Care Program to comply with the new Code of Practice, and more formal training in euthanasia could be required in the future. 

# CPRC UPDATE

**The Canadian Poultry Research Council (CPRC) recently published a progress update through their online eBulletin. It includes an update on all of the organization's recent activities, and can be found here on their website [www.cp-rc.ca/ebulletin/issue5-numero5/](http://www.cp-rc.ca/ebulletin/issue5-numero5/).**

FOR UPDATES  
ON MORE OF  
THE CPRC  
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ARE DOING  
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One activity in the eBulletin was the creation of the CPRC page “Where are they now?” to follow up with previous scholarship recipients. Since its inception in 2006, the CPRC Poultry Scholarship program has assisted postgraduate students who are involved in poultry research and many continue to contribute to the poultry industry today.


For example, the very first recipient, Mohamed Careem, received the scholarship while completing his PhD studying Marek's disease in chickens at the Ontario Veterinary College, University of Guelph. Dr. Careem went on to conduct post-doctoral research on innate immune responses against mucosal viral infections (like ILT) and has now established an independent research program as a tenured Associate Professor at the University of Calgary, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine. His research program continues to look at poultry respiratory diseases.

For updates on more of the CPRC scholarship recipients and what they are doing now, check out the page [www.cp-rc.ca/funding/scholarships/where-are-they-now/](http://www.cp-rc.ca/funding/scholarships/where-are-they-now/).

The 2016 CPRC scholarship was awarded to Charlene Hanlon, a Ph.D. student under the supervision of Dr. Grégory Bédécarrats at the University of Guelph. Her research will be investigating the involvement of certain hormones in egg production of laying hens.

Other recent news from CPRC includes the updating of the National Research Strategy for Canada's Poultry Sector. This document was first published in 2012 and has formed the basis for the research structure of the Poultry Science Cluster, as well as guiding decisions for annual funding of projects. Much of the strategy remains relevant, but some priorities have evolved and new issues have become important to the poultry industry.

The update will seek input from producers through the national and provincial representative organizations, the scientific community including university and government, and other industry stakeholder organizations representing a broad range of value-chain members.

Lastly, there are some new faces among the CPRC Board of Directors. Tim Keet of Saskatchewan (representing Chicken Farmers of Canada) is now the CPRC Chair with Helen Anne Hudson (Egg Farmers of Canada) as Vice-Chair. Erica Charlton (Canadian Poultry and Egg Processors Council) was elected as the third member of the Executive Committee. Roelof Meijer, an eight-year board member representing Turkey Farmers of Canada (TFC) and Chair for the past three years, was replaced on the board by Brian Ricker from Ontario. Cheryl Firby, the Canadian Hatching Egg Producers board member was replaced by Murray Klassen from Manitoba. 

# CETA Update

**On Friday October 21, 2016, it appeared that Wallonia, a small French-speaking region of Belgium, had brought seven years' worth of trade negotiations between Canada and the European Union (EU) to an abrupt halt. Canada's Minister of International Trade, the Honourable Chrystia Freeland, walked out of her meeting with Wallonia's leaders in Brussels, clearly frustrated and questioning the EU's ability to reach an agreement, "even with a country with European values such as Canada, even with a country as nice and as patient as Canada."**

If Minister Freeland's actions were strategic, they appear to have worked. On Sunday October 30<sup>th</sup> – just nine days later – Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, European Council President Donald Tusk and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker met in Brussels to sign the Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) and its Joint Interpretative Instrument, which was developed to address the concerns of Wallonia and other CETA opponents.

The instrument specifies how several provisions of CETA should be interpreted, but it does not alter the text of the agreement.

While an extremely important milestone, the formal signing by Canada and the EU's top officials is just one more step on the long and winding road to bringing CETA fully into effect.

For Canada, the remaining steps to the full ratification of CETA are quite straightforward. On Monday October 31, 2016, the day following its signing, the implementing legislation for CETA was tabled in the House of Commons, where it is expected to move quickly through its first, second and third readings, and then it will move to the Senate for final review and approval. At that time, Canada will formally advise the EU on its capacity to put the agreement into effect.

Things are not quite as simple for the EU. Since CETA is considered a mixed agreement by the EU, meaning that some of its content refers to issues under national jurisdiction and some to issues under the jurisdiction of the EU, it requires approval by the EU and each of its 28 members for full implementation. Once approved by the EU Parliament, CETA will be

implemented on a provisional basis, covering the approximately 90% of the agreement that is governed by EU jurisdiction.

The EU-level approval process is multi step. First, it must be formally referred to the EU Parliament. A few days later, it is expected to go to the EU Parliament's International Trade Committee to be reviewed and voted on. If the vote is positive, the text will then pass on to the EU Parliament's Plenary for its review, discussion, and eventual vote. This part of the process could be completed by early December, but at the time of going to press an exact timeline was difficult to gauge.

If the Plenary gives its assent, the EU will advise Canada on its capacity to provisionally apply the agreement, which would cover all the agriculture market access issues of interest to Canada. However, full implementation, which would include the contentious investor-state dispute settlement system, will require the ratification of all member states and their regional parliaments. This could take several years. And, given the recent experience with Wallonia, the completion of this final step cannot be taken for granted.

## **What does this mean for the Canadian chicken sector?**

Although the trade deal does further to open Canada's dairy market to European exports, CETA will have no impact on Canada's domestic poultry market as it does not provide Europe with any additional access over and above what is currently provided through Canada's commitments at the World Trade Organization (WTO). **CF**

# Pathogen Reduction in Chicken

**Chicken Farmers of Canada is working with a new Federal/Provincial/Territorial government and industry working group on the control of *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* in poultry. This new group is an amalgamation of two previous initiatives – the Pathogen Reduction Initiative and the *Salmonella* Enteritidis (SE) Working Group.**

Canada has one of the safest food systems in the world and Canadian chicken farmers are committed to keeping it that way. To this end, Chicken Farmers of Canada has been participating in these industry-government groups to identify strategies to monitor and reduce pathogen levels.

Food animals, including poultry, naturally carry pathogens in their intestinal tract that may be transferred to raw meat products during slaughter and processing. *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* are of particular importance because of their ability to cause foodborne illness in humans.

The Pathogen Reduction Initiative began in 2012 to conduct a baseline study on key pathogens in meat with the objectives of assessing current pathogen levels, establishing reduction targets, and identifying and implementing strategies to monitor and reduce pathogen levels. The baseline surveys are now complete and the National Microbiological Baseline Study in Broiler Chicken can be found on CFIA's website.


It's important to note that the study does not indicate a new or increased risk. The results demonstrate that while a number of samples tested positive for *Salmonella* or *Campylobacter*, the concentration levels of these bacteria were relatively low. The prevalence of *Salmonella* was higher in the eastern part of the country, while the prevalence of *Campylobacter* was higher in the west. The results and variations in levels over seasons and across the country are expected and are consistent with those found around the world.

Chicken Farmers of Canada has also participated on the government-industry *Salmonella* Enteritidis (SE) Working Group since 2008. Recommendations from this work are now complete in Health Canada's 2014 "National Strategy for the Control of Poultry-Related Human *Salmonella* Enteritidis Illness in Canada."

The newly formed Government and Industry Working Group on the Control of *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* in Poultry

will identify risk management strategies to control *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* in poultry products by linking the recommendations of the *Salmonella* Enteritidis working group with the result of the Microbiological Baseline Study from the Pathogen Reduction Initiative.

Pathogen reduction starts right at the farm and the Chicken Farmers of Canada On-Farm Food Safety Assurance Program (OFFSAP) mandates minimum biosecurity and sanitation processes to reduce the risk of pathogen contamination. The program received full recognition in 2013 from the Federal/Provincial/Territorial governments for promoting the production of safe food at the farm level and adhering to the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles.

As part of the recognition process and Chicken Farmers of Canada's commitment to continuous improvement, the OFFSAP manual is reviewed a minimum of every three years and recommendations from the FPT Working Group will be considered in this review process. 



*From all of us at Chicken Farmers of Canada,  
we wish you a safe and happy holiday season!*