

# THE CHICKEN FARMER

## Canadian chicken farmer recognized with a sustainability award!

There are a lot of great stories and news about the poultry industry, and the agriculture industry overall, that often don't make the news. While this is unlikely to catch the attention of big media outlets, we're delighted that Canadian Poultry Magazine has continued for the third year now to recognize the commitment of poultry farmers to sustainable practices on-farm. And this year's recipient of the sustainability award is one of our very own chicken farmers from British Columbia!

Located near Salmon Arm, B.C., Farmcrest Foods Ltd. is a successful family-run enterprise started in 1999 by Richard Bell and his brother-in-law Alan Bird, with members of three generations of the families currently helping out on the farm.

The operation includes a hatchery and poultry barns, feed mill, processing plant, rendering plant, enclosed mechanical composting for bird mortality, and crop production. Farmcrest also has its own poultry retail store and, in total, employs 45 people.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

### in this issue

3 | Updates to the Animal Care Program

6 | The Spread of Avian Influenza

4 | Hill Watch

7 | Canadian Chicken Sector Economic Growth



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“

THEIR WORK ETHIC AND  
COMMITMENT TO THE  
ENVIRONMENT AND THEIR  
LOCAL COMMUNITY IS  
EASY TO GRASP WHEN YOU  
SPEND TIME WITH THEM.

”

Farmcrest has an environmental farm plan and has used expert advice from a certified crop advisor since 2011. In 2013, Farmcrest also began a working relationship with Poultry Partners, a team of technicians, production specialists, veterinarians and nutritionists based in Airdrie, Alberta, which offers a variety of agricultural industry services.


By growing a large portion of the feed ingredients that their chickens consume, Farmcrest has been able to dramatically reduce the carbon footprint of their operation. Some of the steps they have taken include: the use of moisture and pH meters for soil testing to understand when conditions are optimal for manure application; a concrete pad for manure storage to prevent runoff; reductions in odour, ammonia and particulate matter inside and outside the barn by ensuring an optimal level of nitrogen is available to the birds; no use of irrigation and minimizing water use with an air chill system in the processing plant, nipple drinkers, and a misting system for disinfection; and the use of top line R60 insulation, LED lighting, high-efficiency electric motors and radiant tube heating.

Reflecting on his work with Farmcrest, Shawn Fairbairn, Poultry Partners general manager commented that the folks at

Farmcrest are extremely engaged. “Their work ethic and commitment to the environment and their local community is easy to grasp when you spend time with them. They are big believers in continuous learning and improvement. There is on-going reinvestment in all aspects of their operation to allow for improved welfare, safety and production efficiency for the birds, workers and the food they produce.”

And that certainly makes Farmcrest deserving of the 2016 Sustainability Award – in every sense of the word!

Farmcrest is featured in the January 2017 issue of Canadian Poultry Magazine, along with an article about Chicken Farmers of Canada’s new sustainability strategy. The strategy highlights the four key values of Canadian chicken farmers – protecting bird health and welfare, producing safe chicken for Canadians, preserving the health of the land and of our farms, and providing value to Canada and affordable food to Canadians through supply management.

Stay tuned to [www.chickenfarmers.ca](http://www.chickenfarmers.ca) for the release of Chicken Farmers of Canada’s first Sustainability Report. 

\*Some excerpts taken from Canadian Poultry Magazine, January 2017 issue.

# NEW

## Highly-Recommended Elements in the Animal Care Program

Chicken Farmers of Canada's (CFC) Animal Care Program is based on the previous Code of Practice. With the release of an updated Code for broilers in June 2016, CFC is now undergoing a full update of the Animal Care Program (ACP) using the National Farm Animal Care Council's (NFACC) Animal Care Assessment Framework. This is a process set out by NFACC for commodity groups to develop or revise their audit program based on the Code revisions.

Through that process, all "requirements" in the new Code need to be incorporated in the Animal Care Program manual as "mandatory" items, but the process will take some time. A new ACP manual is under development and will be made available to farmers in 2018.

Having an Animal Care Program that is based on the Code of Practice and being a part of the Code development process are major benefits for our industry. It allows farmers to have input into this important document and to collaborate with a variety of stakeholders to achieve buy-in. This is critical when promoting the Animal Care Program as the one national standard for all chicken farmers. With a lifespan of about 10 years between revisions, there is stability for farmers in this process.

### WHAT ARE THE CHANGES AND WHY IS CFC MAKING THEM?

To help prepare for the changes that are coming in the next version of the Animal Care Program, CFC is incorporating the "requirements" from the new Code of Practice as "Highly-Recommended" (HR) items in the current Animal Care Program. Updated record forms, which reflect the new HR items, will also be made available soon.

Although the exact wording may change depending on the outcome of the full review process, these new HRs will become mandatory when the next version of the Animal Care Program




is released. Incorporating the requirements from the Code of Practice, now, as HR items in the ACP manual will provide an opportunity to become familiar with the requirements in the new Code and to begin implementing them on-farm.

### HOW WILL THIS AFFECT MY IMPLEMENTATION ON-FARM, MY AUDIT, AND MY ACP CERTIFICATION?

The new HRs will be incorporated into the record forms and farmers are expected to begin implementing them on-farm as of May 2017.

The new HRs will also be incorporated into the audit checklists and CFC auditors will be including them as part of their audits as of June 15, 2017. Any HR items not implemented at the time of the audit will be noted on the audit report.

As with other highly-recommended items in the ACP manual, the new HR items will not impact certification.

Should you have any questions about these changes to the Animal Care Program please contact CFC or your provincial board office. 



# Hill Watch

## Trudeau Shuffles Cabinet

**Just over a year into his mandate, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau shuffled his cabinet in early January, which media reported was in response to the new challenges the government faces internationally – namely with the incoming Trump presidency in the United States.**

### NEW MINISTERS AND ROLES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- The former Minister of International Trade, the Honourable Chrystia Freeland, became Minister of Foreign Affairs, replacing the Honourable Stéphane Dion.
- The Honourable François-Philippe Champagne replaced Freeland as Minister of International Trade. Champagne had previously been the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance.
- The Honourable Ahmed Hussen takes on the portfolio of Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship, replacing the Honourable John McCallum. Hussen is a rookie MP from the Toronto area.
- The Honourable Patricia Hajdu left her post as the Minister of Status of Women to become Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour. Hajdu replaced the Honourable MaryAnn Mihychuk who was removed from Cabinet entirely.
- The Honourable Maryam Monsef is the new Minister of Status of Women, moving into the role previously occupied by Minister Hajdu.
- Replacing Monsef, the Honourable Karina Gould became the new Minister of Democratic Institutions. Gould is another new MP from Burlington with roots in trade and agriculture.
- John McCallum, the former Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship and long-term MP, is leaving government altogether to become Canada's Ambassador to China.

There are now 21 Ministers who are also first-term MPs, while only four Ministers remain from previous Liberal Cabinets. The shuffle maintains the 50/50 gender split in Cabinet that Trudeau committed to in 2015.

The departures of Hon. McCallum and Hon. Dion from politics will mean that by-elections will occur in the ridings of Markham-Thornhill in Ontario and Saint-Laurent in Quebec.

### THE UPCOMING YEAR IN PARLIAMENT

While 2017 – Canada's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary – is sure to be a celebratory year in and around Parliament Hill, the Trudeau government still has a lot of work to do in the second year of its mandate.

New Democratic Institutions Minister, Karina Gould, will be working across all parties towards overhauling Canada's electoral system in time for the Prime Minister's spring deadline.

Finance Minister Bill Morneau will introduce his second budget, one that may include additional stimulus spending and transfer payments to provinces and territories, but could still carry a hefty long-term deficit.

Newly-appointed Minister of International Trade François-Philippe Champagne will have to stickhandle the uncertainty that comes with U.S. President Donald Trump's trade agenda. The potential re-opening of NAFTA, coupled with the pending TPP ratification and a trade deal with China, will certainly have Champagne's plate full for the coming months.

In agriculture, Chicken Farmers of Canada looks forward to the government's consultation on the Duties Relief Program. We hope this consultation will result in a timely implementation of better rules to stop the distortions into the Canadian chicken market created by inappropriate program duplication and design, and circumvention of tariff classifications. 

# An update on Government AMR and AMU Initiatives

**Following the March 2015 release of the Federal Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance and Use in Canada, the federal government has continued to move forward with a number of activities on this issue. Chicken Farmers of Canada (CFC) is working closely with the federal government on these initiatives and advancing our common objectives regarding surveillance, stewardship, and innovation.**

One element in the Federal Action Plan, being led by the Public Health Agency of Canada, is the creation of a pan-Canadian framework to address antimicrobial resistance (AMR). While the Federal Action Plan was developed solely by the federal government, this framework will bring together federal, provincial, and territorial governments as well as key stakeholders from the veterinary and medical communities, industry, and academia. Since so many initiatives are already underway on this topic by each of these groups, the pan-Canadian framework will serve as a guide to align these various actions and help ensure that efforts are coordinated and complimentary.


The framework will be divided into four areas: surveillance, stewardship, infection prevention and control, and research and innovation. Working groups have been established for each of the four areas, and Chicken Farmers of Canada (CFC) is participating on the stewardship working group. This group will be looking at the ways various stakeholders are promoting responsible use practices to maintain the effectiveness of antimicrobials of human importance.

The surveillance working group is examining surveillance activities already in place, assessing any gaps, and ultimately hoping to get a comprehensive picture of antimicrobial resistance and use (AMU) in Canada. Infection prevention and control is concerned with improving practices so that the need for antimicrobials is reduced. And finally, research and innovation is concerned with developing better tools and approaches to detect and treat drug resistant infections in humans and animals. A report from each group is planned to be presented to the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Health and Agriculture Ministers this summer.



Two other key government activities detailed in the Federal Action plan include the removal of growth promotion claims and increasing veterinary oversight of medically important antimicrobials (Categories 1 to 3) in feed and water. This work is being led by Health Canada's Veterinary Drugs Directorate, which intends for both of these changes to be implemented by the end of 2017. While increased "veterinary oversight" will likely mean that medically important antimicrobials will be available by prescription only, the final details are still being worked out as to what this will mean and how it will be implemented. This policy change will also impact where antimicrobials will be sold, which involves regulatory changes by all provincial governments, however the final details on this also remain to be worked out.

CFC will continue to stay involved with the federal government on these developments and ensure that the interests of the chicken industry are taken into consideration.

In other news, the definition of 'raised without the use of antibiotics' (RWA) production previously differed between Canada and the United States, putting the Canadian chicken industry at a disadvantage with its closest trading partner. In a welcome update, in August of last year the Canadian Food Inspection Agency formally changed the RWA definition claims on meat, poultry, and fish to allow for the use of chemical coccidiostats. Although the use of ionophores continues to not be allowed as part of the claim, this brings the RWA definition in Canada effectively in line with that of the United States. CFC thanks its federal partners for making this happen. 

# The Spread of Highly-Pathogenic Avian Influenza in Europe and Asia

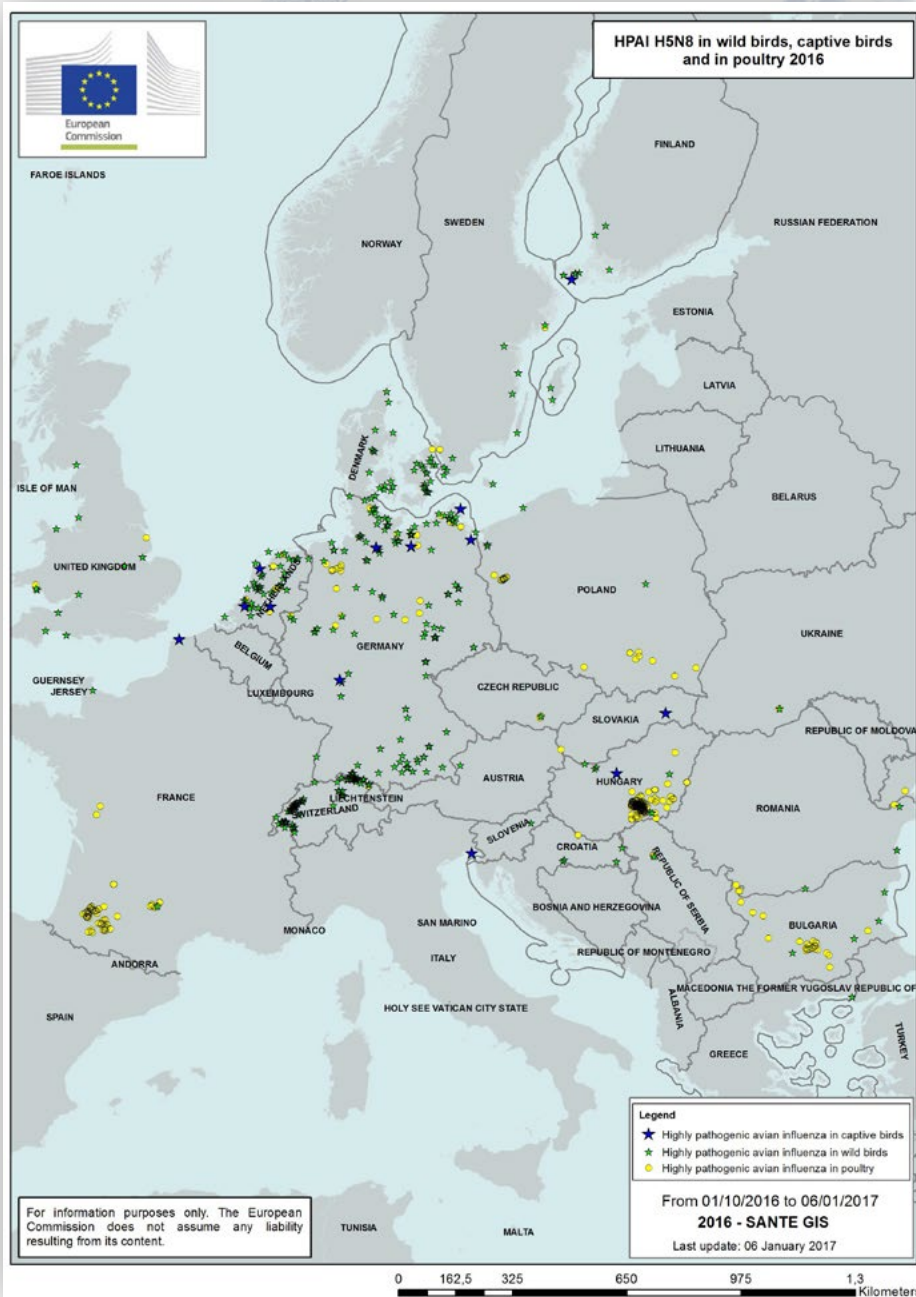
While it may seem oceans away, the recent outbreaks of avian influenza in Europe and Asia are cause for concern for Canada because of the possibility that it may travel here with migrating birds. As stated in a December 1, 2016 advisory from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) “Certain strains of avian influenza viruses are moving quickly across Europe and Asia, infecting wild birds and domestic poultry. There are significant concerns these viruses may spread to Canada through the migration of wild birds.”

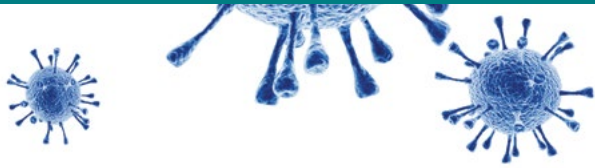
The following map shows the location of various outbreaks in domestic, wild, and captive birds, as of January 6, 2017.

[http://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/ad\\_control-measures\\_hpai\\_chrono\\_2016\\_map.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/ad_control-measures_hpai_chrono_2016_map.pdf)

This is the second time the highly-pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) strain H5N8 has been introduced into Europe via the autumn migration of wild birds, although it has been circulating continuously in Asia since 2010.

“Cases have been found in both migrating birds and commercial flocks in 17 countries including Germany, Holland, France, a number of Eastern European countries such as the Czech Republic and Slovenia and lately also in most parts of Great Britain and in Ireland. So far, only Belgium seems not to have any cases. Most effected is Hungary within the first week of January with over 200 cases, followed by Germany with over 150 cases, mostly in wild birds, and France which in the first week of January reported just under 100 infected commercial farms as well as a number of cases in wild birds. In all those countries, authorities have ordered a compulsory





confinement of poultry, strict precautionary hygiene measures as well as transport restrictions [1].” Outside Europe, cases have also been detected in India, Iran, Israel, Nigeria, Russia, Serbia, Taiwan, and Tunisia.

In Japan, the strain of concern is HPAI H5N6, where a seventh outbreak was reported at the end of December. This same strain is currently causing the worst ever outbreak of HPAI in South Korea, with more than 22 million birds being culled across the country in attempts to control the disease. The H5N6 strain is also circulating in waterfowl in China. There are concerns that H5N6 might spread beyond Korea and Japan, and follow HPAI H5N8 into Europe or North America.

While most strains of avian influenza are found to exclusively infect birds, there are some strains such as H5N1, H7N9, and H5N6, which have caused severe illness or death in people. However, the World Health Organization has concluded that the risk of transmission to the general public is considered to be very low, with the main risk being transmission to people in close contact with infected poultry or wildlife.

### **WHAT CAN BE DONE TO LIMIT THE RISK OF AI INFECTION ON CANADIAN POULTRY FARMS?**

AI viruses can spread to domestic poultry through direct contact with wild birds or their droppings and secretions that may be unintentionally brought into the barn. Producers can minimize the risk of AI to their poultry through extra attention to biosecurity protocols and practices, as per the standards Chicken Farmers of Canada’s On-Farm Food Safety Assurance Program. Within the Program, an annual review of SOPs (standard operating procedures) and biosecurity practices is required, which is extremely important given this current AI risk. **CF**

*\*information in this article is current as of writing on January 13, 2016.*

# THE CANADIAN CHICKEN SECTOR

## AN ECONOMIC GROWTH SUCCESS STORY

In order to properly understand the importance of the Canadian chicken sector to the domestic economy, it is vital to have up-to-date data on the impact of our activities. To this end, CFC recently joined the turkey, hatching egg, and table egg sectors in commissioning a national economic contribution study.

The study, which is based on 2015 data, demonstrates the growing value of the chicken sector to the Canadian economy. Key sector-level indicators, such as employment, gross domestic product (GDP) and taxation revenue, have been calculated to identify the economic impacts of raising and processing chickens, both for each province and for Canada as a whole.

Overall, the domestic chicken sector has demonstrated solid growth since the last study, which was based on 2013 data. While the sector supported a total of 78,200 jobs across the country in 2013, that number grew to 87,200 in 2015. In 2015, Canada’s 2803 chicken farmers and 191 processing plants contributed \$6.8 billion to GDP, growing from the \$5.9 billion they contributed in 2013. This meant that in 2015, the sector generated \$2.2 billion in federal, provincial and municipal taxes, up from the \$1.9 billion generated in 2013.

The accompanying map provides additional insight into how the Canadian chicken sector contributes at the provincial level; please note that some provincial data has been aggregated for reasons of confidentiality. CFC encourages its readers to keep this map on hand for easy reference.

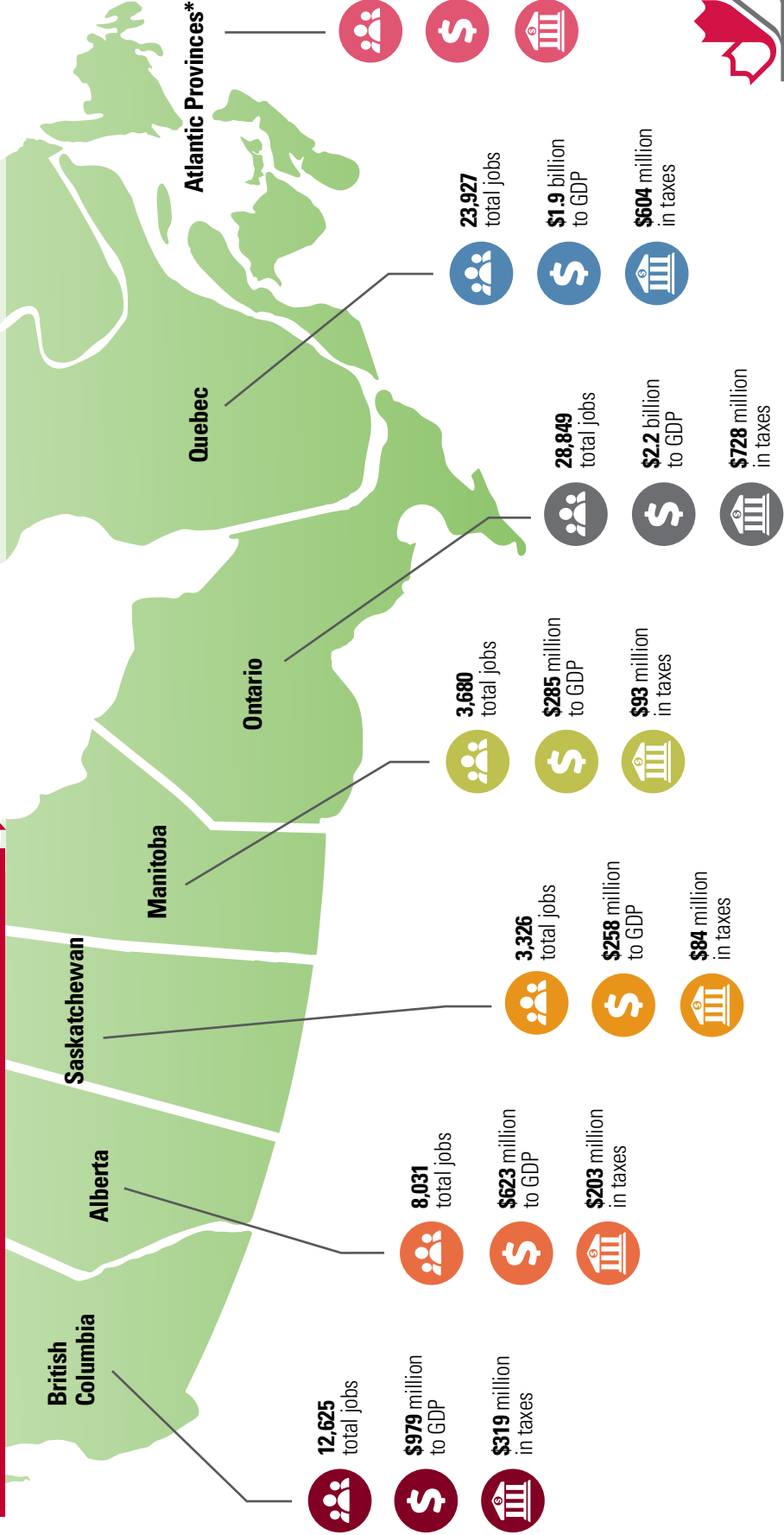
Although the sector is growing at a steady rate, the data provided does not tell the whole story. Plagued by import control circumvention practices that have eroded the domestic market, such as the illegal importation of broiler meat declared as spent fowl, the inappropriate use of the Duties Relief Program, and products being intentionally designed as specially defined mixtures to circumvent import controls, the Canadian chicken sector has been unable to achieve its full potential.

Solving these import control loopholes would allow the Canadian chicken farmers and processors to take full advantage of economic opportunities and demonstrate their full capacity to contributing to the Canadian economy. CFC looks forward to its ongoing work with the Canadian government on resolving these challenges and ensuring the continued growth and prosperity of the Canadian chicken sector. **CF**

# CANADA'S CHICKEN SECTOR

**2,803 FARMERS**  
**191 PROCESSORS**

**87,200** total jobs  
**\$6.8** billion to GDP  
**\$2.2** billion in taxes



Source: Kevin Grier Market Analysis and Consulting Inc., The 2015 Economic Impact of the Poultry and Egg Industries in Canada, October 2016.  
\* Chicken production occurs in all four Atlantic provinces, however the data is aggregated to ensure confidentiality.