

THE CHICKEN FARMER

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Chicken Farmers of Canada Supports Wild Bird Survey

About the Survey

Canada's inter-agency Wild Bird Influenza Survey 2006 was launched on May 18th by Environment Canada, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre. The survey will primarily study Canada's wild birds to determine the prevalence of avian influenza (AI) along the birds' migratory routes.

As in previous surveys, it is expected that a variety of AI viruses will be found. Most of these viruses commonly circulate in wild birds with little or no impact on their health or the health of other animals and should not be a cause of alarm for Canadians.

The 2006 survey, which will be carried out through the spring, summer and fall, will allow animal and public health authorities to better understand the presence and characteristics of typical strains of AI in North America's wild bird population.

Canadian Chicken Farmers Support the Initiative

Chicken Farmers of Canada supports these surveys, believing that they represent an important part of the country's strategy within several important issues, such as animal disease, the detection and mitigation of avian influenza and biosecurity.

Animal disease is a shared responsibility between both industry and government. The chicken industry implements biosecurity protocols to limit the opportunity for our birds to have contact with other animals and humans. This helps prevent the introduction or spread of potential animal diseases.

Farmers understand that biosecurity is important year round. For example: farmers restrict access to their farm to only people necessary for the operation. Precautions are taken to prevent transmission of the disease via boots, clothing, or the tires of vehicles.



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Farmers work with their suppliers to keep all animal diseases out of their barns; however, should one get in, the industry and both federal and provincial governments have developed strong emergency response plans to quickly reduce the chance of spread.

Survey Methodology

Canada's Wild Bird Influenza Survey 2006 will sample and test both live and dead, migratory and resident birds.

The collected samples will undergo preliminary analysis by member laboratories in the National Avian Influenza Virus Laboratory Network. This network, under the leadership of the National Centre for Foreign Animal Disease (NCFAD), includes six provincial or university labs located in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and Prince Edward Island.

The network laboratories have the capacity to test samples for the presence of avian influenza (influenza 'A') and H5 and H7 subtypes. Though low pathogenic H5 and H7 subtypes are quite common in wild birds and have little or no impact on their health, these subtypes are of particular interest to animal health authorities because they have the potential to mutate into highly pathogenic forms capable of causing serious disease and mortality.

Testing by network laboratories can generally be completed within 24-48 hours of the arrival of a sample in the lab. Samples identified as containing H5 or H7 subtypes are forwarded within 24 hours to the NCFAD in Winnipeg for confirmatory testing and further characterization.

Canada is monitoring global AI developments very closely, particularly the spread of the Asian H5N1 strain. Recognizing that better understanding of viruses and their exchange, as well as early detection, represent Canada's first line of defence in protecting animal and human health, the 2006 survey was identified as a priority in the 2006 federal budget.

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This year's survey will place a greater focus in the north Atlantic region, which hosts birds that might come into contact with birds from Europe where the Asian H5N1 strain has been found in several countries. This includes sampling in Iceland, which hosts migratory birds from both North America and Europe.

Canada is coordinating its survey approach with the United States, which has announced plans to conduct extensive surveillance along the Pacific Flyway, which intersects with Asian migratory routes.

Biosecurity Reminders

Wild bird populations, who are natural reservoirs for the influenza viruses, are beyond producers' control. Therefore, it is essential for commercial poultry producers to maintain strict biosecurity

practices to prevent the introduction of the virus in their flock.

On a farm:

- Keep poultry confined indoors.
- Keep away from areas frequented by wild fowl.
- Keep strict control over access to your poultry houses by people and equipment.
- Keep equipment clean and disinfected before taking it into poultry houses.
- Do not keep bird feeders or create duck ponds on your property as they attract wild birds.
- Maintain high sanitation standards.

With information courtesy of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency



there are no market distortions, and very often subsidies can distort trade. For instance, a producer benefiting from large subsidies can decide to dump his overproduction on export markets.

Canadian Chicken: A Fair Trade Product?

With a supply management system, Canadian chicken farmers match production to domestic demand, receive a fair price from the marketplace, do not receive subsidies from the government, provide high quality products at stable and reasonable prices for consumers, and ensure an efficient and secure food supply that respects Canadian sanitation and health standards.

By disciplining the level of production to match demand, supply management does not lead to over-production, which would have to be exported on the highly distorted world marketplace. It also prevents surpluses from flooding the domestic market and driving prices to artificial lows.

Canadian Farmers Trade Fair

In Canada, the consumption of fair trade products has risen over the past five years. The sales of Fair Trade Certified products indicate an annual average growth of 55% since 2001 (Transfair Canada, February 2006) and the biggest markets for these products are British Columbia and Quebec. More and more Canadian consumers are concerned about labour conditions, good production practices, and the well-being of farmers in developing countries.

Fair trade coffee, tea, rice, bananas, sugar, chocolate and mangos can all be found in the Canadian marketplace. All of them originate from developing

countries. The fair trade relationship is from south to north. What about northern agriculture products? Would it be possible to have a north-to-north or north-to-south fair trade relationship?

What is Fair Trade?

The expression "fair trade" is used broadly and can be confusing. In Canada, there is no legislation on the use of "fair trade" labelling for products. However no product can be "certified fair trade" without the logo of the Transfair Canada which is a member of Fairtrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO).

According to FLO, the concept behind fair trade is to ensure that producers in developing countries get a fair price for

their products by eliminating most of the middlemen, improving their economic position. FLO restricts their initiative for "small farmers and wage workers in the south, who have been restrained in their economical and/or social development by the conditions of trade."

To comply with the generic fair trade standards of FLO, farmers have to

form cooperatives or associations, have to contribute to the social and economic development of their members and their communities, and have to be democratically

controlled by their members. To obtain a fair trade certification, the producers also have to assess the conformity of their production to standards on environmental development and labour conditions.

North-to-North Fair Trade

Some people have challenged the idea of restricting fair trade (products and labelling) to small farmers in the south and proposed to extend it to larger farmers in the north. They argue that some northern farmers are also disadvantaged by the conditions of trade. Because of that, a lot of them receive subsidies from their government to compete. Some would say that fair trade is when

Therefore, is the supply management system fair enough to be considered as fair trade? Based on the current FLO standards, Canadian chicken farmers cannot obtain fair trade certification for their production since our country is in the north. So, even if the domestic trade of supply-management products is fair, it seems that there is no possibility to be certified as is for now. Others would argue that there is no need to have a special certification because consumers prefer to buy locally to support Canadian farmers. Supporting local farmers does not, however, guarantee a good return for farmers. Supply management is more than simply buying locally. It is a system where farmers can get a fair price for their product while growing safe, quality chicken that consumers can trust.

What may be required to support or increase trade beyond the purely commercial is a type of marketing or labelling that identifies products in a whole new category that could be called Equitable, Ethical or Solidarity Trade. These have been explored in France and some parts of Latin America. While Fair Trade has addressed some of the concerns expressed by developing nations, not all previous trade inequalities have been addressed.

Exactly what measures or rules that would govern its use are unknown but one thing is for certain, it will ensure that all farmers get a fair price for their products.





"Be Aware and Declare" Campaign Launched in Ottawa



On May 17th, the CFIA, in partnership with the Canada Border Services Agency and other government departments, announced its campaign to help prevent plant and animal disease outbreaks such as avian influenza. The campaign was formally launched at the Ottawa International Airport.

The "Be Aware and Declare" travellers' campaign targets the public with information on the types of products they should not bring into Canada, and stresses that all travellers are responsible for helping to eliminate prohibited foreign products such as certain meats, poultry, cheeses and fruits from entering the country.

"These seemingly harmless products can spread viruses, diseases and destructive insects," said Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Chuck Strahl at the launch. "While our Border Services Officers do an excellent job of protecting our borders, we need travellers to do their part and declare their food, plants and animal-related products."

By focussing on prevention, the Government of Canada continues its efforts to protect our country and encourages travellers to be a part of the solution.

Visa offices, as well as many of the 2,800 travel agencies across Canada will be distributing *Be Aware and Declare*, a brochure outlining what travellers need to declare when entering Canada. If you need a new passport, you'll get the message too. When your passport arrives, so will a copy of *Bon Voyage But...*, Foreign Affairs' information brochure which features a two-page spread on what travellers can and cannot bring into Canada.

Without a doubt, the most entertaining part of the entire campaign is the in-flight video, which will be screened on all inbound and outbound Air Canada flights longer than an hour and a half. The video, which uses humour to convey the *Be Aware and Declare* message, was filmed at the Ottawa International Airport and features some of CFIA's own staff.

Representatives of the Canadian dairy, produce and poultry industries were present at the launch to help convey the importance of protecting Canadians, animals and plants from unwanted diseases, viruses and pests.



With information courtesy of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Features of the Travellers' Campaign

Video – A 30-second public service announcement that will be shown by Air Canada, Japan Airlines and Olympic Airlines on flights headed to Canada. Using humour, the video illustrates the need to "be aware and declare".

Brochure – Designed to give travellers an overview of what can be brought into Canada and the rationale behind the rules and regulations. It will be distributed through travel agencies, visa offices, toll free lines and other venues. Distributed through travel agencies, customs offices, passport offices and visa offices abroad, the poster raises awareness of the need to be aware and declare all food, animal and plant-related items when entering Canada from abroad.

Information Card – Air Canada and other airlines will be distributing the card prior to arrival in Canada to make travellers aware of the penalties that they may incur if they do not declare.

Disposal bins – Disposal bins will be conveniently placed in the international arrival areas where travellers can dispose of products not permitted into Canada.

Website – A new website — <http://www.BeAware.gc.ca> is also being launched. Like the brochure, it provides information and rationale behind what travelers need to declare when entering Canada.





NEWS FROM THE HILL

In the House of Commons

The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food

The committee met on May 4th to elect a new chair and vice-chairs. Members elected Conservative MP Gerry Ritz as chair and Bloc Québécois MP, André Bellavance and Liberal MP, Paul Steckle, as vice-chairs. Ritz, a former grains and ostrich farmer from North Battleford, SK, had been the Conservative party's agriculture critic and also previously served as vice-chair for this committee.

On May 11th, the Dairy Farmers of Canada, the Dairy Farmers of Ontario, the *Fédération des producteurs de lait du Québec* and the Dairy Processors Association of Canada appeared before the committee to discuss imports of milk protein concentrates. At issue is the use of imported and subsidized milk protein concentrates; products which have led to \$242 million in annual losses for dairy producers. "If the government takes no action, uncontrolled imports of protein concentrates will more than double this shortfall to over half a billion dollars per year, according to conservative estimates." (From a *Fédération des producteurs de lait du Québec* May 2nd media release)

CFC and the other supply-managed commodities (SM-5) were invited to appear before the committee on June 15th for a review of the ongoing agriculture negotiations at the WTO. Committee members heard from SM-5 representatives on the need for the government to stand firm and defend Canada's domestic marketing system. Canada's balanced negotiating position has been challenged by both internal and external groups with an agenda for freer farm trade, despite the fact that supply management is a domestic industry and its loss will lead to little or no appreciable gains in market access to first world nations.

The Standing Committee on International Trade

This new committee met for the first time on May 3rd to elect a chair and vice-chairs. Members elected Conservative MP Leon Benoit, as chair and Bloc Québécois MP Pierre Paquette and Liberal MP Lui Temelkovski as vice-chairs.

Other House of Commons Business

Bill C-218, a Private Members Bill, an act for the

recognition and promotion of agricultural supply management, was introduced by the Hon. Wayne Easter. The Bill is essentially the same as one from the previous Parliament (Lynn Myers – Bill 264).

On May 29, Pierre Paquette of the Bloc Québécois asked the following question to the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food:

(Translated): "As I understand it, there won't be time before the text is virtually finalized. So can the government repeat now that there's no question of in any way changing Canada's position at the WTO on agricultural supply management and cultural diversity?"

The Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food, the Hon. Chuck Strahl replied:

"Mr. Speaker, we have been very clear. We have been clear in the House and we have been clear in Geneva about our support for supply management. The discussions that are ongoing there involve not only the supply managed industries but access for our export markets as well. The deal we are trying to drive over there is to benefit the entire agricultural sector. We have supported supply management. We have done that in committee, we have done it publicly, we did it during the campaign, and we will continue to support it in the years to come."

In the Senate

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry

The Chair of this committee is the Hon. Joyce Fairbairn and the Deputy Chair is the Hon. Leonard Gustafson.

The committee has been meeting and hearing from witnesses in order to study the present and future state of agriculture in Canada. To date, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the National Farmers Union and numerous government department officials have appeared before the committee. It is important to note that committee members have asked questions related to supply management, the WTO, and food safety.

CFC will be requesting an appearance before the Senate Committee to make a presentation on supply management, the WTO and AI. It is important that CFC take advantage of all possible avenues to ensure that MPs and Senators understand the important contributions that our industry makes to the Canadian economy and the general public.

Staying informed

CFC and its supply management partners are developing updated messaging relating to supply management, sensitive products and our position at the WTO. For copies of these updated materials, please visit the supply management website at www.farmsandfood.ca.

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