

# THE CHICKEN FARMER

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## THE FIRST ANIMAL CARE PROGRAM AUDITS HAVE BEGUN!

In 2003, CFC embarked on the journey of developing an auditable Animal Care Program (ACP) based on the *Recommended Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals: Chickens, Turkeys and Breeders from Hatchery to Processing Plant*.

With input from provincial chicken boards and a multitude of industry stakeholders, the Animal Care Program was finalized in August 2008. In 2009, the focus was on training auditors and getting the program out to farmers. Now that it is time to begin auditing, CFC wanted to address some of the frequently asked questions about the program, as well as to provide some additional background information on the program.

### Why was an Animal Care Program developed?

CFC developed an animal care program to demonstrate the level of good production practices and care on Canadian farms. There has been a proliferation of new animal care programs from retailers and restaurants; this program was meant to ensure that there is only one standard for Canada.

### Why is it important to have one standard for Canada?

Without having a unified approach to animal care in Canada, it opens the door for individual companies to develop their own animal care standard. This could create numerous programs that farms would have to meet and these may be different than the one that CFC has developed. A unified front with support from key stakeholders is the best way to streamline this approach to animal care.

### How can we ensure that there will only be one standard for Canada?

CFC's goal was to develop an auditable program that would not only be practical to implement on-farm but that would also meet the needs of other industry stakeholders.

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**FOR A WEEKLY UPDATE  
ON THE WTO TRADE  
NEGOTIATIONS, VISIT  
THE CFC WEBSITE AT:  
[WWW.CHICKEN.CA](http://WWW.CHICKEN.CA)  
AND CLICK ON  
GENEVA WATCH.**



## CFC wanted to address some of the frequently asked questions about the program...

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As part of this process, CFC attained feedback from over 40 stakeholders and incorporated much of that feedback into the final ACP.

To date, the following organizations have indicated their support for the implementation of the ACP:

- > Canadian Federation of Humane Societies (CFHS)
- > Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers (CFIG)
- > Canadian Poultry and Egg Processors Council (CPEPC)
- > Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA)
- > Further Poultry Processors Association of Canada (FPPAC)

CFC is currently in talks with other organizations to attain similar support for the program.

It is affiliations with these organizations that provide the program with the credibility we need to sell it to stakeholders and consumers. Support from industry partners such as these will go a long way toward ensuring that CFC's ACP is recognized as the animal care standard for Canadian chicken.

### **Why is stocking density included as a mandatory component of the program?**

Stocking density and catching are the two leading concerns of consumers in terms of bird welfare. Without addressing density, the program would not be credible.

### **Where did the stocking density requirements come from?**

The density requirements in the ACP were based on the Recommended Code of Practice for Poultry and were supported by a literature review that was conducted by CFC on the welfare of broilers in relation to stocking density.

Partners involved in developing the stocking density guidelines from the Code of Practice, that CFC's requirements were based on, include:

- > Academics specializing in animal behaviour
- > Animal agriculture industry partners
- > Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC)

- > CFHS
- > CVMA
- > Federal and provincial governments

In addition, these requirements were also reviewed by the over 40 stakeholders that were involved in providing input on the ACP during its development.

### **Why have additional requirements for farmers stocking between 31 kg/m<sup>2</sup> and 38kg/m<sup>2</sup>?**

Scientific literature indicates that bird welfare can be compromised at higher densities but that management practices can be used to maintain appropriate welfare<sup>1</sup> – the CFC program has been designed based on these facts. To this end, it is essential to have adequate and meaningful records available for auditing; otherwise, the program would be meaningless.

Monitoring and recording humidity and temperature ranges, which are additional requirements for higher density producers, are vital to the success of the program. Without these records, this aspect of the program would be impossible to audit and there would be no way to demonstrate to consumers that appropriate measures have been taken.

The majority of organizations that have provided support for implementation have had concerns with allowing birds to be raised to density levels up to 38 kg/m<sup>2</sup>. It was only after reviewing CFC's additional management practices for higher density levels that they were willing to provide support. Without these, important players such as CFHS and CVMA would not be involved with the program.

### **Why was the ACP developed based on records and not outcome based measurements?**

After a thorough review, CFC chose to develop the existing program without focussing on an outcome based approach. This gives the ability to prove the way that the birds were raised throughout the growing period. An outcome-based program that would examine bird health at the end of flock (e.g. foot pad lesions and gait scores) would be very costly to implement, would require numerous different on-farm audits and would create potential biosecurity issues.

### **Why is it important to keep records?**

The ACP is designed to be an auditable program but without keeping records the program cannot be audited. The program is designed to prove to consumers that appropriate animal care is being implemented on-farm. By keeping meaningful records, the program can be audited and consumers reassured.

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<sup>1</sup> See: Meluzzi and Sirri. 2008. Welfare of Broiler Chickens. Italian Journal of Animal Science. 8 (suppl. 1): 161-173.

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### Is the equipment for monitoring daily minimum/maximum humidity and ammonia expensive?

Based on quotes, humidity monitoring equipment can be purchased for under \$1,000, or systems can be added to existing monitoring equipment. A list with price quotes for some systems have been provided to each provincial chicken board.

### What is the five year phase-in period?

In November 2008, the CFC Board of Directors approved the motion to accept a 5-year phase-in period of the density requirements of the program. The phase-in period began on December 1, 2008 and will end on December 1, 2013.

The purpose of the phase-in period is to provide a period of time for farmers to become compliant with the stocking density requirements outlined in the Animal Care Program. Farmers will have until December 1, 2013 to make any necessary changes in order to come into full compliance with the stocking density requirements in the Animal Care Program. During the phase-in period, producers can be certified on the ACP if they are in compliance with all other criteria outlined within it.

### Will the program be reviewed and updated?

Yes, like the On-Farm Food Safety program, the ACP is considered a living document that will be reviewed and updated (if required) on a regular basis. In fact, the density requirements of the program are scheduled for review in March 2011 and the full program will receive a full review every three years. **CF**



## News from the Hill

### PRODUCT OF CANADA LABEL RULES UNDER REVIEW

In 2008, Product of Canada label rules were changed to be more restrictive of items that were being sold and identified as being Canadian, despite having a large portion of their ingredients come from outside Canada.

Under the old rules, any food with 51% Canadian content – which could include labour and packaging – could boast it was a “Product of Canada.”

The matter was studied by a House of Commons committee in early 2008. The committee suggested a threshold of 85% Canadian content before a product could use the label.

When passed, the number was boosted to 98%, thereby eliminating many products such as those that were sweetened with imported sugar, or those which contained imported citric acid or were pickled with imported vinegar, despite the majority of the ingredients being of Canadian origin.

The net result has been a drastic reduction in the number of products that carry the label “Product of Canada”.

“There’s less and less Canadian product identified as Canadian product,” says Laurent Pellerin, president of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. “Some people tell us it’s easier to say ‘Canadian product’ outside of Canada than it is in our own market. I don’t think that was the (original) objective.”

The intent of the change was to provide consumers with more information and clearer labels on the origin of their food.

Instead, the consumer sees a cornucopia of creative labelling. “Hand-made in Canada,” “roasted in Canada,” or “produced from 100% Canadian berries” are sprinkled along supermarket shelves, offering no idea of what ratio of ingredients is actually Canadian.

The law also permits the label “Made in Canada” if accompanied by the phrase “from imported ingredients” or “from imported and domestic ingredients.” There’s no need to give proportions here either.

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Blackburn recently proposed to keep the 98% rule but to exempt specific ingredients used as sweeteners or packing materials, such as sugar, salt or vinegar. Industry and consumer groups have given the proposal mixed reviews.

## PRIVATE MEMBER'S MOTION PASSED: WILL PROVIDE MORE TOOLS TO FARMERS

Bev Shipley, MP for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, introduced a private member's motion to help Canada's agriculture industry that was passed in the House of Commons on April 20, 2010.

The motion reads:

"That in the opinion of the House, the government should ensure that production management tools available to Canadian farmers are similar to those of other national jurisdictions by considering equivalent scientific research and agricultural regulatory approval processes by Health Canada, the Pest Management Regulatory Agency, and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency."

This will ensure that Canada's approval process for agricultural products does not lag behind the United States, its largest trading partner. It will also ensure that Canadian farmers competing domestically with imports will not be at a competitive disadvantage.

Specifically, for the chicken industry, this will assist with the approval of antibiotics as well as prebiotics and probiotics. Due to the size of the Canadian market and the rigour of the approval process, many companies avoid the Canadian market altogether. The change as described by the motion would expand Canadian farmer's access to more competitive products.

Once adopted, a motion becomes an order or a resolution, but it has yet to translate into regulation.

## CANADA-EU FREE TRADE TALKS CONTINUE

The Canadian government has indicated that it will continue to resist pressure from European Union trade negotiators to open the domestic dairy and poultry markets to European product in talks on a free trade agreement.

Negotiators from the European Commission and Canada just held their third round of talks on a Canada-EU Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) in Ottawa. The next round of talks is scheduled for July in Brussels, Belgium.

Jean-Pierre Blackburn, Canada's Minister of State for Agriculture said the Conservative government will continue to defend the supply management system in the EU talks.

"Here in Canada, supply management works," the minister told CP news service. "If we open our borders, there will be huge difficulties for these sectors. There would need to be changes for the way we do things, and we're functioning very well in Canada."

He said supply management allowed dairy and poultry industries to remain among the most profitable and stable in Canada but that Canada's dairy industry has previously proven to be a sticking point in other trade talks. **CF**

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**— Laurent Pellerin,  
president of the Canadian  
Federation of Agriculture.**

## WTO NEGOTIATIONS: THE SLOW COOKER IS ON

While the WTO formal negotiations seem to be rather slow at this time, there are plenty of opportunities for ministers to get together and touch base on what has to be done to bring the Doha Round to completion.

No major developments have occurred but there is constant activity in an attempt to revive the Doha Development Round negotiations.

The much-anticipated stock-taking exercise, reported on in the last issue of *The Chicken Farmer*, which many hoped to bring some life into the dragging trade talks in Geneva, turned out to be a non-event. Expected to be a week-long meeting, it was compressed into a one-day session during a seniors officials meeting the week of March 17<sup>th</sup>, with countries re-stating their positions and nothing more. Though progress was extremely slow in Geneva, not all is lost, since signs of movement, although cautious, have been registered in other places.

For instance, pending U.S. Congressional approval, U.S. President Obama issued presidential nominations for the positions of U.S. Chief Agriculture Negotiator (Idi Sidiqqi), and U.S. Ambassador to WTO (Michael Punke). This was viewed as an important step forward, since many blamed the U.S. for not being able to advance the talks for lack of senior officials in these two key positions. Now the Americans can finally be present on equal footing with all other countries at the negotiations table.

As soon as he took his new job, Ambassador Punke initiated a U.S.-led process that was hoped to bring a breakthrough in negotiations, despite the numerous critiques from a good number of countries that felt left behind in the talks. The U.S., facing an uphill battle against a skeptical Congress, is interested in gaining more market access into key markets – particularly those of large developing countries like China, India and Brazil. The U.S. called for a small

negotiating group to address these concerns, and invited these three key countries, plus the Europeans, to a 5-party discussion in Paris.


This initiative was quickly labelled as “the group of 5”. However, its stated goal of moving trade talks forward did not materialize. Apparently, despite the small and intense nature of the group there remain significant differences in positions within this group of players. The final outcome at the end of the meeting was a consensus not to schedule any additional meetings.

Another event where the WTO negotiations were discussed was the Cairns Group Ministerial meeting on April 19-20 in Uruguay. Of the 19 members of the group advocating trade liberalization in agricultural products, only 6 were represented by their ministers, including Canada’s Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Gerry Ritz. The communiqué issued after the meeting indicated that an ambitious and balanced outcome to farm trade talks in the WTO’s Doha Round must be “top priority” for Cairns Group members, who also underscored the role of the WTO’s rules-based system in helping countries to emerge from recession. “As the recovery gets underway, the WTO remains the right platform for trade to grow strongly once again,” the attending ministers declared. Canada offered to host next year’s ministerial meeting.

Over the coming weeks, there will be two more opportunities for trade ministers from key WTO members to meet and discuss about the Doha Round: an OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) Forum on May 26-27 in Paris, France and an APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) ministerial

meeting on June 5-6 in Sapporo, Japan. In addition, Canada is working hard to prepare for hosting the G-8 Summit in Muskoka on June 25-26, as well as the G-20 Toronto Summit on June 26-27. While the WTO formal negotiations process seems to be rather slow at this time, there are plenty of opportunities for ministers to get together and touch base on what has to be done in order to bring the Doha Round to completion. There is no doubt that this issue is high on the agenda of every world leader these days.

Moving back to Geneva, the WTO General Council had a regular meeting on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Pascal Lamy, WTO Director General, took the opportunity to address the status of negotiations and the way forward. Using his typical, metaphorical language, Lamy spoke about a “cocktail approach” in moving the Round forward citing the following must-have “ingredients” in the process: meetings organized by the chairs of the different negotiating groups; preliminary contacts between trade ministers; and his own consultations with delegations on general issues. “Members must start shaking the ingredients before the ice melts,” he said.

In the meantime, Ambassador David Walker of New Zealand, Chair of WTO agriculture negotiations, announced that the next meeting will take place on May 17<sup>th</sup> to allow countries to, once again, freely exchange comments on the 2008 draft modalities text. Although everything seems to be so uncertain at the moment, in reality, despite large gaps between positions, a WTO deal might quickly get struck if all the puzzle pieces fall in the right place at the right time. 



# POULTRY RESEARCH UPDATE

**The Canadian Poultry Research Council (CPRC) was established in 2001 by the five national poultry organizations in Canada. CPRC's mandate is to create and implement programs for poultry research and development that address specific industry needs.**

Fifteen research projects funded by CPRC have been completed. Outlined below is a summary of one of those research projects. Additional project summaries are available on the CPRC website ([www.cp-rc.ca](http://www.cp-rc.ca)), in *Canadian Poultry Magazine* and in other editions of *The Chicken Farmer*.

## IMMUNE RESPONSE TO AVIAN INFLUENZA VIRUS IN CHICKENS

### Principal investigator:

*Shayan Sharif, University of Guelph*

**Start date:** March 2007

**Final report received:** November 2009

**Total project funding:** \$359,400 (CPRC \$59,800, Poultry Industry Council \$60,000, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada/Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada \$239,600)


### Background

The avian influenza virus (AIV) is of great importance to poultry health (and somewhat to human health). This virus has caused significant economic damage to the Canadian poultry industry with three separate outbreaks since 2004. During the first outbreak of AIV in the Fraser Valley, B.C., (2004) over 19 million chickens were depopulated to control the spread of the disease; 14.9 million of which went to market after being tested and cleared. A pandemic (an animal disease outbreak which crosses into the human population and continues to spread rapidly) could have a major impact on the poultry industry in the affected areas and beyond. In addition to the significant loss of human lives, the economic burden of a global avian influenza-based pandemic is incalculable. The 2004 outbreak in southern B.C. cost over \$300 million dollars to the local, provincial and national economies.

Over the past seven years, there have been several reports of transmission of the virus from birds to humans in East Asia, Turkey, and Africa. Human-to-human transmission of the virus continues to be extremely rare at this time. A true pandemic flu virus is one which has developed the ability to easily transmit from infected humans to other individuals and this has not occurred. Several strategies may be envisaged for control of AIV in chickens and to prevent its transmission to humans. Among these strategies, vaccination is of critical importance. A suitable vaccine will not only prevent infected chickens from showing clinical signs of disease, but it will also help control virus shedding from the infected birds. This will have an impact on the ability of the virus to spread to other animals and possibly to human populations.

### Current Research

The goal of the current research was to develop a vaccine incorporating antigens of an H5N1 AIV isolated in Canada, to evaluate the efficacy of cytokines (small proteins secreted by cells of the immune system which carry signals between cells) in enhancing immune response to AIV antigens, and to identify molecular determinants of AIV antigens that elicit immune responses in chickens.

In order to further characterize the H5N1 viruses that have been circulating in Canada, Dr. Sharif and his team undertook the task of sequencing the genome of two Canadian virus isolates. Subsequently, using cutting-edge molecular biologic techniques, they were able to construct several types of candidate vaccines incorporating antigenic determinants of a Canadian H5N1 AIV isolate. Results so far show that these vaccines elicit immune responses against influenza antigens. This work is part of an overall program to better understand immune responses to AIV infection in chickens and improve upon existing commercial vaccines. Dr. Sharif's studies led to the discovery of previously unknown "immune mediators" that can increase the chicken's immune response and may improve the efficacy of a new generation of AIV vaccines. 

## IN BRIEF

**CANADA RELEASES ON-FARM SAFETY VIDEO****THE CANADIAN FOOD INSPECTION AGENCY HAS CREATED A NEW ANIMAL HEALTH BIOSECURITY VIDEO AND IT'S AVAILABLE ONLINE.**

"Producers have a long-standing and successful history of using preventive measures as a means of keeping animals healthy and the agriculture industry strong," said Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz. "This online video will remind producers that farm-level biosecurity is the best investment they can make to maintain the health of their animals and their business."

This video is part of "Animal Health Starts on the Farm" which is an awareness campaign that encourages producers across Canada to revisit their disease control plans, observe their animals for signs of illness, and regularly consult with veterinarians on the health of their animals.

"Canada has one of the top animal health systems in the world, due in large part to the commitment and efforts of producers on the farm and their veterinary practitioners," said Dr. Brian Evans, Chief Veterinary Officer of Canada, and Executive Vice-President of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). "With a vision to maintain this reputation, we think it is important to be vigilant and to re-emphasize that many simple disease-limiting practices are inexpensive and easy to undertake."

You can find the video at [www.inspection.gc.ca/english/animal/biosec/tooute](http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/animal/biosec/tooute)

**CHINA TO BECOME DOMINANT FORCE IN ANIMAL FEED MARKET****CHINA IS EXPECTED TO BECOME A DOMINANT FORCE IN THE WORLD ANIMAL FEED MARKET,**

according to Bob Swick, speaking to the delegates attending the Australasian Milling Conference in Melbourne recently.

Rising wealth and a change in diet among the Chinese population has resulted in a rapidly expanding meat and aquaculture market. With that has come relentless growth in the animal feed market. Swick told the conference that China was acquiring companies around the world to ensure there was enough food to feed its people.

Chinese meat consumption is now 54 kg/capita/year – nearly double the Asian average and just a bit more than half that of Canada. Pork remains China's most popular meat and its consumption has doubled in the past 10 years, but chicken and beef had taken a greater share of the total market during the past two decades. Chicken consumption accounted for 9% of the total Chinese meat market in 1985, but has risen to 20% by 2008. Beef's share jumped from 6% to 14% over the same period.

Rising meat consumption in China means an expansion in the compound feed market which will reach 275 million tons by about 2020-2025. That would be a major share of the global feed market.

Swick said China's feed market grew an incredible 24% last year, stretching the ability of home-grown crops to supply enough grain for manufacture of stock feeds. "China may become a net corn importer as early as 2011-12 as demand for livestock feed overtakes China's internal supplies of corn and more acreage goes to horticultural production."

**U.S. FEARS VISIT OF EU COMMISSIONER****THE EU'S NEW HEALTH AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER MAY SPARK A NEW TRADE DISAGREEMENT WITH THE U.S.**

by his focus on improving animal welfare, and continuing bans on imports of U.S. animal products to Europe.

The EU's new health and consumer affairs commissioner, John Dalli, began his first official visit to Washington on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

His visit may open a new, potentially disruptive front: animal welfare. He is reported to be planning to propose a new law on animal welfare. According to EU experts familiar with the plans, Mr Dalli's law may promote the use of cruelty-free labels for some meat products, which could lead to European consumers shunning U.S. and other imported products.

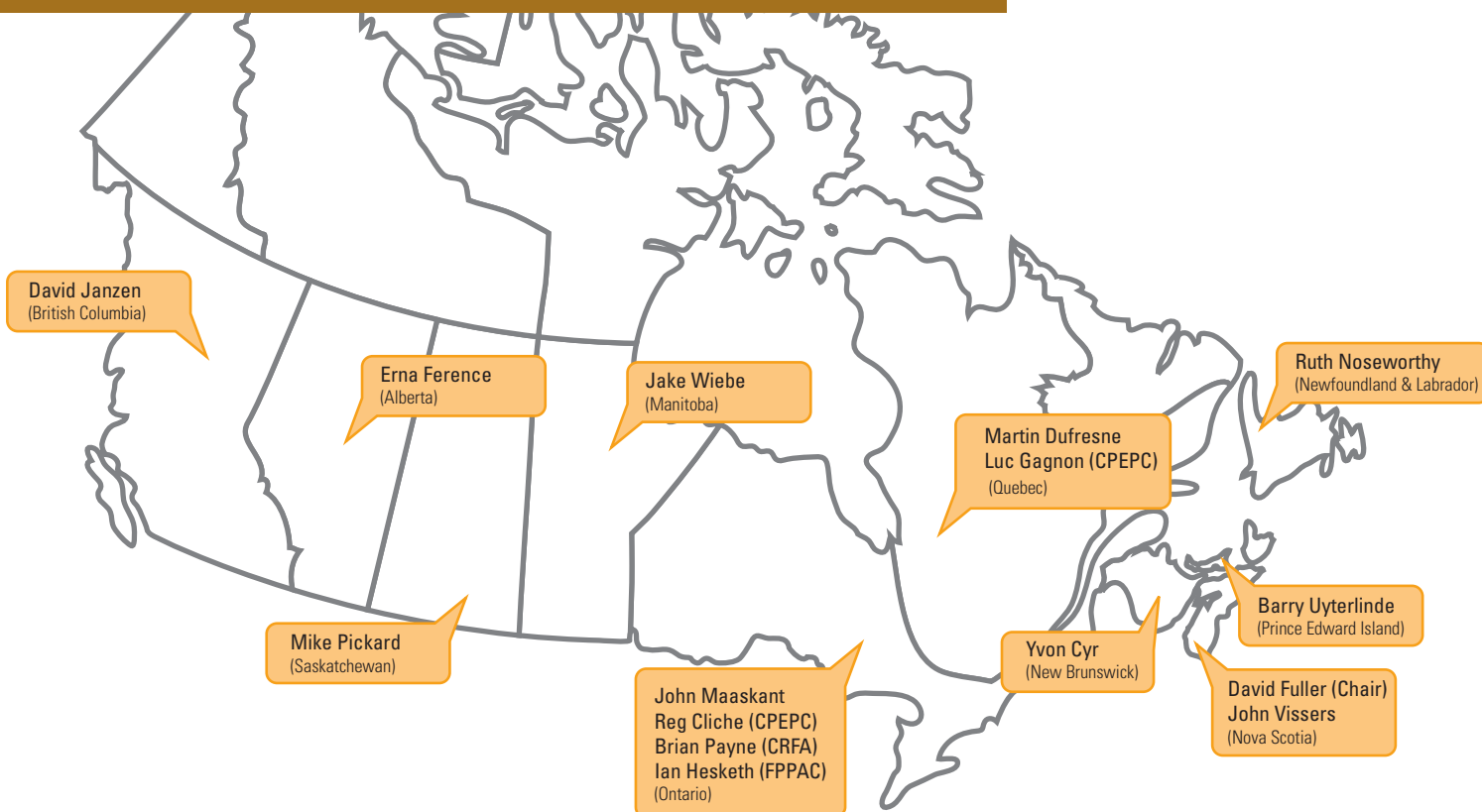
He has signalled there would be no end to Europe's bans on imports of chickens treated with chlorine and of beef treated with hormones, and he has said Europe needs more time to consider allowing imports of meat from cloned animals.

The new animal welfare law could include stunning methods for poultry or introducing techniques to detect boar taint in pork products.

A goal of the law would be to encourage meat producers to label their products to show that their animals had been raised and killed using certified procedures, something that could disadvantage U.S. and Canadian processors if they did not adopt the same procedures. **CF**



## 2010 CFC Board of Directors



## 2010 CFC COMMITTEES

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