



Canadian Food
Inspection Agency

Agence canadienne
d'inspection des aliments

CFIA 2025

Building for the future

Building on a solid foundation

Today's regulatory environment exists in a world that is rapidly changing. Technology, innovation and global trading patterns continue to pose challenges to food safety and the protection of Canada's animals and plant resources. To ensure the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) can effectively deliver its mandate, the CFIA has to remain agile and be able to face new threats quickly and effectively. By seeking out innovative approaches and leveraging new technology, we can look to new ways of working for the future that include better, more responsive programs and services that give our global trading partners confidence in the safety and quality of Canada's agriculture, fisheries and forestry products.

As unprecedented global events have shown, the CFIA must continue to embrace uncertainty, learn through experimentation, expand partnerships, remove barriers, and explore new technology and tools. This will ensure that, even in times of crisis, the agency can continue to keep food safe, safeguard the health of plants and animals, and do its part to ensure the Canadian economy can continue to thrive despite any challenges that may arise.

The year 2020 saw tremendous growth and innovation in response to COVID-19. Manufacturing in Canada was able to pivot to re-inforce the supply chain with things such as personal protective equipment and hand sanitizers. Innovation in the rapid development of testing for COVID-19 and research for vaccine development demonstrate the shift in science and ability of Canada to compete on the global stage.

Staff, where possible, shifted to working remotely. Front line staff continued to deliver critical services in food safety, plant and animal health areas. Tools such as our Comparative Risk Model became a cornerstone in our prioritization of activities as the CFIA addressed capacity needs from coast to coast to coast.

Today, the CFIA continues to highlight digitization efforts by increasing information technology (IT) capacity and providing employees with the tools and resources they need to adapt to a digital way of working.

Because the ability to adapt and respond to new risks and rapid changes to our environment is crucial to our future success, the CFIA is revamping its "Responding to Today, Building for the Future" (RTBF) framework to "CFIA 2025: Building for the future" framework. This allows us to refocus on our priorities with a plan of action that addresses our current realities as we move forward.

CFIA 2025 is part of the process of continual improvement and learning from our successes and challenges. It's about making necessary adjustments based on what worked and what hasn't, so we can continue to be effective at delivering on our mandate.

With the introduction of CFIA 2025 comes the removal of the digital-first tools and services area of focus found in the original RTBF. This change was necessary as the CFIA looks to further emphasize thinking digitally in all areas of employee work by including this in each of the new areas of focus and guiding principles mentioned below.

As we look to the future, CFIA 2025 will continue the work of RTBF by outlining two overarching guiding principles:

- trusted partnerships
- global leader

Under trusted partnerships, the CFIA will share in the responsibility of safeguarding Canada's food, plant and animal resources through defined roles and open and transparent information sharing. The CFIA will continue to act as a global leader, pushing the frontier of food safety and animal and plant health that encourages a globally competitive industry and removes roadblocks to market innovation.

The Canadian food, animal and plant supply chains are built on trusted relationships and strong negotiations. This remains the underpinning for our activities as a regulator. Government commitments to grow the economy and international trade continue to put pressure on the agency to remain agile and respond to the changing and growing landscape.

Much like RTBF, CFIA 2025 outlines priorities – or areas of focus - for the agency. The four updated areas address a future state that furthers our transformation efforts while protecting Canadians and supporting industry.

The four areas of focus are:

- agile regulations
- intelligent oversight
- enabled workforce
- stakeholder empowerment

Whether it's called modernization, transformation or evolution, change is a must. It is important to look at how to enable our workforce, how to partner with industry and the international community, and how to serve Canadians. Adapting to the four new areas of focus to further our transformation efforts will allow just that.

Guiding principles:

Trusted partnerships and global leader

Moving forward, the CFIA's core focus will continue to build trusted partnerships and promote a reputation as a global leader. The CFIA will protect Canadians and support industry through its agile regulations, intelligent oversight, and stakeholder empowerment. By working with stakeholders on an even greater preventive approach, the CFIA is enabling its workforce to safeguard Canada's plant and animal health, protect consumers from food safety risks and maintain a world class food safety system.

The CFIA continues to develop and deploy more digital services through its ongoing investments in modernizing its applications and increasing the availability of self-service through [My CFIA](#), the agency's trusted portal to access CFIA services. It is also advancing work to make more and more permissions available online such as select pre-market approvals, import

permits and export certificates. These shifts will allow regulated parties to request services in a more streamlined and modern way.

Areas of focus:

Agile regulations

The focus of RTBF's modern regulatory toolkit was to provide outcome-based regulations and new compliance tools that focused on plant and animal health and food safety. This allowed industry to innovate and the agency to adapt in response to emerging risks. CFIA 2025 expands on these concepts with the first of four main areas of focus: agile regulations.

Under agile regulations, the CFIA will create an environment where regulations remain dynamic, transparent and responsive, allowing businesses to act on new opportunities and become more competitive. This will ensure the CFIA's role of enforcement continues as a predictive and preventive regulator, allowing regulated parties to embrace innovations while keeping their products safe for Canadians.

An agile regulatory environment will also allow the CFIA to be flexible. Agility when delivering critical services that protect food safety, animal health, plant health and market access through ministerial exemptions for interprovincial trade of meat, labelling regulations, etc. was highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic. As technology advances, and industry's requirements evolve, the CFIA will be better positioned to respond to change if and when required.

Intelligent oversight

Canada is one of the world's leaders in the production of safe food and the protection of plant and animal health. Our employees are experts in their fields and work every day to positively impact the lives of Canadians and shape our country's future.

As the world continues to transform, we see digital and data driven technology facilitating the seamless circulation and exchange of information and services with short wait times and little human interaction. To keep pace and remain effective in this new reality, the CFIA must explore and embrace new technology and make better use of internal CFIA information as well as externally generated information to develop relevant and useful intelligence. This will better position us to predict, detect, prevent and respond to potential and real time problems in food safety and plant and animal health.

CFIA 2025 will continue to position the agency as a global leader by looking at novel ways to make use of new scientific methods, technologies and partnerships to identify and mitigate risk, protect Canadians and support industry. It will also give our employees access to state of the art technologies and provide them opportunities to share important research and developments with the world.

Under CFIA 2025, the agency will continue to work diligently to identify risks, based on the latest science, data analysis and intelligence methods. The intelligence created will help to allocate resources and invest in tools where they will have the greatest impact.

Enabled workforce

The agency's employees are at the core of the great work performed at the CFIA each and every day. In today's fast-paced environment, it is imperative that they have access to the tools, information and support they need when they need it. Much like RTBF's consistent and efficient inspections, CFIA 2025 recognizes enabled workforce as a key area of focus.

Under CFIA 2025, it is recognized that employees are looking to have efficient tools and technology so they can continue to serve our stakeholders effectively. For this reason, the CFIA will continue to replace ageing and outdated technology, develop interconnected and nimble processes and networks, tap into collaborative environments that foster experimentation and innovation, and offer flexible ways to access both ongoing learning and mandatory training.

The agency must continue to build a diverse and inclusive workforce, which is central to removing barriers, improving efficiency, enhancing teamwork and encouraging creativity.

CFIA 2025 acknowledges that a diverse workforce translates to innovative ideas and new ways of addressing the challenges and opportunities we face each day. It recognizes the need to support its diverse workforce to ensure employees remain healthy, engaged, and productive.

While employees are responsible for their own health, the workplace must play a positive role in helping them manage their physical and psychological health and safety. This includes fostering a culture of transparency, inclusivity and trust that promotes growth and development and optimizes the health and well-being of employees.

Lastly, the agency will continue exploring opportunities for an enabled and agile workforce that is not constrained by geographical barriers while continuing to adapt to an increasingly flexible work environment.

Stakeholder empowerment

The online world is becoming an increasingly important space for CFIA stakeholders. Rapid growth of online services, web-based applications and mobile communications are revolutionizing how businesses and individuals interact with the world around them. This raises expectations for end-to-end digital services and easy-to-find, easy-to-understand government information.

In the previous RTBF framework, the digital-first tools and services priority recognized the importance of equipping stakeholders with a full range of electronic services and information to comply with regulations. It also focused on providing employees with the necessary tools to carry out their work effectively and efficiently. This meant the launch of My CFIA, an online tool

which gives both staff and stakeholders access to an increasing number of services, such as licenses, permits and certificates.

Advancing digital tools and services will remain key for the agency under CFIA 2025's stakeholder empowerment. Feedback from consultations with stakeholders and the public will help inform the development of new online information and service offerings to ensure their changing needs are met. This will improve the design and sustainability of our current networks and systems, such as My CFIA, by focusing on improved speed and usability for external audiences, positioning both industry and the agency for the future.

The CFIA will also continue to expand its online services, delivering them in a more integrated manner. The agency will collaborate with other government departments and international partners to improve efficiency so that industry can be competitive at home and on the international stage.

Strengthening our future

Recently, public servants across the country took part in refining the ongoing journey of public service renewal. This culminated in Beyond2020, a refreshed framework with a focus on mindsets and behaviours. While Beyond2020 is about all public servants, CFIA 2025 represents our corporate vision and our priorities as an agency to keep moving forward in the spirit of Beyond2020. Both CFIA 2025 and Beyond2020 ask for us to be agile, as individuals and as an agency, and to respond to a rapidly changing environment with flexibility.

These initiatives aim to equip and enable us through training, efficient and effective processes and innovative tools. They count on us to embrace the diversity, experience and perspectives of our colleagues to ensure a healthy workplace built on inclusivity and respect. When we engage our colleagues, stakeholders, and partners, we are able to better understand and respond to their needs and include their perspectives when making decisions and developing new tools.

Recognizing the need for the ability to adapt and respond to new risks is imperative to building a future for the agency. The agency's goal must be continuous improvement.

CFIA 2025 looks to new ways of working for the future – both for the agency and for stakeholders. It will allow the CFIA to take steps to include better, more responsive programs and services that ultimately protect the safety of our food, plant and animal resources. As we position ourselves for the future, we will incorporate modern approaches and invest in technology, innovation, and a highly skilled workforce.

The agency will also continue to evolve as a global leader as it continues to actively pursue fairness in trade practices, influence international standards and enhance regulatory cooperation with foreign governments.

The CFIA is committed to ongoing communication and engagement with our internal and external stakeholders on key initiatives. We will continue to highlight the important work performed by our dedicated employees in various ways, including on-line through CFIA's [Chronicle 360](#) as well as social media platforms. Together with you, the agency can positively impact the lives of Canadians and shape our country's future, each and every day.