



# THE CANADIAN FOOD INSPECTION AGENCY (CFIA) INTRODUCTORY GUIDE FOR INDIGENOUS NATIONS, GOVERNANCE, AND COMMUNITIES

COMPONENT OF THE AFRICAN SWINE FEVER AWARENESS  
CAMPAIGN

Indigenous Science Office – 2025



Canadian Food  
Inspection Agency

Agence canadienne  
d'inspection des aliments

Canada



***The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) Introductory Guide for Indigenous Nations, Governance, and Communities***

Également disponible en français sous le titre : *Guide d'orientation à l'intention des communautés autochtones sur la peste porcine africaine*

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## INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) introductory guide outlines the high-level roles and responsibilities of the CFIA. It describes how people and branches function together in a regulatory environment to fulfill the CFIA's legislated mandate. Overall, the CFIA responds to existing and emerging risks involving farmed plants and animals as well as food safety.

The CFIA is the regulatory body responsible for overseeing the safety of Canada's food supply and protecting animal health and the plant resource base. The CFIA was created by the *Canadian Food Inspection Agency Act (1997)*.

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO RECONCILIATION

The CFIA is committed to Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples in Canada. Since 2018, the CFIA has been building and increasing its overall knowledge of Indigenous Science (ways of knowing), Indigenous relations and engagement, its Duty to Consult and cooperate, and aligning its policies and regulations with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (2021)*. Indigenous employees at the CFIA established the National Indigenous Advisory Circle (NIAC) in 2015 as a support group for Indigenous employees while also serving as an Indigenous advisory committee for Human Resource purposes at the Agency. The Indigenous Reconciliation Working Group (IRWG) was established in 2024 (by both the Policy and Science Branch) to foster cultural sensitivity and awareness of Indigenous peoples in Canada, across the CFIA's branches and business lines.



HOT ZONE

The CFIA is still on its learning journey to bettering its relations with Indigenous peoples in Canada. This introductory guide includes a great deal of information on how the CFIA has traditionally functioned. However, the CFIA is continuing to advance its knowledge and efforts in working more effectively and respectfully with Indigenous Nations and communities. For more information on the CFIA, or to speak to a CFIA employee about impacts to your community that fall under the CFIA mandate, please contact your regional Indigenous

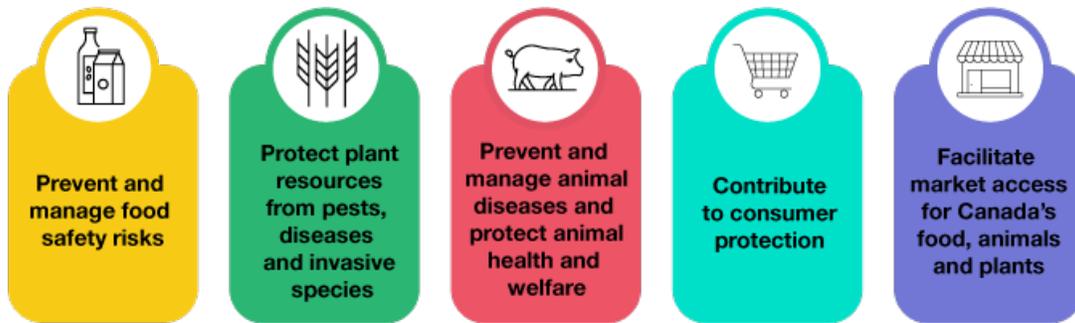
Liaison (contact information for CFIA's Indigenous Liaisons is listed under *OPERATIONS BRANCH* section of this document.

## LEGISLATED MANDATE, ROLES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Through safeguarding many things such as the animal and plant resource base, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is committed to protecting the health and well-being of people living in Canada, the environment, and its economy.

It is important that CFIA staff (approx. 6,000 full time employees) across all branches fulfil their specific mandated roles and responsibilities - both transparently and cooperatively - to effectively deliver CFIA programs and services!

The CFIA develops regulations and delivers inspection and other services to:



# APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

The CFIA is responsible for administering or enforcing all or part of 10 federal statutes. A total of 24 different sets of regulations flow from these Acts. **A full listing and breakdown of these Acts and Regulations is located in the CFIA Legislation Table in this document.**

## Legislative base CFIA-wide

- *Canadian Food Inspection Agency Act*
- *Agriculture and Agri-Food Administrative Monetary Penalties Act*

- *Fertilizers Act*
- *Plant Breeders' Rights Act*
- *Plant Protection Act*
- *Seeds Act*



- *Food and Drugs Act*
- *Safe Food for Canadians Act*

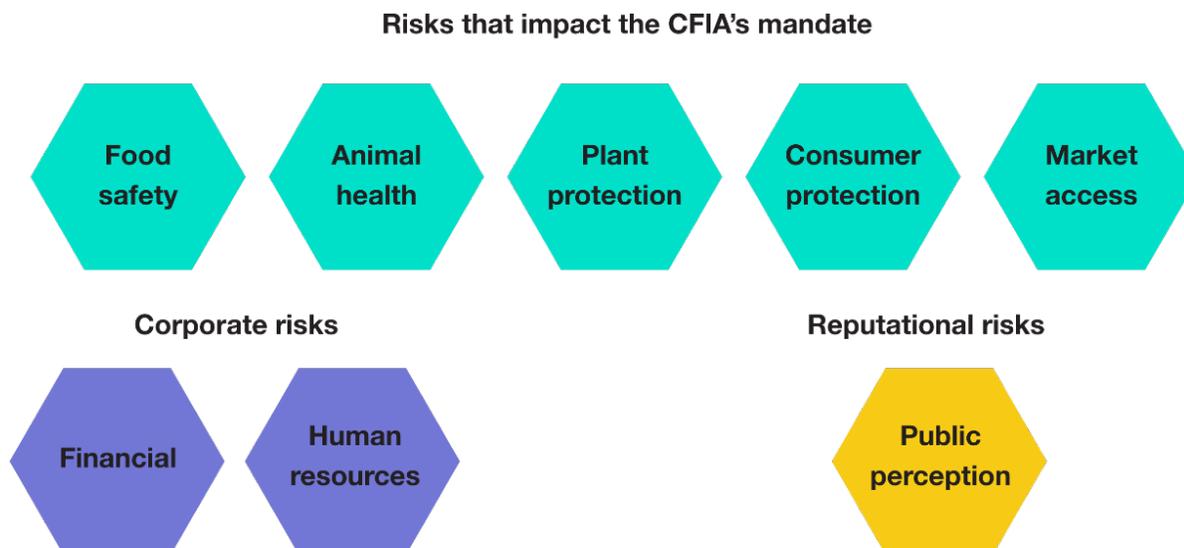


- *Health of Animals Act*
- *Feeds Act*



## THE CFIA - CORE FUNCTIONS

The CFIA manages multiple types of risks which include:



The CFIA maintains open communication and strong relationships with regulated parties, while continually adjusting program design and delivery to address new and emerging risk pathways. Risk involving “plant and animal health and food safety” regularly shifts since the business, commercial and industrial sectors are constantly evolving. As a regulator, the CFIA monitors and prioritizes the evaluation of business models, technologies and new innovative products and processes to make informed risk management decisions.

To do this, the CFIA takes an integrated approach to risk management, and works in collaboration and partnership with other government departments and agencies (federal, provincial, territorial and municipal) and engages consumers, industry, and academia. Mitigating these risks is the driving force behind the design, development, and implementation of CFIA programs and their regulatory frameworks. In designing and delivering its programs and services, the CFIA also considers stakeholder needs and feedback, operational efficiency, and a culture of service management excellence. This helps ensure that the CFIA provides quality services that are fair, accessible, efficient, and timely that promote confidence in the safety of Canada's plant, animal, and food resources.

The CFIA also wishes to be inclusive of feedback and input from Indigenous businesses. This assists the CFIA on bettering the design, development, and implementation of CFIA programs and delivery of its mandate to Indigenous peoples, while also reducing the historic barriers and adverse economic impacts experienced by Indigenous peoples in Canada. If you wish to benefit from CFIA services or want to know more about the CFIA mandate and its interaction with Aboriginal and Treaty rights, please reach out to your regional Indigenous Liaison.

The CFIA carries out four core functions to manage risks related to food, animals and plants while supporting innovation and market access. These functions are derived from the CFIA's suite of legislation and are displayed on the following table.

CORE FUNCTION	EXAMPLES INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:
<p><b>Assess risks and develop programs to manage them</b></p> 	<p>Conducts risk assessments and scientific research to inform program design and delivery, and the development of legislation and regulations. Works with other organizations to develop national and international standards.</p>
<p><b>Promote compliance</b></p> 	<p>Designs and develops guidance documents and similar products to help regulated parties understand and comply with legislated requirements.</p>
<p><b>Verify and enforce compliance</b></p> 	<p>Designs and carries out inspection and surveillance programs to verify compliance and takes action when products are not compliant (such as seizing or recalling products, revoking registrations or licenses, issuing administrative monetary penalties or ordering removal of imported products). Potential actions taken in any given situation depend on the actual facts of the matter and on the legislation under which the requirements are set.</p>
<p><b>Provide services to mitigate risks and support market access</b></p> 	<p>Issues export certificates and import permits for animal health and plant protection purposes, provides licenses to grant regulatory permissions to food businesses, and registers veterinary biologics, livestock feed, fertilizers and seed varieties.</p>

## OVERARCHING LEADERSHIP - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Ministerial responsibility for the CFIA's activities is shared between the Minister of Health and the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food. The Ministers work together to collaboratively advance initiatives that cross areas of responsibilities.

### MINISTER OF HEALTH

The Minister of Health is responsible for the **overall direction** of the CFIA and for all activities related to **food safety**. This minister holds the powers and carries out the functions that are related to food safety under any act the CFIA administers or enforces.

As the minister responsible for the CFIA, the Minister of Health can do the following:

- order a recall when there are reasonable grounds that a product poses a risk to public, animal or plant health;
- enter into agreements with provincial governments for services and activities related to the CFIA's mandate;
- set the fees to be paid for services provided by the CFIA;
- report to Parliament on the activities of the CFIA, including tabling the corporate business plan and annual report; and
- support the establishment and appoint members to the Ministerial Advisory Board.

With respect to food safety in particular, the Minister of Health enables the CFIA to protect Canadians from food safety risks by doing the following:

- leading the development and renewal of legislation, regulations and policy related to food safety (such as Memoranda to Cabinet and Treasury Board submissions);
- delegating food safety-related powers and duties set out in laws to CFIA officials;
- leading international co-operation and technical assistance activities related to food safety, including international standard setting on food safety; and
- leading public communications for all activities related to food safety.

### MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND AGRI-FOOD

The Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food is responsible for promoting a competitive, innovative, and sustainable Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector.

With respect to the CFIA, the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food holds the powers and carries out the functions under any Act the CFIA administers or enforces related to animal



health, seed quality, plant protection, feed, fertilizer, plant breeders' rights, non-food safety agricultural activities, and economic and trade facilitation.

The Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food enables the CFIA to fulfill its responsibilities by doing the following:

- leading the development and renewal of non-food safety related legislation and policy (such as Memoranda to Cabinet and Treasury Board submissions);
- delegating non-food safety related powers and functions set out in laws to CFIA officials;
- setting the strategic direction for trade policy related to agriculture and food (including the CFIA's market access facilitation efforts) and negotiating scientific and technical issues with foreign trading partners (for example, conditions Canadian exporters need to meet to sell their agricultural and agri-food products abroad); and
- leading public communications for agricultural activities that are not related to food safety.

## **PRESIDENT OF THE CFIA**

The President of the CFIA provides leadership, promotes collaboration across the public service, and encourages innovation and a results-oriented organizational environment within the CFIA.

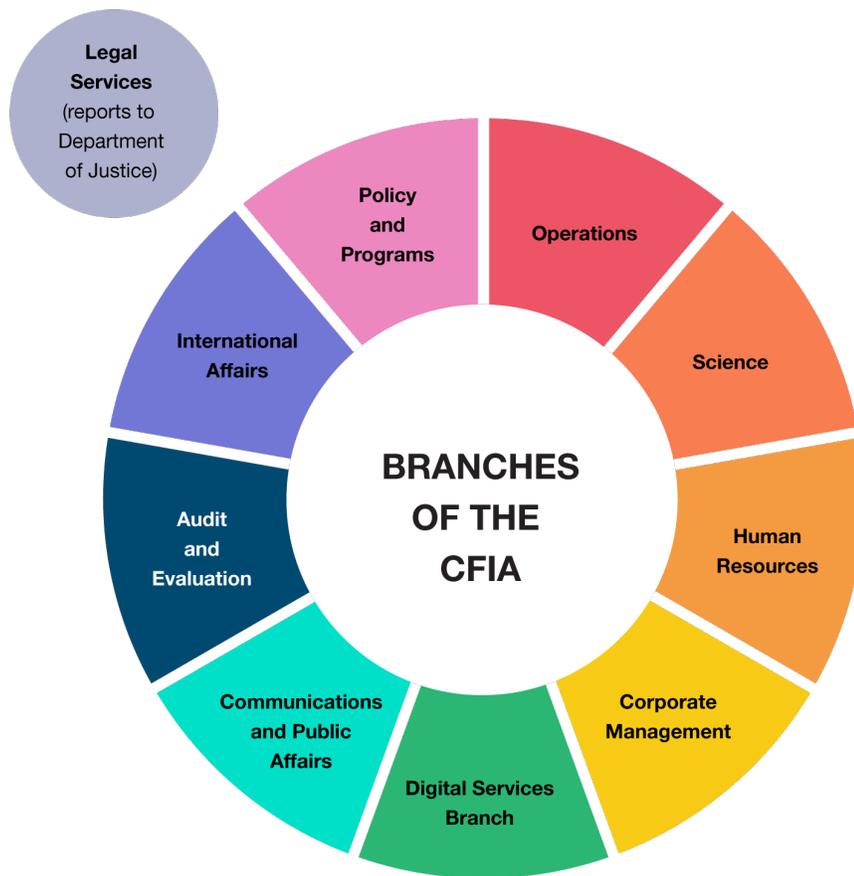
The President is responsible for supporting the Minister of Health and Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food in fulfilling their responsibilities and for managing and directing the work and staff of the CFIA.

## OVERVIEW OF CFIA BRANCH ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The CFIA President strategically organizes branch roles and responsibilities to reflect how the agency:

- Delivers on the CFIA mandate.
- Contributes to an integrated approach to managing risk across business lines.
- Supports market access.

Branches carry out the roles assigned to them by the President, and exercise responsibilities in accordance with laws and Government of Canada policies and processes.



In addition to helping carry out the CFIA's core functions, each branch has specific responsibilities related to supporting and enabling policy development, program design or program delivery. The branches work together so that CFIA programs and services are delivered in a coordinated and integrated manner.

The following section provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of each branch. While each branch generally leads initiatives related to their respective roles, individuals in other branches may provide support. This flexible model ensures effective use of individual talents and expertise to achieve Agency objectives.

The teams at the CFIA that have primary responsibilities in handling files that have intersectional considerations involving Indigenous peoples, communities, and Nations (and their associated food, plant and animal businesses) have been identified in **red**.

## 1. POLICY AND PROGRAMS BRANCH (PPB)

Develops strategic program policy and designs programs at the CFIA.

**The CFIA's Office of Diversity and Indigenous Policy is located within PPB.**

### **Advice and direction**

- Provides strategic policy and program advice and interpretation, including in relation to legislation and regulations and leads the development, revision and implementation of policies and programs.
- Leads risk management and risk communications, and coordinates input from others to make well informed risk management decisions.
- Contributes to the CFIA's participation at international standard setting organizations.
- Sets domestic requirements and import conditions for the entry of food, plants, and animals into Canada.

### **Permissions**

- Provides regulatory permissions such as pre-market assessments for animal and plant products.

### **Coordination**

- Coordinates and directs horizontal processes to integrate programs across the CFIA, including parliamentary affairs, ministerial correspondence, and cabinet affairs.

### **Engagement**

- Leads stakeholder engagement in relation to legislation, regulations, and program development (or re-design), with:
  - consumer associations;
  - national industry associations;
  - federal/provincial/territorial stakeholders and bodies; and
  - other government departments.

## 2. OPERATIONS BRANCH

Leads the front-line delivery and enforcement of CFIA programs.

**The CFIA's Indigenous Liaisons work in Operations Branch.**

<b>Atlantic Region – Danielle Martin</b> Email: Danielle.Martin@inspection.gc.ca	<b>Ontario Region – Jennifer Ambrogio</b> Email: Jennifer.Ambrogio@inspection.gc.ca
<b>Quebec Region – Iaskenia Sioui</b> Email: Iaskenia.Sioui@inspection.gc.ca	<b>West Region – Lindsay Happyjack</b> lindsay.happyjack@inspection.gc.ca

### **Advice and direction**

- Sets operational policies<sup>1</sup> and procedures and provides guidance on how to carry out inspection programs.

### **Compliance**

- Verifies compliance of regulated parties against requirements, initiates control measures in response to risk, and takes enforcement action in response to non-compliance.
- Responds to threats to human, animal and plant health through food recalls, and emergency management response.

### **Engagement**

- Leads senior executive outreach, and federal/provincial/territorial and stakeholder engagement, in relation to program delivery.

### **Permissions**

- Provides regulatory permissions such as food, plant and animal registrations, licences, permits, ministerial exemptions and authorizations.
- Provides other market services, such as export certificates.

### **Surveillance**

- Provides oversight and validation of inspection programs and conducts surveillance to collect information on risks.

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<sup>1</sup> Operational policies provide guidance for program delivery. They describe how to deliver the elements of the program design.

- Analyzes operational information and data (i.e.: inspection results, samples, compliance data) to inform risk-based decision making.

### 3. THE SCIENCE BRANCH

Provides scientific advice and laboratory services to support policy development, program design, regulatory decisions, and operational delivery.

**The CFIA's Indigenous Science Office is located within the Science Branch.**

#### ***Advice and direction***

- Provides risk assessment, risk intelligence, foresight information and laboratory services to support food safety, animal and plant health, and market access.
- Conducts regulatory research and develops testing methods to inform risk management, including risk communications and response to threats.

#### ***Compliance***

- Provides oversight of Canadian laboratories accredited or recognized by the CFIA (federal, provincial, university, private, etc.) in the areas of biosafety and biocontainment, as well as quality management and accreditation.

#### ***Surveillance***

- Designs, develops, and manages surveys and surveillance to detect, monitor and confirm the presence or absence of known and emerging threats.

#### ***Engagement***

- Leads engagement with scientific experts through partnerships with other government departments, universities, and national and international networks.

#### ***Permissions***

- Provides regulatory permissions such as import permits for animal pathogens.

### 4. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS BRANCH

Brings focus and accountability to international activities within the CFIA and AAFC, to better advance the Government's market access and trade agenda.

#### ***Advice and direction***

- Conducts multi-lateral and bilateral negotiations on technical requirements to facilitate trade.

- Leads and/or contributes to CFIA's participation at international standard setting organizations.

### **Engagement**

- Leads stakeholder engagement in relation to import and/or export requirements, standard setting, and international trade policy with:
  - foreign competent authorities;
  - international stakeholders and bodies; and
  - other government departments.

### **Support and Coordination**

- Leads the development of international frameworks, strategies, cross-cutting regulatory cooperation policy and the strategic food safety dialogue.
- Provides leadership to align priorities and integrate efforts to increase the effectiveness of the Agency's international activities with a whole of government approach.

## **5. DIGITAL SERVICES BRANCH**

Works horizontally to drive change through integrated business risk management, information management, innovation, business development and technology solutions.

### **Advice and direction**

- Provides data analytics and business intelligence to inform business lines on integrated business risk management.
- Provides business and service development expertise to support innovation and continuous improvement.
- Provides design expertise and technical support to develop information technology solutions to support business transactions.
- Provides direction, advice, and centralized services in the areas of information management and information technology (IMIT) and information security.

### **Support and Coordination**

- Supports business risk management decisions, provides coordination support to the business lines, and supports sound Agency information management practices.
- Supports innovation to test new hypotheses and ideas.

## 6. COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS BRANCH

Provides strategic communications advice and delivers communication services for internal and external audiences.

### **Advice and direction**

- Provides communications advice and direction on Agency priorities, in collaboration with Agency colleagues and Ministers' offices.
- Provides stakeholder engagement advice to employees.
- Works with colleagues within the CFIA, across the government and in other organizations to develop and deliver communication services and products.
- Coordinates and directs the CFIA's implementation of the Policy on Communications and Federal Identity and its related procedures.

### **Compliance and Engagement**

- Verifies that communications initiatives are aligned with the CFIA and Government of Canada priorities and policies.
- Provides information to the public, media, and employees about CFIA programs and services.
- Develops communications products and services for industry stakeholders to promote compliance with regulations.
- Supports industry and government stakeholder engagement activities.

### **Coordination**

- Leads senior executive outreach and events in the national capital region.

## 7. CORPORATE MANAGEMENT BRANCH

Provides strategic advice, functional direction and delivers professional services in financial and asset management, corporate planning, and reporting, as well as security and procurement.

### **Advice and direction**

- Develops, manages, and delivers a broad spectrum of policies, solutions, systems, processes, services, and strategic advice for its functional authority areas.

### **Compliance and Engagement**

- Manages the Agency's planning, reporting and control frameworks, and compliance with legislation and policy instruments for its functional authority areas.

- Promotes an organizational culture of partnership in sound stewardship of public resources and assets, including security awareness.

### ***Support and Coordination***

- Acts as the primary contact point with the Office of the Comptroller General of Canada and the Treasury Board Secretariat on all planning, reporting and resource management matters, and maintains key linkages and relationships with federal partners.
  - Provides leadership, sound stewardship, and enabling services for:
    - corporate planning and reporting and performance management;
    - budgeting and resource allocation and financial management;
    - investment and project management and procurement and contracting;
    - asset management and security; and
    - facilities and real property management and environmental management.

## **8. HUMAN RESOURCES BRANCH (HR)**

Sets the policies and procedures for managing human resources and is accountable for reconciling business needs and ensuring the business has the talent it needs to effectively meet business goals.

### **The CFIA's Indigenous HR is located within the Human Resources Branch**

#### ***Advice and direction***

- Develops and implements plans, policies, and programs to recruit, train, develop and retain people.
- Ensures the Agency has modern human resources tools, processes, and sound organizational structures.
- Negotiates the terms and conditions of employment.
- Monitors and supports the application of human resources legislative obligations for the CFIA, including official languages, labour code, etc.

#### ***Compliance and Engagement***

- Promotes the employee experience and champions workplace wellness, a respectful workplace, linguistic duality, diversity, mental health, and workplace safety.
- Manages the CFIA's interpretation of, and compliance with, human resources legislation, policies, guidelines, and processes.

- Monitors and reports on human resources programs and recommendations for improvement to senior management.

#### ***Support and Coordination***

- Supports CFIA management in the areas of workforce planning, talent management, staffing, classification and organizational design, labour relations, grievance management, training, official languages, human resources reporting and compensation.

## **10. AUDIT AND EVALUATION BRANCH**

Leads internal audits and evaluations.

#### ***Advice and direction***

- Provides assurance and/ or advice with respect to governance, risk management and the effectiveness of the management control framework.
- Delivers a suite of evaluation services that provide senior management with relevant, reliable, and timely information and advice to improve the performance of CFIA programs and services.
- Provides advice on emerging risks facing the Agency and across the Government of Canada.

#### ***Support and Coordination***

- Works collaboratively with internal and external stakeholders, including supporting and coordinating the CFIA Audit Committee and the Performance Measurement and Evaluation Committee.
- Coordinates with the Office of the Auditor General and other external assurance providers on external audits and assessments.

## **11. LEGAL SERVICES UNIT**

#### ***Support and Coordination***

- The Legal Services Unit reports to the Department of Justice (DOJ) and acts as the legal advisor to the CFIA on all matters of law connected with the CFIA. Legal Services provides legal advisory services on policies, programs and operations, compliance and enforcement matters, the development of legislative acts and regulations, as well as

agreements and arrangements. Legal Services also plays a role in supporting and coordinating legal proceedings involving the CFIA.

## INTEGRATED RISK AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

To fulfill its mandate, the CFIA identifies and manages risks on behalf of the public in Canada across its three business lines: food, animal, and plant health. The CFIA takes an integrated business approach to managing risk, which allows the organization to make more informed decisions on how it carries out and manages its core functions and resources. An ongoing, agency-wide risk management approach enables the CFIA to systematically assess risk in an integrated and transparent way and allocate resources to areas of greatest impact. In this way, the CFIA works to continuously align efforts such that risk and resources are optimized within and across business lines and branches.

Each of the branches that make up the CFIA (as described in “Overview of Key Branch Roles and Responsibilities”) contribute to delivering programs under and across the three business lines. The following mechanisms are in place to support coordinated and cohesive decision-making among and within business lines:

- Business line management boards (BMBs) provide strategic leadership as it relates to oversight and risk-informed decision-making for the business line. The chair of each BMB is accountable for the overall performance of the business line, including integrated planning, priority setting, and resource allocation.
- Horizontal issues that impact more than one business line are discussed by experts and managers across the business lines through horizontal management governance committees.



## THE CFIA LEGISLATION TABLE

BUSINESS LINE	LEGISLATION	PURPOSE
	<i>Canadian Food Inspection Agency Act</i>	<p>Establishes the CFIA, which is responsible for administering/enforcing various legislation related to food, animal health and plant health. The Act also sets out</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The responsibilities of the President of the CFIA, the Minister of Health.</li> <li>○ The powers of the CFIA, as well as its accountability, organization, human and financial resources regimes.</li> <li>○ The reporting framework of the CFIA.</li> </ul>
	<i>Agriculture and Agri-Food Administrative Monetary Penalties Act (AAMPA)</i>	<p>Establishes an administrative monetary penalty system that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Provides the CFIA with an additional means to encourage compliance with CFIA legislation.</li> <li>○ Supplements existing enforcement measures.</li> </ul> <p>Currently, the AAMPA allows designated CFIA officials to issue a warning or a penalty in cases of non-compliance with specified provisions of the <i>Health of Animals Act</i>, the <i>Plant Protection Act</i>, the <i>Safe Food for Canadians Act</i>, and their regulations.</p>
<b>FOOD</b>  	<i>Food and Drugs Act</i>	Establishes a framework for protecting consumers in matters of health and safety, as well as marketplace deception, regarding food, drugs, cosmetics, and medical devices.
	<i>Safe Food for Canadians Act</i>	<p>Protects food safety and consumers in Canada by regulating food commodities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Their inspection, safety, labeling, and advertising.</li> <li>○ Their import, export, and interprovincial trade.</li> <li>○ Establishing standards for them.</li> <li>○ Registering or licensing persons performing certain activities related to food.</li> <li>○ Establishing standards and providing registrations for establishments where food-related activities are performed.</li> </ul> <p>This Act consolidated the authorities of the <i>Fish Inspection Act</i>, the <i>Canada Agricultural Products Act</i>, the <i>Meat Inspection Act</i>,</p>



and the food provisions of the *Consumer Packaging and Labelling Act*.

**PLANT**



<i>Fertilizers Act</i>	Regulates the import and sale of fertilizers and supplements and provides for authority to prescribe standards and packaging and labelling requirements and to inspect and sample products for compliance purposes.
<i>Plant Breeders' Rights Act</i>	Protects plant breeders' rights, which are a form of intellectual property rights, relating to propagating material. This includes seeds for sowing and any part of the plant that may be used for propagation.
<i>Plant Protection Act</i>	Regulates the import, export and spread of pests that are injurious to plants, provides for their control and eradication and for the certification of plants.
<i>Seeds Act</i>	Regulates the quality standards, grades and labelling requirements for seeds sold in Canada and provides the authority to inspect and sample seeds for compliance purposes and for the registration of varieties.

**ANIMAL HEALTH**



<i>Feeds Act</i>	Regulates the import, manufacture, and sale of livestock feeds. The Act also provides for the authority to prescribe standards, packaging, and labelling requirements and to inspect and sample products for compliance purposes.
<i>Health of Animals Act</i>	<p>Protects human and animal health by controlling diseases and toxic substances in animals and their products.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Regulates the importation of animals and animal products into Canada to prevent the spread of animal diseases.</li> <li>○ Regulates the export of animals, the eradication of animal diseases, the humane transportation of animals, and the purity, potency, efficacy, and safety of veterinary biologics.</li> </ul>

