

# Animal Health Policy in British Columbia: A Consultation Paper

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## 1. Introduction

Animal health is important for British Columbia to support food safety and to maintain a strong, competitive agriculture industry. To ensure that British Columbia can effectively manage future animal health risks, the Ministry of Agriculture is conducting a review of the provincial animal health policy direction. The *Animal Disease Control Act* is the central legislation in BC, and is supported by several other Acts, regulations, as well as policies and practices (see Appendix 2).

A sound BC animal health policy framework (including legislation, regulation and policy) should:

- Protect human health.
- Minimize the negative economic impact of animal disease outbreaks.
- Support the continued productivity and competitiveness of livestock operations.
- Strengthen the confidence of interprovincial and international trading partners.

## 2. Providing Feedback

As part of this review, the Ministry of Agriculture is seeking the views of a broad audience, including the public, veterinarians, animal health labs, and livestock producers, through web-based public consultation on the consultation paper.

The consultation paper is organized as follows. Section 3 provides background information on animal health management. Section 4 discusses the key aspects of provincial animal health management, provides some information on the changes being considered in BC, and presents the key consultation questions that guide feedback.

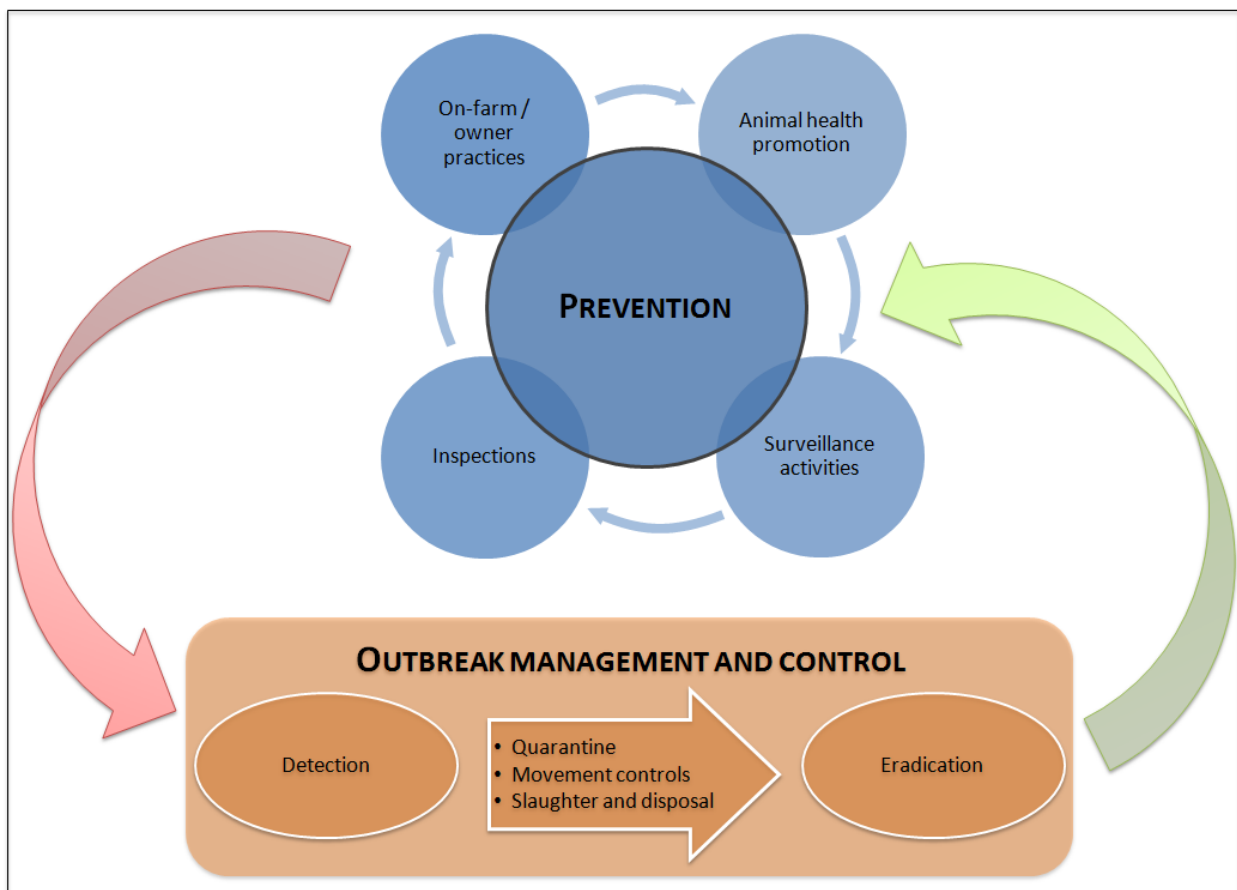
Feedback on proposed changes to animal health management in BC can be provided at <http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/ahb/>. To start responding to the questions click on the feedback survey link at the website. Your views, suggestions, and input are very important in helping us to develop BC's provincial policy direction for managing animal health.

Your feedback is required before January 23, 2011.

### 3. Background

Management of animal health primarily focuses on disease prevention activities, which include animal health promotion, on-farm practices, surveillance activities, and inspections (see Figure 1). Many of these activities require close collaboration between government, animal owners, veterinarians, industry associations and others. Prevention relies on sharing new information, and the voluntary adoption of new animal health practices in order to manage endemic diseases and reduce the risk of disease outbreaks. Occasionally, an outbreak of a highly infectious or contagious disease can occur, resulting in an animal health emergency. Government authorities are then required to act quickly, in cooperation with farmers, veterinarians, and other partners, to manage and eradicate the outbreak.

Figure 1. Animal Health Management



Animal disease outbreaks can result in significant economic impacts. Highly infectious or contagious diseases can cause significant morbidity and mortality resulting in substantial economic losses to livestock owners. The avian influenza outbreak of 2004 in BC's Fraser Valley lasted 91 days, resulted in more than 17 million birds being culled and 410 commercial poultry farms being emptied, and had gross economic costs exceeding \$380 million.<sup>1</sup> Disease outbreaks can also lead to international/national trade

<sup>1</sup> Victoria A. Bowes (2007) After the Outbreak: How the British Columbia Commercial Poultry Industry Recovered After H7N3 HPAI, *Avian Diseases*, March, 51(s1), pp. 313-316.

closures thus affecting an entire industry or sector. In the case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), economic losses amounted to \$6.3 billion due to over 40 countries closing their borders to Canadian beef and other ruminants.<sup>2</sup> In the event of a significant animal disease outbreak economic hardship will also be felt by sectors and communities that depend on these sectors.

Animal diseases can also have human health implications, sometimes through direct transmission to humans (called zoonotic diseases) and other times through contaminating animal products or by-products. In an interconnected global economy, animal diseases can easily be transmitted and spread quickly, carried by animals, animal products and by-products,<sup>3</sup> or a variety of fomites and vectors.<sup>4</sup> In new environments, the development and spread of diseases can also be unpredictable. Many new and emerging human health threats have their origins in animal diseases, as seen in 2009 with the H1N1 influenza virus.

With growing public awareness of food safety and human health, it is important for British Columbians to have an effective animal health management system in place. Ultimately, the successful management of animal health relies on a government system that supports good practices by farmers and other animal owners.

In Canada, government management of animal health is an area of shared federal and provincial responsibility (see Appendix 1). Federal responsibility is for trade limiting diseases. The federal government has been effective in dealing with a variety of past disease outbreaks in BC, including avian influenza and BSE. However, the swift containment and eradication of an animal disease outbreak requires support from both levels of government. It is important for BC to have the authority to act on a broad range of animal diseases including trade limiting diseases,<sup>5</sup> production limiting diseases, and zoonotic diseases.

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<sup>2</sup> Verna Mitura and Lina Di Pietro (2004) Canada's Beef Cattle Sector and the Impact of BSE on Farm Family Income, 2000-2003, Statistics Canada, Agriculture and Rural Working Paper Series No. 69, June. (<http://dsp-psd.pwgsc.gc.ca/Collection/Statcan/21-601-MIE/21-601-MIE2004069.pdf>)

<sup>3</sup> Animal products include meat, milk, and reproductive material, among other things. Animal by-products are biodegradable animal wastes consisting of animal carcasses, parts of animal carcasses, animal products not intended for human consumption.

<sup>4</sup> Vectors and fomites are things that can carry disease. A fomite is an inanimate object or substance that transmits a disease from one individual to another. Grooming supplies, farm equipment, or bedding are all examples of fomites. A vector is a living organism, often an insect, that transmits a disease.

<sup>5</sup> Production limiting diseases are generally diseases that reduce the productivity of livestock operations. Some production limiting diseases that may require additional provincial attention could include diseases that are foreign to some parts of the province, while endemic to others, or diseases where there is a risk that their virulence could increase.

## 4. Discussion

Animal health management involves two broad sets of activities: prevention, and outbreak management and control. The delivery of these two activities is supported by having appropriate information tracking and administrative processes in place. Currently in BC, policy direction has not been developed to support all aspects of this overall framework.

These four broad components provide the framework for specific changes being contemplated. Specifically, this section is organized around the following individual topics:

1. General
2. Prevention
  - Reporting
  - Surveillance activities
  - Inspections
3. Outbreak management and control
  - Quarantine
  - Surveillance zones
  - Control zones
  - Destruction and disposal
4. Information tracking
  - Traceability
  - Licensing
5. Administrative processes
  - Appeals
  - Offences and penalties
  - Collection, use and disposal of information

### 4.1. General

Although there are many concepts involved in animal health policy, there are two particular concepts that cut across all aspects of animal health policy and are important to consider when reading the remainder of this paper. Integrating these concepts into BC's animal health policy direction could expand how animal health is managed in BC.

**Animal:** Effectively managing the full range of animal health risks requires a definition of animal that includes all non-human animals. Although the practical focus of most animal health management activities would still be livestock and farm animals this definition would potentially encompass pets, wildlife, fish and other aquatic animals. The way that animal diseases would be managed would differ by the type of animal.

**Disease:** An animal disease is any change in the normal functioning of an animal's body caused by an agent. Agents associated with animal diseases can be grouped into two broad categories:

- Living agents include viruses, bacteria, rickettsia, protozoa, helminths, arthropods, and others.

- Non-living agents include toxins, and other biological, chemical or physical agents (e.g. heavy metals, dioxins).

Although the diseases caused by living agents are typically the primary concern in managing animal health, there are also other agents that can compromise an animal's health creating production losses or possible risks to human health. Diseases caused by non-living agents are (generally) not contagious and are managed differently than other animal diseases. Recently, both Alberta and Ontario have expanded their focus to include a broad range of animal health diseases.

#### 4.1.1. Consultation Questions

1. Do you support a more comprehensive approach to animal health management that moves beyond livestock to include all non-human animals?
2. Do you support an approach to animal health management that considers a broad range of animal diseases?

## 4.2. Prevention

Strong prevention is the foundation of managing animal health. Preventative actions minimize the risk and impact of a disease becoming established. This includes sound on-farm practices, the promotion of farm animal health through education/information sharing, and biosecurity programs developed for, and with, the agriculture (and aquaculture) sector to reduce the risk of diseases being introduced. Surveillance activities, such as sampling to determine if diseases exist and the extent of their distribution, are particularly important in detecting emerging diseases not previously seen in the province. Prevention requires the support of the agriculture sector to be effective, to help detect the possible presence of animal diseases, and to facilitate timely follow-up by officials.

### 4.2.1. Reporting

To minimize the impact of any animal disease incident, timely reporting of information on infected animals from individuals working with the animals and a clear process for reporting the animal diseases are needed. Any lag time in reporting can lead to more serious consequences. Prompt reporting by anyone who should reasonably know about an animal disease is essential to help understand the disease, contain it and minimize its impact/spread.

Animal diseases that pose a serious animal health threat are commonly defined as "reportable". They are reportable because they pose a significant threat to trade, production or even human health and are managed actively to minimize the risk of spread. "Notifiable" diseases are less severe than reportable diseases, and are managed passively through monitoring. These terms are accepted internationally as a way of categorizing and reporting on animal health diseases.

The provincial requirement to report diseases is currently limited to individuals who are in possession of, or in charge of, animals. At present BC's dated policy to report diseases to provincial animal health authorities focuses on two diseases; tuberculosis and brucellosis which are also reportable federally. BC

also requires notification for a small number of additional diseases<sup>6</sup>. However, under federal law there is a more extensive list of other diseases that are reportable or notifiable.

BC is considering adopting the terms reportable and notifiable as a clear means of communicating with industry and other government agencies. Developing and issuing a list of reportable and notifiable diseases would provide greater clarity regarding diseases that pose a significant risk in BC, and a list of potential reportable and notifiable diseases is provided in Appendix 3. BC is considering requiring anyone who deals with animals to notify provincial officials in the event of a confirmed or suspected case of a reportable disease. Alternatively, the requirement to report could be limited to a specific list of people such as animal owners, veterinarians, and livestock dealers.

#### 4.2.2. Surveillance Activities

Surveillance generally involves keeping close watch on animal health issues. It is an essential part of government's prevention management. Effective surveillance activities are required for the early detection of both emerging animal diseases and some diseases that are endemic to BC (e.g., detecting increases in virulence or mutations). Surveillance can include random or targeted sampling or testing of animals for multiple diseases, as well as sampling and testing of animal products, by-products or feed. Sampling sources could include farms, public sale yards and slaughterhouses<sup>7</sup>, but may, in the case of farm animals, need to include any segment in the animal production/processing chain. Surveillance activities would normally be carried out by government veterinarians, but some activities could potentially be done by other government staff (e.g., compliance and enforcement officers) or contracted out (e.g., to private veterinarians). It is important to note that surveillance activities extend beyond government actions and rely on a high level of awareness of animal health issues by all individuals handling animals.

Inadequate surveillance activities and tools can delay the identification of a disease and can result in the establishment of a disease, which may have significant effects on the viability of a farm operation. Information gathered through surveillance activities is also essential for demonstrating that a farm, geographic area or the province is disease free. The inability to conclusively demonstrate that an area is disease-free can affect consumer confidence and potentially result in interprovincial and international border closures.

BC's animal health framework currently does not include surveillance. Any surveillance actions carried out by the province have been done under delegated authority from the federal government for federally listed diseases, or occasionally on a voluntary basis in partnership with industry. A proactive provincial surveillance system for animal diseases will help protect both animal and human health, as well as animal productivity and market access.

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<sup>6</sup> Currently listed "infectious or contagious diseases" listed in the *Animal Disease Control Act* or its accompanying regulation are: tuberculosis, brucellosis, swine plague, caseous lymphadenitis, equine encephalomyelitis, foot rot in sheep, distemper in fur bearers, infectious laryngotracheitis, mycoplasma gallisepticum, influenza A, and Newcastle disease.

<sup>7</sup> Slaughterhouses that slaughter and process meat for human consumption are regulated under the Meat Inspection Regulation under the *Food Safety Act* of the Ministry of Health.

### 4.2.3. Inspections

Upon being informed of a confirmed or suspected reportable disease it is important to conduct a more thorough inspection. An inspection could include the examination of infected animals (alive and dead) and testing or taking of samples from other animals (potential carriers or vectors), animal products, animal by-products, feed, transportation vehicles, or other potential fomites. An inspection can also include obtaining animal records, such as the age, origin and previous diseases.

Inspections would be completed by government-certified inspectors, which may include government veterinarians, other government staff, or private individuals such as veterinarians. Clearly specifying an inspector's powers and authorities allows government to efficiently and transparently deal with affected farms or animal owners. Being able to certify individuals as inspectors as needed, allows government to rapidly draw on the skills and regional availability of qualified professionals who can act quickly. Transparency facilitates positive interactions between farmers and officials in difficult times, such as during the management of an outbreak. All inspectors need the ability to collect and obtain critical information required to assess an animal disease. If critical information is missed during an inspection, an improper diagnosis may be made or inadequate controls may be implemented. Although inspectors may need to act in other circumstances, particularly related to reportable diseases, their powers become critical during a suspected animal disease outbreak.

Currently, BC does not specify what an inspector can inspect, what they can or cannot sample, or what can be removed from a premise for testing. Providing clarity on the extent of an inspector's authority, ensures transparency and fairness in dealing with animal owners.

### 4.2.4. Consultation Questions

3. Should there be provincially mandatory reporting of both reportable and notifiable diseases?
4. Should any diseases be added to, or removed from, the proposed list of reportable and notifiable diseases? (See Appendix 3)
5. Who should be responsible for reporting animal diseases?
6. How should government's powers to conduct surveillance activities be specified to ensure that they benefit animal owners and effectively manage animal health risks?
7. What duties responsibilities and authorities should an inspector have in determining the presence and extent of a disease?
8. Please provide any additional comments you may have related to prevention activities.

## 4.3. Outbreak Management and Control

An animal disease outbreak is an emergency management situation and quick, effective management actions are required to contain and eradicate the disease, minimize the negative consequences and speed the recovery. Overall, there have been few animal disease outbreaks in BC; however when an outbreak occurs, appropriate actions, based on sound analysis and diagnosis, need to be implemented as soon as possible. The extent and rigour of management actions depends on the specific disease and the level of the outbreak. Typically one or more of the following actions are commonly undertaken to control an outbreak:



- Quarantine
- Surveillance zones
- Control zones
- Destruction and disposal

In the past, BC has relied quite heavily on federal authority to manage animal disease outbreaks. However, it is important that the province have complementary authority to implement management action so that it can act when needed, independent of the federal government, to address a broader range of animal diseases that could have significant negative implications for productivity, animal well-being, or human health.<sup>8</sup> Nationally and internationally there is a well-established suite of management actions necessary to control outbreaks, and the province does not currently have the tools to take many of these actions.

#### 4.3.1. Quarantine

Quarantine is usually the first action to be taken to control an outbreak. Although quarantine implies a single action of isolating an animal or premise, it is in fact a comprehensive tool for controlling the spread of an animal disease, and it enables many actions to be taken at the same time. Quarantines are generally implemented through orders that define the various specific actions that must be taken within a timeframe to eradicate the disease. The requirements may pertain to cleaning and disinfecting practices, animal vaccination, specific animal care and feeding requirements, and restrictions on the movement of vehicles or other things that may be infected (i.e. fomites).

Items eligible to be quarantined include animals, animal products and by-products, any item believed to be contaminated by the disease, and any premise (e.g., farm, sale yard, co-mingling areas, animal processing plant). BCs currently has policy direction that enables the quarantine of any animal with only an infectious or contagious disease and does not specify the actions that can be taken. BC is considering providing additional guidance on what can be quarantined, the matters that a quarantine order can address, who can issue a quarantine order, and how or when a quarantine can be lifted.

#### 4.3.2. Surveillance Zones

Often a surveillance zone is put in place surrounding the quarantined area to determine whether the disease may have escaped the quarantine area. A surveillance zone is an additional geographically defined protective measure used to manage an outbreak. BC currently has no formal policy direction on the establishment of surveillance zones. When surveillance zones were required in the past in BC, they have been implemented under federal authority.

BC would like to develop policy direction on the establishment of surveillance zones as part of a complete package of outbreak management controls. The direction would likely include information such as the maximum area of a surveillance zone, how a surveillance order must be issued, who can issue a surveillance zone order, and the conditions that could be placed on premises or animals within a surveillance zone.

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<sup>8</sup> Federal responsibility is for trade limiting diseases.

#### 4.3.3. Control Zones

During an outbreak, it may be necessary to control the movement of animals, animal products and by-products in and out of areas beyond quarantine and surveillance areas. Establishing control zones in certain areas helps minimize the risk of animal disease entering from or spreading to other jurisdictions (within BC, Canada, or internationally). There may also be times when a control zone would be established as a preventative measure to proactively prevent the spread of a disease into or out of a region. Control zones may be used to establish export/import controls or border control zones, but these instances would likely be quite rare, and would involve significant federal and inter-provincial collaboration.

Providing authority and policy direction to establish control zones in BC would provide the province with a more complete toolkit with regard to management actions needed to limit or prevent the spread of a disease.

#### 4.3.4. Destruction and Disposal

Another necessary tool for eradicating disease is to humanely destroy and dispose of infected animals, animal products and by-products. When there is no risk to human health or food safety, animal slaughter and consumption is the preferred option for livestock that are raised for meat and are mature. The direction to destroy animals is usually done by order, which includes details such as the method of destruction and the timeframe by which the destruction and disposal must be carried out.

The destruction and disposal of diseased animals in BC has in the past relied on federal authority and action. Under the federal *Health of Animals Act*, the federal minister of agriculture may pay for animals ordered destroyed or disposed and may pay up to a maximum amount by species. In BC, we have relied on the federal framework to pay for animals destroyed as a result of a federally listed animal disease, as was the case with avian influenza in 2004.

British Columbia would like to revise and clarify existing policy regarding the destruction and disposal of animals. Specifically, the province would like to clarify under what circumstances an animal can be destroyed, the method of destruction, the timeframe within which actions must be taken, and what may need to be destroyed (in addition to animals). There is also no guidance on appropriate disposal of diseased animals which is important in preventing further infection. Options for disposal would vary based on the number of dead animals and size. The province needs to be able to act independently of the federal government specifically in the case of diseases that do not fall under the federal mandate.

#### 4.3.5. Consultation Questions

9. Would the producers and the province benefit from more clearly defining the range of outbreak control actions (e.g., quarantine, surveillance zones, control zones, and destruction and disposal) and the authorities associated with them?
10. What conditions or limits should be placed on government's ability to impose quarantine orders?
11. What conditions or limits should be placed on government's ability to impose surveillance zone orders?

12. What conditions or limits should be placed on government's ability to impose control zone orders?
13. What conditions or limits should be placed on government's ability to impose destruction and disposal orders?
14. Please provide any additional comments you may have related to animal disease outbreak management and control.

#### **4.4. Information Tracking**

A common need for supporting both good prevention and swift, effective outbreak control is reliable and accessible information related to individual animals, animal owners and handlers, farms, processors, transporters, and sale yards. Accurate and up-to-date information enables the province to take targeted, timely and effective management actions, to quickly pinpoint the disease source, determine the likely spread of the disease, and minimize the economic impact and spread of a disease. Information and records on animals are also increasingly important to external and internal trade.

##### **4.4.1. Traceability**

Traceability is the ability to trace and follow an item (i.e., an animal, animal product or by-product, feed, or other substances) through all stages of the production, processing and distribution chain by means of recorded identifications. Simply, it is about tracking the movement of a product (and its attributes) through locations and over time.

Traceability allows for swift detection of the source of a disease affecting animals or humans, and ultimately ensures greater public confidence in food production and animal health. Improving traceability is of growing interest provincially, nationally and internationally. Accurate animal records, including proof of age, origin, lineage, and health records, will increasingly affect the movement of animals across national or provincial borders.

A comprehensive traceability system is built on three pillars:

- Animal or product identification;
- Premise identification; and,
- Animal or product movement.

The most comprehensive traceability system requires everyone in the food chain to keep records, from the farmer to the food processor and retailer, and everyone in-between.

In July 2009 the federal, provincial, and territorial ministers of agriculture agreed to establish a mandatory and comprehensive national traceability system for livestock and poultry by 2011. What this system will look like has not yet been determined. However, it likely will cover premise identification, animal identification and animal movement tracking, all in cooperation with existing industry and provincial initiatives.

Individual animal identification is currently being coordinated federally and is mandatory in all provinces for cattle, bison and sheep. Animal identification is being led federally, but British Columbia will need to support this initiative.

Premise location and identification information is the responsibility of the provinces. Basic information, such as the owner's/operator's name, address, telephone number, email address, is required for premise identification. In a comprehensive system, premise identification could be required from any premise that deals with animals, such as farms, sale yards, fairs and exhibitions, veterinarian clinics, renderers, feedlots, slaughterhouses and carcass disposal sites. Beyond simply identifying a premise, information on type of animals (e.g., laying hens or broilers) and numbers present at a location is important. Naturally the information for traceability purposes would need to be adapted somewhat depending on the type of operation.

Animal movement tracking ensures the ability to trace where an animal has been and identify animals it has come in contact with over the course of its life, including the import and export of animals. Animal movement tracking is dependent on having both premise and animal identification in place, without both of these in place the ability to track movement is limited. Currently there is no requirement for animal movement tracking information, either federally or provincially.

Other provinces, such as Alberta have already regulated premise identification, while Ontario has kept the door open for enabling a provincial traceability system through legislation.

Any traceability efforts undertaken to date in BC have been voluntary, such as the BC Poultry Premise Identification Initiative. BC is also currently working with other sectors, such as dairy and hogs, to put in place premise identification systems.

#### **4.4.2. Licensing**

Licensing can provide a means for registering certain activities and specifying record-keeping requirements. Few farm businesses in BC are required to be licensed. Access to transaction records involving animals can help determine exposure of other animals at collection areas, such as sale yards and assembly stations.

BC currently licences a number of entities, such as auctioneers, livestock dealers, hide dealers, public sale yards, and slaughter facilities. Our current licensing system does not have consistent requirements for record-keeping across the sectors. In the past, licensing requirements have had a limited connection to animal health. However, BC is considering revising licensing requirements and the terms and conditions of licence agreements to create a stronger link between licensing and record-keeping, particularly to support any traceability initiatives. Through licensing, requirements for the collection and retention of information such as sellers' and buyers' addresses, numbers of animals (including species and sex), destinations of animals, animal imports or exports, and animal deaths (including date and cause of death) could be mandatory.

The type of information required may differ for each activity, as a sale yard is quite different from a game farm or hide dealer. Recorded information would need to be available upon request. For

example, in the event of an outbreak, up-to-date and reliable information is essential in determining the source and quelling the spread. Explicit requirements for record-keeping for licensed businesses are being contemplated.

There are specific regulatory standards pertaining to documentation requirements when administering prescription therapeutants to farmed fish. Documentation of therapeutants is an important record keeping requirement for the salmon farmer. Aquaculture has recently become a federal responsibility.

BC is also looking at the opportunity to consolidate and harmonize the requirements of various licences and registrations currently under multiple statutes (e.g., fur farms, game farms). The province will continue licensing livestock dealers, hide dealers, public sale yards, and slaughter facilities, but proposes to cease licensing auctioneers.

#### **4.4.3. Consultation Questions**

15. How should we ensure that BC's animal health policy direction is best able to support the future expected federal traceability system, while meeting the needs of BC livestock industries and the province?
16. Should premise identification be a voluntary or compulsory initiative? What type of premises should participate, and what type of information kept?
17. Which activities should be licensed and what should their licensing requirements be?
18. Please provide any additional comments you may have related to traceability and licensing.

#### **4.5. Administration Processes**

There are a number of administrative aspects that are integral to the overall efficient functioning of provincial animal health management. Rules about the collection and use of information are very important given that information can easily be disseminated widely and rapidly. Addressing penalties and appeal mechanisms, are also important aspects of good public policy for animal health.

##### **4.5.1. Appeals**

Administrative law principles require that all individuals are treated fairly and have an opportunity to be heard. In the case of animal health, government has the ability to make a decision that can affect a farm or business. Providing individuals with an opportunity to appeal a decision is an important part of creating a fair and just system.

The current animal health system allows an individual to appeal to the minister of agriculture any decision, direction or order made by an inspector. The minister has complete discretion to stay or revoke the action. BC would like to clarify the specific decisions or actions that can be appealed and provide further detail on how appeals are to be registered. In addition, BC is considering authorizing a tribunal or appeal board to hear appeals, or mandating an existing board to rule on appeals rather than the minister.

#### 4.5.2. Offences and Penalties

BC is seeking to revise, update and clarify offences and penalties related to animal health. The province would like to enhance and clarify what actions are considered to be an offence, for example, offences could include non-compliance with a quarantine, surveillance zone, control zone, or destruction order, operating without a licence, failing to keep adequate records, or not making records available upon request. Without these provisions, the strength of any animal health system and the ability of the province to act quickly to stem an outbreak could be jeopardized.

A simpler, more direct method of penalizing infractions, such as being able to issue violation tickets, may also be needed for some contraventions. Violation tickets allow an official to issue a fine upon witnessing an event of non-compliance, and similar penalties are available for BC fisheries and forestry. Violation tickets work by having specific offences listed in a statute, which are linked to fines under the *Offences Act*. Under the current framework fines are only payable upon conviction by a court.

BC would like to be able to issue higher penalties and fines to provide a real deterrent and reflect the cost to the province of non-compliance. The spread of a disease due to non-compliance with a quarantine order could impact additional farms and businesses, as well as costing the province time and money to manage a larger outbreak. Currently, fines for offences are levied upon conviction, and, in most instances, are \$25 to \$200 for the first offence, and \$50 to \$500 for a second offence and subsequent offences. Fines for a first offence of up to \$10,000 dollars, and up to \$30,000 for a second offence would act as stronger deterrent. These amounts would be similar to other jurisdictions, such as Alberta and Ontario.

#### 4.5.3. Collection, Use and Disposal of Information

At times it may be necessary to share, or make public, information related to an animal disease, and at other times animal health information should be protected. For example, a quarantine order may need to be advertised in a newspaper, the chief medical health officer may need to be contacted, or other government agencies may need to be notified. Information that may be shared in these situations could include the location, address and contact information of a farm or the geographic location of an outbreak. Any sharing or disclosure of information would be governed by, and with the intent of protecting animals or humans and improving biosecurity.

The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* requires the disclosure of information that is clearly in the public interest. An explicit policy that clarifies the minister of agriculture's role and responsibility with regard to the collection, use and disclosure of information would build on this provision to clarify information sharing for animal health, emergency and control purposes. The province currently has no policy regarding the collection, use and disclosure of information related to an animal health incident.

#### 4.5.4. Consultation Questions

19. What decisions warrant an appeal process?
20. Who should hear and rule on appeals?

21. What actions warrant a penalty? What should the penalty be and how should it be levied?
22. What should be included in a policy regarding collection, use and disposal of information?
23. What limits should there be on the collection use sharing and disposal of information?
24. Please provide any additional comments related to appeals, penalties and the collection use and disclosure of information.

## **5. Summary**

Animal health is an important public issue that affects all citizens of British Columbia. We value your input and responses to the questions posed in this paper. Once the public review period has closed, we will summarise the comments received and report out on this feedback. We will take all responses into consideration as we complete our policy analysis and propose any new policy direction.

### **5.1.1. Consultation Question**

25. Please provide any additional comments you may have regarding animal health management in British Columbia.

## Appendix 1. BC and Federal Roles and Legislation

Animal health issues are managed by both the federal and provincial governments. The federal government primarily relies on the *Health of Animals Act* and regulations to manage animal health issues. This comprehensive legislative framework allows the federal government to step in quickly and take all necessary actions to control the spread of an animal disease outbreak (for trade-limiting diseases). At the federal level, animal health management is focused on preventing or managing animal diseases that will negatively affect international trade (i.e., trade limiting).

This model of working with the federal Canadian Food Inspection Agency has worked well to address trade related diseases. However, BC, as with other Canadian provinces, needs to be able to act for a broader suite of animal diseases. The province does not currently have adequate tools to detect and monitor zoonotic diseases, production limiting diseases, and new and emerging diseases.

The *Animal Disease Control Act* originated more than 50 years ago, and is the central statute that defines BC's animal health policy direction. It was first known as the *Contagious Diseases Animals Act* when created in 1948. It has had periodic minor updates, most recently in 2004 to add livestock licensing requirements; however, the overall structure remains much the same as it was in 1948. The Ministry of Agriculture is also responsible for other acts and associated regulations in relation to animal health such as *Fur Farm Act*, *Game Farm Act* and *Bee Act*. Aspects of the *Wildlife Act*, which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment, also pertain to animal health.

The Ministry of Agriculture also administers a variety of programs related to animal health:

- The ministry develops extension and training materials which take the form of bulletins and pamphlets, such as the Dairy Talks and the Animal Health Monitor.
- The ministry runs the Animal Health Centre in Abbotsford, which is a containment level 3 (CL3) laboratory, and one of only two accredited full service veterinary diagnostic laboratories in Canada. The Animal Health Centre has 33 dedicated veterinarian and laboratory staff.
- The ministry is responsible for maintaining the Foreign Animal Disease Emergency Support (FADES) plan.
- The ministry works cooperatively with industry associations on programs and initiatives such as the Poultry Industry Biosecurity/Emergency Response and the BC Poultry Premise Identification Initiative.



## Appendix 2. Web Links

### British Columbia

- Animal Health Centre: <http://www.al.gov.bc.ca/ahc/>
- Livestock Health Management & Regulatory Unit: <http://www.al.gov.bc.ca/lhmr/index.htm>
- *Animal Disease Control Act*:  
[http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/ID/freeside/00\\_96014\\_01](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96014_01)
  - Animal Disease Control Regulation:  
[http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/ID/freeside/10\\_150\\_66](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/10_150_66)
- *Fur Farm Act*:  
[http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/ID/freeside/00\\_96167\\_01](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_96167_01)
  - Fur Farm Regulation:  
[http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/ID/freeside/10\\_310\\_59](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/10_310_59)
  - Licence Fee Regulation:  
[http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/ID/freeside/11\\_12\\_90](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/11_12_90)
- *Game Farm Act*:
  - Game Farm Regulation:  
[http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws\\_new/document/ID/freeside/10\\_232\\_91](http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/10_232_91)

### Canada

- Alberta *Animal Health Act* and Regulations:  
[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/acts12272](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/acts12272)
- Ontario *Animal Health Act*: [http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws\\_statutes\\_09a31\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_09a31_e.htm)
- Canada *Health of Animals Act*: <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/h-3.3/text.html>
  - Reportable Diseases Regulations: <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/en/SOR-91-2/FullText.html>
  - Proposed regulation on aquatic animal diseases: <http://gazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p1/2009/2009-12-19/html/reg1-eng.html>

### International

- World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE): <http://www.oie.int>
- OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code: [http://www.oie.int/eng/normes/mcode/en\\_sommaire.htm](http://www.oie.int/eng/normes/mcode/en_sommaire.htm)

## Appendix 3. Potential Reportable and Notifiable Diseases

### Reportable Diseases

- African horse sickness
- African swine fever
- Anaplasmosis
- Anthrax
- Avian influenza;
- Bluetongue
- Bovine spongiform encephalopathy
- Bovine tuberculosis (*M. bovis*)
- Brucellosis
- Chronic wasting disease of cervids
- Classical swine fever
- Contagious bovine pleuropneumonia
- Contagious equine metritis
- Cysticercosis
- Equine infectious anaemia
- Equine encephalomyelitis
- Equine piroplasmosis (*B. equi* and *B. caballi*)
- Exotic Newcastle disease
- Foot and mouth disease (FMD)
- Fowl typhoid (*Salmonella gallinarum*)
- Hog cholera (classical swine fever)
- Infectious laryngotracheitis
- Lumpy skin disease
- Mycoplasma gallisepticum
- Peste des petits ruminants
- Pseudorabies (Aujeszky's disease)
- Pullorum disease (*S. pullorum*)
- Rabies
- Rift Valley fever
- Rinderpest
- Disease caused by *Salmonella dublin*
- Disease caused by *Salmonella heidelberg*
- Disease caused by *Salmonella enteritidis*
- Disease caused by *Salmonella pullorum*
- Disease caused by *Salmonella typhimurium*
- Scrapie
- Sheep and goat pox
- Swine influenza
- Swine vesicular disease
- Transmissible gastroenteritis
- Trichinellosis
- Vesicular stomatitis
- Q Fever – Coxiella

- Plague (*Yersina pestis*)
- Tularaemia (*Francisella tularensis*)
  
- Disease caused by any non-living agent that is a threat to animal health or human health

#### **Notifiable Diseases**

- Disease caused by any Salmonella
- Lyme disease or the presence of the vector Ixodes species ticks
- Avian chlamydiosis (*Chlamydophila psittaci*)
- Johne's disease
- Vibriosis (genital campylobacteriosis)
- Bovine trichomoniasis
- Epizootic hemorrhagic disease
- Malignant catarrhal fever
- Disease caused by West Nile virus
- Disease caused by Neurotropic variant form of equine herpesvirus Type-1 (nEHV-1)