

Elora, Ontario, Canada

September 19, 2022

Animal Health Canada Leadership Change

Animal Health Canada is pleased to announce Colleen McElwain as Interim Executive Director of Animal Health Canada, effective September 19, 2022. Colleen has served as AHC's Operations and Animal Health Director and has a long history of progressive leadership experience within agriculture. The AHC Board would like to thank Dr. Melanie Barham for her contributions to the organization and wishes her well as she pursues another leadership role.

Colleen holds a Master of Science in Applied Behaviour and Welfare, and a Bachelor of Science in Animal Biology; both from the University of Guelph's Ontario Agricultural College. In 2020, she received her Certified Association Executive (CAE) professional designation. For over 15 years Colleen has worked within industry and government in various roles supporting animal health and welfare policy development and program implementation. As the Programs Director at Canadian Animal Health Institute, Colleen held a multi-functional role to provide organizational leadership in relation to communications, environmental stewardship programming, stakeholder relations and member service delivery. Prior to CAHI, she worked at the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) leading her team on livestock traceability policy and stakeholder relations. For several years Colleen worked at the Turkey Farmers of Canada (TFC) where she was the lead for animal health and welfare, disease surveillance, traceability, antimicrobial resistance, and applied research policy and programming. She has participated on numerous national industry and government boards and committees, including a term as a Director at Large on the NFAHW Council Board representing the Canadian Animal Health Institute (CAHI).

"On behalf of the AHC Board of Directors, we warmly welcome Colleen as she takes on the role of interim Executive Director. Colleen has contributed during the last year to AHC and this gives us great confidence in her ability to take on the challenge as we move forward with our crucial next steps in our transition over the coming months" says René Roy, AHC Co-Chair.

Over the course of the past year, AHC has completed major work on the road to realize the new vision and mission of AHC, including the current work of divisions and projects. Some of the major accomplishments of AHC this year include:

- Delivery of a new strategic plan to be released at Forum 2022
- Completion of the final report on the [Plant and Animal Health Strategy](#)
- Work towards a new governance structure
- [Securing a third year of funding for the African Swine Fever National Project/Executive Management Board](#)
- Work to develop a new financial model and multi-year forecasted budget for AHC

- Development of new operational infrastructure to meet the demands of transition
- [Creation of a new award to recognize leadership in agriculture](#)

Stakeholders can expect regular updates and communications and are encouraged to [join the AHC mailing list](#) to receive communications directly.

AHC is a unique not for profit organization which is funded jointly by federal, provincial, territorial, and industry/non-government stakeholders. AHC engages expertise to address important topics such as emerging diseases, animal welfare, animal health surveillance, antimicrobial use and resistance, and the emerging theme of “One Welfare”. AHC along with its divisions leads the initiation of projects to address animal health and welfare stakeholder needs in Canada.

AHC (previously the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council) was formed in 2010 as an outcome of the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Strategy (2009). It was established as an advisory body to the Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Regulatory Assistant Deputy Ministers of Agriculture Committee and other stakeholders. Over time, it has grown to be a table for collaborative problem solving and project work with portfolios including surveillance, animal welfare, emergency management and training.