

AHC Strategic Plan – 2022-25: Placemat and Repositioned Elements

Vision	Mission	Guiding Principles	
A sustainable agriculture and agri-food sector strengthened by an inclusive industry-governments partnership protecting the health and welfare of farmed animals.	Animal Health Canada provides leadership in building a collaborative, multi-partner model that clarifies the respective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of each partner implementing an animal health strategy for Canada, beginning with emergency management.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. AHC is a leader in One Health and One Welfare. These two concepts involve the critical intersection of animals, people, and the environment, and underscore our belief in continual improvement of health and welfare of animals, people, and the environment. 2. AHC is an agency of communication and integrity. We are leaders, convenors, facilitators, and collaborators for the farmed animal sector. This means identifying important issues across the sector, bringing together stakeholders to solve those issues, and communicating to the broader community. 	
Pillar 1: Emergency Management	Pillar 2: Animal Welfare	Pillar 3: Disease Surveillance	Pillar 4: Resilient Governance and Operations
<p><i>Goal</i> To become the central collaborator and support for emergency management for farmed animal emergencies and emerging threats.</p>	<p><i>Goal</i> To develop and advance a Canadian animal welfare strategy for farmed animals.</p>	<p><i>Goal</i> To strengthen a national animal health surveillance system that allows for early warning and forecasting for threats or diseases of concern.</p>	<p><i>Goal</i> To build upon a robust organizational foundation for a lean and action-ready organization.</p>
<p><i>Objectives</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Become the central collaborator to bring appropriate groups together before, during and after an animal health emergency. 1.2 Clarify expectations and future opportunities for AHC during new outbreaks, new emergencies, as well as planning for other issues. 1.3 Develop a coordination framework for developing emergency response and preparedness plans (based on international standards), including building a framework / template for emerging serious animal diseases. 	<p><i>Objectives</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Clarify the roles and responsibilities of NFACC and AHC to develop a clear animal welfare mandate. 2.2 Uphold the NFACC model as the credible, science-informed approach for the development, update and maintenance of the Codes of Practice for the care and handling of farm animals. 2.3 Uphold the standard, credible approach for the development of Animal Care Assessment Programs that align with the delivery of the Codes of Practice on farms. 2.4 Assist interested sectors with recognition of the Codes of Practice by trading partners, and integration of Codes of Practice into provincial and territorial government policy. 	<p><i>Objectives</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Develop national framework of endemic diseases for collecting, interpreting and disseminating information on these disease issues consistently across the country. 3.2 Facilitate and coordinate the delivery of expanded national surveillance as identified by partners. 3.3 Advance animal health surveillance to be a system that is internationally recognized, and trusted/valued by Canadian stakeholders as a protection against disease threats. 3.4 Facilitate collaboration across all stakeholders on AMR/AMU as Canada meets requirements for the Pan-Canadian Action Plan for AMU/AMR, including the pillars of surveillance, research and innovation, stewardship, infection, prevention and control. 3.5 Provide surveillance insights and advice from a national perspective with a centralized information hub and through a robust shared network of networks structure. 	<p><i>Objectives</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1 Finalize and action organizational structures (governance and operations) to be able to lead into the next phase of the organization. 4.2 Secure funding for critical projects in the next policy framework. 4.3 Renew financial model. 4.4 Finalize roles and responsibilities to ensure clarity between public and private partners. 4.5 Continue current and planned activities of Animal Health Canada and its divisions and projects. 4.6 Develop the AHC Online Training Centre, a capacity building resource offering to meet AHC priorities. 4.7 Identify and prioritize research gaps in strategic pillars.

Table1: Repositioning Strategic Plan Elements

Where AHC can play a supporting role:	Rationale:
<p>Guiding Principle: One Welfare</p>	<p>One Welfare should remain a guiding principle in the work Animal Health Canada does; however, the lens applied from an operational perspective should complement the other work areas of the organization (e.g., linkages to emergency preparedness, support for emergency response, animal care, animal welfare, awareness of mental health across the sector). Where possible, Animal Health Canada can collaborate and amplify mental health resources in the context of its core pillars from groups such as the Canadian Centre for Agricultural Wellbeing, the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association and Do More Ag.</p>
<p>Pillar 1: Emergency response</p>	<p>In November 2022, two virtual member and stakeholder workshops were hosted by AHC which determined its role should focus before (preparedness and prevention) and after (recovery and mitigation) for all three types of emergencies: diseases, disasters and disruptions. In order for AHC to be able to assist beyond a supportive role in a response, it would require the delegation of certain authorities from FPT governments and/or industry groups.</p>
<p>Priority 3, bullets 1 and 3: Advance and action traceability and biosecurity support</p> <p>Pillar 1, Activity 11: Support the advancement of traceability in agriculture as a key pillar of emergency management and disease surveillance.</p>	<p>Traceability is already managed by multiple organizations within the Canadian farmed animal sector and is proposed to be regulated by the CFIA for many species (timelines for implementation are under consultation). As a part of its work, AHC can partner with these organizations to use traceability information or policies to develop emergency management plans, disease surveillance information tools and potentially to support animal welfare activities.</p> <p>Biosecurity is a key tool in promoting good animal health and welfare, and AHC has developed many tools which align with best practice adoption. Where there is a need (e.g., smallholders, sectors with less organizational capacity) AHC can develop biosecurity tools and assist with their promotion. In some sectors, this may be a less active role (e.g., hogs, poultry, dairy) because there are already well-established methods to get biosecurity information to producers and supply chain partners.</p>
<p>Pillar 1, Activity 4: Support for establishing and upholding zoning arrangements</p>	<p>All aspects of zoning arrangements, from negotiation to implementation, are managed by the CFIA and as such outside of the scope of AHC. AHC can work within its pillars to develop programs which may support or respond to a specific objective (e.g., disease surveillance).</p>
<p>Pillar 1, Activity 5: Foot and Mouth Disease vaccine bank</p>	<p>In the March 2023 budget, funds were allocated to the CFIA to develop and maintain an FMD vaccine bank, in collaboration with the PT governments. AHC can coordinate programming and projects to facilitate the collaborative development of FPTI planning on how vaccines will be delivered to the field, once the decision for their use and confirmation of target animals has been provided by the CFIA.</p>

Where AHC will need more time:	Rationale:
<p>Strategic Pillar 1, Activity 10: Environmental scan of national biosecurity resources present in the farmed animal sector including zoonotic disease, as well as current barriers to implementation and adoption.</p>	<p>As indicated above, AHC will likely not be taking a lead role in the delivery of biosecurity tools for most livestock and poultry species. While valuable, this work will require more resources and time than the current strategic plan allows.</p>
<p>Strategic Pillar 2, Activity 5: Explore government recognition of animal care programs for interested industries.</p>	<p>This is an activity AHC, via NFACC, can undertake; however, there is a need for CFIA to clarify how it would include animal welfare programs within its Technical Recognition Program which focuses on on-farm food safety programs. Until this is complete, NFACC will not be able to substantially move forward.</p>
<p>Priority 3, bullet 3: Identify and prioritize research gaps in strategic pillars</p>	<p>AHC is uniquely placed to undertake this activity and share it with its broad membership to support their research priority setting activities; however, given significant resource limitations during the time of this strategic plan, it is recommended that this be considered a lower priority to be addressed in the next strategic plan.</p>