

Forum 2020 Presenters

Session 3 – COVID 19 – Unintended Consequences and Lessons Learned



Dr. Harpreet Kochhar

Dr. Harpreet S. Kochhar was appointed Associate Deputy Minister of Health Canada on April 1, 2020. Since joining Health Canada, Dr. Kochhar has become an integral player in Canada's COVID-19.

Before joining the Department, Dr. Kochhar served as Assistant Deputy Minister of the Operations Sector for Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) where he led the delivery of the Immigration, Citizenship and Passport programs across Canada and at missions and offices abroad. He also was responsible for the implementation of key strategic projects for IRCC, including the Passport Modernization Initiative, Predictive Analytics, and the transformation of IRCC's operational delivery model.

Prior to joining IRCC, Dr. Kochhar was Associate Vice-President of Operations at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) from 2015 to 2017, and was Canada's Chief Veterinary Officer and Canada's Delegate to the World Organization for Animal Health. He was responsible for delivering food inspection services across the country as well as managing more than 4,000 employees. During his tenure at the CFIA, Dr. Kochhar managed several high profile cases to ensure the safety of Canada's food supply, including the official response to Canada's largest beef recall (XL foods).

Dr. Kochhar started his career by practising veterinary medicine in South Western Ontario. He has a Master's Degree in Veterinary Science and a Ph.D. in Animal Biotechnology from the University of Guelph where he also was Assistant Professor at the Ontario Veterinary College.

On a personal note, Dr. Kochhar is an active fundraiser for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and contributes to charities such as the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Mental Health Institute, and the Liver Foundation. In 2012, Dr. Kochhar was honoured with Elizabeth II's Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal for his professional and volunteer contributions and in 2017 he was awarded the Canada 150 Medal for community services.

In his spare time, he enjoys cooking as well as playing golf, volleyball, and skiing.



Jarrod Gillig

Jarrod Gillig serves as Business Operations and Supply Chain president for Cargill’s North American protein business. In his role, he oversees 40 protein production facilities across Canada and the United States. Gillig has more than 22 years of experience with Cargill, during which he has held numerous positions across beef processing, including plant management.

Jarrod is passionate about empowering youth to participate in agriculture and is actively involved in 4-H. He and his family show Hereford cattle.



David Moss

David Moss is the general manager of the Canadian Cattlemen’s Association. He was co-founder and vice president of AgriClear LP – an online agri-business marketplace joint venture with the TMX Group and Natural Gas Exchange. An entrepreneur by nature, David has been in the cattle industry his entire life. He helped build ranch to retail alliances in the United States, Australia and South America. He brings a focus on innovation, data technology, and international business knowledge and experience. He holds an MA, Leadership Studies from the University of Guelph (Honours), an undergraduate degree from the University of Lethbridge (Honours) and a Project Management masters certificate from York University. He serves on numerous industry committees and is an active volunteer in his Okotoks community.



John Ross

John Ross has been the Canadian Pork Council's Executive Director since 2016. In his role he ensures the views of Canada's pork producers are effectively represented on national issues such as foreign trade and animal health. He is member of the government-industry African Swine Fever Executive Management Board and has been a long-time advocate of implementing collaborative approaches to managing animal health challenges.

John has had a lifelong passion for livestock. He studied animal science at the University of Guelph (OAC 83). After graduation, he enjoyed a successful career at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. While at the Department he worked through a series of livestock and red meat related positions focusing largely on sectoral development issues.

John is also a member of the 4-H Canada Board of Directors.



Claire Citeau

Claire Citeau is the Executive Director of the Canadian Agri-Food Trade Alliance (CAFTA). In her role, Claire advocates for trade liberalization and competitive market access for Canadian agri-food exporters through bilateral and multilateral free trade agreements such as the CPTPP, CUSMA, CETA, or the WTO. Claire has a background in international trade, policy and government relations.

Claire's interest in international trade stems from having lived in Senegal, Western Africa and witnessed firsthand how global events have a tremendous impact on economies and agriculture sectors around the world.

Prior to joining CAFTA, Claire held positions with Alberta's Ministries of Agriculture and International Affairs, RBC Dominion Securities and the Canadian Encyclopedia.

Claire holds a double MBA in international business as a graduate of the University of Alberta and the Montpellier Graduate School of Business in France.

Claire is national sailing champion. She lived in Senegal and France before making Canada her home.



Marianne Patten

Marianne Patten is Executive Secretary of the Canada Mink Breeders Association. Prior to that she was a mink producer. During that time, she served both as a director and President of the Canada Mink Breeders Association. While part of the Association she participated in the development of the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farmed Mink, the Mink Care Assessment Program, and the National Farm Level Mink Bio-Security Standards

She is a graduate of the Nova Scotia Agricultural College (now the Faculty of Agriculture, Dalhousie University).

Before becoming involved in the mink industry, Marianne worked with the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture providing extension services.

Panel Members



Steven Sternthal

Steven Sternthal is the Director General for the Centre for Food-borne, Environmental and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases with the Public Health Agency of Canada's Infectious Disease Prevention and Control Branch. In this role, Steven is responsible for leading One Health policy, science, and program initiatives to address food-borne and zoonotic infectious diseases. Steven has over 20 years experience in managing public health issues, many of which are relevant to the work of the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council (e.g. food safety, antimicrobial resistance, emerging zoonotic infectious diseases). Steven holds a Master in Health Administration from the University of Ottawa and a Bachelor of Science from McGill University in Montreal. Steven represents the Public Health Agency of Canada on the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council.



Frederic Seppey

Frédéric Seppey, Assistant Deputy Minister, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Frédéric Seppey is Assistant Deputy Minister of the Market and Industry Services Branch at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC). His responsibilities include trade negotiations, agriculture and agri-food sectoral competitiveness, and departmental regional offices.

Prior to his current assignment, Mr. Seppey held several management positions with AAFC, notably as Canada's Chief Agriculture Negotiator, and at the Canadian section of the Canada-US Regulatory Cooperation Council. During his 25-year career in the Public Service, Mr. Seppey also worked at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, the Privy Council Office, the Department of Finance and the Treasury Board Secretariat.



Jaspinder Komal

Dr. Jaspinder Komal graduated from the Faculté de médecine vétérinaire at the Université de Montréal in Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec, with a degree in Veterinary Medicine and a post-graduate degree in Veterinary Microbiology. He began his veterinary career specializing in small animals in a practice in the Eastern Townships of the province of Quebec.

In 1994, Dr. Komal joined the Public Service as a Veterinary Inspector as well as a Laboratory Supervisor in Atlantic Canada. In 2000, Dr. Komal and his family moved to Ottawa where he held various positions of increasing responsibility within the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and other departments, such as Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and Health Canada.

Currently, Dr. Komal is the Vice President of the CFIA's Science Branch, as well as and Canadian Delegate to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) for Canada.



Bobby Matheson

Bobby Matheson is currently the Vice President, Advocacy with Dairy Farmers of Canada. Bobby originally comes from a dairy farming family in the Maritimes and is a seasoned and results driven executive with extensive experience in policy development, program design and delivery, corporate management and change management. He has previously worked within the executive ranks of the public service, including Public Safety Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. He is adept at establishing and maintaining networks and effective working relationships across federal departments and agencies, Indigenous peoples, non-profits, other governments and industry organizations to deal with a range of issues including income stabilization, disaster preparedness, animal health and crime prevention. After obtaining a degree in Animal science, and working a short period of time as a research technician, he went on to complete a Masters at McGill University as well as a PhD at the University of Saskatchewan, both in agricultural economics. He is passionate about

agriculture and the dairy sector, and is very pleased to have returned to his roots and supporting dairy farmers across Canada.

