

ED Report

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Action Items from the July 2020 Board meeting

- CSF’s legal council issued correspondence to ALP, OSF and LEOQ.
- The CSF remitted comments to the Health Canada consultation on proposed changes to the MRL (minimum residue level) list.
- The CSF followed up with CEPOQ for clarification on the request for support of their genetics research project.

Canadian Sheep Identification Program / Traceability

- The CSF AgroLedger project came to life in July, with the hiring of the project’s IT manager and three full-time infrastructure architects. This first phase of development will take place over two months and is planned to wrap up the first week of September.
- The CSF hosted an AgroLedger information session with a subset of stakeholders who had asked for more detailed information. The session provided some background on the project, and expectations from the technology through the first phase of development.
- The CSBA Board requested a presentation about the AgroLedger project, interested in understanding the technology as it relates to digitizing animal information and potential conflict or synergy with the *National integrated genetic services for breeders across multiple species in Canada* project.
- The CSF and CFIA’s food labeling group met to discuss opportunities for farm to fork traceability and relevant labeling on sheep and lamb products. AgroLedger proposed providing the opportunity to provide product tracing and an opportunity to share product information on food labels. These are optional, value-added opportunities that could help with brand recognition and provide the opportunity to connect directly with consumers.
- Industry was notified of the latest Canadian Sheep Identification Program fee increase in July. The increases are a result of program fee changes implemented by the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency who is the program’s responsible administrator. The portion of the program fee collected by the CSF remains unchanged. The CSF released information about the coming fee changes in January 2019, noting “Fee

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increases will take place over the course of the next two years, varying by tag type according to the terms of the agreement and as tag inventories are replenished.”. There will be one more increase to come, when the final fee will reach \$0.59/tag.

Scrapie Flock Certification Program

- Scrapie Flock Certification Program participants with anniversary quarters of January – March, were allowed annual file submission deadline extensions to July 31, 2020. Those producers are reminded that the extended deadline is quickly approaching.

Industry Updates

- The CSF met with researchers from the University of Cambridge to discuss the potential for a study that assesses the differences in welfare statuses of sheep transported for longer periods of time versus those unloaded mid-voyage for food, water and rest. The University will draft a research proposal for the industry’s consideration later this summer.
- AAFC’s COVID-19 Working Group meetings have decreased in frequency from the weekly Monday/Wednesday/Friday schedule to meeting only on Tuesday and Thursday. Much of the recent discussions have focused on COVID-19 outbreaks among temporary foreign workers and related work to contain outbreaks and protect workers. The CSF is participating less frequently as it becomes clear there is a specific focus of the meetings that does not greatly impact the sector.
- The CSF hosted a stakeholder meeting with the National Farm Animal Care Council to review and discuss proposed changes to transport references in the Codes of Practice for the Care and Handling of Sheep. Although the 5-year Code Review is underway, this is a separate process designed to address portions of the Code that deal with livestock transportation and meant to align the Code with new transportation regulations. NFACC went through an extensive exercise of drafting proposed changes with input from the CFIA, and the stakeholder meeting was held to provide industry an opportunity to consider the proposed changes. The group was comfortable with the proposal and NFACC will proceed with implementing the changes with final approval from the NFACC Board. Once revised, the updated Code will be available electronically. No printed copies will be available at this time.
- The CSF-CFIA Humane Transport Working Group met in July to continue work on the industry’s Q&A document, and to discuss any issues related to implementation of the transportation regulations. The Q&A document is expected to wrap up in August. Additionally, the CSF Chair and ED met with the CFIA humane transport team to discuss specifics of sheep movement demographics in Canada, and continued concern around FWR requirements in the regulations.
- The ED met with researchers leading the *National integrated genetic services for breeders across multiple species in Canada* project proposal for which the CSF was asked for support. The project is intended to “improve genetic services in multiple species in Canada through an integrated system and collaborative work”, and there was an interest in understanding where elements of this project may overlap with work

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being done through the AgroLedger project to facilitate information sharing across the value chain. This group will meet again in September as AgroLedger's first phase of development is wrapped up, to see where there may be some synergy between the two projects.

- The CSF Chair and ED met with NFACC's Chair, Vice-Chair and General Manager to discuss the Code 5-year review, confirming CSF's adherence to the review process.
- The Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System's new Small Ruminant Network met for the second time in July with expanded membership. The second meeting focused on next steps which included some discussion about the SRN page on the CAHSS network page, and initial planning of the SRN network map. A subgroup was formed to work on further drafting of the network map to bring back to the SRN for approval sometime this fall.
- The CSF in partnership with the OLPC, has engaged with the College of Veterinarians of Ontario (CVO) to address the transabdominal pregnancy ultrasound issue. Following initial discussions in June, CSF and OLPC joined meetings to discuss the CVO's new position and policy statements on this issue. Ontario currently has two independent technicians permitted to conduct pregnancy ultrasound services for clients as an exception to the CVO's prior policy of pregnancy ultrasound as vet-only services. The CVO recently updated their policy on this issue, crafted within an *Use of Forms of Energy in the Treatment and/or Care of Animals* position statement. The position means to classify the use of energy forms in veterinary practice based on their level of risk, however there is an element of the 'diagnosis' risk assigned to the technology's use that results in its classification in the statement. In other words, the energy form's risk level isn't assessed solely based on the physical risk that the energy poses. As a result, ultrasound technology appears in all 3 different risk levels; Category One – high risk (transvaginal and transrectal ultrasound), Category Two – moderate risk (transabdominal ultrasound) and Category Three – low risk (therapeutic ultrasound). Category One uses would be veterinary-only, Category Two uses would be veterinary or technician under direct supervision of a veterinarian and Category Three uses available to laymen. Industry discussions are planned to assess the impact of CVO's position on producer access to the technology. Although the CVO policy is relevant primarily to Ontario producers, the same limitations to access to pregnancy ultrasound services exist in most Canadian jurisdictions and the precedent set in Ontario could serve as a basis for future decisions in other provinces.
- Health Canada is proposed changes to their MRL (maximum residue level) list which could have an impact on the sheep sector. MRLs are set out the level of residue that could safely remain in the tissue or food product derived from a food-producing animal that has been treated with a veterinary drug. MRLs must be established by the CFIA before a veterinary drug can be approved in Canada. Among the proposed MRL changes are the addition of Monensin and Tulathromycin MRLs for sheep; good news in that it will allow for new label claims for these products for sheep.

This month's meetings

- University of Cambridge – Research
- Osler, Hoskin & Harcourt LLP

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- AgroLedger – technical planning
- Canadian Sheep Federation Board of Directors
- AgroLedger IT Team meeting x 6
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada COVID-19 Working Group x 4
- AgroLedger – information session
- CSF Directors, Members and Staff Advisory Committee - Codes of Practice for the Care and Handling of Sheep transport review
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency – Humane transportation
- CSF-CFIA Humane Transport Working Group
- CEPOQ – Genetics research project
- Canadian Agriculture Policy Institute – webinar
- Canadian Sheep Breeders Association – AgroLedger presentation to the Board
- National Farm Animal Care Council – Code 5-year review
- University of Waterloo – work coop program
- Government of Saskatchewan – International trade and market access
- Canadian Food Inspection Agency – AgroLedger and food labeling
- Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS) - Small Ruminant Network
- Canadian Sheep Federation Audit & Finance Committee
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada – Market intelligence reporting
- College of Veterinarians of Ontario – Transabdominal pregnancy ultrasound
- Manuel Pereyra Terra – AgroLedger wool traceability
- Codes of Practice for the Care and Handling of Sheep 5-year review – research committee