



May 4, 2018

File: 44200-20 WELF

## **DELIVERED BY EMAIL**

Jim Collins, Chair  
BC Broiler Hatching Egg Commission  
180 – 32160 South Fraser Way  
Abbotsford BC V2T 1W5

Gunta Vitins, Chair  
BC Egg Marketing Board  
250 – 32160 South Fraser Way  
Abbotsford BC V2T 1W5

Robin Smith, Chair  
BC Chicken Marketing Board  
101 – 32450 Simon Ave  
Abbotsford BC V2T 4J2

Kevin Klippenstein, Chair  
BC Turkey Marketing Board  
106 – 19329 Enterprise Way  
Surrey BC V3S 6J8

Dear Sirs and Madame:

## **POULTRY CATCHING AND ANIMAL WELFARE – BCFIRB EXPECTATIONS UPDATE**

This letter is in follow up to the BC Farm Industry Review Board's (BCFIRB) assessment of the actions taken, to date, by the BC poultry boards to help ensure sound animal care practices during the catching and loading of poultry.

As first instance regulators, the provincial poultry boards play a key role in establishing and enforcing animal care standards during the catching and loading process.<sup>1</sup> Following the June 2017 animal welfare issue in the chicken industry, the poultry boards became aware that more controls were needed to ensure that producers and catching crews comply with animal care standards during catching and loading.

### **Review of Catching Oversight**

To begin, BCFIRB observes that all poultry boards have made sound animal care practices mandatory for producers. These care requirements were in place prior to the 2017 incident.

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<sup>1</sup> June 23, 2017 [BCFIRB Regulated Marketing and Animal Welfare](#); August 1, 2014 [Regulated Marketing and Animal Welfare](#)

The Broiler Hatching Egg Commission and BC Egg Marketing Board General Orders clearly specify that their producers must comply with the poultry Codes of Practice.<sup>2</sup> Compliance with national on-farm animal care programs, based on the Codes of Practice, is mandatory for turkey, chicken, and egg producers under their respective General Orders.<sup>3</sup> The national hatching egg Animal Care Program is not yet mandatory under the provincial General Orders due to delays at the national level.<sup>4</sup>

Despite these requirements, the 2017 June incident highlighted gaps in oversight during the catching and loading process. Following this, the majority of poultry boards took immediate steps, including:

Step	Board	Status
Requiring producer or delegate signatures on load-out reports to demonstrate attendance at catching	Chicken	Mandatory
	Turkey	Voluntary, pilot
	Hatching egg	Under review
Licencing catching companies	Chicken	In place
	Egg	In development
Auditing the catching and loading process	Chicken	In place
	Egg	In place
	Hatching egg	Limited
	Turkey	Under review

### BCFIRB Expectations

The *Natural Products Marketing (BC) Act* provides the poultry boards with the regulatory authority and related responsibility to adopt and enforce rules necessary to maintain orderly marketing. BCFIRB's role is to ensure the marketing boards fulfill this responsibility.

BCFIRB expects that poultry boards will:

- Take immediate steps (if not already in place) to ensure, through an appropriate means, that producers or a responsible delegate are physically present for the full duration of catching and loading. Producers are reminded they have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that their birds are being handled humanely, and to intervene where necessary.
- Continue to ensure appropriate monitoring and enforcement of mandatory animal care programs.
- Remain alert to any potential gaps in the Code of Practice and/or national animal care programs now or in the future that may impact orderly marketing, and respond accordingly.

<sup>2</sup> Guidelines for the care and handling of farm animals are contained in the National Farm Animal Care Council Codes of Practice. These Codes promote sound management and welfare practices for housing, care, transportation, and other animal husbandry practices.

<sup>3</sup> TFC [Flock Care Program](#); CFC [Raised by a Canadian Farmer Animal Care Program](#); CHEP [Animal Care Program](#); EFC [Animal Care Program](#)

<sup>4</sup> It is anticipated that the national hatching egg Animal Care Program will be ready for adoption by provincial boards (including the BC Hatching Egg Commission) in 2018.

If your boards have any questions, please feel free to contact BCFIRB.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Les". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

John Les  
Chair

cc: James Mack, Assistant Deputy Minister  
Agriculture Science and Policy  
Ministry of Agriculture

Jack Brown, Chair  
BC Cranberry Marketing Commission

Debbie Etsell, Chair  
BC Vegetable Marketing Commission

Bert Van Dalfsen, Chair  
BC Hog Marketing Commission

Ben Janzen, Chair  
BC Milk Marketing Board

BCFIRB website