The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is dedicated to safeguarding food, animals and plants to enhance the health and well-being of Canadians, the environment and economy.

Livestock traceability is the ability to follow an animal or group of animals during all stages of its life. There are three main pillars to livestock traceability systems:

- Identification of livestock with an approved indicator;
- Identification of premises where livestock are kept, assembled or disposed of; and,
- Reporting events related to livestock such as movement of animals from one premises to another.

The goal of the livestock traceability system is to provide timely, accurate and relevant information to reduce the impacts of a disease outbreak, food safety issue or natural disasters originating from and/or affecting livestock.

The Livestock Identification and Traceability Program (TRACE) has been administered jointly by CFIA and industry since 2001. The program is regulated and enforced under Part XV of the *Health of Animals Regulations*, made under the authority of the *Health of Animals Act*.

# Livestock Identification and Traceability Program (TRACE) – Regulatory Update. N° 2
# April 19, 2018

This second edition aims to provide an overview of progress on proposed amendments to Part XV of the federal Health of Animals Regulations (hereafter referred to the "Regulations") that pertains to livestock identification and traceability.

**Why are amendments to the Health of Animals Regulations being proposed?**

The goal of CFIA's proposed regulatory amendments is to address the gaps in the current livestock identification system previously identified during consultations in 2013 and 2015, including:

• livestock species that share diseases are not all subject to traceability requirements;
• the time period allowed to report an event to a responsible administrator is too long to support an efficient response to disease outbreaks, or natural disaster;
• information about the geographical location of sites (premises) where animals are located is limited; and
• information about the domestic movements of livestock is unknown or not readily available.

An example of how these gaps can impact disease response was seen through the 19 cases of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in Canada and during the recent bovine tuberculosis outbreak in Alberta and Saskatchewan. It is estimated that the number of farms quarantined could have been significantly reduced with improved premises identification and timely and accurate animal movement reporting.

**What are some of the benefits of traceability for your operation?**

Effective traceability can better protect public health and support industry market access, competitiveness and consumer confidence. For example, individual animal indicator (tag) numbers can be tracked in voluntary systems like Beef InfoXchange (BIXS) (www.bixsco.com) which offer buyers and sellers the opportunity to share information on livestock with specific marketable traits. Traceability can also provide opportunities to improve productivity and profitability for livestock operations through precision agriculture management such as:

• monitoring individual feed intake, weight gain and breeding and birthing performance;
• analyzing genetics and meat quality attributes of individual animals for better pricing;
• tracking shrink during transport to improve grade quality and sale weight;
• having historical data on genetic evaluations and performance by individual or breed;
• increasing your return on investment through feed efficiencies and genetic improvements using individual carcass quality data.

**What are steps you can take now to be prepared for the new traceability regulations?**

1.Get a Premises Identification (PID) number for your operation. Those who already have a premises identification number that is validated and up to date will not need to re-apply for a new number under the proposed regulations. Find out how you can confirm or acquire your Premises Identification Number on the CFIA web site at www.inspection.gc.ca/traceability

2 Contact your responsible administrator (CCIA, PigTrace or ATQ) to confirm or acquire a database account and provide your valid PID.

3. Ensure every bison, cattle, sheep, and with some exceptions pigs, has an approved indicator applied to it before it leaves your livestock operation.

Traceability can also benefit other agriculture sectors, like crop management, seed and crop performance, field rotations, pesticide application and nutrient management.

To hear from stakeholders in the livestock industry on how they see the value of livestock traceability, watch the Videos: Livestock and Poultry Traceability in Canada on the CFIA traceability web page (www.inspection.gc.ca/traceability).

**Why is traceability important for Canada's livestock sector?**

Traceability is important because it provides timely, accurate and relevant information to reduce the impacts of a disease outbreak, food safety issue or natural disasters originating from and/or affecting livestock. While traceability is critical to protecting animal health, it also has strong marketing benefits for Canadian meat products domestically and in export markets with major buyers and retailers, including:

- McDonald's (http://corporate.mcdonalds.com/corpmcd/scale-for-good/beef-sustainability.html),
- Cargill (https://www.agcanada.com/daily/cattle-traceability-to-pay-off-in-cargill-pilot), and
- Loblaws (https://dnatraceback.ca/loblaw/)

Traceability also plays a key role in programs that are in place to meet consumers' expectation for food safety, animal welfare and sustainability, such as the Canadian Cattlemen's Association Verified Beef Production Plus (verifiedbeefproductionplus.ca) and the Dairy Farmers of Canada's proAction initiative (www.dairyfarmers.ca/proaction or visit the DFC YouTube channel for more videos).

**How is traceability used to help during an emergency?**

The first step to any investigation is to determine the identification number of an affected animal, and any movements made by that animal. This allows investigators to identify the locations where the animal may have interacted with other animals, helping to identify the source and contain the disease from spreading. Without identification and movement information, it is extremely difficult to pinpoint the specific animals and herds that may have been impacted. The result is a larger number of animals and herds than necessary being implicated, quarantined or destroyed during a disease outbreak, which causes undue stress for livestock operators (e.g., capital associated with quarantined animals, the restriction of movement of animals and equipment or destruction of years of breeding traits in a herd).

For example, a recent outbreak of bovine tuberculosis in Alberta and Saskatchewan in November 2016 resulted in tracing back animal movements for the past five years to determine all animals that might have been infected. As a result of inadequate animal identification across many herds and the lack of animal movement information, more than 160 herds (56,000 animals) were quarantined until testing could be completed on the animals. The last quarantine was fully lifted in March 2018, after all trace-in and trace-out animals had been located and tested.

**Got an idea for a newsletter topic? We want to hear from you!**

This newsletter is created to provide an update on the proposed regulatory amendment to Part XV of the *Health of Animals Regulations*. It is also a space where we can address a specific topic related to traceability and how it can help your business.

If you have a topic or theme that you would like to see highlighted, let us know by sending an email to: trace@inspection.gc.ca.

**How often are these newsletters published?**

The Regulatory Implementation Committee plans to publish a newsletter at least once a month (starting in March 2018) up to the publication of the proposed regulatory amendment in the Canada Gazette for public comment. As topics arise, this newsletter will be published to assist in understanding issues, concerns and opportunities with traceability and the new regulations before they come into force.

For more information on the Bovine Tuberculosis outbreak and response by the CFIA, watch the video series "Behind the scenes during the bovine tuberculosis (TB) outbreak investigation" on the CFIA web site.

Proposed changes to Canada's Livestock Identification and Traceability Program aim to reduce the length of time it takes to trace-in and trace-out herds from weeks to days by using animal identification, premises identification, and movement information entered into the responsible administrator's database – improving data accuracy and availability in the event of a disease outbreak or an emergency.

**Regulatory Implementation Committee – Update on activities**

An industry-government Regulatory Implementation Committee (RIC) has been formed with the objective to collaboratively identify and prioritize actions to help prepare for a smooth implementation of proposed amendments to the Regulations. Currently, the (RIC) is:

- developing a template for collecting information to accompany the movement of animals that can be used voluntarily in the absence of a provincially regulated document or manifest;
- looking at engagement with stakeholders during the comment period when the proposed amendments are published to Part I of the Canada Gazette, such as recruiting and nominating Livestock Traceability Ambassadors within the livestock sector.

**When are the proposed regulations expected to be published and come into effect?**

The proposed regulations are expected to be published in fall 2018. Following the publication of the proposed regulations in Part I of the Canada Gazette (www.gazette.gc.ca), stakeholders will have 75 days to review and provide comment.

The CFIA will review and consider all comments received prior to finalizing the regulation amendments and publishing them in Part II of the Canada Gazette. Once published in Part II of the Canada Gazette (anticipated in late 2019), the regulations will be considered final and immediately come into force.

**For more information about the Livestock Identification and Traceability program, as well as the latest updates on the proposed amendments to the *Health of Animals Regulations*, visit www.inspection.gc.ca/traceability.**