

THE CHICKEN FARMER

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Changes are Coming to the Canada Food Guide: Farmers Need to Act

Under its new Healthy Eating Strategy, Health Canada, is making several changes to the way its recommendations about Canadians should eat in an effort to improve the overall health and well-being of the population.

Farmers are being asked to contact their MPs, and to write a letter to the Minister of Health, as well as the Minister of Agriculture, to highlight the issues with the proposed guiding principles of the revised Food Guide as well as the review and consultation process overall. The importance of animal products, both as being protein-rich, and high in essential nutrients, needs to be made clear, as does the perspective that not all proteins are created equal. Chicken has many nutritional benefits, and is not targeted by the need to warn Canadians about sodium, sugar, and saturated fat intake.

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Some key messages for those letters, and a template you can use, have been given to your provincial boards.

HEALTHY EATING STRATEGY

The new strategy, covered by the mandate letter issued to the previous Minister of Health, has a goal of improving the food environment and to make healthy eating easier for Canadians. The strategy covers revising the Canada Food Guide (last published in 2007), improving labelling, reducing or eliminating marketing to children, and making sure Canadians are aware of the levels of salt, sugar, and saturated fats they are consuming.

Those three nutrients have been identified as risk factors for many different diseases and as major contributors to obesity in the Canadian population. Ongoing studies indicate how front-of-package labels will be changed to identify these three culprits, and are considering warning labels, caution symbols, and identification strips on just packaged foods.

While the front-of-package (FOP) labelling review is ongoing, the consultation process for the revision of the Canada Food Guide is nearly complete. Unfortunately, food producers, the agri-food industry as a whole, and many other interested organizations, including health professionals, have been kept at arm's length by Health Canada.

This is part of a new transparency commitment that Health Canada implemented in an attempt to show its impartiality and to allow for an unbiased review. In the past, producers, the agri-food industry and other government departments have been active collaborators to ensure that Canadians are provided with the best information available.

Instead of considering all the available information, science, and evidence behind the current iteration of the food guide, Health Canada's process may result in a generational document that could risk the health of Canadians, farmers, agri-food industries, and likely the overall Canadian economy.

Rather than any new science or Canadian relevance, the current revisions and the Health Eating Strategy are being driven by a global environment scan of papers, reports, and documents. It seems as if they will not be including real evidence that might disagree with Health Canada's plan and their efforts to push the revised Food Guide through.

SO WHAT'S THE CONCERN WITH THE SUGGESTED CHANGES TO THE FOOD GUIDE?

Health Canada is following three guiding principles. They are that Canadians need to eat a variety of nutritious foods and beverages to be healthy, that processed or prepared foods are high in the three targeted nutrients (salt, sugar, saturated fats) and should be avoided, and that Canadians need to learn and use knowledge and skills to make healthy food choices.

The guiding principles are in two formats at the moment. The basic version of the principles, the one that only recommends plant-based protein sources is likely to be the top-level one that appears on poster, artwork, brochures, etc. The detailed version of the guiding principles includes an asterisk with a footnote below the principle listing protein sources – but it's a footnote below the main guiding principle and will require more attention to detail to find it. Here is the text of the footnote as it stands now:

* Protein-rich foods include: legumes (such as beans), nuts and seeds, soy products (including fortified soy beverage), eggs, fish and other seafood, poultry, lean red meats (including game meats such as moose, deer and caribou), lower fat milk and yogurt, cheeses lower in sodium and fat. Nutritious foods that contain fat such as homogenized (3.25% M.F.) milk should not be restricted for young children.

It is not known what the tools, websites, or any of the collateral will look like as those are under development and have yet to be shared. Those are expected in 2018 or 2019.

Here are the basic guiding principles, as circulated by Health Canada.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 1:

A variety of nutritious foods and beverages are the foundation for healthy eating.

Health Canada recommends:

- » Regular intake of vegetables, fruit, whole grains and protein-rich foods, especially plant-based sources of protein
- » Inclusion of foods that contain mostly unsaturated fat, instead of foods that contain mostly saturated fat
- » Regular intake of water

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 2:

Processed or prepared foods and beverages high in sodium, sugars or saturated fat undermine healthy eating.

Health Canada recommends:

- » Limited intake of processed or prepared foods high in sodium, sugars or saturated fat
- » Avoidance of processed or prepared beverages high in sugars

GUIDING PRINCIPLE 3:

Knowledge and skills are needed to navigate the complex food environment and support healthy eating.

Health Canada recommends:

- » Selecting nutritious foods when shopping or eating out
- » Planning and preparing healthy meals and snacks
- » Sharing meals with family and friends whenever possible

CONSIDERATIONS

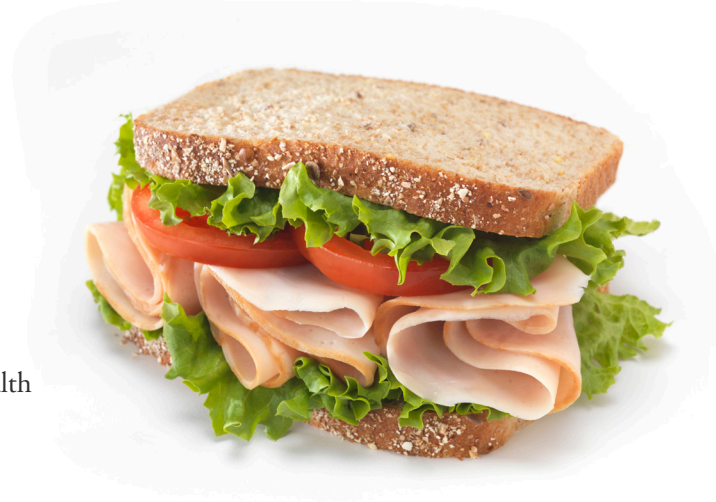
- » Determinants of health
- » Cultural diversity
- » Environment

In guiding principle number one, protein from plant-based sources are being recommended despite the fact that there are no plant-based sources that currently qualify as being considered a “source” of protein under Health Canada’s own guidelines. In addition, the current Food Guide is already plant-based with 50% or more of a plate dedicated to fruits and vegetables.

As for the review process, it has become clear that Health Canada is already working to complete the review as they desire. For those that took part in the two rounds of public consultation, they will recall the closed response options and carefully directed questions that took users down a certain path. Rather than an impartial solicitation of Canadians or a dialogue on key issues and concerns, the closed survey was the only method of participation that consumers, farmers, or the agri-food industry were permitted. There was also significant vegan activist participation and they have been celebrating the updated guiding principles as a great victory.

Farmers need to act now. They need to contact their Members of Parliament, write to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Agriculture. Health Canada is on track to deliver their new Food Guide in 2018, to the detriment of all of animal agriculture and any of those industries we work with.

The new Food Guide will be rolled out without discussion, debate, or even presentation to Parliament as Health Canada does not consider it a regulatory document. **CF**



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Hill Watch

Canadian Federation of Agriculture Summer Meeting and Ministers' Roundtable

Chicken Farmers of Canada representatives were in St. John's, Newfoundland at the end of July to attend the Canadian Federation of Agriculture's (CFA) summer meeting, combined with the CFA/Federal Provincial Territorial (FPT) Ministers' roundtable.

The CFA summer meeting provided a good opportunity for Directors and industry representatives to discuss the issues facing their sectors, and determine a forward approach in dealing with the many government consultations underway.

As part of the Standing Committee on Finance's pre-budget submission request, CFA presented their recommendations for the 2018 federal budget. In its submission, CFA highlights agriculture as a key economic driver of inclusive growth, increasing productivity, problematic labour shortages, export potential, and our role in environmental stewardship.

CFA also wants to see an increase in the Next Policy Framework funding, resources for a National Food Strategy, adjusting tax policies to better position the next generation, and a greater emphasis on rural priorities. Other important CFA discussions included Committee updates, a legislative and government relations update, and an FPT roundtable strategy session.

The highlight of the summer meeting was the roundtable with FPT Ministers and CFA members. The annual roundtable kicked off with opening remarks from CFA President, Ron Bonnett, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lawrence MacAulay, and Newfoundland and Labrador Minister of Fisheries and Land Resources, Steve Crocker.

The first discussion was regarding the Advisory Council on Economic Growth's 2nd Report. Ministers and participants focused on how the strategy of implementing the recommendations from the report must take a cross-discipline, cross-government, and cross-sector approach. The Ministers also touched on the proposed National


Food Policy and how it aligns with the growth targets in Canadian agriculture as well as in fast-growing, high-quality markets abroad.

Ministers then went into closed-door meetings for the next two days to discuss the important issues in agriculture and agri-food, including trade negotiations, export opportunities in key markets, and a Plant and Animal Health Strategy, in addition to finalizing the Canadian Agricultural Partnership. FPT Ministers also reiterated their support for our supply management system.

CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL PARTNERSHIP

After months of extensive consultations, the next agricultural policy framework, entitled the Canada Agricultural Partnership, was presented by federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) agriculture Ministers on July 21st. The Canadian Agricultural Partnership is a five-year, \$3-billion investment that will come into effect on April 1, 2018, the deadline by which FPT governments must conclude their bilateral agreements. It will strengthen the agriculture, agri-food, and agri-based products sector, ensuring continued innovation, growth and prosperity.

The Canadian Agricultural Partnership will focus on six priority areas for the next five years:

- » Science, Research, and Innovation
- » Markets and Trade
- » Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change
- » Value-Added Agriculture and Agri-Food Processing
- » Public Trust
- » Risk Management 

AMU REDUCTION STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

In May, the Chicken Farmers of Canada (CFC) Board of Directors decided to update the timeline on the reduction of the preventive use of antibiotics of human importance – otherwise known as medically important antimicrobials. Since the original antimicrobial use (AMU) strategy was announced back in 2014, Chicken Farmers of Canada has been actively conducting initiatives and researching alternatives to help ease the transition.

THE REVISED AMU STRATEGY:

Eliminated the preventative use of Category I antibiotics (those most critical to human health), effective May 15, 2014

Eliminates the preventive use of Category II antibiotics by the end of 2018

Targets the elimination of the preventive use of Category III antibiotics by the end of 2020

Continues to allow the use of ionophores (those antimicrobials not used in human medicine)

Allows the therapeutic use of antibiotics for the treatment of disease to maintain health and welfare

Initiatives have been focused on collaborating with stakeholders in the areas of surveillance, stewardship, research and innovation, and communication.

Collaboration

- » A steering group at the national level representing Chicken Farmers of Canada, Canadian Hatching Egg Producers, Turkey Farmers of Canada, Canadian Hatchery Federation, Canadian Poultry and Egg Processors Council, Animal Nutrition Association of Canada, and the Canadian Association of Poultry Veterinarians is meeting regularly to help guide the implementation of the strategy
- » Provincial boards have been holding discussions with provincial stakeholders to address hurdles and opportunities

Surveillance

- » CFC has collaborated with the federal government to perform AMU surveillance in broiler operations
- » This, combined with our AMU surveillance program, has led to additional insight into AMU levels and trends, and will continue to be analyzed as the reduction strategy proceeds
- » CFC has partnered with the federal government to further investigate the antimicrobial resistance (AMR) patterns associated with antibiotics used in a preventive manner

Stewardship

- » Working to include the AMU strategy as requirements in the On-Farm Food Safety Assurance Program manual
- » Formalizing the definitions of prevention and therapeutic use, along with use strategies to promote a consistent implementation across the country

- » Coordinating with the federal government on requiring veterinary prescriptions for all feed and water use
- » Collaborating with value-chain members to ensure quality throughout the stakeholder chain; reviewing best management practices at all levels
- » Working with government to increase the availability of feed additives to ensure a level playing field with global competitors

Research and Innovation

- » CFC is investing in research through the Canadian Poultry Research Council (CPRC) to provide alternative solutions
- » Industry is working to leverage funding through the next Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada research cluster program with antimicrobial resistance and use as the top priority

Communication

- » Developing tools to communicate the AMU strategy and opportunities to farmers and stakeholders
- » Announcing the AMU strategy to federal government departments, by aligning the Chicken Farmers of Canada strategy with the new federal Pan-Canadian Framework for AMR and AMU
- » Communicating the strategy to retail and restaurant companies as a sustainable means of meeting consumer expectations, while maintaining the ability for farmers to protect the health and wellbeing of their birds

Chicken Farmers of Canada will continue to collaborate with industry stakeholders to implement this strategy effectively. All stakeholders within the chain are also encouraged to focus on the goals of this initiative and to collaborate on addressing any potential hurdles by examining and creating opportunities. **CF**

Raised by a Canadian Farmer Means Even More Now!

Chicken Farmers of Canada has expanded its *Raised by a Canadian Farmer* brand to incorporate the programs that farmers use to raise their birds to the highest standards of care, quality and sustainability.

WHY THE CHANGE?

The logos were re-designed to capitalize on brand equity by combining our respected on-farm programs with the consumer-facing *Raised by a Canadian Farmer* brand. This change will increase the recognisability of the program logos and create new opportunities to communicate and promote these industry-leading programs.

By combining the *Raised by a Canadian Farmer* brand with the on-farm programs, the new identity will have greater meaning for retailers and restaurants, who are critically interested in meeting the expectations of socially responsible consumers.

WHAT WILL THE NEW LOGOS LOOK LIKE?

The three logos are differentiated by their designated program name and assigned colour.



HOW WILL THIS BENEFIT FARMERS?

These new logos give farmers recognizable symbols that they can use to demonstrate the innovation, pride and hard work they put in every day to implement some of the highest standards in food safety and animal care, and it proudly confirms their commitment to keeping their work environmentally, economically and socially sustainable.

The new logos directly link the *Raised by a Canadian Farmer* brand to the hard work that farmers put in each day. Farmers will be recognized in a public way for their implementation of the food safety and animal care programs.

WHAT CHANGES WILL FARMERS SEE?

Farmers will notice the new logos and names on program material as new manuals and documents are printed, as well as across most of CFC's public-facing communications about the programs. New roadside signs promoting the programs will be available to farmers in early 2018.

Be sure to check out www.chickenfarmers.ca for more information about the new logos and the announcement release here at www.chickenfarmers.ca/media-room/raised-by-a-canadian-farmer-means-even-more-now/! 

Changes are Coming to the On-Farm Program Audit Cycles

The current audit cycle comprised of full, partial, records assessment, and self-declaration audits has been in place since 2005 when the on-farm certification programs were in their infancy.

Chicken Farmers of Canada, in conjunction with the provincial boards, has refined the management of the programs and implemented continuous improvement to ensure that the on-farm programs remain credible and effective.

This year, the focus has been on making changes to the audit frequency to ensure the programs' credibility is maintained and that the programs continue to meet the expectations of retailers and restaurants. This, in turn, entrenches the *Raised by a Canadian Farmer* On-Farm Food Safety Program and the *Raised by a Canadian Farmer* Animal Care Program as the only national food safety and animal care programs that can reach all 2,800 chicken farms and the only one that needs to be considered.

The new program audits will be conducted on a two-year cycle and will no longer include partial or self-declared audits. Partial audits have been eliminated from the cycle because they incurred similar travel expenses and workloads as full audits, but provided less information and credibility than a full audit. Self-declared audits have been eliminated based on their reduced integrity as compared to full audits and records assessments.

As part of the revised audit cycle, all farms will receive a full on-farm audit once every two years, with a records assessment audit in the alternating

year. Additionally, new farms will receive a full audit in the first year and begin the two-year cycle in their second year, thereby giving them two full audits in the first two years of production.

Provincial boards will adhere to this new audit cycle starting in January 2018.

Five percent of farms scheduled for audit by records assessment in any given year will be randomly selected to receive a full on-farm audit instead. This process helps to increase the credibility of program implementation and of oversight in years when audits are performed off-farm.

Triggered audits and random audits will continue to make up the range of audits types in the CFC on-farm programs. These audits can be conducted by the provincial board if there are complaints or specific concerns.

CFC's leadership in on-farm food safety and animal care will continue to evolve as we commit to working with the experts – including all industry stakeholder organizations from farm to table, the research community, and government regulators. This commitment and national scope provides confidence to our customers and consumers of the high standards which are the foundations of our “Raised by a Canadian Farmer” brand. **CF**

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VDD UPDATE

Health Canada's Initiatives to Tackle Antimicrobial Resistance

In response to the global rise in antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and the United Nations international call to action, the federal government of Canada has released the new Pan-Canadian Framework on Antimicrobial Resistance and Antimicrobial Use.

This framework is intended to provide strategic goals and guiding principles to address AMR in Canada by outlining the need for action across all jurisdictions and implicated sectors in the areas of surveillance, stewardship, research and innovation, and infection prevention and control.

A copy of the framework can be found here: www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/drugs-health-products/tackling-antimicrobial-resistance-use-pan-canadian-framework-action.html

The Chicken Farmers of Canada Antimicrobial Use (AMU) Strategy is likewise built on the key areas of surveillance, stewardship, reduction, research and management practices, and complements the Pan-Canadian Framework. Our AMU Strategy involves a phased reduction of preventative medically important antimicrobials by first eliminating the preventative use of Category I antibiotics (the date the ban took effect was May 15, 2014), eliminating the preventative use of Category II antibiotics (high importance to human health) by the end of 2018, and by setting a goal to eliminate the preventive use of Category III antibiotics (medium importance to human health) by the end of 2020.

As part of the federal government response, the Veterinary Drug Directorate (VDD) of Health Canada is spearheading six initiatives aimed at increasing stewardship in veterinarian medicine and livestock production.

VDD'S SIX INITIATIVES:

1. Increasing oversight on the importation of own-use veterinary medication: This initiative will no longer allow the importation of medically-important antimicrobials for a person's own farm use to treat food-producing animals.

[This change will have limited to no impact on chicken farmers as the importation of these products is already prohibited under the On-Farm Food Safety Assurance Program (OFFSAP).]

2. Increasing oversight on the importation of active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs): This initiative is aimed at increasing the regulation of imported APIs, which can be used to create antimicrobials.

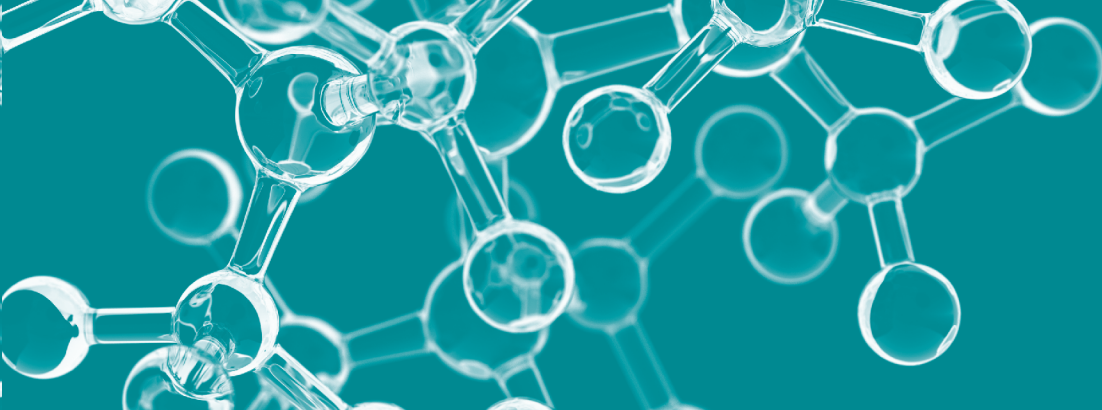
[This change will have limited to no impact on chicken farmers as the importation of these products is already prohibited under OFFSAP.]

3. Reporting of sales volume of antimicrobials to Health Canada: Animal health companies will be required to report sales volumes of antimicrobials to Health Canada, with the possibility of reporting sales by commodity and by region/province. Health Canada expects this improved surveillance to help inform decision-making. The first sales volumes will be reported for the 2018 sales year.

4. Facilitating access to low-risk veterinary health products: This initiative seeks to develop a regulatory pathway, which does not currently exist, to allow for the importation of low-risk veterinary health products for use in food-producing animals.

[While this pathway will be beneficial for certain commodities, the outcome is unclear for poultry as of yet.]

5. Removing growth promotion claims from medically-important antimicrobials (MIAs): This initiative will remove the ability for an antimicrobial to claim, or to be marketed, based on a growth-promotion claim. While no growth-promotion claims have been approved since 2004, this initiative will impact 64 products across all species. This initiative is in response to the lack of modern data to support these claims at the recommended dosages.




6. Increasing veterinary oversight over all medically important antimicrobials (MIAs): This initiative will move all MIAs under the Prescription Drug List – which means that they will require a veterinary prescription to be used in feed or water. Across all species, about 300 products in all dosage forms will be implicated in this initiative.

[This will be a change for chicken farmers in many parts of the country as many of the common antibiotics used in feed – virginiamycin, tylosin, and bacitracin – will require a veterinary prescription prior to its inclusion in feed.]

Moving these products to the Prescription Drug List will also impact where these products can be sold. Once this initiative

is implemented at the end of 2018, medically-important antimicrobials will no longer be allowed to be sold over-the-counter. Therefore, their availability will be restricted through veterinarians (and possibly other specific locations dependent on individual provincial regulations). In all cases, a veterinary prescription will be required prior to their purchase/use.

This is a similar process to requirements for veterinary oversight that has been mandated in Quebec for decades.]

Chicken Farmers of Canada continues to collaborate with veterinarians and feed mills to prepare the industry for these changes and will continue to provide information to farmers over the coming months. 

VETERINARIANS WITHOUT BORDERS

Member of VSF International



VÉTÉRINAIRES SANS FRONTIÈRES

Membre de VSF International

Vets Without Borders is seeking **CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST VOLUNTEERS** for Healthy Animals and Healthy Communities (V4H2)

Veterinarians without Borders works for, and with, communities in need to foster the health of animals, people and the environments that sustain us.

This posting is a 12 month assignment in Ghana. Volunteer will be based in various locations including: Greater Accra region, Salaga, Pong Tamale, Nyankpala and Tamale. A degree in Veterinary Science or related field is essential. Open to Canadian Citizens and Permanent Residents of Canada only. To assist in the development and improvement of the Veterinary Nursing programme in Ghana.

For more information and to apply go to:

www.vetswithoutborders.ca/curriculum-development-ghana

Update on NAFTA

The modernization of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) began on August 16th with a press event in Washington D.C. hosted by Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chrystia Freeland, Mexican Secretary of Economy, Ildefonso Guajardo Villarreal, and United States Trade Representative, Robert Lighthizer.

CFC CONTINUES
TO MONITOR THE
TALKS, AND TO
WORK CLOSELY WITH
CANADIAN OFFICIALS
TO ENSURE THAT A
POSITIVE OUTCOME
FOR THE CANADIAN
CHICKEN SECTOR IS
REACHED IN NAFTA 2.0

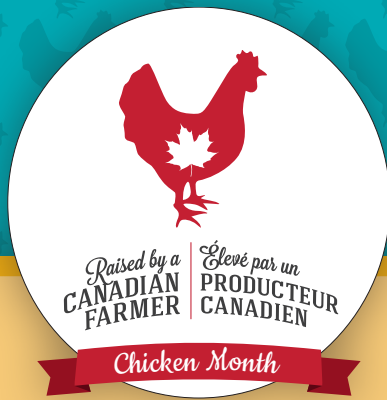
Round two of the modernization was held September 1–5 in Mexico City and round three took place in Ottawa from September 23–27. These first rounds have focused on establishing the draft texts that the negotiation teams will work from going forward, and have not delved deeply into substantive issues like market access, rules of origin, or labour.

On September 22nd, the U.S. Administration notified its Congress that some of their NAFTA proposals would require changes to be made to U.S. trade remedy law. This procedural step sets in motion a 180-day clock before President Trump can sign a new agreement that could then move to Congress for consideration and implementation.

Therefore, the earliest date that Congress could begin considering a new NAFTA agreement would be March 21, 2018 – exactly when American lawmakers will be turning their focus to the upcoming November midterm elections. While it remains unclear how this new timeline could impact the pace of negotiations, all three countries have maintained their commitment to the ambitious timeline of concluding the set of seven rounds of negotiations before the end of the year.

Chicken Farmers of Canada continues to monitor the talks, and to work closely with Canadian officials to ensure that a positive outcome for the Canadian chicken sector is reached in NAFTA 2.0. **CF**





September was National Chicken Month

As a part of the Public Relations Action Plan, CFC prepared various projects and initiatives to celebrate farmers during our 2nd annual National Chicken Month.

Chicken is Canada's #1 protein choice and September is the perfect time to celebrate the popularity of chicken and our farmers!

HERE ARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS:

Farmer Selfie Contest

Check out our Twitter and Instagram accounts to spot some of our daily winners from our Farmer Selfie Contest! Each winner received a fun prize pack for their wonderful submissions.

Facebook Live Video

A short Facebook Live Q&A video with British Columbia's Derek Janzen aired in mid-month. It answered consumer questions about farming and covered the day-to-day life of a farmer. If you missed the live feed, make sure to check back on our Facebook page to see it again later.

Twitter Party #CDNChickenMonth

We hosted a Twitter Party on September 12th at 9:00 pm EST to celebrate chicken month! The party discussed farming, along with recipes and fun prizes were given out. The party garnered over 50 million impressions!

National Chicken Month Recipe Contest

Canadians were asked to submit their favourite chicken recipes in order to win a Chicken Farmers of Canada prize pack AND have their recipe featured on chicken.ca. Recipes submitted by email and the contest closed September 30th. Stay tuned for the winning recipe!

Chef D'Oeuvres Videos

We upped the stakes in the Farmer versus Swimmer cook offs this year. We doubled the team size, so this time around a team of two farmers took on a team of two swimmers to see who made the best chicken dish. The completed dishes were served to a panel of judges and Canadians voted online.

This year, we had Tim Ansems and his buddy Chris Sweeney from Chicken Farmers of Nova Scotia take on Richard Funk and Chantal Van Landeghem from Canada's Swim Team. Tim and Chris made yummy Chicken and Broccoli Calzones, while Richard and Chantal made a beautiful Chicken & Pasta alla Carbonara. In the end, the farmers took home the crown!

For the French video, we had Stewart Humphrey and Alain Talbot from Les Éleveurs de Volailles du Québec take on Sandrine and Ariane Mainville from Canada's Swim Team. The farmers made Grilled Chicken with Chimichurri Sauce & Brown Rice, while the ladies made Apple-Sage Chicken Sauté. The winners were THE SWIMMERS!

Thank you for celebrating National Chicken Month with us and we can't wait to see what we do next year! **CF**