

# CHICKEN FARMERS OF CANADA'S *Sustainability Report*



COMMITTED  
TO  
SUSTAINABILITY



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## INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is important to Canadian consumers. They want to know where their food comes from and they want to know that the work behind producing it is environmentally, economically and socially sustainable – Chicken farmers deliver.

Canadian chicken farmers take this stewardship seriously and are proud of the innovation and hard work they put in every day.

### Chicken Farmers of Canada's (CFC) key values of sustainability

Protecting bird health and welfare

Producing safe chicken for Canadians

Preserving the health of the land and of our farms

Providing value to Canada, and affordable food to Canadians through supply management

### *Protecting bird health and welfare*

#### Highlights

- » Chicken farmers in Canada operate under a national, mandatory, auditable and enforceable *Raised by a Canadian Farmer* Animal Care Program
- » The Canadian chicken value chain supports a comprehensive Antimicrobial Use Strategy that involves surveillance, education, research, and reduction

## Animal Care

CFC's *Raised by a Canadian Farmer* Animal Care Program (ACP) is a concrete, accountable means of demonstrating the pride and commitment of farmers in raising the quality chicken Canadians can trust. CFC is the only organization that can audit and enforce one national program for all chicken farmers in Canada, and has been implementing the ACP since 2009.

CFC's ACP incorporates the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Hatching Eggs, Breeders, Chickens and Turkeys. This Code is maintained by the National Farm Animal Care Council, a world leader in bringing together stakeholders with different perspectives – farmers, veterinarians, processors, transporters, animal welfare associations, researchers, and provincial/federal governments – to develop robust and sound Codes of Practice.

CFC's ACP is strengthened by annual audits and enforcement:

- » Each farmer is audited annually, ensuring accountability from every farm
- » The program has strict enforcement measures to offer additional assurance
  - Canada's supply management gives provincial boards the authority to use monetary penalties, a reduction in allocation or license suspension as measures of enforcement
  - All provinces have made, or have approved making, the ACP mandatory for all chicken farmers
- » The whole value chain is informed and involved
- » Third party audits of the ACP are conducted annually by NSF International to offer credibility and ensure consistency across the country. NSF is an internationally recognized, third-party certification body, accredited by the American National Standards Institute to ISO 17065



## Antibiotics

CFC supports the responsible use of antibiotics and has established a sustainable strategy to meet consumer expectations, protect the health and welfare of birds, and preserve effective treatment options.

### Key elements of the value chain Antimicrobial Use Strategy:

Defining antimicrobial use and analyzing antimicrobial resistance trends

Reviewing best management practices and reducing antimicrobial use

Ensuring effective controls of antimicrobial use in Canada

Researching and determining the availability of alternative products

Educating stakeholders on the issues of antimicrobial use and resistance

The strategy focusses on the preventive use of antibiotics of importance to human medicine (i.e. those antibiotics categorized as I, II and III). This is not a “Raised without the Use of Antibiotics” strategy, as antibiotics play an essential role in protecting the health and welfare of the birds in our care and help ensure a safe food supply.

In May 2014, the Canadian chicken value chain eliminated the use of Category I antibiotics for disease prevention. It has also established timelines to eliminate the preventive use of Category II antimicrobials by the end of 2018, and have set the goal to eliminate the preventive use of Category III antibiotics by the end of 2020. A reassessment of the Category III goal will be performed in 2019 to ensure the readiness of the industry to proceed.

The objectives and approach of CFC's strategy parallels the Canadian government's Pan-Canadian framework on Antimicrobial Resistance and Use.

## The Canadian Poultry Research Council

Research and innovation is the foundation that provides farmers with the information and tools to be able to protect bird health and welfare – it's what helps us to continually improve. CFC is a founding member of the Canadian Poultry Research Council (CPRC). To date the Canadian poultry value chain has invested over \$4.4 million through CPRC, which has been matched by government and other agencies to over \$25 million. Nearly half of this research funding has been directed towards bird health and antibiotic alternative research, and more than 25 projects have been funded to address animal welfare.

In addition, CFC has invested in over 40 projects through CPRC related to bird health and food safety research.

As with protecting bird health and welfare and producing safe chicken, the value chain is also looking to the latest science to help improve the environmental performance of our farms. To date, CFC has invested in over 12 different research projects through CPRC looking at environmental issues and solutions in the poultry value chain.

## Producing safe chicken for Canadians Highlights

- » Chicken farmers in Canada follow a national, mandatory *Raised by a Canadian Farmer* On-Farm Food Safety Program (OFFSP), which has received full recognition from the federal, provincial, and territorial governments
- » The Canadian chicken value chain has an effective and responsive traceability system, as well as communication and operational plans for dealing with potential disease outbreaks



## Food Safety

We believe that food safety begins on the farm. That's why we've implemented a program to ensure that we are providing Canadians with the safe, fresh, high quality chicken they expect.

CFC's *Raised by a Canadian Farmer* OFFSP is Hazard Analysis at Critical Control Points (HACCP) based and has been developed to meet and exceed the standards developed by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and the provincial and territorial governments for on-farm food safety programs.

The program was developed with HACCP principles; it conforms to government legislation, policy and protocols, and uses a Management System in an effective and consistent manner. The OFFSP has also been designed to meet the biosecurity requirements of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's National Avian On-Farm Biosecurity Standard.

The animal care and food safety programs are managed together under one system, so the elements described above which lend credibility to the ACP apply equally to OFFSP. Annual audits of both programs are currently carried out by approximately 30 trained and qualified auditors across the country.

All 10 provinces have now made the program mandatory and 100% of farmers are certified. Thanks to our system of supply management, mandatory means just that – farmers must be certified on the program to sell chicken in Canada and there are enforcement measures in place to ensure compliance.

## Traceability for Emergency Management

The OFFSP ensures proactive biosecurity measures are in place to keep pathogens out of the barn. Even with the greatest precautions, disease outbreaks can still happen, and we've taken steps to prepare the value chain for that potential.

That's why CFC and all ten provincial boards maintain up-to-date Emergency Response Plans to deal with these rare incidents. These plans address both operations and communications in an emergency situation. They set out protocols and procedures to ensure that actions are taken quickly and effectively to limit disease spread, and that communication between all stakeholders is clear so that everyone remains informed and able to effectively support the operational response. In addition, each Provincial Board is part of an Emergency Response Committee with the value chain, CFIA and provincial governments.



## Preserving the health of the land and of our farms

### The Health of the Land

No one depends more on the land, soil, and water than farmers, and they are taking steps to ensure that their farms are environmentally sustainable.

### Highlights

- » Over the last 40 years, Canadian chicken farmers have adopted practices on the farm to reduce environmental impact resulting in:
  - 37% lower carbon footprint
  - 37% reduction in non-renewable energy consumption
  - 45% less water consumption
- » Per kg of protein, the carbon footprint of Canadian chicken is lower than other livestock commodities. 80% of farmers have taken measures to maximize their energy efficiency (e.g. improve electricity usage)

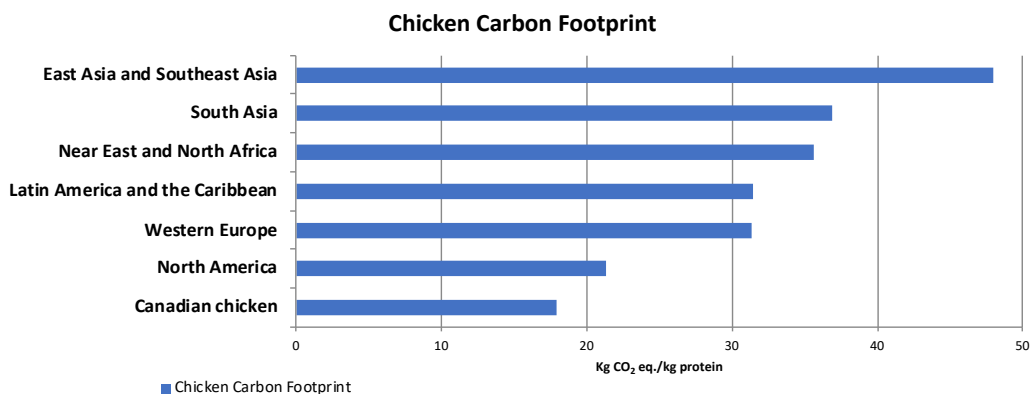
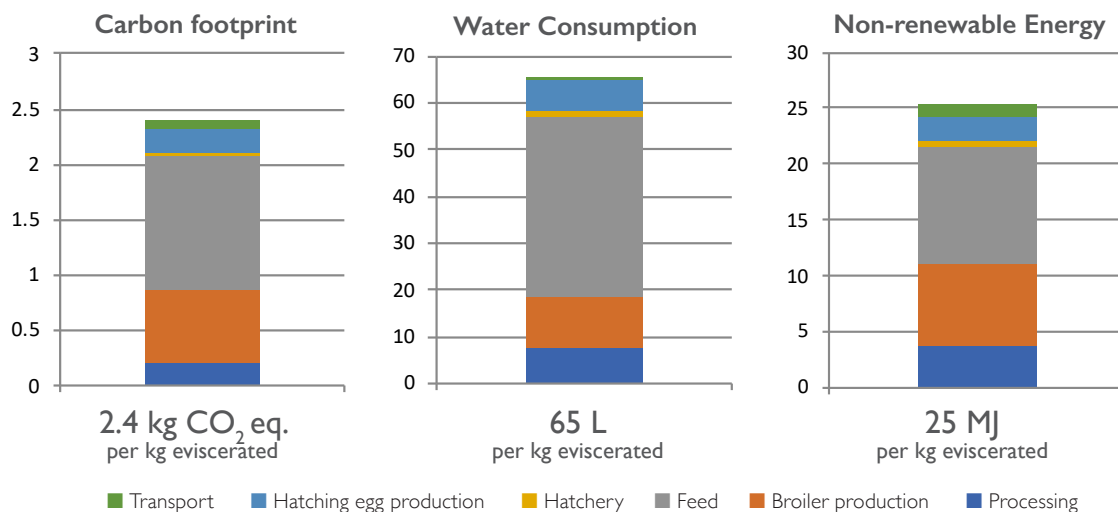
CFC conducted an environmental life cycle assessment (LCA) of Canadian chicken in 2017 to benchmark and assess its environmental impact. The LCA reported the environmental footprint of Canadian chicken through three main indicators: carbon footprint, water consumption and non-renewable energy use.

Per kilogram of eviscerated chicken produced in Canada, on average:

- » 2.4 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> eq. is produced
- » 65 L of water is consumed
- » 25 MJ of non-renewable energy is consumed

Compared to other chicken-producing regions of the world, Canadian chicken has one of the lowest carbon footprints.

The assessment also indicates farmers' commitment as approximately 70% of Canadian chicken farmers are enrolled in their provincial Environmental Farm Plan, and 80% of farmers have taken measures to maximize their energy efficiency (e.g. improve electricity usage).





## *The Health of our Farms*

### Highlights

- » Canadian chicken farms are healthy and vibrant, welcoming new entrants each year to a strong community of family farms
- » 90% of Canadian chicken farmers pay their staff a salary over the provincial minimum wage
- » Additionally, 90% of farmers are involved in their communities in different ways, such as by providing free services to community members, contributing to their municipal or regional organization or actively communicating to farm visitors and neighbours about their farm and agriculture.

The health and safety of those who work on the farm is a key component of sustainable farms.

That's why provincial worker safety and farm safety programs are in place throughout the country. These help to educate and emphasize ways to avoid accidents and control hazards on the farm.

There are approximately 2,800 chicken farmers in Canada, and over 90% of farms are family-owned. Farmers are planning for the future: Over 20% of farmers built new barns or did substantial upgrades between 2013 and 2014.

CFC is helping the next generation of farmers: As a proud supporter of the Canadian Young Farmers' Forum, CFC recently launched its own Young Farmer Program. Initiatives like these foster leadership among Canada's future farmers.





## ***Supply Management: Providing value to Canada, and affordable food to Canadians***

### **Highlights**

- » Supply management allows farmers to invest with confidence in their operations:
  - The value chain contributes positively to the Canadian economy and give back to local communities
  - Consumers are assured of a steady supply of fresh, high-quality chicken at a reasonable price

Supply management is the foundation that makes the Canadian chicken value chain sustainable, and makes everything we do possible – from implementing and enforcing on-farm food safety and animal care programs, to funding innovation and research, contributing to the Canadian economy, and giving back to Canadian communities.

Supply management is a risk management system that allows farmers across the country to match their production to Canadian demand. In other words, we carefully figure out how much chicken Canada will need and farmers make sure to produce that amount.

In terms of economic contribution, the Canadian chicken value chain:

- » Sustains **87,200** jobs
- » Contributes **\$6.8 billion** to Canada's Gross Domestic Product
- » Pays **\$2.2 billion** in taxes

Chicken is the least expensive and most popular meat protein in the country – having risen by only 3.5% since 2013, compared to 32.2% for beef and 13.6% for pork.

With farmers receiving a fair return for their work, supply management also eliminates the need for subsidies; it allows for a healthy, sustainable value chain where farmers can reinvest with confidence in their communities and businesses.

Canadian chicken farmers also support rural communities through their day-to-day business. The chicken value chain purchases over 2 million tonnes of feed and grain from local feed mills, and over 670 million chicks on average from local hatcheries annually, supporting other farmers in turn.

### **GIVING BACK**

Canadian chicken farmers believe that it's important to give back to our communities and support those who are less fortunate, and the stability of supply management allows us to do that.

Contributions to communities from CFC, provincial boards and individual farmers takes many different forms, including cash donations and chicken products to local food banks. As examples, CFC has

contributed over \$500,000 to the Ottawa Food Bank since 2007; Chicken Farmers of Nova Scotia contributes \$25,000/year to local food banks; and, Chicken Farmers of Ontario's Food Bank Donation program facilitates the donation of up to 300 chickens per farmer each year to local food

banks. These contributions are repeated across the country to support those that are less fortunate.

Interested in learning more about Canadian chicken production? Check out [letstalkchicken.ca](http://letstalkchicken.ca) and [chickenfarmers.ca](http://chickenfarmers.ca) for videos and more!

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Canadian chicken farmers are proud to  
provide value and stability to Canada and  
Canadians through supply management.

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