

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 objective 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

9 April 2018

This second update 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 CFIA is proposing amendments to the *Health of Animals Regulations* for livestock identification and traceability. The objective of the proposed regulatory amendments is to address the gaps previously identified during consultations in 2013 and 2015. Four gaps that have been identified in the current livestock identification and traceability program include:

- livestock species that share diseases are not all subject to traceability requirements;
- the time period provided to report an event to a responsible administrator is too long to support an efficient response to disease outbreaks, or natural disasters;
- 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 high compliance with animal identification requirements; improved premises identification and timely and accurate animal movement reporting. 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.

Why is traceability important for Canada’s livestock sector?

The objective 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. 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. Some examples of marketing initiatives by retailers using traceability to improve their supply chain and provide assurance to their customers are:

- McDonald’s (<http://corporate.mcdonalds.com/corpmcd/scale-for-good/beef-sustainability.html>),
- Cargill (<https://www.aqcanada.com/daily/cattle-traceability-to-pay-off-in-cargill-pilot>), and



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

1. Get a Premises Identification Number for your operation. Operations that 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 get your Premises Identification Number on the CFIA web site at www.inspection.gc.ca/traceability
2. Get a Canadian Livestock Tracking System (CLTS) account. Go to www.canadaid.com to register.
3. If you have a CLTS account, make sure your information is up to date. Link your Premises Identification Number to your account.
4. Make sure all animals that leave your operation are tagged with an approved indicator.

- 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 ProAction initiative (www.dairyfarmers.ca/proaction or visit [the DFC YouTube channel for more videos](#)).

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 tag numbers can be tracked in voluntary systems like BIXS (www.bixsco.com) that offer cattle with desirable traits for sought after markets by sharing information between buyers and sellers. 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/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.

Traceability can also benefit other agriculture sectors, like crop management. Seed and crop performance, field rotations, pesticide application and nutrient management, and having historical data at your fingertips are some of the benefits grain and oilseed producers have gained from their traceability systems.

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

How is traceability used to help me during an emergency?

During a disease outbreak it is critical to know which animals were involved, where they were and are located, and what other animals may have been exposed at those locations. The first step to any investigation is knowing the identification number of the animal. Once you have that identification number, you can track the animal's movements that have been reported and determine locations of other animals to hopefully find the source and contain the disease from spreading.

However, not having an identification number for an animal that is tied to a disease outbreak and knowing the movements of those animals can make it extremely difficult to pinpoint specific animals and herds who may be impacted. This can lead to more animals and more herds than necessary being implicated, quarantined or destroyed during a disease outbreak. This can cause a lot of stress for the producer with money tied up in quarantined animals, the restriction of movement of animals and equipment, or the destruction of years of breeding traits into the herd.



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 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 may have been infected. As a result of inadequate animal identification among many herds, this led to over 160 herds with 56,000 animals being 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.

Proposed changes to Canada's Livestock Identification and Traceability Program aims to reduce the length of time it takes to trace-in and trace-out herds by using animal identification, premises identification, and movement information entered into the responsible administrator's database to make information more accurate and available during a disease investigation, which could reduce the time to trace-in and trace-out animals to days instead of weeks.

Regulatory Implementation Committee – Update on activities

An industry-government Regulatory Implementation Committee 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 committee is:

- developing a template for collecting information to accompany the movement of animals that can be used 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 the Canada Gazette, such as recruiting and nominating Livestock Traceability Ambassadors within the livestock sector.

When are the proposed regulations expected to 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, 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.