

STATUS AND ONGOING CONSULTATIONS

Proposed Amendments to Canada's Health of Animals Regulations

Dr. Gordon Doonan, CFIA Senior Staff Veterinarian, Humane Transportation of Animals, met with livestock industry members in Alberta in May 2007, to provide updates on the status of the proposed amendments and to discuss ongoing issues.

CFIA has been collecting input and information for the proposal for several years. "This is not the product of pressure from animal rights groups. The process was initiated prior to their involvement," says Doonan. "The impetus came from within CFIA originally. Later input was provided by researchers, veterinarians, industry and animal humane organizations." Doonan notes, "We recognize that any changes require careful consideration, but there is a sense of urgency, as certain sections do not appear to say what they were intended to achieve."

The regulations are not expected, or intended, to impact most individuals involved in the relocation of animals. "CFIA deals with individuals who give industry a bad name. This is who the regulations are meant to address. What is happening in enforcement today will continue. The aim is to give inspectors the tools and guidance they need to do their job."

The discussion focused on three key proposed amendments: loading density, feed/water/rest, and risk factors (see below).

Wherever possible the regulations will reflect 'outcome-based' measures, (i.e., there must be a negative outcome for the animal). Manitoba's Animal Welfare Act has been referenced for its wording where Codes are referenced, but *not adhering to the Code is not an offence unless there is a negative outcome for the animal.*

Proposed changes to the regulations may be in Gazette 1 by autumn, at the earliest.

Jim Haggins, PIC Canada, attended the meeting and noted, "I came away from this with a great deal more comfort with the procedure ... There was a clear understanding to base decisions on 'outcome based results' and that was certainly encouraging." ■



Gordon Doonan meets with livestock industry reps

NORMAL REGULATORY CHANGE PROCESS



LOADING DENSITY

CFIA heard the request to reference Codes and carried this forward as a recommendation. However, Justice Canada has a rule: one cannot reference an external document if that document has as its source an organization with a vested interest. The National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) is the source referenced for Codes, but it may be viewed as an organization with a vested interest.

FEED, WATER & REST (FWR)

CFIA is considering separating FWR requirements. Water would be most important (then feed, then rest). Currently the proposal is for watering intervals of 28-30 hours for monogastrics and 40-41 hours for ruminants. CFIA is open for discussion around FWR due to the complex variables at play and willing to engage stakeholders in developing answers. Dr. Doonan expects recommendations to be developed by July 2007, at which point stakeholder input is welcome.

RISK FACTORS

Those involved in transportation are responsible for looking at risk factors (e.g. adverse weather conditions), planning accordingly and performing due diligence. CFIA is looking at how to objectively address this requirement. However, there must be a negative outcome to the animal, which can be linked to a lack of due diligence, before any enforcement action will occur.

Proposed changes to animal transportation regulations: www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/heasan/transport/notavie.shtml