



Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System

Charter

For consultation with CAHSS members

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Contents

Background.....	3
1 Network: Principles, Vision, Mission, and Key Stakeholders.....	4
1.1 Core Values/Principles	4
1.2 Vision and Mission statement	4
1.3 A Network of Networks	5
2 Governance Model	5
2.1 Legal Entities, Structure and Membership	6
2.2 Network: Governance and Management	7
3 Dispute Resolution Process	10
4 Termination and Resignation from Membership	10
4.1 Termination of Membership.....	10
4.2 Resignation from Membership	11
4.3 The effects of termination or resignation from Membership	11
5 Charter Amendments and Updates.....	11
6 Appendices to the Charter.....	12
6.1 APPENDIX A - CAHSS Coordinator.....	12

Background

Canada's social and economic well-being is closely connected to the health and welfare of animal populations. The purpose of CAHSS is to bring together and use data-driven information to demonstrate animal health, minimize impacts of disease, and guide planning.

The Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS) is an initiative of the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council (NFAHWC), with broad based collaborative support of industry and governments. It is an independent, member-driven "network of networks" for effective, responsive, and integrated animal health safety in Canada.

1 Network: Principles, Vision, Mission, and Key Stakeholders

1.1 Core Values/Principles

Organizations and individuals wishing to become members of CAHSS must adhere to the Principles of Practice which describe how members work together to achieve CAHSS' vision of an effective, responsive and integrated animal health surveillance system spanning all of Canada.

1.1.1 CAHSS Principles of Practice

Members of CAHSS agree to:

1. Work to ensure the quality of life for Canadians by protecting animal health and public health and supporting economic prosperity.
2. Work to ensure scientific rigour and professional and technical competence, acknowledging that real-world factors must be taken into account in decision making.
3. Encourage practices, behaviours and uses of technology that are consistent with the Purpose and Principles. In particular, encourage openness, collaboration and innovation.
4. Resolve conflict compassionately, productively, cooperatively and respectfully.
5. Freely and fully exchange information relevant to the Purpose while respecting confidentiality.
6. Work to ensure clarity in animal health surveillance communications by providing relevant background and contextual information.

1.2 Vision and Mission statement

1.2.1 Vision Statement

Our vision is that Canada has an effective, responsive, integrated animal health surveillance system leading to improved animal health outcomes and costs, better response to emerging diseases, consumer and public health confidence in animal agriculture, and improved market access.

1.2.2 Mission/Purpose Statement

The purpose of CAHSS is to bring together and use data-driven information to demonstrate animal health, minimize impacts of disease, and guide surveillance planning from a national perspective.

The central roles of CAHSS are to:

- foster open communications within and across the systems and networks;
- serve as a source of information with a website of catalogued resources, animal health information, and other surveillance infrastructure;
- facilitate the development of social network groups to share health intelligence;
- encourage and provide expertise and resources to support the network groups and;
- help to develop the ability to quickly activate coordinated surveillance network in response to animal health emergencies

CAHSS Purpose Statement



1.3 A Network of Networks

From meat, milk or egg production statistics to post mortem reports, surveillance data comes in many forms. CAHSS is a "network of networks" proud to work with the following:

- Provincial, Regional & Species Surveillance Networks
- Federal, Provincial & Territorial Governments
- Council of Chief Veterinary Officers
- Community for Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases
- Veterinary Surveillance & Epidemiology Networks
- Animal Health Laboratories
- Public Health Authorities
- Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative

2 Governance Model

CAHSS utilizes a "Lead Agency" model of governance. In this case, CAHSS falls under the legal authority of the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council (NFAHWC) Corporation. The NFAHW Council is an advisory council formed by the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Regulatory Assistant Deputy Ministers of Agriculture Committee (FPT Reg ADMs) but reports to a broad range of animal agriculture stakeholders and members. The NFAHW Council is operated and funded jointly by three "partners":

- Industry and non-government stakeholders, e.g. the Canadian Animal Health Institute (CAHI), academia and/or the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA);
- Provincial/territorial governments; and
- Federal government.

2.1 Legal Entities, Structure and Membership

2.1.1 Network Members

These are the entities that jointly make up the Network:

1. **Species Specific Network Members** – These are comprised of individuals and organizations working with various animal populations (dairy, beef, poultry, equine, swine, aquatic, wildlife, etc.)
2. **Community of Practice Members** – These are comprised of organizations representing surveillance oversight, best practice, innovation, and emerging trends. Community of Practice Members would include:
 - Federal, Provincial, Territorial Governments
 - Livestock and Agrifood Industry Organizations
 - Provincial/Regional/Sectoral Surveillance and Animal Health Networks and Organizations
 - The Council of Chief Veterinary Officers
 - The Veterinary Surveillance and Epidemiology Network
 - The Community for Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases Network
 - Diagnostic Laboratories
 - Antimicrobial Use and Resistance Surveillance Committees and Organizations
 - Vector-Borne Diseases Organizations
 - Public Health Organizations
 - Universities and Colleges with Veterinary, Agriculture and Health Programs

2.1.2 Requirements for Membership in the Network

Any organization or person that wishes to become a Member must submit an application to CAHSS in writing and meet the CAHSS membership requirements:

- Individuals must work within one of the two CAHSS eligible categories;
- Individuals must be supportive of CAHSS' Purpose and and adhere to its Principles of Practice;
- Organizations must support CAHSS materially, which may include a combination of direct financial support such as a membership fee, and in kind, with human resources such as freeing up the time of its paid employees to serve on CAHSS Steering Group and/or Committees, and support CAHSS' sustainability.

Applications for membership will be reviewed by the Coordinator, who will recommend for approval by the CAHSS Steering Group.

2.1.3 Benefits of Membership of the Network

- CAHSS Members have the right to use the name and logo of the Network in their Network reports and other documents to support their Network's surveillance

activities. The CAHSS name and logo also signifies product quality to vendors and end-users.

- CAHSS Members receive Network reports and any other information which supports their surveillance activities, and which helps in their surveillance learning and growth.
- CAHSS Members have access to expert advice from the Community of Practice and also other surveillance experts within the Network.
- CAHSS Members have the support of the Network during emergency situations/outbreaks.
- CAHSS will provide information and support for research grants and other funding opportunities related to surveillance.
- CAHSS will maintain a website with current information and best practices related to surveillance both in Canada and internationally.
- CAHSS will give members access to other national surveillance networks.

2.1.4 Responsibilities of Membership in the Network

- CAHSS members agree to support the network by participating in network activities, supporting individuals to serve on CAHSS Steering Group and/or Committees, appointing Leads and/or Co-leads for CAHSS networks, and as applicable and agreed, providing financial resources for CAHSS' activities.
- Members will provide direction and support to the Network Leads and Co-Leads to provide timely and relevant data and reporting to CAHSS including the reporting of any emergencies related to animal health.

2.2 Network: Governance and Management

The following section sets out the key roles and responsibilities of governance and management of the Network.

2.2.1 NFAHW Council

The NFAHW Council is the ultimate decision-making body. It is responsible for:

- Final Approval of CAHSS' strategy;
- Final Approval of CAHSS annual budget;
- Supervision of CAHSS Co-ordinator; and
- Accepts appointment or individuals to the CAHSS Steering Group , or puts in place the Appointments process for CAHSS Steering Group to be implemented by delegated individuals (such as the Co-ordinator).

2.2.2 Steering Group

The CAHSS Steering Group is approved by the NFAHW Council based on recommendation from CAHSS. Steering Group members must support the purpose and principles of CAHSS. They must

be willing to attend meetings of the Steering Group. They must have the support of their own organization.

The Steering Group will meet at least quarterly with a target of at least one meeting per year, in person. Steering Group members must declare any conflicts of interest with respect to any topic or decision being considered by the Steering Group.

The Steering Group serves without compensation, but reasonable expenses (approved by the Coordinator and the NFAWH Executive Director) will be reimbursed.

Key Responsibilities of the Steering Group

Among other duties, the Steering Group will be responsible for the following:

- The Steering Group will together with the Co-ordinator prepare a multi-year strategy for CAHSS. The Steering Group will be a key informant in the strategy formulation process. They will also recommend the strategy to the Council for approval and will on the Council's behalf monitor the progress of the strategy's implementation. The Steering Group will annually review the strategy and together with the Co-ordinator determine any adjustments to CAHSS' strategy.
- Based on the approved strategy, the Steering Group will support the Co-ordinator in the development of annual workplan for the organization, together with a budget. Once agreed to by the Steering Group, the annual workplan and budget will be recommended to the Council for approval.
- The Steering Group will review and approve Members of CAHSS.
- The Steering Group will assist with funding applications and sourcing of funding.
- The Steering Group will support the Co-ordinator in the development of an annual report of CAHSS activities and accomplishments. In addition to producing an annual report, the Steering Group will briefly report, either directly or through the Co-ordinator, on CAHSS' results and key priorities to the Council regularly as directed by Council.
- Together with the Co-ordinator, the Steering Group will determine and strike any Committees and/or work groups needed to further CAHSS' work

Size and Nomination Process:

The Steering Group will consist of 10 members.

Members are appointed equally between the Species-Specific Network Members and the Community of Practice Members.

Each Species-Specific Network has the opportunity to nominate and recommend a qualified candidate for approval by the NFAWH Council based on recommendation from CAHSS.

Community of Practice Networks and Groups each have the opportunity to nominate a qualified candidate from each of the following clusters:

- Veterinary Medicine
- Government
- Laboratory Based Surveillance

- Antimicrobial Use/Vector-Borne Diseases/ Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases
- Regional or sector surveillance networks that are operationally distinct from CAHSS

Terms of office:

Each member's term is 3 years and members are only able to serve 2 terms before leaving the Steering Group. Members who have served 2 terms will be eligible for reappointment after a 1-year absence from the Steering Group.

Members' terms will be staggered with the initial Steering Group having the following initial terms; three members a term of one year; three members a term of two years and four members for a term of three years

CAHSS will recommend steering committee members and their associated terms to the Council for approval.

If a Steering Group member cannot serve out their term, the Co-ordinator will seek nominations from the appropriate Network/Community of Practice group to fill the vacancy and recommendation to the Council for approval.

If a Steering Group member is found not to be fulfilling their duties, the Council has the right to remove them from the Steering Group and find a replacement based on recommendations for the Steering Group.

2.2.3 Chair

The Steering Group will appoint a Steering Group Chair, with approval of the appointment by Council.

The Chair will preside over Steering Group meetings, being responsible for developing a Steering Group workplan, agendas, and recommendations to the Council. In addition, the Chair will be responsible for a process to evaluate the effectiveness of the Steering Group. The Steering Group will determine the frequency of this evaluation process.

2.2.4 Vice Chair

The Steering Group will elect from among their members, a Vice Chair. The Vice Chair will support the Chair in their duties and will substitute for the Chair in the Chair's absence.

2.2.5 Committees

The Steering Group may appoint standing and/or ad hoc committees to further the work of CAHSS.. This may include one or more broader Network Advisory Committee(s) to engage CAHSS Network Members and/or other key networks who may not be formal Members as well as other committees (e.g. annual meeting, communication, network recruitment, specific project oversight, steering group nominations, sustainability planning, technical data sharing etc.)

2.2.6 CAHSS Co-ordinator

The CAHSS Co-ordinator reports directly to the Council's Executive Director. In addition to the duties listed in APPENDIX A, the Co-ordinator will either act as Secretary to the Steering Group or appoint another staff member to fulfill these duties.

The Steering Group will annually provide the Council's Executive Director with feedback on the performance of the Co-ordinator.

2.2.7 Network Leads and Co-leads

Each Species-Specific CAHSS network will appoint a Network Lead and/or Co-lead. The Leads and Co-Leads will be responsible for leading meetings and reporting to CAHSS on the surveillance activities and practices of their respective network. They will work with the Co-ordinator to develop best surveillance practices within their network and will support the learning and growth of other networks. Network leads serve without compensation, but reasonable expenses (approved by the Coordinator and the NFAWH Executive Director) will be reimbursed.

At least annually the Leads and Co-leads will come together jointly with the Steering Group to:

- mutually encourage and support all network groups with expertise and experience where possible;
- facilitate communication within and across the systems and networks on topics such as best surveillance practices, surveillance challenges, emerging issues, etc.;
- further support the development of the CAHSS website of catalogued resources, and other surveillance infrastructure;
- facilitate the development of social networks to share health intelligence with the appropriate stakeholders on a regular basis and;
- develop the ability and/or links to quickly activate coordinated surveillance networks in response to animal health emergencies.

CAHSS will develop the agenda for the annual meeting in conjunction with the Steering Committee and Network Leads and Co-Leads.

3 Dispute Resolution Process

In keeping with CAHSS' Principles, members will resolve conflict compassionately, productively, cooperatively and respectfully.

Disputes between CAHSS members will be referred to the CAHSS Co-ordinator for mediation. If the matter cannot be solved by the CAHSS Co-ordinator, it will be referred to the Steering Group for discussion and a recommended solution. If the members in the dispute are not satisfied with the recommendation of the Steering Group, the matter will be referred to the Council.

The Council will consult with the members who are involved in the dispute, the Co-ordinator and the Chair of the Steering Group before making a ruling. The Council's decision on the matter will be accepted as final by all concerned.

4 Termination and Resignation from Membership

4.1 Termination of Membership

The Network has the right to terminate membership for good cause. This will be a decision of the Council based on recommendation of the steering committee.

4.2 Resignation from Membership

The member must notify the Network in writing of their decision to leave the CAHSS Network.

4.3 The effects of termination or resignation from Membership

Once a member has either been terminated or has resigned, they are no longer able to utilize all member benefits. This includes the use Network's name in Member literature and/or advertising.

Also, the member will no longer receive internal CAHSS reports or expert advice.

5 Charter Amendments and Updates

The Charter will be reviewed annually by the Steering Group. The Steering Group will seek input from all stakeholders on the effectiveness of the Charter and make recommendations to the Council regarding any changes to the Charter for approval by the Council.

6 Appendices to the Charter

6.1 APPENDIX A - CAHSS Coordinator

The CAHSS Coordinator will be hired by the Council and recruited jointly by Council and the CAHSS Steering Group. The Coordinator will receive an annual performance review by the NFAHWC Executive Director with input from the CAHSS Steering Group.

The roles and responsibilities of the CAHSS Coordinator will include:

- Manage CAHSS network and Steering Group co-ordination.
- Provide training and development on CAHSS for new co-leads and Executive Committee members.
- Support CAHSS Steering Group in strategic planning to advance effective, responsive and integrated animal health surveillance.
- Co-ordinate the development of funding applications and CAHSS network plans, in cooperation with CAHSS Steering Group, Council Executive Director and Network Leads/Co-leads.
- Initiate and coordinate meetings of the CAHSS Steering Group and Network Leads and Co-leads.
- Manage day-to-day operations of CAHSS.
- Report to CAHSS Steering Group and to Council on CAHSS performance and progress.
- Enhance collaboration with networks that are not part of CAHSS, building relationships with regional and species-specific networks to enhance information sharing.
- Ensure effective project management, budget management, network collaboration and co-ordination.
- Ensure oversight of CAHSS governance.
- Responsible for the general and active management of the business of CAHSS, and to facilitate the implementation of the decisions, strategic plans and policies as established by the CAHSS Steering Group and CAHSS network leads.
- Ensure the co-ordination of CAHSS Steering Group and CAHSS network calls.
- Establish new networks when gaps are identified and linking with other CAHSS, regional and sectoral networks, and assisting CAHSS networks in meeting targets and resolving critical issues as needed.
- Develop communication material content and social media content.
- Oversee website content.
- Liaise with external data sources, including laboratories.
- Organize network events.
- Recruit new network members.