

CANADIAN

September/October 2013

Meat Business

The Beef, Pork & Poultry Industry Magazine

Weighty Issue

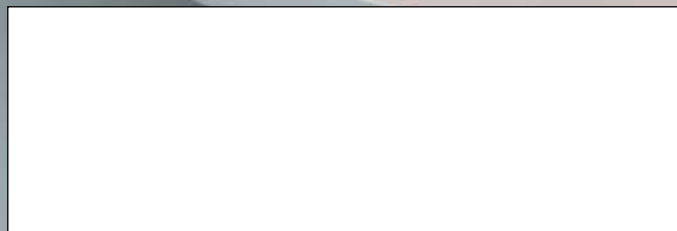
Traceability for protein-based processors

Government policy toward local food

Gluten-free grows in Canada

Industry needs foreign workers
pg. 5

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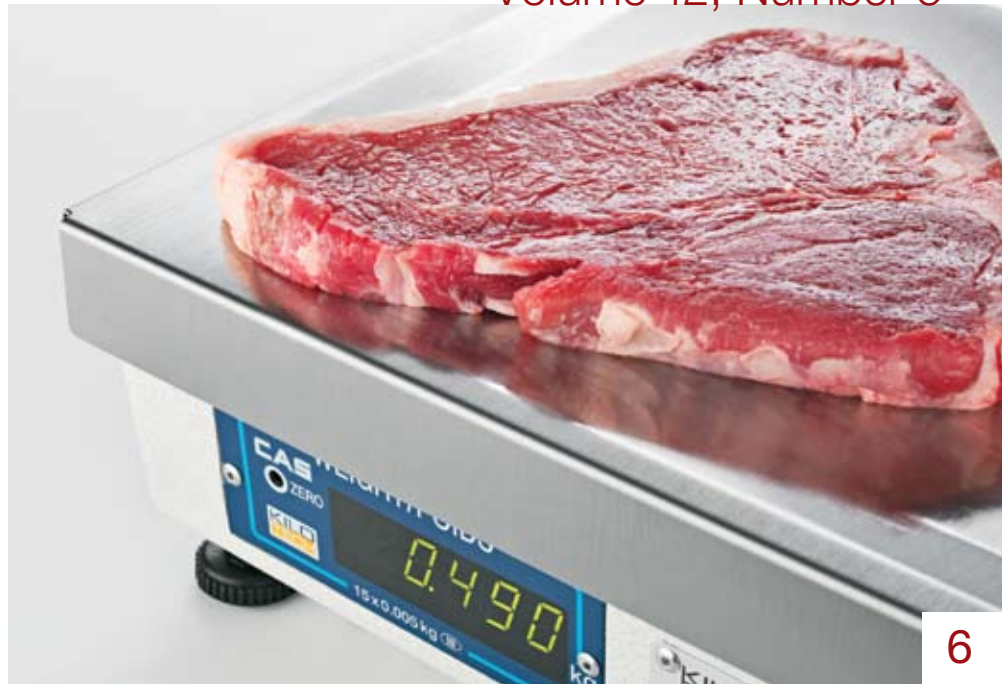
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Canada's meat industry needs foreign workers

ACCOUNTING FOR SOME 70,000 jobs, \$24 billion of sales and \$4.5 billion of exports, Canada's meat industry constitutes the largest segment of this country's food processing sector. Access to foreign workers is critical to the future of the industry, and of significant benefit to Canadian farmers, workers, consumers and municipalities.

The meat processing industry offers a crucial market outlet for Canada's 70,000 livestock farms. Should this cease to be the case, Canadian farmers would either become captive to the prospect of sales to U.S. meat processors or they would be left with no commercially viable alternative but to stop farming.

Foreign workers perform tasks for which many Canadians are simply not interested. Their important contributions allow meat processors to remain in operation. In the absence of foreign workers, meat processing companies would be forced to eliminate product lines, reduce the number of production shifts, or go out of business. Any of these outcomes would jeopardize Canadian competitiveness and eliminate both direct and indirect jobs for Canadians.

Companies operating in this country make it possible for consumers to purchase Canadian produced and processed meat. In terms of value, Canada is already a net importer of beef and chicken from the United States and our positive trade balance in pork with that country is diminishing. Reduced access to foreign workers would result in Canadian consumers becoming even more dependent upon imported food.

Canadian meat processors are an integral component of local economies and job markets. In some rural communities, they are a primary source of employment and economic activity. The closure of a plant, or even a significant reduction in employment, would have a major negative impact on the local municipality.

Some foreign workers apply to become permanent residents of Canada. When successful, both the local community and Canadian economy benefit from the acceptance of a proven contributor who already possesses not only valuable job experience in a worker deficient region or specialized skill, but who is integrated into the local economy and Canadian society.

The unqualified first choice of our industry is to employ Canadians, because the cost of employing foreign workers is significantly greater. Foreign workers are members of the same labour unions and receive the same salaries and benefits as Canadians, but incur substantial additional expenditures for recruitment, return airfare from and to home countries, worker compensation programs, government mandated accommodation standards, and many other expenses.

Unfortunately, while efforts to recruit Canadian workers are intensive and constant, they are only partially successful. The clearly documented reality of our industry is that jobs available at many locations exceed, by far, the number of Canadians able and willing to perform the tasks required. While not exclusively, many of the available jobs would require that Canadians relocate to rural communities, including in other provinces. Should readers be interested in these employment opportunities, the Canadian Meat Council would be pleased to forward their contact information to potential employers.

The alleged misuse of the temporary foreign worker program by a few should not be permitted to jeopardize the interests of the many Canadian farmers, companies, workers and consumers who benefit from their vital contribution to this country. Access to foreign workers is critically important, not as the first preference, but rather as the only option currently available for sustaining the supply of labour necessary for a viable Canadian-based meat industry. **M**

James Laws, P.Ag. is the executive director of the Canadian Meat Council.



Weighty Issue

Traceability for protein-based processors.

By Heather Angus-Lee

GONE ARE THE days when meat processors could claim that their difference from other food sectors limits their ability to adopt technology or participate in industry standards. In fact, the Meat & Poultry Business to Business Data Standards (mpXML) is one of the most comprehensive traceability initiatives in the food industry. Last year a new recall standard from GSI, including one specifically for meat, was incorporated into the Product Recall Program in Canada and its comparable program in the U.S.

Protein-based processors are increasingly turning to technology to meet the growing pressure from customers and governments for improved traceability and recall – whether their product is delivered to retailer, wholesaler or distributor. In fact, given the number of processing steps, unique packaging and tracking issues, and variance in raw materials, meat companies have an inordinate need for sophisticated business software, such as an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system or warehouse management system (WMS).

Catch-weight management

Catch-weight management is likely the trickiest of traceability issues for meat processors. Functionality that some ERP systems offer:

- On a case-by-case level, you see the actual catch-weight of each directly in your item ledger and warehouse entry transactions.
- You have the ability to record weights at time of purchase, or can offload that process until you ship the product.
- Catch-weight is visible on the item tracking page wherever

item tracking is available in the system (e.g. all inventory transactions).

- You have the ability to do sales pricing by catch-weight, meaning that even though you sell the item by case, the price that is used could be a per pound price that changes as the weight of each case changes.
- When receiving catch-weight items into inventory, the cost that hits the inventory is based on the actual catch-weight of the case. This is true for purchased products as well as manufactured products.
- If you are distributing landed costs to catch-weight items, you can do it by the actual catch-weight in order to get a more accurate cost distribution.

By-product processes

Upon arrival at a processing facility, fat and other parts of meat products are trimmed off to be re-purposed as by-products – and it is your company’s responsibility to ensure that these by-products are tracked as they make their way through various systems and stages of food preparation. It is equally important to ensure that the market cost allocation of these by-products is handled accurately and efficiently along the way. Some ERP systems will include management of recipes based on deconstruction offering by-product and co-product support. Recipe management, in addition to bill of materials and other features, includes functionality for the support of static and dynamic units of measure conversions including catch-weight.

Case is king

Meat suppliers need to be able to establish a case-level product protocol that can be used for traceability by supplier, retailer, wholesaler and distributor in both normal conditions and in the event of a recall. A case is a discrete unit with its own unique serial number and weight. At a bare minimum, a supplier must assign a batch/lot number for case-level traceability. A serial




Recipe management, in addition to bill of materials and other features, includes functionality for the support of static and dynamic units of measure conversions including catch-weight.

number is sometimes included as well as a more refined product identifier – especially for catch-weight cases. Ideally both a batch/lot number and a serial number are included on the label of a case. A serial number will indicate what is in each case of meat or poultry, and all the cases are loaded onto a pallet which

gets its own dedicated serial number. Some ERP systems include the ability to conduct single-scan inventory management, which allows for the picking of a container full of cases without having to scan individual cases.

Scanning the horizon

An increasing number of meat companies are moving toward the inclusion of machine-readable labels so scans can capture all traceable information and store it within the ERP or WMS system. Catch-weight management, for example, is simplified by the use of barcode scanning wherever varying weight products are touched. It should be noted that some ERP systems limit you to storing a single barcode per item – making conversion to the (industry standard) GS1 compliant barcode labelling a major disruption to your business. Be sure to look for ERP systems that let you store as many barcodes as you like, in a variety of formats, so your company can take a phased approach to converting items to the new barcodes.

Once you make the decision to automate your operations, take your time to investigate which software systems are built with industry-specific functionality that can be mapped to your business processes to resolve many of the issues around catch weights, multi-stage processing, labelling and other considerations for traceability. Pay particular attention to the automation of data capture, storage and retrieval for critical tracking events such as receipt of bulk raw meat, ingredients and packaging, product creation, packaging/pallet configuration, picking and shipping. 

Heather Angus-Lee, a long-time business and trade journalist, now writes for JustFoodERP. She can be reached at heather.angus-lee@justfooderp.com.



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Since September 2012, all Piller's meat products have been gluten-free, and the company also added a Simply Free line that is free of other food allergens.

Gluten-Free Grows in Canada

The Canadian market for gluten-free products is on the rise, and is less likely to be a fad than in the U.S., a new report says.

By Alan MacKenzie

ACCORDING TO A new report from Rockville-based market research firm Packaged Facts, the Canadian gluten-free market grew 26.6 per cent between 2008 and 2012. The firm credited the surge to the increased availability of gluten-free products in major supermarkets, like Sobey's or Loblaw's, a growing awareness of celiac disease and gluten intolerance, and even celebrity endorsements of a gluten-free lifestyle.

The report also noted there is a higher percentage of gluten-free product users in Canada, compared to the United States. More survey respondents in Canada than the U.S. purchase gluten-free products to treat celiac disease and other illnesses, which suggests gluten-free is much less likely to be a cyclical diet fad in Canada as compared to the U.S.

According to Packaged Facts, gluten consists of a specific complex of storage proteins found only in the endosperm

of wheat grain. It is the gluten matrix that imparts the desirable properties uniquely associated with wheat-based products, such as breads and other baked goods.

Generally, fresh meats are safe for those on a gluten-free diet. For gluten to be present in meat, it must be added to the product, typically as a binder or for flavour. This means, however, that processed meats, such as sausages and wieners, can often be of risk to those on a gluten-free diet.

In September 2012, after approximately two years of research and development, Ontario-based Piller's Fine Foods, one of Canada's leading manufacturers of specialty European deli meats, announced that all of its products no longer contain gluten. In addition, the company also launched a line of allergen-free products called Simply Free, which is free of gluten and all other major food allergens, including milk, peanuts, tree nuts, mustard,

sesame, egg, fish, soy and sulphites.

Piller's director of marketing Rita Weigel said the decision to make all products gluten-free, and addressing other food allergies as well, was based on a growing consumer need. She noted that, according to Anaphylaxis Canada, approximately one in every 100 Canadians has celiac disease and must avoid gluten, and about 300,000 Canadian children have food allergies.

"Allergens are a very serious issue and we thought we'd be able to develop a flavourful product that more people could enjoy. We have the technology to take old world recipes and address that issue," she said.

The Simply Free line includes ham, sausages and various other deli meats. Piller's recently expanded it to include pastrami, capicola, meat snacks, and fully cooked breakfast options such as cornmeal back bacon and breakfast sausage rounds.

"After our successful launch of Simply Free allergen-free deli meats last year, we received many letters from parents thanking us for providing delicious products that the whole family can enjoy with peace of mind that their kids can eat safely," Weigel noted.

The Piller's Simply Free line is available at major grocery stores across




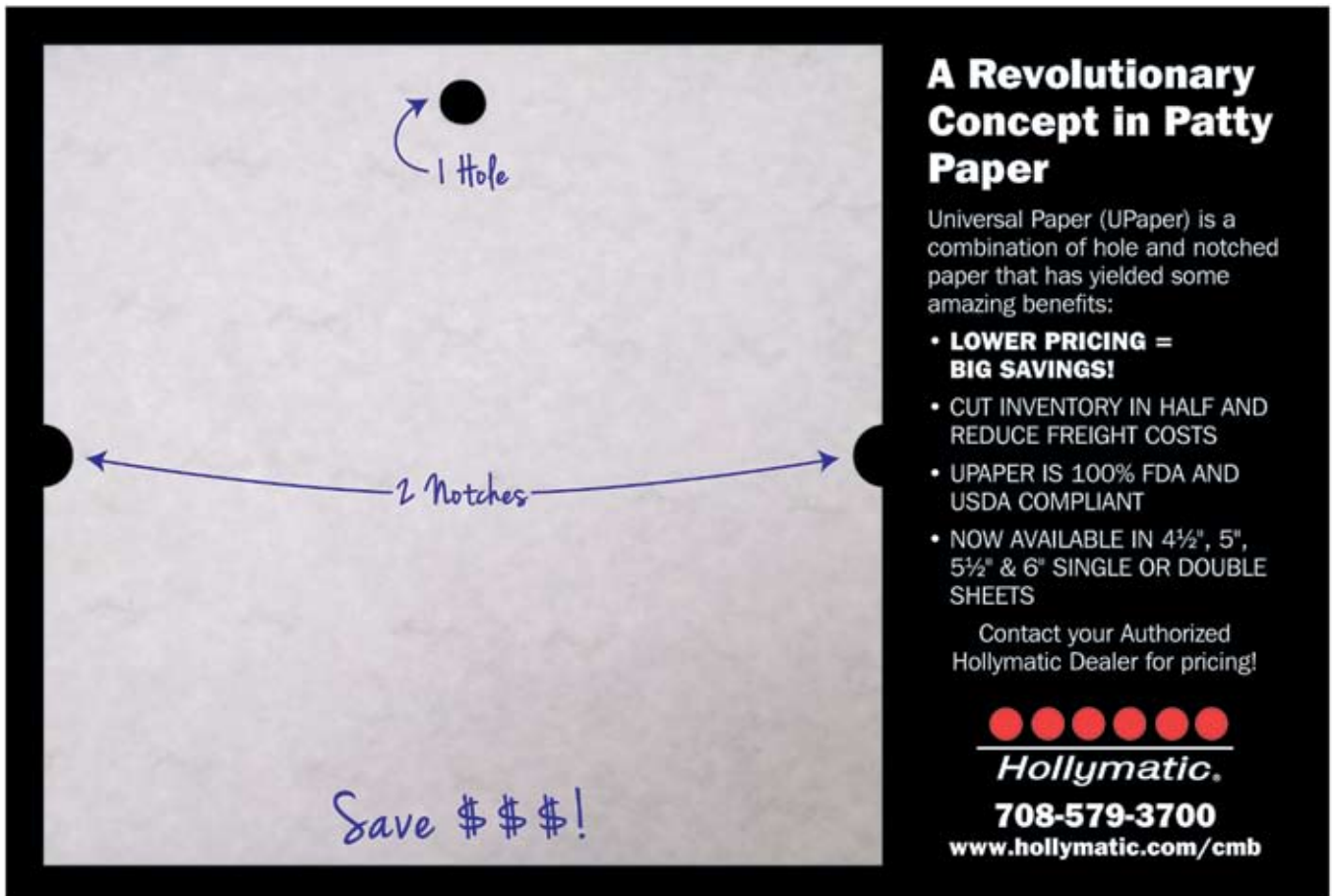
For gluten to be present in meat, it must be added to the product, typically as a binder or for flavour.

Canada, she added.

The availability of gluten-free products in traditional grocery stores is one of the main reasons for the growth in popularity, according to Packaged Facts. In a 2012 survey, the group found that over half of those who purchased gluten-free products did so at major grocery chains, such as Safeway and IGA. Walmart was the second most common place to purchase gluten-free products, with 43.3 per cent of respondents saying they purchased them there. Health/natural food stores made up 11.5 per cent of the purchase points for those surveyed.

The products are also seen as generally healthier than non-gluten-free products. The Packaged Facts report, however, said this is a perception that will peak at the end of 2013 or early 2014. The group said that at this point the gluten-free market will continue to grow, but that growth rate will decline, eventually dropping to single-digit growth in 2016, mostly centred around those with celiac disease and gluten intolerance.

Still, the overall trend for gluten-free products is upward. The report said the Canadian market, valued at \$460 million, will nearly double by 2017. 




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One Hand Taketh Away

Scrutinizing government policy toward local food.

By Colin Anderson

SMALL FARM OWNERS Pam and Clint Cavers had the surprise of their lives Aug. 28 when Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) staff showed up to seize and destroy their stock of locally produced and cured prosciutto.

A few months prior to this occurrence, MAFRI had presented the Cavers with a \$10,000 prize, naming their prosciutto the "Best New Food Product" in the Great Manitoba Food Fight competition.

This incident highlights the need to scrutinize how government policy may be preventing family farmers from innovating and diversifying, and from meeting the growing consumer demand for local food. Pam Cavers neatly summed up their experience with MAFRI, "With one hand they giveth and the other they taketh away."

Imagine this Kodak moment. MAFRI minister Ron Kostyshyn savouring the Cavers' delicious prosciutto in front of a captive audience, celebrating local food and farmers at the Great Manitoba Food Fight.

Photos: realmanitobafoodfight.ca



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Fast-forward four months. The scene changes from that Kodak moment to a nightmare for the Cavers. Two MAFRI inspectors arrive to deliver a \$1,400 fine and to seize and destroy \$8,000 of a product they had poured their hearts into developing.

The MAFRI officers were aggressive and intimidating – so much so that the RCMP officer attending at MAFRI's request, himself a customer of the Cavers, warned the inspectors that they can do their job without being rude, to respect that the Cavers livelihood was at stake and to “take it down a notch.”

It's not hard to see why Manitoba family farmers feel that policy toward local food is two-faced. Because unfortunately, as dramatic as the raid at the Cavers farm is, this is not an isolated incident. It is indicative of a much deeper seeded problem – the marriage of government to industrial agriculture to the detriment of family farmers.

In my doctoral research, I interviewed farm families who sell their meat directly to consumers in Western Canada and the U.S. Most farmers wanted to expand and innovate but were frustrated and stymied by the many barriers they face.

Most often it was the lack of affordable and accessible processing facilities. Some farmers I interviewed had considered



+ Government policy may be preventing family farmers from meeting the growing consumer demand for local food.

establishing their own facilities. But the regulations are geared towards large industrial plants and the costs of compliance are too great to make business sense for smaller farmers and processors.

Meanwhile many said that the existing regulations were open to interpretation, which they noted is a huge business risk.

Everyone agrees that food safety regulations are important. However, smaller farmers and processors want regulations to take into account the relative risk of different size operations – “scale-appropriate regulations.”

The most obvious reason for different regulations for smaller producers and processors is that the potential impact of an outbreak from the mega processing plants is much greater. You have to look no further than what happened with the Maple Leaf listeria outbreak in 2008 and XL Beef e-coli outbreak in 2012 for evidence.

In the XL beef incident, at least 18 fell ill, thousands of pounds of meat were wasted and it was months before the company could determine where the tainted food had been sold. The incident cost between \$16 million and \$27 million and damaged consumer confidence in Canadian meat.

Is the Manitoba government serious



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about local food? Many farmers say that, while front line MAFRI staff people are helpful, they are woefully underfunded.

When it comes to photo ops and window dressing, the government program money is there. Just look at the MAFRI Buy Manitoba program. What was framed as opportunity to help farmers develop local markets essentially ended up being a tool for large grocery chains to label products that were manufactured in Manitoba.



It is indicative of a much deeper seeded problem – the marriage of government to industrial agriculture to the detriment of family farmers.

Sure, some legitimately Manitoban companies were supported. But, we also see Coca Cola labelled with a Buy Manitoba logo. Once again, a program was coopted by big industry, yet family farmers like the Cavers, receive almost no benefit.

Then there is Open Farm Day, another MAFRI program. Farmers host consumers to promote their farm products and educate the public about farming – again, a great photo op for the minister. However, Dwayne Logan, a former farmer


participant in Open Farm Day, aptly criticized that the program gives the public an unrealistic view of agriculture as idyllic.

Thus, MAFRI holds up small, family farms up as the face of agriculture. Yet it provides minimal financial support and even undermines small farmers with one-size fits all regulation.

There is no doubt that the public is looking to tap into local food from Manitoba farmers. Yet, incidents like the one at Harborside Farms effectively drive farmers underground, making it difficult for consumers to find authentic local food.

If we are serious about enabling farmers of all sizes and types to meet the growing consumer interest in local food, we must demand that government works with farmers to create more appropriate programs and regulations.

We can look elsewhere to see that there are ample but unrealized opportunities for our government to nurture the local food economy. For example, three years ago, farmers and consumers united to successfully lobby for scale-appropriate regulation that is now enabling local food in the state of Oregon.

It is clear that we need to get beyond the photo ops, and that the government must listen to what farmers need and what the public wants in order to provide good, clean healthy food. 

Colin Anderson is a PhD student at the University of Manitoba investigating direct farm marketing and cooperatives in Western Canada and the USA. He was present at the Cavers' farm during the MAFRI raid and is involved in an effort to petition the government to address the regulatory barriers that constrain the local food economy. He and other students recently launched the website realmanitobafoodfight.ca following the incident at the Cavers' farm.



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OIMP Goes Back to Basics with Meat Expo

Meat Industry Expo returns with fall date for 2013.

FOR ITS 2013 Meat Industry Expo, the Ontario Independent Meat Processors Association (OIMP) is moving the event from its usual Easter timeframe to October to avoid the busy March/April season.

This year marks the OIMP's 21st industry expo, and the event is themed "Back to Basics" – to reflect the emphasis on Ontario's meat and poultry processing industry, rather than an overall food industry approach, which was tried in the past.

"It's still open to others, but we want to make sure that the meat people are being recognized," said OIMP executive director Laurie Nicol.

The event, taking place Oct. 25 and 26 at the International Centre in Mississauga, Ont., will feature exhibitors from all aspects of the meat industry, showcasing the latest innovations, new technologies, and equipment and service solutions, Nicol noted.

Also included is the presentation of the awards for the Ontario's Finest Meat Competition. Sixteen companies are competing with 145 product entries in 12 categories. Judging of the products, which took place in September, is based on visual appearance, flavour, texture, aroma, and uniqueness. Platinum, Gold and Silver awards will be presented on Oct. 26 at a gala dinner.



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"We've been involved in highlighting what Ontario meat processors have to offer since 1987, when we launched our first competition."

– Laurie Nicol, OIMP

"We've been involved in highlighting what Ontario meat processors have to offer since 1987, when we launched our first competition," Nicol said. "We had four categories and a handful of entries and did that annually up until 2009, when we really broadened the categories. We now have 12 categories that embrace both modern trends and artisanal meat products. New this year is a specialty bacon category."

Judges for the competition include: Isabelle Boucher, freelance food writer and author of Crumb, an award-winning food blog; Charmian

Christie, food writer and author of the upcoming cookbook *The Messy Baker*; Rita Demontis, lifestyle and food editor for the *Toronto Sun* and national food editor for Sun Media; Jennifer McLagan, chef and author of the widely acclaimed books *Bones, Fat, and Odd Bits*; Carrie Oliver, founder of the Artisan Beef Institute; Emily Richards, author of several cookbooks and professional home economist; and Jill St-Amour, executive chef of Oban Inn at Niagara-on-the-Lake.

For more information on the event, visit meatindustryexpo.ca. 

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Motivating Poultry Farm Employees

Inspiring staff to be more driven and productive is key to producing high quality chickens.

By Ronnie P. Cons

EVERY SUCCESSFUL MANAGER knows that a motivated employee is a productive employee. The key to motivating employees is to create an internal drive in their minds to carry out duties at the most optimal manner that is consistent with the objective of maximizing the profitability of the operation.

Many job functions have to be carried out successfully in order to create a successful and profitable poultry operation. Broiler farm employees have to manage and be concerned with many details including: the proper intake and receipt of the new chicks onto the farm; making sure the temperature and environment is just right for the chicks; making sure the chicks' food intake is adequate; and making sure they follow the firms bio security protocols to prevent infection and disease. If employees are not motivated in their tasks, a lapse in bio security can occur which could be very costly for the farm operation. Not being actually sincerely

concerned about the chicks' food intake and well-being will in effect lead to reduced chick growth, and lower quality chickens.

On the other hand, a motivated employee is one that will really care that the chicks are well taken care of and that they grow up to become healthy chickens of high quality.

But is it really possible to motivate employees to care about the operation and their job duties at such a high level? The answer is yes, but the right strategies must be developed and implemented by management. Of course, we are all aware that the field of motivating employees is a large one with many varying opinions and philosophies. Every manager in any kind of operation must decide how to motivate the persons under his charge. But sadly, many managers have misconceptions about what approach to use and often resort to tactics and strategies that actually result in unmotivated employees.

For instance, there is the hard

manager approach, in which the manager believes that instilling fear of punishment or penalties to salaries will maximize productivity. The result is often the opposite – upset employees who feel abused and mistreated who thus end up being less concerned about the success of the operation.

Then there is the manager who believes that money is the main motivator. Do such and such an activity at such a level of performance and you will get a bonus of x dollars. Again, research shows that money is not the biggest motivator of behaviour thus they are using a less than optimal strategy.




Sadly, many managers have misconceptions about what approach to use and often resort to tactics and strategies that actually result in unmotivated employees.

Kenneth Kovach of George Mason University did a study that found some surprising results as to what employees really want. The most important factors in descending order were: interesting work; appreciation of work; feeling in on things; job security and then wages.

In conformance with this study, managers should do as following to motivate their employees:

- Make sure that each employee finds his or her position interesting. This can be done by HR before job placement to make sure the employee is matched with the position that is most to his or her liking. Of course the more interesting the position the better the performance.
- Managers must make sure to show their appreciation of employees' work with verbal feedback and congratulations for a job well done. A good word goes a long way to make the employee feel he or she is appreciated and a part of the company, which will lead to higher motivation.
- Managers must show respect to their employees by making them feel in on things. They must include them in meetings discussing the well-being of the chicks. By being a part of these discussions they will feel more committed to the operation and the success of the poultry operation.
- Managers must make sure that the employees feel that they have job security, which will allow them to focus on the long term success of the operation.
- Of course employees must be paid fair wages.

In relation to the second point above, managers should also let the employees know how important they are to the operation, and tell them that they want them to stay for the long term and to succeed with the operation.

Following the above advice should hopefully lead to happier, more motivated employees and a more profitable poultry operation. 



Ronnie P. Cons is the executive vice-president of C&C Packing Inc., a leading Canadian meat and poultry distributor. He can be reached at 514-461-5202 or rcons@ccpacking.com.



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Lab-Grown Burger Makes Debut

Burger made from the muscle cells of a cow could be commercially available in about 10 years, creator says.

THIS SUMMER, the first-ever public tasting of a lab-grown burger took place in London. The “Cultured Beef” burger represents a first step toward a sustainable, environmentally friendly alternative to meat production, according to creator Mark Post, a professor at Maastricht University in the Netherlands.

The burger, cooked in a frying pan, was unveiled in front of reporters on Aug. 5 and tasted by Josh Schonwald, a Chicago-based author who has written extensively on the future of food, and Austrian food researcher Hanni Rutzler.

Post described the meat as “biologically exactly the same as the meat tissue that comes from a cow.”

“What we are trying today is important because I hope it will show Cultured Beef has the answers to major problems that the world faces,” Post said at the tasting. He noted that the demand for meat is expected to increase by more than two-thirds by 2050.

“Our burger is made from muscle cells taken from a cow. We haven’t altered them in any way. For it to succeed it has to look, feel and hopefully taste like the real thing,” he added.

Post said the burger, which cost \$332,000 to make, could be commercially available in about 10 years.

Rutzler and Schonwald told reporters they were pleasantly surprised at the texture, but were undecided about the taste.

According to a release from the university, the burger is made from a sample of muscle cells taken from a cow that are cultured in a laboratory by scientists who place them in a nutrient solution to create muscle tissue. The tissue is grown by placing the cells in a ring, like a donut, around a hub of gel. The muscle cells grow into small strands of meat. Some 20,000 such strands are needed to make one 140g (approx. five ounce) burger.

Ingredients commonly found in similar food products, such as salt, egg powder and breadcrumbs, were added,

as well as red beet juice and saffron to bring out its “natural colours.”

Post first got involved with the project in 2008, when he was a professor of tissue engineering at the Eindhoven University of Technology. The Dutch government-funded program investigating “in vitro meat” was initiated by Wilem van Eelen, an entrepreneur who held a long-time fascination for the possibility of culturing meat.



“For it to succeed it has to look, feel and hopefully taste like the real thing.”

– Mark Post, Maastricht University

It is estimated one single sample could produce 20,000 tonnes of Cultured Beef, enough to make more than 175 million quarter-pounder patties. This many patties would otherwise require meat from more than 440,000 cows, according to the university.

Global hunger issues are among the benefits that Post and his team believe will come from the acceptance of Cultured Beef. The researchers noted that meat demand across the globe is estimated to increase by 73 per cent by 2050, but that we already use 70 per cent of farm land for livestock. Cultured Beef could use as much as 99 per cent less space than what is needed for current livestock farming methods, they said. ^M

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ALBERTA

Calgary firm leads development of BIXS 2 database

The Canadian Cattlemen’s Association (CCA) announced it has contracted Arcurve Inc., a Canadian-based software development firm, to create the next version of the Beef InfoXchange System (BIXS).

The first of a sequence of releases of ‘BIXS 2’ is targeted for the fall of 2013 with each successive release offering additional benefits to BIXS participants, CCA said.

Arcurve was the successful bidder in a request-for-proposals process that solicited responses from software development firms across North America, CCA said.

BIXS is a national voluntary online database designed to capture and exchange data linked to an individual animal’s unique electronic ID tag number, known as the CCIA (Canadian Cattle Identification Agency) tag or RFID (radio frequency identification) tag. This data includes cow-calf, purebred and feedlot production, health, genetic and performance data as well as detailed individual carcass data provided by participating packing plants. The system is presently funded through AAFC’s Agricultural Flexibility Fund as part of Canada’s Economic Action Plan.

Last winter the BIXS team began a process to evaluate the current version of the system to pinpoint shortcomings and decide on a pathway forward, interviewing commercial beef industry software development and service firms, packers, feedlots, retail interests, existing value chains and others to discover the precise benefits needed from BIXS. This feedback was used to build a

specification of the next version of the system.

BIXS 2 will be smaller than the current version, and quicker for users to get onto and get data in and out of, CCA said. Import and export functionality will be improved and it will handle many thousands of users and millions of records. BIXS 2 will key only on cross-segment data of economic importance and avoid duplicating existing commercial software systems and services. It will also enable blind queries using a Sourcer Utility, which enables cross-segment communication based on individual animal or carcass data or health and management protocols.

The new version will be animal-centric where actions are applied to animals and recorded across their lifetime up to detailed carcass data acquisition. BIXS 2 will be built for quick, effective and reliable interfacing with existing software systems, and will be significantly less expensive to build, maintain and evolve than the current version.

SASKATCHEWAN

Saskatchewan Food Centre awarded provincial meat inspection contract

The Government of Saskatchewan recently awarded the contract for meat inspection services in provincially inspected meat processing plants to the Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre in Saskatoon.

“Our government remains committed to maintaining high food safety standards,” Saskatchewan Agriculture Minister Lyle Stewart said in a release. “Under the supervision of the provincial government, I am confident that the Food Centre will deliver rigorous meat inspection services to ensure high-quality and safe Saskatchewan meat products.”

The Food Centre will provide meat inspection services to Saskatchewan’s 12 provincially inspected meat processing facilities starting on Jan. 1, 2014. Currently, the province contracts the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to deliver meat inspection services.

ONTARIO

Government invests \$1M in cattle genetics

The federal government recently announced an investment of more than \$1 million in science and innovation to help Ontario beef producers develop a strong genetic base for their livestock.

“The livestock industry drives jobs and growth for Canadians, and a big part of our on-going success in keeping Canada’s beef sector ahead of the pack is our continued investment in research and innovation,” Parliamentary Secretary Pierre Lemieux said in a release. “This project will allow Canada’s beef producers to gain better access to genomics tools for breeding and selection that can help them lower their costs of production and raise healthier, disease-resistant animals.”

An investment of up to \$827,050 will help BIO, a producer cooperative, conduct three leading-edge research projects to increase producers’ understanding and use of genetic evaluations, improve genetic selection in beef and sheep using modern economic indicators in order to evaluate and predict market trends, and study genetic traits to identify markers that can be used to improve carcass value and quality.

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“Genomics is the turbocharger to genetic improvement programs in the beef industry and this CAAP (Canadian Agricultural Adaptation Program) funding allowed BIO to help producers build the all-important reference data base, while also giving back information right away on two of the most important traits in beef production; feed efficiency and tenderness,” stated BIO vice-president Dave Milliner. “I used the results on my young bull calves to determine which ones should be culled before I invest in evaluating their growth performance. This saved me \$250 per culled animal and ensures that I have the best breeding stock possible to sell.”

A second research investment of up to \$264,110 will help the Ontario Cattlemen’s Association (OCA) improve feed efficiency for beef cattle based on a comprehensive analysis of their liver function. The results of this research could also help determine the relationship between feed efficiency and other important performance parameters such as cow fertility and weight.

This investment is being made through CAAP, a five-year (2009-2014) program that helps the agricultural sector seize new opportunities and respond to emerging challenges.

QUEBEC

Olymel plant resumes operations following ammonia leak

The Olymel hog slaughterhouse and butchering plant at Vallée-Jonction, Que. was temporarily closed for a few days in August due to an ammonia leak.

The facility closed on Thursday, Aug. 15. In the days

that followed, after emergency services authorized a gradual resumption of activities, Olymel teams emptied the plant of products so they could be destroyed, while other groups were busy cleaning the facilities and carrying out sanitation procedures required so operations could be resumed this morning.

The facility has a slaughtering capacity of 37,500 hogs per week, and a large part of its production is destined for foreign markets, including Russia, Japan and the United States.

The company noted the origin of the ammonia leak, which occurred in a refrigeration zone, has been identified. Olymel said it is working to ensure that the detection systems and evacuation protocols that made it possible to avoid adverse effects on its employees’ health, always work optimally.

“Olymel management also wishes to express its gratitude to the people living near the facility, who showed great patience in spite of the security measures imposed around the perimeter of the plant during the incident. Lastly, I wish to acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of all fire and emergency services that intervened, including those from Vallée-Jonction and the surrounding municipalities, and the various government agencies that were also mobilized at one time or another, as well as the collaboration of all the Vallée-Jonction municipal officials and the town’s Mayor, Réal Bisson,” Olymel president and CEO Réjean Nadeau stated.

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Events Calendar promotes upcoming trade shows, conferences, workshops and other events for the meat industry. For up to date listings, visit meatbusiness.ca/events.

AMI Foundation offering Animal Care and Handling Conference

The AMI Foundation (AMIF) Animal Care and Handling Conference for the Food Industry, a leading animal welfare education opportunity for meat and poultry companies, their customers and those involved in the production and management of livestock and meat products, will be held Oct. 16 to 17 at the Westin Crown Center in Kansas City, Missouri.

The conference, now in its 15th year, offers a variety of professional development opportunities. Nearly a dozen associations and organizations have collaborated this year to create a program that satisfies an array of attendee needs. General session topics will include public perception and ethics of animal welfare, a USDA humane handling panel discussion, a look at animal welfare from the customer perspective, and a closing panel discussion featuring teachers and students who have used materials from AMI's Glass Walls project, which offers the public virtual plant tours.

This year's featured speakers include Temple Grandin, Grandin Livestock Handling Systems; Candace Croney, Purdue University; Mark Crowe, USDA, Office of Food Safety; Lucy Anthenill, humane handling enforcement coordinator; Kellye Pfalzgraf, Tyson Foods, Inc.; Jim Pillen, Pillen Family Farms; Chuck Bildstein, Bunzl Distribution; Lily Edwards-Callaway, JBS USA; Erika Voogd, Voogd Consulting, Inc.; Jennifer Woods, Woods Livestock Handling; Ashley Lembke, American Foods Group, LLC; Rob Elder, Seaboard Foods.

For more information, visit www.meatami.com.

Journalist and cattle rancher Bill Kurtis keynote speaker at MIHOF ceremony

Famed journalist and award-winning broadcaster Bill Kurtis is the keynote speaker at the Meat Industry Hall of Fame's (MIHOF) 2013 Induction Ceremony and Dinner on Nov. 3 at The Drake Hotel in Chicago.

Kurtis has worked for the award winning program CBS Reports and co-hosted the CBS Morning News. After anchoring the news for Chicago's WBBM-TV, he left traditional television reporting to start his own production company, making a variety of programs for A & E Television Network. Several years ago, he founded Tallgrass Beef in his home state of Kansas, raising grass fed cattle and supplying meat to some of the top restaurants and supermarkets around the country.

This will be Kurtis' third keynote address for MIHOF. Past speakers have included Rosemary Mucklow, director emeritus of the North American Meat Association and Temple Grandin, a member of the hall's inaugural class of 2009 and well-known animal behavior consultant to the livestock industry.

The Induction Ceremony will honour these six distinguished members of the Class of 2013:

- Barry Carpenter, CEO of the North American Meat Association;
- Michael E. Dikeman, PH.D., professor of meat science at Kansas State University; past president of the American Meat Science Association and the Federation of American Societies of Food Animal Sciences;
- Sheldon Lavin, chairman and CEO of OSI Group, LLC, a global supplier of top quality meat products for many of the world's leading foodservice and retail brands;
- Tom Pierson, PH.D., professor emeritus at Michigan State University and a pioneer in analyzing effective retail marketing and merchandising programs for value-added meat and poultry products;
- James "Bo" Reagan, PH.D., recently retired vice-president of the NCBA Research and Knowledge Management Center and an expert on beef quality and safety and cattle genomics;
- Roger Reiser, president of Reiser, a leading food industry equipment manufacturer, and a strong proponent of advancing product quality and value through leading-edge technologies in processing and packaging.

For more information on the event, visit www.meatindustryhalloffame.org.

Upcoming Events

October 2013

23
Guelph Food Safety Seminar
2013 Symposium
Holiday Inn Guelph Hotel &
Conference Centre
Guelph, Ont.
2013gfssymposium.
eventbrite.ca

25 – 26
Ontario Independent Meat
Processors 2013 Meat Expo
International Centre
Mississauga, Ont.
oimp.ca

November 2013

2 – 6
NAMA Outlook Conference
Chicago, Illinois
meatassociation.com

January 2014

21 – 23
Banff Pork Seminar
Banff, Alta.
banffpork.ca

February 2014

9 – 12
National Grocers Association
(NGA) Show
Mirage Hotel and Casino
Las Vegas, Nevada
thengashow.com

March 2014

2 – 4
CRFA Show
Direct Energy Centre
Toronto, Ont.
crfa.ca



Thefoodnewz is an on line events calendar created by Debra Bradshaw of Zep Food & Beverage Division. To find out more about the events listed in this magazine visit thefoodnewz.com. If you know of events not listed please email Debra directly at zeprep@rogers.com.



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A New Standard

New code of practice released for beef producers.

THE NATIONAL FARM Animal Care Council (NFACC) on Sept. 6 released the new Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Beef Cattle.

Codes of Practice serve as a national understanding of animal care requirements and recommended practices. The codes cover housing, feed and water, handling, euthanasia, transport and other important management practices. The beef cattle code is the fourth of eight farm animal codes of practice currently under revision to be completed through the NFACC Code development process.

“This Code of Practice sets a new standard that will improve the lives of beef cattle across Canada,” Geoff Urton, who represented the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies on the code development committee, stated in a release. “I’m encouraged to see this code define minimum acceptable standards for cattle care and chart a path for more use of pain control during procedures like castration and dehorning.”

“Canadian cattle producers care for their cattle every day,” added Ryder Lee, manager of federal and provincial relations for the Canadian Cattlemen’s Association (CCA). “What that care entails is not often fully understood by people unfamiliar with livestock production and the practices of the industry in general. The updated Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Beef Cattle will give people a better understanding of all that’s involved in raising beef cattle. And they can feel good knowing that the Code takes into account science-informed practices that are practical for producers to use and meet the public’s expectations for animal care.”

The code’s development was led by a 15-person committee comprised of beef cattle producers (cow-calf, backgrounding and feedlot operators), animal welfare and enforcement representatives, researchers, transporters, processors, veterinarians and government representatives. Aiding in their work was a six-person scientific committee that included research and veterinary expertise in beef cattle behaviour, health and welfare.

Manitoba Beef Producers president Trevor Atchison welcomed the release of the voluntary code, noting it will ensure the industry’s efforts toward the highest standards of animal care.

“The revisions to the code are practical and science-

based. Beef producers have had the opportunity for input, both through direct involvement in the development of the new code by NFACC and through an extensive comment period,” said Atchison.

“Beef producers care about the welfare of our animals and we work to protect their health and well-being. These renewed national guidelines will allow us to demonstrate that to the public at large,” he added.


The code is available electronically at www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/beef-cattle.



“Beef producers care about the welfare of our animals and we work to protect their health and well-being. These renewed national guidelines will allow us to demonstrate that to the public at large.”

– Trevor Atchison, Manitoba Beef Producers

Also, currently under review is the Draft Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pigs. The public comment period for the pig code closed on Aug. 3, and NFACC said over 4,700 submissions, representing 32,340 individual comments, were received from interested parties in Canada, the United States and around the world. Producers, processors, veterinarians, animal welfare advocates, the general public and many others contributed valuable input that will now be considered by the pig code development committee.

A November meeting is planned for the next stage of developing the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pigs, NFACC noted. 

- staff



Beef Exports to China

Beef consumption in China rises, leading to an impressive growth of Canadian exports to the country.

CANADIAN BEEF EXPORTS to mainland China in the first half of 2013 have shown dramatic growth compared to levels from the same time period in 2012.

Data from Chinese Customs shows that from January to June 2013, a total of 10,088 tonnes of Canadian beef, valued at over \$35 million, were shipped to China. This represents nearly three times the total amount exported in all of 2012 and already surpasses the previous record set in 2002.


According to a recent report from Rabobank, beef consumption in China has risen steadily over the last few years with rising incomes, dietary shift and urbanization driving the Chinese appetite for beef. With local production unable to grow fast enough to meet increasing demand, the Chinese market provides a great opportunity for exports from key beef producing countries like Canada.

Canada is one of only seven countries eligible to export beef to China and currently has eight beef processing plants certified to export to that market. Canadian beef exported to China include short plate, chuck eye roll and top blade cuts. China also imports loin cuts including tenderloin, rib eye and striploin to serve high-

end foodservice customers.

“Our strategy in the Chinese market focuses on maintaining strong relationships with Canadian beef and veal exporters and key regional Chinese clients to increase brand awareness and loyalty, and facilitate on-going trade in eligible beef products,” Rob Meijer, president of Canada Beef Inc., said.

Canada Beef Inc. works with key contacts in the Chinese culinary community such as high-profile chefs and culinary schools to build awareness and understanding of the Canadian beef advantage with this influential audience.

Canada Beef Inc. is the cattle producer-funded and run organization responsible for domestic and international beef and veal market development. It has offices in Canada, Mexico, Japan, Hong Kong, China, Taiwan and South Korea. Canada Beef works to foster loyalty to the Canadian beef brand and build strong relationships with trade customers and partners. These efforts increase demand for Canadian beef and the value producers receive for their cattle. 

- Canada Beef Inc.



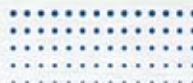
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Closer Scrutiny

Canada's food system needs environmental overhaul, report says.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT of Canada's food system needs closer scrutiny, according to a new report from the Conference Board of Canada.

The report said that governments at all levels in Canada need to play a lead role in managing environmental risks in the food sector through the use of hard and soft measures, both of which are essential to ensure the environmental sustainability of the food system. Hard measures include laws and regulations

that mandate minimum environmental standards, backed up by compliance monitoring and enforcement. Soft measures include technical assistance and cost-sharing programs that create incentives for businesses to change behavior, as well as public education and awareness campaigns.

"Every meal eaten in Canada leaves an environmental footprint. At each stage of the production, distribution, and preparation of food, something is taken from or added to the environment. If we are to conserve Canada's environment and guarantee food security in the years to come, it is essential that the food system be as sustainable as possible," said Michael Bloom, vice-president of organizational effectiveness and learning for the Conference Board. "That entails environmental stewardship by governments, industry and consumers."

The report said that Canada, as a major food exporter, will be looked upon to satisfy rising global food demand – but must do so without jeopardizing the environment. Agriculture accounts for almost 10 per cent of Canada's greenhouse gas emissions.

It also noted that only 43 per cent of Canada's

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producers have implemented specific management practices to benefit the environment. As much as 40 per cent of all food is wasted in Canada – a problem that is not being adequately addressed, the report said.

The report, *Reducing the Risk: Addressing the Environmental Impacts of the Food System*, provides




“If we are to conserve Canada's environment and guarantee food security in the years to come, it is essential that the food system be as sustainable as possible.”

– Michael Bloom, Conference Board of Canada

six recommendations to manage risk and improve environmental performance:

1. Governments should motivate and support business environmental performance – Only 43 per cent of Canada's producers have fully implemented some form of beneficial management practice (BMP) – one that benefits the environment. Cost is the main concern, yet a majority of producers

adopting BMPs found that the financial benefits exceed the costs.

2. Add “green” thinking to agricultural policy and link it to income support programs – Agricultural policy has focused largely on supporting producer incomes without integrating environmental objectives.
3. Improve education about household food waste – As much as 40 per cent of all food, equivalent to \$27.7 billion annually is wasted in Canada, mostly in households. Education and awareness campaigns could help consumers reduce their food waste.
4. Develop food eco-labels for retail products – More widespread use of labels that outline the environmental practices related to a food's production, would improve consumers' ability to make environmentally friendly purchasing decisions.
5. Develop concrete and measurable food sustainability objectives – Benchmarks and objectives against which environmental performance can be objectively measured and assessed-and would enable all stakeholders to take meaningful actions.
6. Create a Canadian agri-food environmental governance system – A coordinated and overarching farm-to-fork approach to risk governance would improve on the current plethora of systems organized around sector, environmental cause, geographical region, and political jurisdiction. 

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NAMA and AMI explore possible merger

The American Meat Institute (AMI) and the North American Meat Association (NAMA) on Sept. 12 announced that the organizations have initiated discussions about a possible merger.

The executive committees of both associations this week voted in favour of pursuing discussions to create a new organization to represent the meat and poultry industry. A committee composed of members from each association will be formed to discuss next steps and to explore how a new organization can best serve its members. Discussions are anticipated to occur during the next several months.

“We believe that these discussions hold great promise for creating a new organization that could leverage the strengths that both AMI and NAMA offer. It is our intention to pursue discussions in a measured, thoughtful manner that will serve the interests of our associations’ members,” representatives for the groups said in a statement.

NAMA represents more than 600 companies in the United States, Canada and Mexico. The group was formed in 2012 as a consolidation of the North American Meat Processors Association (NAMP) and National Meat Association (NMA).

Founded in 1906, AMI represents companies that process 95 per cent of red meat and 70 per cent of turkey in the United States.

Cargill joins suspension of Zilmax-fed cattle

Cargill, in a statement on its website, said it supports Merck Animal Health’s decision to suspend sales of the feed supplement Zilmax in the U.S. and Canada. Merck temporarily pulled the

product in August after animal welfare concerns were raised about the product.

Cargill said it is suspending the purchase of Zilmax-fed cattle in North America, pending Merck’s research. The company said the last of its cattle being fed Zilmax that are in its supply chain will be harvested at the end of September.

In early August, at a National Cattlemen’s Beef Association meeting, multiple packers referenced situations that they believed may have been linked to Zilmax, although no scientific studies have made a connection, Cargill noted.

“While Cargill has not linked Zilmax to any specific incidents involving animal well-being, the company does believe more research is necessary to answer recently raised questions regarding the use of this product,” Cargill stated.

Merck in September announced it will conduct a scientific audit that will monitor the process of the feeding of Zilmax. The audit will follow identified cattle from the feedyard to the packing plant to determine potential causes of lameness and other mobility issues during feeding, transportation, offloading and staging at the processing facility. The company said it also will do a thorough review of potential compounding factors—such as nutrition, transportation and receiving facilities.

The company noted it is accelerating the development of its animal health advisory board, which will bring together industry experts, producers, academics and company leadership to promote an open dialogue on animal well-being.

Cargill will be represented on the board by its head of animal welfare and husbandry, Dr. Mike Siemens.

Maple Leaf to sell rendering and biodiesel business

Maple Leaf Foods has entered into a definitive agreement to sell Rothsay, its rendering and biodiesel business, to Darling International Inc. of Irving, Texas. The transaction is expected to close by the end of this year.

Rothsay is the leading rendering company in Canada and a leading producer of biodiesel.

“The sale of our rendering and biodiesel business supports our strategy to focus on effective capital deployment and profitable growth in the consumer packaged foods market,” Maple Leaf president and CEO Michael McCain stated. “We are delighted to have concluded almost a year-long process with an agreement with Darling, the North American leader in food waste recycling. The sale will support future investments in our consumer facing businesses and allow Darling to build on Rothsay’s strong capabilities and deep customer relationships.”

Rothsay had EBITDA of approximately \$85 million in 2012. Proceeds from the transaction of approximately \$645 million will initially be used to pay down debt. Upon completion of the prepared meats strategy, management will consider appropriate deployment of excess capital, including reinvesting in its core consumer packaged food businesses or returning excess capital to shareholders.

The business operates six rendering plants located in Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia and a biodiesel facility in Quebec. It employs approximately 550 people, who will transition to Darling once the transaction closes.

Maple Leaf plans to enter into a long-term contract with Darling to receive by-products recycling services at competitive market rates. Darling is the largest and only publicly traded provider of rendering and bakery residuals recycling solutions to the U.S. food industry. The company recycles beef, poultry and

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pork by-product streams into useable ingredients such as tallow, feed-grade fats, meat and bone meal, poultry meal and hides.

The company also recovers and converts used cooking oil and commercial bakery residuals into valuable feed and fuel ingredients. These products are primarily sold to agricultural, pet food, leather, oleo-chemical and biodiesel manufacturers around the world.

Reiser appoints new senior VP



Reiser, a leading supplier of processing and packaging equipment solutions for the sausage, meat, poultry and prepared foods industries, in September announced the appointment of Scott Scriven to a newly created position of senior vice-president of sales and marketing.

“Scott is the consummate salesperson and his business philosophy is a perfect fit for Reiser,” president and CEO Roger Reiser stated in a release.

Scriven has broad knowledge of the food equipment industry on a global level having focused his entire career in sales and sales management within that industry. For the past 14 years, he has served as president and CEO of Weber, Inc. Well known for his customer focus and collaborative approach to developing strategies, Scriven will be a good fit for managing the Reiser sales team, the company stated.

StatsCan reports cattle increase

Canadian farmers had about 13.5 million cattle on their farms on July 1, up 0.1 per cent from July 1, 2012, Statistics Canada reported recently. This was the first year-over-year increase since 2005 and followed seven years of declining inventories.

Despite the rise, the cattle herd was still 19.8 per cent below its peak level of July 1, 2005, the agency reported.

Hog producers reported 12.9 million hogs, up 0.6 per cent from last year, while the number of sheep fell 0.3 per cent.

Overall, cattle inventories rose slightly with increased numbers of steers and feeder heifers, as slaughter numbers fell during the first half of 2013 compared with the same period in 2012. The number of beef cows on Canadian farms, however, decreased 0.3 per cent from July 2012 to 3.94 million head, continuing a downward trend that started in July 2006.

The number of beef heifers held for breeding was up 0.7 per cent from July 2012 to 673,900 head. Canadian farmers had 1.4 million dairy cows and heifers on their farms, up 0.1 per cent from last year.

As of July 1, 82,760 farms reported cattle and calves, down 1.8 per cent from the same date last year and 3.9 per cent less than the previous year.

The first half of 2013 saw cattle and calf slaughter decline for a third consecutive year, down 9.5 per cent from the same period in 2012 to 1.5 million head. Cattle and calf exports increased 41.5 per cent during the first half of 2013, from 401,600 head in the first six months of 2012 to 568,100 head in 2013. However, exports remained 36.4 per cent below the peak of 2008.

As of July 1, there were 7,100 hog farms in Canada, down 1.4 per cent from the same date a year earlier. These farms reported 1.2 million sows and gilts, holding steady from July 1, 2012.

Domestic hog slaughter was down 1.2 per cent for the first six months of 2013 compared with the same period in 2012, to less than 10.4 million head. Canada exported 2.6 million hogs in the first half of 2013, down 9.2 per cent from 2012. This was 48 per

cent below the level recorded at the July peak of 2008.

Sheep inventories decreased, 0.3 per cent from July 1, 2012, with a decline in the breeding herd. The number of ewes was down 0.9 per cent and the number of replacement lambs fell 2.6 per cent. The number of market lambs increased 1.2 per cent from 2012.

Government expands livestock genetic access in Brazil

Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz announced on Sept. 11 that imports of sheep and goat genetics from Canada have now been approved by Brazil, a market the Canadian Livestock Genetics Association (CLGA) estimates to be worth approximately \$1.5 million to \$2 million annually for Canadian exporters.

“The interest in Canadian small ruminant genetics continues to grow past our expectations,” stated Michael Hall, CLGA executive director. “Our members and small ruminant breeders in Canada are very excited about Brazil as a positive market opportunity. We would like to thank the team from the Government of Canada for all their work in helping us reopen this market to Canadian exporters and producers.”

The government said it is working to discover the mutual economic opportunities that will foster lasting relationships between Canada and its partners in North and South America. Two-way trade between Canada and Latin America and the Caribbean has increased by 32.1 per cent between 2007 and 2012.

Total Canadian global exports of animal genetics reached \$103.6 million in 2012, representing an important export commodity for Canadian producers, while Brazil imported a total of \$31 million in animal genetics.

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Have Your Say

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is modernizing food safety regulations, which will impact small and medium-sized businesses.

By Mandy D'Autremont

MAJOR CHANGES AT the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) are coming soon. On Nov. 22, 2012, the federal government's *Safe Food for Canadians Act*, which seeks to modernize and strengthen Canada's food safety system, received Royal Assent. To bring the act into force, the CFIA is updating food safety regulations.

We all know agri-business owners deal with the CFIA for a variety of reasons, including livestock feeds, animal health, horticultural products, food labelling, grains and field crops, meat and poultry products, and the list goes on. The CFIA's upcoming changes will impose new requirements on businesses operating in these industries and affect how the CFIA deals with many small and medium-sized business owners - possibly you. So, it's important for you to have a say during CFIA's current consultations.

Specific initiatives the CFIA is undertaking include:

- A new regulatory framework for federal food inspection (i.e. new licensing, traceability, record-keeping, and food recall processes and requirements);
- A focus on compliance promotion (e.g. improved education);
- Inspection modernization (development of a single, consistent inspection approach);
- New requirements for food importers (new license requirements, which include developing and maintaining a preventive control plan that outlines a business' food safety plan);
- Updated food labelling requirements; and
- A new outcome-based approach (inspectors will emphasize specific and measurable outcomes versus prescriptive provisions).

In principle, the CFIA's goals sound positive, but we need to ensure these changes don't add a new layer of unnecessary red tape, confusing paperwork, and additional runaround from CFIA inspectors and staff. To be clear, small business owners have no issue with the legitimate rules necessary to ensure safe food for Canadians. The smaller the business, the less capacity they have to hire professionals to fill out forms or interpret regulations, so it is important for the CFIA to consider a small business owner's capacity when developing regulatory requirements and paperwork.

Over the past few months, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) has been vocal in raising its agri-business members' views, concerns, and questions about CFIA's upcoming changes: how will inspectors interpret the new requirements; how will the CFIA outline requirements for the new preventive control plans; will there be changes to how inspectors interact with business owners; and will business owners be able to get responses




in writing from the CFIA when interpretations of new regulations are needed?

Pushing for better service at the CFIA has been a focus of the CFIB for the past seven years. While CFIB agri-business members recognize the importance of the CFIA's role in ensuring a safe food system, they have also identified it as one of the government bodies most burdensome to their business from a regulation point of view. In response, CFIB issued its first CFIA Report Card in 2007, which revealed the CFIA needed to dramatically improve how it interacted with agricultural producers. CFIB looks forward to releasing its second CFIA Report Card in early 2014, which will include key recommendations on what the CFIA can do to improve how it interacts with producers.



How can you take part in the consultations? The CFIA plans to hold in-person consultations throughout October in five major cities across Canada. You can also submit a response to the CFIA's discussion papers on each of the initiatives prior to Nov. 30, 2013. Visit CFIA's website for more information.

We believe the *Safe Food for Canadians Act* and resulting regulatory changes is a good opportunity to start addressing red tape by creating clearer, streamlined legislation, and regulations that are fair, transparent and ensure accountability of producers and the CFIA. We will continue to push for these improvements and encourage you to do the same - either by submitting your own response to the CFIA or contacting CFIB at 1-888-234-2232 to share your views and concerns.

These changes will impact your business; make sure you have your say. 



Mandy D'Autremont is a policy analyst, agri-business with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB). She can be reached at mssask@cfib.ca

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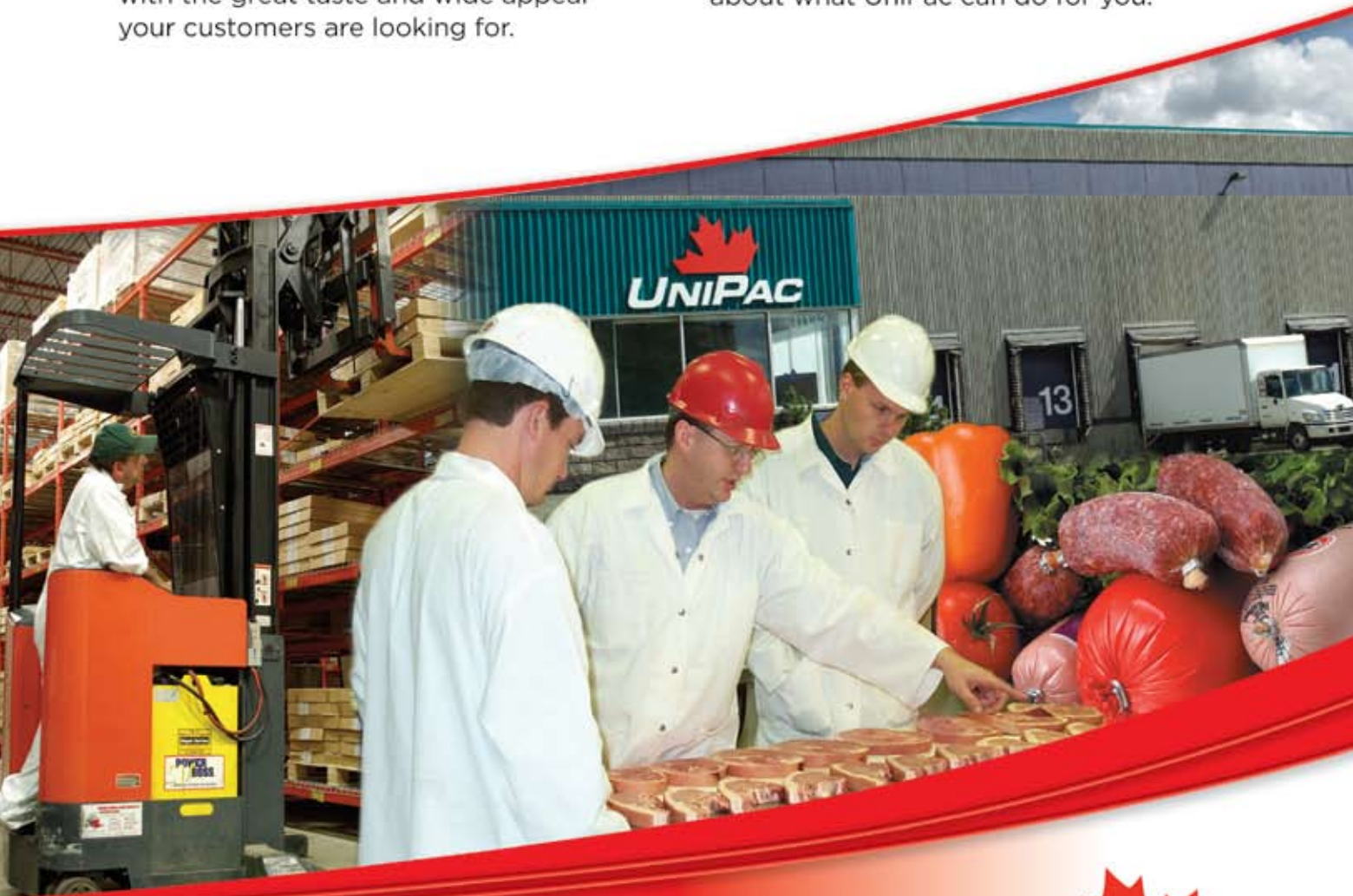
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