

Issue 71 March 2025

OLPC 2025 Membership Meetings

In-person meetings will be at Beef Farmers of Ontario, 130 Malcolm Road, Guelph.

- April 11, 2025
- June 13, 2025 – in person, AGM
- August 15, 2025
- October 17, 2025 – in person
- December 12, 2025

Foot-and-Mouth Disease Confirmed in Cattle in Hungary

Foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) virus has been confirmed on a cattle farm in Kisbajcs, Hungary, less than two months after the virus was found in water buffalo, in Germany. Hungary's National Food Chain Safety Authority announced Hungary's first case in more than 50 years on March 7, 2025

A farm with 1,400 cattle showed classic symptoms of foot-and-mouth disease at the beginning of March, before the presence of the pathogen was confirmed by the national laboratory. The national chief veterinarian immediately ordered the closure of the farm and initiated an epidemiological investigation to try and establish how the virus reached the farm.

Canadian Integrated Program for Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance (CIPARS) – Release of 2023 Data

CIPARS has updated their interactive data visualizations on their web pages to include 2023 information for both the veterinary antimicrobial sales reporting data and for their farm antimicrobial use data.

The links to access the data visualization pages can be found [here](#)

Rabies in Canada

In 2024, a total of 2,487 samples were submitted for rabies testing in Canada. Of those, 137 cases were positive.

In recent years, rabies infections have primarily been reported in:

- bats across the country;
- skunks in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario;

Avian Influenza Found in Sheep in U.K.

The H5N1 virus was detected in a single animal in Yorkshire, the British government reported on Monday, March 24, 2025. It added that the risk to humans remained very low. While avian influenza has been detected in cattle and other mammals, this is being reported as the first infection of a sheep.

In a statement, Britain's government said that avian origin flu (or H5N1) had been found in a ewe during what it called "routine surveillance" of livestock in Yorkshire in the north of England, where cases had been confirmed in captive birds.

"All affected birds and the infected ewe were humanely culled to mitigate the risk of further disease spread," the statement from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs said. "Further official testing of the remaining flock of sheep at the premises, including the lambs of the affected ewe, were negative for the presence of avian influenza virus."

Animal Health Canada – FMD Preparedness

Over the past two years Canada has been preparing for a potential foot and mouth disease (FMD) outbreak through the development of two key components:

1. The FMD Integrated Emergency Response Plan (IERP)
2. The Vaccination Implementation Support Structure (VISS)

Progress to date:

- **Collaboration:** Animal Health Canada is working with federal, provincial, territorial, and industry partners to clearly define roles and responsibilities, ensuring everyone knows what to do during an FMD outbreak.
- **Identifying Gaps:** Some gaps have been identified in how roles overlap during an outbreak. Animal Health Canada is addressing these to ensure a smooth and coordinated response.
- **Vaccination Support:** The Vaccination Implementation Support Structure (VISS) has been developed to outline Canada's vaccination strategy, including protocols for different livestock species.

Next Steps:

- Finalizing key components of the FMD Integrated Emergency Response Plan (IERP) and Vaccination Implementation Support Structure (VISS), with ongoing integration of protocols and strategies.
- Actively working to address and clarify gaps in roles and responsibilities, ensuring better coordination and preparedness amongst all stakeholders.
- Continuing resource planning to ensure personnel, equipment, and operational support are in place for an effective, timely response during an outbreak.

Goal: The goal is to complete and integrate the VISS as a key component within the FMD IERP, ensuring clear and actionable protocols for effective vaccination. From the evergreen FMD IERP document, and associated gaps list, stakeholders will have a clearer understanding of FMD planning and preparedness needs required for the immediate future. Addressing gaps will require striking specific working groups with broad stakeholder participation.

- raccoons in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick; and
- foxes in Nunavut and Northwest Territories, as well as the northern parts of Quebec, Manitoba, and Labrador.

Since reporting began in 1924, there have been 28 cases of rabies in humans in six provinces, and all cases were fatal. The last human case of rabies transmitted from a non-flying animal in Canada was in 1967. Since then, all human cases of rabies in Canada have been from exposure to bats or due to exposures while in another country.

CVO Public Consultation on Veterinary Professionals Act, 2024

The College of Veterinarians of Ontario's public consultation on regulatory concepts related to the *Veterinary Professionals Act, 2024* is now posted and available for review and comment. The public consultation is available until April 16, 2025.

The regulatory concepts contained in this consultation include licensure, professional misconduct, and quality assurance. Work related to the authorized activity model and the development of regulatory exemptions for certain activities and/or other non-veterinary animal care providers is also included.

All members of the public and the profession are welcome to access the anonymous public consultation survey by [clicking here](#) to access the website. The regulatory concepts have been divided into five main categories – licensure; authorized activities; regulatory exemptions for non-members; quality team-based care; and administration. Respondents can provide feedback on all these categories or only respond to those that they are most interested in. The results of this survey will be compiled by a third-party reviewer and presented to the Transition Council for its review.

Detection of Bovine Tuberculosis in Saskatchewan

In December 2024, CFIA launched an investigation into a case of Bovine tuberculosis (bovine TB) in a six-year-old animal originating from Saskatchewan that was slaughtered at a federally registered abattoir in Alberta. On February 25, 2025, CFIA announced the disease had been detected in the birth herd of the infected animal. There have been three additional confirmed cases in the animals tested to date. All animals over twelve months of age will be tested to determine the prevalence of the disease, and the entire herd will be humanely depopulated.

Laboratory culture results from the November 29, 2024, infected animal found a strain that has never been identified in animals or humans in Canada, and the origin of the strain is unknown. It is not closely related to any of the recent strains in Western Canada.

All areas of Canada have been considered officially bovine TB-free in its farmed bovine and cervid species since 2006. An investigation of this detection will support international market access for Canada's beef industry. The CFIA investigation will include:

- the testing of herds that have been in contact with infected herd,
- the tracing of animals that left the infected herd in the last 5 years and the testing of implicated herds as required,
- the tracing of animals that provided animals to the infected herd in the last 5 years and the testing of implicated herds as required.

Bovine TB is a reportable disease in Canada and has been subject to a mandatory national eradication program since 1923. While all areas of Canada are considered to be officially free of bovine TB today, isolated cases in cattle may occur. Human cases of bovine TB are very rare.

Our Mission

Provide a forum to facilitate the development and coordination of an Ontario strategy to deal with foreign animal disease and other transmissible livestock and poultry diseases.