



### OLPC 2021 Membership Meetings

- February 12, 2021
- April 16, 2021
- June 11, 2021
- August 13, 2021 – tentative
- October 15, 2021
- December 10, 2021

### OLPC Board Elections

OLPC held its annual meeting on October 16, 2020. Gord Coukell was acclaimed as Chair. The Vice-Chair will be elected by the Board at their January meeting.

### Terms Expires 2021

Major Livestock – Darby Wheeler, Beef Farmers of Ontario  
Poultry – Klaus Schneeberger, OBHECC

Veterinarian Associations – Steve Roche, Acer Consulting

### Term Expires 2022

Minor Livestock – Tom Lewis, Sheep Farmers of Ontario  
Individual Agri-Business – Julie Harlow, Angus GeoSolutions Inc.  
Agriculture and Food Associations and Coalitions – Jean Howden, LRIC

### COVID and Mink

A one health approach has been taken by the Ministry of Health with COVID planning because of the potential zoonotic interaction with mink farms. Mink are very susceptible to COVID. Ten countries have reported confirmed cases of COVID-19 in mink: Netherlands, Spain, Denmark, U.S., France, Italy, Sweden, Greece, Lithuania, and Canada. The Canadian case involved a mink farm in British Columbia which had eight COVID-positive employees. Subsequent testing found positive animals as well. OMAFRA is working with Ontario fur breeders on strategies if an outbreak were to occur on a farm, e.g. sample submission and handling.

### Salmonella Dublin

Salmonella Dublin is considered an emerging disease in several Canadian provinces. OLPC members heard a presentation given by Dr. Cynthia Miltenberg, OMAFRA at the December membership meeting regarding Ontario cases.

This is a cattle host-adapted strain of Salmonella but is zoonotic and can infect other mammals. It most frequently results in respiratory disease and septicemia in calves between the ages of two weeks to six months of age. It is associated with high morbidity and mortality in naïve calves. It is less frequently associated with illness and abortion in mature cattle. Surviving animals have a high probability of becoming carriers of the disease. Carrier animals can maintain the infection within a herd by periodically shedding the bacteria and infecting new animals. Long-term infection in a herd is associated with production losses that vary with how well the disease is controlled on the farm.

Between 2012 and 2019, 57 premises tested positive in Ontario. The number of farm cases is slowly increasing but there has not been a corresponding increase in human cases in Ontario. Quebec has seen an increase in human cases. Sixty percent of human cases required hospitalization. A high proportion of cases in Ontario, Quebec, and bordering US States are multi-drug resistant.

Introduction to the farm is typically through new animal purchases so veal producers are at high risk. There is an especially high risk when sourcing calves from the U.S. Reliable sourcing of cattle and biosecurity are the best preventative measures. A working group has been formed to connect with experts outside Ontario.

### PAWS Advisory Table

The Ontario government has established a multi-disciplinary advisory table to provide ongoing advice regarding animal welfare. Members of the Provincial Animal Welfare Services (PAWS) Advisory Table include: Dr. Kendra Coulter, Associate Professor at Brock University; Gayle Ecker, Director at Equine Guelph at the University of Guelph; the Animal Alliance of Canada; the Association of Animal Shelter Administrators of Ontario; Canada's Accredited Zoos and Aquariums; College of Veterinarians of Ontario; Humane Canada; Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police; Ontario Federation of Agriculture; Ontario Veterinary Medical Association; and, World Animal Protection.

In addition to seeking advice through this Table, the Ministry of the Solicitor General will also be:

- establishing Technical Tables in the future which will include additional members beyond the Advisory Table members and will support the development of specific regulations that require sector specific and/or technical analysis and expertise; and,
- undertaking broader public and stakeholder consultation to seek advice and input.

### CAHI Fee Increases

At the December OLPC meeting, members heard a presentation from the Canadian Animal Health Institute (CAHI) regarding the increase in regulatory fees for veterinary drugs. In 2019, Health Canada implemented significant regulatory service fee increases for reviews and approvals of veterinary drugs. Fees will increase up to 500% by 2026 which will raise registration costs for livestock products significantly. This will have a significant impact on up to 90% of currently licensed veterinary medications leading to deregistration or significant price increases.

For new drugs, innovation costs are \$28 m for companion animals and \$39 million for livestock; costs are not recouped for three to seven years. Once a drug is developed, the

### **COVID-Positive Dog in Niagara**

OMAFRA issued a veterinary advisory in late October regarding a confirmed case of SARS-CoV-2 in a dog in the Niagara region. SARS-CoV-2 is the virus that causes COVID-19 in humans. The animal was tested as part of a research study, following diagnosis of COVID-19 in several people in the same household. This dog did not have any clinical signs of disease.

The current understanding of COVID-19 is that the overall risk of infection and illness in most domestic animals is low. Current evidence suggests mink, ferrets, cats and more rarely dogs can be infected with SARS-CoV-2.

Testing of pets and livestock species (with the exception of farmed mink) is not recommended at this time, as the virus is primarily transmitted person-to-person and not through animal contact.

### **Campylobacter Linked to Ducklings**

There has been an increase in Campylobacter cases in Ontario which have been connected to backyard ducklings. The number of backyard poultry has increased due to COVID, i.e. people want their own food supply and also have more time if they are working from home. The Ministry of Health has prepared a factsheet on backyard poultry and human health considerations for handling.

### **Canadian Integrated Program for Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance (CIPARS) Reports**

The summary reports representing data for the **2018 surveillance year** are available in HTML format on the [CIPARS web page](#).

Due to the Public Health Agency's ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CIPARS multi-stakeholder webinar, which normally takes place during Antibiotic Awareness Week in November, will be held in early 2021. Details will be forwarded when confirmed.

annual sales threshold now needed to cover registration and maintenance fees in Canada is \$500,000. According to 2017 data from veterinary product distributors supplying Canadian veterinarians, over 50% of products have sales of less than \$500,000.

Canada's small market becomes even less viable under this regulatory fee system. The expected impacts are:

- it becomes less viable to apply for new uses for existing drugs;
- low volume drugs disappear;
- there will be more off label drug use, to treat conditions for which the drugs are not approved to treat; and,
- Canadian drug innovation will decrease, with money moving to more attractive markets

CAHI is currently surveying its member companies to quantify the impact of the first round of service fee increases implemented in 2020.

### **Regulations Amending the Food and Drug Regulations - Use of Foreign Decisions Pathway**

The Use of Foreign Decisions (UFD) pathway will allow manufacturers of drugs for human and veterinary use to submit drug submissions in Canada basing their submissions on foreign decisions and with a reduced cost thereby providing an incentive for manufacturers to bring their product to market if criteria are met.

It intends to address stakeholder comments that the regulatory framework creates a barrier that has led to a lack of veterinary drugs for use in minor species (e.g., farmed fish, sheep) and to treat rare and life-threatening conditions in major species (e.g., cattle, chickens).

Canadians will have the opportunity to provide comments on the regulatory proposal during the Canada Gazette, Part I, public comment period, which is expected to take place in spring 2021 and last 70 days. More details can be found [here](#).

### **Puppy Imports**

There was a media report over the summer regarding a plane load of sick puppies arriving in Toronto from the Ukraine. There were approximately 500 French bulldog puppies on board, 38 were dead on arrival and dozens more were dehydrated and seriously ill. Imports from the Ukraine were subsequently blocked but there has since been an increase in the number of puppies being imported from Poland (possibly just switched shipping country of origin). There are still 100 to 200 puppies coming into Canada each week. China, the Philippines, Mexico and South America also export to Canada. COVID has greatly increased the demand for puppies as people are at home.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency only has jurisdiction over rabies and humane transport. Under eight months of age, the puppies just require a certificate that they have been vaccinated for rabies.

Education and awareness by purchasers are key to stopping the demand. Veterinarians are likely the most credible source to provide the information and also best positioned to reach dog owners. The Ministry of the Solicitor General, Animal Welfare Services is working on an education piece and the Ontario Veterinary Medical Association has also provided information to members.

### **Eastern Equine Encephalitis**

During the second half of 2020, OMAFRA issued advisories regarding four confirmed cases of eastern equine encephalitis (EEE). The first, in August, was in a pony located in the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville. The unvaccinated pony was euthanized following the sudden onset and progression of neurological signs.

In October, three horses were confirmed with EEE in Lambton County. Two adult horses were from the same farm, and a filly was on a farm five miles from the other premises. The filly and one adult horse were euthanized and the third animal died.

EEE is not transmissible from horses to people. Birds are the natural hosts, which is transmitted to horses and humans by mosquitoes which have bitten an infected bird.

### Rabies Numbers in Canada

As at the end of November, there have been 2,566 samples submitted in 2020 for rabies testing from across Canada. Nationally, 101 samples tested positive. Ontario accounted for 1,425 samples of which 48 tested positive. The breakdown from which species the positive samples were taken are as follows:

	Can.	Ont.
Arctic fox	1	
Bat	74	38
Bovine	2	
Cat	1	
Dog	3	
Raccoon	4	3
Red fox	1	
Skunk	15	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>48</b>

Effective equine vaccines for EEE are available and veterinarians should encourage clients to keep their horse's vaccinations current. Once clinical infection develops, treatment options are limited to supportive care. The mortality rate in unvaccinated horses is high. EEE has also caused fatal infections in pheasants, quail, emus, alpacas, llamas and dogs.

### National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council

Megan Bergman, Executive Director of the National Farmed Animal Health and Welfare Council provided an overview of activities to OLPC members as part of the December meeting.

The Council now has several divisions within its framework. These include: NFACC (the National Farm Animal Care Council); the AHEM project (Animal Health Emergency Management); the Canadian Livestock Transport certification program; and, CAHSS (Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System). NFACC and AHEM were both transferred from the Canadian Animal Health Coalition in July as that organization has now wound down.

NFACC has several Codes under development and review including: salmon, dairy cattle, goat, pig, and transportation. The Canadian Livestock Transport certification program is transitioning to a more user-friendly platform for on-line training. The Council is also looking at further development of Animal Health Canada. A gap analysis was undertaken regarding animal health which identified 19 structural and technical gaps, the most significant being the lack of a cohesive national approach to animal health and the need for communications to be managed more effectively.

Dr Marina (Nina) von Keyserlingk will be replacing Dr. David Fraser on the Council Board. Dr. Fraser has been a member of the Council since October 2010. Dr. von Keyserlingk is a professor in the Animal Welfare Program, Faculty of Land and Food Systems, University of British Columbia. She has also been a Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council Industrial Research Chair in Animal Welfare since 2008.

### 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.*