



**NATIONAL FARM ANIMAL CARE COUNCIL  
CONSEIL NATIONAL POUR LES SOINS AUX ANIMAUX D'ÉLEVAGE**



# **Market Relevant Codes and Communication Leadership**

**PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS REPORT**

**Year Three (April 2016 - March 2017)**

**Canada**

Funding for this project has been provided through the AgriMarketing Program under Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

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## Working together...



...for good animal welfare.

“The commitment that each NFACC member makes when joining NFACC is to support the core values, goals, and objectives of the organization. This can mean stepping outside of our comfort zone and suspending judgment in order to hear and understand other perspectives. It requires a degree of reflection that can be challenging when emotions are running high. I’m continually impressed by the capacity of all involved with NFACC to rise to this challenge.”

## Advancing Canada's Future in Farm Animal Care

The National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) is at the centre of important developments shaping the future of farm animal care in Canada.

NFACC's role is to facilitate an open collaboration regarding Canadian farmed animal welfare issues among a broad range of stakeholders and other key partners that, while accepting the use of animals by humans, firmly believe all animals deserve to be treated well. NFACC provides a forum for all these stakeholders, along with robust processes for farmed animal industry groups to draft or renew Codes of Practice and assessment programs for those Codes.

NFACC's Code Development Process is a robust approach that brings together the latest science, public expectations and achievable reality. NFACC itself does not make pronouncements about what should or must be done on any kind of farm or ranch. **Our role is to serve as a forum that brings together stakeholders that want to improve outcomes for animals and that want to help each other make informed decisions.**

### Strong Year of Progress

During 2016-2017, progress continued through the “Market Relevant Codes and Communication Leadership” project under Growing Forward 2. It has been a time of significant achievements.

The Code for hatching eggs, breeders, chickens and turkeys was released in June 2016. Not stopping to rest on their laurels, industry groups are now working hard to update their animal care assessment programs to meet the new Code.

Congratulations to the layer Code Development Committee for crossing the finish line on a new layer Code of Practice in March. This Code has gotten a lot of attention but the committee never lost focus on what was important for the welfare of hens above all else.

The bison, veal cattle, and rabbit Codes were all released for public comment from late 2016 into early 2017. Each of these Codes will cross their own finish lines later in 2017.

### Keeping Up Momentum

The marketplace changes over time, and demands move with it. What is possible on farms and ranches also evolves over time. What is achievable on farms and what animal welfare science dictates, in addition to other priorities such as animal health and environmental responsibility, also need to be taken into account when talking about the continuous improvement that is sustainable production. The members of the Council know that humane treatment of farmed animals is essential to sustainable production.

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### Building a Pathway

I have no doubt that bringing together all the groups that make up NFACC has changed the conversation about animal welfare in Canada. We all make better decisions when we understand the intersection of animal welfare science, public expectation and achievable outcomes. These decisions are best taken together and I am confident that we can continue down this path into the future.



Ryder Lee

Ryder Lee  
NFACC Chairman

## Perspectives on Progress

### Advancing Codes in support of sustainable industries

Two Codes are complete and three more are nearing completion. Here are some insights on this achievement, its benefits, and the next steps for utilizing these Codes from the industry organizations involved.

#### The Poultry Code

The updated [Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Hatching Eggs, Breeders, Chickens and Turkeys](#) was released in 2016.

**Chicken Farmers of Canada**, *Insights from Steve Leech, National Program Manager*

#### Q: What commitment and opportunities does the Code represent?

“The Code reflects the processes and standards implemented on our farms and throughout the industry that are proof of our industry's strong commitment to animal care. Based on these, our industry is in a solid position to promote the high standards of animal care within the industry to our customers and consumers.”

#### Q: What are key benefits of the NFACC-supported process?

“A major advantage of Chicken Farmers of Canada's Animal Care Program is that it uses the credible and science-informed NFACC development process. NFACC's methodology uses the most recent animal care research and a solid collaboration of stakeholders from different perspectives to develop a Code of Practice that is robust and defensible.”

#### Q: What are the next steps following this achievement?

“With the updated Code of Practice in hand, we are now using NFACC's Animal Care Assessment Framework to renew our auditable Animal Care Program.”

“We also continue to fund animal care research through the Canadian Poultry Research Council, and we will continue to work with the experts – including industry stakeholder organizations, the research community and government regulators – to continuously monitor and improve our animal care programming.”

“Chicken Farmers of Canada understands its responsibility for animal care and we take our responsibility for upholding high principles of animal health and care on-farm very seriously.”

**Turkey Farmers of Canada**, *Insights from Caroline Gonano, Associate Manager: Technical Affairs – Science & Regulation*

#### Q: What does the completed Code demonstrate?

“The [Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Hatching Eggs, Breeders, Chickens, and Turkeys](#) was completed using the unique process set in place by NFACC. Having a Code that involved an in-depth scientific review, the collaboration of a diverse range of stakeholders and a transparent public comment period resulted in a Code that is scientifically informed, practical, and that reflects societal expectations for responsible animal care.”

“Turkey Farmers of Canada (TFC) is pleased to have this important tool in place and is working towards implementing the new Code on turkey farms across Canada through an update to the current TFC Flock Care Program® (FCP).”

#### Q: What are the next steps for using the Code?

“TFC will be utilizing the NFACC Animal Care Assessment Framework to update the TFC Flock Care Program® (FCP) in order to meet the new Code of Practice. The implementation of the ACAF will involve a collaborative process in updating the TFC FCP to enhance the transparency of the program.”

“While the review of the TFC FCP is underway, Canadian turkey farmers have been encouraged to start incorporating the new Code of Practice provisions in their on-farm practices.”

## NFACC Partners

- Agriculture and Agri-Food Portfolio (AAFC, CFIA)
- Alberta Farm Animal Care Association
- Canada Fox Breeders Association
- Canada Mink Breeders Association
- Canadian Bison Association
- Canadian Cattlemen's Association
- Canadian Federation of Agriculture
- Canadian Federation of Humane Societies
- Canadian Hatching Egg Producers
- Canadian Meat Council
- Canadian Pork Council
- Canadian Poultry and Egg Processors Council
- Canadian Sheep Federation
- Canadian Veal Association
- Canadian Veterinary Medical Association
- Chicken Farmers of Canada
- Dairy Farmers of Canada
- Dairy Processors Association of Canada
- Egg Farmers of Canada
- Equine Canada
- Ontario Trucking Association (Livestock Transporters' Division)
- Provincial Ministries of Agriculture (currently represented by Ontario)
- Retail Council of Canada
- Coalition of provincial SPCAs (ON, SK, BC)
- Turkey Farmers of Canada
- World Animal Protection

## Associate Members

- A & W Food Services of Canada Inc.
- Aramark Canada
- Boehringer Ingelheim (Canada) Ltd.
- Burnbrae Farms
- Cargill Canada
- Elanco Animal Health, Canada
- Farm & Food Care Ontario
- Farm Credit Canada
- Loblaw Companies Ltd.
- Manitoba Pork Council
- Maple Leaf
- McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Ltd.
- NSF International
- Saputo Inc.
- Sobeys Inc.
- Tim Hortons
- White Spot Restaurants

**Q: What stands out as a key overall benefit?**

“Applying the new Code on-farm as the basis for the TFC FCP reinforces consistent and up-to-date practices for the well-being of turkeys in Canada.”

**Canadian Hatching Egg Producers, Insights from Sophie Neveux, Animal Welfare Officer**

**Q: What does the completed Code demonstrate?**

“The successful publication of the Code demonstrates the dedication of the entire poultry industry and its stakeholders, including broiler hatching egg farmers, through their involvement in the Code process. The Code strikes a balance between science, poultry health and welfare best practices, and day-to-day farm management. The Code provides greater clarity for broiler hatching egg farmers, which can be utilized for continual improvement on-farm.”

**Q: What is next on the horizon for building on this progress?**

“The Code provides us with an excellent foundation for continued advancement. As a next step, we are using the Code as the foundation of an Animal Care Program (ACP) that is scheduled for release later in 2017.”

**Q: What message will these achievements deliver?**

“The achievement of the Animal Care Program, based on the Code, will serve as an ongoing demonstration of the work and commitment of the Canadian broiler hatching egg farmers. It shows that our industry maintains animal welfare as a top priority and is committed to ensuring that a high level of animal care is provided by broiler hatching egg farmers across Canada.”

**Q: How will this progress help meet rising expectations?**

“On-farm assessment programs, based on the Code, are focused on animal care for poultry farmers. These programs will demonstrate the application of the Code on-farm and allow farmers to continue meeting customers’ highest expectations in the ongoing commitment to continual improvement for the animals in the farmer’s care.”

**The Layer Code**

The most recently completed updated Code is the [Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pullets and Laying Hens](#), released in March 2017.

**Egg Farmers of Canada, Insights from Neil Newlands, Chief Operating Officer**

**Q: What does the Code achievement mean for your organization?**

“Egg Farmers of Canada (EFC) is proud of this accomplishment and how well the Code Committee worked together. It is never easy reaching consensus with a group of people with different viewpoints and experience, but with hard work and mutually respectful discussions, this was possible with this group.”

“Egg Farmers of Canada are long-time supporters of NFACC’s Code Development process, but to see it in action on our industry Code and how successful it has been is a testament to how well this process works.”

“The egg industry was engaged throughout the process, and interested in finalizing the Code of Practice that outlines a minimum set of welfare standards across all housing systems. The Code is also in line with the industry’s own transition away from conventional cages and reinforces the ability of alternative housing to meet the behavioural and welfare needs of the birds.”

**Q: What steps will follow?**

“A project team is being created in line with the NFACC Animal Care Assessment Framework to use the Code to redevelop the industry’s Animal Care Program. EFC has had a program in place since 2004, shortly after the last Code of Practice was completed.”

“It is important to maintain that continuity and establish an updated program based on the updated Code. Once complete, this program will be implemented on-farm using the same EFC inspector and third party audit as is currently administered.”

**Q: Can you put in context what this progress means to the industry?**

“Farmers have been waiting for this Code to give them some direction, especially for alternative systems. Industry stakeholders, such as retail and foodservice companies, and the processing and grading sector have all been waiting for the Code to understand what welfare requirements would be for hens.”

“The industry can now work with its stakeholders to make sure that as the transition happens to alternative housing systems, it is done so using the Code, and all Canadian egg producers will meet those requirements.”

**The Bison Code**

The updated [Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Bison](#) has completed a public comment period and is nearing completion during spring 2017.

**Canadian Bison Association, Insights from Terry Kremeniuk, Executive Director**

**Q: What is the value of having the updated Code in place?**

“All of us involved in the Code development believe the process was a very valuable experience that will result in a bison Code of Practice that will be very useful for both current and new producers. The diversity of the group that built on years of experience since the last code, plus current research, contributed greatly to a valuable and respectful debate that strengthened the Code.”



*Bison Code development committee meeting Chase, B.C.*

**Q: What will be the process for launching the Code?**

“The code will be distributed to all members either in hard copy or electronically. It will be made available to new producers as well as those expressing interest in the industry. It will also serve as the foundation for any discussions on issues related to bison production.”

**Q: How does the Code reflect and help manage current expectations?**

“This Code builds on the work that was completed in the last Code. It also reinforces current production practices that have evolved as societal expectations have changed. The industry will be working from a stronger foundation with the updated Code. We are very pleased with the new bison Code. It will be a valuable tool to help our industry in many ways, including helping to show our commitment to responsible animal care.”



**The Rabbit Code**

The [Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Rabbits](#) wrapped up its public comment period on March 31, 2017. Final meetings to deliberate on the feedback received and to establish consensus on a final Code are planned.

Watch for the new Code in 2017!

**The Veal Cattle Code**

The [Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Veal Cattle](#) wrapped up its public comment period on February 14, 2017. Final meetings to deliberate on the feedback received and to establish consensus on a final Code are underway.

Watch for the new Code in 2017!



Words from a Code Development Committee (CDC) member...

“I’m honestly going to feel sad when the Code wraps up. I always look forward to our FTF [face-to-face] meetings. We are a unique group and work very well together. While disagreements may arise, the fact that the CDC is able to maneuver through them respectfully (actively listening and responding) in order to come to a consensus is refreshing. Each one of us brings different skills to the group.”

## Providing effective feedback during a Public Comment Period (PCP)

Constructive submissions that include alternative wording and references help the Committee to resolve differences and arrive at a quality Code.

Does quantity matter? It may. Many comments expressing a common viewpoint may provide important insights for the committee. However, it's the personal, thoughtful comments that are most persuasive as the committee weighs the diversity of input. In other words, what is said is generally more important than how often it is said.

Submissions often reflect the same range of perspectives that are around the Code committee table and can confirm the consensus of the committee. In these cases, the final Code may not change much from the draft Code. However, submissions can also identify missed areas or alternative solutions that the committee had not considered. Finding solutions that farmers can implement is particularly helpful. Good welfare for animals requires that farmers are able to implement the Code.

Everyone involved in the Code process has the goal of continual improvement in farm animal welfare. What are your viewpoints that can support that goal?



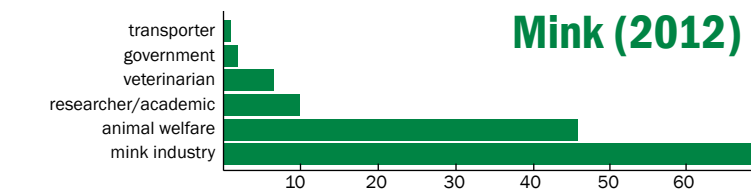
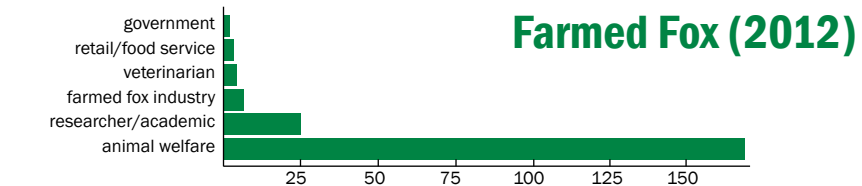
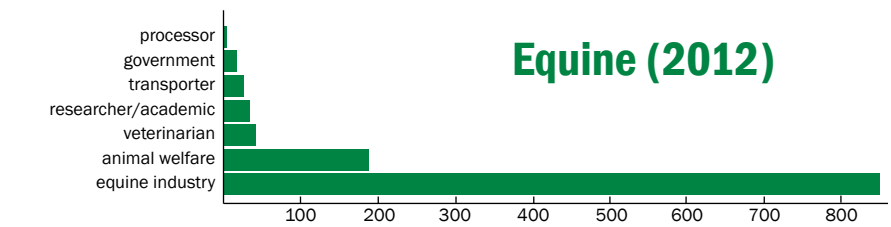
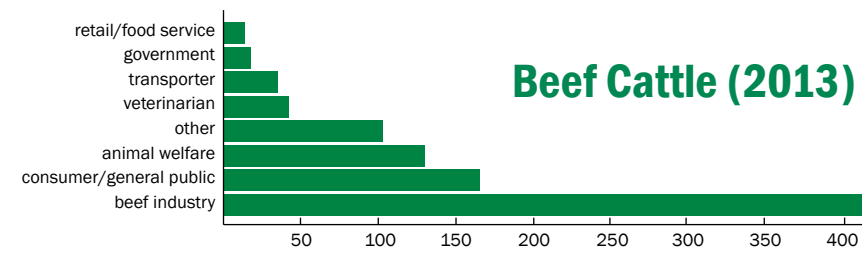
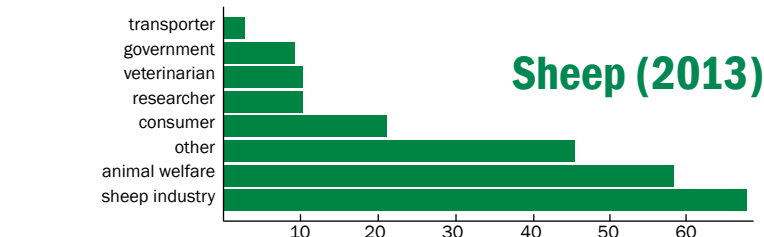
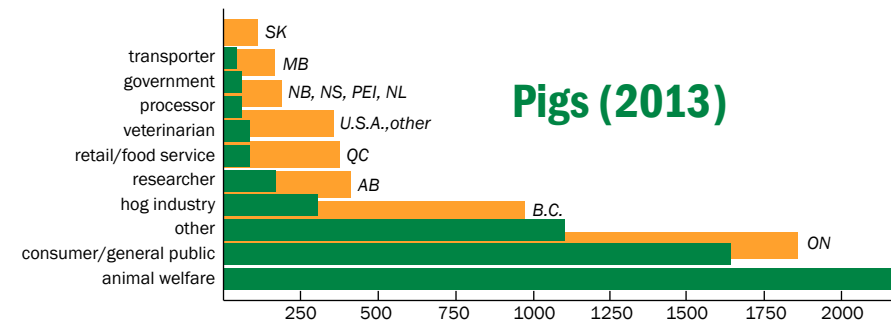
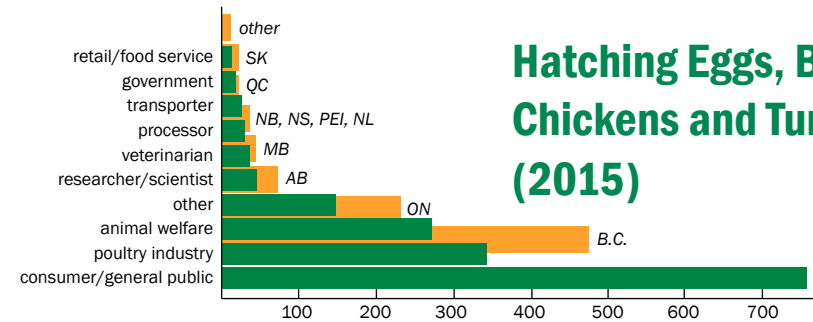
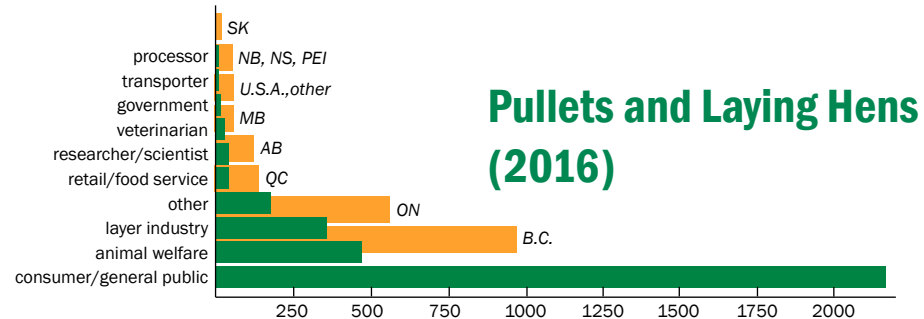
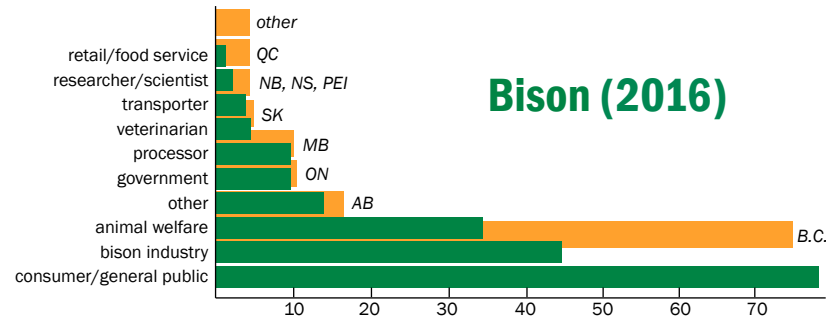
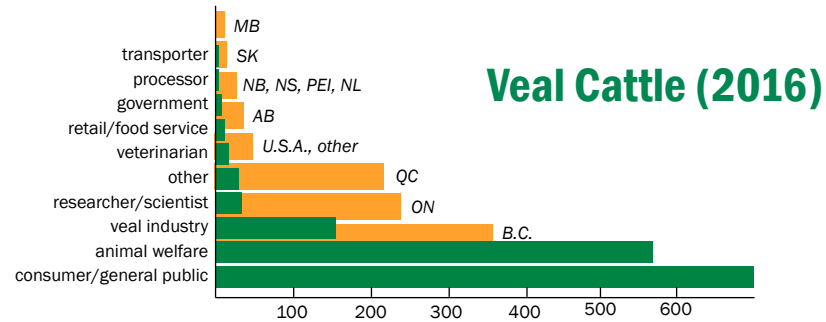
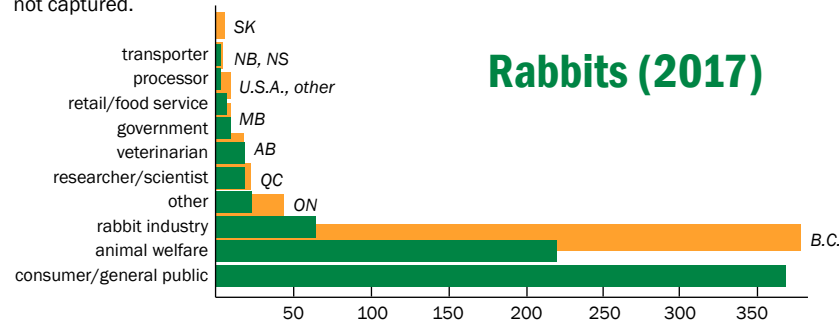
## Public Comment Periods at a Glance

### Public Comments Support Robust Final Discussions on Draft Codes

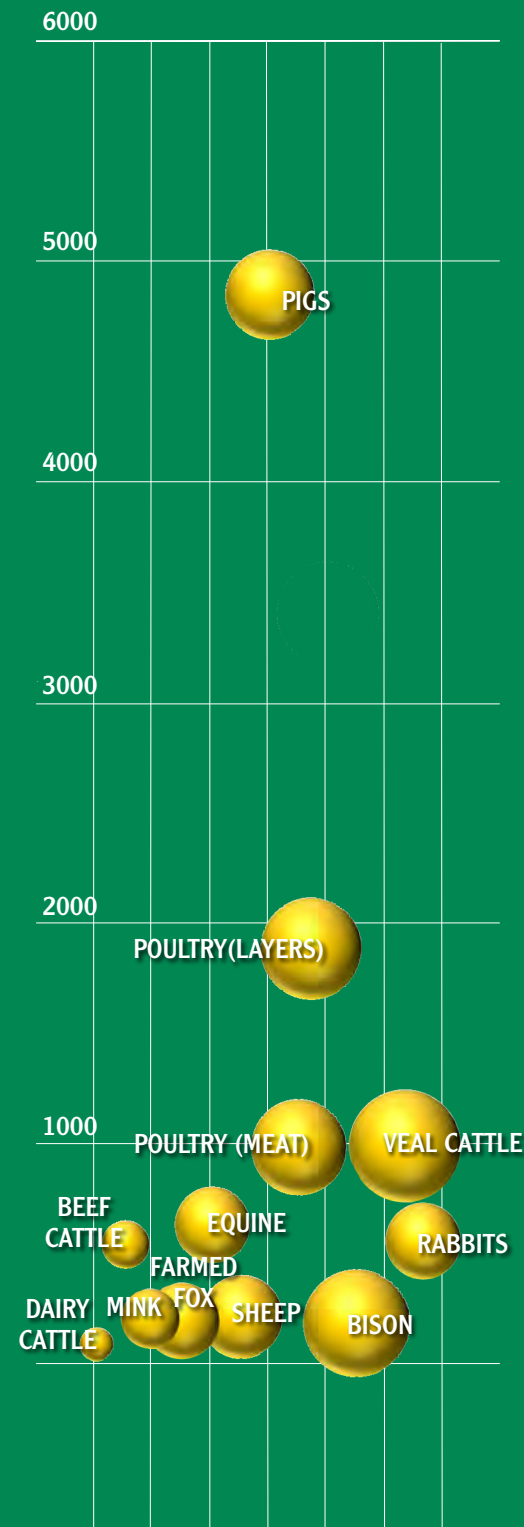
The Public Comment Period (PCP) is a vital component of the Code process and one where all voices have an opportunity to be heard. Code committee members methodically consider and discuss the submissions received.

Code committees are composed of a diverse array of stakeholders, who have often worked collaboratively for over two years to come to consensus on a draft Code. The dialogue has been rigorous and covered the gamut of animal welfare considerations. The PCP enables the Code committee to check its work with a broader representative group, rather than assume that every angle of every issue has been addressed.

NFACC has undertaken 12 public comment periods since 2009. The graphs below provide a snapshot of these including demographic and geographic information. **Please note that those providing submissions could indicate more than one affiliation.** The dairy cattle public comment period was the first in 2009 and garnered 120 submissions. However, demographic and geographic information was not captured.



## Number of submissions to the Public Comment Period on each Code



Keep up with all things NFACC...

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YouTube

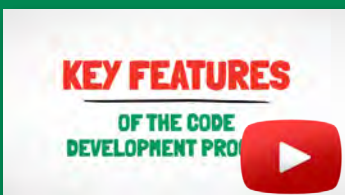
Watch the latest video on our YouTube channel - three minutes on the **Who, What and Why of NFACC**.



Want to learn about Canada's national system for Code of Practice development? The process is featured in **Raising the Bar**.

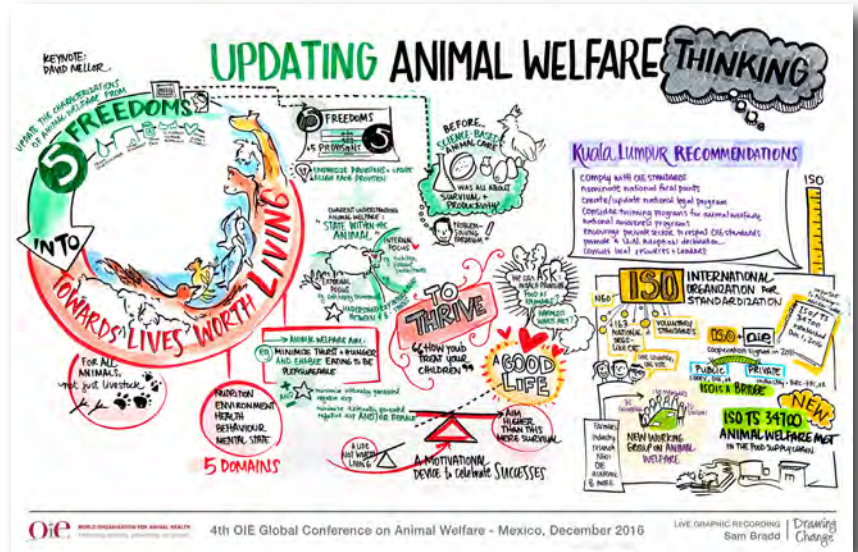


**Key Features** highlights what makes the Code process credible and effective in improving farm animal welfare.



## NFACC and the Codes within an International Context

OIE 4th Global Conference on Animal Welfare, 6-8 December 2016 Guadalajara, Mexico



Canada, as a member of the OIE, demonstrates its adherence to OIE animal welfare standards through the Codes of Practice.

A new ISO TS 34700 "Animal Welfare Management – general requirements and guidance for organizations in the food supply chain" was launched in 2016, in partnership with OIE and consistent with OIE standards. NFACC was represented on the Working Group that developed the technical specification.



- some of the Canadians in attendance at the Global Conference on Animal Welfare\*

\*Photos courtesy of Genevieve Benard, Angela Greter and the World Organization for Animal Health, (OIE) [www.flickr.com/photos/oie-photos/albums/72157675945511591](http://www.flickr.com/photos/oie-photos/albums/72157675945511591)



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Learn more...

This Achievements Report offers an overview of key progress during Year Three of current project funding. Comprehensive information on NFACC and its activities, including numerous resources and regular updates, is available at [www.nfacc.ca](http://www.nfacc.ca). The website features language selection for both English and French.