

Import Policy for Bluetongue (and Anaplasmosis) for Ruminant Animals Imported from the United States

The analysis of comments on the CFIA's consultation paper "Reviewing the CFIA's Import Policy for Bluetongue (and Anaplasmosis) for Ruminant Animals Imported from the United States" (May 19, 2006), and the CFIA's response to concerns raised in those comments have been posted on the CFIA's website at

<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/heasan/disemala/blufie/consult2007/analyse.shtml>

Through broad public stakeholder consultation, which included members of the Canadian Animal Health Consultation Committee (CAHCC), there was support for the conclusion that for the introduction and establishment of bluetongue in Canada, the overall "risk was negligible and restricted to a few weeks at the end of the vector season in the southern fringes of the Prairie provinces and B.C.". The consultation paper signalled that, with the change in policy, "... the Prairie provinces and British Columbia may be treated as a seasonally free zone with associated restrictions on live ruminants and their semen and embryos" by some trading partners.

A key issue arising from the consultation with stakeholders is the need to limit any potential impact on export markets. In July 2006, the CFIA committed to the completion of regulatory changes and move to an enhanced surveillance program so that the case could be made to trading partners that Canada could still be considered to be bluetongue-free or seasonally-free in Western Canada.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency lifted bluetongue import restrictions for ruminants from the U.S. through a Governor-in-Council (GIC) amendment registered on February 1, 2007, which came into force on February 21, 2007. A surveillance program to meet World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) requirements for bluetongue-free and bluetongue seasonally-free is under development. A revised domestic bluetongue policy has been developed effective July 1, 2007. Additional regulatory changes to remove U.S. serotypes of bluetongue from the reportable disease list and adding them to the immediately notifiable list will be published in the Canada Gazette, Part I in fall 2007.