



December 2011

U.S.-Canada Regulatory Cooperation Council Action Plan

Under the Regulatory Cooperation Council, the United States and Canada will undertake efforts to better align the regulatory environment between the two countries. This work will focus on leveraging each other's expertise and building food safety systems upon the same principles as efforts are made to improve them; relying on the strength of each other's systems to ensure food produced in either country is safe; and minimizing the duplicative verification activities and requirements imposed on products flowing between Canada and the United States. U.S. and Canadian regulators have agreed on a range of initiatives to begin this work, including:

- The USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) will review the various inspection and re-inspection activities for meat and poultry with a view to streamline requirements and simplify administrative procedures. This will include a focus on the certification process to identify opportunities to reduce or eliminate redundant certification, unnecessary data elements and/or administrative procedures – as well as a strong push toward full implementation of electronic certification.
- The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) and CFIA have decided to focus on the development of a common Canada-U.S. meat cut nomenclature system for beef, pork and lamb. This should allow consumers to benefit from a North American approach to a uniform naming convention for label declaration of meat cuts on retail packaging.
- The USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and CFIA will jointly consider what to do should a foreign animal disease occurrence be detected in Canada or the United States. Specifically, the focus will be how best to protect each country from additional spread of the disease, while allowing trade to flow from areas that are shown to remain disease free.
- APHIS and CFIA will continue to focus on establishing a perimeter approach to protecting the U.S.-Canada territory from the unintentional introduction of pests and invasive alien species via cross-border movement of plants and plant products. Through joint regulatory compliance, enforcement efforts and information sharing, the two agencies will leverage one another's work to their mutual advantage.
- APHIS and CFIA will also focus on the certification process for fresh fruits and vegetables to identify opportunities to reduce or eliminate redundant certification, unnecessary data elements and/or administrative procedures.
- AMS and Agriculture and Agri-food Canada (AAFC) will work to establish comparable approaches to protecting Canadian and U.S. fresh fruit and vegetable suppliers from buyers that default on their payment obligations.