



Canadian Pork Council  
Conseil canadien du porc

## 2019 CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

In a world marked by increasing uncertainty, the critical importance of working in close collaboration with our partners in industry and government has become even more apparent.

The Canadian Pork Council's (CPC) strategic plan focusses the efforts of the organization on **four priorities**:

1. Enhancing Value
2. Managing Risks
3. Strengthening Public Trust
4. Ensuring Organizational Excellence

Within these pillars, the CPC's Board of Directors identified **six key issues** that needed extra attention in 2019:

1. Launching the PigSAFE|PigCARE programs
2. Realizing the value of Canadian Pork Excellence
3. Enhancing the Council's advocacy efforts
4. Identifying a Made-in-Canada Hog Price
5. Reviewing the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pigs
6. Establishing the Promotion and Research Agency

Not surprisingly, other issues emerged which required the organization to quickly adapt. Among them was the rapid spread of African swine fever and the suspension of pork exports to China. It was only by working together with our partners that CPC was able to make progress in addressing these additional challenges.

The suspension of Canadian pork exports to China had the potential to consume a large amount of the Council's time. However, in working closely with the Canadian Meat Council and the Canada Pork International, CPC was able to ensure that the needs of pork producers were being considered. Of note, CPC staff played a lead role in the responding to media inquiries.

If an outbreak of African swine fever occurs in Canada, it could devastate the pork sector. Given this, the Council has focussed a great deal of its resources toward being better prepared to prevent and, if necessary, respond to an outbreak. Working closely with its federal and provincial government partners, and its provincial members, several initiatives were implemented. These included: enhanced security at Canada's airports; new import controls on feed grains; the launch of PigTRACE 2.0 and the use of its data for disease modeling; research into new ASF testing methodologies; and a greatly enhanced level of international cooperation. The CPC's animal health leads ensured a high level of communication with our provincial members and created a series of printable ASF resources that were widely shared with all stakeholders. Perhaps more importantly governments and industry are now truly working together on animal health matters at a level never seen before. This new approach provides the foundation upon which the vision of Animal Health Canada might be built.

Despite having to redirect resources to these immediate challenges the Council also made progress on its key priorities.

**Made-in-Canada Hog Price:** Under the direction of the Business Risk Management Committee, a consulting team completed its study exploring the opportunity and feasibility of establishing a Made-in-Canada Hog Price Indicator that better reflects the value of Canadian pigs.

**PigSAFE|PigCARE launch:** The soft launch of the PigSAFE|PigCARE on-farm programs began in January 2019. The initial validator training and subsequent producer training has resulted in an increasing number of producers being registered under the programs.

While the initial feedback has been largely positive, validators, provincial coordinators and producers are all providing valuable feedback that will ensure the programs' content and delivery are continuously improved to meet the needs of producers in the most effective and efficient manner.

**CPE – Realizing Value:** Producers are concerned that they do not directly share in the value created throughout the supply chain by the Canadian Pork Excellence suite of programs. The CPC and many of its members have initiated discussions with processors to identify opportunities for collaboration and to share more of the value directly with producers.

**Promotion and Research Agency:** The Promotion and Research Agency was a priority for discussion with members of parliament, especially the former Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Lawrence MacAulay, and his successor, Marie-Claude Bibeau.

Despite these efforts, the file remains stalled. In the first half of 2019, the renegotiation of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement made for less than ideal conditions to put in place a levy on imported pork which matches that already in place on domestic production.

The CPC remains focussed on keeping this file on top of the agenda for federal policy makers.

**Pig Code Review:** Consistent with National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) code development process, the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pigs was review in 2019.

A code technical panel (CTP), reflecting the composition of the NFACC's membership, began its deliberations on March 18, 2019. The panel focussed its discussion on the 2024 deadline to transition from gestation stalls to group housing.

The CTP members acknowledged that not all pork producers will be able to make the conversion to group housing by 2024 without compromising the welfare of the sows and/or causing significant financial burden for some producers. Except for the representative from Humane Canada, all CTP members recommend extending the 2024 deadline to 2029 in order to provide producers with enough time to complete an orderly transition to group housing.

Notwithstanding the lack of consensus, the panel's report will be forwarded for consideration by the NFACC Board of Directors. Further direction will be provided to producers in early 2020.

**Advanced Advocacy Program:** Recognizing the importance of enhancing its advocacy program, the CPC staff and its board members have increased the intensity of the CPC's advocacy efforts. While there is additional work to be done, including the further, ongoing, direct involvement of provincial pork organizations in the national advocacy program, progress is being made. For example, the CPC has been very active in advancing the sector's election priorities and in lobbying for federal government financial support to offset the impact of the US-China trade war on Canadian pork producers.

The uncertainty of 2019 will not disappear. Canadian pork producers operate in a global trading environment and will continually be buffeted by forces beyond our control. What we can control, by working together, is to continue to build a competitive, profitable pork industry that provides customers around the work with an amazing protein while contributing to the growth of the Canadian economy.

**Rick Bergmann**  
Chair, Canadian Pork Council  
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