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Report Highlights:

CFIA Proposes Streamlining the *Seeds Regulations* for Soybean and Forage Varieties * New Voluntary Farm-Level Biosecurity Standard for the Grains and Oilseeds Industry * New Canadian National Standard for Biosecurity in the Dairy Industry * Chicken Farmers of Canada Recognized for Sound On-farm Food Safety System * Quebec Pork Producer Olymel to Move Back from Gestation Crates

This Week in Canadian Agriculture is a review of Canadian agricultural industry developments of interest to the U.S. agricultural community. The issues summarized in this report cover a wide range of subject matter obtained from Canadian press reports, government press releases, and host country agricultural officials and representatives.

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CFIA Proposes Streamlining the *Seeds Regulations* for Soybean and Forage Varieties: The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is seeking comments on proposed amendments to the Seeds Regulations, which was published in *Canada Gazette*, Part 1, on March 9, 2013. Under the new proposal, soybean and forage varieties will no longer require pre-registration testing or merit assessment. The proposal is expected to provide more timely access to new soybean and forage varieties to both producers and end users, increase innovation and competition within the seed and crop sectors, and result in cost savings for industry due to the reduced regulatory burden. The consultation period ends May 23, 2013.

The Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement is available at the following URL:
<http://canadagazette.gc.ca/rp-pr/p1/2013/2013-03-09/html/reg1-eng.html>

New Voluntary Farm-Level Biosecurity Standard for the Grains and Oilseeds Industry: The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) released the National Voluntary Farm-Level Biosecurity Standard for the Grains and Oilseeds Industry on March 1, 2013. This voluntary Standard was developed in partnership with the CFIA and the provincial governments, Canada Grains Council, Grain Growers of Canada, Canadian Grains Commission and the Canadian Canola Growers Association.

The standard is available at the following URL: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/plants/plant-protection/biosecurity/biosecurity-standard/national-voluntary-farm-level-biosecurity-standard/eng/1354649087792/1355168633095>

New Canadian National Standard for Biosecurity in the Dairy Industry: Following the completion of its advisory process, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) released on February 5, 2013 a National Standard for biosecurity in the Canadian dairy industry. The standard introduces four control areas for biosecurity interventions: animal health management, animal additions and movement, premises' management and sanitation, and personnel, visitors, vehicles, and equipment.

The standards are available at the following URL: <http://inspection.gc.ca/animals/terrestrial-animals/biosecurity/standards-and-principles/national-standard/eng/1359657658068/1359658301822>

Chicken Farmers of Canada Recognized for Sound On-farm Food Safety System: Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz presented the Chicken Farmers of Canada (CFC) with the first ever Letter of Recognition under the [On-Farm Food Safety Recognition Program \(OFFSRP\)](#). According to the government press release, CFC is the first national organization to achieve this recognition. The OFFSRP promotes the production of safe, high-quality food at the farm level and encourages national industry organizations to develop food safety systems in line with [Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points \(HACCP\)](#) principles as defined by the [Codex Alimentarius](#). To qualify for the recognition, national industry organizations must assess their food safety practices against the HACCP principles and submit their food safety program to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) for technical review. Once the food safety program is implemented, audited and assessed, the CFIA grants the recognition. The On-Farm Food Safety Recognition Program is a federal/provincial/territorial government initiative developed in collaboration with industry and funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada under [Growing Forward](#).

Quebec Pork Producer Olymel to Move Back from Gestation Crates: According to a recent [news article](#) Quebec meat packer Olymel plans to bring itself in line with the "new requirements of the market" and phase out the use of gestation crates in its hog production business. The company gives itself until 2022 to phase out the use of the crates for pregnant sows in breeding facilities. Olymel, which is Canada's second largest pork producer, owns nine pork packing and processing plants in Quebec, a bacon plant at Cornwall, Ontario and a primary hog slaughter plant at Red Deer, Alberta. The company got directly involved in the hog production end of the business in January 2013 when it bought one of its major suppliers, Saskatchewan-based Big Sky Farms, out of receivership for C\$65 million. According to the news article, Olymel president Rejean Nadeau said the company believes the change is "inevitable" and is already underway in numerous countries. "Gradually, over a period of 10 years, the Canadian industry will also have to comply with the new requirements of the market," he said. Reportedly, other major pork processors, including Toronto-based Maple Leaf Foods and U.S. packer Smithfield Foods, have also pledged such phase-outs in recent years. Retailers and fast-food chains including Safeway, McDonald's, Burger King and Tim Horton's have also given suppliers deadlines to phase out the use of the crates.

Exchange Rate:

Noon rate, March 21, 2013 (Bank of Canada): U.S. Dollar = C \$ 1.0241

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