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This Week in Canadian Agriculture – Issue 20

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Report Highlights: C-45 Budget Implementation Bill * XL Foods Inc. Resumes Operations Under Enhanced CFIA Oversight * Safe Food for Canadians Act Passes through Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food * Proposed Amendments to Maple Products Regulations

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.

Disclaimer: Any press article summaries in this report are included to bring U.S. readership closer to the pulse of Canadian developments in agriculture. In no way do the views and opinions of these sources reflect USDA's, the U.S. Embassy's, or any other U.S. Government agency's point of view or official policy.

C-45 Budget Implementation Bill: On October 18, 2012, legislation was introduced within the federal government's omnibus budget bill, Bill C-45, to make changes to the Canada Grain Act. Proposed changes include elimination of services that have become redundant since the dissolution of the Canadian Wheat Board's monopoly. Another important change included in Bill C-45 is movement towards an insurance-based producer payment security program and away from the bonding option currently found in the Canada Grain Act. The bonding option is considered to be costly and to provide only weak coverage. The federal government says that this amendment will eliminate about C\$20 million annually in costs from the grain-handling system. The CGC will soon launch consultations in which growers and other industry stakeholders will have an opportunity to comment on the CGC's fee levels and service standards.

Division 19 of Part 4, and amendments to *An Act to amend the Canada Grain Act and the Agriculture and Agri-Food Administrative Monetary Penalties Act and to Repeal the Grain Futures Act* as well as other Acts, can be found at the following URL:

http://www.parl.gc.ca/content/hoc/Bills/411/Government/C-45/C-45_1/C-45_1.PDF

XL Foods Inc. Resumes Operations Under Enhanced CFIA Oversight: Following a thorough assessment of food safety controls at XL Foods Inc., the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) lifted the suspension on the facility's license to operate. The plant will be allowed to progressively resume slaughter and processing operations under enhanced CFIA surveillance and increased testing protocols. Additional CFIA inspectors have remained at the facility to monitor slaughter procedures and to ensure strengthened food safety controls are being effectively integrated into daily plant practices.

Additionally, CFIA will convene its Expert Advisory Committee to conduct a thorough review of events and circumstances related to the XL Foods Inc. E. coli O157:H7 investigation. The Committee is comprised of experts from private sector and academia, and is supported by technical experts from the CFIA, Public Health Agency of Canada, Health Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The results of the review will be made public once completed.

More information on the investigation, as well as Corrective Action Requests that have been issued to XL Foods Inc., is available at the following URL:

www.inspection.gc.ca/recalls_xlfoods

Safe Food for Canadians Act Passes through Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food: The Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food completed its review of the Safe Food for Canadians Act and referred it back to the House of Commons bringing the Government one step closer to completion of Canada's new food safety system. The Act consolidates the authorities of multiple food statutes and provides for:

- tougher penalties for activities that put the health and safety of Canadians at risk;
- a more consistent inspection regime across all food commodities;
- better control over imports and exports; and
- strengthened food traceability.

More information on the Safe Food for Canadians Act can be found at the following URL:
<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/about-the-cfia/acts-and-regulations/initiatives/sfca/eng/1338796071420/1338796152395>

Proposed Amendments to Maple Products Regulations: The Government of Canada is proposing to amend the *Maple Products Regulations*. The proposed changes will standardize maple syrup grade standards, classification systems and labelling requirements. The intention of the revised regulations is to bring consistency to the maple industry nationally and internationally by providing a uniform definition of what constitutes maple syrup. Additionally, the proposed regulations introduce new requirements for two grades of maple syrup: Grade A, for sale at retail, and Processing Grade, for use in food processing.

For more information on the proposed changes or to provide your comments, visit
<http://www.inspection.gc.ca/about-the-cfia/newsroom/news-releases/2012-11-08/eng/1352307393780/1352307487715>

Exchange Rate: Noon rate, November, 14, 2012 (Bank of Canada): U.S. Dollar = C\$1.0018

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