

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

# GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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## Canada

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### This Week in Canadian Agriculture – Issue 21

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**Report Highlights:** Government Delays Food Container Size Deregulation \* Feedback Requested on Canadian Biosafety Standards and Guidelines \* CFIA Fights Claim of Better Inspection for Japan-Bound Meat \* Canadian Government Passes the Safe Food for Canadians Act, S-11 \* Manitoba Proposes More Leeway on Farm Truck Load Limits \* OIE Reference Laboratory Questioned by CFIA and OIE \* What Might Canada's Future Exports Look Like

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.

**Government Delays Food Container Size Deregulation:** The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is delaying a plan to deregulate container sizes for certain foods after gaining feedback from processors and farmers. The Conservative government proposed elimination of current restrictions that limit the size of containers for certain foods, effective this fall, with a phase-in period. Instead, the CFIA now plans to launch a formal consultation in 2013 as part of the standard regulatory amendment process. Proposed changes, which will include a flexible implementation time frame of up to five years, as well as a detailed assessment of potential impacts, will be posted on the Canada Gazette website. Until the regulatory process concludes, the current regulations will remain in force. CFIA compliance and enforcement activities will continue.

More information is available at the following URL: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/processed-products/labelling-and-packaging/container-sizes/eng/1353621089533/1353621169021>

**Feedback Requested on Canadian Biosafety Standards and Guidelines:** The Public Health Agency of Canada's Pathogen Regulation Directorate (PRD) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's Office of Biohazard Containment and Safety (OBCS) are developing the joint Canadian Biosafety Standards and Guidelines (CBSG). The CBSG will be used by facilities handling or storing human and terrestrial animal pathogens, including biological toxins and prion disease agents. The next stage in the development of the CBSG, the information and input phase, is currently in progress, and will allow stakeholders and interested parties an opportunity to provide comments and input on the draft document. The draft CBSG will be available on the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Public Reviews site (<http://publicreview.csa.ca/Home/Category/333>) and feedback is invited until the December 21, 2012 deadline.

**CFIA Fights Claim of Better Inspection for Japan-Bound Meat:** The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) reacted to media reports that said inspectors at the XL Foods meat processing plant in Alberta were told to implement double standards when inspecting the contamination of cattle carcasses destined for Japan. The media reports were ignited when a memo to inspectors was obtained by reporters.

The CFIA responded with the following news release: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/food/consumer-centre/food-safety-investigations/xl-foods/statements/2012-11-29/eng/1354203603381/1354203723459>

**Canadian Government Passes the Safe Food for Canadians Act, S-11:** Proposed in the Senate last June, the Canadian government claims that the Safe Food for Canadians Act goals are:

- Institute a more consistent inspection regime across all food commodities;
- Implement tougher penalties for activities that put the health and safety of Canadians at risk;
- Give inspectors an enhanced ability to compel food producers to provide information in a timely manner and standardized format;
- Give the CFIA the authority to require traceability systems for food producers and processors by way of regulation;
- Provide better control over imports and exports; and
- Strengthen food traceability throughout the value chain.

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>

**Manitoba Proposes More Leeway on Farm Truck Load Limits:** On November 23, 2012, Infrastructure and Transportation Minister Steve Ashton announced proposed amendments to the Highway Traffic Act which would permit heavier loads once weather allows and would permit Provinces to implement detours for heavy vehicles more efficiently when disaster strikes.

More information can be found at the following URL:

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=&item=15640>

**OIE Reference Laboratory Questioned by CFIA and OIE:** The Canadian Press has reported that a Canadian university's prestigious international designation may be suspended following an audit by The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). OIE conducted the audit of a lab at the Atlantic Veterinary College in Prince Edward Island after a member country questioned the lab's detection of a virus. In a press release, the OIE states, "Conclusions of the audit were unfavourable and showed that a series of weaknesses in the system have a direct impact on the quality of diagnoses conducted by the OIE Reference Laboratory at AVC." The conclusions of the audit will be reported in May 2013. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) supported the audit. The same OIE reference laboratory recently tested BC farmed salmon and detected infectious salmon anemia virus (ISAv).

**What Might Canada's Future Exports Look Like:** The Conference Board of Canada's (CBOC) Global Commerce Centre published the report, "What Might Canada's Future Exports Look Like?" by Kip Beckman. The piece forecasts Canada's trade with major trading partners out to 2025, and it underlines a dramatic shift now underway in Canadian trade, in which trade with key partners is expected to double based on long-term real economic growth, rather than exchange rates. The report also noted that Canada may run into capacity constraints, particularly with infrastructure gaps. The report is available at the following URL: <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/e-library/abstract.aspx?did=5151>

**Exchange Rate:** Noon rate, December 3, 2012 (Bank of Canada): U.S. Dollar = C\$0.9928

**Most Recent Reports from FAS/Ottawa:**

<b>Report #</b>	<b>Name of Report</b>	<b>Date Submitted</b>
CA12046	The New Legislative Framework for Animal Traceability	12/03/2012
CA12044	This Week in Canadian Agriculture, Issue 20	11/13/2012
CA12042	Grain and Feed Annual	10/30/2012
CA12041	Fresh Deciduous Fruit Annual	11/02/2012
CA12040	This Week in Canadian Agriculture, Issue 19	10/18/2012
CA12039	Dairy Annual	10/15/2012
CA12037	Potatoes Annual	10/01/2012
CA12036	Livestock Annual	09/11/2012
CA12040	This Week in Canadian Agriculture, Issue 18	8/17/2012
CA12034	Poultry and Products Annual	08/16/2012
CA12033	This Week in Canadian Agriculture, Issue 17	08/14/2012
CA12032	This Week in Canadian Agriculture, Issue 16	08/03/2012
CA12031	Grain and Feed July Quarterly	07/27/2012
CA12030	FAIRS Country Report	07/27/2012
CA12029	Biotechnology Annual	07/20/2012
CA12028	This Week in Canadian Agriculture, Issue 15	07/20/2012
CA12027	Biofuels Annual 2012 – revised	07/20/2012
CA12025	This Week in Canadian Agriculture, Issue 14	07/06/2012
CA12015	Oilseed and Products Annual - Canada	04/10/2012
CA12014	Grain and Feed Annual - Canada	04/03/2012