



# Canada's top food safety agency reports on strategic progress

By [News Desk](#) on October 15, 2018

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is out with a [progress report](#) on the strategic framework it launched last year known as “Responding to Today, Building for the Future” (RTBF).

“At that time, we promised to keep our staff, as well as our partners, engaged and informed of the changes and progress we are making to improve how we do business,” according to a statement from CFIA President Paul Glover and Executive Vice President France Pégeot.

“We are proud of the significant work that has taken place across the Agency over the last year – from our core focus on food safety, animal health, plant protection and international market access, to the steps we have taken to innovate and better position ourselves for the future,” they added.

The progress report says that during a time of change for risks to food safety and animal and plant resources, CFIA “should be extremely proud of how far we’ve come.”

“It’s been a monumental year in many ways with several key strategic initiatives coming to fruition – from publishing the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations (SFCR) that come into force in January 2019, to moving from theory to practice with incremental implementation of the Establishment-based

Risk Assessment (ERA) Model, to releasing a growing number of online services for industry through My CFIA,” the report continues.

“We also tested new inspection procedures in hog slaughter establishments in two facilities in Alberta and rolled out the first wave of new digital devices for employees across the country, to help them work more efficiently and effectively.”

CFIA also reports making these changes to its governance and organizational structures:

- establishing the Strategic Priorities Oversight Committee where senior management can make decisions on how initiatives move forward based on readiness and capacity for change;
- creating a new International Affairs Branch to bring focus and accountability to international activities within CFIA and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC), in an effort to better advance the Government’s market access and trade agenda;
- creating the new Innovation, Business and Service Development Branch focused on future design and implementation of business development, services and technology with a dedicated team (known as the i-Zone) that promotes a culture of innovation that challenges the status quo; and
- starting up Business Line Management Boards for food, plant and animal to enhance and integrate risk based planning and resource optimization across the Agency

“Last year, our goal was to advance the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations (SFCR), a shift that would see us move from 14 sets of commodity-specific regulations to one comprehensive set of regulations that are outcome-based,” the report adds.

“This was an ambitious goal for the organization, one we had been working toward for many years. We are proud to say that we accomplished it.”

CFIA’s additional accomplishments during the past year include:

### **Establishment-Based Risk Assessment (ERA) Model and ERA-Hatchery Model Data Collection**

- Data was collected from federally regulated establishments and inspectors for dairy, meat/poultry and maple. Data collection started for additional food commodities including fish and seafood, honey, and egg products.
- Data was collected from federally regulated hatcheries.

### **ERA Results Integration**

- Analyzed results from dairy and meat/poultry.
- Analysis started in maple and hatchery sectors.
- Set up a task force to integrate all commodity results into program and operational planning.
- Adapting the ERA algorithm for an Importer Risk Assessment Model.

### **Canadian Food Safety Information Network (CFSIN)**

- Formally initiated the development of the CFSIN technical solution.
- Signed three data sharing arrangements with Ontario, Alberta and Nunavut.
- Finalized a common CFSIN data dictionary and identified a common food classification system.
- Developed an inventory of environmental scanning and intelligence activities.

The Canadian government's plans for the next three years include:

### **Establishment-Based Risk Assessment (ERA) Model**

- Develop an algorithm for an ERA-Feed Model.
- Use results of the ERA-Feed Model to take a systematic, evidence-based approach to assess the level of risk associated with feed establishments.
- Integrate establishment data online through My CFIA/ Digital Service Delivery Platform (DSDP).

## **ERA Implementation**

- Use ERA results to inform compliance verification frequency for all food commodities based on food safety risks.
- Use ERA-Hatchery results to inform compliance verification frequency Canadian.

## **Food Safety Information Network (CFSIN)**

- Release the CFSIN platform and focus on on boarding, supporting, and developing the network with food safety partners.
- Create a strategy to engage with the food industry and academia to grow the network.
- Develop a shared Pan-Canadian approach to federal, provincial and territorial food surveillance activities.