THE CANADIAN PORK STORY

The Remarkable Story of a Successful Canadian Industry
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In my travels around the world on pork business, I’ve come to realize that Canada is held in high regard by its international trading partners. By world standards, we are a sparsely populated nation blessed with a bounty of resources and a striking global presence as a producer and exporter of quality pork.

Meeting and exceeding our customers’ expectations for safe, wholesome pork is something in which we take a great deal of pride, and our success in doing so has earned us the trust and respect of our trading partners. As President of Canada Pork International, I believe that our stature in world pork circles is the product of our people’s commitment to customer service, to the relationships they foster and to our pursuit of quality and continuous improvement in all facets of pork production. Certainly we have been fortunate in building a highly skilled workforce bent on embracing the latest in technology and on meeting the highest standards in food safety, environmental stewardship and animal welfare. These measures are a necessary part of a business that is as complex and sophisticated as pork production.

I am very appreciative of the assistance of the federal government in backing national food safety measures with a strong regulatory framework. I am also thankful for the ways in which our pork value chain partners have pulled together over the years for the betterment of the industry. As change is constant in the pork business, our teamwork and cooperation are vital to our continued success.

The Canadian Pork Story is a remarkable one that is worthy of sharing. It is yours to enjoy.

Sincerely,
Edouard Asnong
President
Canada Pork International
1. The Canadian Landscape

Canada is a vast country the second largest in the world after Russia. It is also sparsely populated, with approximately 32 million people inhabiting less than one-tenth of its area. Bounded by three oceans and by a border shared with its largest trading partner, the United States, Canada is renowned for its magnificent landscapes and bountiful resources. First-time visitors to Canada are invariably awestruck by its sheer magnitude, from the grandeur of its prairie skies, to the rugged beauty of its mountains, to its endless forests and its myriad of lakes, streams and rivers.

1.1 Canada’s Agriculture

Canada is a major global player in quality food production. Food and agricultural products account for 8% of the nation’s GDP, one job in eight and more than $30 billion in annual exports.

Still, less than 5% of Canada’s 9,222 million hectares is dedicated to agricultural production. Even within the country’s arable land, livestock production is spread over such a large area that, despite the size of the industry, animal density is low. In the specific case of hogs, there is one animal for every 5 hectares of arable farmland, resulting in an average hog density of 0.2 head/ha. A comparison of Canada’s average hog densities to those of some of the world’s major pork-producing jurisdictions drives this point home: hog density in the Netherlands is 15.3 head/ha; in Denmark 8.4; and in Germany 1.3. The enormous amount of land available for Canadian livestock production sets the country apart from most of the world’s other pork-producing nations.

From a climatic standpoint, Canada is also well suited for hog production. The country lies within the northern reaches of the northern temperate zone, with seasonal sub-zero temperatures that are inhospitable to hog diseases. Summer temperatures are also more moderate than those of southern climates, and tend not to have the detrimental effects on sow health and productivity that occur in the American Midwest and further south. The widespread abundance of clean, potable water also lends itself to quality pork production.
1.2 Canada’s Environmental Stewardship Commitment

Canada’s track record of environmental stewardship is second to none. Ever mindful of the environmental issues facing other pork-producing countries, Canada has distinguished itself by instituting programs and measures, backed by legislation, to safeguard the environment. Canadian pork producers are inherently responsible stewards of the land and work cooperatively with government to embrace proactive, forward-thinking environmental measures; as well, many of Canada’s pork producer associations fund environmental research through universities and swine centres.

The industry’s approach to dealing with livestock manure is just one example of this stewardship. Canada’s pork producers value manure as a natural-source plant fertilizer and soil conditioner and in some parts of the country are unable to meet the demand for manure as a complement to chemical fertilizer. The storage and application of manure, together with all matters related to the siting and operation of hog barns is a provincial responsibility controlled by municipal bylaws and provincial regulations.

Environmental sustainability is integral to the health and quality of life of both rural and urban Canadians. Accordingly, the Government of Canada encourages farmers to embrace best land-management practices within each province by acknowledging environmental performance within the agricultural component of the “Green Plan,” a federal-provincial partnership.

The Canadian Pork Council (CPC), the umbrella organization of provincial pork producer associations, promotes environmentally responsible hog production practices. Toward this end, CPC has orchestrated the development of a national environmental certification program. The program standard was approved by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) in 2004. CPC also partnered with other Canadian industry groups in the development of a Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Program for Canadian agriculture. While international environmental practices vary widely among jurisdictions, these measures ensure that Canada’s environmental approaches are not only rigorous by world standards but are also upgraded as new and better knowledge becomes available.
The CPC also developed a 110-page binder titled Practices & Technologies Aimed at Reducing Environmental Impacts from Hog Production, highlighting the environmental technologies and management practices available to pork producers. This has been circulated to producers through provincial associations and is meant to complement existing provincial initiatives.

More recently, the CPC has engaged agronomists and foresters across Canada in delivering a Farm Shelterbelt Awareness and Establishment project, aimed at encouraging hog producers to establish treed shelterbelts on their operations. These shelterbelts have been shown to reduce the drift of hog barn and manure-storage odours across the landscape, thereby improving neighbour relations. Additional benefits of shelterbelts include an improved aesthetic value for the site and improved biodiversity, as well as the potential for reducing thermal energy consumption by 20–30% by shielding barns from harsh winter weather.

For more information on the CPC, please refer to Section 6, “Partners for Success.”
2.1 A Skilled, Motivated Workforce

Few businesses are as complex, sophisticated and tightly controlled as the modern, science-based pork industry. Its employees, forming a skilled, highly motivated workforce, take a great deal of pride in their day-to-day jobs and in the contribution they make to society. Pork production, moreover, has been of great economic benefit to many rural communities that otherwise would be in decline. The industry has revitalized many of these areas and has breathed new life into local industries, businesses and population centres.

At the same time, however, the move towards large, specialized production has presented challenges for those who work in the Canadian hog industry. New barns attract employees from non-farm backgrounds and all employees require training because of:

- the specialized nature of hog production;
- the attention that must be paid to emerging quality assurance programs; and,
- the care that must be provided for farm animals that are sustained in intensive housing systems.

In consequence, a large segment of the industry offers its employees a range of training opportunities through universities, colleges, veterinary practices and company programs. These educational opportunities cover all facets of swine production and human resources management, and can lead to degrees, diplomas, certificates, swine-production technician apprenticeships, pork-production management programs and animal health technician programs. All these programs recognize the complexity of producing a farm animal that is converted into a perishable food item and exported around the world.
2.2 Hog Production Profile

Hog production in Canada has undergone phenomenal changes in recent years. Three decades ago, many of the country's hogs were raised on mixed farms (mostly farrow-to-finish operations) with annual sales of about 50 head. As the industry evolved, small farms were replaced by larger, more specialized operations (500-sow barns) that produced upwards of 10,000 pigs per year. Many of the newer systems (1,200-sow operations) produce more than 28,000 pigs annually, with some 6000-sow operations producing in the range of 140,000 pigs per year. The industry is moving toward a production trend in which fewer barns produce greater numbers of pigs.

With the shift in farm size came a reduction in the number of hog producers. In Canada this number fell from 63,602 in 1976 to 11,497 in 2006. Many new operations today are state-of-the-art, scale-efficient facilities that specialize in either farrowing or finishing. These facilities embrace the latest in technological development and science-based information in all facets of production. Farms that raise pigs to market size will often move all the growing animals through different sites (a technique called all-in, all-out operations) to control disease.

In 2006, Canada’s 11,497 pork producers raised 30.8 million pigs (Figure 1). Seventy-five percent of this production occurred in three provinces: Ontario (26.5%), Quebec (24.9%) and Manitoba (23.6%). While the growth in market hog production has been steady, the marked increase in overall pig production that began in the late 1990’s, as shown in Figure 2, was driven by the demand for Canadian-born weanlings to fill finisher barns in the American Midwest.
Figure 1. Canadian Hog Inventory by Province in 2007 (in thousands of head)

Figure 2. Canadian Hog Slaughter and Live Pig Exports, 1997 to 2006
3. The Canadian Pig

3.1 Canadian Swine Breeds

Canadian Swine Breeds Canada raises a selection of the world’s best swine breeds, allowing it to meet the most demanding market specifications and consumer preferences. Major breeds include the Yorkshire (42% of the national herd), Landrace (32%) and Duroc (25%). In addition, there are smaller populations of other breeds such as Hampshire, Pietrain and Berkshire. Each breed is characterized by unique attributes related to litter size, growth rate, feed conversion, carcass structure and composition.

The most common female lines in Canada are Landrace-Yorkshire crosses. The Canadian Yorkshire, which is also called Large White, is used successfully in many crossbreeding programs and has come to represent the ultimate in sow productivity. With its high carcass quality, the Canadian Yorkshire plays an increasing role in maintaining consumer demand for high-quality pork.

The Canadian Landrace female, used in purebred and crossbreeding programs, is well known for its excellent mothering ability, temperament, longevity and prolific reproduction. This breed is highly desired for its average daily gain, feed conversion and leanness. The Landrace is a well-muscled white breed noted for its high-quality carcass, high percentage of ham and, in particular, for bacon production.

The Duroc breed dominates male lines. The Duroc is a solid, pinkish-red red meat animal noted for its feed efficiency and for excellent carcass qualities of intramuscular fat, tenderness and juiciness. Strong feet and legs make the Duroc an excellent choice for rugged commercial-feeding conditions. This breed is also noted for large litters, a characteristic retained even when used in a crossbreeding program.
3.2 Canadian Swine Genetics

Canada has established a solid reputation for its achievements in swine genetics and for the quality of its pork. The country’s accomplishments in this regard are borne out by its export performance:

- Canada has been in the purebred breeding business for over 100 years, working cooperatively with many developing countries to improve pork quality through Canadian genetics.
- Canadian quality grading systems have been in place for the past three decades, advancing carcass and quality meat characteristics.
- Canadian pork accounts for 21% of world pork exports.
- During the past 30 years, Canadian breeding stock has been shipped to more than 40 countries, with the United States and Denmark foremost among them.
- Our achievement in producing uniformity is a significant advantage to the meat processing industry. Since we use three purebred breeds in our breeding program, the animals grow and finish with a uniformity that producers and meat processors appreciate and consumer demands.
- There is a burgeoning demand by finishing units in the U.S. Midwest for Canadian-born weanlings. In 2006, U.S. hog finishers purchased over 6.0 million weanling pigs from Canada.

Genetic improvement is a never-ending process. Canada’s advantage in swine genetics began in large measure with a national hog-grading system that rewarded lean carcasses, which in turn influenced genetic selection. Hog grading now varies among provinces and among plants within provinces, but the settlement grids still reward lean pork, as they have been doing for three decades (although, to a degree, we are now moving away from leanness). By contrast, U.S. hogs, in the early years of grading in Canada, were purchased according to ungraded live weight. To this day, U.S. hogs grade heavier and fatter than Canadian hogs.
Canadian breeding companies, small and large, have achieved the level of leanness desired by the marketplace. They have also enhanced sow productivity through increases in pigs per litter (Figure 3) and by lowering weanling mortality.

To build on these advances, much of the emphasis is now being placed on meat characteristics such as tenderness, flavour and colour. In some parts of the country, breeding companies are using real-time ultrasound in feed trials, followed by in-plant meat analysis, to direct genetic selection. As a result, breeding companies are making significant gains in harmonizing genetics with feed rations and housing systems in order to develop approved lines of natural and organic pork for niche markets.

Artificial insemination (AI) has also played a key role in advancing Canadian genetics. While its uptake varies from province to province, AI is applied to 75% of the sow herd through 34 government-accredited insemination centres. Biosecurity and disease monitoring within these centres is tightly controlled.
3.3 Swine Research and Development

Canada has led the world in the arena of swine research and pork product development. Many of its successes are the result of collaboration among breeding companies, university researchers and regional swine research centres. Agriculture Canada through its centres of excellence in Alberta (Lethbridge and Lacombe) and Quebec (Lennoxville and St-Hyacinthe) has played a significant role in advancing industry research interests. Several of Canada’s universities, such as the University of Manitoba, the University of Guelph, the University of Alberta, the Université Laval, and the University of Saskatchewan are among world leaders in leading edge pork research. Among the advancements have been the following:

• Canadian research led to the development of a test for the presence of the halothane gene that causes Porcine Stress Canada’s breeding stock population.

• Canadian science and innovation resulted in branding pork based on its Omega-3 attributes. Health Canada has recognized the Omega-3 content of pork as a functional food, as has the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

• Research is underway to improve the pig’s absorption of dietary phosphorous and thereby reduce the amount of phosphorous in pig manure.

• Canadian ingenuity created computer software that provides a statistical method of evaluating the strength of an animal, using information derived from relatives located in any number of different sites. Best Linear Unbiased Prediction (BLUP) software, developed in 1995, is recognized as the method of choice for genetic evaluation of livestock and has accelerated the pace of genetic improvement in Canada.

• Canadian Research and Development is also responsible for introducing a national scoring and genetic evaluation system of hog conformation traits. The system includes six traits of fore and hind legs, four traits of toes and the number of functional teats. The system provides opportunities for the selection and genetic improvement of conformation traits in market hogs as well as improvements in the longevity of sows.

The Canadian Centre for Swine Improvement (CCSI), in cooperation with industry, has played a vital role in improving swine genetics. CCSI offers leadership and services in:

• computing genetic evaluations;
• maintaining a national performance database;
• developing national standards for swine recording; and,
• coordinating research activities in cooperation with its provincial and national partners.

CCSI also operates a national swine registry program for breeding-stock export requirements. It was also the first national swine registration program to use BLUP.
4. The Canadian Pork Production System

4.1 Quality Assurance Programs

The Canadian pork industry is widely recognized as a producer of quality pork products. Being a major world exporter of pork, Canada recognizes that international consumers demand assurances that everything possible is done to produce safe, wholesome pork. In Canada, that commitment to quality originates with the pork producer and is supported by programs based on Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles.

HACCP is a structured process of determining what actions should be taken to promote food safety, then using established program procedures and protocols to carry out those actions, and finally verifying the results of the actions through audits. HACCP programs are used around the world to identify and minimize potential safety hazards in the food chain. In the Canadian pork industry HACCP programs are applied to on-farm pork production practices, animal-feed manufacturing and the slaughter and processing of the finished product.

Through the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), the federal government plays a significant role in ensuring producers’ compliance with Canadian HACCP programs. CFIA is responsible for all federal inspection programs related to feed production, animal health and processing-plant protection. To enhance on-farm food safety programs, CFIA also provides a system for formally recognizing HACCP programs according to their technical soundness and delivery.
4.1.1 Food Safety

4.1.1.1 The Canadian Quality Assurance® program
Canada’s on-farm approach to quality pork production is governed by the Canadian Quality Assurance® (CQA) program which is based on HACCP principles. CQA® was developed nationally and is delivered by each of the provincial producer membership associations, and is overseen by the Canadian Pork Council. Most federally inspected pork processing plants require CQA as a condition of sale.

Originally launched in 1998, CQA® promotes best-management practices to reduce or eliminate potential on-farm hazards that could compromise the safety of pork. Hazards are classified into three categories: physical (such as broken needle fragments); chemical (such as residues of medications); and biological (such as salmonella).

In addition to following best-management practices and set protocols, CQA® pork producers are required to keep accurate records of their practices. The documentation is reviewed annually by trained program validators to ensure that the standards set out in the CQA® manual are being met. Validation in the first year requires a full review of the producer’s records and production facilities to ensure protocols are working; second- and third-year validations require record inspections only. Thereafter, the three-year cycle repeats itself.

All requirements of the CQA® program are established by an expert technical review team and are based on the most recent scientific information available. CQA® underwent a complete program review in 2004 and is constantly being upgraded. Beginning in 2005, CQA® began to subscribe to a formal, annual internal audit of the national office and three of its provincial members. CQA® evolves as new information, new technology and new science becomes available. Upcoming changes include the requirement for all CQA® producers to use detectable needles.
The CQA® program has received a Letter of Completion from CFIA, verifying the soundness of the technical content of the program. This letter represents a rigorous review of the CQA® program by federal and provincial government food safety experts, and indicates government approval of the program. As of January 1, 2006, over 90% of the hogs processed in Canada originated from CQA®-registered farms.

4.1.1.2 Abattoirs and Processing Plants
Food safety at the abattoir and processing plant level is of paramount importance to consumers and pork-chain partners. The principles of HACCP-based checks and balances introduced on-farm are an inherent part of the food safety measures used in the nation’s abattoirs and processing plants.

In 1991, CFIA developed the Food Safety Enhancement Program (FSEP) in order to promote and support development, implementation and maintenance of HACCP systems in all food processing plants. FSEP started as a voluntary program, but in November 2005 it became mandatory for all federally registered meat and poultry abattoirs, processing plants and storage facilities in Canada.

4.1.1.3 Use of Medication
Medication use in food animal production in Canada is closely monitored. While medications are critical for the well-being of animals, their use (particularly of antibiotics) must at all times be prudent, and this was one of the underlying reasons for the establishment of Canada’s on-farm safety programs. Within the pork industry, CQA® is designed to promote the judicious use of medications, and requires that a detailed accounting of all medications and procurements must occur within a valid client-veterinarian relationship. The presence of chemical residues such as antibiotics is monitored further along the food chain, through rigorous abattoir sampling protocols and inspections by CFIA staff.
The Canadian Pork Production System

Licensing of veterinary drugs, approval of new drug uses and drug production standards fall under the Veterinary Drugs Directorate (VDD) of Health Canada, which is the federal government department responsible for helping to maintain and improve public health. The VDD evaluates and monitors the safety, quality and effectiveness of all veterinary products. CFIA is in charge of auditing and monitoring drug use in keeping with Health Canada requirements. Licensing of veterinary biologics such as vaccines are regulated by CFIA.

4.1.1.4 Antimicrobial Resistance
There is growing worldwide concern about a link between the use of antibiotics in animal production and increasing resistance to antibiotics in human diseases. In response, Canada has created the Canadian Integrated Program for Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance (CIPARS) to help protect human health. Because of the advanced development of the CQA® program, this national surveillance program is being piloted in the swine industry. It is a collaborative effort involving a broad spectrum of industry and government representatives.

Begun in 2004, CIPARS began with the sampling and analysis of on-farm swine feces in each of the major pork-producing provinces. Samples are collected three times a year from a select number of finisher hogs farms validated under the CQA® program. Once this phase of the national on-farm surveillance program is completed, it will be expanded to include animal foods and pork products at the retail level. Ultimately, CIPARS is expected to include beef and poultry as well. The program will help safeguard public health, beginning with the farm animal, and will further strengthen Canada’s already high standards of food safety.
4.1.2 Animal Welfare

Good animal care is good business, so animal welfare is very much an industry priority. While farmers know that a contented pig is a productive pig, they also recognize that the public wants assurance that food animals are well cared for during their lifetime. Public interest in animal husbandry practices and housing systems has augmented producer-driven improvements on this front.

4.1.2.1 National Animal Care Codes of Practice

Codes of practice are nationally developed guidelines for the care and handling of farm animals and include recommendations for animal housing, management, transportation and processing. The codes are voluntary and are intended to be used as a management tool in the promotion of sound, proven welfare practices. Moreover, as international concerns about animal welfare become more acute, foreign buyers will increasingly see these codes as very positive aspects of the Canadian pork industry.

The codes contain recommendations to assist farmers (and others in the agriculture and food sector) to compare and improve their own management practices. Codes have been developed by a review committee representing farm groups, animal welfare groups, veterinarians, animal scientists, federal and provincial governments, related agricultural sectors and interested individuals. Initially the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies (CFHS) led in coordinating code development; later, this was taken over by the Canadian Agri-Food Research Council. More recently, a new organization, the National Farm Animal Care Council, has been working to redesign the code development and revision process.
Three separate codes apply to swine:

- Recommended Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals: Pigs (published 1984, revised 1993);
- Recommended Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals: Transportation (2001); and
- Recommended Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals: Early Weaned Pigs (2003).

4.1.2.2 Animal Care Legislation

Federal government regulations that pertain to aspects of farm animal welfare include:

- the Health of Animals Act;
- the Criminal Code of Canada; and
- the Meat Inspection Act.

At the provincial level, acts and regulations for animal care draw on the standards set by the codes of practices to protect the welfare of swine and to address offences when they occur.
4.1.2.3 Animal Care Assessment

In 2005, an animal care initiative was undertaken by Canadian Pork Council (CPC) to bolster national swine welfare initiatives that were already underway. The Animal Care Assessment (ACA) tool was specifically developed to promote sound welfare practices and assure consumers that these practices are being followed. The tool follows all aspects of production critical to the well-being of animals, including stockmanship, feeding and watering, equipment and housing.

ACA was developed by a team of experts, including animal care researchers, pork producers and veterinarians. The ACA documentation was reviewed and its implementation supported by the CFHS, the Canadian Meat Council,² the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors and the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association. CPC is currently working towards full producer participation in the program.

At present, participation in the program is voluntary and, like CQA®, it follows a set procedure for keeping written records of practices, for meeting program requirements and for reviewing all documentation annually using program evaluators. Producers who want to participate in the ACA must already be participants in the CQA® program.

² For more information on the CPC, please refer to Section 6., “Partners for Success.”
4.1.2.4 Trucker Quality Assurance

Transportation is a key aspect of pork production and is taken very seriously by the industry. If animals are moved or handled improperly, they can be injured or die. In addition, problems with meat quality can arise from the improper handling of pigs before slaughter.

Recognizing the importance of transportation from the standpoint of animal welfare and meat quality, several Canadian trucking firms have made truck quality assurance a part of their driver training programs. Trucker Quality Assurance programs are also offered by the provinces through farm animal councils and, in some cases, through community colleges. These certificate programs cover a number of areas, including:

- emergency response planning;
- biosecurity;
- scheduling and stopping;
- truck conditions such as interior space, weather tightness and maintenance;
- fitness of the hogs;
- loading and unloading;
- aggressive handling;
- hog flight zone and natural instincts; and,
- driver attitude.

Transportation is also an important component of the codes of practice and has been the subject of brochures produced by several provincial pork associations.
4.1.2.5 Animal Care in Processing Plants
Canada’s meat slaughter facilities are strictly monitored by CFIA and have developed animal handling protocols and HACCP plans for all aspects of animal care and humane slaughter.

In addition new facilities are designed and built in consultation with animal welfare experts to ensure that they conform to the latest expert recommendations and research findings. Animals that are unloaded safely and calmly with well-designed loading docks and barns that are designed with proper lighting, ventilation and resting facilities all contribute to better overall safety of the animals and the animal handlers. Regular humane slaughter audits are performed and compliance is strictly enforced by both federal government officials and major customers.

4.1.2.6 Farm Animal Councils and Public Awareness
At the national level, the National Farm Animal Care Council has been created to bring producers, researchers and governments together to examine animal care and welfare issues.

In addition, many members of provincial livestock associations have formed farm animal councils. These non-profit organizations are run by full-time staff and offer a variety of programs and services that promote humane treatment of livestock. Producer-targeted programs cover topics such as the handling and transportation of livestock and emergency response measures. Provincial councils are also very proactive in heightening public awareness about animal care practices through brochures and exhibits at fairs and in other public venues.

The pork industry has seized on the emergence of public interest in welfare issues to show, through interpretive centers, how swine are raised on Canadian farms. Several research centres and individual barn owners have attached observation rooms to working barns to enable the public, and schoolchildren in particular, to see first hand how pigs are raised and how livestock is properly cared for.
**4.1.2.7 Animal Care Research**

Many of the larger pork producer associations fund animal welfare research through universities and swine centres. A significant component of swine research is targeted to group-sow housing systems.

**4.1.3 Feed and its Production**

The production of food animals in Canada draws on an abundant variety of quality feed grains. During each of the last 10 years, hogs have consumed 35% to 45% of the 28 million tonnes of feed grain produced in this country. As shown in Figure 4, the major grains consumed by hogs are corn (54%), barley (29%) and feed wheat (12%). The Canadian hog feed market also uses 1.4 million tonnes of soy and canola protein meal every year.

![Figure 4. Use of Canada's Feed Grains in Animal Feed, Average 1999–2001](image)

The Canadian pork industry has the ability to tailor feed ratios to suit consumer preferences both at home and abroad. In many cases, this equates to the amount of corn fed to the hogs versus the amount of barley (Table 1).
Feed is a variable that can influence the quality of meat. It affects primarily fat composition, which influences the meat's firmness and colour, and the rancidity detection rate.

Canadian feed barley is a highly digestible grain that offers an excellent combination of amino acids and high lysine content, thus making it a preferred ingredient in comparison with other grains. Feed wheat from Western Canada is an equally high-quality ingredient and has several advantages in animal feeds. Its high gluten content promotes good pellet binding and eliminates the need for supplemental binders.

Soy meal and grain corn are good sources of energy and protein. Grain corn contains significant amounts of starch, which gives it a high energy yield. When used in association with grain corn, soy meal has a good protein balance and makes for a palatable ration.

Feed supply companies are an integral part of the livestock industry, specializing in the development of customized feed programs and the transfer of leading-edge information about nutrition and feeding systems to producers. Knowledge transfer takes place in several areas, including protein nutrition and phase feeding.
4.1.3.1 Feed Safety: FeedAssure
The Animal Nutrition Association of Canada (ANAC) is the national organization of manufacturers and suppliers of animal nutrition products. It oversees the delivery of a comprehensive feed safety management and certification program.

FeedAssure is an HACCP program that brings the highest safety standards to the production of animal feed. Under the program, third-party audits are conducted annually; full audits are carried out in year one, followed by partial audits in years two and three, after which the cycle repeats itself. More than 70% of the commercial livestock feed in Canada is manufactured in mills that are HACCP-certified under the FeedAssure program.

4.1.3.2 Medicated Feed Controls
Health Canada and CFIA are responsible for enforcing regulations controlling the use of medicated feed for livestock. Health Canada sets policies to protect public health and ensures that veterinary medications are safe and effective before licensing them for direct or indirect use. CFIA ensures that the policies of Health Canada are followed, and is responsible for all the federal inspection programs related to feeds, animal health and plant protection. Under the provisions of the Feeds Act, CFIA monitors the use of feed-additive medications, primarily through facility inspection, label inspection and feed sampling and testing programs at Canadian feed mills and farms.
4.1.4 Animal Health

Canada prides itself on possessing one of the best swine herd health statuses in the world. The low prevalence of diseases in the country’s hog population, as defined by the World Organization of Animal Health (formally the Office International des Epizooties or OIE), testifies to the soundness of Canada’s herd health program (Table 2).

Table 2. Canada’s Hog Disease Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OIE-listed Diseases</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foot-and-mouth disease</td>
<td>Free (1952)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swine vesicular disease</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African swine fever</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hog cholera</td>
<td>Free (1963)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vesicular stomatitis</td>
<td>Free (1943)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aujeszky’s disease</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trichinella</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthrax</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porcine brucellosis</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porcine cysticercosis</td>
<td>Free</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: OIE
*Dates of last outbreaks

In farm animal production, a herd’s health status results from many influences, including producer astuteness and attention to detail, housing conditions, welfare practices and biosecurity protocols. In all of this, the strong relationship between pork producers and veterinarians plays a vital role in securing and maintaining a robust, healthy herd.
4.1.4.1 Biosecurity

Canada’s pork producers follow a rigorous, multifaceted biosecurity program that includes the following:

• **Barn Separation Distances**
  The distance between barns is critical for preventing the spread of airborne diseases; many countries have found that where barns are in close proximity and hog densities are high, diseases tend to spread more readily. Canada is fortunate in having one of the lowest hog densities of any major pork-producing country in the world, and much of the growth of the hog industry is taking place in the prairies where barns are widely separated, often by three to four kilometres.

• **Entry Protocols**
  In most hog barns, entry is restricted to barn workers, essential visitors and veterinarians; people in the latter two categories must have had no contact with swine within the last 60 hours. In addition, all workers and visitors must shower before entering the barn and must wear facility-supplied clothing and boots. Outside equipment is disinfected before being brought into the barn and public entry to barn sites and adjacent grounds is prohibited.

• **Stock Quarantine**
  Quarantine is a process by which new animals are isolated from herd animals for a period of time to ensure that they are free of disease. The isolation procedure involves maintaining separate facilities away from, and unattached to, existing barns.

• **Barn Environmental Controls**
  The environment in which animals are raised can have a huge influence on herd health. As the trend continues towards large, intensive units of livestock, much more attention is being paid to the importance of controlling environmental conditions such as temperature, humidity and airflow. Barn ventilation systems today are sophisticated and fully automated, with built-in alarm systems to warn of any malfunction or power failure. The CQA® program places a great deal of emphasis on maintaining a healthy environment for swine.
**The Canadian Pork Production System**

- **Transportation Protocols**
  Trucks used to haul commercial feed and pigs must be routinely washed. Many of the major trucking companies subscribe to rigorous HACCP standards for keeping vehicles clean.

- **Manure and Dead Stock Management**
  The handling of dead stock and manure is tightly regulated by each of the provincial governments. Canada’s pork producers devote special attention to these matters to protect the health and safety of both livestock and people.

**4.1.4.2 National Swine Health Information Plan**
Canada’s animal herd health has been advanced by the development of the National Swine Health Information Plan (N-SHIP). Administered by the Canadian Centre for Swine Improvement (CCSI), in cooperation with provincial swine specialists and industry, the plan is designed to illustrate levels of health and biosecurity in Canadian herds for the purpose of eliminating disease. Health and biosecurity information is stored in a database and regularly updated.

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4 For more information on CCSI, please refer to Section 6, “Partners for Success .”
4.2 Foreign Animal Disease Control

Food animal production that is tied to export markets must have effective strategies to deal with potential outbreaks of disease in foreign animals. Should an outbreak occur, Canada must be able to assure its customers that the meat they are eating is safe, and that it is derived from healthy stock. To address this need, Canada is developing risk management strategies for dealing with such outbreaks. These strategies are cooperative efforts involving federal and provincial governments and industry stakeholders.

4.2.1 Disease Control Strategies
At the federal government level, CFIA leads in developing strategies for protecting Canadian livestock from diseases that could restrict trade or threaten human health. CFIA stays abreast of the health status of Canadian herds and oversees the Canadian Animal Disease Emergency Management System (CADEMS). CADEMS is part of a vast project that focuses on preventing the introduction of bioterrorism agents, such as foot-and-mouth disease, into Canadian herds. The intention is to equip Canada and Canadian producers to deal effectively and promptly with such an emergency situation.

As well, CFIA is in the process of completing a national Foreign Animal Disease Emergency Response System (FADERS). Once completed, the system will consist of five modules: Animal Premises; Animal Information; Inspection Information; Laboratories; and Disease Management.

Each Canadian province has implemented warning and information systems for animal health. Most provinces also have their own emergency plans, and some have developed ways to coordinate with the federal government when it is necessary to deal with disease outbreaks.

On the industry front, the Canadian Animal Health Coalition works to strengthen the health system by bringing together various livestock groups with a shared interest in risk management. This non-governmental group enjoys considerable flexibility in initiating studies and bringing projects to early fruition.
4.2.2 Regionalization

Industry and governments recognize the value of dividing the country into regions in order to prevent and/or limit the damage caused by the outbreak of a foreign animal disease. Under this scheme, a region with a disease could be kept separate from disease-free regions, and the latter would not be subjected to disease-driven disruptions in trade. Such regions would be defined by areas where road traffic is constricted and can be tightly controlled; one example is the point where the Trans-Canada highway crosses the border between Ontario and Manitoba. Other types of regional controls would be islands or mountain ranges. The regionalization model complies with OIE requirements and has been successful in other jurisdictions around the world.

4.3 Live Animal Traceability

The CPC and provincial pork organizations have been proactive in the development of a national identification and traceability system for the Canadian hog industry. The Canadian industry has developed an action plan to prepare for the rare event of a foreign animal disease outbreak or food safety crisis.

Much of the national progress on traceability has been related to live animals and consists of monitoring swine movement so that any disease outbreaks can be contained and controlled. This initiative is led by the CPC in cooperation with its provincial members, and is structured around the development of national identification and traceability standards and requirements. CFIA and national livestock identification agencies are also providing CPC with input into the logistical and technical aspects of the initiative.
Canada’s initiative for tracing live swine uses a four-step, phased approach (Table 3). Key components include:

1. **Premise Identification and Registration**
   Working with the Canadian Livestock Identification Agency, CPC is developing national standards for premise identification. The standards will be applied to farms, auction sites, abattoirs and all other sites through which animals pass. This crucial first step will begin the process of premise identification and registration for the National Hog Traceability System.

2. **National Tattoo Registration and Allocation**
   Although Canadian hog producers have been using shoulder slap tattoos for settlement purposes for more than 15 years, the numbering system has been local or regional in use. The system will ensure that the numbers are unique to the production sites where they are applied, and that they are nationally controlled and maintained.

3. **Swine Slaughter Movement Database**
   Swine tattoo numbers obtained from packing plants and marketing boards will be fed into a slaughter movement database in order to track hog movement from the farm to the abattoir. This is scheduled for early completion and will eventually be integrated into the National Hog Traceability System.

4. **National Hog Traceability System**
   With completion intended for the near future, this comprehensive hog movement reporting system will be the central location for all tracing information and will ensure the information’s continuity and consistency.
The meat slaughter and processing industry is a pillar of Canada’s agri-food economy. On the basis of deliveries and added value, meat products are the principal sector of the Canadian food processing industry. This sector also makes the most significant contribution to job creation, accounting for 28% of the Canadian food industry’s workforce. The meat manufacturing sector employs nearly 68,000 people, including production workers, administrative employees and other non-production positions.
4.4.1 A Skilled Workforce
Canada’s pork packing and processing industry relies heavily on skilled and semi-skilled workers. From receiving and handling live animals at the processing plants to packaging, distribution and sales, the work is varied, demanding and at times physically challenging.

To maintain optimal product quality and shelf life, meat cutting and packing is performed at temperatures below 4 degrees Celsius. The work, usually performed in a standing position, requires skill and knowledge in proper cutting techniques and the use of specialized equipment. It also requires physical strength and endurance to cut the meat, most often still a manual procedure. High speed, high capacity processing plants require a large number of dedicated skilled employees. Canada’s meat processors take great pride in the regular on-site on-the-job training and orientation that is provided to all new and existing employees.

Several of Canada’s larger meat processing companies have closed their older facilities and are consolidating their capacity in key strategic new facilities. This requires more employees to operate the facilities at optimal double shift processing levels.

Worker Safety and Health
Worker Safety and Health is a top priority for Canada’s pork processing industry. Regular training of employees combined with job rotation, regular work breaks and new processing plant design and equipment assures employees are maintaining optimal health and targeting zero injuries. Continuous improvement of plant processes and vigilant enforcement of safety regulations designed for each and every plant location contribute to ever increasing levels of employee safety and the elimination of any repetitive muscular skeletal injuries. On site health care and physiotherapy clinics and ergonomic training sessions keep employees and managers up to date on the latest techniques and tools available to minimize work injuries and to treat any immediate needs as they arise.
4.4.2 Evolution and Advancements in the Processing Sector
Canada’s pork slaughter and pork processing sector has changed considerably over the past several years. It was once dominated by small to mid-size plants, but state-of-the-art facilities are now being built to process between 45,000 and 50,000 hogs per week. Many of the newer facilities are in the prairies, where prospects for expanding hog production are greatest. In 2005, seven of Canada’s 40 federally inspected processing plants (that is, plants with processing capacities of more than one million head annually) handled 59% of the hogs (Table 4).

Table 4. Canada’s Federally Inspected Pork Processing Plants, 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant Size (number of head slaughtered per year)</th>
<th>Number of Plants</th>
<th>Total Hog Slaughter (thousands of head)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 99,999</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000 – 500,000</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2,379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500,000 – 1,000,000</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 1,000,000</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12,614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>40</strong></td>
<td><strong>21,106</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Canada

Canada’s total weekly slaughter capacity is approximately 480,000 hogs. While most plants run single shifts, the newer plants are capable of double-shifting.

In all provinces, the slaughter and meat inspection processes are standard across all federally inspected slaughter plants. Canadian hogs are slaughtered at a live weight of approximately 110 kg, with a trend to higher hog weights. In 2005, 56% of the market hogs were slaughtered in Quebec and Ontario.
The requirements of animal welfare and food quality mean that proper treatment of animals prior to slaughter is an industry priority. Animals stressed before slaughter, whether in transportation, holding or stunning, can produce meat that is pale, soft and wet. As a consequence, processing plants use a range of humane handling measures:

• Animal behaviourists are often consulted in abattoir design to ensure that the facilities do not unduly alarm pigs when they are being held, moved or stunned. Abattoirs use two types of systems to stun animals: electricity and carbon dioxide.

• Plant staff is trained in proper pig-handling techniques.

• Plants ensure that the procedures outlined in the codes of practice are being followed.

• Plants promote and encourage trucker certification under the various Trucker Quality Assurance programs.

• Abattoirs require hogs to be rested for two to four hours before slaughter, depending on the duration of hauling before processing.

The methods used to process carcasses also have an impact on meat quality. Most Canadian plants employ a two-stage, rapid-chilling process using a combination of low temperature and high air velocity to produce a stable final temperature.

**Advanced Technologies In Pork Processing Plants**

The adoption of advanced pork processing equipment has allowed for significant improvements in plant efficiencies, employee safety and food quality. Mechanization of pork processing facilities has helped to replace employees in physically demanding and stressful job functions. Robotic carcass splitters and robotic loin trimmers have allowed processors to operate more safely and to improve line speeds and product consistency. Robotic stackers in warehousing facilities allow processors to redeploy semi-skilled labour to other departments. Advanced metal detecting and x-ray equipment improve quality and food safety by eliminating the already low potential of any foreign material in the final product.
Residues and Antibiotic Monitoring
Canada’s meat processing industry requires on-farm adherence to withdrawal times for any administered antibiotics. In addition, the presence of residues is closely monitored at meat processing facilities by the CFIA and plant staff.

Meat Plant Sanitation and Hygiene
Pork can only compete on the global marketplace when produced under stringent sanitary conditions. Equipment placed in new and upgraded plants incorporates not only speed and efficiency but also the ability to be cleaned and sanitized properly. Automated computer-controlled systems ensure that the proper balance of time, temperature and cleaner concentration is maintained during cleanup.

Improvements to the overall meat plant sanitation and new packaging design and materials have allowed Canada’s meat processing facility to export fresh pork products to distant world markets and still have sufficient shelf life to compete with domestic product.

Pork Processing Plants and the Environment
Canada’s pork processing plants are designed to meet the strict requirements of federal, provincial and municipal requirements for environmental protection. From the design of their waste water treatment processes to the energy efficiency of its boiler and compressors, Canadian processors are continually seeking ways to improve plant sustainability. Plants recognize the importance of regenerative energy capture and electrical energy reduction in helping to move the nation towards a reduction in green house gas emission.
4.4.3 Federal Inspection Services

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency is responsible for the development and implementation of the federal meat hygiene program including:

- the development of regulations, policies and standards relating to the inspection of facilities and meat products, and the processing, use of and labelling of meat products;
- registration of facilities and licensing of operators;
- inspection of federally registered abattoirs, processing plants and storage facilities;
- import inspection;
- export inspection and certification to meet the requirements of the country of destination;
- audit and verification;
- compliance and enforcement;
- disease surveillance, control and eradication; and,
- emergency preparedness and recalls.

From the moment animals arrive at the abattoir, and through all stages of processing, CFIA veterinarians and inspectors verify the hygiene and safety of the meat. All Canadian Federally registered processing plants are inspected by CFIA to the same exacting standards in all areas of Canada. In addition, the Agency has negotiated access agreements with the competent authorities of many foreign governments around the world. CFIA acts as the third party independent verifier that Canadian processing plants approved for a specified export market destination meet all the requirements of that market.

In federally-inspected facilities all animals are inspected by federal veterinarian prior to slaughter. Each and every animal is also inspected post slaughter by veterinarians and inspectors to ensure that animals are disease-free. CFIA enforces stringent standards with respect to disinfection, hygiene, product monitoring, packing and labelling in order to ensure compliance with the requirements set out in the Meat Inspection Act.

Meat products produced in federally inspected plants are identified with a symbol known as the meat inspection legend. The number on the stamp identifies the plant at which the meat or meat product was processed.
5.0 Canada's Pork Exports

Exports are an integral part of the Canadian pork industry. Because Canada produces more pork than it can consume, it will always be dedicated to the highest standards of customer service in the international marketplace. Canada's pork industry is committed to ensuring customer loyalty and subscribes to the philosophy that it can consistently offer its customers exactly the products they want. This reliability and adaptability is the cornerstone of the Canadian pork industry and distinguishes it from its competitors.

5.1 Variety and Choice for Buyers

The closer Canada's pork processors move to the retail level, the more demanding are the requirements and specifications of pork purchasers. In response, Canadian abattoirs and processing plants make a priority of filling highly specific orders, and over the years have demonstrated their ability to tailor their output to the precise requirements of foreign buyers.

The Canadian Pork Buyer’s Guide and its Export Cut Charts, for example, are recognized references and promotional tools that have been translated into nearly 15 languages. The Guide and the Cut Charts are used as minimum quality references on which to base international trade agreements. New versions of the guide and charts were published in 2004 in the form of a CD-ROM with 3D views of various cuts of meat. The result is a promotional tool unlike any other in the world.

Just as important, Canada has developed a personalized approach to trade that emphasizes flexibility and adaptability in international markets. By building relationships in the client’s language and developing affinities on the basis of shared ethno-cultural backgrounds, the Canadian pork industry has forged a global reputation for the highest standards of product quality and customer service.
5.2 Canada’s Global Pork Market

Because of these efforts and the commitment of its manufacturers and trading houses, Canada is now the third-largest global exporter of pork. With pork exports more than tripling within a 15-year period (Figure 5), it is one of the most remarkable food production success stories in the world.

Table 5. Canadian Pork Exports by Value and Volume, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value ($)</th>
<th>Volume (tonnes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>1,032,557,324</td>
<td>362,778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>752,829,139</td>
<td>218,204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>147,220,273</td>
<td>90,026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>132,898,179</td>
<td>74,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>120,145,939</td>
<td>38,135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>67,134,251</td>
<td>54,006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>48,260,301</td>
<td>43,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>17,743,306</td>
<td>13,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>72,633,750</td>
<td>40,247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>23,146,586</td>
<td>9,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>14,491,729</td>
<td>7,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>105,171,934</td>
<td>85,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>2,534,232,711</td>
<td>1,037,267</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistics Canada
Canada’s Pork Exports

Global pork exports exceeded 5 million tonnes in 2006 and Canada accounted for nearly 21% of this trade, shipping pork to more than 100 countries; these Canadian exports represented a value of $2.5 billion and a volume of 1.04 million tonnes (Table 5).

Despite the number of countries competing in pork exports, Canada continues to serve the most demanding markets such as the United States and Japan, which respectively make up 35% and 21% of Canadian exports (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Canadian Pork Export Markets, 2006
Canada’s Pork Exports

The United States (U.S.) is by far Canada’s largest customer for pork; in 2006, Canadian producers exported 2.75 million market hogs and 6.01 million weanlings to the U.S., for a total of 8.76 million animals. While market hog exports are expected to remain stable or even decline as Canadian processing-plant capacity increases, weanling exports from Canada have been increasing in response to feed-cost conditions that favour finishing hogs in the United States. Foreign demand for weanling pigs and breeding stock testifies to the excellent genetic quality and health status of the Canadian pig.

Distribution Systems and Port Container Movement
Canada is blessed with a geographic location that allows it to serve almost all global markets rapidly and effectively. The scale of Canadian pork exports around the world testifies to the excellent capabilities of Canada’s modern, efficient transportation and distribution infrastructure.

Canada’s large land mass requires an equally large transportation and a distribution network to ensure that products get to foreign markets on time. The use of refrigerated storage facilities and a sophisticated computer tracking system are integral components of that network as are the state-of-the-art shipping ports in Vancouver, Prince Rupert, Montreal and Halifax.
6. Partners for Success

**Canadian Swine Breeders Association (CSBA)**
The CSBA is responsible for keeping the database for the pedigree lineage of Canada’s swine breeds. Incorporations of breed associations are done under the rules of the Animal Pedigree Act, a law of the Parliament of Canada that sets certain standards for registration eligibility and procedures. This also contributes to the value of the Canadian pedigree as a reliable record of an animal’s lineage.

Aside from maintaining the herd registry, the CSBA also provides a forum for concerted promotion for and by its members, communicates swine breeder perspectives to governments and industry partners, promotes new technology to the industry and assists in export development for the industry.

**Canadian Centre for Swine Improvement (CCSI)**
CCSI is a national non-profit organization created by the swine industry in 1994 to provide leadership and expertise for the genetic improvement of swine in Canada. CCSI computes Canadian genetic evaluations, maintains the national performance database, develops national standards for swine recording and co-ordinates research and development in cooperation with its national and provincial partners.

CCSI offers a broad range of products and services to Canadian breeders, exporters and international clients including: expertise in the design of selection, genetic evaluation and performance recording programs; services for data processing and communications; services for research and data analysis; and genetic-improvement software for individual herds or for national needs.
Canadian Pork Council (CPC)
The CPC is the national pork producer organization created in 1966. The CPC’s objective is to assume a leadership role and coordinate nationwide hog producer initiatives. The objectives of the CPC are to:

• maintain a healthy Canadian pork industry that will provide a profitable economic environment for hog producers;
• have hog production recognized as an economically important and environmentally responsible segment of Canada’s economy;
• ensure that pork is promoted as the lean, nutritious protein source it is; and
• maintain Canada’s national swine herd health status as the best in the world.

Canadian Meat Council (CMC)
Since 1920, the CMC has been the national professional association of federally inspected abattoirs and red-meat processors. The CMC is intended as a forum where representatives of abattoirs, processing plants and other national industrial associations can exchange information and share opinions. The primary subjects of concern are regulations and competitiveness in domestic and foreign markets. The CMC is also the preferred representative to government. In order to perform targeted actions when required, the Council is subdivided into different sectors by product (that is, by pork, beef and lamb) and by province.


Canada Pork International (CPI)
Established in 1991, CPI is the export promotion agency of the Canadian pork industry. It is a joint initiative of the CMC, representing the pork packers and trading companies, and of the CPC, which is the national hog producer organization. The Canadian pork industry is committed to customer satisfaction and to diversifying and expanding export markets.
CPI’s objectives are to:
- provide foreign customers with information on Canadian pork products and on the Canadian pork industry;
- work with the Government of Canada and its trading partners to resolve specific foreign market access issues that affect Canadian pork exports;
- develop, co-ordinate and implement the international promotional efforts of the Canadian pork industry; and
- keep the Canadian industry appraised of changes taking place in export markets.
Accordingly, the activities of CPI are focused on organizing promotional activities in priority markets, developing promotional material, investigating and reporting on export market opportunities, and on informing our foreign customers about Canadian pork and Canada’s pork suppliers.

Canadian Animal Health Consultative Committee (CAHCC)
The CAHCC has been meeting annually for more than 25 years, and deals with a broad range of animal health issues. These meetings are hosted by CFIA’s Animal Health and Production Division and CFIA’s Animal Disease Surveillance Unit.

The CAHCC forum provides for communication, consultation and co-ordination among the CFIA, its provincial partners and the regulated animal industries, and provides for the review, development and implementation of animal health policies and programs with the goal of promoting the long-term sustainability of Canada’s animal industries.

The CAHCC is made up of national industry representatives, federal-provincial animal health authorities, national animal health and welfare organizations, veterinary college deans and invited experts.
Pork Value Chain Roundtable

At the national level, the pork industry links all players in the pork value chain to foster collaborative industry-government actions that will help secure an enduring competitive advantage for Canada in the global marketplace. This Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada sponsored forum is aimed at helping industry improve its position in existing markets, identify opportunities and build recognition of Canada’s ability to meet the demands of the fast-changing, highly segmented global marketplace.

This roundtable enables senior federal and provincial government representatives, as well as regulators, trade representatives and researchers, to collaborate in setting goals and targets that will strengthen the industry and enhance Canada’s overall capacity to meet the highest standards for our markets. The roundtable is industry-led, with a goal of ensuring broad industry buy-in of action plans in the area of traceability, food safety, animal health, meat quality and public concerns. Roundtable working groups support research and action on various projects aimed at strengthening Canada’s pork sector as a whole. The ultimate goal is for Canada’s pork industry to lead the world.

Figure 7. Pork Value Chain Roundtable Makeup
7. Quality Without Compromise

With Canadian pork, there is no compromise when it comes to quality, safety, hygiene and reliability. Canada’s high animal health standards, scientifically developed animal care and feeding systems, and state-of-the-art processing technologies allow the Canadian pork industry to provide its customers with a consistently wholesome, delicious product.

Behind this innovative and successful industry are two of Canada’s most valuable resources: its people and its natural bounty. The industry has expert producers and scientists who are dedicated to safety, quality and good service, and who work throughout the pork supply chain to ensure that the product meets the highest standards in the world. Just as important, Canada is dedicated to protecting its natural landscape and to preserving the quality of its soils and water, so the country’s vast open spaces provide a clean, healthy environment for the thriving hog industry.

Finally, the Canadian pork industry is committed to steady improvement so that it can continue to provide customers with products that are nutritious, flavourful and produced in a way that protects and respects the environment. Quality, it may safely be said, is in the industry’s very nature.