SAFE FOOD FOR CANADIANS
ACTION PLAN

Strengthening Canada’s World-Class Food Safety System

FOOD SAFETY MODERNIZATION

World Seafood Congress
Presented by Cameron Prince
DATE
Transforming the CFIA

- The CFIA is pursuing a comprehensive agenda that is designed to improve the Agency and allow it to meet the challenges posed by the complex operating environment.
- The CFIA is adopting modernized systems and tools, fostering a culture of service, enhancing transparency, and improving operational efficiency.
- The passage of the Safe Food for Canadians Act (November 2012) sets the stage for these and a number of other significant food safety enhancements, including new food regulations to support the Act, over the next two years.
- The Safe Food for Canadians Action Plan (May 2013) is the cornerstone to this transformation.
We are in a dynamic global food environment:

- **Evolving production and processing technologies**
- **Modernization initiatives of trading partners**
- **Increased knowledge of risk and systems-based approaches**
- **Advances in science & technology**
- **Emerging pathogens and diseases**
- **Globalization and industry consolidation**
- **Shifting consumer landscape – ageing population and increasing expectations**

**SAFE FOOD FOR CANADIANS ACTION PLAN**

*Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Agence canadienne d'inspection des aliments*
Range of food safety partners

- **International partners**
  - Set import/export requirement; comparability of food systems

- **Provincial/territorial and municipal partners**
  - Inspection, public health, surveillance; enforcing food safety laws within jurisdiction

- **Federal partners**
  - Public Health Agency of Canada; Health Canada

- **CFIA**
  - Federal food inspection; investigates foods linked to illness outbreaks; recalls

- **Industry**
  - Responsible for producing safe food that complies with government standards

- **Consumers**
  - Responsible for safe food handling and preparation
Building a legacy of safe food through

- Stronger food safety rules
  - Legislative, regulatory and program modernization
- More effective inspection
  - Inspection modernization, tools and training, compliance promotion
- A commitment to service
  - Complaints and appeals, redress, improved technology infrastructure
- More information for consumers
  - Transparency, labelling and claims, better on-line tools
Fish and Seafood Inspection in Canada

• A very strong and modern Canadian fish inspection program
• Internationally recognized
• First mandatory HACCP program for Canada and first for seafood globally
• Became part of CFIA in 1997
• Continues to be a leading program in CFIA in terms of innovation (QMPI, importer licensing, etc.)
• Will be a key part of the modernized CFIA Food Inspection Program, but it will mean some changes (ie. Fish Inspection Act replaced by Safe Food For Canadians Act).
1. Stronger Food Safety Rules

Safe Food for Canadians Act

Food Regulations/Program

Importer licensing

Traceability for food

Objectives to be Achieved

- Industry responsibility affirmed
- Better protection for Canadians
- Prevention focus/robust & responsive regulation
- Risk-based decisions to better manage risk
- Outcomes and systems based approaches
- International consistency
Modern legislation

- Safe Food for Canadians Act (November 2012) enables stronger and modern food safety system; safer food and better protection for Canadians
  - Enhanced controls over imported food at the border
  - Deterring of deceptive practices, tampering, and hoaxes
  - Simplified consistent requirements across food traded internationally and interprovincially to promote compliance
  - Tougher fines and penalties
  - New authorities related to traceability of food and record keeping

- More competitive Canadian businesses
  - Reduced regulatory burden and improved inspection consistency
  - Improved certification of exports for international market access
New food regulations, single food program

• Principles for crafting regulations:
  – Comprehensive licensing for food imported, exported and traded inter-provincially
  – Requirement for hazard analysis and appropriate preventive control plans
  – Targeted, limited exemptions
  – More robust approach to imports to ensure they meet Canadian standards
  – Use of incorporation by reference for technical requirements when appropriate

• Requirements will clearly articulate expected outcomes and be generic across food where ever possible

• Program re-design will include clear guidance to industry to facilitate compliance and to inspectors to improve consistency.
2. More Effective Inspection

- Inspection Model
- Better Guidance Documents
- Compliance Promotion

**Objectives to be Achieved**

- Industry responsibility affirmed
- Better verification and protection for Canadians
- Risk-based decisions to better manage risk
- Systems-based approaches
- Transparency
- System assessed regularly
- More consistent regulatory interpretation
- Regulated parties understand obligations
New food inspection model
Innovative Features of New Model

• Those who import, export or prepare food for inter-provincial trade will require a license and preventive controls
• Inspection oversight will be risk based - better application of intelligence to determine risk
• Inspection approach will be consistent across food
• Single strategy for compliance and enforcement to provide consistent and appropriate response across food
• Systematic assessment of performance embedded in approach to ensure continuous improvement
3. A Commitment to Service

Changing Culture

Service Standards and user fees

Review mechanism

IMIT enabled electronic interface

Objectives to be achieved

- Recognize/reinforce Industry responsibility
- Continuous improvement at CFIA
- Better food safety results for Canadians
- Better service provider to industry
4. More information for consumers

Transparency

Food labelling and claims modernization

Improved on-line tools

Objectives to be achieved

Provide useful food safety information to Canadians

Better food safety results for Canadians

Regulated parties understand obligations
What does this all mean for Fish Inspection in Canada?

• Canadian fish and seafood industry in a very good position to meet these changes
• New Act & Regulations will have an overall food focus and will cover much of existing Fish Inspection Act and Regulations requirements
• Only a few areas will be “fish specific” ie. Shellfish sanitation
• CFIA will maintain fish & seafood specialists
• Import programs will be the same across all foods including licensing
What does this all mean for Fish Inspection in Canada?

• Inspectors will be recruited and trained as food inspectors first and later trained in specialties such as fish inspection
• Trade based process & product requirements will be maintained.
• Export certification will be modernized by electronic certification project
• Consultations on regulations in 2014 will be a very important part of the process.
Conclusion: Focus on prevention

- Canadians are proud of and confident in their food safety system.
  - But that system must evolve; no food safety system can guarantee no risks.
- Safe Food for Canadians Action Plan enables all partners in the food safety system to better perform their roles in keeping food safe.
- New approach allows better targeting of risk and rapid response.
- Will mean new requirements for licensing and preventive controls for many.
- Result will be a stronger food safety culture throughout the system.