Fisheries and Oceans Canada Pêches et Océans Canada

Canada

Aquatic Animal Health

Canada's reputation for high quality fish and seafood depends on keeping our wild and farmed aquatic animals protected against serious infectious diseases.

National attention to aquatic animal health has grown quickly over the last decade due to an increase in volume and diversity of live and fresh seafood trade around the world. Live fish can now travel as rapidly as people between countries to reach consumer markets as well as for aquaculture production. The World Organization for Animal Health, a veterinary organization responsible for setting standards for land-based and aquatic animal health management programs, has stringent guidelines to reduce the risk of transfer of serious disease with the movement of live aquatic animals or seafood products.

DFO works closely with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Health Canada, industry, universities, other federal departments and the provinces to coordinate Canada's aquatic animal health programs, which span federal and provincial regulatory responsibilities. Visit the links provided below to learn more about aquatic animal health.

- What we do: National Aquatic Animal Health Science Branch
- National Aquatic Animal Health Program
- Legislation and Regulations pertaining to aquatic animal health
- Fact Sheet:Aquatic Animal Health – Disease Prevention and FAQs
- Information Bulletins
- Additional Resources

DFO's National Aquatic Animal Health Science Branch – What We Do

In spring 2005, the Government of Canada funded the development of a National Aquatic Animal Health Program (NAAHP) to bring Canada into line with increasingly stringent international aquatic animal health management standards. Many of Canada's trading partners are developing aquatic animal health programs based on the international animal health standards set by the World Organisation of Animal Health (OIE) used to support the World Trade Organisation's Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) were funded to co-deliver federal components of NAAHP.

CFIA, as the lead agency for the NAAHP, will provide program direction under the authority of the *Health of Animals Act*, which brings Canada's aquatic and terrestrial animal health programs under the same legislative umbrella. The transfer of regulatory authority from DFO to CFIA, which requires modifications to the Health of Animals Regulations, is anticipated to take two years. In addition to program leadership, CFIA is also responsible for aquaculture health surveillance. DFO is responsible for delivering the science component of NAAHP.

A new regulatory laboratory system is being built from DFO's existing aquatic animal health laboratory infrastructure for delivery of regulatory diagnostics, technology development and targeted research. DFO is also responsible for surveillance of wild aquatic resources, under CFIA program development.

Successful animal health programs around the world are underpinned by internationally credible national laboratory systems which deliver accurate, reliable and consistent test results for disease detection. This capability, strengthened by technology development and targeted research, provides a country with a sound scientific foundation to protect its animal populations from the introduction of disease, to design integral domestic disease management programs and to defend the certification of exported animals/products. Science and technology are integral to Canada's performance in validating diagnostic detection methods for significant animal diseases and for improving management of its animal stocks.

The federal regulatory component of NAAHP consists of four main program elements:

- Program direction and regulation
- Field operations, including sample collections
- Diagnostic testing
- Research and development

The CFIA is responsible for most related field operations activities in the aquaculture sector. National Aquatic Animal Health Science program officials perform and coordinate sampling for disease surveillance and monitoring of wild stocks, while directing and delivering diagnostic testing, associated technology development and targeted research to establish a sound science-base supporting the CFIA NAAHP mandate.

The establishment of a credible DFO NAAHP research and laboratory system requires a national management model which is integrated with CFIA responsibilities, incorporates all stakeholders and effectively manages work within a sound performance management framework. In DFO, delivery of the NAAHP is led in collaboration with regional staff. Linkages with the CFIA, federal agencies, provinces/territories, private sector, industry, academia, and public sectors are formalized at national and local levels.

Legislation and Regulations

- Health of Animals Act
- Fish Health Protection Regulations - MANUAL OF COMPLIANCE Text Version | PDF Version | MS Word Version
- Fish Health Certificate (PDF)
- Fish Health Protection Regulations Laboratory Report (PDF)
- Fisheries Act
- National Code on Introductions and Transfers of Aquatic Organisms

Information Bulletins

- Viral Haemorrhagic Septicaemia (VHS) in Various Great Lakes Fish Species
- Fact Sheet and Frequently Asked Questions
- Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia cases confirmed in Ontario(August 2007) FAQs

- Canada Conducts Surveillance for Fish Virus in Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Systems (2007)
- Ontario Government Seeks Public's Help to Slow Spread of Fish Disease: Reporting Fish Die-Offs Through TIPS Line Helps Track Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (June 2007)
  For reporting fish die-offs, call: 1-877-TIPS-MNR (847-7667)
  More information is available in these fact sheets:
  - VHS Fact Sheet for Anglers
  - VHS Fact Sheet for Aquarists
  - VHS Fact Sheet for Fish Farmers
  - VHS Fact Sheet for Property Owners
  - VHS Fact Sheet for Bait Fish Harvesters
- United States Department of Agriculture: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Fact Sheet on VHS (July 2006)
- MSX in American oysters
- SSO in American oysters
- Sea Lice Research in the Broughton Archipelago
- Malachite Green in Wild and Farmed Fish and Fish Products
- Importation of Ornamental Fish

Additional Resources

- Canadian Food Inspection Agency – Aquatic Animal Health Division
- Health Canada – Veterinary Drugs
- United States Department of Agriculture - Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Veterinary Services: Centers for Emerging Issues
- World Organisation of Animal Health (OIE)
- World Trade Organisation Agreement on Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
- Synopsis of Infectious Diseases and Parasites of Commercially Exploited Shellfish
- Veterinary Chemicals for use in Fish Egg Disinfection in Canadian Fish Hatchery and Aquaculture Facilities
- Fish Health Protection Regulations - MANUAL OF COMPLIANCE - Text Version | PDF Version | MS Word Version
  - Fish Health Certificate (PDF)
  - Fish Health Protection Regulations Laboratory Report (PDF)
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans Statement on Sea Lice and Pacific Salmon Stocks
- SSO Disease of American (Eastern) Oysters
- MSX Disease of American (Eastern) Oysters

- Importation of Ornamental Fish
- National Code on Introductions and Transfers of Aquatic Organisms

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