

OLPC 2016

Membership Meetings

All meeting dates are Fridays. Meetings are held at Ontario Pork except December which will be at Beef Farmers of Ontario.

- April 15, 2016
- June 17, 2016
- August 12, 2016
- October 14, 2016
- December 16, 2016

Raccoon Rabies Update

As of our February meeting, there had been 46 positive cases of raccoon rabies recorded; 40 raccoons and six skunks. Artic fox rabies has also reappeared in Perth County.

Biosecurity Signs

OLPC will soon have the biosecurity stop signs available in English and French (double-sided). The order form can be found at:

<http://www.ontlpc.ca/page.php?cnt=biosigns>

National Emergency

Management Framework

OMAFRA has been gathering input on a national Emergency Management Framework for agriculture which will be discussed at this year's Federal, Provincial, and Territorial (FPT) meeting in July. There will be a number of specific strategies which will populate the Framework including an Animal and Plant Health Strategy, Livestock Market Interruption Strategy, Food Strategy, and there could be others.

Introduction of Pathogens via Companion Animals

OLPC sent a letter to Dr. Harpreet Kochhar, Chief Veterinary Officer for Canada regarding the potential for the importation of pathogens to Canada via companion animals. This is a concern from both an agricultural standpoint and as a human health issue. The importation of "rescued" dogs from other countries is of particular concern; the use of forged health papers has been discovered in the U.S. In addition, there is currently no standard deworming protocols that must be followed before allowing dogs into Canada and no quarantine requirement. As well, not all rescue groups bring in dogs under a commercial import permit. Recent cases of Leishmaniosis and Echinococcus multilocularis in Ontario related to imported dogs are concrete examples of the very real threat to human and animal health. Once these pathogens get established in the wild animal population, they become virtually impossible to eradicate.

Dogs being moved within Canada are also a concern. There is no tracking of rescue groups' activities or the movement of resettled dogs some of which are coming from northern Ontario which is an area where Artic fox rabies is endemic. The groups vaccinate the dogs after they are brought to urban areas but that is not sufficient.

We reminded Dr. Kochhar that great strides have been made by the livestock and poultry sectors in the development of biosecurity standards. To support these efforts, we require the government to maintain sound biosecurity practices at our borders. We urged him to give special consideration to enhancing the health importation requirements for companion animals.

Documenting Antimicrobial Use

OLPC will be polling members regarding what type of recording and tracking of antimicrobials is currently being done on-farm. Even if this information is not being centrally compiled, the fact that it is being recorded is important to know. This is a starting point in preparing for regulatory changes in relation to antimicrobial use.

As of January 2017 there will be federal requirements for enhanced veterinary oversight of the use of antimicrobials in feed and water along with greater documentation of both the use of antimicrobials and animal disease surveillance. These requirements are part of Health Canada's initiative to align with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Veterinary Feed Directive which comes into effect as of January 1, 2017. It is our understanding that a discussion paper on the federal regulatory proposals is expected to be released by Health Canada. OLPC sent a letter to The Honourable Jane Philpott, Minister of Health in January urging her to make the public release of this document a priority. We emphasized that sufficient time is required to provide the agriculture sector an opportunity to comment and also to implement the necessary processes to align with potential U.S. trade requirements.

The Value of an OLPC Membership

OLPC was formed in 2005 to coordinate an Ontario strategy to deal with foreign animal disease and other transmissible livestock and poultry diseases. Currently, our three key strategic directions are: increase on-farm biosecurity awareness and encourage implementation; assist with coordination of emergency preparedness efforts; and continue advocacy efforts in relation to the Animal Health Act, 2009 and proposed Regulations as required.

Most importantly, the OLPC provides an opportunity for members to share information on current biosecurity initiatives and projects. It also offers a venue for support for biosecurity and emergency response issues you may wish addressed.

Our Mission

Provide a forum to facilitate the development and coordination of an Ontario strategy to deal with foreign animal disease and other transmissible livestock and poultry diseases.