

Natural Products Marketing (BC) Act Mandatory Notifiable Avian Influenza Insurance Review

*Work Plan
January 27, 2016*



Natural Products Marketing (BC) Act

Mandatory Insurance for Registered Poultry Producers

Work Plan

Sponsors:

- BC Broiler Hatching Egg Commission (BCBHEC)
- BC Chicken Marketing Board (BCCMB)
- BC Egg Marketing Board (BCEMB)
- BC Turkey Marketing Board (BCTMB)

Stakeholders:

- All licenced BC poultry producers
- BC Broiler Hatching Egg Producers Association (BCBHEPA)
- BC Chicken Growers Association (BCCGA)
- BC Egg Producers Association (BCEPA)
- BC Turkey Association (BCTA)
- BC Poultry Association (BCPA)
- BC Primary Poultry Processors Association (BCPPPA)
- BC Egg Processors Council (BCEPA)
- Allied Trades

Purpose:

The poultry boards and commission have the absolute discretion to make any decisions. This work plan is intended to provide the boards and commission with a process to assemble the information and analysis as well as engage and consult stakeholder to make decisions whether or not to use the authorities provided under the *Natural Products Marketing Act (NPMA)* to require producers to have disease insurance. In this regard, the purpose of the work plan is

- To undertake the requisite due diligence incumbent on the poultry boards and commission in consideration of implementing mandatory Avian Influenza disease insurance in the regulated poultry industry in British Columbia.

Outcomes:

While it remains in the discretion of the poultry boards and commission to make any decisions regarding disease insurance, the expected outcomes of this work plan include:

- The poultry boards and commission having duly engaged stakeholders and acquired the requisite information upon which to make an informed decision on whether or not to exercise the authority granted under the *NPMA* to require licenced poultry producers to maintain disease insurance as a condition of licence.
- In the event that the poultry boards and commission have determined that requiring mandatory disease insurance is in keeping with sound marketing policy:
 - Seek and receive prior approval of the BC Farm Industry Review Board (BC FIRB) to amend the general/consolidated orders of each of the four schemes to require mandatory Avian Influenza disease insurance.

Scope:

The scope of the undertakings proposed in the work plan is limited to:

- Assessing whether insurance contributes to a return to a system of orderly marketing
- Assessing the need for mandatory Notifiable Avian Influenza (NAI) disease insurance that contributes to maintaining a system of orderly marketing.
- Identifying and assessing options other than insurance as a means to mitigate and manage risk of NAI discoveries in British Columbia.
- Assessing the need for mandatory Avian Influenza disease insurance will include identifying the absence or sufficiency of available disease insurance.

The undertaking is not intended to address the implementation of the disease insurance requirement, nor is it intended to support the creation of an insurance entity to provide disease insurance.

Background

Considerable time, energy and work has been undertaken by the poultry industry at the urging of government since the 2004 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreak to identify, plan and implement measures to mitigate the risks of future AI discoveries. Subsequent discoveries in 2005, 2009 and 2014 have reinforced the need for the industry to have an effective risk mitigation strategy in place.

Following the 2004 HPAI outbreak, at the urging of government the industry initiated a risk assessment process with the objectives to:

- Identify and assess risk factors which predispose the poultry industry to infectious disease outbreaks.
- Provide opportunities and risk management options to industry and government.
- Minimize impact of disease outbreaks on public confidence in poultry produced in BC.
- Maintain expansion of domestic and international markets for poultry products produced in BC.

The risk analysis was built in four major phases:

- Identifying and ranking a broad range of risk factors which could impact on the frequency and intensity of future animal disease outbreaks. This phase led to the identification of some 34 risk factors facing the industry.
- Assessing and evaluating the gaps that exist with respect to the mitigation of these risks from industry structure, policy and management practice perspectives. This phase led to the consolidation of the risk analysis into a range of possible options and alternatives by which risk could be mitigated or eliminated.
- Conducting an economic and financial evaluation of a limited number of possible and practical response options. This phase identified that an “effective risk management response will necessarily involve an integration of a number of related and complementary actions, that collectively will lead to a positive impact on risk reduction. Three risk response options were identified for further analysis and consideration by decision makers.
- Developing a series of strategies, recommendations and actions for consideration. Six interrelated options were recommended.

Risk Analysis Steering Committee

A joint industry/government steering committee including BC FIRB representation received the Serecon Risk Analysis for approval. The steering committee unanimously adopted the report and in recognizing the significant implications of the recommendations, directed the development of a risk mitigation strategic plan that built on the Serecon recommended integrated risk management model of:

- Universal biosecurity system
- Active surveillance program
- Responsive financial management and compensation system

Universal Biosecurity

Serecon recommended the “BC poultry industry develops a “universal biosecurity program” which encompasses the full value chain of the sector”.

Active Surveillance

Serecon recommended “as a mechanism for early detection and to reduce the intensity of animal disease outbreaks, the industry establish an on-going active surveillance program, inclusive of all production sectors, and supported by a compensation system that compensates industry for their economic losses and recovery costs in the event of detection and business disruption/closure.”

Shared Risk Management System

Serecon recommended “the industry and government develop, and implement an integrated financial management and compensation program. “The Shared Risk Management System”, that provides funding mechanisms for recovery from disaster, self-insurance, government supported production insurance, private insurance, and compensation that substantively protects the industry from the significant perils it will face due to disease risks, and which will serve to sustain and grow the industry.”

Emergency Response

In addition to the recommendations contained in the Serecon Risk Analysis, the BC Poultry Association has put in place an emergency response plan that mirrors the federal/provincial Joint Emergency Operations Centre (JEOC) utilizing an Incident Command System (ICS) approach. Industry has received training in ICS and continually updates the emergency response plan based on reviews of recent events. The industry and government based on the 2014 HPAI outbreak are examining options for including industry in the JEOC to combine resources and improve the overall effectiveness of the response to future discoveries.

Sound Marketing Policy

Notwithstanding the poultry boards and commission joint submission in January 2014 on the Use of Regulatory Authority in Disease Insurance, the approach taken and work done by the BC poultry industry on the Risk Mitigation Strategy adopted the objective to manage/mitigate risk of NAI. The work was predicated on an integrated framework for the three key elements (biosecurity, surveillance and shared risk management).

Given the amendments to the *Natural Products Marketing Act* that now explicitly enable the poultry boards and commission to consider implementing disease insurance requirements, it is clear that the boards and commission must turn their focus on applying due diligence and sound marketing policy in making a conscious decision on whether or not to require disease insurance as a condition of licence.

Process

The poultry boards and commission will take into consideration direction provided by the BC Farm Industry Review Board (BC FIRB) in various letters on mandatory insurance:

- August 14, 2014 – Supervisory Decision – Sound Marketing Policy and Board Authority – Mandatory Poultry Disease Insurance
- March 3, 2015 – Poultry Disease Insurance – Supervisory Decision Follow-up
- May 12, 2015 – Amendments to the *Natural Products Marketing (BC) Act*, Poultry Disease Insurance and August 14, 2014 Supervisory Decision
- September 12, 2015 Mandatory Disease Insurance Review and Assessment – Draft Work Plan.
- October 13, 2015 Mandatory Disease Insurance Review and Assessment - Next Steps.

The substantive directions provided by BC FIRB include:

- “Use of an appropriate SAFETI process to determine what, if any, insurance may be required to help ensure orderly marketing.”
- The need for mandatory insurance within the context of sound marketing policy
 - How to effectively return the poultry industry to a system of orderly marketing?
- Consideration of the impact of mandatory insurance on the industries as a whole, including competitive pricing, foregone opportunities, the availability (or lack thereof) of government funding and related considerations.
- Decisions and rationale are publicly available in a timely manner.

A five-phase approach is proposed to address the BC FIRB directions. For each phase a comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy would be developed and implemented encompassing the following points:

- Utilize the poultry boards and commission websites for industry stakeholder and public comment.
- Presentations to the five poultry associations for input and comment.
- Distribution of information to and direct follow-up with the allied trades for input and comment.
- Compilation of input and comment into a report with response where appropriate and posted to the poultry boards and commission websites for validation.

Phase 1 – Why is a financial response needed?

Serecon’s Risk Analysis identified the need for industry and government to develop and implement an integrated financial management and compensation program. Determining why a financial response is required is important to answering the sound marketing policy question.

The key questions to be addressed in this Phase include:

- How to effectively and efficiently return the poultry industry to a system of orderly marketing?
 - Is a financial response necessary?
 - What other options/tools are available to the boards and commission.

Approach

Given the considerable work already done, this Phase will be limited to assessing that work and compiling a summary to address the questions related to sound marketing policy,

Expected Outcome

The report and stakeholder feedback would enable the poultry boards and commission to make a determination that a financial response to a NAI discovery is required to effectively and efficiently contribute to a system of orderly marketing following a NAI discovery.

Deliverables

- An engagement strategy for Phase 1.
- A report on the financial response to NAI and options for response.
- A report on the stakeholder and public feedback on the need for a financial response to NAI.

Phase 2 – Scope of Financial Response

Serecon's Risk Analysis identified that the scope of a financial response is not limited to the costs of enhanced cleaning and disinfecting infected premises. Experience gained through the NAI outbreaks in BC has identified costs that have implications on the industry that affect the system of orderly marketing. This Phase will not only address the scope of the financial response required, but also analyze the various options identified in Phase 1 that the boards and commission have to respond with. The key questions to pursue in this Phase include:

- What would be the scope of the response to maintain a system of orderly marketing?
 - What needs to be compensated?
 - Is it more than just C&D required and why?

The options analysis would include addressing questions such as:

- Why current board authority/orders are not able to maintain orderly marketing in the event of a disease outbreak?
- Why is a predictable financial response to avian influenza needed?
- What mechanisms already exist to provide required compensation?
 - Contingency Funds
 - *Health of Animals Act*
 - Business Risk Management Programs
 - Private insurance
- What new mechanisms are possible?
- What conditions must exist to enable the mechanisms to work efficiently and effectively?
 - Is mandatory participation required and why?
- What are the implications of adding mandatory insurance requirements on:
 - Industry cost competitiveness?
 - Pricing?
 - Foregone opportunities?
 - Availability of government funding?
 - Other related considerations?

Approach

As with Phase 1 considerable work has already been done, as such, focus will be on assessing that work identifying and filling any gaps and present the findings by way of a report to the boards and commission focussing on:

- The key questions regarding the scope of the financial response.
- The options to address the scope of the financial response.
- The conditions required to enable the mechanisms to work efficiently and effectively.

Expected Outcome

The report and stakeholder feedback would enable the poultry boards and commission to determine whether insurance requiring participation by all registered producers can provide an effective and efficient financial response and identification of other considerations as part of the decision making process.

Deliverables

- Phase 2 stakeholder engagement strategy.
- A report on the sound marketing policy rationale:
 - Identifying gaps in maintaining a system of orderly marketing in the event of a major disease outbreak.
 - Options for satisfying a system of orderly marketing.
 - Analysis of the options.
 - Recommended option.

Phase 3 – Do the Conditions of Insurance Exist?

If insurance is to provide a viable mechanism for poultry boards and commission to provide the financial response to maintain orderly marketing, they must be satisfied that the conditions of insurance exist.

The key questions to be addressed in Phase 3 include:

- Do the conditions of insurability exist?
 - Ability to confirm cause of loss
 - Ability to measure loss
 - Establishing the loss rates
 - Defining coverage
 - Equal knowledge between insured and insurer
- What does the insurance product need to look like to be acceptable to the majority of industry?
 - What must it cover?
 - Are the costs acceptable?
 - Is it actuarially sound?
 - Is it administratively feasible?
 - Can the excess loss be reinsured?
- How would mandatory insurance affect the competitiveness of the BC poultry industries?

Approach

Given the work already done, assess the existing work and augment the gaps in knowledge and information to present findings by way of reports to the boards and commission that determine whether or not the conditions of insurability exist.

Expected Outcomes

The reports and stakeholder feedback would enable the poultry boards and commission to determine whether the conditions of insurability exist.

Deliverables

- Phase 3 stakeholder engagement strategy
- Loss Quantification Model Update
 - Establishing the basis for measuring losses
 - Establishing what could be covered

- Actuarial Soundness of a BC only approach
 - Establishing loss rates
 - Estimated losses based on coverage options
 - Establishing the basis for premium structure
 - Conditions for insurability
 - Capital requirements
 - Reinsurance feasibility/requirements
 - Need for mandatory participation

Phase 4 – Do Viable Insurance Delivery Mechanisms Exist?

Considerable work on insurance mechanisms has been previously conducted. Work in this Phase will focus on analyzing and providing a summation and update of previous work. This work will provide the basis for assuring the poultry boards and commission that viable delivery mechanisms exist to enable an informed decision.

There are a limited number of poultry disease insurance products and/or entities that can provide insurance. The poultry boards and commission must analyze what is currently available and decide which mechanism if any will achieve the desired outcomes of mandatory disease insurance in the BC regulated poultry industry. The key questions to be addressed include:

- What insurance mechanisms are currently available?
 - How applicable are they to achieving BC's desired outcomes for mandatory insurance?
- Why a BC only approach is necessary?
- Are there any residual legal implications/considerations that the boards and commission must take into consideration?

Approach

Assess the work done to date and present an evaluation of the full range of options available to the boards and commission. The evaluation will include:

- Legal considerations
- Financial (tax) implications
- Administrative considerations
- Producer acceptance

Expected Outcomes

The reports and stakeholder feedback would enable the poultry boards and commission to confirm whether viable insurance products can be delivered by viable business entities and whether that entity exists at this time.

Deliverables

- Phase 4 Stakeholder Engagement Strategy
- Evaluation of the financial response mechanisms.

Phase 5 – Mandatory Insurance Delivery Mechanism

It is understood by the poultry boards and commission that it is not possible to demonstrate at this time that the establishment of the BC Poultry Captive Insurance Company is work that falls under orderly marketing. Work on this aspect must occur concurrently but it is understood that levies collected under the *NPMA* authority cannot be used for these tasks. The poultry associations will be required to find alternate funding for industry share of the cost of these works.

Should the poultry boards and commission determine in Phase 4 that a captive insurance company is the best mechanism to support maintaining orderly marketing following a NAI discovery it will be incumbent on the poultry boards and commission to demonstrate how such an insurance program would be implemented. The focus must be on clearly defining the roles, responsibilities and relationships between the boards, commission and the delivery mechanism within the scope of orderly marketing policy.

Approach

The poultry boards and commission will define the roles, responsibilities and relationships between them and the captive insurance company. This may include:

- Clearly stated expectations, roles, responsibilities, accountabilities of each party.
- Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of associations.
- Information sharing requirements.
- Contracts for services, i.e. premium collection, audit and inspection.

Expected Outcome

All parties, the poultry boards, commission, associations and captive insurance company have a clear understanding of expectations, roles, responsibilities and relationships as it relates to board and commission mandatory disease insurance requirements.

Deliverables

- Stage 5 stakeholder engagement strategy
- A Memorandum of Understanding outlining the respective roles, responsibilities and relationships between all parties.
- Service agreements between the boards and commission and the captive insurance company.

Cost Estimates

The expected cost of activities to complete all four phases is \$200,000. A portion of the costs of all phases may possibly be recovered through the BCPA's BC Poultry Captive Insurance Company federal Agri-Risk Initiative funding. The Agri-Risk Initiative may cover up to two-thirds of the cost of eligible activities.

The industry share of costs (\$67,000) would be covered by the boards and commission, provided that Agri-Risk Initiative funding can be applied to the activities that fall within the scope of the BCPA's project.