

CPRC Update: Research Strategy Review and Potential New Research Cluster

Research Strategy Review

CPRC facilitated development of the *National Research Strategy for Canada's Poultry Sector* (the Strategy) that was released in 2012 (<http://cp-rc.ca/research/>). The Strategy identified nine priority research categories including (not in order of importance):

- 1) Economic Viability
- 2) Genetics
- 3) Food Safety
- 4) Animal Health Products
- 5) Poultry Health
- 6) Poultry Welfare
- 7) Environment
- 8) Functional and Innovative Products
- 9) Poultry Feedstuffs

Industry's goal was identified for each category and, rather than identifying specific projects, research target outcomes were listed. For example, industry's goal for the Animal Health category is to "*Continue to promote the prudent use of antimicrobials and reduce their use where possible. Increase the use of alternatives to antibiotics.*" One of the research target outcomes is "*Alternatives to currently used antimicrobials.*" This approach to identifying and stating research priorities leaves it to researchers to propose projects that will address the results industry would like to achieve from its investment in research activities.

CPRC uses the 2012 Strategy as a guide in its annual calls for Letters of Intent and as a basis for development of the Poultry Science Cluster, a five-year research program co-funded by industry and government. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) contributed \$4-million to the \$5.6-million poultry cluster under the *AgriInnovation Program*, part of *Growing Forward 2*, with the balance of funds from industry and provincial government funding. That program runs from April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2018.

CPRC's Board of Directors has decided to review the Strategy to identify changes in existing priorities and new issues that have arisen in the past four years that should be included in an updated Strategy. The review will include a broad consultation with poultry research stakeholders including producer groups, researchers, government, input suppliers and processors. Many of these stakeholders are represented by CPRC's member organizations.

The review is not designed to generate a research strategy from scratch but to build on the two-year process that led to the 2012 document. The priorities identified in that process remain valid but issues may have evolved over the past four years and new research opportunities, such as precision agriculture or climate change impacts, appeared. The Strategy review is targeted for completion so a final draft can be acted upon by the CPRC Board at its March 2017 meeting.

Potential New Research Cluster

The science cluster program is part of the five-year federal-provincial agreements that include risk management, market development and research funding programs. The science clusters were introduced in *Growing Forward* and continued in *Growing Forward 2*. Inclusion of a third science cluster program in the next federal-provincial agreement is not certain; however, AAFC have received good reviews from industry and government.

CPRC is hopeful that the science cluster program is included in the next agreement. The cluster program fits well with CPRC's system. It is a five-year funding commitment and allows CPRC to cooperate with other organizations to combine funding and design a more extensive research program than is the case with CPRC's annual funding, which is usually for two or three years. This approach allows CPRC to target longer-term objectives, such as vaccine development, in the cluster but still respond to more immediate issues, or those closer to the end user, with the annual funding calls.

Updating the Research Strategy will provide information that will help CPRC and its industry partners develop a strong cluster proposal that will include research based on industry-identified priorities.

CPRC, its Board of Directors and member organizations are committed to supporting and enhancing Canada's poultry sector through research and related activities. For more details on these or any other CPRC activities, please contact The Canadian Poultry Research Council, 350 Sparks Street, Suite 1007, Ottawa, Ontario, K1R 7S8, phone: (613) 566-5916, fax: (613) 241-5999, email: info@cp-rc.ca, or visit us at www.cp-rc.ca.

The membership of the CPRC consists of Chicken Farmers of Canada, Canadian Hatching Egg Producers, Turkey Farmers of Canada, Egg Farmers of Canada and the Canadian Poultry and Egg Processors' Council. CPRC's mission is to address its members' needs through dynamic leadership in the creation and implementation of programs for poultry research in Canada, which may also include societal concerns.