

CPRC Update

Last fall, the Canadian Poultry Research Council (CPRC) hosted a series of six workshops across Canada in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia. Workshop objectives were to:

1. Present and discuss the *National Research Strategy for Canada's Poultry Sector* issued in August 2012 and available on CPRC's website
2. Review progress to date of the current Poultry Science Cluster co-funded by industry, provincial governments and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) *Growing Forward* program
3. Explore potential elements and partners for a new Cluster under AAFC's *AgriInnovation* program scheduled to begin April 1, 2013

The workshop series was part of CPRC's industry outreach activities to foster ongoing discussion among those involved in Canadian poultry research as well as those that benefit from research discoveries including producers, input suppliers, processors and consumers. The more than 100 workshop participants included researchers from government and universities, government representatives, and industry stakeholders. The wide range of expertise among participants was recorded, as were the poultry research priorities of the many organizations represented at the events.

Input on Cluster Development

The main thrust of the agenda was to draw on the broad pool of expertise and representation among workshop participants to receive input on ways that industry can leverage the research completed in the present Poultry Science Cluster and other industry research activities to maintain Canada's poultry research initiatives. These initiatives will include both the *AgriInnovation* Science Cluster and ongoing project research supported through a variety of funding sources. Much of the discussion during the workshops focused on the potential structure and content of a new Poultry Science Cluster application, to be submitted to AAFC in 2013 as part of the *AgriInnovation* program.

Participants were asked **what they liked** about CPRC's approach to development of a potential Cluster application; several themes emerged from responses:

- ***Broadly-based, balanced approach:*** Many participants liked that the potential Cluster includes a range of scientific disciplines and that CPRC intends to balance forthcoming funds between Cluster research and individual projects.
- ***Based on industry needs:*** Participants recognized that the potential Cluster construct aligns with industry-identified research priority areas and target outcomes as described in the National Research Strategy.
- ***Collaboration:*** Participants appreciated efforts to solicit input from research groups across the country and encourage them to work together to address research issues.
- ***Long-term vision:*** The relatively long (five-year) timeframe of the Cluster program was appreciated by most. Even more so was CPRC's vision beyond the Cluster to promote sustained funding for poultry research in general.
- ***Theme categorization:*** Participants generally agreed with dividing the cluster application into three broad themes, under each of which specific research activities could be listed.

Participant **suggestions to improve** the potential Cluster application also fell into themes:

- ***International collaboration*** should be considered within the scope of the Cluster where appropriate.
- ***Multidisciplinary research and collaboration*** should be promoted.

- **Strategic approaches** should be taken to maximize the potential impact of research programs
- **Improve communication** with the research community.
- **Maintain flexibility** in work plans to allow for unforeseen hurdles to and successes from research.
- **Consider the needs of all industry commodities** when developing research programs.
- **Secure stable sources of funding** to promote long-term success of poultry research programs.

A number of **specific research ideas** that might be incorporated into the Cluster were also suggested.

Next steps

While preparing the Cluster application, CPRC considered all of the valuable feedback received during, and subsequent to, the workshops. A CPRC sub-committee, representing each of the national poultry organizations, identified proposals of particular interest to industry. Proposals were reviewed by CPRC's Scientific Advisory Committee to ensure scientific merit and several of these research ideas are being incorporated into a Cluster application, to be submitted to AAFC by the end of March.

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.