

Coordinating Ontario's Poultry Industry's Response to Infectious Disease through Preparedness and Prevention:

On July 20, 2023 Maggy Watson, the Operations Lead, Feather Board Command Centre (FBCC) talked about Coordinating Ontario's Poultry Industry's Response to Infectious Disease through Preparedness and Prevention in the Emerging and Systemic Risks Monthly Lecture Series. She started with an acknowledgement of working with skilled and resourceful people. Then she introduced the Feather Board Command Centre as a collaborative efforts between Ontario's four poultry marketing boards. In Ontario they have the chicken farmers of Ontario, the egg farmers, Ontario Broiler Hodging Egg Chick Commission and then the Turkey Farmersville, ON.

Then she talked about the hazards for farmed animal disease. Federally Reportable Diseases (CFIA) and Ontario Provincially Notifiable Hazards (OMAFRA) has a huge list of hazards from which FBCC only takes care of Avian Influenza, Fowl typhoid, Newcastle disease under CFIA and Avian encephalomyelitis, Avian Infectious Laryngotracheitis, Avian mycoplasmosis under OMAFRA.

Further Maggy said " There are 3 responders for animal disease or the poultry industry Federal, provincial and territorial. We have two levels of government. Agriculture and food Canada, Health Canada. Of course, we're talking about infectious things. So, they become evolved because there's all kinds of wild birds now ministry of environment conservation and park stuff for Ontario."

And on the industry side they have their marketing boards, the poultry service support sector and the other businesses and organizations that are going on around the farms that help get the products to the grocery store. And then, of course, the big, important one, the heart of the industry, which is farmers. FBCC is here to integrate the industry side into that government side.

Then Maggy shared the time layer formation of FBCC.

Maggy said, "we do preparedness training and exercises which helps us to get to that that stage of integration. So, we have all of the stuff from the feather boards, we train them incident management system beforehand.

For prevention the farmer needs to maintain bio security standard. Bio Security are tangible or intangible security measures and steps that are taken to prevent the introduction of any type of hazard that may introduce the spread of an infection into a protected population of animals. Bio Security standard are the key to prevention and limitation of disease spread. The marketing board require quota holding farmers to maintain strict bio security standards on their farm. And those video programs are included in annual inspection events. So, that kind of bio security standards are all the time run at the mills. And then they also have tightened bio security protocol for province as a whole, or for a specific area.

Another major part of response is how our integration works, Maggy said. We're going to talk about training of IMS. This is our general BCCIMS structure. The reason we love IMS in this type of area is very scalable and modular. Incursions of disease have been required different levels of response. This whole structure, if it's a smaller face in AA secluded area we have a emergency response plan that we share with the Ontario Animal Health Network. That's something that we are able to carry out pretty routinely. We may not have to stop this whole plan for you. We are able to only roll out the sections we need. We need basic incident management system. However, if we have something that's a little bit more complex,

such as the highly pathogenic alien influenza response, then we may carry out all of these roles and responsibilities in here.

Highly pathogenic influenza in 2022 and 2023 definitely can be used as a complex response category. They had 39 staff from all four of the feather boards that were responding. Some were related to troubleshooting and support for the farmers and the industry.

Lastly, another response area that the key farmers start to use or continue to use technology a lot more in forming their bird health decisions.

Moderator Dr Carly Rozins asked many questions along with the below ones:

If there is an outbreak on a quota holding farm versus a non quota holding farm, do you think the procedure is similar like with their tests go to the same facility?

Maggy said all the tests do go ultimately to the same lab. So, they're all under the same.

Then Dr. Carly asked to what extend the bio security needed?

Maggy's ended up the discussion by the below comment:

Bio security is the only prevention. The industry was to focus on how we can try to manage wildlife and the birds' interactions with wildlife. Bio security is one of those ways, because that's how we keep the birds that they're farming away from the wildlife.