

BC Poultry Association 2021 Year in Review



The purpose of the BC Poultry Association (BCPA) is to lead the regulated BC poultry associations on common issues that strengthen and improve the well-being of regulated poultry farmers.

Current BCPA directors

- Directors are appointed by the four member associations; each association appoints their chair and one other director. The association represented by the Chair appoints an additional representative.
- In addition, each Marketing Board/Commission appoints one producer director representative to the BCPA. These positions are *ex-officio* and non-voting.
- The BCAC poultry director also sits on the BCPA as an *ex-officio* and non-voting.

Name	Sector and position on BCPA
Steve Heppell	Turkey, Chair
Angela Groothof	Hatching eggs, Vice-Chair - (Also the IAF poultry rep, poultry rep for the Centre for Governance in Agriculture)
John Driesen	Hatching eggs
Dale Krahn	Chicken (Also on the Provincial wood fibre steering committee)
Fred Redekop	Chicken, Secretary
Mark Siemens	Eggs, Treasurer (Also on the Abbotsford Ag Committee)
Dan Kampen	Eggs (Also an alternate Emergency Operations Centre Director)
Steve Froese	Turkey
Stan Thiessen	Turkey (Also the SPFG Chair)
Daniel Zylstra	<i>ex-officio</i> , Hatching eggs
Ray Nickel	<i>ex-officio</i> , Chicken
James Krahn	<i>ex-officio</i> , Turkey
Matt Vane	<i>ex-officio</i> , Eggs

Other Poultry Committee Appointments

- Wayne DeJong – BC Agriculture Council (BCAC) poultry rep, biosecurity committee, Environment rep
- Hester Mulder - BCAC's public trust committee, Chair of the Biosecurity Committee
- Chris Vanrietschoten – BCAC's labour committee

Meeting highlights

- The BCPA had four director meetings – three via Zoom, and one in person. The November meeting was cancelled due to the flood. In addition, there were three extraordinary meetings to discuss the SPCA’s unannounced inspections and poultry’s involvement in the feed differential program.
- Dr Gigi Lin and Dr Vicki Bowes attended a director meeting to discuss reovirus, IBH ILT, and vPMV.
- Work continued on Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT). Several options were discussed. In consultation with Dr Bowes, a factsheet on key ILT messages was developed and circulated. A different approach may be needed.
- BCPA participated in activist round table meetings sponsored by the BC Ministry of Agriculture and participated in BCAC led animal activist meetings. Limited progress was made. The BCPA considers activists to be one of the poultry sector’s top issues.
- BCPA approved a wild bird AI surveillance project and will be managing the project on behalf of the vet lab.
- The BCPA recommended that producers move to yellow biosecurity status in December due to the loss of the BC Vet lab for quick AI testing, the discovery of high path AI in Newfoundland and the widespread high path AI outbreaks in Europe and Asia.
- BCPA directors attended the BCAC, IAF, and WorkSafe AGMs, and participated in Ag Day in Victoria.

Biosecurity Committee

The Committee met in February and March to review the manual and make recommendations for 2021.

A significant step was taken in 2021. The four national biosecurity programs were reviewed and compared to BC’s program to determine if there were still gaps between BC’s and the national programs. There were still gaps, so the BC program is still needed. This review will be conducted annually. Eventually some poultry sectors will only be audited under their national program.

The committee has four recommendations for changes to the manual:

- i. The removal of standard 11 - Individual flock health records must be maintained
- ii. The removal of standard 14 – A management program that prevents the contamination of feed and water sources must be in place
- iii. Including the modified Turkey Farmers of Canada sample emergency preparedness plan as an example of an emergency preparedness plan.
- iv. The removal of highly recommended measures from the audit tool

Emergency Operations Centre (Avian Influenza and Flood)

During January to October, section chief EOC meetings were held monthly other than during summer. The monthly calls discussed issues such as preparedness under covid and designated employer. Senior regional CFIA staff, AGRI staff and AgSafe staff are invited to participate in all the meetings. The goal of the meetings is to further communication and teamwork and to advance the poultry sector's preparedness for a possible avian influenza outbreak or other emergency.

We were fortunate to find a new EOC director and planning chief in 2021. Cathy Van-Martin joined Dan Kampen as an EOC director. Cathy has extensive EOC and ICS experience from her work with the Burnaby Fire Department. Krista Harris, also very experienced with ICS and EOC from her work with the Abbotsford Fire Department will be the lead planning chief for the poultry EOC. Allan Cross stepped off the EOC, so the EOC is looking for an additional EOC director.

In October, Cathy led an EOC/ISC training session for ten producers.

The annual flu shot reminder letter was sent out.

In November, the EOC showed that all the training and organization worked – we were ready for an emergency and when the floods hit, the poultry EOC was able to activate within hours. Daily Zoom calls were held, response goals were identified, action plans were created and implemented, crisis messaging, and communications were prioritized and executed, task forces were developed, new ICS positions were developed, daily and weekly reports were provided, and the EOC was expanded to meet daily needs of affected poultry farms. The first accomplishment was getting feed and water to farms. The poultry EOC worked with the Abbotsford EOC and provincial emergency agencies. We supplied staff for the permitting department to assist getting critical trucks to and from farms. The EOC was deactivated in early December.

Lessons learned from the food emergency will be brought back to our regular EOC meetings.

Rapid Response

Allen Knowles is the industry lead for rapid response teams. The team membership lists are almost all filled. Industry rapid response teams held virtual meetings with their CFIA counterparts, and some teams participated in socially distanced training exercises with CFIA team members. Several rapid response team members were fit tested.

AI Surveillance

The provincial vet lab continues to test high mortalities in turkeys and eggs as part of AI surveillance. Early detection of AI should help minimize the spread of AI. The flood caused serious damage to the provincial vet lab and it's not sure when it will reopen. This is great loss for rapid AI testing. Samples will now have to be sent to Winnipeg for AI testing.