

The Animal Health TWG has reached agreement on testing and certification for several equine and bovine diseases. The USA has also agreed to remove import testing requirements for two swine diseases.

The Pesticide TWG exchanged information but has been principally waiting for the results of domestic reviews of pesticide policies in both Canada and the USA.

The Plant, Health, Seeds and Fertilizer TWG has made progress in developing a reciprocal, modified inspection and certification system for the two-way movement of large volumes of greenhouse plant materials and in developing an operational framework for trade in nursery plants from areas of the USA infested with Japanese beetles.

The Food, Beverage and Colour Additives and Unavoidable Contaminants TWG made important progress toward having parallel food additive submission processes in both countries. In Canada, an amendment to the Food and Drug Regulations is being considered by Health and Welfare Canada to provide public notification when a food additive submission is received by the Department. This would mirror current U.S. Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) practice. The USFDA has made a commitment to amend its regulations so as to interpret the Freedom of Information Act as preventing the release of scientific data and information provided by Canada in confidence. Resolving this should improve the availability to scientists in both countries of the same toxicological and efficacy evaluation data, and should assist officials in reaching consistent conclusions in similar time frames.

It has been suggested that a new harmonized and more stringent level be adopted for aflatoxin contamination in food, USFDA is also working toward an amended policy that would allow draft regulations to be shared with the Government of Canada.

The Packaging and Labelling TWG has been examining nutrition labelling, ingredient listing and claims, food composition standards and grade nomenclature. The group has also reviewed container size regulations. With respect to the enrichment of flour and pending resolution of procedural questions on implementation, the acceptance of the equivalence of existing Canadian and U.S. standards has been tentatively recommended by the regulating departments of both countries.

The Fish and Fishery Products Inspection TWG has focused its attention on equivalence for a range of standards, tolerances and inspection activity levels, inspection systems, quality factors, aquaculture and the control of fish disease transmission. Of particular interest are efforts to establish equivalent safety