



Canadian Food
Inspection Agency


Agence canadienne
d'inspection des aliments

the face

of excellence

**Human
Resources
Strategy
2003-2008**

Canada



Cat No.: A104-19/2003
ISBN: 0-662-67500-2
P0305-03
October 10, 2003



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Achieving excellence through our people

Safeguarding Canadians

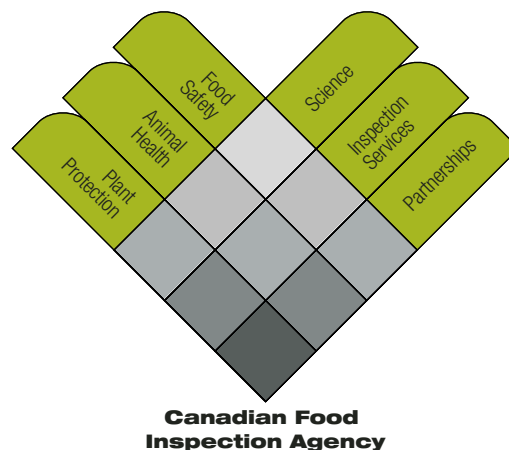
It is impossible to talk about the work of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) without talking about our people. It is the excellence of our employees that gives Canadians confidence that the CFIA remains steadfast in its commitment to safeguard Canada's food supply and the plants and animals upon which safe and high-quality food depends.

Our employees enhance food safety by developing and implementing regulations and surveillance strategies to maintain compliance with federal legislation, as well as creating and promoting education and public



awareness programs. Our people are out making sure that facilities for hatching eggs, butchering meat, and processing fish for public consumption are inspected and that food products are safe to eat. In addition, CFIA staff ensure that honey and fresh fruit and vegetables coming from federally registered establishments and produce warehouses in Canada, or being imported from outside the country, are safe, wholesome and appropriately labeled. CFIA staff also review food labels for accuracy and analyze samples from both imported and domestic foods for impurities, drug residues or anything that might cause disease.

Our employees protect Canada's plant resource base by working to prevent the introduction and spread of pests and diseases, and by controlling and eradicating them. Our inspectors monitor plants, plant material, and other related matter

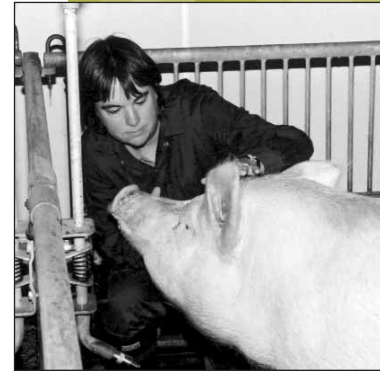




entering the country to reduce the risks to our ecosystem and to monitor goods intended for export from Canada to facilitate compliance with the requirements of foreign countries. The CFIA also works with various international organizations in support of the international control of plant pests.

Our employees enhance animal health
by working to control and eradicate diseases
affecting animals as well as diseases that

could be transmitted to humans who come into contact with such animals. Our people inspect livestock premises and hatcheries as well as animals that enter the country from abroad. When reportable outbreaks of animal disease occur, the CFIA works to eradicate or control them. To enhance the security of the food chain, Agency employees also regulate veterinary biologics and animal feeds.



The invaluable work performed by our people highlights the need for a skilled workforce to meet the expectations of Canadians concerning their food supply.

A focus on science

Our employees are highly skilled, with more than 70% working in a scientific, professional or technical capacity. These include agronomists, veterinarians, biologists, chemists, research scientists, laboratory technicians and front-line inspectors, as well as support staff and managers.

CFIA's employees safeguard Canada's food supply and the plants and animals on which that supply depends. It's a big responsibility, one that requires us to inspect meat packing facilities, monitor agricultural imports and ensure food is accurately labelled, to name just a few of our many functions.

Central to them all, however, is the use of science as the basis of program design and delivery. The CFIA is Canada's largest science-based regulatory agency, meaning that solid science is the cornerstone of our policy creation and regulatory decision-making. Scientific knowledge and practice put us in a strong position to deal effectively with emerging concerns such as regulation of biotechnology-derived products and the threat of bio-terrorism. From laboratory science such as testing and research through risk assessment, surveillance, analysis and regulatory research, our scientific expertise is crucial to the furthering of our three business objectives: food safety, plant protection and animal health.

Why we need a human resources strategy

Given the importance of these responsibilities, the challenge is to attract the best people possible and to make sure they stay with us to exercise their skills to the benefit of all Canadians. But as you will see, evolving federal government priorities, a changing operational environment and demographic realities are making this challenge bigger than ever.



Federal government priorities

By 2010, the federal government plans to double its investment in research and development, and strengthen scientific, laboratory and corporate capacities to put Canada among the world's top five innovator countries. The current number of science and technology workers in Canada will need to double to meet these goals and deal with the perpetual advance of technology.¹

Recent events have also demanded a review of procedures aimed at keeping Canada's borders secure. Many federal agencies have been affected by efforts to strengthen cross-border security without overly inconveniencing the travelling public or hindering the safe import and export of goods—including food and related products.

These demands are occurring as the government of Canada moves toward a style of management that is open, transparent and accountable. It emphasizes results and values-based management, as well as responsible spending and due diligence. Given the need to attract and retain top-quality federal employees, there is also a growing trend to make human resources management more flexible and responsive to employees' needs.

At the same time, federal employers must continue to capitalize on the diversity and linguistic duality of Canadian society by embracing multiculturalism.

¹ Source: *A Bold Challenge to all Canadians*, Speech from the Throne, January 2001

In carrying out its mandate to safeguard Canada’s food supply, plants and animals, the Agency has established five strategic goals for 2003–2008. Each goal supports established Government of Canada priorities, providing key benefits for all Canadians.

The government of Canada’s priorities	CFIA strategic goals
Public health	Protecting Canadians from preventable health risks
Economic growth	Delivering a fair and effective regulatory regime
Environmental protection	Sustaining the plant and animal resource base
Public security	Promoting the security of Canada’s food supply
Good governance	Providing sound Agency management

The external picture

The CFIA’s plans and priorities are influenced by a number of challenges that could affect the future of food safety, animal health and plant protection in Canada. Issues such as increased global trade, major pest and disease outbreaks, evolving (and in some conflicting cases) science and changing societal values require strategic responses by governments and agri-food industries. The Agency addresses these challenges and strives to reduce risks as part of its overall planning process.

On the human resources front:

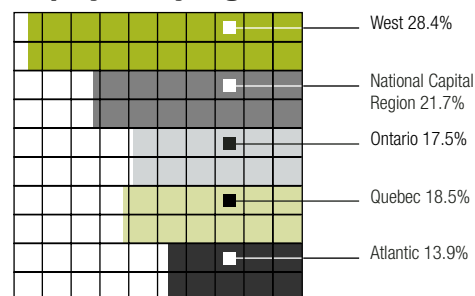
- Public- and private-sector employers are realizing they must find new ways to retain workers, whether by fostering a better work–life balance, providing career mobility or offering life-long learning opportunities.
- There is enormous competition for talented candidates. Given that the same factors are affecting not just the CFIA’s efforts to find the best people, but also those of other employers, it is crucial that we maintain a clear vision of human resources management for the next five years and beyond.

The internal picture

A demographic snapshot²

The CFIA's workforce includes over 5,500 dedicated employees,³ the vast majority of whom (82.5%) are permanent. The headquarters of the CFIA is located in the National Capital Region, with area offices in Western Canada, Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canada.

Distribution of employees by region



Over the past year, the Agency continued efforts to ensure a diverse and representative workforce where linguistic duality and employment equity principles are valued and supported.

As of March 31, 2003, francophone representation at the Agency was 26%, compared to 22.7% for the Canadian population. For the past four years, francophone representation at the Agency has consistently exceeded that of the Canadian population.

Employment Equity Designated Group representation at CFIA compared to Canadian labour market availability

Employment Equity Designated Group	Percentage of the Canadian labour market ⁴	Percentage of CFIA workforce as of March 31, 2003
Women	44.6%	44.9%
Aboriginal Peoples	1.7%	1.5%
Persons with Disabilities	4.6%	2.9%
Visible Minorities	8.6%	6.6%

² As at March 31, 2003.

³ For human resources purposes, “employees” represents total number of employees on strength with the CFIA.

⁴ Figures based on 1996 Statistics Canada census data and 1991 *Health and Activities Limitations Survey*.

The Agency continues to implement policies, systems and programs to increase representation of designated group members with specific focus on those groups where the gaps between labour market availability and representation are most significant.

Renewing our workforce: Progress to date

To cope with growing demand for CFIA services, the number of employees grew by 20 percent from 1997 to 2003. Although the Agency's average three-year retention rate of 86% indicates that employees are overwhelmingly likely to stay, a forecasted five-year retirement eligibility rate of 25% in the key scientific, professional and technical groups will continue to be a focus for recruitment, retention and succession planning strategies.

The CFIA is working to meet these and other human resources challenges that we face now and will encounter in the coming years. Much has been done to move toward the objectives set out in our last human resources strategy. We have progressed toward maintaining a qualified workforce, attracting and retaining skilled employees, and ensuring a supportive workplace for all.

Meeting the challenge

We will have to overcome a variety of tough challenges to achieve our business objectives. Internally, it is clear that our biggest challenge will be ensuring a skilled workforce to keep pace with global change. This is further complicated in light of impending retirements, which, if taken at the same time, could cause a significant loss of expertise, particularly among senior management, as well as scientific, professional and technical employees.

A challenging future

- Intense national and global competition for talented employees
- Significant forecasted retirements of experienced staff, particularly within the scientific and professional and technical groups, as well as from the management cadre
- Need to be representative of an increasingly diverse Canadian society
- Shrinking workforce pool of appropriately skilled potential employees
- Increasing demands related to technology
- Need to ensure a solid CFIA talent-management strategy in order to close skills gaps

Building on success

Meeting these challenges and maintaining the quality of our work at the CFIA can only be sustained by enhancing the quality of our workforce.

The strategy: Our human resources priorities for 2003-2008

The Agency recognizes the importance of developing a human resources strategy that facilitates achievement of CFIA's strategic goals. It is through the work of Agency employees that we will meet these strategic goals (see page 5).

With this strategy, CFIA is continuing the cyclical process of setting its human resources course for the future. To meet the challenges ahead and ensure that we achieve the goals set out in our business plan, our **four key human resource priorities** over the next five years will be to:

- support **effective leadership**;
- promote a **productive workforce**;
- create an **enabling work environment**; and
- establish a **sustainable workforce**.



These human resource priorities were developed through consultations with employees and managers across the country, as well as by analyzing the internal and external factors affecting human resources management. By focusing on these areas, we will ensure not only that we are a respected employer for our skilled staff, but also that we provide a rewarding work experience for all of our people.

1. Support effective leadership by ensuring that leaders and managers have the skills and competencies required for today's business environment and to sustain delivery of the Agency's mandate into the future.

Every organization must have skilled, principled leaders if it is to succeed. At the CFIA, a significant percentage of our senior managers—37.6%—will be eligible to retire over the next five years, along with 25% of employees in the scientific and professional and technical groups. We are preparing for this

eventuality by developing a succession planning process that encourages strong leadership and continuity in business-critical, science-based positions. This will be supported by training to help leaders acquire and maintain the skills they need to be effective as managers of both business and people. Creating the next generation of senior managers requires a solid strategy aimed at ensuring our organization's talent is recognized and developed. Finally, we must see to it that those now in leadership positions continue to be successful in their own work and that they actively support the development of those reporting to them.

What we will do: We will fine-tune succession planning for our leaders, especially senior managers and key scientific personnel, and create developmental and training programs to target identified gaps. We will continue to implement our management learning continuum, emphasizing the development of up-and-coming leaders. In addition, managers will be made accountable for enabling appropriate training for their staff. We will establish accountability-based performance agreements for executives, evaluating their performance in the areas of employment equity, occupational health and safety, and official languages.

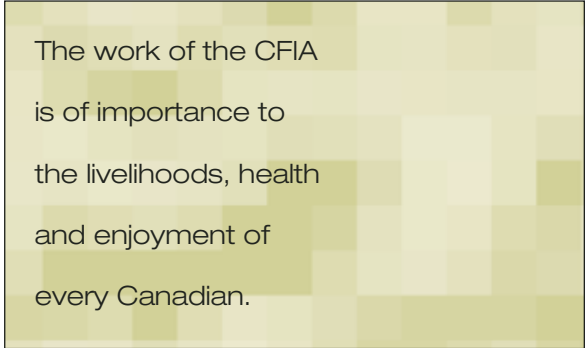
We are developing a succession planning process that encourages strong leadership and continuity in business-critical, science-based positions.



2. Promote a productive workforce that delivers the CFIA's programs and services in an efficient and effective manner.

The work of the CFIA is of such importance to the livelihoods, health and enjoyment of every Canadian that it is our mandated responsibility to do it as well as possible. We are committed to continuing our support for a dynamic, well-trained, resourceful and competent workforce that can demonstrate concrete results to the public. It is also important that our people feel appreciated and supported; to that end, we understand the need for strategies to recognize their efforts and provide timely and effective communication.

What we will do: We will implement this human resources strategy to guide the next five years of the organization's development. We will implement results-based human resources management that will use a performance measurement framework to measure human resources priorities and outcomes. Business processes will continue to be streamlined and automated to improve data capture. Data integrity will be enhanced and information delivery will be improved through Web redesign. We will evaluate and, where necessary, enhance our recruitment and retention strategies. We will continue to enhance our internal communications, as well as promote and encourage the recognition of employee achievements. We will seek to improve organizational health through the alignment of wellness programs with a corporate wellness strategy and through the collection of employee feedback.



The work of the CFIA is of importance to the livelihoods, health and enjoyment of every Canadian.

3. Create an enabling environment so that employees can deliver high-level client service while reaching their full career potential.

For our people to be productive, they must receive the support they need. The most important element of that support is the environment in which they work, which encompasses everything from having adequate training to ensuring a safe work environment and access to the proper equipment. It is also essential that we continue our efforts to become a truly inclusive employer, one that reflects the diverse cultural, ethnic and linguistic nature of the society it serves.

With talented candidates fielding offers from across the country and around the world, the CFIA must ensure it is known as an employer offering a positive work environment and extensive opportunity.

What we will do: We will continue to work toward implementation of CFIA-specific classification standards for Science Professional and Veterinarian employees in the BI, AG, CH and VM occupational groups, to better meet the Agency's unique requirements. We will ensure supporting scientific, technical, and management training is up-to-date and accessible. We will progress in our efforts to implement a values-based staffing system. We will implement an integrated program of policies and guidelines that supports flexible, efficient and effective staffing and ensure opportunities for career advancement. We will continue to make employment equity and official languages principles central to everything we do.



Recognizing excellence

At the CFIA, we honour our people and what they have accomplished through awards programs. Our employees have also been recognized externally with awards from other public and private sector organizations.

The human resource challenges facing us in the years ahead must dictate our actions now.

4. Establish a sustainable workforce in which the skills and knowledge of employees are managed effectively.

The human resource challenges facing us in the years ahead must dictate our actions now. We must stay focused on managing the skills and knowledge of our employees as effectively as possible if we are to continue to perform at the standard

Canadians expect of us. We must be a learning organization that ensures its viability through strong business practices based on the management of our human resources.

What we will do: We will increase our focus on learning Agency-wide through the development of a learning strategy for the Agency that will provide a coordinated approach to technical and non-technical learning for employees of the CFIA. Electronic learning will be further pursued and developed in order to most efficiently and effectively reach and train the maximum number of employees. We will continue to work toward ensuring that human resources needs and human resources planning are fully integrated into the CFIA's business planning process. We will continue effective consultation with our employees' bargaining units to ensure modern and competitive approaches to compensation.

By setting our standards high, we will continue to provide outstanding service to Canadians.



Making sure we get there

While it is vital that we set out our plan for human resources management over the coming years, that plan is effective only if we ensure it is put into action. To that end, we are using a new results- and accountability-based performance measurement framework for reporting our progress. The Human Resources Performance Measurement Framework establishes the human resources areas to be measured and includes concrete indicators that will assist in providing a clear statistical picture of how well the CFIA is performing. It is closely linked to the CFIA's four key human resources priorities, establishing measures for each that will provide invaluable data on our progress in making them a reality. The framework will also enable us to base our yearly reports to Parliament on quantifiable results.

Looking ahead

There are few things more important to Canadians than the safety of the food they and their families eat. At the CFIA, it is our job to have the right people in sufficient numbers to continue to provide peace of mind about our food supply. The knowledge, skills and abilities of our highly skilled employees are paramount to the successful achievement of our mandate.

We have the flexibility to create a dynamic organization that values its people and their achievements.

The period covered by this strategy will be a time of great change and challenge, both outside and inside the CFIA. Staff will face increasing demands as the food supply chain becomes increasingly global in nature and technology continues to advance. Managers will be required to move to a results-based approach emphasizing innovation, accountability and risk-taking, all the while dealing with a workforce that is more diverse in every respect than at any time in our history. The CFIA will see greater competition for a smaller pool of the knowledgeable, competent employees required to carry out its mandate.

If we are to meet these challenges, it will require strong leadership and a sustained commitment to creating a highly desirable workplace for all qualified candidates. Fortunately, we have already set out on this path—we are well positioned to carry out the vital work we do to meet the needs of Canadians.

Our separate employer status allows us the flexibility to create a dynamic organization that values its people and their achievements. Effective human resources planning, closely aligned with the Agency's business planning, will strive to ensure that we not only meet the goals we have set for ourselves, but also that we communicate them effectively across the organization.

The next half decade will be a challenging time indeed, but by preparing now, the CFIA is poised to emerge as a strong, effective organization with a solid human resource foundation built on the excellence of its people.