

CANADA BRITISH COLUMBIA MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
ON COORDINATION OF FISH INSPECTION PROGRAMS

between

CANADA, REPRESENTED BY THE  
DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES AND OCEANS

and

BRITISH COLUMBIA, REPRESENTED BY THE  
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD

and the

MINISTRY OF HEALTH<sup>i</sup>

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (Canada) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (British Columbia) and the Ministry of Health (British Columbia) wish to identify and clarify their respective roles regarding fish inspection programs and to review issues that may arise from time to time and develop procedures for dealing with them.

Therefore the Parties will create a Fish Inspection Directors Steering Committee consisting of the Executive Director of Environmental Health Protection Service, Ministry of Health, the Director, Aquaculture and Commercial Fisheries Branch, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Director of Inspection and Special services Branch Department of Fisheries and Oceans to implement activities and coordinate resources under further memoranda of understanding approved by the committee as follows:

1. Coordinated fish inspection programs will have the following objectives:
  - a) To assist each party to provide reasonable health and safety assurances to the public under the mandate of respective Fish Inspection Acts (Canada and British Columbia);
  - b) To provide a framework for coordination and implementation of fish inspection programs and activities; and
  - c) To avoid duplication of efforts, while providing maximum program efficiency and regulatory effectiveness.
- 2) The parties will implement complementary fish inspection programs:
  - a) To inspect fish and facilities used for the handling, holding, transporting, processing and sale of fish;
  - b) To identify minimum compliance standards for the grading, handling, holding, transporting and processing of fish;
  - c) To monitor and enforce Fish Inspection Regulations and Fisheries Regulations as prescribed in the respective Federal and Provincial Acts and Regulations; and
  - d) To recommend regulatory changes in the respective Fish Inspection and Fisheries Regulations.

- 3) It is recognized that, in general,
  - a) British Columbia is responsible for the administration of fish inspection programs for those facilities which handle product destined for intraprovincial sales;
  - b) Canada is responsible for the administration of fish inspection programs for imported products and those facilities which handle products for interprovincial or export sales.
- 4) The three directors shall meet from time to time to review programs of mutual interest, coordinate fish inspection activities and enforcement actions, create annexes to the Memorandum of Understanding covering specific program details including roles of the parties and clarify jurisdictional issues.
- 5) Chairmanship will rotate annually between the three parties.
- 6) This Memorandum of Understanding will continue in force until one year after one party formally notifies the other party of its intent to terminate the Memorandum of Understanding.
- 7) This Memorandum of Understanding outlines the nature of cooperation between the parties in carrying out their respective responsibilities relating to fish inspection, and is not intended to create a legal relationship between them.

ANNEX to the Memorandum of Understanding  
On Coordination of Fish Inspection Programs

The following administrative arrangements have been put in place:

- 1) The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food will monitor aquaculture activities at farm sites with respect to the use and control of therapeutic drugs, other chemical agents and sanitation.
- 2) The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food will inspect all vehicles and unloading sites that require buyer licences to ensure compliance with the Fish Inspection Regulations of British Columbia. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans will inspect fishing vessel fish holds as a condition of licensing.
- 3) The Department of Fisheries and Oceans will coordinate and administer the Sanitary Shellfish and Paralytic Shellfish Poison Control Programs including the monitoring of federally registered and provincially licensed mollusc processing and packing plants and the analyses of product.
- 4) The Department of Fisheries and Oceans will inspect processed aquaculture fin fish at federally registered processing plants to determine whether residues from therapeutic drugs and chemical agents used in aquaculture operations are in compliance with the Food and Drug Act.
- 5) The Department of Fisheries and Oceans will inspect sport caught fish canneries and product to determine compliance with the Fisheries Act Regulations of British Columbia.
- 6) The Department of Fisheries and Oceans will inspect commercial canneries and product to determine compliance with the Fish Inspection Regulations of Canada and British Columbia.
- 7) The Ministry of Health will be responsible for food safety programs in food services, retail stores and those processing facilities holding only Provincial fish processing licences.
- 8) The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food will licence and inspect fish buying and vending facilities, sports caught fish processing facilities other than canneries, and marine plant processing and license processing plants after an acceptable inspection by either the Ministry of Health or the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

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<sup>i</sup> The above is a reproduction of the original document that was signed in 1991 by the Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Deputy Minister of Agriculture Fisheries and Food and the Deputy Minister of Health.