

<b>Working Group</b>	Agriculture & Food #1	
<b>Action Plan Initiative</b>	Meat and Poultry Products: Equivalence	
<b>Deliverable outcome</b>	Streamline requirements and simplify associated administrative procedures for products produced under Canada and U.S. equivalent meat and poultry product inspection systems. Ensure public health goals are met by sharing information, including data, on performance indicators to verify control of key system components, such as government oversight, HACCP systems, and microbiological and chemical residue testing programs. Reduce where possible, certain specific regulatory requirements as they pertain to inspection and re-inspection activities.	
<b>Task team members</b>	Canada – Canadian Food and Inspection Agency (CFIA), Dr. Richard Arsenault [e-mail: Richard.Arsenault@inspection.gc.ca] US – United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) [e-mail: RCC-BTB@one.usda.gov]	
<b>Action items</b>	Action Item 1: Streamline requirements and procedures related to equivalency.	Action Item 2: Establish a mechanism to maintain and promote continued alignment
	<b>Interim Deliverables</b>	
<b>3-6 Months</b>	<p>Conduct an inventory and assessment of each country's food safety inspection equivalence requirements to identify similarities, differences, and gaps. Elements that would be considered in this exercise include: HACCP and SSOP requirements, government oversight, microbiological and chemical residue testing, compliance and system verification. The regulatory basis for requiring "continuous inspection" (e.g. daily inspection presence) in federally registered meat processing facilities will be examined.</p> <p>This assessment would also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reviewing the availability of data collected by each system under existing regulatory requirements.</li> <li>- Developing a combined set of objective and quantifiable regulatory performance indicators, which are outcome based (i.e. public health and food safety) and include operational measures.</li> <li>- Identifying linkages to public health and food safety outcomes to determine if alternate approaches can provide a similar or higher level of protection.</li> </ul>	Establish a bilateral mechanism between CFIA and FSIS to address both strategic and technical issues.
<b>6-12 Months</b>	Identify options for amending, replacing, or removing requirements (existing or proposed) related to the differences or "gaps" between the FSIS and CFIA food safety inspection equivalence requirements. Identify how enhanced data/information sharing could be used to support modifications to existing regulatory requirements.	As an initial task, monitor progress of deliverables identified under Action Item #1 including: pilots and policy, regulatory or administrative changes as required.

<p><b>12-18 Months</b></p>	<p>Develop a joint report identifying both short term or interim solutions to enhance equivalency, as well as longer term issues that will require regulatory change. This will include identifying the mechanism and the frequency for how data can be exchanged on an on-going basis. Develop work plans and milestones for moving forward with implementation of recommended changes.</p> <p>Begin implementation; piloting changes when necessary to achieve desired outcomes.</p>	<p>Review report from Action Item 1. Continue to monitor progress on making adjustments in both countries to advance regulatory alignment.</p>
<p><b>Beyond 18 Months</b></p>	<p>Evaluation of any pilot projects to determine next steps.</p> <p>Assess and report on the outcomes of any policy, regulatory, or administrative changes.</p>	