

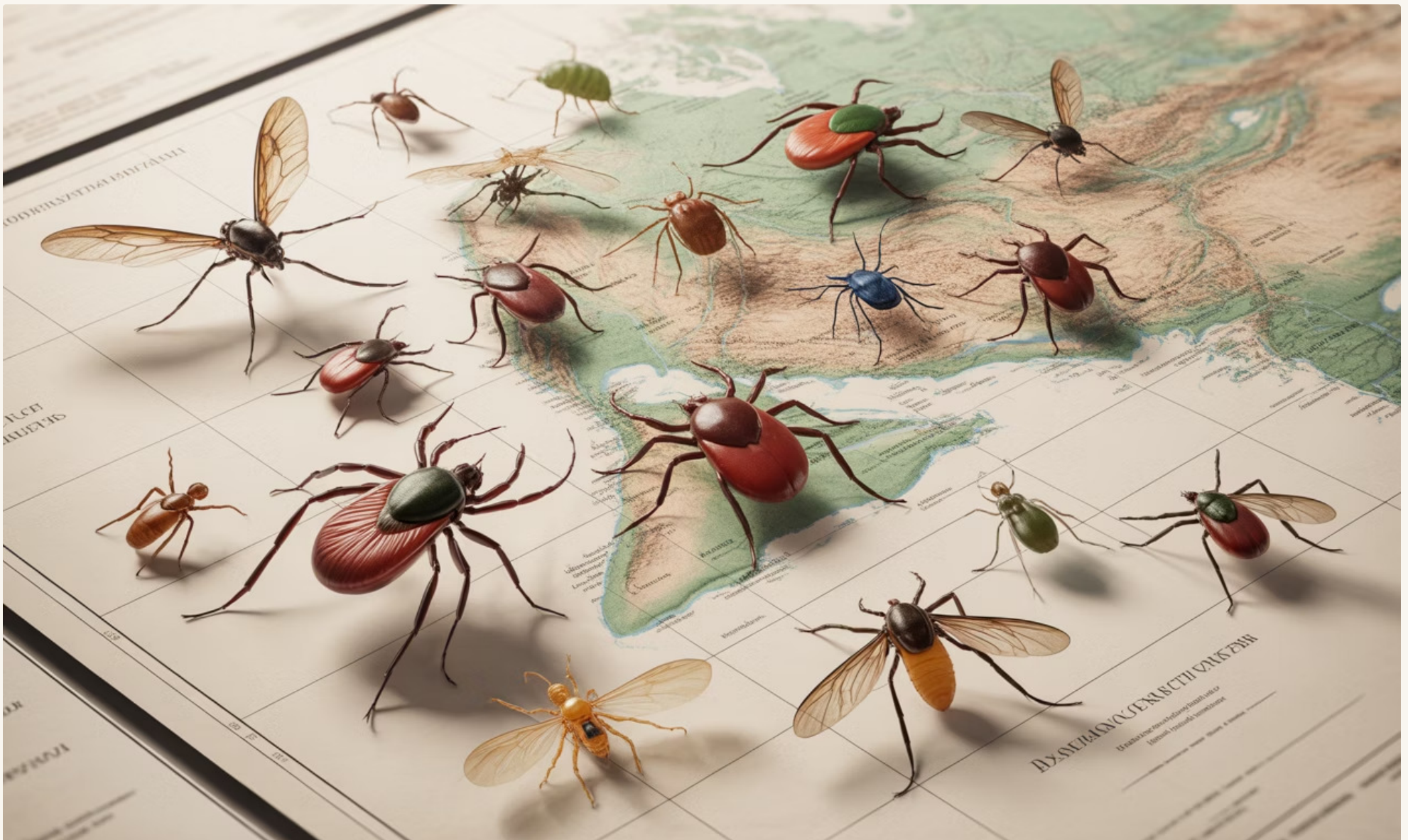
CSF Operations Update Fall 2025



The close of 2025 has been fast-paced and full of change, with Canada's livestock sector facing new challenges and opportunities on every front. For the Canadian Sheep Federation (CSF), the focus has been on staying ahead of that curve—ensuring producers have a voice in the policies and systems that shape their businesses. From disease surveillance and traceability modernization to animal health leadership and international trade, this period has been about solidifying progress, anticipating risks, and positioning the sheep industry for success in an increasingly digital, data-driven world.

Disease Surveillance and Emerging Threats

The global disease landscape continues to shift rapidly, with climate change, wildlife movement, and trade patterns increasing exposure risks. CSF continues to participate actively in CAHSS and CEZD discussions, where the convergence of vector expansion, climate influence, and international livestock movement is creating new pressure points across animal health systems.



New World Screwworm and Border Threats

The Vector-Borne Disease Network provided some of the starkest updates this fall. New World screwworm has now advanced to within 70 miles of the U.S.–Mexico border, with cases in cattle described as catastrophic tissue infestations. The U.S. FDA responded with conditional approval of Doramectin (Detomidine CA1) for prevention and treatment — a development relevant to Canadian import controls should the pest cross northward.

Asian Longhorn Tick Detection

Closer to home, the Asian Longhorn tick was detected in southeastern Michigan and at Canada's doorstep. A truckload of 75 Angus heifers was refused entry at the Queenston port of entry after inspectors found heavy tick infestations, prompting follow-up on emergency communication protocols. The delay in internal notification exposed coordination gaps that are now being addressed through updated training and clearer reporting pathways. Meanwhile, awareness campaigns and the E-Tick surveillance tool are being leveraged to encourage early detection by companion-animal clinics, equine professionals, and producers.

Domestic Disease Developments

Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever

Tick-borne and vector diseases are now clearly a domestic issue. Rocky Mountain spotted fever was confirmed in dogs and, for the first time, humans in Quebec and Ontario, with local tick surveillance identifying *Rickettsia rickettsii* in American dog ticks. Stakeholders recommended making the disease reportable — an important policy signal for public-animal health integration.

West Nile Virus Activity

West Nile virus activity remains elevated, with 187 human cases and 37 equine cases reported nationally this season.

Lumpy Skin Disease in Europe

Beyond North America, Lumpy Skin Disease was confirmed for the first time in Europe, with outbreaks escalating across Italy, France, and Spain. CFIA has already restricted certain bovine imports from affected regions. Sheep pox remains entrenched in southern Europe, reinforcing the need for Canada's continued vigilance on import risk assessments.

Small Ruminant Concerns

The Small Ruminant Network also reported avian influenza spillover infections in goats — another reminder of the unpredictable cross-species nature of this virus — and an increase in stable fly infestations in Quebec, where no approved products are currently labeled for control. The issue highlights gaps in veterinary product access for minor species that CSF continues to raise in national regulatory discussions.

- ❑ Taken together, these developments reinforce the importance of integrated surveillance, transparent data sharing, and rapid risk communication — all pillars of the framework CSF supports through collaboration with its industry partners. As climate patterns shift and animal movement intensifies, the Federation's engagement ensures the sheep sector remains connected to the earliest warning systems shaping Canada's preparedness posture.

Antimicrobial Use and Resistance (AMU/AMR)

The conversation around antimicrobial resistance is maturing from awareness to accountability — and, increasingly, economics. Recent work shared through the CAHSS AMU Network quantified, for the first time, the economic cost of AMR in livestock production. Modeling from Denmark and Ethiopia showed resistance contributing to 2.7% of pig health losses and 4.4% of cattle losses, equating globally to 481 million litres of lost milk — enough to feed 31 million people.

Economic Impact

These figures mark a turning point: antimicrobial resistance is no longer just a public health risk; it is a measurable economic liability. This framing will be valuable as CSF continues to advocate for coordinated AMU monitoring and access to veterinary products that balance stewardship with livestock health and welfare needs.

Regulatory Response

At the same time, Health Canada's proposed reclassification of over-the-counter antimicrobials continues to draw strong industry feedback. The CSF's submission reinforced that regulatory controls must not outpace the realities of field access — particularly in extensive and remote production systems where veterinary coverage is limited. The Federation's position remains that stewardship depends on availability, education, and accountability, not restriction alone.



Global Surveillance Framework

Work on AMR surveillance and stewardship is gaining traction internationally through the Global Burden of Animal Diseases (GBADS) platform. That framework — already used to model economic losses — offers a pathway to standardize health and productivity indicators across species and regions. CSF's engagement here is strategic: connecting Canada's on-farm data and traceability infrastructure to the global language of measurable sustainability.

The underlying message this fall is that antimicrobial resistance is finally being treated as a solvable problem, provided systems like ours can quantify impact. As the data sharpen, CSF's contribution is to ensure Canada's sheep sector is recognized not as a minor data point, but as a model for right-sized, evidence-based stewardship.

Animal Health and Emergency Preparedness

National coordination in animal health and disease preparedness advanced substantially this quarter under Animal Health Canada's leadership. The appointment of Dr. Cassidy Klemer as AHC's incoming Executive Director marks a new chapter for the organization, reinforcing its focus on national coordination across animal health, welfare, and food security.

01	02	03
FAD Executive Management Board	FMD Response Planning	E-Learning Expansion
The AHC Emergency Management Division announced the formal establishment of a Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) Executive Management Board, modeled on the proven structure used for African Swine Fever preparedness. This framework now anchors leadership teams for Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD), African Swine Fever, and Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza, each tasked with prioritizing national preparedness gaps, coordinating simulation exercises, and standardizing outbreak response planning.	For FMD specifically, the first Integrated Emergency Response Plan (IERP) — developed by Serecon Consulting and tested through national tabletop exercises — has been released. A companion Gaps Analysis document identifies areas where Canadian readiness requires investment, including vaccine logistics, communication protocols, and compensation frameworks. The FMD Leadership Team's mandate is to refine these priorities, aligning government and industry capacity to respond quickly and consistently across provinces.	Animal Health Canada's e-learning expansion continues to strengthen field-level preparedness. Courses such as the Incident Command Structure for Agriculture and biosecurity training for small ruminants are now in high demand. CSF has been an active participant in these efforts, ensuring the needs of sheep producers are directly represented as national training standards evolve.

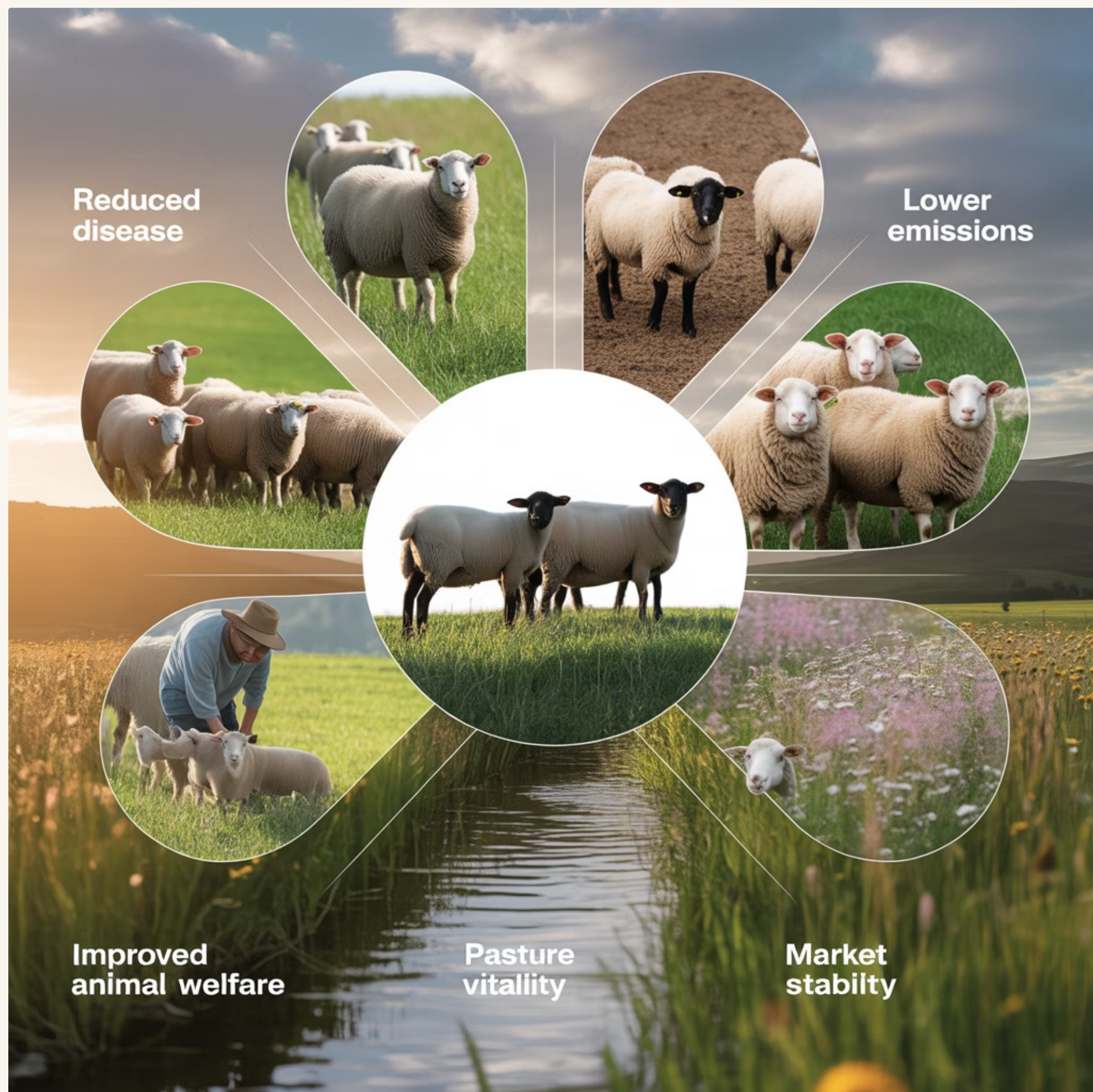
Animal Welfare Committee

Animal Health Canada also reaffirmed its intent to reconstitute an Animal Welfare Committee, extending beyond NFACC's Code of Practice process to support outcome-based welfare indicators that can integrate digitally into traceability and certification systems — a move aligned with CSF's own traceability modernization initiatives.

Collectively, these efforts strengthen Canada's national framework for early detection, coordinated response, and business continuity in the face of foreign animal disease threats. CSF's involvement through the FMD Leadership Team ensures that the sheep sector remains both protected and proactive within the broader One Health framework guiding federal and provincial animal health strategy.

Traceability and Technology

The past two months have marked a major inflection point in the evolution of traceability within Canada's sheep sector. The Canadian Sheep Federation has reached a tentative agreement with CFIA on the content of the Responsible Administrator Agreement, establishing the regulatory foundation for the sector's transition to a modernized, data-driven national traceability framework.



AgroLedger Platform

At the core of this transformation is AgroLedger, CSF's blockchain-enabled traceability platform designed to do far more than record animal movements. It actively generates real-time tracing analytics capable of identifying at-risk animals, locations, and transport conveyances in seconds — a leap forward from today's static data repositories. This functionality is based on the same epidemiological models CFIA uses in disease investigations, meaning the system can immediately replicate outbreak-tracing workflows without external intervention.

Interest in AgroLedger continues to grow, driven by its dual role as both a regulatory compliance tool and an on-farm management platform. Producers increasingly view the system as a means to derive value from data they already collect, while maintaining ownership and privacy through blockchain-based permissions that separate regulated data from private business information. This approach directly responds to producers' long-standing demand that traceability provide operational benefits — not just regulatory reporting.

Evolving Definition of Traceability

Meanwhile, the definition of traceability itself continues to evolve, as discussed at recent DIASCA meetings. Internationally, traceability is no longer confined to animal movement records; it now encompasses environmental and social accountability, linking identification systems to issues such as deforestation risk, antimicrobial use tracking, land-use mapping, and product transparency throughout supply chains. These expanding expectations are already influencing import/export policy, market access, and consumer certification requirements. CSF's strategy — building adaptive systems that integrate health, sustainability, and production data within one secure platform — positions Canada's sheep sector to stay ahead of that curve rather than reacting to it.

Facial Recognition and Innovation



Facial Recognition Technology

Alongside this, CSF continues to advance facial recognition for animal identification, a technology developed to enhance accessibility and interoperability. Using mobile devices, the system can identify animals in real time with over 96% accuracy, reducing dependence on RFID readers and creating new opportunities for automated data capture and health monitoring.

Early Parasite Detection Research

Complementing this work, CSF is exploring a new applied research project that would extend this innovation into early parasite detection. The proposed project would investigate the use of mobile imaging and artificial intelligence to identify signs of gastrointestinal nematode infection in sheep before clinical symptoms appear, using a cell phone or tablet camera to assess subtle visual cues such as eye color, body condition, and movement. At this stage, the concept remains under exploration, but it represents a promising potential extension of the digital tools already under development within the traceability ecosystem.

International Recognition

Finally, international recognition of CSF's leadership in livestock digitalization continues to grow. Following your presentation at the FAO's Sustainable Livestock Transformation Conference in Rome, CSF has been invited to speak at the "Empowering Livestock Health" conference in Riyadh, organized by the TAFS Forum and the National Livestock and Fisheries Development Program of Saudi Arabia. The invitation highlights global interest in the innovative facial traceability work being led out of Canada — and in its potential to strengthen disease control through technology.

- ❏ Together, these developments demonstrate how CSF's traceability and technology strategy is moving beyond compliance into measurable impact — advancing both animal health and sector resilience while reinforcing Canada's credibility as a digital agriculture leader.

Trade and Global Collaboration

Global market access and trade modernization have taken centre stage this fall, with CSF representing the sheep sector across multiple policy files where the intersection of trade, sustainability, and science-based regulation is rapidly reshaping competitiveness. Whether through the CUSMA 2026 review, evolving EU animal welfare standards, or international climate frameworks, CSF's objective remains consistent: ensure that Canadian lamb can move freely and competitively while aligning with emerging digital and environmental standards — on Canada's terms.

North American Trade: CUSMA 2026 Review

CSF's proposed submission to the Government of Canada's consultation on the 2026 CUSMA joint review press for tangible, science-based reforms to remove friction in cross-border sheep and lamb trade. The recommendations included:

- Elimination of U.S. retail country-of-origin labelling (COOL) for lamb, which continues to segment Canadian product and limit shelf competitiveness.
- Time-bound SPS cooperation, ensuring animal-health events are managed through recognized zoning and compartmentalization rather than default trade freezes.
- Streamlined documentation and inspection protocols, including electronic veterinary and food-safety certificates to remove redundant re-keying of identical data.
- Cross-border protection for traceability and certification data, guaranteeing that trusted, machine-readable e-certificates travel securely with the product.

These proposals rely on Chapter 3 (Agriculture) of CUSMA — the same chapter governing agricultural trade committees — as the mechanism to institutionalize predictability and prevent technical barriers from escalating into market disruptions.

For CSF, modernization isn't about new access but about operational reliability, ensuring the digital traceability systems now being built can integrate seamlessly with North American supply chains.

European Market and Climate Leadership

European Market Alignment: On-Farm Animal Welfare Modernisation

The EU's ongoing reform of its animal welfare framework represents another significant shift in how market access will be conditioned. While sheep are not among the first species listed, the consultation defines the architecture for digital monitoring and import equivalence, effectively setting the rails for future compliance.

CSF's engagement focuses on ensuring this foundation remains science-based, outcome-oriented, and WTO-consistent, supporting modernization that promotes measurable welfare outcomes verified through credible digital tools — rather than prescriptive or region-specific inputs. Early participation positions Canada to align proactively, rather than retrofit later when lamb and mutton inevitably fall within the scope of equivalence requirements.



Climate and Global Collaboration: Split Gas Leadership

The Federation's leadership on agricultural climate metrics expanded this fall through its submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development (ENVI), urging Canada to adopt a "split gas" approach to greenhouse gas reporting. This approach distinguishes between:

- Long-lived gases (CO₂, N₂O), which accumulate and require net-zero trajectories; and
- Short-lived gases like biogenic methane, which stabilize when emissions are steady or declining.

CSF's submission emphasized that treating these gases identically distorts climate policy — overstating methane's warming impact by a factor of three to four and obscuring real progress in emission intensity reductions achieved through better animal health and productivity. Adopting split gas reporting would align Canada's 2030 Emissions Reduction Plan with the latest IPCC science and position Canada as an international leader in climate transparency ahead of the 2028 UNFCCC review.

That submission built upon CSF's role in the international Joint Statement on Split Gas Reporting, co-signed by agricultural organizations from 11 nations. The statement calls on UNFCCC parties to formally recognize split gas methodologies in future inventory and NDC reporting — effectively rewriting how agricultural climate contributions are measured globally.

Together, these initiatives position CSF as a credible policy voice at the junction of trade, sustainability, and science. The Federation's consistent message — that robust traceability, improved animal health, and climate accountability are mutually reinforcing — continues to differentiate Canada's sheep sector as both a reliable trading partner and a model for sustainable livestock systems worldwide.

Looking Ahead



Disease Preparedness

Stronger surveillance systems and coordinated response frameworks protecting Canadian flocks

Digital Traceability

Modernized platforms delivering real-time analytics and operational value to producers

Climate Leadership

Science-based reporting that accurately reflects agricultural contributions and progress

Trade Advancement

Streamlined market access aligned with digital standards and sustainability expectations

The closing months of 2025 have been a time of consolidation and progress. From disease preparedness and antimicrobial stewardship to digital traceability and climate leadership, CSF's work continues to ensure the sheep industry is informed, resilient, and forward-looking. The momentum built this fall sets the stage for a pivotal 2026—one where Canadian producers can expect stronger systems, clearer policy pathways, and continued advocacy that keeps agriculture practical, science-driven, and sustainable.