



# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT





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## Your success is our vision

Our collective success would not be possible without the support of our valued members, dedicated Directors, and the valuable feedback from the producers we serve. Together we have achieved some amazing things this year, fought for Canadian sheep farmers and ranchers and created new opportunities for the sector.



# Chairman's Annual Report 2022

As I write this 2022 Canadian Sheep Federation chairman's report we in western Ontario are blessed with unusually warm autumn weather, in sharp contrast to some past years when frosty nights and frozen puddles reminded us of the coming winter season most mornings in November. As we consider the results of our efforts to lead and guide the direction of the CSF over the past year, we must consider both the challenges as well as the opportunities that influence decisions and actions taken by our board, and those of us who have accepted the leadership roles. We recognize that in order to fulfill the leadership mandate our industry has given us we must overcome the challenges and seize opportunities as they are presented, with the goal of creating the tools and structure that producers require to improve their livelihood within the Canadian sheep industry. We must also recognize that much like our weather, the only certainty that we can be assured of is change.

As we anticipate our direction forward in 2023 we do so apprehensively, with the hope that the Covid 19 challenge of the past two years may finally be behind us. We are all aware of the negative impact the pandemic imposed upon our efforts both as individuals and as an organization, however we must also recognize some of the resulting positives, our ability to safely continue interactions with others remotely while hosting meetings virtually, as well as improving remote communications, and savings in time and travel expenditures.

Canadian sheep producers have long been challenged with access to trained ultrasound technologists who are able to assess the number of fetuses' developing in a pregnant ewe's womb. Access to this technology is not only a livestock management issue but it is also an animal welfare issue, in that knowing the number of lambs a ewe is carrying helps to determine nutritional requirements of the entire flock. Recognizing the need for training of competent ultrasound technologists, CSF contracted Duncan and David Kennedy of Progressive Animal Services, Thornhill, Scotland to train nine prospective technicians in a three day, hands on training course. CSF also reached out with an offer of a one day advanced training program to the small ruminant veterinarian community as part of that training program. The program was immediately filled and we now have eighteen individuals who have expressed an interest in further iterations of this program.

Since 2004 Canadian sheep producers have been required to install national traceability tags in all sheep and lambs before they leave their farm of origin. The Canadian Sheep Identification Program is a federally regulated program administered by the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency with the assistance of the CSF. The price of each CSIP tag purchased by a sheep producer in Canada includes an administration fee payable to the CCIA among other costs. Recognizing the potential for the CSF's own AgroLedger traceability program to vastly improve not only the accuracy and speed of individual animal trace backs, but also the opportunity to create full farm to plate traceability across the entire value chain, the CSF has moved toward becoming our sector's Responsible Administrator for sheep industry traceability. Our goal is to provide access to a world class "cutting edge" full sector traceability program that is led by those who are required to use the program. CSF recognizes the importance of traceability, while also recognizing that a successful program must consider costs, labor and time intensity, and simplicity. We suggest AgroLedger not only ticks all of those requirements, but it is also poised to include additional technological identification improvements that will set the standard for global livestock traceability. The Canadian Sheep Federation is committed to improving developments in traceability and distributed ledger technology, in fact in 2022 we have incorporated a for profit subsidiary which we named PruvIT Technology Inc. To learn more about AgroLedger and FacelT technologies check our website; <https://www.pruvit.io>

Over the course of my career as a sheep producer our industry has seen many newcomers step forward to suggest they were about to radically change the business of Canadian sheep farming, with an eye to having producers fall in line behind them or else.... Most of those entities lasted a very short time, either due to a lack of understanding of our sector, because of poor management or bad timing, or in many cases the failure to recognize that all successful ventures in this sector are based upon the level of support from their fellow participants in the sector. While often the early demise of these start ups (or perhaps upstarts) is blamed on the short comings of our industry, the disruption in the marketplace creates both chaos and opportunity, short and long term. I would suggest that there is room for significant improvement within our sector, particularly with regard to processing capacity both federally and provincially. Access to processing lies primarily with both levels of government and less so with producer representative bodies such as CSF, who have brought producer concerns regarding lack of processing capacity forward to the appropriate governments. I would however question were in Canada one would find livestock marketing opportunities that would offer the low initial investment, market accessibility, entrepreneurial opportunities, and domestic market capacity compared to our domestic sheep industry.

The Canadian Sheep Federation is *the* sheep industry's national producer representative body. Our job is to champion the priorities and rights of Canada's sheep farmers and ranchers. This year, a number of the CSF's provincial member organizations launched a legal challenge of the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency's overreach as a provincial farm products marketing agency, in the form of license fee collections on sale transactions occurring outside their provincial jurisdiction. The CSF was obligated to act on behalf of the wishes of the majority of its membership and as a result CSF requested the offending marketing board to cease collections of illegal out of province license fees. A negative response led to a board hearing and we are now moving forward with an AFRAAT hearing.

I have touched upon some of the initiatives the Canadian Sheep Federation has been involved with over the past year, with the recognition that these represent a small percentage of our actual involvement in representing the interests of Canadian sheep producers across our entire country. It certainly occurs to me that while every producer benefits from the actions of the CSF, not all producers are contributing to the costs of those actions at this time. None of this work would be possible without the herculean effort put forward by our Executive Director, Corlena Patterson or the dedication of our entire volunteer Board of Directors, who generously donate their time for the benefit of every Canadian sheep producer. If you are interested in a more detailed accounting of the Canadian Sheep Federation's activities please follow our Executive Directors reports, either on our website [cansheep.ca](http://cansheep.ca) or via your provincial sheep industry representative organization, CCWG, or the CSBA.

Respectfully submitted,

Allan Ribbink, Chairman  
Canadian Sheep Federation



# Ultrasound Training

Thank you to Duncan and David Kennedy from Progressive Animal Services for making the trip from Scotland to help our participants become better at scanning. It is a service that needs to be more accessible and more proficient in Canada, in support of our producers. You cannot be supportive of the industry if you're arguing that point.

Thank you to IMV Imaging for providing 3 scanning units, each valued at approximately \$30,000 (!), for participants to use for training. There simply were not enough units available in Canada for us to have done this without IMV's generous support. An extra bit of thanks for letting us hold on to one unit for a while, for our trainees to use for practice over the coming weeks.

Thank you to Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers Ltd for special ordering and supplying the scanning crates just for this event. Managing without them would have been nightmarish! Crates that haven't already been spoken for are available from CCWG at a discounted price. Call them in if you're interested in one.



Thank you to Fred Baker, Chair of the Ontario Lamb Producers Caucus for organizing the host farms, hauling equipment and handling sheep. And thank you to Canadian Sheep Federation Chair Allan Ribbink for hauling equipment and people, and wrangling sheep for the week. Fred and Allan were the visionaries of this series of training and educational events, determined to make pregnancy scanning mainstream in Canada.

Thank you to our host farms Zac Baker, Twin Shores Farm and Craigmore Farm for providing fantastic training spaces, sheep for us to use, and for putting up with our intrusion. We really appreciate your hospitality and your patience!

And finally, thank you to our participants. We appreciate your enthusiasm for the sheep industry and your commitment to making the sector a better place. It was a pleasure getting to know you all!

## Ultrasound training facts

- Beginner training had 9 participants scan 320 sheep over 3 days on 2 different farms.
- Advanced training had 4 participants scan 100+ewes in a single day.
- There are currently 15 beginners and 9 advanced trainees on the waiting list for our next training session.



# Market Access

## International

Late in 2021 we were excited to learn that restrictions that had prevented Canadian exports of breeding stock to the U.S. since 2005 were lifted! Since the change in U.S. regulations in December 2021, the CSF has worked closely with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to ratify necessary export certificates, see accreditation for export certifying veterinarians put in place, work through initial issues with export permits, and negotiate certificates for cross-transit shipments through the U.S to Mexico, with whom we've had export conditions since 2016. We are so pleased to see breeding stock finally move south.

Building on the momentum of U.S. access, we finalized export certificates for breeding stock to Kenya in 2022 and began work on certificates for Ecuador, Cuba and Peru.

## Domestic

The CFIA launched a revitalized Food Advisory Committee in 2022 and although CSF's participation in the Committee is governed by a confidentiality agreement, we can share that one of the primary initiatives the group is undertaking is to eliminate inter-provincial trade barriers to meat trade.

To support future work related to improving and increasing regional processing capacity, the CSF has partnered with Temple University to conduct a comparative environmental impact analysis that we hope will help inform decisions to process locally. The analysis will take place in two parts; the first undertaking in the spring of 2023 will compare the environmental impact of moving animals large distances for processing vs establishing more regional capacity where the second part of the analysis that gets underway later in 2023 will provide detailed recommendations about where best to establish local plants.

Sign Up Today!



WWW.AGROLEDGER.CA

# AgroLedger

## Changing how we manage traceability

2022 saw the third phase of AgroLedger development, to include its own private blockchain, a fresh and modern front-end and improved functionality.

With a few finishing touches we will be ready to onboard early adopters. Sometimes it feels like the wheels of development

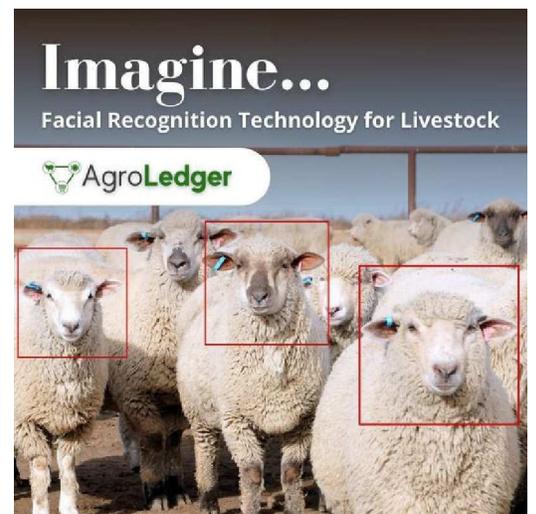
turn slowly but it is essential that to get the technology just right before we start handling regulated data even for early adopters. The CSF is working closely with the CFIA on a proposal to have the CSF become Responsible Administrator of the Canadian Sheep Identification Program and part of that work includes final approval of AgroLedger as the program's data management system.

If you want to learn more about AgroLedger, book a presentation today by contacting us at [admin@agroledger.ca](mailto:admin@agroledger.ca) and learn more by visiting our website at <https://agroledger.ca/>

## FacelT - a revolution in animal identification

To improve AgroLedger's functionality and help move the industry towards autonomous reporting, that's reporting without knowing you did it, we started development of a world class technology that pairs camera vision with artificial intelligence to be able to use facial recognition to uniquely identify sheep. Although various groups are working on similar technology, we think we're special. Instead of using costly on-farm hardware and advanced connectivity tools to manage process, we wanted to get the concept to work with a cell phone and marginal cell/internet connection.

With the help of some bright young innovators, we designed FacelT to work from any connected device. We started field trials (literally!) in August when we became the first group to be able to use facial recognition via livestream. What does this mean? It means you can pick up your phone, tablet, or a network connected, off-the-shelf security camera to look at and recognize individual sheep. No special applications, no expensive hardware just an everyday connected device. This is a major step in the direction of autonomous, point and click traceability.





# Partnerships

This year, we tried something new. We partnered with 12 student teams from 6 universities in 3 different countries to carry out some much needed research and development.

**RMIT**  
**Work Integrated Learning**  
**in Data Analytics**

**University of Saskatchewan**  
**Fall 2022 Agribusiness**  
**Management**

**University of**  
**Saskatchewan**  
**Agribusiness Marketing**  
**Management**

**Ohio University**  
**Business IT Analysis and**  
**Consulting**

**Simon Fraser University**  
**Strategy Analysis**  
**Practicum**

**Thompson Rivers University**  
**Fall 2022 Short-term**  
**projects**

**Temple University**  
**Industrial and Systems**  
**Engineering**

# Some current priorities



**Food Advisory Committee**  
A CFIA-led initiative to resolve inter-provincial trade barriers especially as they pertain to meat trade.



**FMD Vaccine Strategy**  
Facilitated by Animal Health Canada, industry groups and government agencies have worked on developing an FMD strategy for Canada.



**Animal Protein Table**  
Replacing the industry-specific roundtable model, AAFC recently launched the Animal Protein Table that will see livestock groups working together to solve common challenges.



**Canadian Animal Health Surveillance System (CAHSS)**  
Keeping an eye on emerging issues, the CSF is members of 3 CAHSS Networks; Small Ruminant, Antimicrobial Use and Resistance, and Vector-Borne Diseases.



**Access to vet drugs**  
Always on the priority list, we are getting more creative working with stakeholders to improve access to important medical products.



**Western Processing**  
Understanding the urgency to retain processing capacity in the west, we've been working to influence retained lamb capacity in Alberta's largest abattoir.



## A word from our Executive Director

Thank you for taking the time to glance through this year's Annual Report. This was just a smattering of some of the work we've been up to in the past year, with far too many other initiatives to mention. If you want to learn more, check out our facebook page or hit us up for our quarterly reports. Reports are distributed to our members four times a year.

Representing the sheep industry on over 30 different external Boards, Working Groups and Committees means we are involved in all the same initiatives as the other major livestock groups. From forming new animal health organizations, to developing FMD strategies, fighting for improved access to veterinary pharmaceuticals, building animal welfare tools, drafting global sustainability frameworks and every priority in between, we work hard to make your success as a Canadian sheep farmer our top priority.

The work is never ending and the rewards are unlimited. If you want to get involved in any of our initiatives, we would love to have you. Many hands make light work. Send us an email at [info@cansheep.ca](mailto:info@cansheep.ca) or leave us a message at 613.652.1824.

As always, its a pleasure serving you.

Corlena Patterson  
Executive Director, Canadian Sheep Federation