

CANADA'S SHEEP CODE IS BEING UPDATED

What it is • How it is developed • How to have your say



A shared Canadian approach to better sheep welfare

Canada's Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Sheep provides nationally developed guidance for sheep care. A proposed update is now available for public comment.

HOW THE CODE IS DEVELOPED

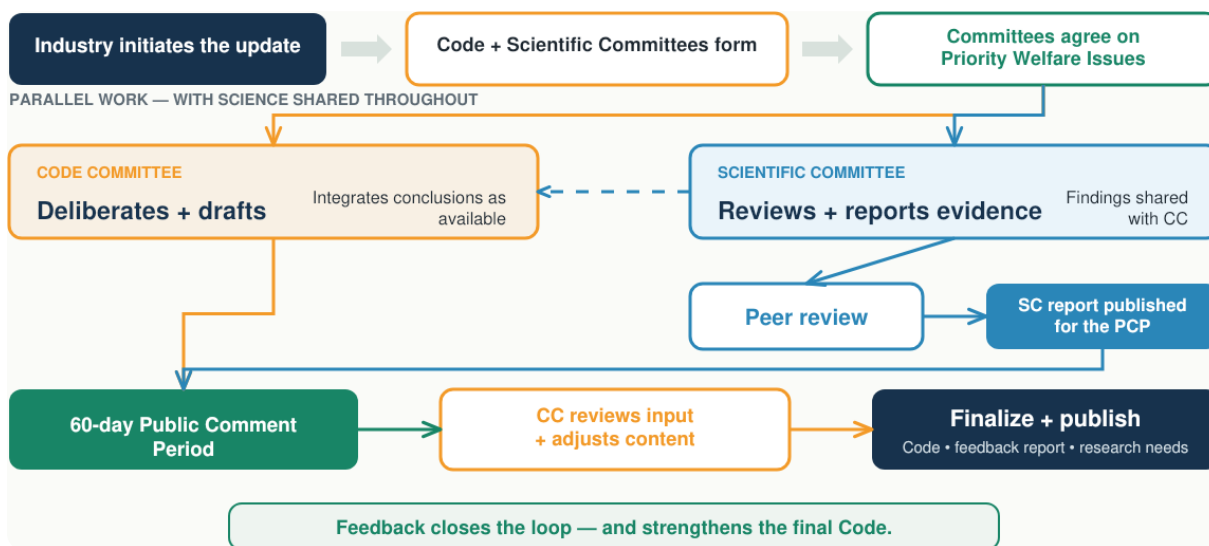
Code development is collaborative, transparent and consensus-based. The process is designed to ensure each Code is scientifically informed, practical and reflects society's expectations for responsible farm animal care.

PARALLEL WORK

Code Committee drafts. Scientific Committee reviews evidence.

Science is shared throughout.

Public comment informs final revisions and decisions.



A consensus-based process

The Code Committee brings together diverse perspectives to help shape the updated Code.

WHO IS AT THE TABLE?

Farmers
Veterinarians
Animal-welfare organizations
Researchers
Processors
Retail
Foodservice
Governments



PUBLIC COMMENT IS THE FINAL BROAD REALITY CHECK

Read the draft. Share your perspective.

Anyone can review the draft and submit comments through the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFAACC) Sheep Code webpage.

COMMENTS CLOSE

**OCTOBER 9
2026**

nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/sheep

Three NEW sections in the proposed Sheep Code

Selected highlights only. Review the draft Code for all proposed changes.



NEW

1. Personnel, training & responsibilities

- Set a farm welfare policy.
- Provide the training, supervision and resources needed to follow it.
- Personnel must be competent or directly supervised.
- Specialized procedures require demonstrated competency.

WHY IT MATTERS

Good welfare depends on people knowing what is expected, and being able to do it.



NEW

2. Emergency preparedness

- Written, accessible, farm-specific plan tailored to risks.
- Include contacts, site map, evacuation, critical passwords and assigned actions.
- Employees and family know where it is.
- Review annually and train; keep the plan immediately accessible.

WHY IT MATTERS

There may be no time to work out what to do.
A farm-specific plan supports fast, coordinated decisions that protect people and reduce risks to sheep



NEW

3. On-farm slaughter

- Increasingly relevant as markets change; clear expectations are needed.
- A competent person uses an approved stun-and-bleed method.
- Include an SOP in the farm euthanasia action plan.
- Non-stun slaughter is limited to licensed abattoirs.

WHY IT MATTERS

Clear requirements help ensure on-farm slaughter is carried out properly, humanely and in accordance with applicable regulations.

Three notable proposed changes in the Sheep Code

3
UPDATES

Selected highlights only. Review the draft Code for all proposed changes.



DIFFERENT

1. Euthanasia

- Expanded decision tree, clearer signs and daily reassessment.
- Trained, authorized people; contacts; primary, alternate and secondary methods.
- mBFT: neonatal lambs only under strict conditions; actively seek alternatives.
- Support workers; provide a timely alternative.

WHY IT MATTERS

Recognize suffering sooner • Act without delay • Verify the outcome



DIFFERENT

2. Pain control

- Work with a veterinarian on practical, safe and effective protocols for castration and tail docking.
- Procedures must be justified by welfare risks and benefits, not performed routinely.
- When procedures are needed, use an effective pain-control plan.

BOTTOM LINE

Avoid unnecessary procedures.



DIFFERENT

3. Predation management

- Build a proactive, location-specific strategy.
- Use layered prevention; monitor results and adapt.
- Remove deadstock and afterbirth promptly, especially near sheep areas.
- Human presence (e.g. shepherds, range-riders or supervision) during vulnerable periods is one of the best deterrents; lethal control is not the only tool.

BOTTOM LINE

Use a planned, layered approach; lethal control is not the only tool.

