



FROM THE *flock*

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RECOGNITION

Funding for the Canadian Sheep Identification Program and the Canadian Sheep Federation's Food Safe Farm Practices Program, has been provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Canadian Integrated Food Safety Initiative under Growing Forward.

Funding for the Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program has been provided through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) AgriFlexibility program.

Opinions expressed in this document are those of the Canadian Sheep Federation and not necessarily those of AAFC.

Alberta Lamb Producers Share Traceability Project Findings and Technology

Alberta's lamb producers will be getting access to information acquired through a Lamb Traceability Project that could help them manage operations more efficiently and increase profits.

A \$456,000 grant from the Alberta Livestock and Meat Agency (ALMA) will allow Alberta Lamb Producers (ALP) to share the lessons learned in the traceability project and potential benefits of a flock management system, which utilizes radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology. ALP will use the funds to hire project contractors, educate producers at regional skills training sessions, finalize software development and develop communications materials. The information will lead to improved management of operations and increased profits. Other possible benefits include labour savings, improved ewe production and reduced feed costs.

"The lamb industry has long been seeking better tools to support expanding production, increase profitability and attract a new generation of producers," said Jack Hayden, Minister of Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development. "This project will allow producers to use RFID technology to manage their operations more efficiently."

"The next logical step for the lamb industry is to adopt the flock management system," said Margaret Cook, executive director, ALP. "Our producers understand the importance of maintaining good information and records to allow them to make informed management decisions leading to increased efficiency and profitability."

The Lamb Traceability Project puts Alberta in a lead position in Canada for developing industry benefits from a traceability program. It is also an excellent example of how RFID technology can increase profitability.

"The lamb traceability project aligns with ALMA's priorities of enhancing competitiveness and advancing information flow," says Gordon Cove, ALMA president and CEO. "This project supports growth and profitability of Alberta's lamb industry."

Alberta Lamb Producers, and Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development partnered to develop the Lamb Traceability Project to meet regulatory requirements for traceability and provide tools for managing flocks more efficiently and profitably.



ALP continued

Alberta Lamb Producers is producer directed and funded, and represents the interests of Alberta sheep producers to help build a sustainable, thriving sheep industry for all stakeholders. For more information on ALP, visit www.ablamb.ca and for information on the Lamb Traceability Project, visit www.sheepcentral.ca

ALMA contributes ideas, information and investment as it works with industry partners to achieve a sustainable, profitable and internationally respected livestock and meat industry. For more information on ALMA, visit www.alma.alberta.ca

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[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/newslett.nsf/all/agnw18391](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/newslett.nsf/all/agnw18391)

MacTavish resumes position as Executive Director

September 7, 2011 (Guelph, ON) – The Canadian Sheep Federation (CSF) is pleased to announce that Jennifer MacTavish has resumed her position as Executive Director with the Federation as of September 6, 2011.

Barb Caswell held the position of Interim Executive Director during MacTavish's ten-month maternity leave. During her time as Interim Executive Director, Barb was responsible the day-to-day operations of the Federation and keeping key industry initiatives moving forward, such as Animal Identification and Traceability, Biosecurity, Scrapie and Revisions to the Codes of Practice. The Federation is as committed as ever to ensuring the growth and sustainability of one of Canada's highest potential agri-food sectors. MacTavish will once again be working closely with industry and government stakeholders to chart and implement further evolution of the industry, in order to maximize opportunities for the future.

"On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank Barb for her hard work and dedication over the past ten months. With Barb back in her role as National Coordinator On-Farm Food Safety, and Jennifer in place once again as Executive Director, we are back to the full complement of expertise on our national team to better support our industry moving forward." stated Andrew Gordanier, Chairman of the CSF.

The Canadian Sheep Federation is a national, non-profit organization that represents all Canadian sheep producers. Its mission is further the viability, expansion and prosperity of the Canadian sheep and wool industry.

For more information contact the Canadian Sheep Federation at 1-888-684-7739 or info@cansheep.ca

Food Safe Farm Practices....an update

By Barb Caswell, National On-Farm Food Safety Coordinator

It's been an exciting past ten months, as I was out of the National OFFS position to cover Jennifer MacTavish while on maternity leave. Being in that position gave me a much broader view of the industry – both the successes and difficulties that producers are facing as we continue to move forward with issues like rising inputs, increasing demand, lost infrastructure, trade issues, and increasing government regulation. When asked am I glad to be back to the On-Farm Food Safety position, my answer is always the same – the last ten months have been an incredible learning opportunity, one that I have benefited from greatly, but I am looking forward to taking this newly gained knowledge of the industry and using it towards progressing the Food Safe Farm Practices Program.

While it may appear as though CSF has been somewhat quiet on the on-farm food safety front, the truth is much to the contrary. I would like to thank Niki Petrie of AgraPoint, who operated in my capacity during my absence, completing a number of initiatives while in the position.

So, as I delve back into food safety once again, I thought this would be a great opportunity to update you on what's been done over the recent past. First, there have been a few requests with regards to the Producer Manual. You may recall that CSF had to resubmit the entire program to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) after its last internal program review. A number of changes had been made to the program, both in an attempt to simplify the HACCP Model on which the program is based, as well as to facilitate better understanding of implementation at the farm level by producers. In the Producer Manual, there was a major focus on simplifying the good production practices and on reducing duplication. After all, an on-farm food safety program is only useful if it is being implemented on the farm, and CSF hopes to make that process as simple as possible.

While CSF is not required to submit the program to CFIA for technical review, the process adds to the credibility of the program both domestically and internationally. CFIA's On-Farm Food Safety Technical Recognition Program is an external evaluation of the technical soundness and administrative effectiveness of on-farm food safety systems developed and implemented by Canada's national producer organizations (NPOs). Many commodities – such as beef, dairy, poultry, horticulture – have participated in this process and those same commodity groups have worked together through the Canadian On-Farm Food Safety Working Group with CFIA to ensure communication and recognition internationally of CFIA's Recognition Program.

A number of changes were requested as part of the review process to ensure that, with the program changes, the Food Safe Farm Practices Program continued to address food safety hazards on the farm. CSF has since completed those necessary changes and they have been submitted back to CFIA for review. The press is ready to go – once changes are reviewed by CFIA, Producer Manuals will once again be available for distribution. Producers will be made aware of the updated manuals through From the Flock, as well as if you completed a training session, and your mailing address has not changed, you will receive an updated Manual by mail. If you have not completed training, please contact me (barbara@cansheep.ca) and I can provide you with information on potential training opportunities as well as send you a copy of the updated Manual when they are available.

Moving onto training initiatives, CSF was also able to update the online training modules that have been used previously for the Food Safe Farm Practices Program. The modules will hopefully be easier to follow and provide clear guidance on how to implement the program on your farm. Face to face training is still being offered, as

FSFP continued

well as many provincial governments still have provincial funding for on-farm food safety program implementation. For information on potential training workshops in your area or provincial funding opportunities, you can contact me or contact your provincial sheep association.

Lastly, a major focus of the last year has been development of a management system to ensure consistent program implementation on a national basis. In many cases, CSF relies strongly on the involvement of provincial sheep associations to help to deliver the on-farm food safety program on a consistent basis and to all Canadian sheep producers. CSF has worked hard over the past 18 months to get both trainers and auditors in place so that those wishing to learn more about the program and request certification on the program through the on-farm audit cycle have an equal opportunity to do so. As well, completion of training and on-farm audits have been important part in allowing producers to access those provincial funding program for program implementation.

The Food Safe Farm Practices Program remains a priority of CSF, and I look forward to once again working with producers in the future to help you learn about, understand, and hopefully benefit from it. If you have any questions or concerns regarding food safety or on the Food Safe Farm Practices Program, please contact me at barbara@cansheep.ca or 1.888.684.7739.

Sheep, goat movements must now be recorded on NLIS database

Sheep and goat producers in Western Australia are now required to record mob-based movements on the National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) database. Department of Agriculture and Food Brands Registrar Farran Dixon said the new recording requirements were designed to accelerate the tracing of sheep and goats in the case of a disease outbreak or the detection of a residue in meat, milk or fibre.

“One or more sheep or goat constitutes a mob and a mob-based movement (MBM) must be recorded on the database within 48 hours of arrival of the sheep at their destination property,” Mr Dixon said. “If owners buy sheep or goats through a saleyard, send them direct to an abattoir, feedlot, export depot, or exhibit them at a show, the recording will be done for them. “For movement of sheep and goats between farms with different PICs, the owner or person responsible for the animals at the destination property is responsible for recording the MBM on the NLIS database. The actual entry to the database can be made by the buyer or seller or by organising a third party to complete it for them.”

Movements to agistment properties, regardless of who owns or leases those properties must also be recorded on the database. Stock owners who have an NLIS database account for cattle can use it to record sheep and goat movements. Those who do not have an account need to create one by going to the NLIS database at www.nlis.mla.com.au and following the prompts.

The database entry is completed by filling in the online form that requires the PIC from where the animals came from and PIC they were moved to, date of movement, number of animals, brand on the LPA NVD/Waybill and serial number on the LPA NVD/Waybill. Department staff will be providing training for Community Resource Centres staff to assist stock owners without computers. Paper submission forms are obtainable from MLA at a small cost.

Source: <http://fw.farmonline.com.au/news/state/livestock/sheep/sheep-goat-movements-must-now-be-recorded-on-nlis-database/2296490.aspx>



Goat Industry Survey

On February 6, 2010, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada approved funding the National TSE Eradication Plan, a project to be administered by the Canadian Sheep Federation, the Canadian Sheep Breeders' Association and the Canadian National Goat Federation. Shortly thereafter, Scrapie Canada officially began its latest project under this funding; the "Scrapie Eradication – A Small Ruminant Industry Plan".

Funding was allocated for a three year study that will focus on determining scrapie prevalence in the Canadian sheep flock and goat herd and the continuation of the Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program (VSFCP).

The objectives of the National TSE Eradication Plan are:

- To determine scrapie prevalence in the Canadian sheep flock and goat herd.
- To enable the establishment of a clear time frame in which scrapie can be eradicated from Canada and after the OIE-recommended seven-year monitoring period, have Canada internationally recognized as scrapie free.
- To develop a business plan to allow the Canadian sheep industry and the Canadian goat industry to work closely together on program elements that contribute to the control and eradication of TSE's in Canada.
- To administer the National Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program.

A Small Ruminant Industry Plan

The National TSE Eradication Plan will determine scrapie prevalence in the Canadian sheep flock and goat herd and use that information to help establish a clear time frame for eradicating scrapie from Canada. The long term goal of this project would then be to have Canada recognized internationally as scrapie free after the OIE-recommended seven-year monitoring period. Gaining a status of scrapie free is necessary for Canada to remain competitive in international markets. The project will also allow for the development of a business plan specifically focusing on TSE eradication, which will benefit Canadian sheep and goat producers, as well as the Canadian agriculture industry as a whole. The reduction and elimination of scrapie from Canada would reduce or prevent the destruction and disposal of scrapie infected flocks/herds, which are costly and present animal welfare concerns to both the Canadian livestock sector and consuming public.

Prevalence of scrapie in the Canadian sheep flock will be established through the random collection and testing of 15 000 brain and lymph node samples from mature sheep slaughtered in abattoirs across Canada. The collection of samples will be done by the CFIA and Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development (ARD), with sample size based on 2008 statistics on the mature Canadian ewe flock. Compilation of data will be completed by the CFIA and the information analyzed by experts at the University of Guelph.

The study of scrapie prevalence in goats will take on a slightly different methodology under its own project, and is currently underway. The methodology for determining scrapie prevalence in the national goat herd differs slightly from that of sheep as the goat industry faces some additional challenges.

Goat Industry Survey Continued

A shortage of statistical information with respect to the mature goat population in Canada means insufficient sample reference base. Furthermore, random collection of goat samples from abattoirs across Canada is not possible without an industry wide mandatory national ID program in full effect, as the CFIA is unable to test any animal for scrapie that cannot be traced back to the farm of origin. As a result, project coordinators have designed a two stage plan for establishing scrapie prevalence in the goat herd. This plan will include the creation, distribution and statistical analysis of a goat industry survey, which will precede a call to industry for voluntary sample submissions, allowing a study of scrapie prevalence in goats.

The George Morris Centre in Guelph, Ontario, was contracted to develop, distribute and interpret the findings of a goat industry survey. Industry response to the survey is paramount to the success of the goat scrapie prevalence study in that it establishes key statistical information on which to base the subsequent study. The goat industry survey was developed to establish a clear break down of industry statistics into populations of does, bucks and kids... information that is not segregated in Statistics Canada reporting on the national goat herd.

Distribution of the goat industry survey began early in July and has continued as additional producer groups are identified. To date, 282 producers have responded to the national survey, with provincial response rates as follows:

Alberta	45
British Columbia	45
Manitoba	24
New Brunswick	4
Newfoundland/Labrador	0
Nova Scotia	4
Ontario	73
Prince Edward Island	0
Quebec	60
Saskatchewan	15
Yukon	2

We ask any goat producer who has not received a copy of the survey to please contact Scrapie Canada and we encourage every producer to take a moment to participate in the survey. All of the information collected as part of the survey will remain confidential, and the results are of great importance to both the scrapie prevalence study and the Canadian goat industry alike.

Experts at the George Morris Centre will begin analyzing the survey data by the middle of September. Once the statistics from the survey become available, the next step of the prevalence study will be to begin goat obex sample collection and analysis.

Project coordinators will need to ask Canadian goat producers to submit brain samples to the project. Since random testing at the abattoirs is not a possibility for the goat population, project coordinators have determined that a voluntary sample submission process is the best way to proceed with the study. These samples will be tested at a scrapie accredited laboratory and results will be used to determine scrapie prevalence in the Canadian goat herd. Further details around the sampling methodology have not yet been finalized but industry groups and producers will be made aware of any advances in the project as soon as they are confirmed. Industry participation in all aspects of this study is key to the project's success and we encourage all goat producers to participate.

Part of our mandate here at Scrapie Canada is to coordinate and promote the Small Ruminant Industry Plan and the National Voluntary Scrapie Flock Certification Program. As such we are available to participate in producer meetings and industry events, providing presentations, program materials and discussion spaces for producers and industry professionals. If you are interested in having Scrapie Canada participate in your event, please contact us at 866-534-1302 or via email at admin@scrapiecanada.ca.

Funding for this project is provided through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's (AAFC) AgriFlexibility program. Opinions expressed in this document are those of the CSF and not necessarily those of AAFC.

Timelines towards Mandatory RFID - Going through the changes

In June 2010, the Canadian Sheep Federation approved a motion to move the sheep industry towards mandatory RFID tags. This decision was given a great deal of consideration. Not only does an RFID system help sheep producers meet anticipated traceability requirements, it also gives producers an opportunity to move the industry forward with the adoption and use of new technology.

As we continue forward with the timelines to move towards mandatory RFID tags, since July 1st, 2011, the Ketchum Kurl lock # 3 and Allflex dangle tags are no longer available for sale from the manufacturers, Ketchum and Allflex, as Canadian Sheep Identification Program (CSIP) tags.

While most retailers across the country do not have any non-RFID CSIP tags left in stock, retailers with inventory have until October 1, 2011 to sell any remaining stocks.

The next timelines towards Mandatory RFID are:

January 1, 2012

- Producers are encouraged to tag all animals born or tagged after this date with CSIP approved RFID tags (Shearwell Data Ltd SET tag or Allflex RFID Button Tag).
- Producers need to carefully monitor their stocks and use up inventory of the Ketchum Kurl lock #3 and Allflex dangle tags before December 31, 2012.
- If producers tag an animal which will still be in the population as of January 1, 2013 (i.e. breeding stock) with a non-RFID tag, that animal will be non-compliant after January 1, 2013. As a result, producers will be required to retag the animal with a CSIP approved RFID tag and cross-reference with the old identification number if the animal is to leave the farm after January 1, 2013.

January 1, 2013

- Ketchum Kurl lock #3 and the Allflex dangle tags will be officially removed from the list of approved tags for the CSIP and will no longer be accepted from this date forward at sales, abattoirs or by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) for shipping, transfer or sale of sheep in Canada.

Discussions around traceability for the Canadian Sheep Industry have been and continue to be a major focus of the Canadian Sheep Federation's Board of Directors and staff.

RFID tags – Essential tool for Traceability

When will traceability be implemented?

The federal government has mandated that full traceability for the livestock sector be phased in starting in 2011.

What is full traceability?

Traceability systems in Canada are based on three basic elements: animal identification – unique identifiers (usually ear tags) for each animal; premise identification – where the animals were born; and animal or product movement tracking.

Why aren't sheep fully traceable under the current Canadian Sheep Identification Program (CSIP)?

Currently, identified sheep in Canada (not including Quebec) can only be traced to their farm of origin – movement and contact with other animals in the marketing chain are unknown.

Why full traceability?

The ability to rapidly trace an animal throughout its life cycle is essential to isolating animal health emergencies and can help limit the health, economic, trade, environmental and social impacts of such emergencies.

What is Canadian Sheep Federation's (CSF) role in traceability?

Traceability is a joint responsibility between industry and government. As such, CSF is committed to ensuring that the CSIP evolves with the changing needs of producers and the industry. Canadian sheep producers and provincial and national sheep organizations are discussing how to best capture the benefits to sheep producers from electronic flock management systems.

CSF remains committed to working closely with provincial organizations to provide them with timely communication, information and education required to make sure the RFID system provides a positive return for the industry.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Daniel Dion, National ID Coordinator, at daniel@cansheep.ca

Funding for this initiative has been provided by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Canadian Integrated Food Safety Initiative under Growing Forward.



Agriculture and
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Agroalimentaire Canada



Cysticercus ovis in Canadian sheep: Research Summary

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Cysticercus ovis is the intermediate stage of the canine tapeworm *Taenia ovis*, and forms lesions in the muscle of infected sheep. Although neither a flock nor human health issue, carcasses heavily infected with *C. ovis* are condemned at slaughter. Sheep become infected through the ingestion of *T. ovis* eggs that are released into the environment when an infective dog, coyote or wolf defecates. These animals become infected through the consumption of sheep meat containing viable *C. ovis* lesions.

Historically, condemnations due to *C. ovis* have been sporadic in Canada. However, in recent years, condemnation statistics collected from Ontario provincially inspected abattoirs, and federally inspected abattoirs across Canada, have revealed a substantial increase in the number and proportion of sheep carcasses being condemned due to *C. ovis* infection (Figure 1). If the prevalence of *C. ovis* continues to increase, the financial losses caused by a high number of condemned carcasses could be detrimental to the Canadian sheep industry.

In light of this concern, a joint effort between the Canadian Sheep Federation, the University of Guelph, and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs was initiated in 2009 to identify risk factors associated with carcass condemnations due to *C. ovis*. During the study period, condemned carcasses originated from farms in multiple provinces. Information about farm management practices were collected from 40 case farms (farms that had a *C. ovis* condemnation) and 56 control farms (farms that never had a *C. ovis* condemnation).

Risk factor analysis revealed that disposing of deadstock in a manner that allowed for scavenging of the carcass (i.e. leaving the carcass where the animal fell, using an uncovered deadstock pile, or

disposing “over the fence”) resulted in an eleven-fold increase in risk of the farm having a lamb condemned due to *C. ovis*. To reduce the risk of *C. ovis* transmission, deadstock must be disposed of in a timely manner using a method that ensures wild and domestic canids cannot access carcasses. In Canada, the regulations regarding deadstock disposal differs between provinces, but several methods are available that prevent opportunity for scavenging. These include proper composting, using a burial chamber, and burying on-farm.

Independent of the deadstock disposal method, the scavenging of deadstock by farm dogs was found to be associated with a four-fold increased risk of sheep carcass condemnations due to *C. ovis*. Accordingly, if farm dogs are discovered eating sheep meat, or producers are unsure of their dogs’ eating habits, treatment with a drug for tapeworms should be carried out within five weeks following exposure to prevent the release of parasite eggs into the environment. Predation was not found to be a risk factor in this study.

In summary, this study has found that the incidence of *C. ovis* condemnations has increased dramatically in Canada – starting in 2007. All provinces west of New Brunswick had *C. ovis* condemnations within the two year study period. The possibility of carcass condemnations occurring in Atlantic Canada cannot be dismissed, especially since *C. ovis* has been reported there in the past. Proper disposal of deadstock, and preventing the scavenging of sheep carcasses by farm dogs, is important in reducing the risk of *C. ovis* transmission. Additionally, we recommend that all dogs that have access the sheep rearing areas be routinely and frequently (every 5 weeks) dewormed with a product that kills tapeworms.

Cysticercus ovis

We recommend that the Canadian Sheep Federation continue to work with the government agencies responsible for abattoir inspection, and suggest the continued use of the Canadian Sheep Identification Program to identify the origin of lambs condemned due to *C. ovis*. Ensuring that producers are made aware of *C. ovis* on their farm, so that appropriate control measures can be taken, will be essential for controlling the infection in Canada.

We thank the Canadian Sheep Federation for their help and cooperation in conducting this study. Also, many thanks to the OMAFRA meat inspectors for collecting the tags of condemned lambs. We acknowledge the Animal Health Strategic Investment fund, part of the OMAFRA-University of Guelph agreement, the Gartshore Memorial Sheep Research fund, and the Canadian Sheep Federation, for providing funding for this project.

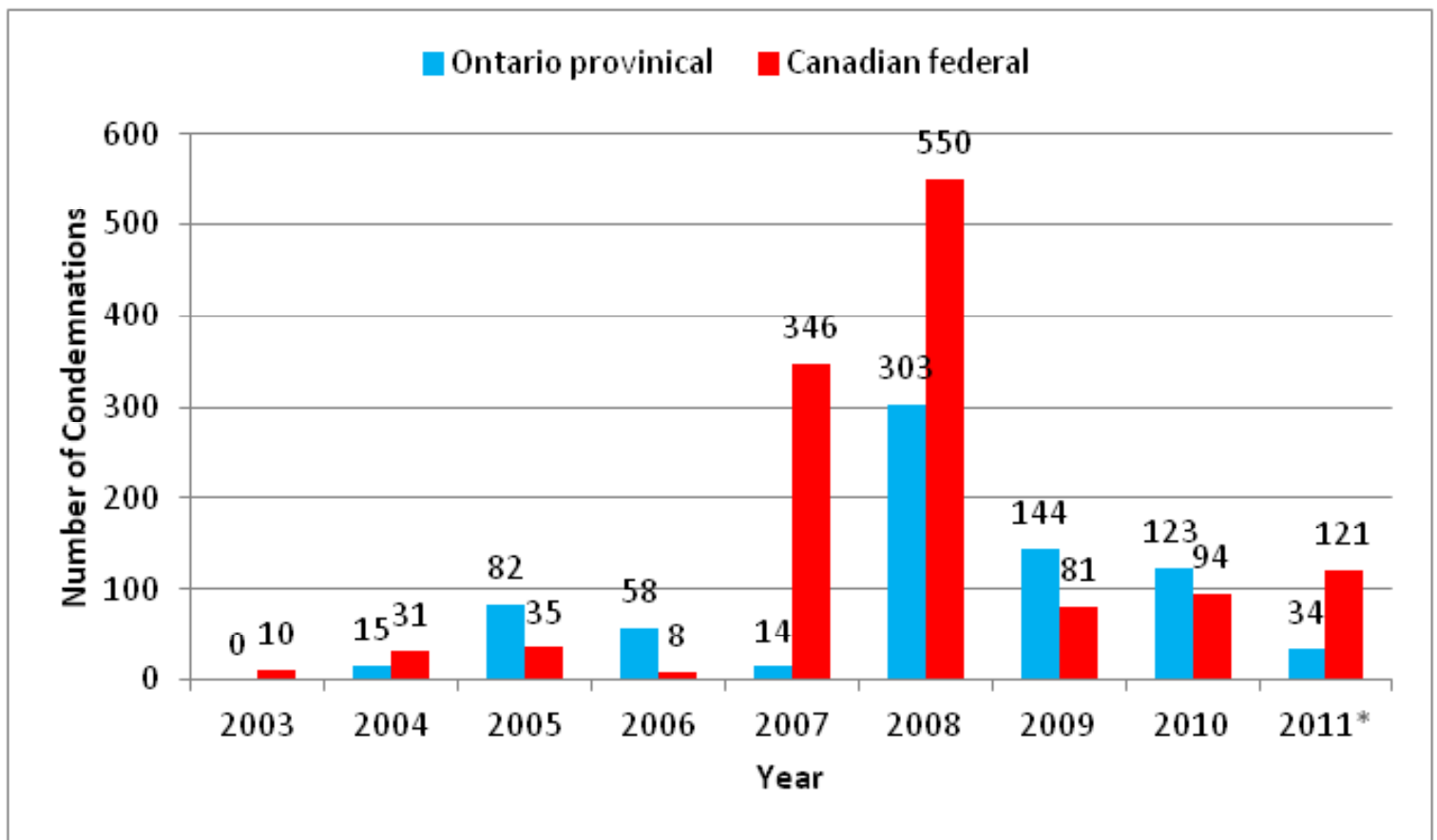


Figure 1: Total number of sheep carcass condemnations due to *Cysticercus ovis* infection that occurred at Ontario provincially inspected abattoirs, and federally inspected abattoirs across Canada, from 2003 to 2011. * Up to March 31st 2011 only.