

A large flock of sheep is grazing in a vast, rolling green landscape. The sheep are in the foreground and middle ground, scattered across the hills. The background shows more rolling hills and a few trees under a soft, hazy sky. The overall tone is peaceful and pastoral.

CSF Operations Update

June 2025

Last month was a pivotal one for the Canadian Sheep Federation, marked by a historic step forward in national traceability leadership and increased engagement in foreign animal disease preparedness. From sector-led initiatives at home to contributions on the global stage, this update captures the progress we're making — together — to build a more resilient, informed, and connected future for Canada's sheep industry.



A New Era for Traceability in Canada's Sheep Industry

May 2025 marks a turning point for Canada's sheep producers. For the first time since livestock identification regulations were introduced more than two decades ago, the Canadian sheep industry has been granted the opportunity to lead its own national traceability program.

Following years of advocacy, preparation, and perseverance, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has confirmed that the Canadian Sheep Federation (CSF) is eligible to serve as the Responsible Administrator (RA) for traceability under Part XV of the Health of Animals Regulations. This is a monumental shift—not only in program administration, but in sector empowerment.

Traceability matters. It matters for disease response, for food safety, for supply chain integrity, and increasingly, for consumer confidence. What makes this development truly meaningful is that the responsibility for managing traceability will now rest with those who know sheep production best: the producers and sector leaders who live this reality every day.

While there are still a few steps ahead—ratifying the legal agreement with CFIA and preparing for the full transition—this milestone signals a sector-led future for livestock traceability. It's an opportunity to build a system that works for sheep, designed by those who understand the industry's unique needs and priorities.

The CSF's digital traceability platform, AgroLedger™, will serve as the backbone of the system, providing a secure, scalable foundation to support real-time reporting, enhanced animal health outcomes, and rapid response in the event of a disease outbreak. With this transition, Canada's sheep industry is not just catching up—it's stepping out in front.

We'll continue to share updates as implementation progresses. But for now, let's take a moment to recognize what this means: a future where sheep producers aren't just participants in traceability—they're leaders of it.

Strengthening Our Foreign Animal Disease Preparedness: The Next Chapter in FMD Planning




Coming off the momentum of the recent announcement that CSF is set to become the Responsible Administrator for traceability, it's clear the Canadian sheep industry is stepping into a new era of leadership and responsibility. But with that opportunity comes the need for action — particularly when it comes to our readiness for disease emergencies like Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD).

The long-awaited final FMD Integrated Emergency Response Plan (IERP) and Gaps Assessment documents were published in May, capping off over a year of national collaboration. These comprehensive tools don't just highlight our sector's strengths — they also shine a light on areas where urgent improvement is needed. From data readiness to movement controls and vaccination logistics, the sheep sector has work to do.

To that end, we're rolling up our sleeves.

The Canadian Sheep Federation will be a member of Animal Health Canada's new Foreign Animal Disease Emergency Management Board (FAD EMB) — a group created to ensure the IERP becomes more than just a plan on paper. This new Board will help operationalize the FMD response across all species and serve as a launchpad for preparedness efforts across other diseases. CSF's role is to ensure that the sheep sector's needs and realities are never overlooked.

What's Next?

-  **Translating the IERP**
Creating producer-friendly materials (think: "what to expect if an outbreak hits").
-  **Developing Quick-Reference Tools**
Movement control checklists, risk zone explanations, and biosecurity tiers.
-  **Creating Biosecurity 'Levels'**
Clear protocols (e.g., green, orange, red) to guide producers, service providers, and responders through enhanced protocols as they move in or out of control zones.
-  **Planning Training Opportunities**
Blending virtual sessions with practical tabletop exercises.
-  **Advancing Technology Integration**
Exploring how technologies like AgroLedger can support traceability, biosecurity audits, and outbreak response documentation.

The reality is, the sheep industry hasn't historically had a large seat at the table when it comes to emergency planning — but with this new traceability role and a voice at the FAD EMB, that's changing. To fully step into that leadership role, we'll need to be both visionary and grounded — committed to advancing tools like AgroLedger™, while also investing in boots-on-the-ground preparation.

The road ahead won't be simple, but it is a road we now get to help pave.

Keeping an Eye on What's Coming: Global Disease Signals That Matter to Our Sector

May's disease intelligence reports reminded us of something that can easily be forgotten in a relatively healthy flock: just how quickly health threats can emerge — and how far they can travel.

As part of the Canadian Sheep Federation's growing involvement in national disease surveillance efforts, we monitor and contribute to the Community for Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases (CEZD) early warning system. This tool scans the globe for disease signals, then helps Canadian experts evaluate their relevance to our livestock sectors. The goal? Better awareness, earlier alerts, and more time to prepare.

So, what matters to the sheep and goat industry right now?

New World Screwworm (NWS)

While traditionally associated with Central and South America, NWS has been creeping steadily north. In May, human and livestock cases were reported in Mexico and Guatemala. In response, the U.S. suspended live animal imports from Mexico. If this pest were to establish itself north of the border, the implications for animal welfare, producer costs, and border trade could be profound.

Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)

Outbreaks of the SAT-1 strain were reported in Türkiye and Iraq, where it hadn't been seen in decades. While Canada remains free of FMD, these developments reinforce the need for continued vigilance and response planning — something CSF is actively engaged in through the new Foreign Animal Disease Emergency Management Board.

Other Small Ruminant Diseases

Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR), sheep pox, and other small ruminant diseases are also under continuous watch through the CEZD system. While these didn't make major headlines in May, their global movement trends are tracked to ensure early warning if threats emerge in new geographies.

Why does this matter to Canadian producers?

Because the world is getting smaller. Animals, people, and pathogens are more connected than ever. Having a seat at the table — and systems in place like AgroLedger to help us act quickly — gives our sector a fighting chance to stay ahead of the next health crisis.

This isn't about creating fear. It's about building confidence. Knowing what's out there means we can respond faster, smarter, and in ways that protect both animal health and livelihoods.

Advancing Global Traceability: Canada's Role in the DIASCA Alliance

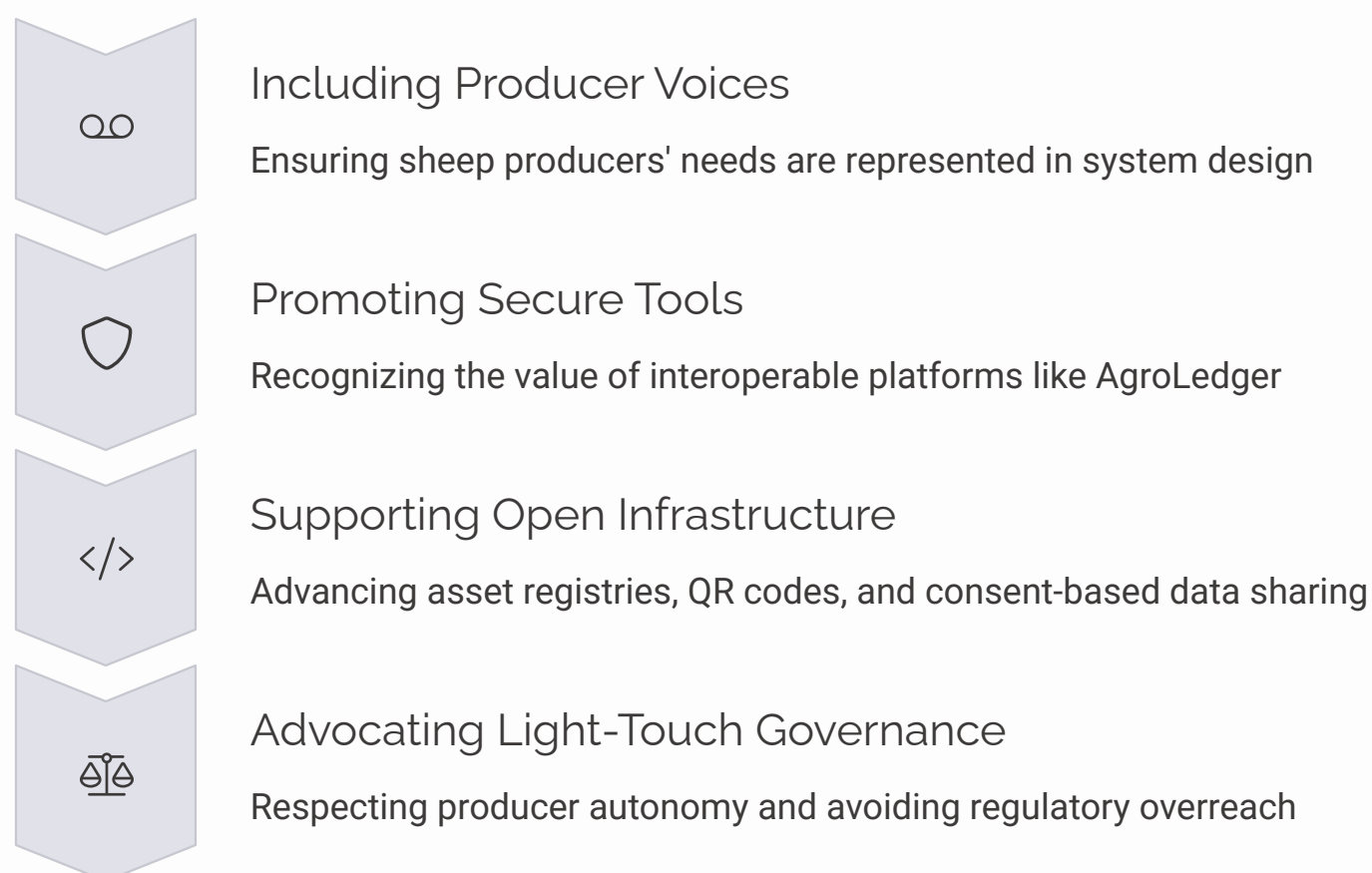
Building on the Canadian Sheep Federation's growing involvement in foreign animal disease (FAD) preparedness — a space we've been steadily contributing to for years — we're now extending that leadership into the international traceability arena.

Through our participation in the Digital Integration for Agricultural Supply Chain Alliance (DIASCA), CSF is helping to shape the future of agricultural traceability and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) on a global scale. DIASCA brings together over 600 contributors from around the world to design open, scalable systems that support transparent, trustworthy supply chains.

So why does this matter to sheep producers?

The traceability requirements of tomorrow won't look like those of today. From new animal health regulations to sustainability certifications and border trade rules, market access will increasingly depend on our ability to provide timely, verifiable data. Initiatives like DIASCA aim to build shared "digital railways" that make this possible — but they also risk overlooking smaller industries unless we speak up.

CSF's Role in Shaping Digital Infrastructure



The bottom line? We're helping to shape the digital rules of engagement — not just for Canada, but for the global industry — so that traceability becomes a tool for opportunity, not just oversight.

For Canadian sheep producers, this means staying ahead of the curve. It means being ready when buyers or trading partners ask for more detailed product histories. And it means having a traceability system that reflects how our industry actually works — because we helped build it.

Coming This Fall: Pregnancy Ultrasound Training for Small Ruminants



For those looking to build or sharpen their skills in pregnancy ultrasound for sheep and goats, mark your calendars — training is coming this fall!

The Canadian Sheep Federation is pleased to be partnering with the Saskatchewan Sheep Development Board and Ontario Sheep Farmers to deliver two hands-on ultrasound training events in late September. Each event will offer a three-day beginner course as well as a one-day advanced/refresher course, giving producers, technicians, and veterinarians multiple ways to participate, whether they're brand new to scanning or looking to refine their technique.

This training is more than just a skill-building opportunity — it's a step toward enhanced flock management. Accurate pregnancy detection helps producers make better feeding, marketing, and labor decisions, all while improving animal welfare. It also opens the door to new on-farm service offerings for trained technicians and vet teams.

Training Details

Course Type	Duration	Content
Beginner Training	Three days	One half-day of theory followed by two and a half days of live scanning
Refresher Course	One day	Focused entirely on scanning and evaluating multiples, ideal for those looking to refresh their skills or pursue certification

Additional Information

- Locations: Courses will be hosted in Saskatchewan and Ontario.
- Eligibility: Open to producers, technicians, veterinarians, and vet techs. Limited spaces will be available.

Stay tuned for more details. Our provincial partners will share registration information, course fees, and logistics directly with their members over the coming months. In the meantime, we encourage anyone interested in gaining practical experience in ultrasound scanning to consider these opportunities.

These courses are part of our continued effort to strengthen producer capacity, support reproductive efficiency, and respond to the growing demand for trained service providers across Canada.