



Covid-19 and Its Influence on SFCR Implementation

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March 2020

- 86% inspection capacity (in-person and remote)
- GoC direction – Telework
- Food Security



Challenges

- Regulatory requirements
- International obligations
- Industry response
- Mental Health and Well-being



Challenges



Government

Flexibility and Innovation

- Regulatory requirements
- International obligations
- Remote inspection
- Preservation of a healthy inspection workforce
- Fed-Prov Collaboration



Overview of the *Safe Food for Canadians Regulations*

Scope

- **Interprovincial trade and export:**
 - Food for human consumption (including ingredients)
 - Food animals from which meat products may be derived
- **Intraprovincial trade:**
 - traceability (e.g., retail)
 - labelling and advertising

Key features

- **One regulation** for all food
- **Broad in scope**
 - **food:** confectionaries, baked goods, oils, spices, beverages, cereals and pasta
 - **activities:** importing, growing/harvesting
- **Outcome-based** allows for flexibility and innovation
- **Transformational:** licensing, preventive controls, preventive control plans (PCP) and traceability

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Electronic Records

Powers

- **24(2)** The inspector may, for the purpose referred to in subsection (1),
 - **(e)** use or cause to be used a computer or other device that is in the place to examine data that is contained in or available to a computer system or reproduce it or cause it to be reproduced in the form of a printout or other intelligible output and remove the output for examination or copying;

Production of documents, information or samples

- **27** An inspector may, for a purpose related to verifying compliance or preventing non-compliance with this Act, order a person to provide, on the date, at the time and place and in the manner specified by the inspector, any document, information or sample specified by the inspector.

Remote Inspection

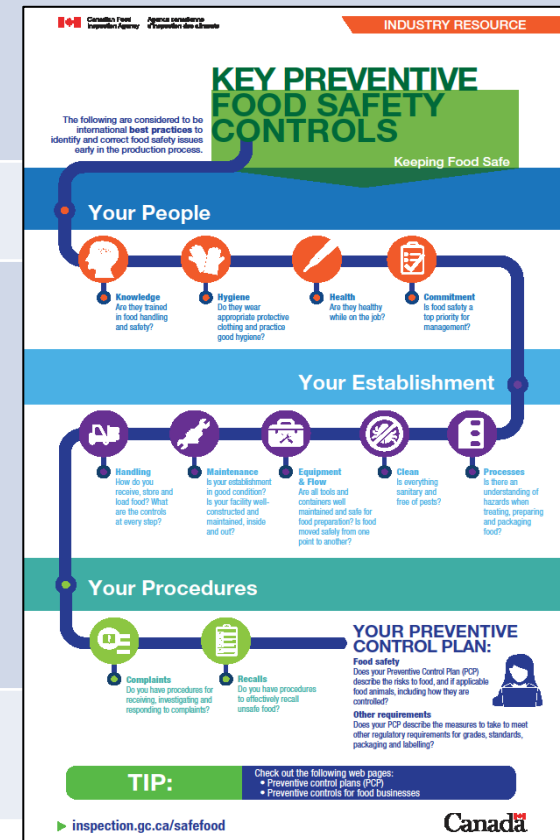
- Electronic records
- Electronic signatures
- Virtual Inspection (exploratory)



Preventive controls

Preventive (food safety) controls are outcome-based and include:

- ✓ Identification and analysis of hazards; implementation of control measures; and evidence of effectiveness
- ✓ Treatments and processes
- ✓ Maintenance and Operation requirements
 - Sanitation, pest control and non-food agents
 - Conveyances and equipment
 - Conditions of the establishment
 - Unloading, loading and storing
 - Competency
 - Hygiene
- ✓ Investigation, Notification, Complaints and Recall



Guidance: [Regulatory requirements: Preventive controls](#)

Preservation of a healthy inspection workforce

- Emergency hiring
- **Inspector cross-utilization**
- Inspector Cohorts
 - Rotation of onsite and remote work
 - Reduced intermingling amongst inspectors and establishments
 - Easier to trace if COVID concerns
- Inspection Prioritization

Inspection Prioritization

- Risk data
 - Establishment Risk Profiles
 - Domestic Requirements
 - Trade Requirements
- Inspection Capacity



Ministerial Exemptions

- to alleviate a **shortage in the available domestic supply** of a food
 - Allows the importation of or send/conveyance of non-compliant food from one province to another.
 - Must alleviate a shortage in the available supply of a food that is manufactured, processed or produced in Canada, and must not have an adverse effect on health and safety.



November 2020

- 94% inspection capacity
- Conversion of key training modules from in-class to online
- Telework – capability for all inspectors



How has our food industry managed during COVID

- Recall stats from April-September 2020 compared to 5-yr avg of same time period
 - Approx. 50% less recalls
 - Only 19% decrease in industry-initiated recalls



Looking Ahead

CFIA and FPT

- Resurgence
 - What is our critical inspection capacity?
 - Fed-Prov collaboration
- The new norm for the CFIA
 - Digital first

Industry

- Innovation through SFCR

Lessons Learned

- Government can be nimble and flexible
 - Electronic service delivery = flexibility
 - Consolidated food regulatory program
- Cdn Food Sector values food safety
- During significant crisis, government and industry must and can work together

Thank You!

