

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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CFIA Consultation on Food Safety Regulations

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Report Highlights:

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) re-opened consultations in May on the implementing regulations under the Safe Foods for Canadians Act. The consultation is focused on addressing impacts on small businesses. However, the consultation, which closes on June 30, 2015, also covers the first version of the proposed draft regulations. The schedule for CFIA webinars and meetings related to this consultation are included in this report.

CFIA Consultation on Food Safety Regulations

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) continues to undertake consultations with stakeholders on its proposals for the regulations it is developing to fulfill the mandate set out by the *Safe Food for Canadians Act*. This most recent round of consultations is focused on receiving feedback on the impacts of new regulations on micro and small businesses. CFIA is defining micro businesses and small businesses as those generating \$30,000 or less and \$100,000 or less in gross sales attributed to food per year, respectively.

In its statement to open the newest round of consultations, CFIA states that risks with fresh fruit and vegetables and manufactured food products that are not federally registered (known as "NFRS" products) are not fully understood nor adequately controlled. CFIA goes on to explain that between 2011 and 2014, imported products, which are largely made up of fresh fruits and vegetables and NFRS products, accounted for approximately half of all recalls in those sectors. Through this newest discussion paper, CFIA is seeking input on how to shift the focus from response to prevention, while not unduly impacting micro and small-sized businesses. Many of the companies operating in the fresh fruit and vegetable and NFRS sectors fall into the definition of micro and small businesses and so feedback on the CFIA discussion paper from these companies is important.

CFIA is seeking feedback on four proposed options designed to help reduce the cost of compliance on micro and small businesses. The options presented by CFIA are:

1. Increase exemption threshold for the preventive control plan (PCP) documentation and record-keeping requirements for food businesses
2. Exemption from identification for businesses not currently subject to registration or that do not need a certificate (e.g. export certificate) from the CFIA. These businesses would have the option of voluntarily identifying themselves to the CFIA.
3. No cost for license for microbusinesses generating \$30,000 or less in gross sales per year
4. Providing greater transition time for micro and small businesses by delaying the coming into force of the regulations for businesses generating \$100,000 or less per year (e.g. three years)

More on the consultation for micro and small businesses can be found at the following URL address: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/about-the-cfia/acts-and-regulations/regulatory-initiatives/sfca/food-safety-systems/consultation/eng/1426531765143/1426531843899>

Consultations close on June 30, 2015. Comments are received through the completion of a questionnaire which is available on the CFIA consultation web page (see hyperlink above) or at the following URL address: <http://inspection.sondages-surveys.ca/surveys/CFIA-ACIA/sfca/?l=en>

The schedule for the webinars and meetings can be found at the following URL address: <http://www.inspection.gc.ca/about-the-cfia/acts-and-regulations/regulatory-initiatives/sfca/food-safety-systems/engagement-calendar/eng/1430926524014/1430926524717>