

Fast Track

News from Canada's National Food Traceability Standards Initiative

Message from the Chair

Can-Trace's Collaborative Course Towards the Development of Voluntary Food Traceability Standards

In 2003, a group of food industry associations convened to achieve a common vision—to develop and maintain voluntary industry traceability data standards for all food products grown, manufactured and sold in Canada—under the fitting name, Can-Trace.

Since that time, Can-Trace has achieved its primary mandate to develop and maintain the Canadian Food Traceability Data Standard (CFTDS), a voluntary standard that identifies the minimum data requirements to establish traceability in a one-up/one-down format, compatible with global standards.

Along the way, Can-Trace has fostered an open dialogue with the food supply chain to ensure that the necessary framework to enable whole-chain traceability is put in place. This allows Can-Trace's various working groups and projects to be relevant and meaningful to all stakeholders.

As the second version of the CFTDS is underway, the Can-Trace initiative has and will continue to offer a voluntary, transparent and inclusive forum for all participants in the chain. Maintaining this community and collaboration is the key to our success.

In the weeks and months ahead, our challenge will be to identify the various programs and tools to help stakeholders better understand the challenges associated with traceability and how they can benefit from systems based on the Can-Trace standard.



Jane Proctor, Chair

Coming Soon: New Website

To offer stakeholders useful and current information on food traceability in a user-friendly format and continue to foster open dialogue, Can-Trace is redesigning its website, www.can-trace.org, scheduled for launch on February 20, 2006.

Calendar of Events

Can-Trace travels nationally to present and share Can-Trace work. The following are recent and upcoming events at which Can-Trace will or has presented.

November 1-2, 2005 — Food Traceability Summit, Mississauga, ON

November 15-17, 2005 — National Seafood Sector Council's 2nd HR Conference, Moncton, NB

February 1-2, 2006 — Food Traceability 2006, Dallas, TX, USA (www.trackingfood.com)

Can-Trace Provides Input to International Traceability Standard ISO 22005

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is developing standard ISO 22005 for traceability in the feed and food chain. This standard sets out the general principles and requirements for designing, implementing and documenting a traceability system, preferably as part of a broader management system such as ISO 9001:2000 or ISO 22000:2005.

Canadian experts, including representatives from Can-Trace, are participating in the ISO working group developing the standard to ensure that Canadian requirements are incorporated. Through its representatives, Can-Trace has recommended that the draft version of the new standard identify the information that should be exchanged between supply chain partners in order to establish traceability, such as those outlined in the Can-Trace data standard. In early November, the draft standard was sent to member countries, including Canada, to be voted upon. There will be additional consultations in early 2006, prior to Canada casting its vote.

For more information or to obtain a draft copy of the standard, contact Manon Forget at manon.forget@pwgsc.gc.ca or Albert Chambers at afchambers@monachus.com.





Fast Track

Canadian RFID Centre is Launched

Initial Focus on Food Traceability

Created by industry for industry to help understand radio frequency identification (RFID), its benefits and implications, the recently launched Canadian RFID Centre (CRC) allows producers, manufacturers, distributors and retailers to experience how RFID will enable food traceability.

RFID is a wireless system that helps enterprises track products, parts, expensive items and temperature- and time-sensitive goods using a radio frequency transmission. In a typical RFID system, transponders, or RFID tags, are attached to objects. This tag will identify itself when it detects a signal from a reader that emits a radio frequency transmission. Each RFID tag carries information on it such as a serial number, model number, colour, place of assembly or other types of data. When these tags pass through a field generated by a compatible reader, they transmit this information back to the reader, thereby identifying the object.

Located in IBM's distribution centre in Markham, Ontario, the CRC will initially focus on the retail, produce and consumer packaged goods industries and demonstrate how RFID can enable a more accurate and cost effective way of implementing food traceability of frozen, fresh and dry goods. In the near future, the CRC will include other products and processes.

The founding partner organizations that joined forces to develop the CRC include:

- Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors
- Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers
- Canadian Produce Marketing Association
- EPCglobal Canada (GS1 Canada)
- Food and Consumer Products of Canada
- IBM Canada Ltd.
- Intermec Technologies Corporation
- Symbol Technologies Inc.
- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

For more information, visit www.canadianrfidcentre.ca.

For more information on Can-Trace, visit www.can-trace.org or contact info@can-trace.org.

Canadian Food Traceability Data Standard: The Next Version

The Standards Working Group (SWG) has begun working on a second version of the Canadian Food Traceability Data Standard. At a meeting in September, the SWG reviewed dozens of change requests submitted by stakeholders aimed at improving the editorial and technical content. A number of those change requests—submitted in response to a formal change management request—were approved by the working group.

At its next meeting in February, the SWG will consider a report from the Integration Guidelines Working Group, which is expected to recommend minor amendments to the mandatory data elements as well as to some of the definitions associated with those elements.

Education - Next Step for Can-Trace

As the Can-Trace initiative advances, one of the next steps is to provide stakeholders with an increased understanding and awareness of traceability. Can-Trace's strategy document, "The Road Ahead," speaks to the need to identify education and awareness programs to assist organizations with traceability issues.

Can-Trace is considering setting up a new education and awareness working group to look at questions such as:

- What aspects of traceability are of greatest concern or most important?
- What mediums for distributing information would be most effective?

If you are interested in participating or have comments, please forward them to info@can-trace.org prior to January 31, 2006.

