



Canadian Food
Inspection Agency

Agence canadienne
d'inspection des aliments

Evaluation of the Export Certification Program

Audit and Evaluation Branch



Canada

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Executive Summary

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) oversees the issuance and delivery of export certificates for regulated animal, food and plant products. These certificates provide assurance that Canadian products received by importing countries meet certain standards and requirements. The export certification program is supported by scientists, negotiators, inspectors, clerks, administrators and program officers to respond to export certification requests.

Overall Findings: CFIA issued accurate export certificates within a timeframe that met the needs of industry. However, at the time of the evaluation, CFIA had not yet fully implemented its system to deliver all export certificates in a digitally-enabled manner. CFIA's collaborative approach to negotiations facilitated expansion into new export markets.

Executive Summary - *continued*

Opportunities for Improvement

Service Delivery Standards

CFIA should review and update its 2018 CFIA Service Management Strategy to align with CFIA's strategic priorities.

It should also establish service delivery standard "groupings" that organize the export certificates into like groupings and determine appropriate delivery standard(s) for each grouping.

CFIA should establish service delivery standards for export certificates and monitor and report on its performance against these standards.

Training and Guidance

CFIA should provide all relevant employees with updated export certification training, guidance and reference tools to promote and assist in their understanding how to perform their duties for new and existing export certification systems and practices.

This could include the following: there is a clear process to review and update export certification training policies, procedures and guidance for the purposes of consistency and accuracy; training curriculums address the competencies required and any identified gaps for export certification; and delivery of training occurs in a timely manner.

Resource Allocation

CFIA should strengthen how it applies an integrated risk management approach within and across its animal, food and plant programs to more effectively determine appropriate resource allocations to its export certification activities.

This risk management approach should align with the Treasury Board Framework for the Management of Risk.

Information Management

CFIA should develop a transition plan designed to allow for all paper and electronic export certificates to be entered and managed in the Digital Service Delivery Platform. This plan should include a change management approach that supports both internal and external stakeholders being prepared for implementation.

Introduction

CFIA identified the need to evaluate export certification activities for the food, plant and animal business lines during the 2018 Evaluation Plan process. CFIA works with other federal departments to facilitate export trade. Some of the activities include:

- issuing export certificates
- negotiating with foreign trading partners to establish export requirements
- providing industry with information to support business decisions
- resolving situations in which exports do not meet the requirements of the foreign country

CFIA is working to respond to the changing global market and increasing demand for export certificates. This evaluation presents recommendations to support CFIA in responding to a complex international trade environment.

During the 2018–2019 fiscal year, CFIA issued 450,194 certificates, with the top ten commodities producing 438,322 export certificates.

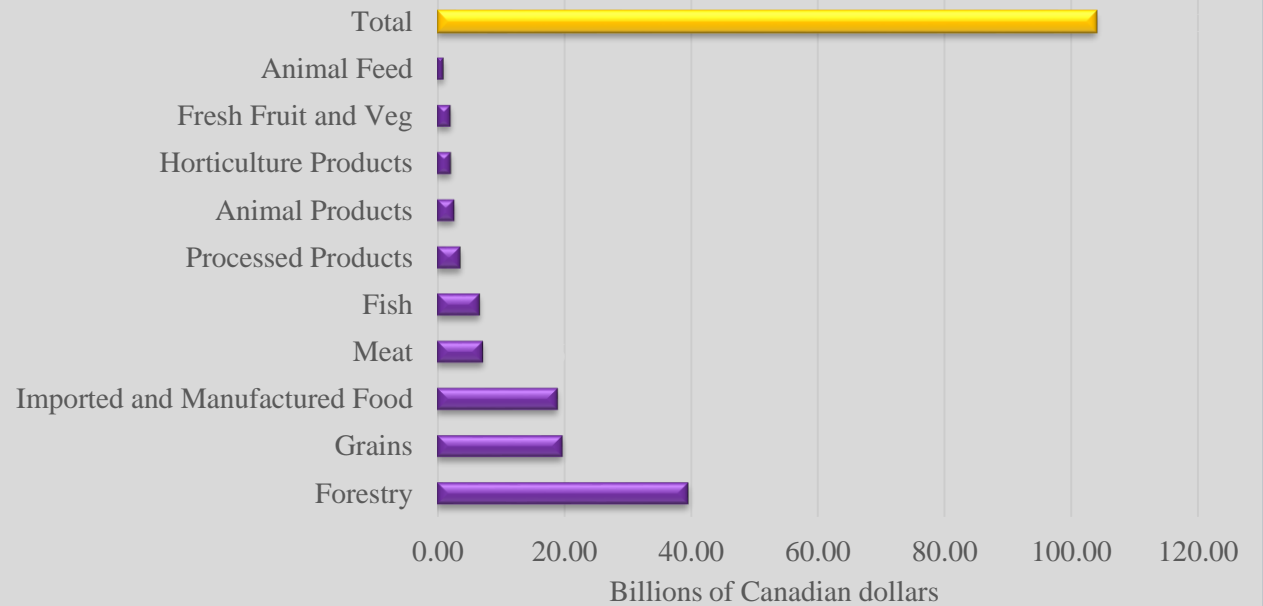


Graph 1: Number of certificates issued for the top 10 commodities exported from Canada in 2018-2019.
Source: [CFIA Management Resources and Results Structure](#)

Introduction - *continued*

The export certificates that CFIA issued in 2018 supported more than \$105.9 billion in exports, with the top ten commodities totaling \$104 billion.

Top ten exported commodities by dollar value (2018, Canadian dollars, Billions)



Graph 2: 2018 top ten exported commodities by dollar value.

Sources: Forestry data from [Government of Canada Trade Data Online](#) (2020-03-11). All other data from [Agriculture and Agrifood Canada Market Access Secretariat](#).

Methodology Summary

This evaluation focused on export certification activities that took place from April 2016 to November 2019. This is the period to which the evaluation conclusion applies. However, to gain a more complete understanding of the subject matter, the evaluation examined certain matters that preceded this period.

The observations presented in this evaluation are supported by data from various sources including interviews with CFIA employees, stakeholders, literature reviews, and the review of relevant data.

- Annex 1 details the full methodology.
- Annex 2 presents the export certification program logic model created by the Evaluation Directorate and CFIA subject matter experts. The logic model visually represents the evaluation's scope. The outcomes, outputs and activities identified in the logic model informed the evaluation's lines of inquiry.

This report presents the evaluation team's observations and recommendations on CFIA's export certification program's ability to deliver export certificates in an **accurate**, **timely** and **digitally-enabled** manner.



Accurate

The information within an export certificate is a factual representation of the consignment and supports acceptance of the consignment by the foreign regulatory authority.



Timely

Export certificates are issued within a timeframe that does not habitually or significantly delay the export of regulated products.



Digitally-enabled

The readiness of all stages of the export certification process to be managed through the Digital Service Delivery Platform.

Observation 1: The export certification program achieved the expected outcome of facilitating the delivery of export certification



Export certification is essential to maintaining and expanding export trade. Canada's export certification program therefore promotes a reputation of integrity in international trade. In the 2017-2018 fiscal year, CFIA reported that 99% of its animal and animal product exports, and 99.6% of its plants and plant product exports, met the import requirements of the foreign markets.

Domestically, CFIA has several activities to meet the needs of Canadians in an expanding and evolving global market. These activities include the following:

CFIA hosts many **foreign-country audits** to promote the integrity of the Canadian export program. For example, the evaluation team observed part of Japan's 2019 audit of Canada's beef export program. By hosting this audit, CFIA provided first-hand evidence that Canada's animal health and food safety regulations and practices meet Japan's requirements for an additional category of beef from Canada. This audit resulted in expanded access for beef from cattle aged 30 months and over for export to Japan.

Every year, the Science, Operations, Policy and Programs, and International Affairs branches are all involved in working to **resolve market access issues**. Below are examples of issues that were resolved:

- 2016: opening and maintaining the Japanese market to greenhouse-grown peppers from British Columbia
- 2016: expanding the types of Canadian beef that can be exported to Mexico
- 2017: signing the Canada-Ukraine Free-Trade Agreement and maintaining increased access to that market
- 2019: expanding the types of Canadian beef that can be exported to Japan

Observation 1: The export certification program achieved the expected outcome of facilitating the delivery of export certification - *continued*

CFIA is implementing a Digital Service Delivery Platform to allow inspectors to record findings, complete inspection reports, record images, issue export certificates and share information with stakeholders while fully mobile. In fiscal year 2018-19, CFIA inspectors across all three business lines spent an average of 29 minutes issuing an export certificate. CFIA expects that the Digital Service Delivery Platform will significantly reduce this time and may allow inspectors to focus on further inspection activities that support export certification. CFIA has already launched the issuance of Certificates of Free Sale through the Digital Service Delivery Platform. Early reports indicate that there is an upward trend in the number of Certificates of Free Sale that are being issued digitally. It is anticipated that there will be a similar trend with the digital issuance of export certificates once the platform has been fully implemented.

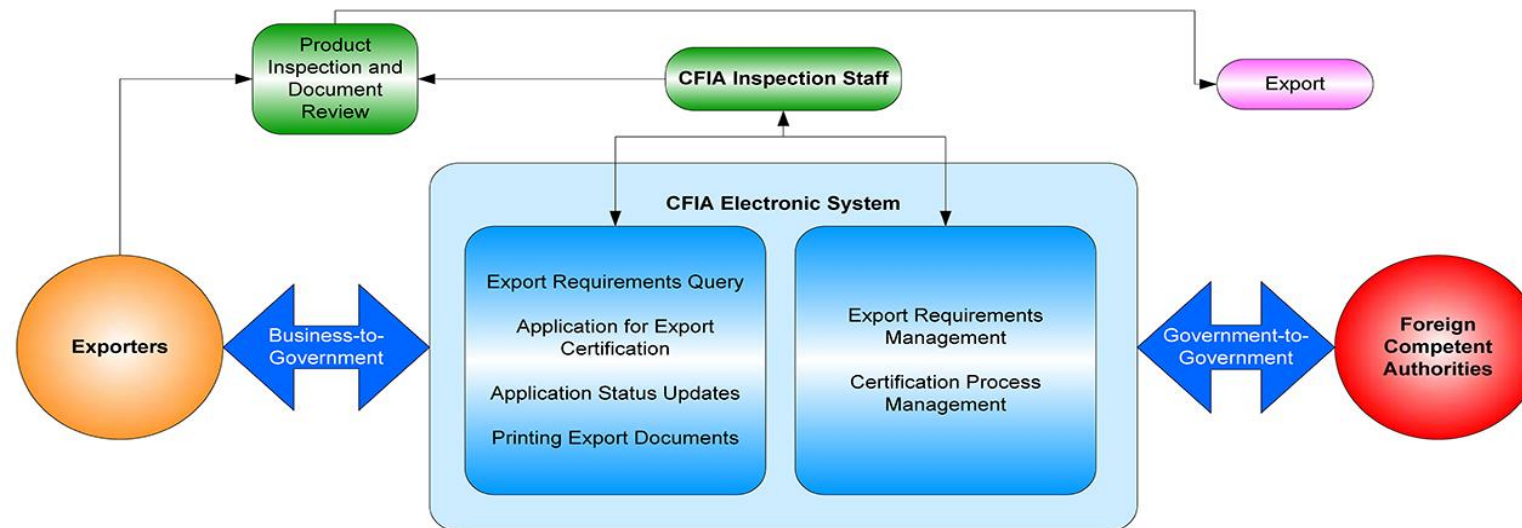


Figure 1: Process map for the DSDP

Source: *Transforming Export Certification* (Canadian Food Inspection Agency; 2014)

Observation 1: The export certification program achieved the expected outcome of facilitating the delivery of export certification - *continued*

The strength of Canada's reputation facilitates international trade, and is significantly influenced by the integrity of the CFIA's export certification program.

As a global leader, Canada participates in several international associations to ensure the worldwide approach to the safety of animals, food and plants is consistent. This supports a transparent trade environment. CFIA activities in this area include:

Negotiations to establish or renew free trade agreements

CFIA co-leads the negotiation of Canada's free-trade agreements and other trade activities that reinforce internationally accepted principles of market access negotiations and trade dispute resolution.



Participation in international standard setting bodies

CFIA is actively involved in international standard setting bodies to influence the development of science-based standards that contribute to consistent approaches to the trade of animal, food and plant products. For example:

CFIA is actively involved in the revision of international food safety guidelines to allow for the use of electronically issued export certificates. CFIA co-led the update of Canada's Strategic Framework for Participation in the Joint Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations /World Health Organization Food Standards Program. This framework guides Canada's approach to the negotiation of international food standards.



For three years, CFIA provided the International Plant Protection Convention with a Project Manager to lead the development of a system that enables the exchange of electronic plant health export certificates between countries. Experts anticipate that this system will simplify and speed up the export process for plant commodities.



CFIA's technical experts actively informed the development and revision of international standards on priority animal diseases and animal welfare for the World Organisation for Animal Health.

Observation 2: CFIA has some recommended export certification service delivery standards. CFIA exceeded these standards but did not electronically track service delivery performance.

Service delivery standards are important for service management excellence. Among other things, service standards:



- help clarify expectations for regulated parties and employees
- drive service improvement
- contribute to results-based management
- reinforce government accountability by making performance transparent
- increase Canadians' confidence in government by demonstrating the government's commitment to service excellence

"The service delivery standard is 10 days, but we try to do it in one day."

– CFIA Inspector

Observation 2: CFIA has some recommended export certification service delivery standards. CFIA exceeded these standards but did not electronically track service delivery performance. - *continued*

The evaluation team observed that CFIA's regulatory requirements have no service standards for the maximum amount of time that it should take for an exporter to receive their export certificate, after they have submitted an export certification request. However, at the program level, there are some required or recommended service standards for issuing export certificates. The following are some examples from various CFIA policies, guidelines and procedures:

Fish and fish products: “Three working days for live & fresh and five working days for other products is recommended.” (CFIA, *Export Certification Guidelines for Fish and Fish Products*).

Honey products: “It is recommended that the application be submitted a minimum of seven working days prior to loading to allow time for document verification and product inspection (under review).” (CFIA, *Operational procedure: Issuing an export certificate for honey*).

Maple products: “The inspector will review the completed application [...] which is recommended to be submitted a minimum of 48 hours prior to loading to allow time for document verification and product inspection (under review).” (CFIA, *Operational procedure: Issuing an export certificate for maple products*).

Plant products: “... CFIA should receive the application at least ten working days before the date of shipping. Additional time may be required to issue phytosanitary certificates when there is a need to perform a treatment, a test or growing season inspection.” (CFIA D-99-06: *Policy on the issuance of phytosanitary certificates for export and for re-export*).

Veterinary biologics: “Export certificates and Permits to import veterinary biologics for investigational or emergency use will be issued within 14 days from receipt of completed application, fees and supporting documentation” (CFIA, *Service Standards for the Issuance of Permits, Licences and Export Certificates*).

Observation 2: CFIA has some recommended export certification service delivery standards. CFIA exceeded these standards but did not electronically track service delivery performance. - *continued*

The evaluation team interviewed inspectors at 19 local CFIA offices across the country and toured export facilities. Inspectors from all three business lines reported frequently delivering export certificates within 24 hours if there was no testing required to certify the material. In interviews with inspectors and exporters, the evaluation team learned that many exporters have come to regularly expect this level of service.

CFIA did not have a procedure or system in place to electronically track its performance against the existing recommended program level service standards. Without these metrics, CFIA was not able to accurately determine whether, and how often, it met these standards. The lack of metrics in this area also affected CFIA's ability to effectively plan the resources for export certification. It also presented other significant challenges, such as the following:

1. In interviews, exporters explained that they planned their trading timelines according to the 24-48 hour export certification timelines that they had come to expect. However, if the local CFIA office cannot issue an export certificate within a predictable timeline, the exporter may experience costly delays throughout its delivery chain. Having established and predictable service standards would allow exporters to build the certificate processing time into their delivery timelines. It would also allow inspectors to focus on risk reduction rather than on unpredictable and urgent requests.
2. As exporters expand their 24-hour operations, they are increasingly requesting that CFIA offer export certification during evenings and weekends. These hours are not part of a typical inspector shift. This means that inspectors are under pressure to issue a growing number of export certificates during their regular hours.

"There's pressure from industry to do them in less than 48 hours. We can't impede trade."

- CFIA Inspector

Observation 2: CFIA has some recommended export certification service delivery standards. CFIA exceeded these standards but did not electronically track service delivery performance. - *continued*

The lack of performance metrics against CFIA's existing recommended service standards placed heavy pressure on inspectors:

3. Without formal service standards for delivery of all types of export certificates, inspectors are under constant pressure from exporters to issue certificates faster. The evaluation team reviewed emails from exporters requesting the issuance of export certificates within less than 24 hours of their initial request. According to an operations manager, CFIA inspectors receive similar requests quite frequently. As demand for export certification increases, it may not be possible to meet expectations of service delivery within 24 hours. Of the exporters interviewed, 86% stated that while they had no complaints about their interactions with CFIA inspectors, faster is always better. Exporters explained that tight transport timelines associated with perishable goods means that they often required export certificates within 24 hours of their request.

"We have a very high demand for export certificates on Fridays. Sometimes CFIA has trouble keeping up"
- *Canadian Exporter*

In locations such as the Maritimes, there are few commercial flights available to transport exported goods. This means that if their shipment is not on the Friday plane, the exporter will have to wait another week to move their perishable goods across the ocean. Exporters also have to coordinate trucks to transport the goods from their facility to the airport. Trucks are in high demand during production season, so the window of opportunity to reserve a truck can be very narrow. Moreover, another exporter is always ready to use the reserved truck if the original exporter's shipment is delayed.

"Sometimes there will be a trailer of live animals in the parking lot waiting for an export certificate. We have to do it right away."
- *CFIA Inspector*

Observation 2: CFIA has some recommended export certification service delivery standards. CFIA exceeded these standards but did not electronically track service delivery performance. - *continued*

Recommendations

As the pace of global trade continues to accelerate, it is important that Canadian exporters can factor export certification service standards into their timelines. In response to this need, and to effectively manage internal resources, CFIA should review and update its 2018 service management strategy to align with CFIA's strategic priorities.

CFIA should develop and implement service standards across the export certification program. It should develop groupings of commodities that require similar export certification verifications and establish appropriate service standards for each group.

CFIA should ensure that official service standards are aligned to the updated CFIA service management strategy.

This would achieve the following:

- improved accuracy of CFIA's resource planning
- enable Canadian exporters to use those service standards when planning the timing of their business transactions

CFIA should monitor and report on its performance against these standards to ensure that the standards continue to support CFIA's mandate and meet the needs of Canadians.

"We haven't been told service delivery standards for export certificates but we get them when we need them."

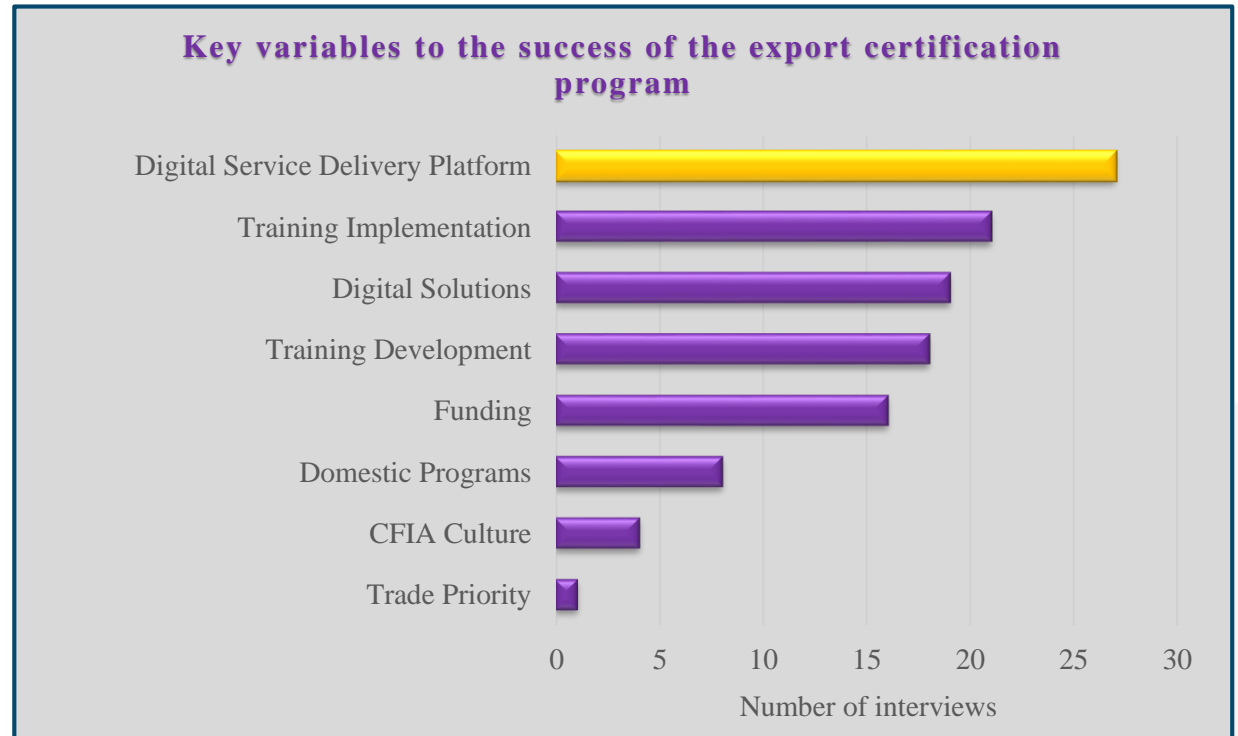
- *Canadian Exporter*

Observation 3: CFIA did not always deliver export certification training and guidance to CFIA export certification employees in a timely and consistent manner.

As CFIA is updating its approach to regulation, CFIA inspectors are required to use new tools and strategies to conduct their work. However, many of the employees interviewed told the evaluation team that CFIA inspectors often lacked up-to-date training and guidance on how to use new tools and procedures.

When the evaluation team asked CFIA employees throughout all CFIA branches and levels to rank the 8 variables that could affect CFIA's ability to facilitate export certification (Graph 3), interviewees ranked the DSDP as the most significant variable. Training implementation was the second and training development was the fourth most significant variable that interviewees believed could harm CFIA's ability to facilitate export certification. Some of the comments about the DSDP included:

- continuous delays in roll-out caused some stakeholders to lose confidence in the platform
- some CFIA staff feared they would lose their jobs when the export certification process became automated
- some exporters were reluctant to change the ways in which they interacted with CFIA because their established relationships worked well.



Graph 3: Key variables that could affect the ability to facilitate export certification, as ranked by CFIA employees that were interviewed for this evaluation. Ranking was based on the responses of several employees per interview.

Observation 3: CFIA did not always deliver export certification training and guidance to CFIA export certification employees in a timely and consistent manner. - *continued*

- 1. Delivery of training and guidance was not timely** – Proactive and well-timed training is important to support a culture of acceptance around new initiatives, tools and procedures. During inspector interviews, the evaluation team was told about situations in which the timing of the training hindered the implementation of a new initiative or tool. The following are examples:
 - The *Safe Food for Canadians Act* and the *Safe Food for Canadians Regulations* came into force on January 15, 2019. Most of the inspector interviews for this evaluation occurred in February and March of 2019, so inspectors were still familiarizing themselves with the new act and regulations at the time of our interviews. Although CFIA had offered an online course and several webinars before the implementation, many inspectors felt unprepared to navigate the new regulations. Many suggested that they needed more time to practice scenarios before implementation.
 - CFIA delivered workshops and information sessions to CFIA inspectors to prepare for the DSDP. However, the project experienced repeated delays in implementation and many inspectors stated they had forgotten what they had learned.

When asked to rank the variables that could harm CFIA's ability to facilitate export certification, interviewees across several branches and levels ranked the DSDP as the most significant concern (Graph 1). This ranking was based on apprehension that the program would ever be fully implemented.

The Single Window Initiative required CFIA training of industry and CFIA staff so that all users understood how to use the new import declaration database. Repeated delays in implementing the initiative initially meant that stakeholders and CFIA staff had low trust in the initiative. However, through retraining and outreach, CFIA was able to restore trust in the initiative. By November 2019, 90% of industry members whose commodities are regulated only by CFIA were participating in the Single Window Initiative. There is an opportunity to look to the lessons learned from this initiative to ensure trust in the Digital Service Delivery Platform.

Observation 3: CFIA did not always deliver export certification training and guidance to CFIA export certification employees in a timely and consistent manner. - *continued*

2. Training / guidance was unclear or outdated

The evaluation team often observed that training and guidance materials, including courses, guidance documents and directives, had not been updated to reflect new procedures. The following are examples:

- Meat training had not been offered to inspectors within the last two years and what was available was dated. Further, the training manual stated that a participant must obtain a pass mark of 80%, but did not state what happens if they did not pass the test.
- Aquatic animal health training was still listed as draft and made reference to the *Fish Inspection Act* instead of the more recent *Safe Food for Canadians Act*.
- The 2019 CFIA Technical Assessment Report for the Phytosanitary Certification of Grains, Grain Products and Field Crops found gaps and inconsistencies in guidance materials on CFIA's internal network.

Observation 3: CFIA did not always deliver export certification training and guidance to CFIA export certification employees in a timely and consistent manner. - *continued*

3. Training / guidance did not accommodate different learning styles

Over the last several years, CFIA increased its focus on delivering training online. However, many inspectors interviewed stated that the online training they received was less beneficial than in-person training. In the case of webinars, the inability to ask questions or to slow the lesson pace caused many inspectors to feel left behind. Many inspectors stated that in-class and on-the-job training were most effective.

Other inspectors mentioned that they found online classes to be convenient and more flexible. This highlights the need for a variety of training formats to accommodate different learning styles.

“Every time a new CFIA veterinarian comes out, there’s no knowledge transfer. It’s hard on the animals.”
- *Canadian Exporter*

Observation 3: CFIA did not always deliver export certification training and guidance to CFIA export certification employees in a timely and consistent manner. - *continued*


There are many factors that can affect whether a new initiative will be implemented on time. During interviews, some employees noted CFIA training differed (i.e. timing/approach) between the Single Window Initiative and the Digital Service Delivery Platform. This difference in training may have influenced the culture of acceptance. As the Single Window Initiative rolled out over many years, supplementary training was required throughout the rollout.

Without updated guidance and training material, inspectors must spend more time seeking advice to accurately deliver export certification services. This is an inefficient use of inspector time and creates a risk that export certification services could be delivered inconsistently.

Observation 3: Recommendation

CFIA should provide all relevant employees with updated export certification training, guidance and reference tools to promote and assist in their understanding how to perform their duties for new and existing export certification systems and practices. This could include the following:

- There is a clear process to review and update export certification training policies, procedures and guidance for the purposes of consistency and accuracy.
- Training curriculums address the competencies required and any identified gaps for export certification.
- Delivery of training occurs in a timely manner.



“We need more guidance. So much knowledge is lost when people leave.”
- CFIA International Affairs Branch Officer

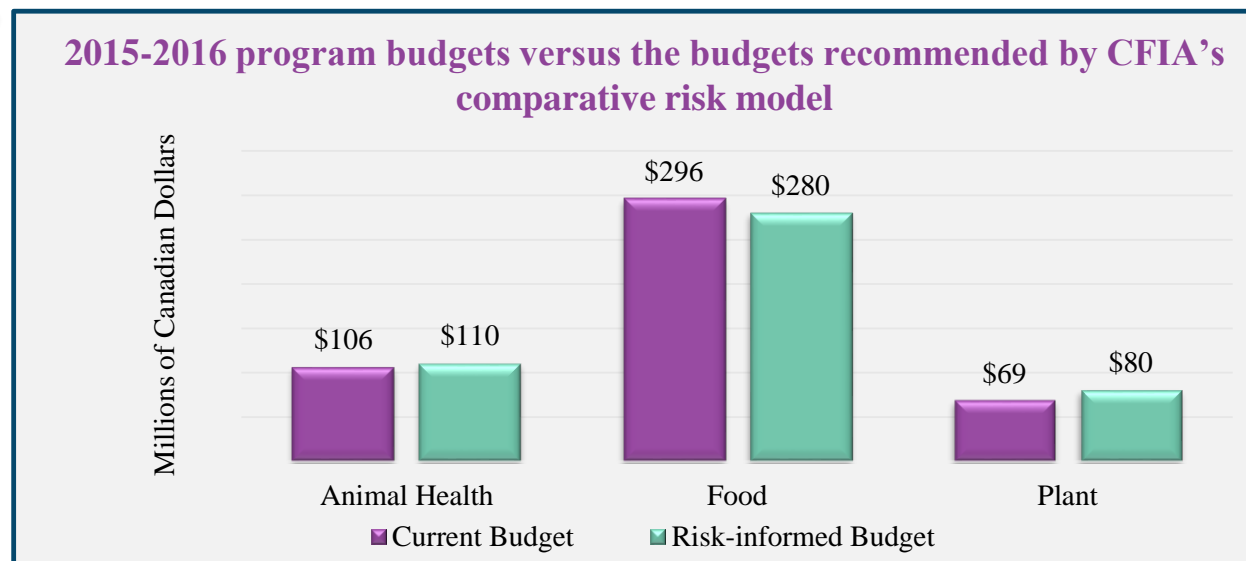
Observation 4: As CFIA kept pace with rapid export growth, there was a shift of CFIA resources from the import and domestic programs to the export program.

On average, CFIA has seen a 4% growth in the number of export certificates produced every year since the 2015-2016 fiscal year. For example, as part of this growth:

- From the 2016–2017 to the 2017–2018 fiscal year, there was a significant increase in the number of animal health laboratory tests conducted to support export certification.
- In the 2018–2019 fiscal year, the National Aquatic Animal Health program saw a 246% increase in export certification over the previous year. This was mainly due to rising exports of finfish to Indonesia, molluscs to Malaysia and Vietnam, and salmon to New Zealand.

To respond to the growing number of export certification requests, CFIA reallocated money from other parts of its budget. This meant that fewer resources were available to other program areas to support risk-mitigation activities.

CFIA's export certificate volumes have been growing since 2015-16. However, according to CFIA's comparative risk model, the 2015-2016 plant health program budget was approximately 20% lower than required to facilitate a truly risk-based approach to plant health protection. Within the plant health program itself, the budget was not properly allocated across activity areas. For example, program design and delivery to support domestic and import activity was underfunded by almost 4%. This is a concern because if the domestic and import programs are not appropriately resourced, CFIA may be challenged to ensure that Canadian products are safe and healthy. If international stakeholders do not have confidence that Canadian products are safe, they may refuse to accept Canadian exports. This concern was echoed by CFIA employees throughout all branches and levels who were interviewed for this evaluation.



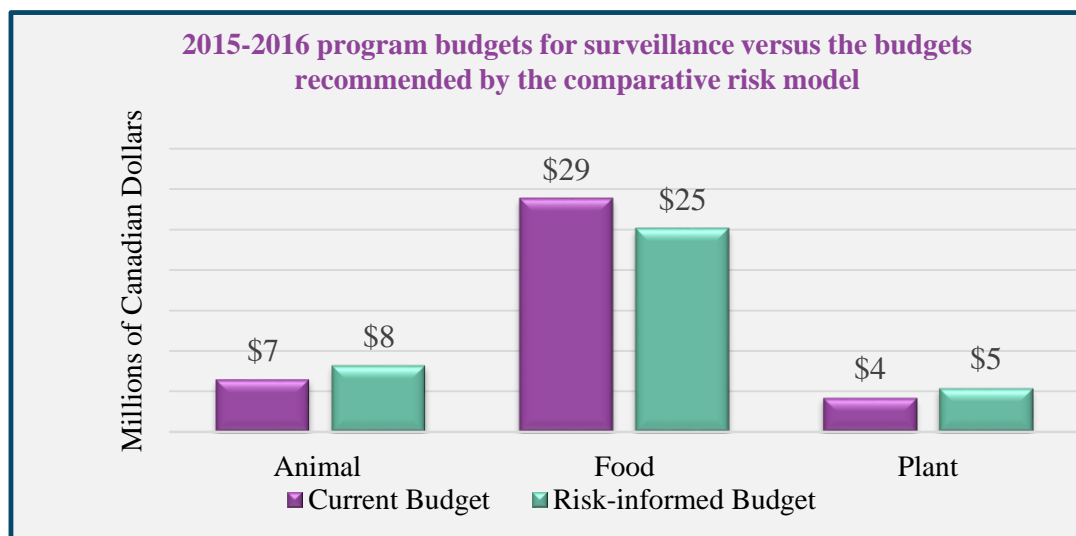
Graph 4: A comparison of the 2015-2016 program budgets versus the budgets recommended by CFIA's comparative risk model.

Source: [CFIA Multi-business line analysis of comparative risk model results](#)

Observation 4: As CFIA kept pace with rapid export growth, there was a shift of CFIA resources from the import and domestic programs to the export program. - *continued*

From 2016-2019, the plant health surveillance budget has not been sufficient to ensure that CFIA is surveying for known regulated pests that affect export trade while also surveying for new and emerging pests and diseases. According to the comparative risk model, both the animal and plant health programs received less surveillance related funding in 2015-16 than what the model proposed.

Underfunding within the animal and plant health programs may affect the ability of CFIA to immediately survey for new threats while continuing surveillance that is required to maintain access to export markets. It could also affect the safety of animals and plants in Canada's natural and domesticated environments.



Graph 5: A comparison of the 2015-2016 program budgets for surveillance versus the budget recommended by the comparative risk model

Source: [CFIA Multi-business line analysis of comparative risk model results](#)

The CFIA comparative risk model identified the following measures as opportunities to reduce overall risk:

- an increased focus on the plant and animal business lines
- increased investment in emergency planning to allow CFIA to be more proactive in preventing emergencies

To address these opportunities, the animal, food and plant business lines would have to be aligned with the recommended risk-informed budget. This would support programs that are focused on prevention and mitigation – the foundation of a robust export program.

Observation 4: As CFIA kept pace with rapid export growth, there was a shift of CFIA resources from the import and domestic programs to the export program. - *continued*

In the meat hygiene and animal health programs, our review of resource allocation told the same story: most were spent on activities that supported the export sector.

Although CFIA collects risk information from its business lines, the evaluation team observed that there was an opportunity for CFIA to use a proactive, systematic process to understand, manage and communicate risk from an organization-wide perspective, beyond a single branch or business line. Such ongoing risk management assessments would:

- consider risks at every level of the organization
- communicate the results to CFIA management
- aggregate these results at the corporate level
- ensure adequate monitoring and review

To help CFIA achieve its mandate and maintain the confidence of international stakeholders in the safety of Canadian food, plant and animal exports, an integrated, risk-based approach within and across business lines would allow CFIA to allocate resources more effectively to its export certification activities.

Observation 4: Recommendation

Strong domestic and import sectors are the foundation of a robust export sector and CFIA should strengthen how it applies an integrated risk management approach within and across its animal, food and plant programs to more effectively determine appropriate resource allocations to its export certification activities. This risk management approach should align with the Treasury Board Framework for the Management of Risk.

Observation 5: CFIA's approach to information management (collecting, storing, managing and maintaining) was not clearly defined for the export certification program.



CFIA has many different systems that support the collection, reporting and storing of data for export certification. The evaluation team observed that the same type of data was not recorded in the same way in all systems. This makes it hard to collect, analyze and report on the data, and increases the risk that the data are not of good quality.

“Data quality challenges hinder our ability to really understand the export area”

- CFIA Senior Executive Manager

The evaluation team observed variation across business lines and regions in how documents were stored.

During regional site visits, the evaluation team saw that export certification documents were stored in many different spaces: sometimes in locked cabinets, in file boxes stacked in unsecured CFIA offices, or on the floor of secured CFIA offices within processing plants.

During interviews, CFIA employees said they believed they were required to keep export certificates for ten years, while they understood that other offices saved every export certificate ever produced. In one case, an inspection office received permission from CFIA Information Management Services to keep certificates for only three years. The evaluation team observed that only the meat program had prepared specific guidance to clarify the document retention period.


The evaluation team also observed inconsistencies in how export certification information from local offices was communicated to national headquarters. Offices submitted information to Ottawa either through an established database such as the Management Resources and Results Structure or via a spreadsheet. In some cases, the information was submitted to a generic email account. Employees stated they were not always clear how information from regional offices was supposed to be transmitted to headquarters, and they did not know how it was received and used.

Observation 5: CFIA’s approach to information management (collecting, storing, managing and maintaining) was not clearly defined for the export certification program. - *continued*

At the time of this evaluation, CFIA was in the early phase of implementing the Digital Service Delivery Platform to support export certification. Almost all of the export certification activities were supported by pre-existing information systems. The platform had not yet been used enough for the team to evaluate its information management capability and effectiveness. At the same time, there were high expectations of the platform. In interviews with CFIA senior management, and in several senior management meetings across all business lines, our team observed that officials frequently stated that the Digital Service Delivery Platform will be the main solution to the export program’s information management needs. However, the Digital Service Delivery Platform development team cautioned that the platform will not be a “one-stop shop” for all CFIA’s export-related information management needs.

Observation 5: Recommendation

CFIA should develop a transition plan designed to allow for all paper and electronic export certificates to be entered and managed in the Digital Service Delivery Platform. This plan should include a change management approach that supports both internal and external stakeholders being prepared for implementation.



“We cannot prioritize our work because export information is not tracked for our small program”
- CFIA International Affairs
Branch Officer

Conclusion

This evaluation found that CFIA delivered export certificates in an accurate and timely manner. However, at the time of the evaluation, CFIA had not yet fully implemented its system to deliver all export certificates in a digitally-enabled manner.

Methodology

This evaluation focused on export certification activities that took place from April 2016 to November 2019. This is the period to which the evaluation conclusion applies. However, to gain a more complete understanding of the subject matter, the evaluation examined certain matters that preceded this period. Annex 2 presents the export certification program logic model created by the Evaluation Directorate and CFIA subject matter experts. The logic model visually represents the evaluation's scope. The outcomes, outputs and activities identified in the logic model informed the evaluation's lines of inquiry.

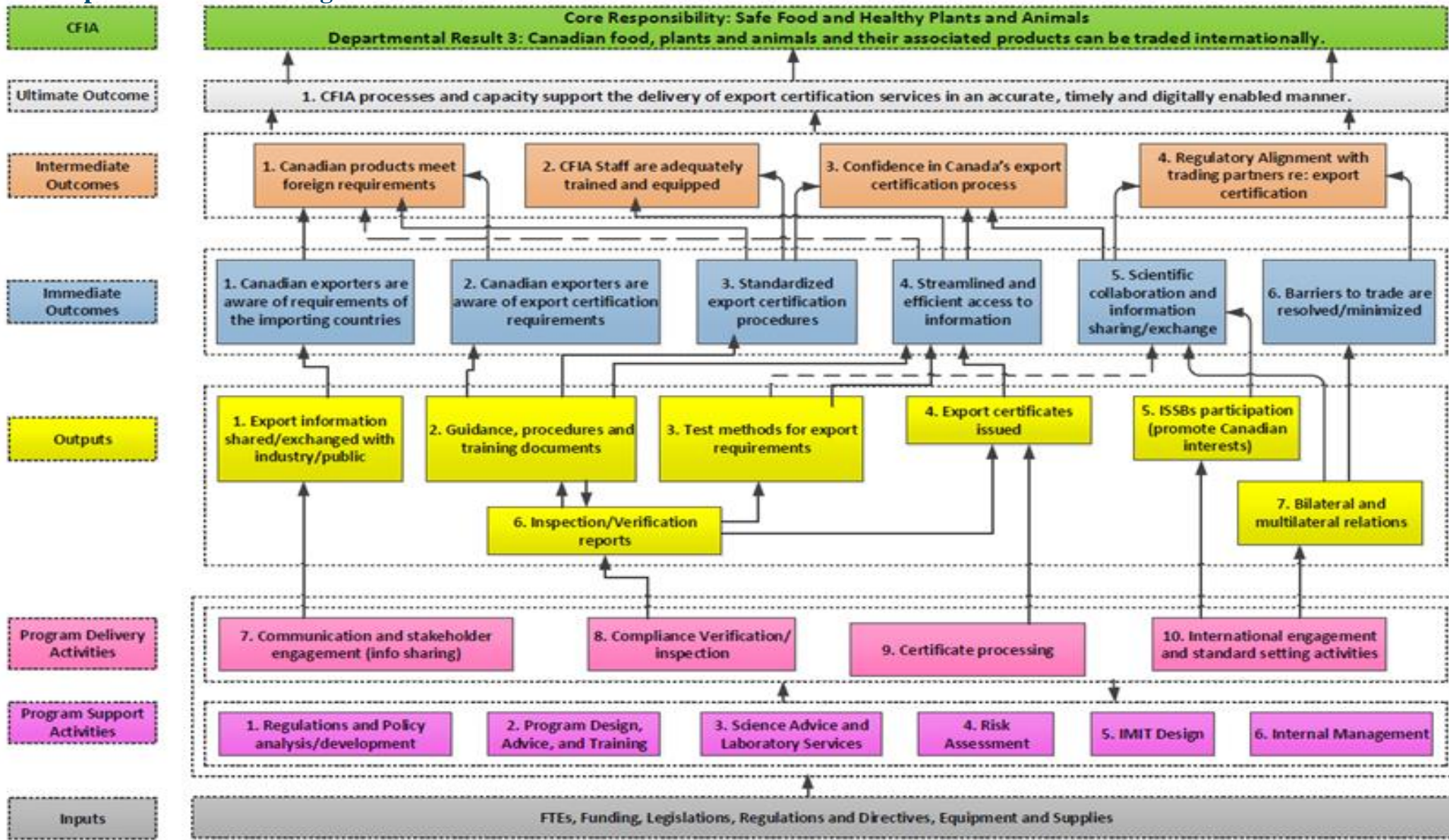
The evaluation team travelled across Canada to interview 22 exporters and CFIA employees at 19 local offices, 6 laboratories and the national headquarters within the Programs, Operations and Science Branches that are involved in the export certification program. The evaluation team assessed activities that support export certification, including (but not limited to) negotiations with foreign trading partners, laboratory testing, certification and reporting. The evaluation team also interviewed 4 technical specialists abroad via telephone.

Using qualitative data analysis software, the evaluation team identified themes and trends within the interview responses. The evaluation team also conducted an extensive review of academic, industry, Canadian and foreign government documents to inform the evaluation.

This evaluation was supported by an advisory committee that included members of branches involved in the evaluation scope, as nominated by their respective vice presidents. These members provided feedback on the evaluation framework, and confirmed the factual accuracy of the final report.



Annex 2: Export Certification Logic Model



Stakeholders:
 CFIA, Canadian Exporters, Canadian Public, OGDs and Trading Partners

- Assumptions:**
- Digital Service Delivery Platform (DSDP) export specific functions will be rolled out as per the DSDP release plan;
 - Training will be implemented by CFIA staff;
 - Digital solutions such as electronic certification will advance across the Canadian government and the governments of our trading partners;
 - Training will be developed for new IMIT systems and for SFCR;
 - The CFIA will be granted the relevant funding requests to support the ultimate outcome;
 - Domestic programs, as they relate to export certification, will be in place to support export certification.
 - CFIA culture will evolve to support the change in approach;
 - Trade facilitation will remain a priority for the President of the CFIA;

Acknowledgements

The evaluation team would like to acknowledge the contributions of all the Canadian exporters and CFIA employees across Canada who participated in the interviews for this evaluation. The perspectives and experiences of the regulated parties and the frontline staff were essential to this evaluation.

The evaluation team would also like to thank the members of the working group and the advisory committee for their expertise and cooperation throughout this evaluation.