



December 8, 2011

## U.S.-Canada Beyond the Border Action Plan

Under the Beyond the Border Initiative, the United States and Canada agreed to establish a new long-term partnership built upon a perimeter approach to security and economic competitiveness. Not just at the border, but “beyond the border.” To that end, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) have chosen to focus on two types of initiatives – those that better protect the two countries from offshore food safety and animal and plant health risks, and those that consider alternative approaches to existing activity at the U.S.-Canada border.

- Recognizing the highly regulated nature of fresh meat on both sides of the border, USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and CFIA will initiate a 12-month pilot program aimed at inspecting meat away from the border area. Specifically, the pilot will provide for advance review and clearance of official certification and alternative approaches to import inspection activities for fresh meat. The scope of the pilot would be those exports from a mutually agreed sample of exporting establishments in both countries that export fresh meat products directly to federally-inspected establishments in the other country. The pilot will develop a process under which CFIA and FSIS complete document verification of official certificates in advance of the shipment’s arrival at the border. Depending on the outcome, the pilot program may be extended or expanded.
- Wood packaging material made of unprocessed raw wood is recognized as a pathway for the introduction and spread of pests. A large volume of this material crosses the external and internal borders of North America. Fortunately, USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and CFIA already work very closely to monitor these materials. Under the Action Plans being announced, the two agencies will undertake a 12-month feasibility study to consider the prospects of moving the inspection process away from the border for material from third countries and in transit. The study will require the involvement of the respective border security authorities and, depending on the outcome, may be followed by a pilot inspection program.
- Canada and the United States seek to better protect the region from offshore food safety and animal and plant health risks. Where possible, the USDA and CFIA will develop joint processes and programs to increase the efficiency of making risk management determinations for third country imports. By December 2012, APHIS and FSIS will work collaboratively with CFIA to develop a plan which will allow for:
  - the utilization of a common approach to the assessment/audit methodology;
  - the utilization of shared assessment/audit findings;
  - potential efficiencies in our work, while also reducing risk; and
  - enhanced health and regulatory security.