



# Maple Leaf Foods Commitment to Animal Care

Maple Leaf Foods has strong values that deeply define our culture and have a very direct relationship to how we treat animals we raise or source. There are important environmental, nutritional and ethical implications of meat production that we must manage responsibly as part of our commitment to being a sustainable company.

As the largest meat protein company in Canada we must be a leader in animal care. To achieve this, animal welfare must be an integral part of our culture and business. We will commit the necessary organizational focus and resources to achieve this.

Maple Leaf Foods is a significantly vertically-integrated company that owns hog production, hatching egg production, hatcheries and pork and poultry processing plants. We have strong relationships with farmers and other service providers, and we will seek to advance continuous improvements across our supply chain. We believe in the important linkages between animal care, workplace safety, food safety and quality, and environmental sustainability. They all have a vital role in providing consumers with high quality, nourishing food that is produced sustainably and ethically.

Our responsibility for animal care goes well beyond our own operations to advocate and share knowledge that elevates practices and regulations across the industry. We will actively engage with consumers, customers, animal care interest groups and other stakeholders, so that change can be based on sound science, what is best for the animal, and what society expects of us. Through our actions and communications, we must earn public confidence that the products we make come from animals that have been treated empathetically and humanely.

Maple Leaf Foods is committed to enhancing our animal wellness practices in a manner that advances the Five Freedoms, the most widely-accepted global standard for responsible animal care.

1. **Freedom from hunger or thirst** by providing ready access to fresh water and a diet that maintains good health and vigour;
2. **Freedom from discomfort** by providing an appropriate environment, including shelter and a comfortable resting area;
3. **Freedom from pain, injury or disease** through prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment;
4. **Freedom to express normal behaviours** by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animal's own kind; and
5. **Freedom from fear and distress** by providing conditions and treatment which avoid mental suffering.

**We will support these through ongoing critical self and third-party evaluation and continuous improvement in four critical areas:**

**Culture:** advancing a culture of animal care through communications, education and training; robust policies and well-defined Standard Operating Procedures; and providing positive reinforcement and timely consequences for violations.

**Accountability:** regular reporting of performance, issues and progress against goals to a Committee of the Board, senior leadership and across facilities; and conducting frequent, rigorous internal and independent audits.

**Advancement:** advancing best practices and technologies based on sound science; establishing an independent council of experts; and supporting research and advocating for improvements that raise standards across the industry.

**Communications:** providing clear, fact-based communication of commitment, goals and performance, and building open relationships with stakeholders.



## **Culture**

- Providing our people with the knowledge, skills, resources and workplace culture to reinforce empathy and high standards of animal care.
- Clearly defining and enforcing expectations of our people and suppliers regarding animal care, recognizing best practices and taking swift disciplinary action when necessary.
- Elevating the importance and prominence of animal care in our management processes, operating policies and procedures, employee communications and supplier relations.

## **Accountability**

- Establishing strong governance, with senior leaders directly accountable for compliance to our standards and advancing our goals.
- Reporting quarterly to a Committee of the Board and senior leadership on key animal care metrics, risks and progress towards our goals.
- Requiring our hog and poultry operations and suppliers to adhere, at a minimum, to guidelines under: the National Farm Animal Care Council's Codes Of Practices; the Canadian Quality Assurance program and Animal Care Assessment of the Canadian Pork Council; the Animal Care Program of Chicken Farmers of Canada; the Turkey Farmers of Canada Flock Care Program®; the Canadian Hatching Egg Producer CHEQ™ Program; and the Chicken Farmers of Ontario Transportation and Safe Handling Program.
- Requiring weekly/monthly internal audits of our operations by employees that are either certified or trained as animal auditors by the Professional Animal Auditor Certification Organization (PAACO), and annual third-party audits across our operations.
- Maintaining a strong and open relationship with the dedicated Canadian Food Inspection Agency ("CFIA") inspectors and veterinarians at all our processing facilities, and with provincial officials that oversee on-farm animal care.

## **Advancement**

- Developing and implementing an Animal Care Strategy that advances our commitments and goals, with measurable targets and outcomes.
- Working closely with our producer partners and other suppliers to advance high standards of animal care across our supply chain.
- Monitoring and advancing our practices through the office of the Vice President, Animal Care and an internal governance structure that includes senior operations leaders.
- Establishing an Animal Care Council, comprised of external experts who will assist us to continually advance the efficacy of our program and culture.
- Supporting research that enhances our understanding and advances animal welfare.
- Advocating for regulatory reforms that raise and enforce standards across the industry, including incorporating by reference industry codes of practice into provincial and federal legislation.

## **Communications**

- Communicating regularly and openly on our goals, progress and performance.
- Seeking to build constructive dialogue with organizations committed to advancing animal welfare.

**Michael McCain**  
**President and CEO**

**Gary Maksymetz**  
**Chief Operating Officer**