

CTA BRIEFING NOTE



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Canada's Food Safety Regulatory Landscape is Changing: Are You Ready?

Canada

The Safe Food for Canadians Act (SFCA), which received Royal Assent in November 2012, establishes a modern and robust legislative framework for the safety of food commodities, marking the first step in the transformation of Canada's food safety system.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has now pre-publish an overview of proposed regulations which will likely appear in Canada Gazette Part I in late 2014 followed by a formal consultation period of 75-days. From there, the proposed regulations are expected to be published in Canada Gazette Part II, in mid-2015. However, the changes to Canada's regulatory framework for food inspection will not end in 2015. The CFIA, in the context of its Food Labelling Modernization Initiative, will pursue further options through 2014. This could lead to additional regulatory changes in areas such as labelling, grades and standards of identity. In addition, several other areas were identified which could be addressed in a future round of regulatory changes, such as requirements for transporters, warehouses and distribution centres. The CFIA has indicated it may begin consultations on these issues in 2016.

United States

Changes are also occurring in the US. The Food and Drug Administration is modernizing its food safety regulations by introducing sweeping changes which will include new requirements for trucking companies. The aptly named Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) represents the first major overhaul of US food safety regulations since the current rules were written in 1938. The Act includes seven major proposed rules, the most recent of which – covering the Sanitary Transportation of Human and Animal Food – will have the greatest impact on carriers. The rule concerning transportation is open for public comment through July 30.

The proposed rule establishes requirements for vehicles and transportation equipment, transportation operations, training and record-keeping. Pointing to one example, Shippers will be required to inspect a vehicle for cleanliness or contamination prior to loading food that is not completely enclosed by its container. Carriers will be required to establish written procedures, subject to

record-keeping requirements, for cleaning their vehicles and equipment. The rules will apply equally to US carriers and Canadian fleets that operate there, as well as shippers, receivers and importers.

The court-ordered deadline for publishing the final rule is March 31, 2016. Once published, it will be at least another year before it is implemented. Large carriers (businesses, defined as having more than US\$25.5 million in annual revenue) won't be required to comply with the new rules until 2017, while smaller businesses will have until 2018.

What is CTA doing to help carriers comply?

Nearly a decade ago the Canadian Trucking Alliance, assisted by an advisory committee of carriers, provincial associations and national food industry associations, developed a food safety program for its members using Canadian HACCP principles. With financial support from the federal government, the Trucking Food Safety Program (TFSP) was recently upgraded to help carriers meet clients' more demanding food safety requirements.

The approach was to develop a compliance program utilizing food safety building blocks and the required preventive controls for trucking companies as well as a series of commodity-specific modules which can be introduced depending on the requirements of individual carriers. The CTA program consists of food safety prerequisites, the development of standard operating procedures and risk-based preventive control measures, fully documented with automatic record keeping, task alerts, missed tasks warnings, and instant access to all pertinent regulations relevant to each individual trucking company. In addition, modules on refrigerated, frozen and mixed loads, as well as dry grocery products, have been submitted to the CFIA Technical Review process. CTA's final objective is to see the program receive full compliance recognition for the upcoming US and Canadian regulations.

In the Fall/Winter 2014, CTA plans to launch opportunities across the country for carriers wishing to be trained and certified under the CTA food safety program. Please e-mail jonathan.blackham@cantruck.ca to sign up to receive information about these upcoming training opportunities.