



## Canadian Animal Health Coalition Coalition canadienne pour la santé des animaux

*Promoting a collaborative approach to animal health  
Œuvrant pour une vision commune de la santé animale*

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

For immediate release

#### **Bluetongue virus found in Ontario beef herd**

(Guelph, ON) The Canadian Animal Health Coalition (CAHC) has been informed that the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has confirmed a positive case of Bluetongue virus in an Ontario cattle herd.

On August 7, 2015, samples collected from an animal in an Ontario abattoir as part of the national Bovine Serological Surveillance program returned a positive result for bluetongue serotype 13. The positive animal did not show any clinical signs of the disease prior to slaughter. On September 2, 2015, follow up testing on the farm of origin, which is located in southwestern Ontario, detected two other positive animals. None of the animals had ever left the farm nor were there any US import animals on the premises.

Bluetongue primarily affects sheep but also affects cattle, sheep, goats and other ruminants. Infection is mild or unapparent in the vast majority, including cattle and goats. However, in sheep and some wild ruminants, bluetongue can cause serious illness and death.

There is no human health or food safety risk associated with bluetongue.

This is a serious health issue for sheep farmers. Case fatality rates are very high and in an epidemic situation, the untreatable disease can cause up to 30% of the flock to die. The virus is transmitted primarily through biting midges which can be blown by the wind over long distances making it challenging to contain.

“In addition to the health risk to flocks there is potential that Ontario’s sheep and cattle sectors could lose their export certificates allowing them to trade with international partners,” said CAHC executive director Mark Beaven. “The CAHC supports the Canadian sheep industry in their efforts to protect their farmers against this disease threat,” he said.

CAHC joins with the Ontario Sheep Marketing Agency in advising producers to contact their veterinarians if they have concerns that this disease may be present in their flock.

-30-

Contact: Mark Beaven, Executive Director  
Canadian Animal Health Coalition  
42894 Browntown Road  
Bluevale, Ontario N0G 1G0  
Phone: (519) 829-2242 Email: [mark@animalhealth.ca](mailto:mark@animalhealth.ca)

The Canadian Animal Health Coalition is a not for profit organization serving Canada’s farmed animal industry. The organization is a partnership of organizations all recognizing a shared responsibility for an effective Canadian animal health system.