



# The CFIA **Renewal** Plan 2008–2013

## CFIA **Vision**

To excel as a science-based regulator, trusted and respected by Canadians and the international community.

## CFIA **Mission**

We are dedicated to safeguarding food, animals and plants, which enhances the health and well-being of Canada's people, environment, and economy.

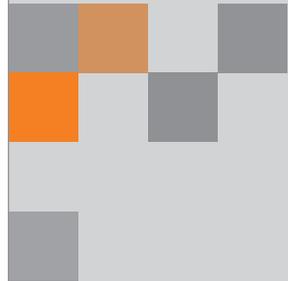


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# Renewal **Planning** at the CFIA:

## **The Business Context**

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is Canada's largest science-based regulatory agency. We are responsible for the delivery of all federally mandated programs for food inspection, plant and animal health products and production systems, and consumer protection related to food. The CFIA's mandate is vast and complex, with responsibilities flowing from 13 federal statutes and 42 sets of regulations.

With nearly 7,000 dedicated professionals working across Canada, the CFIA is committed to serving Canadians by protecting public health, contributing to economic growth, and protecting Canada's environment.

To fulfil this commitment, we must build a workforce that can adapt to the complex and ever-changing business environment in which we operate, while continuing to excel in delivering policies, programs, and services to the people of Canada.

## **An Evolving Business Environment**

The Agency has always proactively addressed the key human resources renewal challenges of all public-sector organizations: dealing with an aging workforce with high numbers of impending retirements, representing an increasingly

diverse Canadian society, and keeping up with the ongoing demands of technological change.

As a science-based regulatory organization, however, we also have to address unique recruitment and retention challenges, like intense competition for talented knowledge workers and access to fewer appropriately skilled workers.

The social and economic context in which the CFIA operates is continually evolving, and the scope of activities under our mandate is expanding. Some of the key global and national factors affecting our work include:

### ■ **Globalization**

As markets around the world become more interconnected and borders more porous, imports and exports of products subject to CFIA regulation are on the rise. As this happens, the Agency faces growing demands for inspection and certification.

### ■ **Population Demographics**

Demand for Agency regulation is also being driven up by rising immigration, which is creating higher demand for a greater variety of import foods from a larger number of countries. Canada's aging population poses further regulatory challenges because it is at greater risk from food-borne pathogens and demands increased food fortification and nutrient supplements.

### ■ **Evolving Consumer Preferences**

Canadian consumers are more focused than ever before on the quality of food products. They want more convenient foods and ready-to-eat products; they demand healthy food choices and greater variety regardless of the season or country of origin; and they want informative labels that allow them to make choices about nutrition and production methods.



### ■ **Evolving Federal Science and Technology**

As the Government of Canada hones its investments in science and technology and scientific issues become more complex and multidisciplinary, all federal science organizations must adapt the way they work to include integrated approaches and multi-stakeholder collaboration. These challenges will be further enhanced with the retirement of a significant number of public service scientists in the next five years and challenges in attracting new scientists to federal research.



### ■ **A More Complex Trading Environment**

Globalization, increasing trade volumes, changing consumer demands, higher international standards and new production practices, combined with high-profile food and product recalls, have raised international public concern about food safety, translating to more stringent regulatory requirements for many Canadian exporters and importers and additional requirements for CFIA intervention to facilitate trade.

## **Meeting the Challenges of Renewal: Integrated Human Resources and Business Planning**

While the Agency has traditionally used strategic HR planning and management to stay ahead of the human capital curve, workforce renewal today has become not only a top HR priority but a top business priority for the CFIA.

The *CFIA Renewal Plan 2008–2013* represents an important step in developing an integrated HR-business vision. The Plan covers renewal and more, outlining how, from an HR perspective, the CFIA plans to respond to long-term federal government priorities for bolstering economic prosperity, strengthening security at the border and of the safety of the food supply, protecting the environment and contributing to the health of Canadians.

At the same time, Agency business planning is increasingly referencing HR planning. The CFIA's annual *Report on Plans and Priorities*, which outlines how the Agency intends to use its resources to deliver its mandate, links directly to HR Renewal.



## Mapping CFIA Business Planning to Government of Canada Priorities

Government of Canada's priorities	CFIA Contribution
Clean and healthy environment for Canadians	Minimize and manage public health risks associated with the food supply and transmission of animal disease to humans to protect Canadians from preventable disease.
Prosperous Canada through global commerce	Deliver a fair and effective regulatory regime in order to support a safe and sustainable plant and animal resource base.
Fair and secure marketplace	Protect consumers and market access by applying sound science and consistent standards.

## Summary of Agency Priorities

### Program Priorities

1. Enhance regulatory compliance, with a focus on safety of domestic and imported food.
2. Strengthen preparedness to mitigate and respond to animal and plant diseases and pests.
3. Improve the program and regulatory framework to support continued consumer protection and economic prosperity.

### Management Priorities

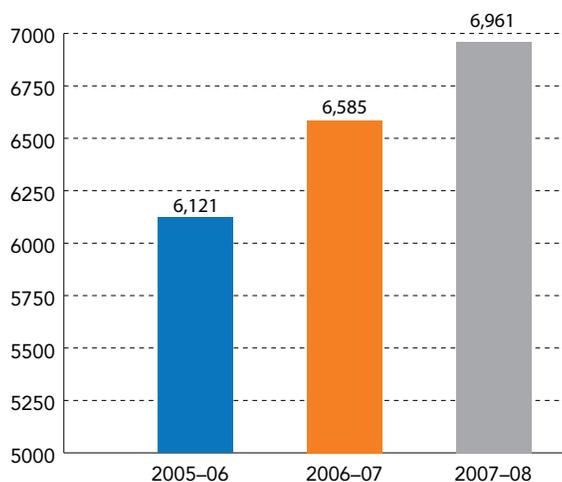
4. Implement Human Resources Renewal.
5. Enhance alignment and coordination within the Agency to better integrate risk management into effective policy development, program design, and program delivery.

## Renewal at the CFIA: Embracing Change and Opportunity

Workforce renewal at the CFIA is not simply another initiative in a sea of planning and programs—rather, it is a core business process. It therefore requires a special focus. This focus on renewal is the purpose of the *CFIA Renewal Plan 2008–2013*.

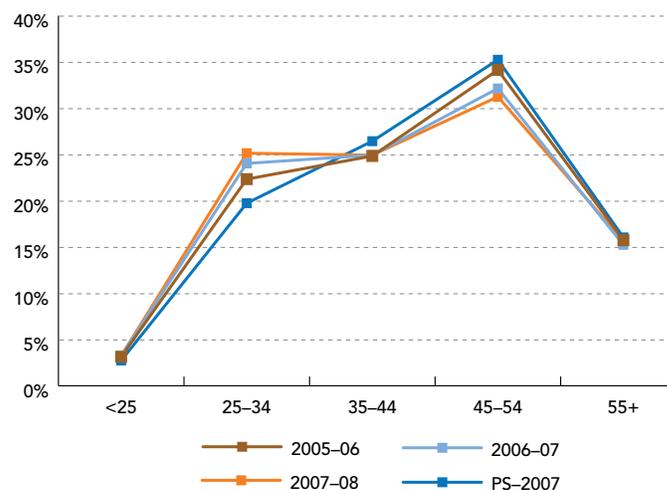
The Agency’s business needs, plans, and activities are fundamentally linked to its human resources; supporting renewal means conducting the business of the Agency in a way that makes effective people management a core part of management accountability and enables us to close skills gaps in order to continue to meet our regulatory responsibilities.

### CFIA Population



These efforts have never been more important. When the Agency was created in 1997, it committed itself to applying its 4,698 employees across Canada to the task of exploring and implementing new approaches to delivering services and working with clients and industry. Of these 4,698 employees, 86% had indeterminate employment status. The average age of the workforce was 43, mirroring the average for the Public Service at the time.

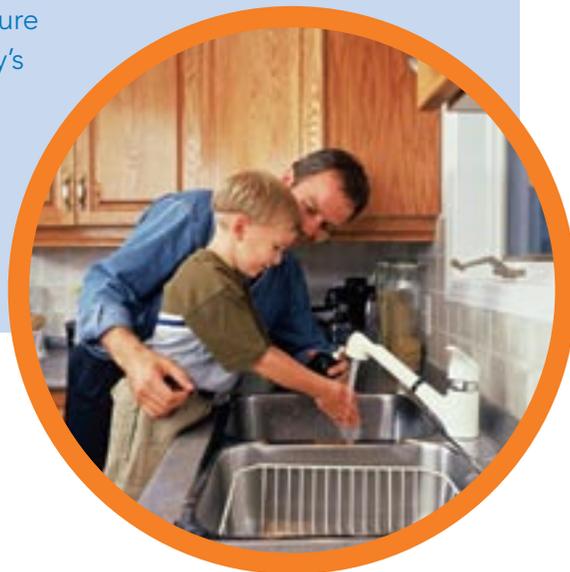
### CFIA Population by Age Band, 2005–08



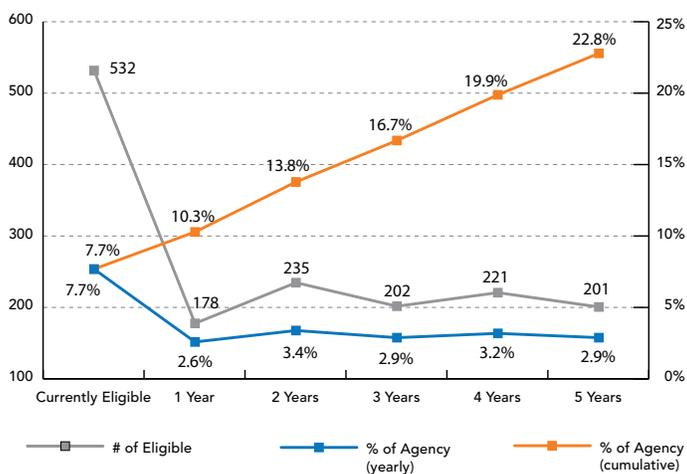
As of March 31, 2008, the Agency’s workforce is 6,961 strong. This represents a 48.2% increase from the Agency’s original workforce eleven years ago. In contrast with the general aging trend in the Canadian workforce, the Agency has been able—through concerted recruitment efforts—to maintain an average employee age of 43.3 years, compared to 46 years in the greater Public Service. Today, 50% of the CFIA population is between 25–44 years of age; this figure is considerably higher than the Public Service-wide percentage of 44% for this age band.

## Values and Ethics: An Integral Part of the Agency's Governance Structure

The CFIA's *Values and Ethics Strategy* was created to ensure that values and ethics form an integral part of the Agency's management practices and overall work environment. Values and ethics are anchors of the public service and the CFIA. Supported by accountability and transparency, they are essential components of good governance.



### CFIA Population, Years to Retirement Eligibility



Despite these successes, the human resources challenges facing us in the years ahead must influence our actions now—this is the essence of responsive human resources management.

### The Opportunities of Renewal

Addressing the many challenges of our changing work environment isn't the only reason to undertake workforce renewal. The CFIA also wants to make the most of the many opportunities change offers. Renewal means learning how to manage the challenges of change, but also opening ourselves to the new opportunities:

- **We're growing at an exciting pace:** The Agency has been in rapid growth mode for several years and will continue to grow in the years to come.
- **We are positioning ourselves for new approaches to partnership and innovation:** The increasingly horizontal nature of our work (for example, internal and external partnering) is becoming more important and pervasive.

- **We are embracing the promise of technology:**  
Technology offers opportunities to transform the way we work. As a science based organization, we are uniquely positioned to benefit from these opportunities. These technical advances will also help us to transform our HR processes.
- **We are committed to diversity:**  
Today's labour market offers a more diverse pool of available resources to draw from, allowing us to be more inclusive.
- **We are committed to the Agency:**  
CFIA employees are more satisfied with their careers and committed to their work when compared to public service employees overall.

## About This Plan

This plan was created by the Agency's Human Resources Branch (HRB) through comprehensive consultations with employees, managers, and bargaining agents across the Agency.

The first phase of the consultation process included in-person consultation with more than 175 employees and managers across the country in December 2007 and January 2008.



### Participant Perspective: The Agency Renewal Plan

*Very interactive session to improve and modernize HR within the Agency.  
It was a great opportunity to make positive changes to achieve the Agency's  
mandate and vision.*

## Participant Perspective: What does renewal mean for you?

*For me, renewal means the ability to explore, improve and allow for changes to take place within the organization. It also means inventing ideas that can help us build on what we have now.*

These half-day sessions, which were hosted in Guelph, Ontario; Moncton, New Brunswick; Calgary, Alberta; Montreal, Quebec; and in Ottawa, allowed HRB to build the second phase of the consultation: a detailed online questionnaire that allowed all Agency employees to share their views on renewal. More than 2,000 CFIA employees from coast to coast completed the online questionnaire. Both phases provided vital feedback that helped to refine the *Agency Renewal Plan 2008–2013*.

Throughout the consultative process, direct employee input played a central role in establishing a path for renewal at the Agency and ensuring that the Agency remains a federal public-service leader in science-based regulation.





# The Plan

The Agency recognizes that having the right people in the right place at the right time requires integrated HR and business planning focused on five major themes:

## 1. Employee Engagement (Retention)

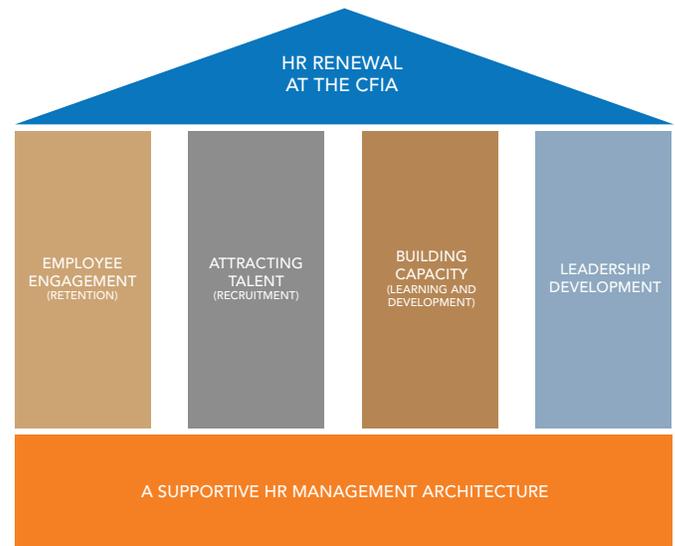
### We heard:

- Effective leadership, a good work environment, meaningful work, and support for work-life balance are extremely important factors for ensuring high retention rates.
- Having a balanced workload, access to learning opportunities, the tools to perform your job, and effective internal communications to clarify expectations are among the most important factors in supporting a high level of pride in and commitment to the CFIA.
- The effectiveness of senior leaders, access to training and career development, and effective internal communications are the biggest contributors to employee job satisfaction at the Agency.
- An environment where all employees feel welcome and enabled to contribute to their full potential is the biggest contributor to a diverse workplace.
- A healthy workplace is one in which you have a balanced workload and access to flexible work arrangements in support of work-life balance.

### Here is what we will do:

The Agency will maintain a vibrant workforce able to contribute to its full potential, helping to make the CFIA a high-performance organization. We will do this by fostering an environment where all employees feel welcome and where they have the tools they need to do their jobs. By emphasizing our long-term commitment to our staff through ongoing performance discussions, coaching and mentoring, effective union-management relationships, and a focus on work-life balance, we will boost employee engagement.

As a top employer, the CFIA will support a culture of internal and external recognition, will incorporate and promote safe workplace initiatives, will have a fully representative workforce, and will continue to foster an environment of linguistic duality. We will tailor classification to the unique needs of the Agency and will continue to seek feedback on employee engagement through employee surveys.



## 2. Attracting Talent (Recruitment)

### We heard:

- Salary and benefits are the most important factors in attracting potential CFIA employees, followed by job security and career development opportunities.
- Employees in the job market would be most attracted by access to a variety of work experience and career opportunities, job security, attractive benefits, and work-life balance.
- Mobility between the CFIA and the greater public service will be a very important factor in the workplace of the future.
- One of the best tools for attracting talent in the future will be to accelerate staffing processes.

### Here is what we will do:

The Agency will use coordinated planning, programs, and tools to attract new employees—including both younger employees and more experienced workers—in order to keep the CFIA strong and vibrant over the long term. This goal includes planning for staffing needs in advance, developing a strong employment brand to increase awareness of the Agency among the Canadian labour pool, and making diversity central to our recruitment strategy. This will include showcasing the excellent work of the Agency and its employees to prospective employees and the general public.

Attracting talent is also a cornerstone of maintaining renewal during the coming high-retirement era. We will support this endeavor by introducing innovative approaches to staffing, ensuring that business continuity is fully supported, developing strategies for critical groups where shortages may exist, providing interesting and challenging career

development opportunities and making recognition of experienced workers central to the way we work.

## 3. Building Capacity (Learning and Development)

### We heard:

- The key factor contributing to the CFIA's capacity to be a learning organization is financial support for training and development, followed by management and employees' commitment to participating in these programs and applying their knowledge, and access to on-the-job training.
- Having assignment opportunities and access to mentoring programs are the most important factors in building the capacity of Agency employees.



- Communication and people management are the most important skills for responding to the Agency's renewal needs now and in the future.
- Over the next five years, the types of learning that will be most important for the Agency in responding to its business needs are on-the-job training, leadership training, and technical training.

### Here is what we will do:

The Agency will build its knowledge capacity on two levels: organizational and individual.

Organizational capacity building will entail ongoing advanced planning for learning, so that learning decisions reflect the values and priorities of the organization and that the Agency maintains national and international confidence. It will also entail continuing to deliver programs so that all new employees are quickly oriented to the vision and mandate of the Agency and have a clear understanding of their role in helping us reach our goals. In addition, management will be able to forecast, measure, and evaluate the impact of learning.

To build individual capacity, we will give Agency employees every opportunity to enhance their skills. This capability will, in turn, enhance recruitment and retention because employees will clearly see their learning and development path.

We will encourage all employees to work with their managers to develop and implement individual learning plans to address current and future training and development needs.

We will optimize the use of development programs for critical groups that will identify clear career paths, on-the-job training, expected learning, and assignment opportunities.

We will emphasize technical training and deliver it as required using the most efficient blend of on-the-job, classroom and e-learning activities.

We will continue to invest in the CFIA Development Fund to support knowledge transfer, management development, developmental language training and post-graduate education.

We will develop a suite of options for official language training.



## 4. Leadership Development

### We heard:

- By far, people management skills are critical to be a successful leader at the CFIA. The ability to coach, mentor, and empower employees is also very important.
- The best ways to identify potential leaders at the CFIA are to provide people with assignments and other development opportunities, to listen to individuals and the managers of individuals who express an interest in leadership, and through leadership development programs.
- The best tools for supporting leadership development and succession planning are access to assignment opportunities, competency profiles and associated training, and formal career development programs.

### Here is what we will do:

The Agency will give all leaders and potential leaders have access to the programs and tools they need to build their leadership competencies. As a leading science organization, we have strong scientific and technical skills. In fact, the CFIA's scientific expertise makes an integral contribution to regulatory policy and standards not only in Canada, but around the world.

We will enrich our overall scientific capacities by having leadership skills that are equally robust. Leadership skills will include the ability to nurture a strong culture of recognition in which leaders mentor, support, and teach staff and one another in a cycle of growth and ongoing improvement. They will also include the ability for leaders to build succession planning into their regular management practice. We will make leadership development a key element of our planning processes.



We will continue to implement CFIA leadership competencies across the CFIA and provide the tools to assess their level of proficiency and address any gaps. The Agency will continue to provide mandatory training for all new delegated managers and ensure that existing delegated managers stay current with the evolving mandatory training.

We will develop people management skills by specifically assessing the performance of leaders in this area, creating clear expectations and measuring results.

We will support and encourage participation in a variety of networks for CFIA managers and continue to support an active CFIA Youth Network.

We will continue to participate in leadership development programs in the public sector and beyond, while encouraging leaders to play an active role in coaching and mentoring employees.

## 5. A Supportive HR Management Architecture

### We heard:

- Access to and availability of HR services is a very important factor in supporting employee engagement.
- Accelerating our staffing process is an extremely important factor in attracting talent.

### Here is what we will do:

The Agency will introduce new HR tools that will allow us to work more efficiently and effectively and will support our commitment to HR excellence. This modernization of Agency HR services will help us to better meet the CFIA's ongoing human capital needs.

The foundation of this HR architecture will be consistent, standardized HR processes and tools like generic work descriptions and self-serve capabilities that accelerate and

simplify access to HR services for employees and prospective employees. As new tools are introduced, their availability will be promoted through high-impact communications.



We will continue to explore ways to streamline staffing while respecting our staffing values by implementing Fast Track Staffing and using collaborative staffing processes to the fullest extent possible.

We will promote innovation and efficiency in HR processes while identifying opportunities to provide additional self-service features in our HR system and services.





## Taking Our **Commitment** Forward

No plan is effective unless it is put into action. Our first step is to share this plan with Agency employees and managers, so that all Agency employees clearly understand the profound importance of renewal to the business of the CFIA. The elements of this renewal plan will form a key pillar in the ongoing planning and practice of managers across the Agency and in the Agency's business and HR plans. The CFIA will also carefully track and regularly report on its progress with detailed, quantifiable results.

There are few things more important to Canadians than the safety of the food they and their families eat. At the CFIA, it is our job to have the right people in sufficient numbers to continue to provide Canadians with peace of mind about their food supply. While the coming years will be a time of great change and challenge both outside and inside the CFIA, strong leadership and a sustained commitment to creating a highly desirable workplace for all qualified candidates puts us in an excellent position to carry out our vital work for Canadians.