

# The Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Its Regulated Parties, Stakeholders and Partners: **AN ETHICAL RELATIONSHIP**

## **Sound values and ethics are an integral part of good management in any organization.**

We believe that knowledge of the values and ethics of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is helpful in building effective working relationships between the CFIA and regulated parties, stakeholders and partners.

This document will provide you with a brief explanation of:

- the ethical principles under which all CFIA employees are expected and obligated to operate;
- the CFIA values;
- the main tenets of the CFIA's *Code of Conduct*, including conflict of interest guidelines; and,
- an explanation of what this means to you.

### **CFIA Statement of Values**

The CFIA has developed the following Statement of Values to support decision making in our role as a science-based regulator.

“As employees of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency:

- We value scientific rigour and professional and technical competence. These play a crucial role in our decision making. We do not manipulate science to achieve a desired outcome, but acknowledge that other factors must be taken into account in this decision making.
- The reputation and credibility of the Agency are vital to our ability to deliver our mandate. As such, we behave, internally and externally, in a way that trust is preserved.
- We are proud of the contributions we make to the quality of life of Canadians. We value dedication and responsiveness from all employees day to day and particularly during an emergency.
- We value competent, qualified and motivated personnel, whose efforts drive the results of the Agency.
- To develop effective policies and strategies, we value the perspectives of the stakeholders who are affected by our decisions.
- We maintain our regulatory independence from all external stakeholders. We have the courage to make difficult and potentially unpopular decisions and recommendations, free from personal bias.
- We are committed to our physical and psychological well-being.”

This set of values helps CFIA employees determine what should and should not be done as they fulfill their daily responsibilities. We expect that you and your employees will respect these values in business decisions or interactions that directly affect the CFIA.

### ***Code of Conduct***

#### **Physical and psychological well-being**

We are committed to the physical and psychological well-being of all our employees. We pledge to conduct ourselves professionally and appropriately while on your premises, treating your staff with courtesy and respect. At the same time, when on your premises, CFIA employees are equally entitled to be treated with respect by your managers and staff.

CFIA employees are expected to follow your established safety procedures and comply with all instructions concerning health and safety for the workplace, in accordance with the *Canada Labour Code, Part II*. You are required to take all reasonable and necessary precautions to ensure the safety and health of CFIA employees and any people granted access to your workplace.

### **Conflict of interest**

Maintaining the trust of Canadians is vital to our ability to fulfill our mandate. Therefore, it is critically important that CFIA employees avoid all conflicts of interest—even if the conflict is perceived rather than actual.

The CFIA defines a conflict of interest as:

*Any situation in which personal assets, interests or activities affect in any way, or have the potential to appear to affect, the honest, impartial performance of an employee's duties or their judgement to act in the public interest.*

*It is important to note that an employee's duties do not have to be directly affected by personal interests to create a conflict of interest. It is sufficient that there is an appearance to others that they may be affected. Such a potential or apparent conflict of interest serves to undermine the credibility of the Agency's actions and reputation.*

### **CFIA conflict of interest guidelines**

The CFIA has adopted a clear policy on actions that are permitted outside the workplace, and on accepting gifts, benefits and hospitality.

- **CFIA employees are not permitted to accept any offers of gifts, hospitality and other benefits from organizations regulated by the CFIA.**
- CFIA employees may accept gifts, hospitality and other benefits **from other parties**, so long as the gifts:
  - are of nominal value (less than \$25)
  - do not create a real or perceived conflict of interest
  - are infrequently given
  - are within normal standards of courtesy or hospitality
  - do not advertise/promote a regulated party
- In all other cases, gifts, hospitality and other benefits must be disclosed by CFIA employees to the CFIA within 15 days of receipt. Employees will not be permitted to keep the gift if it is deemed inappropriate by the Conflict of Interest Secretariat.

Therefore, regulated parties should not:

- offer CFIA employees any holiday gifts, souvenirs, clothing, or other things of value, or
- invite them for paid meals, parties, sporting events, and similar social functions.

### **Additional information and queries**

If you have any questions, please discuss them with the CFIA supervisor responsible for your premise.

You may also contact the Values and Ethics Project of the CFIA by email at:  
[CFIAValues-ValeursACIA@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:CFIAValues-ValeursACIA@inspection.gc.ca).