



Sustainable  
Poultry Farming Group

## BC Sustainable Poultry Farming Group (SPFG)

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### Status Summary for the June 22, 2021 SPFG Committee Meeting

One research proposals was reviewed:

1. 2021-01 - Poultry in Motion – design a new website and content
  - The Poultry in Motion Educational Mini Barn Program began in 2007 and has been running successfully for the past 14 years. The program’s goals are to educate and improve consumer confidence of BC Chicken. Students, teachers, and consumers are educated about the actual growing practices and programs, including: On-farm-food-safety, Biosecurity and Animal Care programs that BC Chicken Growers are required to follow.
  - Until recently, the program used a fully equipped poultry mini barn with live birds and provided in-person presentations and educational materials to elementary and secondary schools and to the public at fairs. The current COVID-19 pandemic restrictions have prevented this program from continuing with onsite presentations. They do not know when we will be able to resume this program.
  - This project is to design and develop new website and content for a new Poultry in Motion with individual web pages for fairs, elementary and secondary schools, and a teacher only page where all educational materials will be accessible in digital format. Separating the content by need and age level will make it easier for teachers and others to find and access the appropriate information. Developing the website will maintain the current program, while in-person visits are postponed, and open new opportunities to extend our reach to schools and fairs that are remotely located or for other educational purposes. The digital content will also enhance information and access to the public.
  - \$5,000 fund was provided.

#### Status of other projects

1. **2016-06** - BCAC Community Engagement Initiative (formerly *Public Trust*)
  - The project is now in it’s fourth year. The SPFG approved extending funding past the initial three-year pilot. The manager continues to make progress despite Covid restrictions. The main focus areas are:
    - COOK ALONG BC SERIES**
    - To date in 2021 there have been four cook along events held in collaboration with BC Agriculture in the Classroom, with an estimated participation of 850+ people in total. In each event, over 95% of participants indicated they learned something new or interesting about BC food production. The next event is scheduled for June 21. The May 8th event was sponsored by BC Chicken Marketing Board and BC Egg (along with BC Cranberry Marketing Commission). The recipes featured ground chicken and eggs. BC poultry farmer Jacqueline Boer and her daughter participated in the cook along and answered questions about egg farming.
    - WE HEART LOCAL BC**
    - We Heart Local BC continues to add new content in collaboration with our members. So far in 2021 we have uploaded 60+ new recipes and 29 new farmer profiles. Our audiences on social media continue to grow: +700 likes on Facebook and +800 followers on Instagram in 2021. We

continue to share information about industry assurance programs and brands. In 2021 we have highlighted the Raised by a Canadian Chicken Farmer and the Start Clean, Stay Clean program. Upcoming collaborations include 2 summer giveaways in collaboration with BCAC members and local farm businesses, as well as a blog with BC Chicken planned for September.

#### **CONSUMER RESEARCH**

- We recently completed another round of consumer research with the Insights West Omnibus Study. Preliminary findings show that sentiment towards BC farmers remains high, and that COVID impacted levels of concern about food system topics. Two new questions were also asked about food purchasing decisions, and engagement with farmers. Full results will be shared shortly.

#### **2. 2018-05 – Aerobic digestion of spent hen hydrolysate**

- The project is underway. The pilot scale and commercial thermal hydrolysis was used to make spent hen hydrolysate. The commercial process uses less water (product is more concentrated). At pilot scale 6 tons of spent hens was processed and the commercial scale yielded 3.5 barrels of hydrolysate. Spent hen hydrolysate is easily 20 to 25% fat depending on the process. The hydrolysate was used to fertilize four different field crops. The focus was on soil health and crop productivity. Greenhouse trials will soon be underway utilizing raw and fermented spent hen hydrolysate.

Thermal hydrolysis is CFIA approved for destroying “mad cow” disease; it can safely convert any diseased animal biomass to nutrients. In the case of avian influenza, this technology could eliminate all organic disease vectors present in the barn (manure, bedding, excess feed etc.) in addition to the diseased birds.

There are 4 crops, wheat, canola, peas and a cocktail mix of forages (a CARA specialty mix to foster soil health / microbiology); each having 4 treatment types, (the above three types of solution and a control nutrient solution). Soil health is the main focus but the solutions’ impact on crop productivity will also be assessed. It will be interesting what impacts the solutions will have on canola given its (debated) reputation of deterring soil microbiology.

Now that the field trials are underway, we’ll be focusing on getting the greenhouse component ‘up and running’. Afterwards, the data for runs 1 and 2 will be thoroughly analyzed before stating run 3. Sample analysis will be obtained for spent hen hydrolysate and its 3 fractions for each thermal hydrolysis process; the dried solids analysis for raw and fermented spent hen hydrolysate will also be obtained.

#### **3. 2020-01-Feasibility study for poultry-specific AD**

- Still on hold due to Covid and funding issues.

#### **4. 2020-02- BC Ag Industry Symbiosis Centre**

- They are securing funding from various sources and expanding the project scope as opportunities develop.

#### **5. 2020-03 - Managing extreme heat report – Climate Action Initiative**

- No follow-up action required.

6. **2020-04** - *Manure Dryer at Seabreeze Farm*
  - Project is on hold for a few months while the farm installs their new biogas upgrader.
7. **2020-05** – *Possible AAFC study - potentially pathogenic microorganisms being transported from livestock operations to neighbouring food crops.*
  - The project was not approved. She may re-apply for funding later this year.
8. **2020-06** - Blackhead Epidemiological Data Collection and Comparison
  - The project is well underway with positive results. The six main project areas are:
    - Data Capture & Analysis
    - Validate the Histomonas PCR
    - Evaluate effectiveness of Paromomycin
    - Identify environmental reservoirs
    - Cecal worm prevalence in BC commercial turkey farms
    - Blackhead Seminars

The next SPFG meeting will be scheduled as required.