



BCFACC

BC Farm Animal Care Council holds first conference on animal welfare.

ABBOTSFORD, BC - BC's entire food chain, from producer to consumer, benefits by ensuring all farm animals are raised in a humane and healthy environment. On November 10, 2011, the BC Farm Animal Care Council (BCFACC) hosted its first conference, bringing the agriculture community together with leaders in animal welfare at the Ramada Plaza & Conference Centre in Abbotsford.

The conference welcomed 150 people, including farmers and ranchers from all livestock sectors, the BC SPCA and industry-led animal care organizations, universities, government, processors and retailers. The program provided valuable context and new information about the research, policy and practice that is helping shape farm animal care in Canada.

"As a farmer, I play a critical and practical role in treating animals well, and it was good to hear about the work that researchers and animal welfare experts are engaging in to help broaden my base of knowledge and spur my level of animal care," says Dan Kampen, egg & turkey producer and co-chair of BCFACC.

The diversity of the participants at the conference created a rich and vibrant space for people to discuss animal care issues, and deepen their understanding of different viewpoints and values that shape the public debate about animal care.

A presentation by Dr. Temple Grandin was the highlight of the day. Dr. Grandin shared insights and experience from 35-years working in animal behavior, as well as the design and audit of slaughter plant facilities and protocols to improve farm animal handling practices. She challenged the audience to reach out to the public and provide more transparency in the livestock industry.

"It was encouraging to have such a diverse group of people come together to share their expertise on how to treat animals well," says Kampen. "We had a full spectrum of interests represented to share, under a spirit of collaboration, their passion for animals and animal care and welfare."

The BC Farm Animal Care Initiative is funded in part by the Investment Agriculture Foundation of BC through Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's former federal adaptation programming.

Presentations from the first BCFACC Conference are available online at <http://www.bcfacc.ca/conference.htm>.

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