Chicken Primary Processing Sector

Date	Time	Location
Monday June 15, 2026	10:15AM – 10:50AM	Marriott Harbourfront Hotel, Halifax Nova Scotia CD

Purpose of Meeting

Regular Chicken Sector Meeting

Title	Name
Chair	Michael Burrows
Staff contact	Nicolas Paillat (nicolas@cpep-tvoc.ca)
Guest(s)	CFC, TFC, FPCC, AAFC, Associate members

Notes

MS Teams Meeting Link: https://tinyurl.com/CPEPPoultry20260615

CPEP Canadian Poultry & Egg Processors | TVOC Transformateurs de volailles & d'œufs du Canada

Agenda Item	Time	Attachment	Type			Presenter
Chicken Sector Meeting – June 2026			Information	Discussion	Decision	
1. Welcome / Call to order / Introductions	10:15am		●			Michael
2. Adoption of the agenda					●	Michael
3. CFC Update			●	●		CFC
4. Fowl imports and DNA test		#4.1-4.2	●	●		Nicolas/CFC
5. CFC Underproduction Strategy Session			●	●		CFC & Meeting particpants
6. Other						
7. Adjournment	10:50am				●	Michael

Trade

Chicken Imported as Spent Fowl

The Issue

Some importers are falsely declaring broiler chicken meat as “spent fowl” to avoid Canada’s import controls.

This is not a clerical error — it is intentional mislabeling. It undermines Canada’s trade system, costs Canadian jobs, erodes tax revenue, and weakens food safety by disrupting traceability in the event of a recall.

The data shows this problem is ongoing — and it is now at an all-time high.

What Is Spent Fowl?

Spent fowl are egg-laying hens processed for meat at the end of their laying cycle. They are a by-product of egg and hatching egg production and are distinct from broiler chickens raised specifically for meat production.

Under Canada’s trade framework:

- Broiler chicken meat imports are subject to tariff rate quotas (TRQ) and import controls.
- Spent fowl is not subject to TRQ and import controls.
- When from the U.S. spent fowl imports are unlimited and duty-free

Because broiler and spent fowl meat can be difficult to distinguish visually, some importers purposely mislabel broiler meat as spent fowl to bypass Canada's import rules.

2025 Data: A clear sign of mislabelling

Based on sector analysis, imports exceeding 60 million kilograms already raises red flags. At 115 million kilograms, 2025 volumes are nearly double that threshold. When converted into whole-bird equivalents, these imports represent 93% of total U.S. spent fowl production.

The United States also sells spent fowl domestically in addition to exporting it to other international markets. For Canada alone to import the equivalent of 93% of total U.S. production signals a clear anomaly and strong evidence of continued mislabeling.

Economic and Food Safety Consequences

Illegal imports are not merely a technical trade issue — they carry serious economic and traceability implications.

Based on 2025 data, fraudulent imports are associated with:
- The loss of approximately 3,600 Canadian jobs
- $394 million in lost economic activity
- $129 million in lost tax revenue

There are also significant food safety risks.

When meat is mislabeled entering Canada, traceability is compromised. If that product enters the Canadian supply chain under false declarations, it becomes more difficult to identify and remove from the market in the event of a recall — weakening consumer protection.

A Practical Solution: DNA Testing

A scientifically-validated DNA test, developed at Trent University, is capable of distinguishing broiler meat from spent fowl.

Chicken Farmers of Canada has supported the development of this innovation and continues to advocate for its implementation as part of Canada's import verification process.

DNA testing would provide a clear, objective, and enforceable method to verify product classification at the — helping to:

- Prevent illegal imports
- Protect Canadian jobs and tax revenue
- Strengthen food safety and traceability

Government Commitment — Now Action Is Needed

In March 2025, the Government of Canada committed to addressing spent fowl fraud and developing an action plan to strengthen detection measures. (*Click here for the official announcement from then-Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Rural Economic Development Kody Blois, and David McGuinty, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.*)

With illegal imports continuing at record levels, that commitment must now result in concrete action. The implementation of DNA testing is an essential next step to ensure Canada's import rules are respected and properly enforced.

For more information on spent fowl fraud and the actions needed to address it, click here to view the info sheet.

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STOP ILLEGAL IMPORTS OF SPENT FOWL

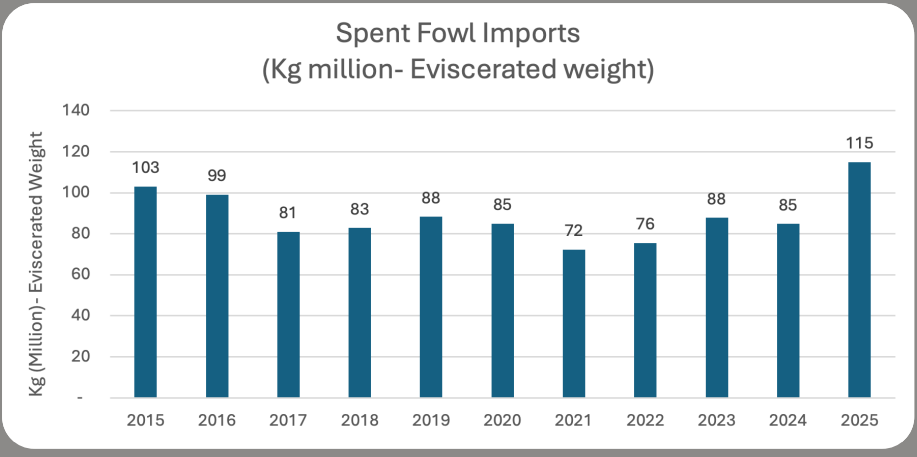
THE ISSUE

SOME IMPORTERS ARE FALSELY DECLARING CHICKEN MEAT AS SPENT FOWL TO AVOID IMPORT CONTROLS.

THIS BORDER FRAUD COSTS CANADIAN JOBS AND TAX REVENUE AND WEAKENS FOOD SAFETY BY BREAKING TRACEABILITY.

CONTEXT

- Spent fowl are egg-laying hens processed for meat after their laying cycle ends — a by-product of egg and hatching egg production.
- Canada allows unlimited duty-free imports of spent fowl from the U.S., but limits broiler meat imports.
- Because it is hard to visually tell the difference between the two, some importers mislabel broiler meat as spent fowl to circumvent import controls.
- 2025 imports reached 115 million kilograms, the highest volume ever and 35% increase over the previous year.



* AAFC Monthly National Fowl Statistics.

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TIMELINE

2012 – Canada imported 106 million kilograms of meat declared as spent fowl from the U.S. — nearly 100% of the entire U.S. spent fowl production at the time, raising serious concerns about large-scale mislabeling and import fraud.[1]

2014 – A DNA test to distinguish spent fowl and broiler was developed by Trent University with support from CFC.

2016 – CFIA suspended a cold storage establishment in the U.S. for mislabeling practices.

2017 – CBSA initiated the first round of priority verification for imports of spent fowl. They are now in their third round, assessing $377 million in duties, penalties and interests for misclassified imported goods.

2025 – most recent data shows Canadian imports equal 93% of total U.S. spent fowl production — an impossible figure that proves ongoing fraud considering U.S. fowl is also sold in domestic and other export markets.

1 Based on our estimates, any imports above 60 million kilograms is a red flag for mislabeling.

- When converted into whole bird equivalents, imports coming from the U.S. represent 93% of total U.S. fowl slaughter, which is a clear signal that illegal imports are crossing our borders.
- Based on 2025 data, illegal imports represent an annual loss of 3,600 jobs, $394 million in economic activity, and $129 million in taxes.
- Fraudulent imports also pose a food safety risk: mislabeled meat cannot be tracked in recalls.

93%

In 2025, Canada's imports of spent fowl would have required 93% of all U.S. production — even though the U.S. also sells spent fowl at home and to many other export markets, a clear signal of mislabeling.



THE SOLUTION

- With support from CFC, Trent University has developed a DNA test to distinguish broiler meat from spent fowl. This test has not yet been implemented as a means of import verification.
- CFC has since committed to a further investment in Trent University to update the test.

THE USE OF THE DNA TEST WOULD:

- Prevent illegal imports
- Protect Canadian jobs and tax revenue
- Strengthen food safety

ASK

With illegal imports continuing at an all-time high, the government must act on its announcement from March 2025, which commits to tackling spent fowl fraud at the border and protecting consumers by developing an action plan to improve detection.

CFC expects this commitment to lead to the implementation of DNA testing to distinguish between broiler meat and spent fowl meat — an essential step to stopping illegal imports.