



Office of the
Auditor General
of British Columbia

November 2025

Ministry of Agriculture and Food: Reliability of Premises Identification Information



An independent audit report



Office of the
Auditor General
of British Columbia

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The Honourable Raj Chouhan
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Province of British Columbia
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Dear Mr. Speaker:

I have the honour to transmit to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia the report, *Ministry of Agriculture and Food: Reliability of Premises Identification Information*.

We conducted this audit under the authority of section 11(8) of the *Auditor General Act*. All work in this audit was performed to a reasonable level of assurance in accordance with the Canadian Standard on Assurance Engagements (CSAE) 3001 – Direct Engagements, set out by the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada (CPA Canada) in the *CPA Canada Handbook – Assurance*.

Sheila Dodds, CPA, CA, CIA
Acting Auditor General of British Columbia
Victoria, B.C.

November 2025



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Horses evacuated from the Joe Rich area near Kelowna due to a wildfire, August 2025.
Source: Teresa Appel

Audit at a glance

Why we did this audit

- In recent years, B.C. poultry and livestock farms have experienced increased threats from animal disease, such as bird flu, and other emergencies, like wildfires and floods.
- The Ministry of Agriculture and Food, through the Premises Identification (ID) program, collects information to help animal health officials and emergency responders identify the types and number of animals under threat, where they're located, and who to contact.
- Since July 2022, under the Premises Identification Regulation, people responsible for poultry and livestock have been required to enrol in the program either directly or through their producer organization.

Objective

To determine whether the Ministry of Agriculture and Food implemented the BC Premises Identification program to provide reliable information to those responsible for protecting poultry and livestock from animal disease and other emergencies (e.g., wildfires and floods).

Audit period:

July 1, 2022 – February 28, 2025

Conclusion

We concluded that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food hadn't implemented the BC Premises Identification program in a way that provided reliable information to those responsible for protecting poultry and livestock from animal disease and other emergencies (e.g., wildfires and floods).

The ministry has accepted all seven recommendations we made focused on increasing program registration, addressing data reliability, and improving guidance to staff about sharing information.

What we found

The ministry lacked the information needed to identify gaps in program registration

- Registration in the Premises ID program became mandatory on July 1, 2022.
- Not all poultry and livestock premises have been registered with the program.
- Because of insufficient information, the ministry couldn't determine the gap between current registrants and the total number of premises that should be registered.
- The ministry lacked information to determine registration gaps for the different types of owners and operators.

Recommendation 1

The ministry didn't implement targeted activities to increase registration

- Targeted outreach couldn't be done because the ministry hadn't adequately identified which owners and operators to prioritize.
- General outreach material, outlining the mandatory registration requirement, was distributed.

Recommendation 2

Audit at a glance (*continued*)

The ministry lacked adequate processes to ensure the reliability of Premises ID information

- The online registration system for owners and operators captured most of the information required by the Premises Identification Regulation.
- The ministry didn't ensure producer organizations provided all information required by the regulation.
- Ministry processes didn't ensure information was accurate or up to date.
- Ministry staff were able to check the accuracy of some of the information, but checks weren't scheduled or recorded.

Recommendation 3, 4, 5, and 6

The ministry lacked adequate guidance for staff about sharing Premises ID information

- The *Animal Health Act* and Premises Identification Regulation allow the ministry to share Premises ID information to protect animal health, administer a traceability program, and support emergency planning and response.
- The ministry didn't have adequate guidance for staff that documented when, and with whom, information could be shared.
- The ministry stated it was drafting new guidance about what information can be shared to support emergency preparedness and planning.

Recommendation 7

Background

In 2024, B.C.'s poultry and livestock sector generated \$2.3 billion in revenue and provided more than 9,000 jobs.

In recent years, poultry and livestock operations have experienced increasing threats to animal health and welfare from disease events such as avian influenza (bird flu) and other emergencies (e.g., wildfires and floods). In 2021, B.C. farmers lost about 1.9 million farm animals due to flooding or extreme heat.







































The Ministry of Agriculture and Food's Premises Identification (ID) program registers "premises" by collecting information about the location of poultry and livestock, the types of animals at each location, and contact information for those responsible for the animals. A premises is any parcel of land where poultry and livestock are kept or dealt with. Types of premises are wide-ranging and include large- and small-scale commercial farms, as well as hobby or backyard farms, and commingling sites.

Commingling sites requiring registration	
exhibitions	assembly yards
fairgrounds	facilities for livestock auctions or sales
zoos, including petting zoos	poultry hatcheries
racetracks	Crown range tenures
facilities for competitions involving animals	boarding stables
veterinary hospitals	community pastures
veterinary laboratories	abattoirs
animal insemination centres	rendering plants
animal research facilities	carcass disposal sites
feedlots	

Source: Premises Identification Regulation



On July 1, 2022, the Premises Identification Regulation came into effect and made registration mandatory for all owners and operators of premises with any of the 38 types of poultry and livestock specified in the regulation.

Poultry and livestock included in the Premises Identification Regulation					
Livestock				Poultry	
	alpacas		nutria		chickens
	guanacos		donkeys		turkeys
	llamas		mules		doves
	vicuñas		horses		ducks
	beef cattle		fallow deer		geese
	dairy cattle		reindeer		guinea fowl
	bison		caribou		peafowl
	water buffalo		goats		pheasants
	yaks		rabbits		pigeons
	chinchilla		sheep		quail
	fisher		swine		ratites
	fox		wild boars		
	marten		bees (<i>Apis mellifera</i>)		
	mink				

The introduction of the regulation increased the scope of work for Premises ID program staff. For example, staff needed to expand their efforts to increase program enrolment. At the same time, staff were being asked to provide information for an increasing number of emergencies.

Currently, the Premises ID program has four full-time staff members handling nearly 10,000 accounts. The program is responsible for collecting registration information and ensuring it is accurate and up to date. Staff also support animal health officials and emergency responders by providing information about poultry and livestock premises affected by the emergency, and maps showing premises locations.

Premises ID information is important for animal health officials and emergency responders as they plan for and respond to animal disease events or other emergencies such as seasonal flooding and wildfires. Reliable Premises ID information can enable animal health officials to more readily contain animal disease events. It can also support emergency responders to coordinate the care and protection of animals during emergencies.

Overall, the program can help reduce the risk to public health from animal-to-human disease transmission and protect the food supply from catastrophic losses.

How Premises ID information can help protect poultry and livestock during emergencies

Emergency officials can use Premises ID information to:

- set emergency alert boundaries;
- inform BC Wildfire Service's response efforts (e.g., whether to use water or retardant);
- notify owners and commingling site operators about an emergency;
- allow owners and operators to return to an evacuation zone to care for their poultry and livestock; and
- know how many poultry and livestock may require relocation to temporary holding areas.



Objective

The objective of the audit was to determine whether the Ministry of Agriculture and Food implemented the BC Premises ID program to provide reliable information to those responsible for protecting poultry and livestock from animal disease and other emergencies (e.g., wildfires and floods).

Scope

The audit focused on the Ministry of Agriculture and Food's implementation of the BC Premises ID program, which is mandated to collect and manage information related to places where poultry or livestock are kept or dealt with (premises) and facilitate the use of this information by animal health officials and emergency responders.

We assessed whether the ministry had implemented the program to provide reliable information to those responsible for protecting poultry and livestock by looking at whether the ministry had:

- increased registration in the Premises ID program to close the gap between the number of premises that are registered and the total number of premises that should be registered;
- implemented processes to ensure Premises ID information was accurate and up to date; and
- provided staff with guidance about how to share Premises ID information according to legal requirements.

The audit period was from July 1, 2022, to Feb. 28, 2025. The start of the audit period aligns with the date when Premises ID registration became mandatory for poultry and livestock owners and commingling site operators.

[Learn more about the audit criteria on page 28.](#)

[Learn more about how we did this audit on page 22.](#)



Conclusion

We concluded that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food hadn't implemented the BC Premises ID program in a way that provided reliable information to those responsible for protecting poultry and livestock from animal disease and other emergencies (e.g., wildfires and floods).

Specifically, we found that the ministry:

- didn't have the information needed to identify gaps in program registration;
- hadn't identified which owners and operators to prioritize for outreach to increase registration;
- didn't have adequate processes in place to ensure the reliability of Premises ID information; and
- didn't have adequate guidance about how to share information according to legal requirements.



Source: Getty Images



Findings and recommendations

Increasing registration

On July 1, 2022, the Premises Identification Regulation came into effect and made registration mandatory for all owners and operators of premises with regulated species of poultry and livestock. However, according to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, not all owners and operators have registered. The ministry identified increasing registration as important for ensuring the reliability of information provided to animal health officials and emergency responders.

The ministry lacked the information needed to identify gaps in program registration

What we looked for

We assessed whether the ministry had the information it needed to determine the gap between the current number of registered premises and the total number of premises in the province that should be registered.

[Learn more about the audit criteria on page 28.](#)

What we found

We found the ministry didn't have the information required to identify the gap between the number of registered premises and the number of premises that should be registered.

The ministry had partial data from sources such as the federal Census of Agriculture, producer organizations, and internal outreach records. However, the data were insufficient to adequately identify the number and types of owners and operators not registered.

For example, the census only captures farming businesses, not the number of premises (e.g., one farm in the census could have more than one premises). Also, the census doesn't capture information on other types of premises, such as hobby farms and commingling sites (e.g., boarding stables, abattoirs, veterinary hospitals, and petting zoos).



Why this matters

Without knowing the gaps in program registration, the ministry can't identify the number and types of owners or operators who are unlikely to be registered. Developing a reasonable estimate of the number and types of owners and operators who aren't registered would allow the ministry to target activities meant to increase registration. It would also allow the ministry to have greater confidence in the completeness of the information it provides to animal health officials and emergency responders.

Recommendation

1. We recommend that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food use additional sources of information to develop an estimate of the number and types of owners and operators who aren't registered in the Premises ID program.

See the response from the auditee on page 23.

The ministry didn't implement targeted activities to increase registration

What we looked for

We assessed whether the ministry identified which owners and operators were priorities for increasing registration (e.g., operator type, priority species, or region) and whether the ministry implemented activities to increase registration among these priority groups.

Learn more about the audit criteria on page 28.

What we found

Priority groups not adequately identified

We found the ministry hadn't adequately identified which owners and operators to prioritize to increase Premises ID registration.

The ministry set an objective in December 2024 to increase registration among small-scale operators and priority species identified by the province's chief veterinarian. We found this wasn't adequate because the ministry hadn't specified the types of "small-scale operators," which ministry staff explained refers to all non-commercial operations. The ministry also hadn't identified which species were priorities.

No targeted outreach activities

Since the ministry hadn't adequately identified which owners and operators to prioritize, it couldn't implement targeted outreach to increase Premises ID registration.

The ministry had developed general outreach materials that were available online and distributed at fairs, exhibitions, trade shows, and to regional district offices. The materials had basic information about the Premises ID program and stated that registration was mandatory. The ministry didn't have any targeted material for specific types of owners or operators.



The ministry also conducted workshops to educate regional district staff about agricultural emergency response and how they could access and use Premises ID information. However, the workshops weren't provided to owners and operators, and they weren't intended to increase registration.

Why this matters

It's important for the ministry to establish which owners and operators to prioritize to increase registration. By setting priorities, the ministry could target its outreach efforts and help ensure the registration of premises that are more likely to be affected by animal disease or other emergencies.

Recommendation

2. We recommend that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food develop and implement a plan to increase registration among owners and operators identified as priorities. The plan should include roles and responsibilities, activities, and timelines.

See the response from the auditee on page 23.



A chicken farm under quarantine in Abbotsford during an avian influenza outbreak, March, 2004.
Source: CP Photo/Richard Lam

Reliability of information provided by owners and operators

During an animal disease event or other emergency, animal health officials and emergency responders can use Premises ID information to know who to contact, the types and number of animals under threat, and their location. This information can be used to plan and coordinate a response, and to rapidly notify affected owners and operators.

Owners and operators can register for a Premises ID account directly with the ministry either online or by completing and submitting a paper form. The Premises Identification Regulation also requires owners and operators to update their account information when it changes.

The ministry lacked adequate processes to ensure the reliability of information provided by owners and operators

What we looked for

We assessed whether the ministry's registration system collected all the information required by the Premises Identification Regulation when owners and operators registered directly with the ministry. The regulation required owners and operators to provide contact information, the location of their premises, their relationship to the owner of the land (e.g., owner or renter), the type of operation, business name and type (if applicable), and the species on the premises, including the maximum capacity for each species.

We also assessed whether the ministry had processes to verify the accuracy of the information owners and operators provided and to ensure the information was up to date.

Learn more about the audit criteria on page 28.

What we found

Registration system captured most of the required information

We found that the ministry's online registration system required owners and operators to enter most of the information required by the Premises Identification Regulation.

The ministry's registration system included mandatory fields for:

- contact information;
- the location of premises;
- the type of operation; and
- the relationship to the owner of the land (e.g., owner or renter).



The system also required registrants to enter information on species present and maximum capacity for each species kept on the premises, but we found the following gaps:

- The system was missing dedicated fields for eight of the 38 species listed in the regulation, however there was an “other” field where these species could be entered.
- Registration instructions provided conflicting definitions of how owners and operators should estimate maximum capacity.

While the system did have an optional field for “business name,” it did not have a field for owners or operators to provide their business type (i.e., incorporated company, non-profit, etc.) despite it being required by the regulation.

Maximum capacity

According to the Premises ID program: “Maximum capacity is not the actual number of animals on the premises at a given time. It is an estimate of the highest number of animals of a given species that the premises could reasonably accommodate. This is used by emergency responders to understand the scale of an operation.” Knowing the maximum capacity is important for emergency response planning and preparedness.

Ministry processes didn’t ensure that information was accurate and up to date

We found the ministry didn’t have adequate processes to ensure the reliability of Premises ID information provided by owners and operators. We found gaps in the ministry’s processes for verifying accuracy and ensuring information was up to date.

For new registrations, the ministry’s verification processes included checks on the accuracy of contact and location information, but there were no checks for the other required information. For example, there was no expectation for staff to follow-up when owners and operators entered “zero” as their maximum capacity, despite declaring they had animals on the premises.

The ministry also had procedures for checking the accuracy of some of the information contained in the Premises ID database. For example, they could check the spatial location of premises and the legal boundaries. However, there was no schedule for how often staff should check for errors, and the ministry didn’t keep records to monitor if staff had completed checks or fixed data errors.

The ministry emailed account holders once every two years to ask them to update their account information if required or confirm its accuracy. The ministry lacked a process for updating accounts that didn’t have valid email addresses.

We found the ministry’s process didn’t ensure information was up to date. We reviewed all account information in the Premises ID database on Dec. 3, 2024. We found that of the 8,664 owners or operators who had directly registered with the ministry, 1,699 (20%) had not confirmed their information in the last two years. We also found that 314 (4%) had not been notified to update and/or confirm their information despite being in the database for more than two years.



Why this matters

Effective animal disease and emergency management requires reliable information. It needs to be complete, accurate, and up to date. Without adequate processes to ensure reliable information, there are risks to the quality of information that health officials and emergency responders rely on to help protect poultry and livestock.

Recommendations

3. We recommend that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food ensure the registration process collects all enrolment information required by the Premises Identification Regulation.
4. We recommend that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food implement processes for staff to resolve errors in the Premises ID database at regular intervals and keep a record of this work.
5. We recommend that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food refine its process for updating and/or confirming information provided by owners and operators to:
 - follow up on accounts with no valid email address; and
 - respond to instances where account holders haven't replied to ministry requests for updating/confirming their information.

See the responses from the auditee on page 24.



Dairy cattle feeding in their Saanich barn.
Source: Province of British Columbia

Reliability of information provided by producer organizations

The Premises Identification Regulation allows members of six producer organizations to provide their enrolment information to their producer organization who then provides it to the ministry.

The ministry has information-sharing agreements with the six producer organizations. According to the agreements, producer organizations must provide their members' enrolment information to the ministry, and they are required to review and update their members' information.

The agreements state that the ministry intends to support the producer organizations to validate and maintain the accuracy of their members' Premises ID information.

Producer organizations with Premises ID information-sharing agreements

- **BC Broiler Hatching Egg Commission** represents 57 producers of eggs for hatching chickens that produced over 114 million eggs in 2024.
- **BC Chicken Marketing Board** has more than 300 licensed growers. B.C. is the third-largest chicken producer in Canada.
- **BC Egg Marketing Board** represents 155 farms that raise 4.2 million hens producing over 84 million dozen eggs per year.
- **BC Turkey Marketing Board** represents 59 registered farms producing nearly two million turkeys annually.
- **BC Dairy Association** represents over 400 dairy farms that produce nearly 900 million litres of milk annually and contribute \$1.2 billion to B.C.'s economy.
- **BC Pork Producers Association** in 2023 represented 10 medium- and large-scale commercial producers (selling at least 300 hogs annually for processing). It doesn't represent the estimated 1,500 small-scale or backyard hog producers.

The ministry lacked adequate processes to ensure the reliability of information provided by producer organizations

What we looked for

We assessed whether the ministry ensured that the producer organizations provided all required information to the ministry, as outlined by the Premises Identification Regulation and specified in the information-sharing agreements.



According to the regulation and information-sharing agreements, the producer organizations are required to provide the ministry with the same information as owners and operators – including contact information, the location of the premises, their relationship to the owner of the land (e.g., owner or renter), the type of operation, business name and type, and the species on the premises, including the maximum capacity for each species.

We also assessed whether the ministry had processes to ensure that information provided by producer organization was accurate and up to date.

[Learn more about the audit criteria on page 28.](#)

What we found

Not all required information provided

We found that the ministry didn't ensure producer organizations provided all required information.

The ministry had ensured that producer organizations provided:

- the location of premises;
- the relationship to the owner of the land (e.g., owner or renter);
- the business name; and
- the type of operation.

The ministry hadn't ensured that producer organizations provided:

- contact information for owners or operators;
- the business type; and
- the maximum capacity for species kept on the premises.

We reviewed all account information in the Premises ID database on Dec. 3, 2024. We found that of 1,197 producer organization member accounts, 345 (29%) didn't have contact information, 116 (10%) were missing business type, and 998 (83%) had "zero" entered for maximum capacity.

Inadequate processes to ensure information was accurate and up to date

We found that the ministry didn't have adequate processes in place to ensure the reliability of Premises ID account information provided by producer organizations.

We found that the ministry had no process to ensure producer organizations verified the accuracy of their members' information.

The ministry did some of its own verification of producer member information, but there were gaps in its processes. For example, the ministry's guidance directed staff to verify membership information and check for consistency of the species listed, but there were no instructions for how to complete this work.



The ministry could also check for errors with producer organization member information in the Premises ID database (e.g., the spatial location of premises and the legal boundaries), but there was no schedule for how often staff should check for errors. Additionally, we found the ministry didn't keep records they could use to monitor if staff had completed checks or fixed data errors.

We also found that the ministry didn't have processes to ensure that producer organizations updated their members' information. Under the information-sharing agreements, producer organizations were responsible for reviewing and updating their members' information annually. And, in an emergency, producer organizations were required to provide the ministry with the current number of animals on their members' affected premises. However, the ministry had no documented processes to ensure these reviews and updates were happening.

Why this matters

Without adequate processes to ensure that the information provided by producer organizations is complete, accurate, and up to date, there are risks to the quality and reliability of the information. Unreliable and incomplete information increases the risk of animal losses and economic impacts to producers during an animal disease event or other emergency.

Recommendation

6. We recommend that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food work with producer organizations to ensure they provide complete, accurate, and up-to-date information as required by the Premises Identification Regulation and information-sharing agreements.

See the response from the auditee on page 26.



Source: Getty Images

Information sharing

The *Animal Health Act* and the Premises Identification Regulation require that information collected for the Premises ID program is protected and only shared for specified purposes. The ministry must safeguard this information and ensure that it is only shared as allowed by the act and regulation.

The ministry lacked adequate guidance for staff about sharing Premises ID information

What we looked for

We assessed whether the ministry had guidance for staff to share Premises ID information according to legal requirements. We looked for guidance that provided staff with direction about who could receive Premises ID information and when it could be shared.

[Learn more about the audit criteria on page 28.](#)

What we found

The *Animal Health Act* and Premises Identification Regulation allow the ministry to share information:

- to protect animal health and to respond to animal disease events;
- for the purpose of administering a traceability program; and,
- to support emergency planning and response as defined by the *Emergency and Disaster Management Act*.

We found the ministry didn't have adequate guidance for staff to share Premises ID information according to legal requirements. The ministry's guidance didn't adequately identify when and with whom information could be shared.

For sharing information for emergency management, the ministry had general instructions for staff to only share detailed Premises ID information (e.g., contact information, specific location) with certain emergency responders during an active evacuation alert or order.

Staff were also instructed to only share aggregated information (i.e., total number of premises in areas and total number of poultry and livestock) with regional districts for emergency planning purposes. This is permitted by the act and regulation.

All other types of information requests received by the ministry were to be sent to Premises ID staff for review. However, there was no additional guidance for Premises ID staff about how to deal with those requests.

The ministry stated it was drafting new guidance for staff about what information can be shared to support emergency preparedness and planning.



For animal disease management, the established practice was to give the provincial Office of the Chief Veterinarian and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency any information they requested. This practice is permitted under the *Animal Health Act*. However, the ministry lacked documented guidance that clearly outlined expectations for fulfilling this type of request including what information can be shared, when, and with whom.

Why this matters

Without adequate guidance for staff about who can have access to Premises ID information and when it can be shared, there's a risk that staff will either share information when it's not permitted by the *Animal Health Act* and the Premises Identification Regulation, or they will withhold information that should be shared. There's also a risk that information-sharing will be inefficient because of the additional time needed for staff to determine whether information can be shared.

Recommendation

7. We recommend that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food implement guidance for ministry staff that includes information on the appropriate access, use, and disclosure of Premises ID information according to the *Animal Health Act* and the Premises Identification Regulation.

See the response from the auditee on page 27.



Farm buildings near Abbotsford surrounded by flood waters, November 2021.

Source: Getty Images



About the audit

We conducted this audit under the authority of section 11(8) of the *Auditor General Act* and in accordance with the Canadian Standard on Assurance Engagements (CSAE) 3001 – Direct Engagements, set out by the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada (CPA Canada) in the *CPA Canada Handbook – Assurance*. These standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and conduct the audit to independently express a conclusion against the objective of the audit.

A direct audit involves understanding the subject matter to identify areas of significance and risk, and to identify relevant controls. This understanding is used as the basis for designing and performing audit procedures to obtain evidence on which to base the audit conclusion.

The audit procedures we conducted included document review and analysis, data analysis, and interviews with ministry staff and third parties.

We believe the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our conclusion.

Our office applies the Canadian Standard on Quality Management (CSQM 1), and we have complied with the independence and other ethical requirements of the code of professional conduct issued by the Chartered Professional Accountants of British Columbia that are relevant to this audit.

Audit report date: October 14, 2025



Sheila Dodds, CPA, CA, CIA
Acting Auditor General of British Columbia
Victoria, B.C.



Appendix A: Recommendations and auditee response

Recommendation 1: We recommend that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food use additional sources of information to develop an estimate of the number and types of owners and operators who aren't registered in the Premises ID program.

Recommendation 1 Response: The ministry agrees. While no single source captures every agricultural premise in British Columbia, we are taking deliberate steps to better estimate and close registration gaps. Since 2024, program improvements and targeted outreach have increased registrations by 15%—nearly 1,800 new accounts—strengthening our understanding of where animals are kept. Building on this progress, we are developing a consistent method that integrates information from the Census of Agriculture, commodity organizations, industry partners, and mapping tools to identify unregistered sites and focus on higher-risk sectors. This work is a key priority under the Emergency Management Branch plan and is being advanced collaboratively with other provinces through the Western Province PID Alliance, positioning B.C. as a national leader in traceability and animal health preparedness. A new estimation methodology is being developed for pilot testing beginning in 2026, followed by phased implementation in subsequent years. These actions will enhance data accuracy, improve outreach efficiency, and strengthen B.C.'s readiness for emergency response.

Recommendation 2: We recommend that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food develop and implement a plan to increase registration among owners and operators identified as priorities. The plan should include roles and responsibilities, activities, and timelines.

Recommendation 2 Response: The ministry agrees. Since 2024, we have been transitioning from broad public awareness to a more targeted, data-driven outreach approach. Building on lessons from emergency responses and registration trends, we are planning new campaigns with municipalities and regional districts and expanding engagement with Indigenous emergency coordinators to reach under-represented producers. Outreach continues through Emergency Preparedness Week,



agricultural fairs, and industry events, helping ensure producers across the province understand registration requirements. The next phase will focus on higher-risk species and operations that are vital to local food security while remaining adaptable to emerging risks. The ministry already links registration to some agricultural grant and support programs and is reviewing these mechanisms to ensure they consistently reinforce registration as a standard practice for livestock producers. A comprehensive outreach and compliance strategy is being finalized and aligned with the Emergency Management Branch plan. Implementation will begin in 2026, with progress reviewed and reported annually through the outreach plan. These coordinated efforts will strengthen traceability, enhance emergency readiness, and ensure that all sectors of B.C.'s livestock industry are informed, included, and prepared.

Recommendation 3: We recommend that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food ensure the registration process collects all enrolment information required by the Premises Identification Regulation.

Recommendation 3 Response: The ministry agrees. The registration system already collects most of the information required under the Premises Identification Regulation, and recent system improvements have strengthened both data quality and usability. Several remaining elements are under review to ensure they provide value for producers and regulators alike. This includes assessing the need for additional species fields and developing a "dormant premises" option to capture temporarily inactive sites without over-reporting. The ministry is also reviewing the reintroduction of the "business type" field to ensure alignment with regulatory requirements while keeping the process straightforward for registrants. Broader data-governance improvements—such as clearer field naming, improved validation checks, and updated user guidance—are helping ensure consistency across the system. Modernization work is continuing to make forms easier to complete and reports faster to generate, reducing administrative effort for both staff and producers. Together, these initiatives will ensure the system continues to evolve to capture all required information and support accurate, accessible data for emergency planning and animal health management across B.C.



Recommendation 4: We recommend that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food implement processes for staff to resolve errors in the Premises ID database at regular intervals and keep a record of this work.

Recommendation 4 Response: The ministry agrees. While staff have long monitored data quality, we are now formalizing a more consistent and transparent process for identifying and correcting errors. Since 2024, we have improved how data inconsistencies are detected through new internal checks and clearer workflows, reducing manual effort and improving response time. Lessons from wildfire and avian-influenza responses have informed the design of these procedures so they better reflect real-world emergency needs. Regular data-integrity reviews are being designed as part of routine operations, supported by stronger documentation to ensure traceable and repeatable corrections. Additional improvements—such as automated alerts, standardized templates, and internal guidance—are being developed through an ongoing improvement project. These actions will be phased in as part of normal operations to ensure sustainability and continuous refinement over time. The goal is a predictable, well-documented verification process that keeps information accurate and ready for use during animal-health or emergency events.

Recommendation 5: We recommend that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food refine its process for updating and/or confirming information provided by owners and operators to:

- follow up on accounts with no valid email address; and
- respond to instances where account holders haven't replied to ministry requests for updating/confirming their information.

Recommendation 5 Response: The ministry agrees. Keeping registration information current is essential for effective emergency response. Biennial email confirmations are already used, and since 2024 we have broadened this process by collaborating with municipalities, commodity boards, and producer associations to reach registrants through multiple channels. We are improving follow-up on accounts with invalid contact details and creating a more consistent process for non-responses. Work is also underway to introduce automated confirmation notices when accounts



become active and to test mailed or phone-based outreach options for registrants without internet access. These activities are part of a continuous-improvement initiative that balances efficiency with accessibility for producers across the province. Updates will continue to be rolled out in stages as technology and capacity allow. Together, these measures will strengthen contact accuracy and ensure that participation in the Premises ID program remains straightforward, responsive, and ready to support emergency communication when needed.

Recommendation 6: We recommend that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food work with producer organizations to ensure they provide complete, accurate, and up-to-date information as required by the Premises Identification Regulation and information-sharing agreements.

Recommendation 6 Response: The ministry agrees. Producer organizations play a vital role in maintaining accurate and current registration data. Existing information-sharing agreements with poultry, dairy, and pork boards already define responsibilities for keeping member records up to date. Since 2024, the ministry has reviewed board data-maintenance practices and increased coordination following lessons learned during avian-influenza responses. Work is underway to clarify reporting expectations, improve timeliness of updates, and formalize how annual data reviews are documented. The ministry is also developing a monitoring approach that is being designed to provide regular feedback to boards without adding unnecessary administrative burden. Collaboration through the Western Province PID Alliance continues to align verification practices across provinces and share successful approaches. These improvements are being phased in collaboratively to complement existing board processes and respect industry capacity. The result will be stronger data integrity, greater accountability, and a more unified approach to traceability and emergency readiness across B.C.'s livestock sectors.



Recommendation 7: We recommend that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food implement guidance for ministry staff that includes information on the appropriate access, use, and disclosure of Premises ID information according to the *Animal Health Act* and the Premises Identification Regulation.

Recommendation 7 Response: The ministry agrees. Clear, consistent guidance helps staff share information appropriately while protecting privacy and confidentiality. While established practice already exists for sharing data with the Chief Veterinarian and federal partners, the ministry is formalizing this through a comprehensive Information Sharing Policy with supporting procedures, reference tools, and staff training. Draft materials are complete and are being refined based on feedback from emergency and disease-response teams. Interim resources—including legal reference sheets and disclosure checklists—remain in use to ensure continuity. Work is also underway with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and other provinces to harmonize geospatial and traceability-data protocols. Implementation of the new guidance will be phased in through training and internal communications beginning in 2026, allowing staff time to adapt. This approach ensures information is shared consistently, securely, and in accordance with legislation while reinforcing B.C.'s leadership in responsible agricultural data management.



Appendix B: Audit criteria

Line of Enquiry 1: Closing the Gaps in Registration

Criteria:

- 1.1** The ministry had information on the number of premises to identify registration gaps.
- 1.2** The ministry had identified which poultry and livestock owners/operators (e.g., operator type, priority species, or region) to prioritize to increase registration.
- 1.3** The ministry implemented activities to increase registration of poultry and livestock owners/operators identified as a priority.

Line of Enquiry 2: Ensuring Quality Information

Criteria:

- 2.1** The ministry's information systems collected all required information.
 - 2.1.1:** The system collected person's name and contact information.
 - 2.1.2:** The system collected location of premises.
 - 2.1.3:** The system collected relationship to owner of the land on which the premises is located.
 - 2.1.4:** The system collected description of type of operation that is carried out with respect to animals kept or dealt with on the premises.
 - 2.1.5:** The system collected, if a business is carried out on the premises, the business name and type.
 - 2.1.6:** The system collected the species of animal kept, and, for each species, the maximum capacity of the premises.
- 2.2** The ministry ensured producer organizations provided all required information.
 - 2.2.1:** The ministry ensured producer organizations provided person's name and contact information.
 - 2.2.2:** The ministry ensured producer organizations provided location of premises.
 - 2.2.3:** The ministry ensured producer organizations provided relationship to owner of the land on which the premises is located.
 - 2.2.4:** The ministry ensured producer organizations provided description of type of operation that is carried out with respect to animals kept or dealt with on the premises.
 - 2.2.5:** The ministry ensured producer organizations provided, if a business is carried out on the premises, the business name and type.
 - 2.2.6:** The ministry ensured producer organizations provided the species of animal kept, and, for each species, the maximum capacity of the premises.



- 2.3** The ministry had processes in place to maintain the reliability of Premises ID data provided directly by owners/operators of sites.
 - 2.3.1:** The ministry had processes in place to verify the accuracy of this data.
 - 2.3.2:** The ministry had processes in place to ensure this data is updated.
- 2.4** The ministry had processes in place to ensure the reliability of Premises ID data provided by producer organizations.
 - 2.4.1:** The ministry had processes in place to verify the accuracy of this data.
 - 2.4.2:** The ministry had processes in place to ensure this data is updated.

Line of Enquiry 3: Data Access and Sharing

Criteria:

- 3.1** The ministry had guidance for staff about sharing Premises ID information according to legal requirements.
 - 3.1.1:** The guidance provided direction about who staff can share Premises ID information with.
 - 3.1.2:** The guidance provided direction about when the Premises ID information can be shared.





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