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Expert Panel Issues Report on Undercover Video from BC Egg Farm

Guelph, ON: A panel of farm animal care specialists examining undercover video reportedly obtained from an egg farm in British Columbia says some of the conditions seen are unacceptable but cautions against moving to quick judgement. The group of experts viewed video that will apparently be contained in a report tonight on CTV News.

"We can't make an assessment from this other than to say this video is not what we see on a daily basis working on farms," said Dr. Tom Inglis, a practicing poultry veterinarian and Adjunct Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Calgary. "Our hope would be that if this video clip is shown as 'news' that it is followed up with sufficient confirmation of validity and an attempt to confirm that the facility and situations depicted actually occurred, were not staged, and were responsibly reported to ensure that birds did not suffer or continue to suffer."

The panel of experts reviewed the video as part of the Animal Care Review Panel program established by the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity (CCFI). The panel was comprised of Dr. Inglis, in collaboration with Dr. Benjamin Schlegel, a board-certified poultry veterinarian; Jennifer Woods, Animal Welfare Specialist; and Dr. Mike Petrik, a practicing poultry veterinarian.

The group examined a 2.5-minute video apparently produced by the group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). The panelists also saw a brief promotional advertisement for CTV's planned news coverage of the video.

"All egg farmers in Canada are expected to follow the standards set forth in the Canadian Codes of Practice for Laying Hens," said Woods. "If producers are found to not be adhering to the standards, I would expect industry to intervene and work on correctional actions along with providing further education to the producer."

Dr. Petrik noted older technology barns provide good animal welfare when properly managed, but the type of housing seen in this video is being phased out in accordance with the Canadian Codes of Practice.

"These types of facilities are being replaced with housing that provides more space, perching, nest spaces, and scratch areas for all chickens used for egg laying in Canada," said Dr. Petrik. "These new requirements represent a very large investment by egg farmers in Canada, and demonstrate a true commitment to laying hen welfare across Canada."

CCFI established the Animal Care Review Panel program to engage recognized animal care specialists to examine hidden camera video investigations and provide expert perspectives. The Panel operates independently. Its reviews, assessments, recommendations and reports are not submitted to the egg industry for review or approval. CCFI's only role is to facilitate the review process and release the panel's findings.



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The panel's full report is available at www.foodintegrity.ca

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