

Dear Stakeholder,

In February 2011, President Obama and Prime Minister Harper called for the creation of the U.S. – Canada Regulatory Cooperation Council (RCC) to promote economic growth through increased regulatory transparency and coordination between the two governments. To this end, the Council's members worked closely with stakeholders to develop the Joint Action Plan which was released December 7, 2011. The Plan identifies opportunities for convergence between the U.S. and Canada to introduce efficiencies that benefit stakeholders while maintaining the high standards of the various regulatory entities involved. The RCC will focus its initial efforts on the 28 initiatives outlined in the Joint Action Plan, one of which is the initiative for Mutual Reliance of Food Testing Results.

The web links associated with this letter include:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/oira IRC_north_america#canada

<http://trade.gov/RCC/>

<http://actionplan.gc.ca/en/page/rcc-ccr/regulatory-cooperation-council>

<http://actionplan.gc.ca/page/rcc-ccr/mutual-reliance-food-testing-results-work-plan>

Through accessing these sites, you can find background information on the RCC, work plans for each of the initiatives, actions taken thus far and how RCC initiatives will benefit you as stakeholders. As we move forward with the Mutual Reliance of Food Testing Results, additional documentation / information will be posted or distributed for comment by email as it becomes available.

At the present time we are seeking your comment or feedback on the *Proposed Communication, Engagement and Consultation Plan* that has been included with this letter. Enclosed also please find each agencies' inventories of *draft Laboratory Accreditation Tools*.

The RCC values stakeholder input, and has expressly incorporated stakeholder outreach in the Mutual Reliance of Food Testing Results work plan. Your perspective on how the Food Testing Results initiative should proceed will provide invaluable guidance as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Health Canada continue to implement the initiative's work plan. We would also be happy to entertain opportunities to speak to this RCC initiative at conferences or meetings hosted by stakeholders to provide further opportunities for engagement.

Finally, while we continue our outreach, we may have unintentionally omitted important stakeholders. Consequently, we invite you to disseminate this communication as you deem appropriate, and to contact us at the following email address with any questions, comments or requests to include additional stakeholders to our contact list: MRFTR-CRASA@inspection.gc.ca. As always, we continue to welcome any recommendations you may have on the execution of our work plan.

Sincerely,

Tim McGrath
U.S. FDA Initiative Lead

Diane Allan
CFIA Initiative Lead

Samuel Godefroy
HC Initiative Lead