



## Strategic Foresight Contributing to the National Animal Health Strategy

### Engaging the animal health science community to project and plan for animal health science needs over the next twenty years

*Research • Diagnostics • Surveillance • Emergency Preparedness and Response • Risk Analysis*

#### Background

In the spring of 2006, a strategic foresight process was initiated with active participation from the animal health science community focusing on projecting animal health science needs twenty years into the future. The process was aimed at determining how partners across government, industry, and academia could work together to plan proactively, enabling effective preparation for a range of potential futures.

#### **Strategic foresight: the strategic thinking that precedes strategic planning and action.**

It uses processes that help participants anticipate the future and think clearly about what is important, and then integrate these insights in a practical way with strategy development, or policy and decision making.

Building off of the strategic foresight initiative, a Working Group on Future Animal Health Science has been charged with informing the **National Animal Health Strategy (NAHS)**, due to be completed in summer 2008. To this end, the Working Group is developing an **Animal Health Science Agenda (AHSA)**.

In late 2007, the Working Group conducted a strategic foresight exercise involving five potential future scenarios given emerging animal health opportunities and threats. For each scenario, the Working Group considered the main drivers (e.g., public attitudes, public health and the environment, science and technology, education and skills, policy and regulation, and economy) and identified the key uncertainties facing decision makers. The result was a proposed strategic direction for Animal Health Science, including a vision and goals. Subsequently, the Working Group performed a back-casting exercise to identify potential objectives and future actions, forming a framework for an Animal Health Science Agenda.

#### **Vision for an Animal Health Science Agenda**

Animal Health Science will be a key contributor to human health and the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of the animal resource base in Canada

#### Regional Workshops

The success of the strategic foresight process depends on the engagement of partners at the national and regional levels. As a result, the Working Group has planned a series of interactive regional workshops in February and March to develop consensus around proposed objectives for an Animal Health Science Agenda. Possible actions will be discussed with focus on regionally relevant sectors and issues (e.g., farmed animals, zoonoses). Following the one-day regional workshops, participants will be expected to disseminate results to stakeholder groups and to gather feedback. The Working Group will then conduct further meetings/workshops during 2008 to build iteratively national consensus on proposed objectives and actions.

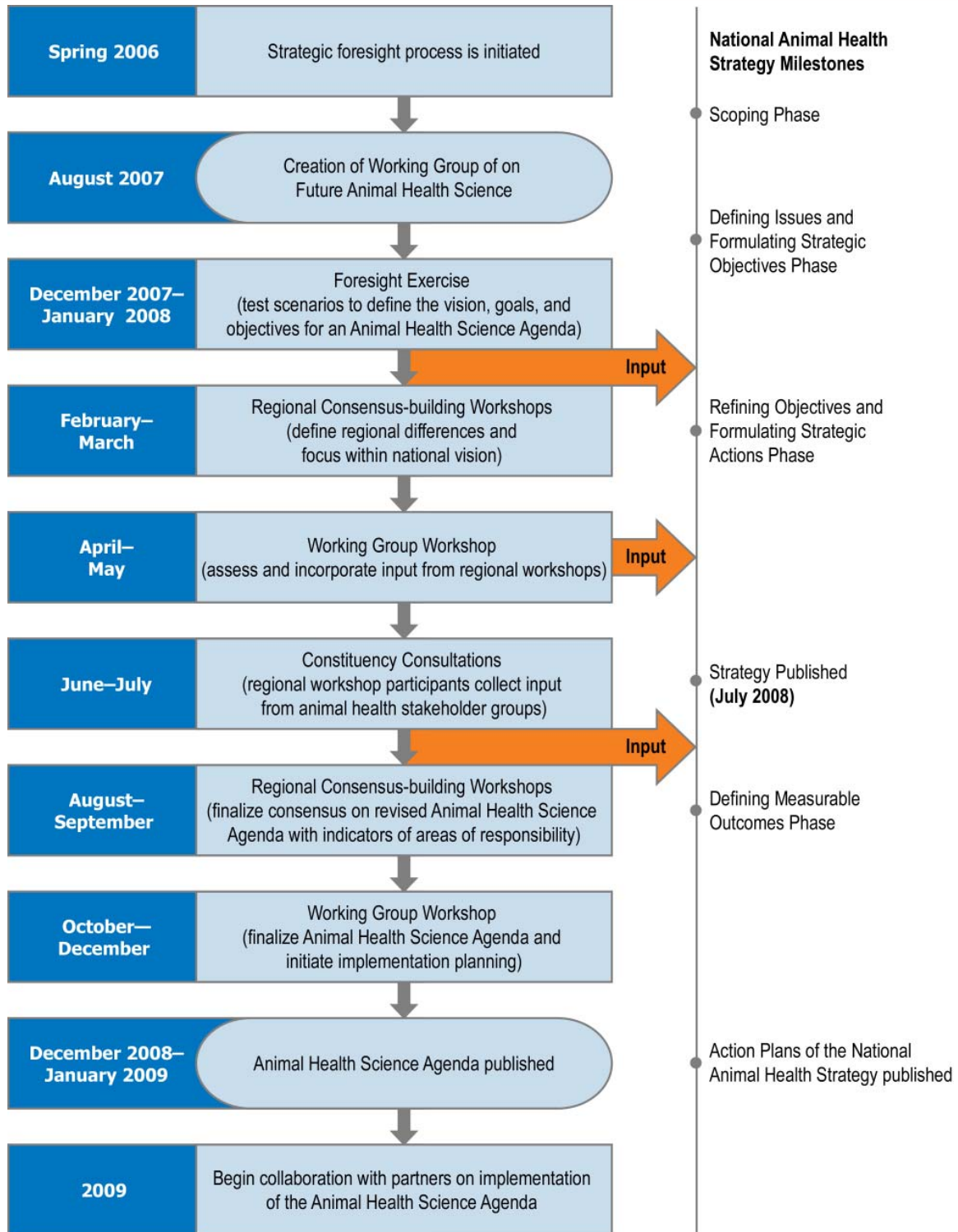
#### Timeline

An Animal Health Science Agenda, resulting from this strategic foresight process, is expected to be completed by the end of 2008, in conjunction with the publication of the Action Plans of the National Animal Health Strategy. In 2009, partners will begin collaboration on the implementation of the Animal Health Science Agenda.





# Future Animal Health Science



**Figure 1: Strategic Foresight for Animal Health Science**

For additional information and updates on the Working Group on Future Animal Health Science and the Animal Health Science Agenda, visit the website of the National Animal Health Strategy at [http://healthyanimals.ca/english/wg-gt/g\\_futscience/index\\_e.shtml](http://healthyanimals.ca/english/wg-gt/g_futscience/index_e.shtml).

