

Position Statement: Responding to Phasing Out Provincial Veterinary Field and Lab Services

Issued by: The AANB-Industry Vet Services & Lab Response Committee

Date: April 9, 2026

The Agriculture Alliance of New Brunswick and stakeholder industry associations have formed the **AANB-Industry Vet & Lab Services Response Committee**. This committee is comprised of all livestock organizations including dairy, beef, chicken, turkeys, eggs, pork, equine, sheep, bees, the Young Farmers of NB, and the NB Veterinary Medical Association in developing a response and collective request to government.

This committee recognizes the broader fiscal pressures facing government and appreciates the continued investments being made in agriculture, including recent commitments to sector growth. However, the proposed elimination of provincial veterinary services (including the critically important and essential services provided by the lab) - without a defined transition plan or prior consultation raises significant concern across the industry.

Access to reliable veterinary services is not optional; it is foundational to animal agriculture in New Brunswick:

- On-farm productivity and economic viability
- Animal welfare, particularly in emergency situations
- Food safety and public confidence
- Biosecurity and disease response capacity

The current system fills critical gaps that private services may not be able to sustainably address, particularly in rural and remote regions.

The members of the committee have identified several immediate risks associated with the current direction. These risks are not theoretical; they have already begun to materialize and will accelerate without timely intervention:

- Potential loss of veterinarians in the near term due to uncertainty
- Reduced or eliminated access to 24/7 emergency services
- Increased pressure on limited private veterinary capacity in rural areas
- Disruption to services that underpin food safety systems and public trust
- Risk to bilingual service delivery across the province

This committee is united in its commitment to working constructively with government. They have agreed to take a measured and solutions-oriented approach because a collaborative outcome is both achievable and necessary. The committee is not asking government to maintain the status quo, but rather to work with industry to design a sustainable path forward.

ACTIONS REQUESTED

Pause Implementation

Remove or, at minimum, pause the plan to phase out services to allow for industry collaboration and consultation to build a sustainable service program.

Engage in Direct Consultation with this Committee

Initiate focused discussions with livestock commodity organizations to ensure government has a clear understanding of current service reliance, regional vulnerabilities, and producer needs before further implementation steps are taken.

Co-Develop a Transition Plan that Minimizes Disruption

Work with industry to design a phased transition that prioritizes continuity of essential services, particularly emergency response, rural coverage, laboratory access, and bilingual service delivery.

Identify and Plan for Service Disruptions in Advance

As part of the transition planning process, whatever that may be, jointly identify where disruptions are most likely to occur and establish clear contingency measures to ensure producers know how and where services will be accessed if challenges arise during the transition.

Maintain Ongoing Dialogue Throughout the Transition

Ensure that livestock commodities remain engaged as the transition progresses, allowing government and industry to respond collaboratively to emerging issues and adjust plans as needed.

This is not a question of whether services should evolve, but how to do so responsibly—without compromising animal welfare, farm viability, or public confidence.

New Brunswick's agriculture sector is prepared to do their part in building a solution together. Producers are willing to adapt to new revenue neutral models, and work in partnership with government.

Steps Taken To Date

This position was collectively developed by the committee over several days on behalf of all livestock industries and was submitted to the Minister of DAAF at a productive meeting held on April 1.

While awaiting a response, the committee has not stopped their work and have recently launched a public survey. Everyone is encouraged to complete the survey and to share it with others. The results will directly inform the work of the committee moving forward.

Survey (English): <https://form.jotform.com/260855416767064>

Survey (French): <https://form.jotform.com/260897216120253>

Agriculture is the solution to help build a stronger NB.



New Brunswick Veterinary Medical Association

Association des médecins vétérinaires du Nouveau-Brunswick

