



# The Code of Practice: An update - 2029 & group sow housing



**Prairie Swine Centre Group Sow Housing Seminar  
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# Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pigs

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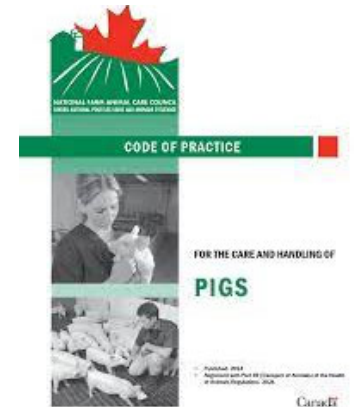
- National guidelines for the care and handling of pigs:
  - Sets requirements and recommendations

Developed of Codes based on

- Scientific knowledge
  - Stakeholder involvement with consensus based decisions

Developments reflect:

- Practical considerations & societal expectations
- Measurable: implementation of the Code evaluated in animal care assessment programs



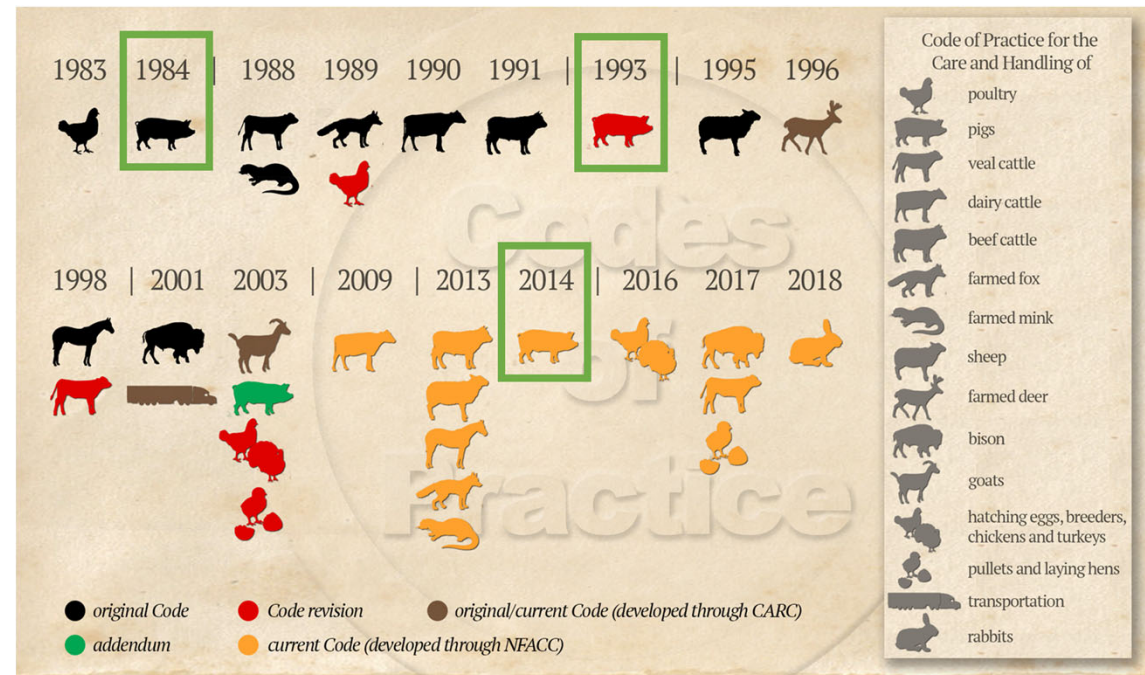


- The Code process is initiated by industry
- Overseen by the National Farm Animal Welfare Council:
  - upholds a consistent approach to advancing farm animal welfare nationally
  - Brings together stakeholders in a collaborative partnership
  - Facilitates a standardised process for collaboratively advancing farmed animal welfare in Canada



# Revision timelines

- Revisions are performed to ensure Codes remain current and considerate of
  - Scientific advancements
  - Government policy
  - Industry practice
- Codes revised every **10 years**
- Reviewed every **five years**



# Major update: 2014

## Housing for gestating sows and gilts

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From July 1 2014, all holdings

- Newly built
  - Rebuilt
    - Brought into use

Must house mated sows and gilts in groups for gestation

- Time in stalls permitted up to 35 days gestation
- Stalls must be sized so animals can stand up, lie down and rest comfortably

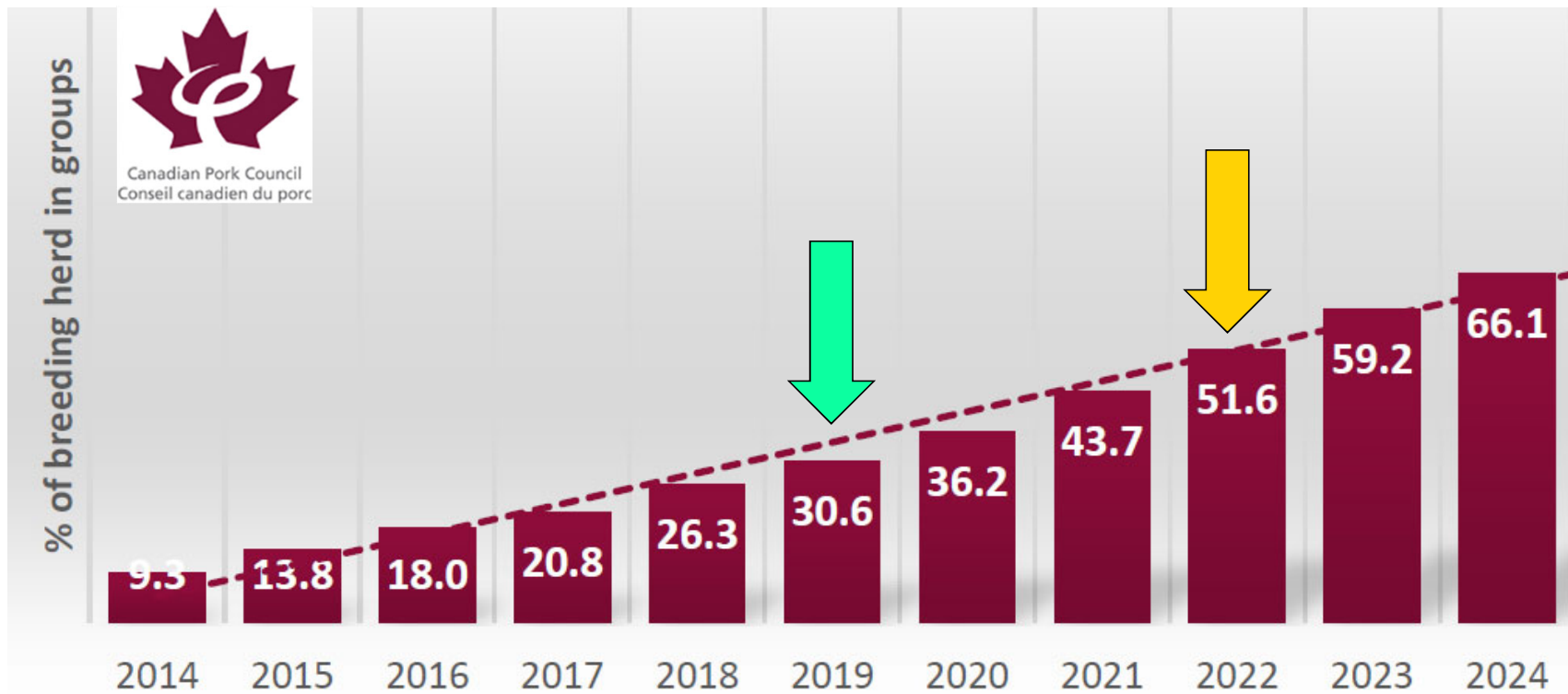
# Code Five-Year Review

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Purpose of five-year review:

- i. Review progress in the national implementation of the Code
- ii. Review developments in science
- iii. Identify challenges to implementation of the Code
- iv. Determine priorities for the next Code revision

# Conversions to Group Housing: National Level



Projections made September 2019



# July 1 2024: Gestating sows & gilts to be in groups

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- Existing stall barns can continue to operate if mated gilts and sows are:
  - *Provided with the opportunity to turn around or,*
  - *Exercise periodically or,*
  - *Provided with a greater freedom of movement*

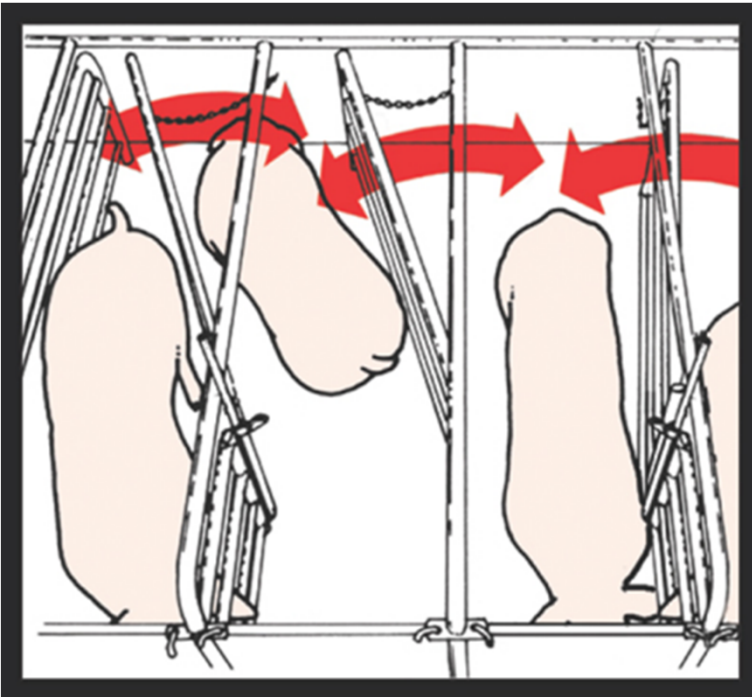


**To be decided by scientific evidence by July 2019.**

Major focus of the Code of Practice Five-Year review:

Determine requirements for gestating gilts and sows





BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

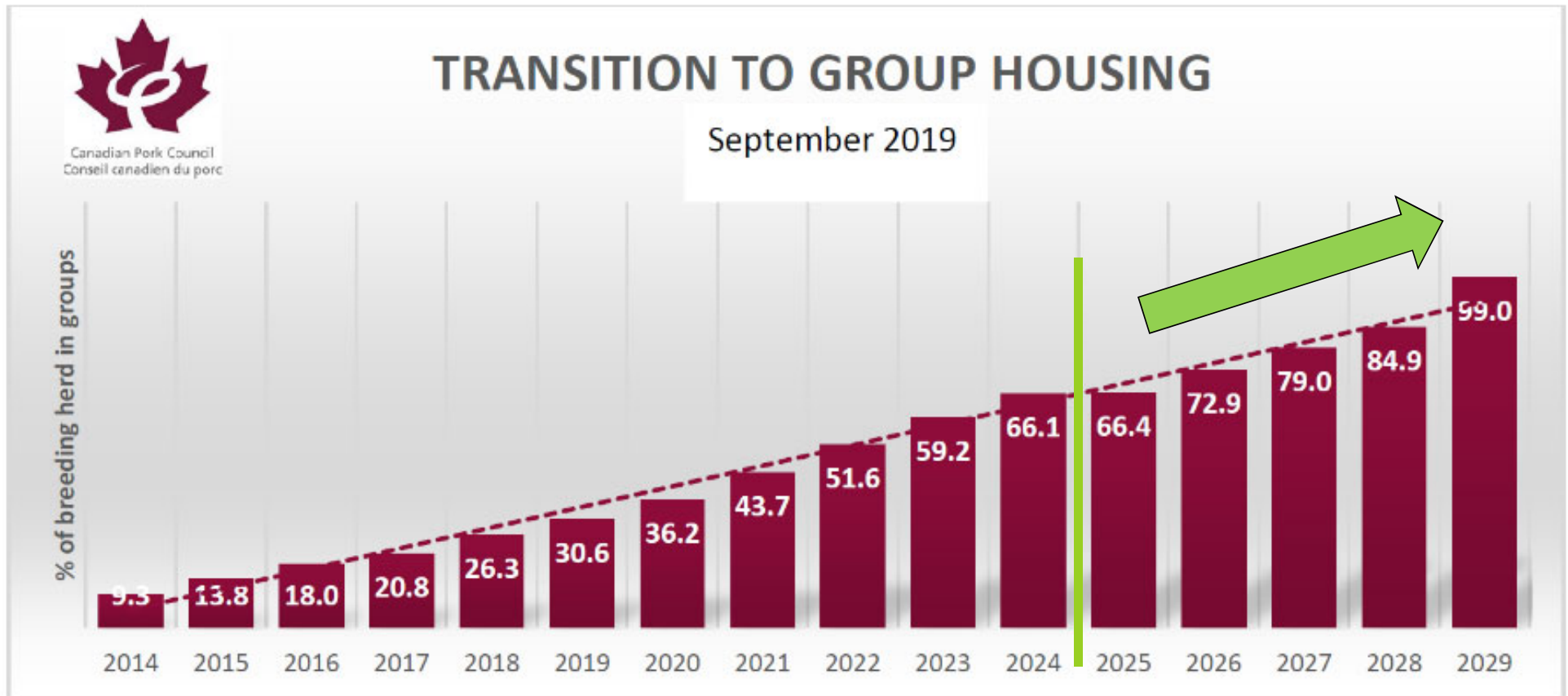
# Should we exercise sows?

- Exercise is beneficial
- Sows will choose to have a greater freedom of movement
  - But do not value time out of the stall as much as opportunities for more feed.
- Exercising sows at a low level (10 minutes, once per week) does not deliver benefits to welfare or productivity.
  - Freedom of movement afforded in group housing a more beneficial
    - More evidence of benefit to welfare under conditions studied.

# How does the extra labour add up?

- Exercising 500 gestating sows for 10 mins, once/week = 5,000mins/83 hrs of labour
- Two x full time staff/week required to exercise 500 sows for 10 mins, once per week
- Little return on investment for productivity and welfare
- Exercise is not an alternative option to group-housing
  - Better to focus investments towards converting to group-housing.

# Code Technical Panel Recommendation



# Providing additional time or supporting non-compliance?

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- A change of the timeline to 2029 provided for remaining barns to convert.
- Providing an extension helps to prevent:
  - Producers exiting the industry
  - Rushing conversions to less optimal facilities
- Supporting an industry to make conversions supports improved animal welfare for a greater number of animals in the long run
  - Contraction of an industry – production is absorbed elsewhere in the world, where welfare standards are typically lower.

# Code Technical Panel Recommendations

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- July 1 2029: boars be housed in pens with sufficient room to turn around.
- Functional and effective enrichments be provided to sows and gilts that remain in stalls post 2024.
- Make recommended minimum space allowance for sows and gilts in group-housing a requirement.
- Swine Innovation Porc consider the following research priorities:
  1. Refinement of management for gestating sows
  2. Environmental enrichment
  3. Management of pain and injury
  4. Transport
  5. Genetics for welfare
  6. Space allowance for nursery pigs

# Completion of Five-Year Review

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- Following public comment period – no significant alterations to the recommendations.
- Swine Innovation Porc research priorities to include euthanasia.
- Consensus in the group could not be reached.
- NFACC performing of governance – feedback expected 2022.



# Acknowledgements

## Project team members

- Mariia Tokareva
- Alexa Woodward
- Jennifer Brown
- Daniel MacPhee
  - David Janz

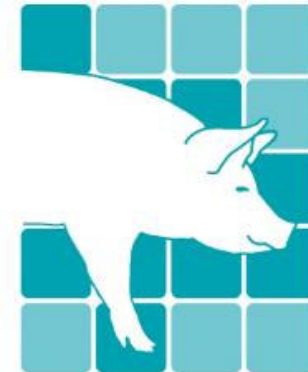
# Acknowledgements

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**ADF Saskatchewan**



Government  
— of —  
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# Thank you to program funders

