

Inside CFIA:

The Inspection Blitz and What Inspectors Actually Look For

Today's Presenter:

Cameron Prince

The Acheson Group



FSMAFRIDAY

Monthly Industry News, Updates & Trends for Food, Beverage, & CPG Manufacturers



What is FSMA Fridays?

- ✓ Monthly FSMA Related News
- ✓ Regulation Changes & Updates
- ✓ Industry Trends
- ✓ Q&A with TAG



Brought to you by:



A global food safety and public health consulting group made up of seasoned industry experts.

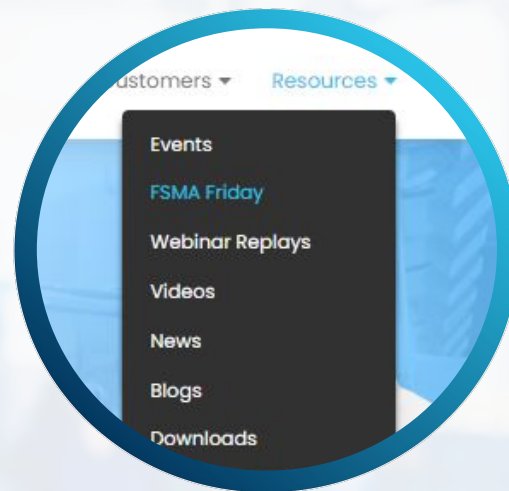


SAFETYCHAIN

Award-winning digital plant management platform to visualize plant-wide performance and better control quality, yield & production optimization.

Before We Get Started...

- ✓ Only panelist microphones are on
- ✓ Ask questions! (Q&A at end)
- ✓ Recording link will be shared
- ✓ Audio issues: use call-in number



Watch prior FSMA Friday recordings at
[safetychain.com > Resources > FSMA Friday](https://safetychain.com/resources/fsma-friday)

Meet Your FSMA Friday Speaker

Cameron Prince

Executive VP, Regulatory Affairs and Managing Director, TAG Canada



Cameron Prince is a highly experienced food safety, agriculture and seafood consultant with over 35 years of experience in food regulatory programs and the food industry in both the US and Canada. He also has extensive international experience having been active in CODEX and other multilateral food related organizations.

Prior to joining TAG, Cameron most recently held the most senior executive position at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) as Vice President of Operations. He also led the food safety modernization initiative that formed the framework for the Safe Food for Canadians Regulations (SFCR).

Cameron's areas of specialization are food safety recall and crisis management, food safety culture, development of food safety systems under FSMA, GFSI and SFCR, animal health and feeds programs, food safety audits, and government regulatory liaison. Cameron is a certified lead auditor for BRC and FSSC 2200, certified HACCP trainer (NSF), and a FSMA Preventive Controls lead instructor.

CFIA Manufactured Foods Inspection Blitz

Why CFIA is running this blitz

- A 2024 Listeria incident killed three people and sickened dozens.
- It was traced to a plant-based milk facility in Pickering, Ontario.
- CFIA had not visited that plant in five years.
- ERAM, the agency's inspection risk algorithm, never flagged it as high risk.
- The case became a high-profile media story, and it put CFIA's whole inspection model under public scrutiny.

What the investigation found

- Canada's Minister of Health ordered an investigation into the incident and into CFIA's failure to inspect.
- CFIA's Office of the Inspector General, an independent body inside the agency led by Scott Rattray, carried it out.
- The OIG reported in 2025 with significant findings and recommendations.
- CFIA's President committed to acting on all of them.
- The blitz launched in October 2025, running one year across all licensed manufactured food facilities.

How we got here



One outbreak, one media cycle, and every licensed manufactured food plant in the country is now on the list.

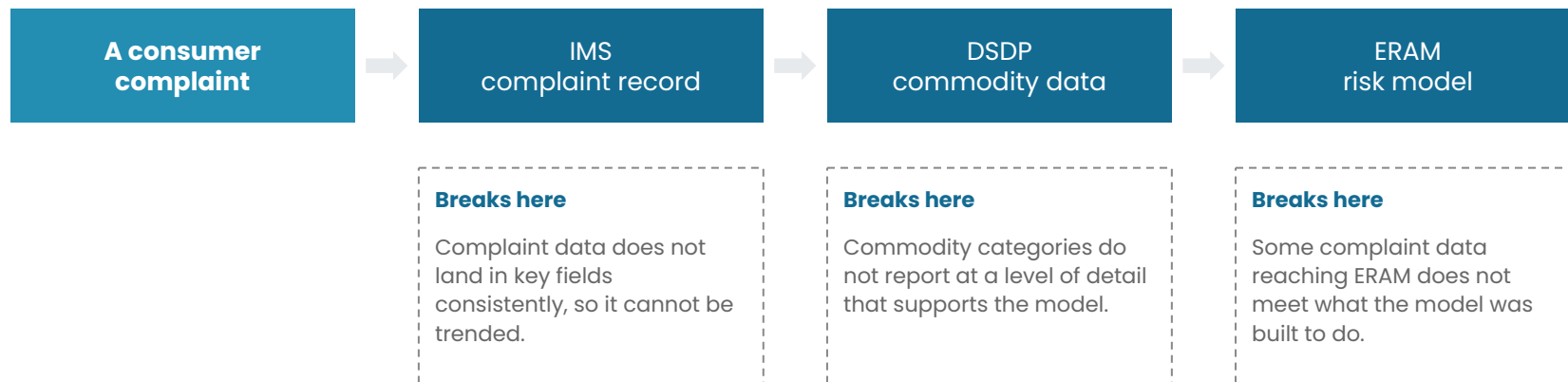
What the OIG found at the plant

- License holders operating without properly identified hazards in their written preventive control plans.
- Adequate controls for identified hazards missing from the production environment in facilities visited.
- Ready-to-eat products not categorized correctly under Health Canada's Listeria monocytogenes policy.
- Building and equipment conditions that could introduce food safety risk.

What the OIG found inside CFIA's own systems

- Licensing: controls over how Safe Food for Canadians licenses are issued and followed up need strengthening.
- Data integrity: limits in the DSDP and IMS systems stop ERAM from incorporating consumer complaints as intended.
- Inconsistent entry: complaint data is not entered into key fields consistently, so it cannot be trended.
- Model drift: some complaint data reaching ERAM does not meet the model's original objectives.
- Unclear expectations: no clear guidance for how an inspector responds to more than one complaint at one establishment.

Where the complaint data breaks down



Result: a plant CFIA had not visited in five years was never flagged as high risk.

What the OIG recommended: licensing and planning

- Rec 1, license approval: strengthen approval policy so licenses are not issued without CFIA review of the preventive control plan.
- Rec 2, establishment data: consider making the voluntary Additional Establishment Information Questionnaire mandatory.
- Rec 3, work planning: align inspection frequencies with operational capacity, focus on the highest-risk establishments, and act when frequencies are missed.
- Rec 4, compliance promotion: review the tools that help regulated parties understand their responsibilities under SFCA/R.

What the OIG recommended: data and complaints

- Rec 5, classification: review food commodity classifications in DSDP and raise the accuracy of license holder information in My CFIA.
- Rec 6, documentation: improve data fields and guidance so every confirmed food safety complaint can be extracted to ERAM.
- Rec 7, trending: improve complaint recording to support consistent entry and proper trending.
- Rec 8, validation: validate the data types feeding ERAM so establishments are assigned a reliable risk level.
- Rec 9, inspector guidance: help inspectors find multiple similar complaints by establishment, and clarify what on-site response is expected.

How the blitz is being run

- A dedicated team of inspectors drawn from across the country, led by an assigned Regional Director.
- Site inspections at every licensed manufactured food plant.
- Visits generally run two to four days, and plants receive notification in advance.
- Findings fall under CFIA's enforcement policy: corrective actions, warnings, fines, license suspension or cancellation.

What CFIA is finding so far

- Licenses not up to date on the products and processes a plant actually runs (sub-element 1.1bc: product formulation, specification and processing).
- Preventive control plans with incomplete hazard analyses.
- Inadequate sanitation.
- Poor equipment design and maintenance.
- Non-compliance or mis-categorization under Health Canada's Listeria policy.

**Roughly one in four inspected plants is
coming back non-compliant**

What to expect if CFIA inspects your plant

- ✓ A team of two or three inspectors, typically for two to three days
- ✓ A review of your SFCR license: responsible parties, products, processes, and the status of your preventive control plan
- ✓ Walkthroughs covering sanitation, GMPs, and CCP verification
- ✓ A staff member available to answer questions at all times

What happens if CFIA finds non-compliance

- A written report is provided.
- Corrective actions are required, with deadlines attached.
- If findings are serious, the file is referred to CFIA enforcement.
- That can lead to warnings, fines, license suspension, or cancellation.
- Some plants voluntarily cancel a license they did not need, or cannot meet the requirements for.

The licensing crackdown: CFIA Office of Permissions

- CFIA no longer issues licenses without review.
- Many plants had declared a preventive control plan they did not have, or listed products they do not make.
- Every applicant for a new license or an amendment is now interviewed by administrative staff to confirm the license is accurate.
- What CFIA is really after is license holders who understand their own responsibilities, and the preventive control plan above everything else.

What the new wait times look like

License amendment

Adding another product or process to an existing license.



30 days or more

CFIA service standard

The published standard for those same amendments, about 14 weeks.



70 business days

New applicant, higher risk

What a new applicant can face for products such as meat.



Up to 6 months

Business days shown on the same calendar scale for comparison. Bars are to scale.

What happens when the blitz ends

- The manufactured foods blitz ends in late October 2026, and CFIA will issue a summary report.
- The OIG, the CFIA President, or the Health Minister may call for further action if findings point to ongoing risk.
- Manufactured foods is roughly 1,700 of as many as 20,000 SFCR licenses, so most of the licensed population has not been touched yet.
- CFIA will not name the next sector. Licensed importers are the logical candidate: the Office of Permissions already cancelled 10 to 15 importer licenses after a small sample of telephone interviews.

Current blitz results

→ Blitz is 68% complete

- Of nearly 1,700 facilities targeted for inspection by end of October 2026
 - 1,100 completed (since fall of 2025)
- Noncompliances
 - 1/4 had at least one noncompliance, issued Notice of Noncompliance
 - Included: sanitation, formulations, specifications, processing
- Approx. 50 establishments had serious non-compliances, resulting in:
 - Product and equipment detentions
 - Stop Processing control actions
 - License suspensions (reinstated after corrective actions)
 - Warnings issued

FSMA FRIDAY

CFIA Inspections

Questions?



SAFETYCHAIN

Join us in September



Friday
September 25



9:00 AM PT
12:00 PM ET

[Register Now](#)



FSMAFRIDAY
WEBINAR SERIES

FRONTLINE PREPAREDNESS:
FOR SQF EDITION 10



FRIDAY,
SEPT. 25



9:00 AM PT
12:00 PM ET

AMIT JAGIRDAR
DIRECTOR OF FOOD SAFETY
THE ACHESON GROUP

FSMAFRIDAY



More Resources

Industry eGuides

Webinars

Videos

Success Stories

Solution Consultation



[achesongroup.com](https://www.achesongroup.com)



info@achesongroup.com

More On Boosting Food Safety



SAFETYCHAIN

