



# PUBLIC POLICIES ON ANIMAL BIOTECHNOLOGY: WHAT IS THE PLACE FOR ETHICS?

Carolina Cardenas  
Lyne Létourneau  
Université Laval

# Plan

- ▶ Context
- ▶ Question
- ▶ Hypothesis
- ▶ Organizational Culture
- ▶ New-Institutionalism
- ▶ Preliminary results



# Context

- 1994: Marketing of products and by-products containing genetically modified plants
- No request to market products or by-products of genetically modified animals
- Evaluation to be based on scientific considerations



# Context

- Science can only provide partial answers
  - Uncertainty: assessing all risks
  - Integration of “other criteria”
    - Integration of ethics
    - Maintain public trust



# Question

What is the place for ethics in  
developing a regulatory  
framework on animal  
biotechnology  
in Canada?



# Hypothesis

The limiting factor in the consideration of ethics may be in the organizational culture of the authorities responsible for the adoption of the animal biotechnology framework.



# Organizational Culture

“The specific collection of values and norms that are shared by people and groups in an organization”



# Organizational Culture

## ○ Elements

- Informal

- Behaviour patterns
- Hidden values
- Assumptions

- Formal

- Institutional values
- Institutional rules



# New-Institutionalism

- Institutions influence the behaviour of actors

- Institutions  $\longrightarrow$  Actors

- Actors  $\longrightarrow$  Institutions

- Institutions  $\longleftrightarrow$  Actors



# Preliminary Results

- Institutions

	Transgenic Fish	Cloned Animal
Regulatory	Health Canada	
	Environment Canada	
Expertise	Fisheries and Oceans Canada	Canadian Food Inspection Agency

# Preliminary Results

- Science based frameworks
  - Science is objective
  - Substantial equivalence
  - All decisions must appear scientific



# Preliminary Results

## ○ Trade protection

- International obligations
- Trade barriers: scientific considerations
- Reaction of international markets



# Preliminary Results

- Non-scientific elements
  - Uncomfortable situation for civil servants
  - Risks are not scientific, they are ideological
  - Relationship risks-benefits: public acceptance
  - Animal welfare

**Ethics**  
**Standards**  
**judgement**  
**moral**  
**conduct**

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carocar2002@hotmail.com  
Lyne.Letourneau@fsaa.ulaval.ca



# Context

## ○ Trust:

- Willingness : the responsibility for making decisions and taking actions
- Individual lacks the interest, time, abilities, knowledge, or other resource
- Science and technology



# CONTEXT

- Essential facts

- Food related scandals
- Novel foods
- Novel ways of production
- Growing distance between production and consumption



# Context

- Why maintaining trust is important?
  - Engagement of the public in the decision-making process
  - Renewed trust in the institution
  - Easier risk acceptability



# Research Project

## 1. Institution:

Formal and informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions proper to each organizational structure

## 2. Institutions' influence:

Institutions  $\longleftrightarrow$  Actors

## 3. Change:

Behaviour pattern: well-established and accepted procedures

Maintain status quo

