



National Animal Health Laboratory Network

NAHLN Laboratory Designations

There are several levels of laboratory participation within the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN). The term “core laboratories” was used to designate the original 12 participating laboratories. Because participation in the network has expanded since 2002, the NAHLN Steering Committee created a system to define laboratory designations to reduce confusion among stakeholders.

The laboratory designation system reflects different levels of infrastructure support for emergency-response preparation as well as funding for surveillance testing. Each level of laboratory participation is vital to the function and capacity of the NAHLN for early disease detection, surveillance, and surge-and-recovery testing in response to disease outbreaks. The goal is comprehensive coverage of the U.S. livestock industry.

How the NAHLN Laboratories Are Categorized

Four designations describe participation in the NAHLN: Core Member Laboratories and Member Laboratories (both of which receive infrastructure support), Contract Member Laboratories, and Adjunct Member Laboratories. The first three categories all participate in active surveillance (fee-for-testing) programs. Laboratories in all four categories have successfully completed the NAHLN approval checklist and quality-assurance requirements, and each has personnel trained and proficiency-tested to conduct the approved NAHLN diagnostic assays.

A **Core Member** Laboratory receives significant infrastructure support from, and also conducts fee-for-service testing for, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). This group of laboratories currently includes just the original 12. Their funding level enables them to be fully committed to the NAHLN mission and able to respond to domestic or foreign animal disease emergencies on a 24/7 basis.

A **Member Laboratory** receives limited annual infrastructure support from USDA for specific purposes, such as establishing information technology connections or developing capacity for data-reporting. These laboratories also conduct fee-for-service testing. Sixteen laboratories currently in this group could move to the **Core Member** category as funds become available to provide the significant annual infrastructure support needed to reach the **Core Member** category.

A **Contract Member Laboratory** performs only fee-for-service testing for control of specific animal diseases. These laboratories can move into either the **Member** or **Core Member** category as funding levels enable infrastructure support.

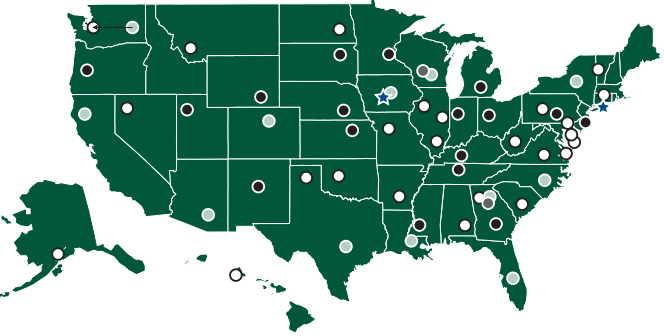
Because of its implementation of NAHLN protocols, an **Adjunct Member Laboratory** is considered a member of the NAHLN, but its primary mission is not domestic animal disease diagnostic work within the United States.

Contact Information

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- ★ National Veterinary Services Laboratories
- Core Member laboratory
- Member laboratory
- Contract Member laboratory
- Adjunct laboratory
- ← Members of a laboratory system

NAHLN, a State and Federal partnership to safeguard animal health

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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