



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service • Legislative and Public Affairs  
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## **USDA Publishes Final Rule to Help Ensure Health of Animals While Traveling**

WASHINGTON, Dec. 21, 2012— The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has amended the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) regulations to require traveling exhibitors to submit itineraries to the agency 48 hours in advance of travel so that inspectors will know where regulated animals are located.

“This rule will help APHIS ensure animals are receiving humane care and treatment while they are away from their main facility,” APHIS Acting Administrator Kevin Shea.

In the final rule, APHIS has clarified that only those exhibitors traveling overnight or longer away from the main facility would need to provide itinerary information. The itineraries must include:

- the name and license/registration number under the AWA of the person who will exhibit the animals, and the name of the person who owns the animals if any animals are leased, borrowed or loaned;
- the name, identification number or identifying characteristics, species (common or scientific name), sex and age of each animal;
- the dates and locations where the animals will travel, be housed, and be exhibited, and including all anticipated dates and locations for any stops and layovers.

Exhibitors can choose to submit their itineraries via fax, USPS mail, or e-mail.

This final rule becomes effective 30 days after publication in the Federal Register.

The AWA requires that minimum standards of care and treatment be provided for certain animals bred for commercial sale, used in research, transported commercially or exhibited to the public. It excludes those animals raised for food or fiber. Persons who operate facilities in these categories must provide their animals with adequate care and treatment in the areas of housing, handling, sanitation, nutrition, water, veterinary care and protection from extreme weather and temperatures. For more information on the inspection and enforcement processes, visit APHIS’ animal care website at [www.aphis.usda.gov/animal\\_welfare/](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/).

With Agriculture Secretary Vilsack's leadership, APHIS works tirelessly to create and sustain opportunities for America's farmers, ranchers and producers. Each day, APHIS promotes U.S. agricultural health, regulates genetically engineered organisms, administers the Animal Welfare Act, and carries out wildlife damage management activities, all to safeguard the nation's agriculture, fishing and forestry industries. In the event that a pest or disease of concern is detected, APHIS implements emergency protocols and partners with affected states and other countries to quickly manage or eradicate the outbreak. To promote the health of U.S. agriculture in the international trade arena, APHIS develops and advances science-based standards with trading partners to ensure America's agricultural exports, valued at more than \$137 billion annually, are protected from unjustified restrictions.

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