

Foreword

I am pleased to present the *2009 United States Animal Health Report*. This is the sixth annual report produced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) on the Nation's animal health status.

This report highlights animal health and epidemiological events of 2009 and provides updates on APHIS Veterinary Services' (VS') programs, activities, and initiatives focused on maintaining healthy livestock, poultry, and aquaculture populations. Additionally, the report reviews key developments in VS' emergency management efforts, laboratory diagnostics and biologics, surveillance and monitoring, and disease management and reporting.

As the national animal health landscape continues to change, VS continues to take a critical look at our future and focus specifically on how we will operate as the Nation's veterinary authority in 2015. Implementing such change over the next 5 years requires that we change how we view our organization. VS is striving proactively to evolve to meet the needs and demands of the world around us. The changing national and global animal health landscape requires us to work together with our partners and stakeholders to meet the needs of U.S. agriculture today and tomorrow.

After identifying several key forces affecting animal health and APHIS during 2009, we created four working groups to focus on program areas outlined in our vision and to help determine which direction that change will take us. Each of these working groups was charged with brainstorming and developing pilot projects that may be used as the seeds for our evolution.

The four groups are:

- **Movement and Marketability** is reviewing VS' role in interstate and international movement of animals and products. APHIS is charged with not only safeguarding U.S. agriculture, but also with facilitating safe agricultural trade around the globe.
- **Surveillance for Action** focuses on data collection, analysis, and dissemination. As APHIS looks at how existing animal health programs should evolve, we are enhancing partnerships, developing new diagnostics, and looking at emerging issues facing animal agriculture.
- **One Health** examines best ways to bridge the human health/animal health interface, and engage in wildlife health issues. The challenges of zoonotic diseases, coupled with the increasing difficulty in distinguishing livestock diseases from those endemic in wild populations, requires VS to think about animal health in novel ways and with new partners.
- **Animal Health Emergency Management Preparedness and Response Planning** is clarifying VS' place in the emergency management community. VS professionals have

proven that they already know how to combat foreign animal diseases; now we must look at how we will use our well-positioned staff to focus on disease prevention and early response. We will also devote more effort to ensure business continuity for livestock industries when disease outbreaks occur.

Not all of the change in APHIS during 2009 occurred within these four working groups. This report highlights efforts to refocus our long-standing bovine tuberculosis program and to begin to train and dedicate APHIS personnel in emerging areas, such as public health and animal welfare. We created an analytical tool to evaluate response efforts and developed a proactive approach to the swine influenza virus even before the global H1N1 pandemic affected U.S. agriculture.

To be successful, VS must adopt a VS 2015 implementation plan that incorporates the ideals of VS and its external stakeholders, including States, Tribal nations, and industry. VS will seek stakeholder participation on work teams that will chart further details of this new course and its implementation at State and local levels. The pressing needs of 2009 and the impending realities of 2015 will require active involvement from multiple partners to make an effective transition of VS and the broader U.S. animal health community.

As always, I invite and welcome your comments and ideas.

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