

Contact:

Workabeba (Abby) Yigzaw (301) 734-6125

Lyndsay Cole (970) 494-7410

## **USDA and Navajo Nation Holds a National Veterinary Stockpile Exercise on Tribal Land**

WASHINGTON, May 5, 2011--The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), in partnership with the Navajo Nation, held a national veterinary stockpile logistics exercise on Wednesday, April 27. This was the first full-scale exercise to be held on tribal lands.

"The exercise was an opportunity for APHIS and tribal member participants to gain valuable experience in implementing veterinary response measures in the event of an emergency," said Undersecretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Edward Avalos. "The joint exercise allowed us to identify gaps and improve processes to ensure we're well equipped to protect American agriculture in the future."



Under Secretary Avalos and President Ben Shelly of the Navajo Nation pictured with NVS exercise participants

APHIS' national veterinary stockpile exists to provide tribal nations, states and territories with the resources they need to respond to a foreign animal disease outbreak. The stockpile consists of therapeutics, drugs, equipment and supplies that can be deployed to the site of a disease outbreak within 24 hours. With these readily available resources, APHIS is prepared to respond to multiple introductions of the most damaging livestock and poultry diseases. Continued improvement and regular testing of the national veterinary stockpile capabilities with exercises like the one held last week help ensure the United States is prepared to deploy materials and other veterinary resources to quickly stop the spread of animal disease to protect the health and value of animal agriculture in the United States and tribal nations.

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