Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has conducted surveillance for bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) since 1990. In 2004, following the December 2003 detection of BSE in an imported cow, USDA implemented an enhanced BSE surveillance program to more accurately determine the prevalence of the disease in the U.S. cattle population.

USDA concluded that the prevalence of BSE in the United States is extremely low (less than 1 case per million adult cattle), and in 2006, transitioned to an ongoing BSE surveillance program that tests at a level more commensurate with this extremely low level of risk. Ongoing BSE surveillance exceeds guidelines set forth by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), providing for testing at a level 10 times that which is recommended by OIE.

NAHLN Laboratories Approved To Conduct BSE, CWD, and Scrapie Testing

This map shows the distribution of NAHLN testing approval for the TSEs.
The National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) has provided BSE surveillance testing since 2004. In fiscal year (FY) 2010, six NAHLN laboratories provided diagnostic testing for the BSE surveillance program. These laboratories continue to conduct testing to detect BSE at the very low level of less than 1 case per million adult cattle, assess any change in the BSE status of U.S. cattle, and identify any rise in BSE prevalence in this country.

To learn more, go to: www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom/hot_issues/bse/surveillance/bse_disease_surv.shtml

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)

Since 2001, USDA has worked to develop and implement a CWD program to prevent and control this disease in farmed/captive cervids, establish a national CWD Herd Certification Program, and assist States and tribes in CWD surveillance in wild deer, elk, and moose. The CWD program supports ongoing surveillance in farmed cervid herds to detect CWD-positive animals and to conduct follow-up investigations to trace CWD-infected animals to epidemiologically linked herds.
In FY 2010, 23 NAHLN laboratories provided diagnostic testing for CWD surveillance, evaluating tissues from 14,580 farmed/captive cervids. The NVSL Pathobiology Laboratory in Ames, IA, tested an additional 5,419 cervids. NVSL also performs confirmatory testing on all samples identified as suspect (potential positive) for CWD by the NAHLN laboratories.

To learn more, go to:
www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/cwd/

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**Scrapie**

USDA initiated the National Accelerated Scrapie Eradication Program in 2001 with the goal of eradicating scrapie from the U.S. sheep and goat populations. Since 2003, surveillance for the program has been conducted primarily through the Regulatory Scrapie Slaughter Surveillance (RSSS) program, which targets sheep and goat populations that have been recognized as having higher than average scrapie prevalence. Scrapie surveillance also targets scrapie-exposed and potentially exposed sheep and goats found through investigations of infected animals; clinical-suspect animals and other mature sheep and goats submitted to veterinary diagnostic laboratories; rabies-suspect animals that test negative for rabies; and voluntary on-farm testing of flocks with risk factors for scrapie or as part of the Scrapie Flock Certification Program.

In FY 2010, 23 NAHLN laboratories provided diagnostic testing for scrapie, evaluating samples from 45,165 animals submitted for scrapie testing through RSSS and 754 animals through clinical-suspect and exposed animal surveillance activities. The NVSL Pathobiology Laboratory in Ames, IA, performs confirmatory testing on all samples identified as suspect (potential positive) by the NAHLN laboratories.

To learn more, go to:
www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/animal_diseases/scrapie/