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Through its National Import Export Service (NIES), VS facilitates the domestic and international marketability of U.S. animals and animal products. The growing interest in agricultural trade in the global market has expanded VS' role to include ensuring the creation of new trade opportunities while continuing to safeguard the nation's animal health.

Under the World Trade Organization (WTO), Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement, countries are required to formulate their sanitary import measures on science-based principles and guidelines. The WTO recognizes the World Organization for Animal Health (formerly the Office of International Epizooties) (OIE) as the international forum for setting animal health standards, reporting global animal events and disease status, and presenting guidelines and recommendations on sanitary measures relating to animal health.

OIE and International Standards

The OIE was established in Paris, France, in 1924 with the signing of an international agreement by 28 countries. As of March 2011, the organization had 178 Members,

each of whom is represented by a delegate who, in most cases, is the country's chief veterinary officer. The mission of the OIE is to prevent the spread of animal diseases. To achieve this mission, OIE has three primary functions: (1) to collect and disseminate information on the distribution and occurrence of animal diseases, (2) to coordinate research on contagious animal diseases, and (3) to develop international standards for the safe movement of animals and animal products in international trade.

In recent years, the mandate of the OIE has expanded to include animal welfare, food production and food safety, and the strengthening of veterinary services. Within VS, four major program areas interact directly with the OIE: (1) NIES's International Animal Health Standards Services (IAHSS), (2) the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL), (3) the Centers of Veterinary Biologics (CVB), and (4) the Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health (CEAH).

NIES's International Animal Health Standards Services

- Guides the development of sound international health standards for safe trading in animals and animal products by coordinating consensus-based comments on proposed modifications to chapters of the OIE Terrestrial and Aquatic Animal Health Codes.
- Maintains a database of disease and subject matter experts to review specific code chapters.
- Monitors and evaluates reports and scientific data produced by the OIE.
- Compiles the Annual Tabular and Narrative Disease Reports on Member Countries' World Animal Health Status and submits monthly disease reports.
- Coordinates import and export efforts to address the international movement of livestock, biological products, and animal products and provides recommendations on health conditions related to the movement of animals and animal products.
- Prepares agendas, briefs, and trade-issue analyses for the delegates attending the Quadrilateral Animal Health Committee Meeting (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States), the North American Animal Health Committee Meeting (Canada, Mexico, and the United States), and the OIE annual General Session.

- Recommends changes to address trade issues effectively and align USDA standards and policies with international standards.
- Represents the Deputy Administrator and the Department of Agriculture at meetings with international officials as well as with livestock and poultry industry representatives.

Contact Point for the International Animal Health Standards Services

National Center for Import and Export International Animal Health Standards Services USDA–APHIS–VS
4700 River Rd., Unit 33
Riverdale, MD 20737–1231
Tel: (301) 734–5324
Fax: (301) 734–8818
e-mail: usa.oie@aphis.usda.gov

CEAH: An OIE Collaborating Center

As an OIE collaborating center, CEAH shares its risk analysis and disease surveillance expertise with member countries. It provides them with technical assistance and expert advice on disease surveillance and control and risk analysis. As a collaborating center, CEAH fulfills the following objectives:

- Reviews, evaluates, and adapts methodologies and approaches to enhance animal disease surveillance systems and the risk analysis process.
- Promotes a harmonized approach to disease surveillance and risk analysis.
- Provides technical assistance to OIE member countries as needed.
- Improves the quality of animal disease surveillance and risk analysis by establishing a critical mass of trained individuals in OIE member countries.
- Networks with other OIE collaborating centers to coordinate activities.

Contact Point for CEAH

Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health USDA–APHIS–VS
2150 Centre Ave., Bldg. B Fort Collins, CO 80526 Tel: (970) 494–7200
Fax: (970) 472–2668
e-mail: ceah@aphis.usda.gov

Center for the Diagnosis of Animal Diseases and Vaccine Evaluation for the Americas: An OIE Collaborating Center

The Center for the Diagnosis of Animal Diseases and Vaccine Evaluation for the Americas consists of three components:

- The National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL)
- The Center for Veterinary Biologics (CVB)
- The Institute for International Cooperation in Animal Biologics (IICAB).

NVSL

NVSL are full-service laboratories with expertise in all diagnostic tests for significant animal diseases found in the Americas. These laboratories are committed to sharing and harmonizing these procedures with other countries in the Americas. The NVSL supports the OIE by

- Providing diagnostic assistance such as agent isolation and characterization;
- Supplying reference reagents to other laboratories, which can be used to standardize testing or for routine diagnosis;
- Evaluating diagnostic reagents used by other countries and exchanging sera to standardize and harmonize testing;
- Providing training in the diagnostic tests that they perform
- Consulting on a wide range of techniques; and
- Conducting developmental projects to improve diagnostic techniques for diseases of significance in the Americas.

Contact point for NVSL/ National Veterinary Services Laboratories

USDA–APHIS–VS
1920 Dayton Ave
P.O. Box 844
Ames, IA 50010
Tel: (515) 337–7266
Fax: (515) 337–7397
e-mail: NVSL_Concerns@usda.gov

CVB

CVB is the sole confirmatory and investigatory testing laboratory involved in regulation of commercial veterinary biologics (vaccines and diagnostic kits) in the United States. CVB supports OIE by

- Developing, distributing, and using worldwide standard protocols for biologics evaluation and training scientists from throughout the world in these protocols;
- Validating and providing standard reagents to biologics manufacturers and regulatory laboratories worldwide;
- Conducting developmental projects to improve biological techniques for diseases of significance in the Americas;
- Reviewing, developing, comparing, and harmonizing testing protocols in collaboration with industry and other Government laboratories and
- Hosting scientific meetings in the area of veterinary biologics.

Contact point for CVB/ Center for Veterinary Biologics

USDA–APHIS–VS
1920 Dayton Ave
PO Box 844
Ames, IA 50010
Tel: (515) 337–7331
Fax: (515) 337–7397

e-mail: cvb@aphis.usda.gov

IICAB

IICAB is based at Iowa State University and concentrates its efforts on educating and implementing international communication and harmonization activities related to the availability, safety, and efficacy veterinary biologics. IICAB supports OIE by

- Offering training on scientific principles behind vaccine safety and efficacy;
- Working with other international organizations to harmonize regulations for veterinary biologics in the Americas;
- Assisting developing countries to obtain veterinary biologics for specific unmet needs and in their efforts to manufacture, import, and regulate veterinary biologics and diagnostics; and
- Organizing scientific meetings and serving as an international resource for information on the use of veterinary biologics.

Contact point for IICAB/ Institute for International Cooperation in Animal Biologics

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Ames, IA 50010
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