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APHIS Updates Select Agents and Toxins Registration List; Removes Agents Including Brucella

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Stakeholder Announcement

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WASHINGTON, December 16, 2024 – The United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) completed its biennial review of the Biological Select Agents and Toxins (BSAT) list. As a result of this review, APHIS is removing five select agents from the BSAT list. These include: *Brucella abortus*, *Brucella suis*, and *Brucella melitensis*, African horse sickness virus, and *Peronosclerospora philippinensis*.

Removing regulatory barriers will greatly advance research on vaccines and diagnostics, which will improve our efforts to control these diseases in animal populations.

The delisting of the *Brucella* spp. does not change the already recommended biosafety levels for work with this species of bacteria.

As part of its biennial review, a working group made up of APHIS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other federal partners, evaluated all potential animal and plant select agents based on their effects on health, production, and marketability of animals or plants. The group also looked at the select agents’ ability to cause disease and if countermeasures or treatments are available.

The working group also considered whether inclusion on the list would have a substantial negative impact on the research and development of solutions for the animal or plant disease caused by the agent or toxin. Selects agents are subject to strong regulations on both their use and movement to protect the American public and agriculture.

These regulations, while effective at keeping the public safe, also limit the amount and types of research that can be done into developing effective countermeasures and treatment. Removing these five agents should allow more entities to conduct safe research that will only enhance our ability to control these diseases.

In January 2024, APHIS published a [proposed rule](#) and solicited public comment on the possible delisting of these agents. APHIS closely reviewed and considered the feedback and addressed it in this final rule.

The final rule is on display in today’s [Federal Register](#).