



many goals one mission

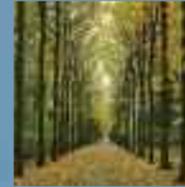


United States
Department of
Agriculture

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Protecting America's Agricultural
and Natural Resources

many goals



“By protecting America’s agriculture, we protect America. And that will never change.”

For more than 40 years, the mission of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has been to protect the health and value of America’s agricultural and natural resources.

It’s a vital mission: healthy and profitable American agriculture provides food and clothing for countless people worldwide and is a key pillar of our economy. Given the broad reach of our mission, millions of people benefit from APHIS’ programs and services every day. As our name suggests, APHIS’ work centers around animal and plant health, but our programs involve many other important things as well: animal welfare, biotechnology, global trade, wildlife damage management, emergency response, and scientific research. And while, for many, APHIS is not a household name, our efforts are seen and felt both far and wide. From an abundance of healthy and affordable food around the world, to air travel kept safe against wildlife-related accidents, to household pets sheltered from harm in a disaster, to our own beautiful tree-lined streets, protecting and promoting agriculture brings value well beyond the farm, touching people’s lives in a multitude of ways.

As agriculture and the global marketplace have evolved, so has APHIS. Today, we continue to oversee pest and disease eradication programs, test livestock and poultry for diseases, and place quarantines on the movement of certain types of plants—activities that have historically been an important component of our work. We continue to provide critical services at farms, feedlots, and facilities with State and industry partners. But we also support the health and marketability of U.S. agricultural industries by

negotiating with foreign governments to facilitate trade and expand markets for U.S. products. Increasingly, we look to innovative, nonregulatory solutions to achieve our aims—making sure agriculture stays healthy while ensuring the swift flow of commerce.

APHIS’ strong commitment to serving the American people guides all that we do. With an eye toward excellence and value, we’re constantly finding new ways to accomplish our work so that APHIS’ way of doing business reflects the way agriculture and commerce operate today. We are using more technology to allow industry to move at the speed of commerce and keep up with demand for agricultural commodities. We are developing better, faster processes to improve our customers’ experience and deliver services more cheaply and effectively. We are streamlining operations in areas such as veterinary biologics licensing, import and export reviews, environmental documentation, and reviews of petitions to determine the regulatory status of genetically engineered crops. These actions—and many others—are saving both time and money as APHIS strives to better serve its stakeholders and the American public.

Even though APHIS’ goals continue to evolve, our ultimate mission remains the same. By protecting America’s agricultural and natural resources, we protect America. And that will never change.



“APHIS is composed of several different program units, each focused on its own unique responsibilities and duties.”



many units

APHIS is composed of several different program units, each focused on its own unique responsibilities and duties. Together, these programs work as a dynamic whole—a world-class system designed to safeguard the health of animals, plants, people, and ecosystems throughout the United States and to foster safe agricultural trade worldwide.

Agriculture is vital to the health and strength of the U.S. economy and our citizens. However, globalization and free trade place great pressure on our safeguarding system. Protecting agriculture requires special attention from all of us who work in and with the agriculture sector.

Our dynamic safeguarding system is built on a foundation of collaboration and partnership. At APHIS, we believe in working closely with our partners and stakeholders, both inside and outside the agency, to get results. Our employees cooperate with growers and producers, industry representatives, other Federal agencies, State

and local governments, professional organizations, advocacy groups, and scientists and academia nationwide to manage the issues that affect agriculture.

In doing so, we are also firmly committed to delivering APHIS programs in traditionally underserved, under-represented areas and rural communities. As part of this effort, we partner with 1890 land-grant colleges and universities, historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs), and community-based and minority organizations (CBOs) to enhance the viability of small, limited resource, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

In addition, APHIS collaborates with internationally recognized scientists and participates in world animal and plant health organizations. And as our work increasingly intersects with human health issues, we find ourselves reaching out to new partners, such as public health officials and organizations. All of this strong collaboration allows us to do more.

many faces



“APHIS employees are on the job 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, protecting America’s agricultural and natural resources.”

APHIS employees are located throughout the United States and in multiple Territories and countries. We are on the job 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, protecting America’s agricultural and natural resources.

Experts

APHIS employees are highly qualified experts in their fields; each is deeply committed to applying his or her skills to the APHIS mission. In addition to scientists, veterinarians, entomologists, and biologists, APHIS employs professionals from a wide range of disciplines, including communications, economics, information technology, finance, emergency management, biosafety, biosecurity, acquisition, facilities management, investigative services, and human resources.

Leaders

Strong leadership; proven technical competence; and practical, customer-focused decisionmaking are the key attributes of APHIS employees. These are the organizational values that help us accomplish our mission every day, as we strive to deliver the best possible service at

the best possible value for taxpayer dollars. We ground our decisions in high-quality, hard analysis, setting clear objectives for our programs and policies and measuring our results and progress in real terms. In addition, we continuously analyze our business processes through formal and informal Business Process Improvement (BPI) methods to improve our organizational performance for the future.

Today, as we face new challenges nationwide in strengthening our safeguarding system, addressing increased trade volume, and responding to agricultural emergencies, APHIS is also investing in continued employee training and development as fundamental to success in an evolving world. At the heart of these efforts is APHIS’ dedication to civil rights in all of our programs and practices—so our agency reflects the diversity of the U.S. public we serve, and every person who stands to benefit from our services can do so equally and fairly.

Animal Health

Veterinary Services

As the Nation's recognized animal health leader, Veterinary Services safeguards the health of animals, people, and the environment by:

- Coordinating national animal health emergency preparedness and management, including the National Veterinary Stockpile;
- Ensuring the safe import of animals, animal products, and veterinary biologics and certifying them for export;
- Diagnosing domestic, foreign, and emerging animal diseases;
- Monitoring the health status of livestock and poultry and directing national programs to control and/or eradicate certain animal diseases;
- Developing, implementing, and enforcing standards for safe animal vaccines and performance of diagnostic kits;
- Providing time-critical animal health information and data to address challenges faced by animal producers and stakeholders;
- Managing a national network of laboratories used for testing and emergency response; and
- Collaborating with public health experts on national and global initiatives that address interconnections between animal, human, and environmental health ("One Health").



many expert skills



“APHIS stands as the first line of defense against the spread of foreign animal diseases.”

Increases in global trade, the emergence of zoonotic diseases, and the threat of agroterrorism demand a comprehensive approach to protecting animal and public health. Through its Veterinary Services program, APHIS brings a wealth of skills and expertise to this effort—from global disease surveillance and animal health certification to disease eradication and emergency preparedness.

Monitoring and Surveying for Disease

To protect animal and public health throughout the United States, APHIS continuously monitors the world-wide animal-health environment, analyzing data and trends as they are reported. Our specialists identify potential and emerging animal health threats and take action not only to mitigate the impact on U.S. agriculture, but also—when the threat is zoonotic (transmissible from animals to people)—to protect public health. Further, through our surveillance programs, we determine whether disease is present or not in U.S. livestock herds—information that can help open more foreign export markets.

Safeguarding Against Foreign Animal Diseases

APHIS stands as the first line of defense against the spread of foreign animal diseases—a threat that can be costly to eradicate and cause significant damage to the U.S. economy. Since its inception, APHIS has successfully eradicated several foreign animal diseases from the United States, including exotic Newcastle disease, classical swine fever, and highly pathogenic avian influenza.

Eradicating Domestic Animal Diseases

APHIS' field force provides on-the-ground support in responding to outbreaks among U.S. livestock and poultry. Working together with State, tribal, local, and other Federal officials, they help eradicate domestic diseases such as brucellosis in cattle, low pathogenic avian influenza in poultry, and scrapie in sheep and goats.

Providing World-Class Animal Health Diagnostics, Analysis, and Product Evaluation

With its own laboratories and laboratory network, APHIS is a leader in animal health science and technology. From diagnosing domestic, foreign, and emerging animal diseases and studying the production practices of U.S. producers to ensuring that veterinary biologics available for the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of animals are pure, safe, potent, and effective, our employees develop and apply scientific methods that form the foundation of the Nation's animal health infrastructure.

Facilitating Trade and Opening New Markets

Through the inspection and certification of animals, animal products, and veterinary biologics being shipped into and out of the country, APHIS helps protect both American producers and consumers. Our specialists work closely with producers to certify their exports as pest- and disease-free, while consumers trust APHIS to ensure that imported animals, animal products, and veterinary biologics pose no threat to the United States, our agriculture, or our food supply. At the same time, we work to expand producer access to foreign markets by engaging in direct trade negotiations and harmonization of standards with other nations.

Plant Health

Plant Protection and Quarantine

Plant Protection and Quarantine safeguards U.S. agricultural and natural resources from risks associated with the entry, establishment, or spread of agricultural pests and diseases by:

- Preventing, detecting, managing, and, if possible, eradicating foreign plant pests and diseases in the United States;
- Developing scientifically advanced, environmentally sound methods to respond to plant health threats;
- Collecting and analyzing pest data, both in the United States and overseas, to identify and evaluate pathways for the introduction and movement of invasive plant pests and weeds;
- Partnering with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to prevent the introduction of agricultural pests and diseases through ports of entry; and
- Establishing requirements for and facilitating the safe import and export of agricultural products.



many watchful eyes

“The continuous process of research, analysis, methods development, survey, detection, and response is central to the success of APHIS’ safeguarding activities.”

Through its **Plant Protection and Quarantine** program, APHIS vigilantly protects agriculture and the environment against plant pest and disease threats to ensure a diverse natural ecosystem and an abundant and healthy food supply for all Americans.

Protecting U.S. Agriculture and the Environment From Invasive Pests

An invasive pest is a non-native species whose introduction into the United States could damage the economy, natural resources, or human health. Our highest priority is to protect American agriculture and natural resources from losses attributable to these pests. Our battle occurs on three fronts: first, in the importing country, where we assist trading partners in their pest control efforts to stop the threat at the source; second, at U.S. ports of entry, where we work in partnership with DHS to inspect cargo, live plant shipments, and international passenger baggage, as well as commercial vessels, trucks, aircraft, and railcars, and intercept foreign agricultural pests before they can enter the country; and finally, across our Nation, where we take actions to prevent, detect, identify, manage, and if possible, eradicate invasive pests, while protecting U.S. agricultural resources and the environment from harm.

Facilitating Safe Agricultural Trade

By determining which plants and plant products can be safely imported—and which pose a high risk and should be excluded—our specialists establish regulations and policies that help protect U.S. agriculture and the environment. We use our expertise to help importers

safely move billions of dollars of valuable commodities, including more affordable and more consistently available fruits and vegetables for consumers, into the United States every day. At ports around the country, our experts help DHS inspectors learn to recognize agricultural threats. Our experts also offer scientific advice on handling possible risk to U.S. agriculture, such as potentially infested shipments of imported plant and animal products and the proper disposal of foreign garbage.

Safeguarding Through Science

Safeguarding America’s agriculture and environment requires a continuous flow of information about pests abroad that could threaten our plant resources and the likely pathways through which they could enter and transit the United States. APHIS scientists monitor pest data from around the world and throughout the country to uncover those pathways and develop strategies to both exclude pests before they arrive at our shores and to stop or limit their movement if they enter the country.

Assisting U.S. Farmers and Exporters

APHIS assists American farmers and exporters by providing plant health inspection and certification for plants and plant products being shipped to foreign countries. Required by importing countries, these plant health certificates ensure that products are pest- and disease-free. We also work to expand producer access to foreign markets by engaging in technical trade discussions with other nations.



Biotechnology

Biotechnology Regulatory Services

Through a science-based regulatory framework, Biotechnology Regulatory Services protects against risks to U.S. plant health by:

- Establishing requirements for the safe importation, interstate movement, and environmental release/field testing of certain genetically engineered (GE) organisms;
- Evaluating potential plant pest risks associated with GE organisms;
- Achieving compliance with our biotechnology regulations through a variety of measures, including inspections, educational and outreach efforts, investigations, and audits;
- Removing from oversight GE plants that do not pose a plant pest risk; and
- Working in coordination with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to ensure that the development and testing of biotechnology products occur in a manner that is safe for plants and animals, human health, and the environment.



many safeguards

“APHIS provides oversight of certain GE organisms to protect against plant pest risks to U.S. agriculture and the environment.”

As the world changes and technology advances, so must the strategies for plant protection. From corn that resists insect pests to cotton tolerant to herbicides, new GE organisms are being tested and introduced on an ongoing basis. Through its Biotechnology Regulatory Services program, APHIS ensures that newly developed GE organisms do not pose a risk to U.S. agriculture and the environment.

Protecting Plant Health Through Rigorous Oversight of Newly Developed GE Organisms

Through a comprehensive program of rigorous regulatory oversight, APHIS requires that applicants wanting to move, import, or field test a newly developed GE organism submit detailed information for thorough review by our scientists to assess plant pest risks or potential environmental impacts before the introduction can be allowed. Upon completion of field testing, developers can petition APHIS to determine nonregulated status for a GE organism once they have gathered sufficient information to demonstrate that the new GE variety does not pose a plant pest risk and is safe to be grown in the environment without regulatory oversight. Before APHIS determines nonregulated status, our scientists must conclude that the new GE variety is just as safe for agriculture and the environment as traditionally bred crop varieties.

Since 1987, when we approved the first field trial for GE plants, APHIS has issued more than 36,000 field trial and

movement authorizations and made determinations of nonregulated status in response to petitions for more than 90 GE products. Once APHIS determines that a new GE organism may be moved and planted without our regulatory oversight, and the product also completes any applicable reviews at other Federal agencies, the developer may choose to bring that product to market. Many GE organisms with nonregulated status have entered commercial production, some on a large scale.

Supporting Progress and Quality in Biotechnology

APHIS works continuously to ensure that its GE regulatory system is strong, dynamic, and responsive to the ever-evolving field of biotechnology. Engaging the public and our many stakeholders in agency procedures, decisions, and activities is essential to this work. For example, our science-based review of newly developed GE products includes soliciting public input early in the petition process. This enables us to incorporate feedback in our initial review and enhance the quality of our environmental analyses.

In addition, APHIS offers continuous education and outreach to the regulated community, including the Biotechnology Quality Management System (BQMS) Program. This program offers organizations in biotechnology research and development specific tools and guidance to improve their compliance with APHIS regulations and awareness of regulatory responsibilities.



Global Trade

International Services

International Services provides animal and plant health expertise to protect American agriculture and facilitate safe agricultural trade around the world by:

- Managing cooperative agricultural health programs in other countries to ensure that foreign diseases and pests such as screwworm and Mediterranean fruit fly are not introduced into the United States,
- Providing training and technical support to build global animal and plant health infrastructures,
- Helping establish and promote the use of international animal and plant health standards to prevent the spread of pests and diseases,
- Monitoring and providing epidemiological information on significant animal and plant pests and diseases worldwide,
- Facilitating the entry of shipments containing U.S. agricultural products at foreign ports of entry, and
- Negotiating trade protocols to expand markets for U.S. exporters and ensure a diverse range of agricultural products is available year round for American consumers.



“Working with scientists and officials around the world, we strive to make global agricultural trade safe, predictable, and fair.”

More than ever, we live in an interconnected, truly global economy. That’s why, as recognized experts in the assessment and regulation of risks associated with trade in agricultural products, officials with APHIS’ International Services program collaborate with animal and plant health counterparts throughout the world to mitigate agricultural pest and disease risks that affect them today and could subsequently affect U.S. producers. The stronger our international animal and plant health network is, the safer our international trade will be.

Building Animal and Plant Health Capacity Overseas

Within the larger mission of APHIS, one key goal is to better enable foreign officials to address many of the same animal and plant health issues APHIS works to prevent here in the United States. By partnering with other countries to control animal and plant pests and diseases, we significantly reduce the risk of them being introduced in our country or impacting the free flow of commodities and people across our border. An area of primary focus is cosponsoring cooperative foreign animal and plant pest and disease mitigation and eradication programs to prevent the spread overseas—and reintroduction domestically—of threats already eliminated in the United States.

Minimizing Pest and Disease Risks Offshore

APHIS conducts pest and disease surveillance and risk mitigation activities outside the United States to address the challenges posed by ever-increasing amounts of international travel and trade. In an effort to mitigate the risks of exotic pests and diseases where they originate, rather than after they reach the United States, our officials stationed around the world collaborate with foreign counterparts on surveillance, diagnostics, and control of priority agricultural threats. They address animal and plant pests and diseases of concern, as well

as capacity building needs to help keep the movement of commodities and people safe.

Facilitating Safe Agricultural Trade

Under the terms of prevailing international trade agreements, APHIS is recognized as the primary U.S. agency in charge of animal and plant health issues associated with agricultural trade. In that capacity, the agency facilitates trade by attesting to the health status of U.S. products being exported and negotiating science-based trade agreements with foreign countries. APHIS plays a major role in building and maintaining strong agricultural trade relations between the United States and other countries. Through their close work with foreign governments, APHIS employees stationed abroad are instrumental in protecting existing markets and opening up new markets for agricultural trade worldwide. Providing assistance and information as needed, our officials also become involved when a shipment is detained at a foreign port due to health documentation or pest/disease issues. Additionally, APHIS works hard to reduce non-science-based sanitary and phytosanitary trade restrictions placed on U.S. exports.

Developing International Standards

Through our work with the World Organization for Animal Health, the International Plant Protection Convention, and the Joint Codex Alimentarius Commission, APHIS veterinary and plant health scientists and officials, along with counterparts from around the world, play a crucial role in setting international standards for animal and plant health and food safety. Creating harmonized standards for agricultural trade minimizes trade losses for shippers and encourages exports. These science-based standards are designed to protect the health of consumers, animals, and plants against agricultural pests and diseases while increasing trade opportunities worldwide.



Animal Welfare

Animal Care

Animal Care protects and promotes the welfare of certain warm-blooded animals bred for commercial sale, used in research, transported commercially, or exhibited to the public by:

- Developing acceptable standards of humane care and treatment for animals regulated under the Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act;
- Proactively working to eliminate the soring of horses through inspections, enforcement actions, and outreach efforts;
- Helping regulated entities adhere to Federal standards through inspections, cooperative efforts, outreach initiatives, and, when necessary, enforcement actions; and
- Providing national leadership on the safety and well-being of household pets during disasters.

many caring hands



“APHIS gives protection to millions of animals each year, nationwide.”

For more than 40 years, Congress has entrusted APHIS with the responsibility to ensure the welfare of animals covered under the Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act. Today, through its Animal Care program, APHIS continues to protect millions of animals each year, nationwide.

Ensuring Humane Treatment

Over the years, APHIS has worked to ensure more humane and more healthy conditions for animals by, among other things, establishing exercise requirements for dogs in commercial breeding kennels and ensuring the psychological well-being of nonhuman primates in medical research facilities. APHIS is also working to end soring—the cruel and inhumane practice of applying irritants to a horse’s forelegs to enhance the animal’s gait and score higher in competitive shows. We work with the horse industry to protect against such abuse by ensuring that only sound and healthy horses participate in horse shows, exhibitions, sales, and auctions.

To ensure that regulated animals are receiving humane care and treatment according to Federal standards, APHIS inspectors conduct unannounced inspections at many different types of facilities, including zoos, circuses, marine mammal parks, research facilities, commercial airports, and commercial dog-breeding kennels.

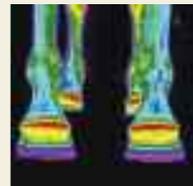
Not Just Meeting, But Exceeding the Standards of Care and Treatment

APHIS’ veterinary medical officers and animal care inspectors are committed to helping licensed and registered

entities not just meet, but exceed the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act. Our employees are well versed in areas such as animal housing, nutrition, and transportation, and we have extensive experience in the care and handling of the animals that come under our regulations. Each year, our specialists participate in dozens of international, national, regional, and local meetings and conferences with stakeholders and members of regulated industries. In a spirit of cooperation, we also offer licensees and registrants informative workshops on various animal welfare topics to help them better understand Federal standards and thus provide more humane care to their animals.

Saving Pets To Save Lives

In the face of emergencies and disasters, many citizens will not evacuate their homes without knowing that their pets will be cared for properly. The safe movement, housing, husbandry, and reunification of household pets with their owners require both logistical and veterinary expertise. That’s why APHIS works closely with other government organizations under the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) National Response Framework to develop an integrated approach to disaster relief for pets. Providing technical expertise as well as planning and coordination support, our animal welfare experts help States and localities prepare to provide for the safety and well-being of pets during disasters. We serve as a powerful planning resource that State and local officials can turn to in advance of a disaster. And during a response, we can often provide a critical injection of manpower and expertise where it’s needed most.



Wildlife Damage Management

Wildlife Services

Wildlife Services provides Federal leadership and expertise to resolve conflicts between people and wildlife and allow them to coexist peacefully by:

- Protecting agriculture;
- Protecting natural resources, including threatened and endangered species;
- Protecting property and infrastructure; and
- Protecting public health and safety.

many solutions



“APHIS acts as a protective buffer between wildlife and people.”

Wildlife is an important public resource highly valued by the American people. By its very nature, however, wildlife is dynamic and mobile—and can damage agricultural and environmental resources and pose risks to human safety and health. APHIS' Wildlife Services program provides leadership in creating a balance that allows people and wildlife to coexist. APHIS' wildlife managers must thoughtfully consider not only the needs of those directly affected by wildlife damage, but also a range of environmental, sociocultural, and economic factors. Our wildlife biologists and technicians provide biologically sound, environmentally safe, socially acceptable, and—whenever possible—nonlethal responses to wildlife conflicts.

Protecting Agricultural Resources

Despite producers' best efforts to protect their livestock and crops, millions of dollars in damage is caused each year by wildlife. APHIS works to reduce this damage by providing producers with both technical and direct management assistance to resolve wildlife conflicts. From recommendations on habitat modification or husbandry practices to reduce the likelihood of wildlife damage to capturing and relocating predators that are preying on livestock, APHIS acts as a protective buffer between wildlife and agriculture

Safeguarding Natural Resources

APHIS works in every State and several U.S. Territories to protect and preserve natural resources, such as wetland habitats, forests, and threatened and endangered species that are vital parts of America's unique landscape. Our scientists and wildlife biologists, partnering with the U.S. Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service, State wildlife management agencies, landowners, and others, help protect more than 100 threatened and endangered plants, birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and insects.

Protecting Property and Infrastructure

Each year, wildlife costs property owners millions of dollars in damage. Through responsible wildlife damage management, APHIS protects homes, lawns, landscaping, golf courses, parks, pets, equipment and machinery, industrial facilities, and other property. APHIS is also frequently called upon to protect urban and rural infrastructure from wildlife threats. Roads, bridges, dams, water drainage systems, and utilities are vulnerable to damage from wildlife such as beaver and birds.

Protecting Public Health and Safety

Unfortunately, wildlife can pose significant threats to public health and safety—from wildlife diseases that can affect domestic animals and humans to birds and animals that collide with aircraft during takeoff and landing. Through a balanced effort involving research and wildlife management, APHIS biologists are creating a protective buffer between wildlife and people. Since 1995, APHIS has been working cooperatively with local, State, and Federal government, universities, and other partners to prevent the further spread of wildlife rabies and eventually eliminate the disease in the United States through an integrated program that involves the use of oral rabies vaccination targeted to wild animals. We are also collaboratively engaged in efforts to reduce populations of feral swine, which already cause over \$1.5 billion in damage annually and carry more than 30 diseases that pose a potential threat to humans, livestock, and wildlife. And to help prevent potentially dangerous interactions between wildlife and aircraft, APHIS biologists provide airport operators across the Nation with advice and recommendations on how to keep runways and flight paths clear of wildlife.

Emergency Response

APHIS coordinates emergency response efforts that protect the health and value of U.S. agricultural, natural, and other resources. This work includes:

- Operating and maintaining the state-of-the-art APHIS Emergency Operations Center;
- Monitoring threats to U.S. agriculture and food sectors;
- Coordinating with DHS and other Federal and State emergency management entities;
- Collecting and disseminating agricultural information, technology, and expertise relating to terrorism and homeland security;
- Developing strategies and policies for effective incident management;
- Coordinating and directing animal and plant health emergency incident response efforts;
- Providing support during all-hazards emergencies; and
- Conducting training exercises to ensure personnel are ready for emergency response work.



many responsibilities

“When a disaster strikes, APHIS is prepared to respond.”

When a disaster strikes, APHIS is prepared to respond. From agricultural pest and disease outbreaks to natural disasters like hurricanes and floods to threats of agro-terrorism, APHIS has the expertise and the infrastructure necessary to protect animals, plants, natural resources, and people.

Combating Pests and Diseases

As the lead national agency for animal and plant emergencies, APHIS has developed and implemented a science-based framework designed to provide optimum protection against pests and diseases. Based on FEMA’s National Response Framework, our activities are organized around the principles of prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. Before an emergency, we work diligently to ensure that our emergency management plans, procedures, and training are current with the highest national and international standards. During an emergency, we coordinate actions with other Federal, State, and local entities to contain, control, or eradicate the pest or disease. And following an emergency, we provide long-term stability and protection from pest or disease recurrence through the implementation of regulations, education about best management and biosecurity practices, and support for restoration.

Supporting “All Hazards” Emergencies

Under Emergency Support Function #11 of FEMA’s National Response Framework, APHIS is tasked with a key role in responding to emergency incidents—including “all hazards” emergencies that may be unrelated to outbreaks of animal and plant pests and diseases. The unique skills of APHIS employees, coupled with our vast networks of diagnostic and research laboratories, veterinary stockpiles, and other assets, make us valuable partners in responding to a wide range of emergencies—from recovering and protecting wildlife impacted by an environmental disaster, such as an oil spill, to providing food to animals stranded by blizzards, hurricanes, or other natural disasters, to assisting States and localities with the evacuation of pets, and therefore residents, in disaster-stricken areas.

Partnering for Success

The key to effective emergency response is a strong network of people trained and prepared to respond. We work in close partnership with national and international animal, plant, and public health protection organizations; Federal, State, tribal, and local governments; universities; industries; and private entities to develop strategies and policies for effective incident management and to coordinate incident responses.



Sound Science

APHIS develops and applies scientific methods to benefit agricultural producers and consumers, protect the health of domestic animal and plant resources, sustain agricultural ecosystems, and promote animal welfare by:

- Identifying and analyzing pest and disease pathways,
- Conducting diagnostic testing,
- Developing and adapting technologies,
- Conducting risk assessments, and
- Serving as a leader and resource in agricultural science and best practices.

many advanced facilities



“APHIS keeps America on the cutting edge of agricultural science.”

With an extensive network of laboratories and research facilities, APHIS draws from among the most advanced and specialized scientific resources available today.

Advancing the Science of Safeguarding

APHIS relies on the unique skills of its highly trained staff—as well as its unmatched access to the most advanced technical resources—for the benefit of U.S. agriculture, producers, and consumers. From our work on biocontrol techniques to wildlife fertility management and molecular diagnostics, APHIS keeps America on the cutting edge of agricultural science.

APHIS' scientific facilities include the:

- **Center for Plant Health Science and Technology**, where scientists evaluate risks associated with the introduction of plant pests and develop methods to exclude, detect, and manage invasive plant pests and weeds;
- **Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health**, where multidisciplinary specialists track emerging animal health threats, monitor U.S. livestock management and production, design comprehensive animal health surveillance programs, and conduct risk assessments to identify situations that could impact the health of U.S. animal agriculture;
- **National Wildlife Research Center**, the world's only research center devoted entirely to the development of methods for effective wildlife damage management;

- **National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL)**, the Nation's premier animal health diagnostic laboratory and World Animal Health Organization reference laboratories for animal diseases of importance;
- **Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory**, a high-security biocontainment facility, part of the NVSL, where experts diagnose and develop tests for foreign animal diseases that threaten U.S. animal agriculture, as well as maintain forensic capabilities that can be used in the event of potential bioterrorist releases;
- **National Animal Health Laboratory Network**, an extensive and integrated system of Federal, State, and university laboratories, led by NVSL, that provide animal disease diagnostic services in both routine and emergency situations, including bioterrorism events;
- **Center for Veterinary Biologics**, the Nation's sole laboratory involved in the testing and regulation of commercial veterinary biologics (vaccines and diagnostic kits) in the United States; and
- **Center for Animal Welfare**, where APHIS specialists collaborate with a diverse network of external partners and experts to serve as a national and international resource for animal welfare science, training, education, and policy strategy.





many opportunities ahead

Many goals. One mission. Even as the challenges and responsibilities have grown for APHIS and its employees, our mission has not changed—it's only become more important.

APHIS' overarching goal is a healthy and profitable American agricultural sector that can feed and clothe the world while providing the basis for a thriving U.S. economy. Today, fulfilling this mission means many things. It means ensuring the health of our animal and plant resources both at home and as they move through the global marketplace. Guarding against the introduction or re-emergence of animal and plant pests and diseases that could limit agricultural production and damage export markets. Collaborating with public health partners to mitigate the impact of zoonotic diseases. Monitoring and responding to potential acts of agricultural bioterrorism, as well as to invasive species, disease outbreaks, and conflicts between people and wildlife. It means eliminating trade barriers and ensuring the humane treatment of animals. And it means making sure that biotechnology-derived agricultural products are safe for release into the environment.

As our Nation's agricultural needs and complexities multiply in the years and decades ahead, it's the goal of APHIS to adapt proactively as new challenges occur. Our experienced cadre of scientists, veterinarians, biologists, and other professionals are better prepared than ever to protect America's agricultural and natural resources well into the 21st century and beyond. And in serving the American public, APHIS will constantly strive to improve and deliver our services in a way that is cheaper, faster, and more effective for American agriculture, farmers and ranchers, and the public.

That's our goal, our mission...and our promise.



United States Department of Agriculture

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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