



Animal and Plant  
Health Inspection  
Service

Office of the  
Administrator

1400 Independence  
Avenue SW  
Washington, DC  
20250

January 30, 2015

Dear Stakeholders:

The start of a new year is a good time to take stock of priorities and set new goals. In keeping with that tradition, I'm pleased to share [APHIS' Strategic Plan for 2015-2019](#). While the plan serves as an important internal guidance document, it's also relevant for you, our valued and important customers and stakeholders who are interested in the overarching direction of the Agency and the driving forces at play in our decision making.

Looking ahead to the next 5 years, I have two core beliefs about our mission. One is that healthy and profitable agriculture is good for America; it provides food and clothing for countless people worldwide and is a key pillar to a thriving economy. My second belief is that Government's role is to do collectively what no one of us can do for ourselves. You may have heard me talk about these core beliefs before; they are the foundation that will guide us as we adapt to changes in the world around us and strive to deliver the most value to our stakeholders, partners, and the American public.

Increasingly, APHIS will seek innovative alternatives to rulemaking to achieve our goals—strategically utilizing regulations as one tool rather than the only tool in ensuring agriculture stays healthy and vulnerable animals are protected. We are developing better, faster business processes to improve our customers' experience and deliver services more cheaply and effectively. We are also harnessing information technology solutions to make services and information available to our customers electronically and to find cost savings. Continued proactive communications with you will ensure that those who have an interest in our mission receive timely, accurate information about the Agency's programs and are able to provide perspectives to better inform our decision making. Our decisions will be data-driven and evidence-based.

To accomplish our mission, we have outlined 7 goals that articulate the Agency's priorities:

**Goal 1** Prevent the entry and spread of agricultural pests and diseases.

**Goal 2** Ensure the humane treatment and care of vulnerable animals.

**Goal 3** Protect forests, urban landscapes, rangelands and other natural resources, as well as private working lands from harmful pests and diseases.

**Goal 4** Ensure the safety, purity, and effectiveness of veterinary biologics and protect plant health by optimizing our oversight of genetically engineered (GE) organisms.

**Goal 5** Ensure the safe trade of agricultural products, creating export opportunities for U.S. producers.

**Goal 6** Protect the health of U.S. agricultural resources, including addressing zoonotic disease issues and incidences, by implementing surveillance, preparedness and response, and control programs.

**Goal 7** Create an APHIS for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century that is high-performing, efficient, adaptable, and embraces civil rights.

For each goal, we have identified objectives and tactics to achieve success. With this plan, we've tried to be clear about what we want to accomplish and how we're going to get there. The reality is agricultural production practices, global trading patterns, and pest and disease threats will always be changing, but our core objective remains unchanged. It is simple but vital: to safeguard American agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin Shea".

Kevin Shea  
APHIS Administrator