



Animal and Plant
Health Inspection
Service

February 18, 2020

Animal Care
4700 River Road
Riverdale, MD 20737

Dear Licensee and/or Registrant,

We are contacting you because you are currently, or have previously been, licensed or registered with the USDA under the Animal Welfare Act (AWA). Based on recent legislation, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) Animal Care is expanding the information that is currently available through our public search tool, and we want to ensure you have accurate information about these changes.

What will change? Since 2017, people using Animal Care's searchable database have not been able to search by name or license number to find inspection reports for facilities that operate a homestead business or out of a home. This is so because at that time, these records were removed to address potential privacy concerns. Most of the documents that were removed were reposted within weeks, however certain inspection reports were deemed to contain private information and were therefore not reposted or were heavily redacted. This letter is to inform you that on February 18, 2020, Animal Care will repost all the unredacted inspection reports, animal inventories, and Annual Reports from Research Facilities from January 30, 2014 to January 30, 2017 that were on our website on January 30, 2017 and will remove any redactions from inspection reports from January 30, 2017 to December 20, 2019 (with the exception of signatures), as required by law. This means information such as your name, address, and inspection findings (including any non-compliant items) during these dates will now be available on APHIS' searchable database.

Also, within 60 days APHIS will post records without redactions (except signatures) generated since the legislation was passed and continue hereafter. These records will include AWA inspection reports (including any non-compliant items), animal inventories, teachable moments, and final AWA and Horse Protections Act enforcement records. Within six months of receipt, APHIS will also post final Annual Reports and attachments from Research Facilities with appropriate redaction for confidential business information. All these records will remain available for a period of three years from posting.

Why is this changing? In December 2019 Congress passed a law to fund the Federal government through September 30, 2020 (Public Law Number 116-44). In addition to funding the government, the law contained requirements regarding the Animal Welfare Act. The legislation (Section 788) requires our Agency to "restore on its website the searchable database and its contents that were available on January 30, 2017, and all content generated since that date," and to do so "notwithstanding any other provision of law." This legislation also required APHIS to post these and additional records "after enactment of this Act for a subsequent period of three years". You can access the new law at https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/H1865PLT_44.PDF.

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please call 970-494-7497. Please note that if you have, or have had, more than one license or registration with the USDA, you may receive this letter multiple times.

Sincerely,

Dr. Betty Goldentyer
Deputy Administrator
Animal Care