



News for Stakeholders

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A Look at the Numbers—Foreign Animal Disease Investigations Over the Years

As the primary Agency in the country responsible for safeguarding animal health, our veterinarians are often asked about the number of foreign animal disease (FAD) investigations that APHIS conducts each year. To better answer this question, we did some research and found that in the past 15 years, APHIS and our State collaborators have conducted more than 7,600 FAD investigations ranging from a yearly low of 254 investigations in 1997 to a high of 1,013 investigations in 2004 due to an outbreak of vesicular stomatitis virus (VSV).

The reality is that in most of these years, only a small fraction of investigations resulted in the confirmation of actual emerging diseases or FADs. Our National Veterinary Services Laboratories in Ames, IA, and Plum Island, NY, working with State and university laboratories in the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN), determine which suspect illnesses constitute a threat to U.S. animal health.

From 2005 to 2011, our analysts took a more in-depth look at the numbers. For a breakdown of the FAD investigations by year and their findings, [click here](#). 2005 stands out due to another outbreak of VSV, which resulted in 995 FAD investigations of which 445 were positive for VSV. Otherwise, from 2006 to 2011, APHIS confirmed 36 FADs out of 2,154 total investigations.

The emerging diseases or FADs detected in these years were VSV, white spot syndrome virus in shrimp, screw-worm in imported dogs, rabbit hemorrhagic disease, wildebeest-associated malignant catarrhal fever, equine piroplasmiasis, and contagious equine metritis. Regardless of the year, the presence of vesicular lesions was the number one trigger for an FAD investigation.

APHIS and our State animal health collaborators successfully addressed all of these FAD detections, coordinating the necessary response while providing regular updates to interested stakeholders. For more information about APHIS' animal health emergency response capabilities, [click here](#).



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FAD Investigations from 2007-2011

