Strategic Plan
National Animal Health Surveillance System

Introduction

The USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services (VS) has the expertise and infrastructure to work in collaboration with animal[*] health and production industries, universities, and State and federal partners to systematically collect, collate and analyze animal health data and promptly disseminate vital information to those who might take action. Veterinary Services' infrastructure, expertise and partnerships are essential to effectively respond to the agency's strategic plans, the Animal Health Safeguarding Review, the Animal Health Protection Act, and the Homeland Security Presidential Directive - 9 (HSPD-9). Veterinary Services is positioned to assume the role of leader and coordinator in building a National Animal Health Surveillance System (NAHSS).

The NAHSS will develop alliances and partnerships with multiple government and private entities, aimed at protecting animal health, veterinary public health, social welfare and food security associated with animal populations. The surveillance system must incorporate science-based approaches for early detection of emerging and introduced diseases, monitoring animal health trends and assessing risk, in order to maintain and enhance welfare, productivity and economic viability of animals and animal-related industries in the U.S.

The transition from current surveillance activities to a comprehensive, coordinated and integrated NAHSS will require institutional and cultural changes in both Veterinary Services and the animal health community. Movement must be made from conducting compartmentalized surveillance efforts surrounding one disease, to viewing animal disease surveillance as an overall system. This complex undertaking will require development and integration of many activities and partnerships. New methods and approaches need to be designed, evaluated and implemented. Although consequences of inadequate surveillance could be catastrophic, the resources to carry out surveillance activities are not unlimited and have to be judiciously and efficiently allocated.

Overall goal

The goal of the NAHSS is to establish and maintain the expertise and infrastructure for early detection and global risk surveillance for foreign and emerging diseases; evaluation and enhancement of surveillance for current disease control and eradication programs; monitoring of disease trends and threats to animal and veterinary public health in the U.S. and other countries; assessment of risk; and timely dissemination of animal health information, especially to those partners obligated to respond. The NAHSS will contribute to the establishment, improvement and maintenance of animal health,

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[*] As defined by the Animal Health Protection Act to mean any member of the animal kingdom, except humans.

veterinary public health and associated food safety and environmental health systems. The NAHSS, as one of many components both within and outside of agriculture working closely with the Department of Homeland Security, will improve the ability to detect bio-threats amidst the background noise of bio-events.

Purpose

This strategic plan provides the framework to set priorities and create a roadmap for the transformation of current and development of future surveillance activities into the NAHSS which will assure greater protection from endemic, emerging and foreign animal diseases to our nation's animal populations. The plan will emphasize the necessary links to other surveillance efforts including those outlined in HSPD-9 and those identified in existing veterinary public health and food safety surveillance systems. Surveillance by definition implies that action will be taken when a pre-defined threshold of disease incidence is exceeded. All goals, objectives and actions identified in this plan will consider and be linked where appropriate with disease eradication, control program and emergency management response plans. The plan will be updated and modified as needed and as new features of the NAHSS are contemplated, evaluated, and implemented.

The following table delineates the current objectives for each of the four NAHSS goals: early detection and global risk surveillance for foreign animal and emerging diseases, enhanced surveillance for current "program diseases", and monitoring and surveillance for diseases of major impact on production and marketing. In the appendices, each of the goals' objectives are specifically identified with proposed actions and projected target dates for completion. This document is dynamic in nature to allow flexibility for updates, amendments, and expansion as new objectives are ascertained.

		Goals (4):			
		Early detection and global risk surveillance of:		Enhanced surveillance for current "program diseases"	Monitoring and surveillance for diseases of major impact on production and marketing
	Objectives (12):	**Foreign Animal Disease**	**Emerging Diseases**		
1	Coordinate and collaborate on design and implementation of disease surveillance (using standardized process)	X	X	X	
2	Develop standards, quality control, and performance metrics for current and future surveillance systems	X	X	X	X
3	Encourage the development and application of new technologies for early and rapid disease detection and data analysis	X	X	X	
4	Support and perform data capture, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination (using standardized methods)	X	X	X	X
5	Develop domestic and global surveillance to detect and identify elevated risks for specified diseases and support response activities	X	X	X	
6	Establish and maintain a disease surveillance capability inventory to facilitate analysis of gaps in surveillance and surveillance systems integration	X	X	X	
7	Enhance collaboration with domestic and international sources of disease surveillance information	X	X		
8	Develop reporting systems and reports for surveillance information dissemination	X	X		
9	Identify regulatory limitations for conducting surveillance	X	X		
10	Contribute to animal disease awareness education for producers and practitioners	X	X	X	X
11	Coordinate and collaborate on monitoring animal health and production trends				X
12	Evaluate and design rigorous scientific methods to assess progress in disease prevention, control, and eradication programs			X	