

# The National Animal Health Reporting System

## What is NAHRS?

The importance of export sales to U.S. animal agriculture industries has increased greatly and is expected to continue to grow. A legitimate concern of importing countries is the risk of introducing new animal diseases. These concerns can be lessened by providing credible, accurate data on the status of animal diseases in U.S. livestock, poultry, and aquaculture.

To maintain and expand our existing trade markets, as well as open new ones, the United States must provide valid animal health information to other countries, especially since the United States demands verification of animal health status claims from other countries. In addition, U.S. trade representatives need credible information when negotiating favorable agreements.

The National Animal Health Reporting System (NAHRS) provides credible animal health data that meet monitoring and surveillance requirements. With the NAHRS in place, U.S. representatives can assure foreign representatives of systematic animal health monitoring in U.S. livestock, commercial poultry, and commercial aquaculture.

## How does NAHRS work?

The NAHRS compiles data on the presence of Office International des Epizooties (OIE) List A and B diseases. These diseases have been determined internationally to be of significant importance in the trade of animals and animal products, and to have potential socioeconomic or public health consequences. The U.S., like other nations, has reported animal disease information to the OIE for many years. However, in the past, U.S. data collection methods have not been systematic and thorough, and accuracy of the data has been challenged.

The NAHRS data are voluntarily reported by the Chief Animal Health Official (State Veterinarian) of participating States and Territories. State Veterinarians are encouraged to gather information from as many sources as possible within their local authority and infrastructure. Defined reporting criteria are used to determine the presence of disease in cattle, sheep, goats, equids, swine, commercial poultry, and commercial food fish.

NAHRS can help provide information that our trade spokesmen need to do their jobs effectively, while satisfying our trade partners that the U.S. knows what's going on with the health of its livestock animals.

Dr. Bruce L. Akey,  
Co-Chairman, Joint USAHA/AAVLD Committee  
on Animal Health Information Systems

## Who has access to NAHRS data and how will the data be used?

States and Territories reporting disease information to the NAHRS indicate only the presence of disease. The NAHRS is not given any individual producer identification, nor the location of affected animals within any State or Territory. The NAHRS annual summary shows only the presence of disease for the country. Information from the summary is used to complete the OIE reports, to support trade negotiations, and to make local and national animal health program decisions.

## What does NAHRS need from you?

The United States maintains very strict requirements for other countries regarding animal health status, and we must be able to demonstrate similar animal health monitoring and surveillance within our borders. Reporting credibility is especially important to the United States, in view of our open publication practices and the worldwide accessibility of scientific and lay journals. Having accurate disease information available from one official source will help reopen markets which have been unfairly closed to U.S. animal agriculture industries, expand trade, and create strong local animal health networks.

**For the NAHRS to be viewed as credible**, all States and Territories **must** participate with the full support of their related animal agriculture industries.

The livestock, poultry, and aquaculture industries need reliable documentation of their animal health status for both trade negotiations and to address domestic situations as quickly as possible.

Dr. Beth Lautner,  
National Pork Board

I would encourage all States to participate in this program. Only if all of us are actively engaged in this system can we assure our trading partners of the excellent animal health system we have in the United States.

Dr. Richard Breitmeyer,  
California State Veterinarian

### NAHRS is a joint project:

- United States Animal Health Association (USAHA)
- American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD), and
- United States Department of Agriculture – Animal Plant Health Inspection Service –

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



**For more information:**  
NAHRS Coordinator  
USDA:APHIS:VS:CEAH  
NRR Building B, M.S. 2E7  
2150 Centre Avenue  
Fort Collins, CO 80526-8117  
(970) 494-7246  
E-mail: [national.surveillance.unit@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:national.surveillance.unit@aphis.usda.gov)

# NAHRS

*The National Animal Health Reporting System*