

NSU's Comprehensive National Animal Health Surveillance Inventory

A comprehensive surveillance system is the foundation of all future animal health outbreak response, endemic disease control, quality assurance initiatives, and marketing. These issues are vital to the health of our Nation and, therefore, must be addressed at a national level.

The goals of the National Animal Health Surveillance System (NAHSS) are to

- Establish a comprehensive, fully integrated surveillance system capable of rapidly detecting foreign and emerging diseases,
- Assess progress in disease prevention, control, and eradication programs,
- Enhance surveillance for current program diseases,
- Conduct surveillance for diseases affecting the marketability or economics of livestock and poultry industries, and
- Provide timely and accurate animal health information.

As a first step toward creating such a system, the NAHSS steering committee requested a searchable inventory of existing animal health surveillance data resources. Veterinary Services' National Surveillance Unit is developing a Comprehensive Animal Health Surveillance Inventory database to facilitate efficient searches and summaries of animal health surveillance. The database is being organized initially by surveillance point (e.g., first-point testing or slaughter testing) and uses general search categories such as disease, surveillance point, or species. In the long term, the database will be expanded to include data that are more difficult to categorize by surveillance point but still provide valuable information for national animal health surveillance. Once established, the database will be a useful tool for searching a broad range of animal health surveillance data and information resources.

The Comprehensive Animal Health Surveillance Inventory Project is one of several tools currently under development that will be critical in the strategic planning and prioritizing efforts of NAHSS.