

Foreword

I am pleased to introduce the 2007 United States Animal Health Report. This is the fourth annual report produced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) on the status of animal health in the United States.

The report includes updates on new and existing programs, conducted by APHIS' Veterinary Services (VS) staff, that seek to maintain healthy livestock, poultry, and aquaculture populations. In addition, the report presents information about emergency management efforts, highlights key epidemiological events of 2007, and provides an overview of the Nation's animal health surveillance activities.

Throughout the report, we present updates on activities and events that reflect the VS program mission, which is to protect animal health and facilitate safe agricultural trade. This year we devote Chapter 1 to a number of strategic areas specific to the VS mission, including emergency planning and preparedness; avian influenza surveillance; aquatic health; national animal identification; and comprehensive, integrated animal-health surveillance. In addition, Chapter 1 covers some of the significant animal health and epidemiological events that occurred in 2007.

Chapters 2, 3, and 4 provide comprehensive information about how VS is working to carry out the goals of the National Animal Health Surveillance System. Chapter 2 describes early detection and global risk surveillance for foreign and emerging diseases. Chapter 3 covers animal disease eradication programs as well as control and certification programs, and Chapter 4 describes monitoring and surveillance for other diseases that affect production and marketing.

A new addition this year is a chapter devoted to animal health diagnostics and veterinary biologics (Chapter 5) to describe in detail these fundamental components of the VS infrastructure and how they enhance animal health in the United States. As in previous reports, we include an overview of the

U.S. livestock, poultry, and aquaculture industries (Chapter 6), as well as information on the ever-changing landscape of U.S. trade in animals and animal products (Chapter 7). Chapter 8 highlights some of the programs and efforts essential to the VS mission, including the National Veterinary Accreditation Program; VS information technology and data systems; and, important tools, methods, and models that VS has developed to improve our efficiency.

Expanding international and domestic collaborative efforts and capacity-building activities is essential to our VS mission. The changing global environment and increasing potential for disease spread have highlighted the need to look beyond our borders to protect the health of U.S. animals. Chapter 9 looks at some of these important partnerships, activities, and efforts that are underway both overseas and throughout our nation. We in VS, and APHIS employees in other units, are proud of the numerous training, education, and outreach programs in place throughout the world to protect animal and human health.

The 2007 Animal Health Report is intended to offer an in-depth look at the status of USDA programs and strategies that help ensure the health of U.S. livestock, poultry, and aquaculture. I believe you will find it a useful animal-health information guide, and I invite and welcome your comments and ideas for future reports. Information on how to provide feedback and contact details are on the inside front cover.

—John Clifford
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