TEXAS ANIMAL HEALTH COMMISSION

2009 – 2013 AGENCY STRATEGIC PLAN

As of
June 27, 2008

Commissioner	Dates of Term	Hometown
Ernie Morales (Chair)	09-06-2011	Devine
Rita Baca	09-06-2009	El Paso
Randy C. Brown	09-06-2013	Lubbock
Reta K. Dyess	09-06-2011	Jacksonville
William Edmiston, Jr., D.V.M.	09-06-2013	Eldorado
Ken Jordan	09-06-2013	San Saba
Thomas G. Kezar	09-06-2011	Dripping Springs
Coleman Hudgins Locke	09-06-2009	Wharton
Charles E. Real	09-06-2013	Marion
Ralph Simmons	09-06-2009	Center
Mike Vickers, D.V.M.	09-06-2011	Falfurrias
Mark A. Wheelis	09-06-2013	Victoria
R.W. “Dick” Winters, Jr.	09-06-2013	Brady

AGENCY STRATEGIC PLAN

FOR THE FISCAL YEARS 2009-2013 PERIOD

BY

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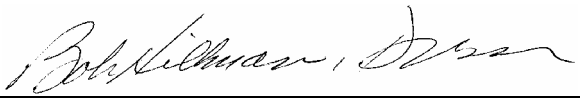
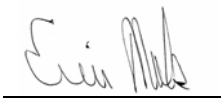
JUNE 27, 2008

SIGNED: 

Bob Hillman, D.V.M., Executive Director

APPROVED: 

Ernie Morales, Commission Chair

TEXAS ANIMAL HEALTH COMMISSION
Strategic Plan, Fiscal Years 2009 – 2013

Table of Contents

Pathway to Prosperity: Statewide Vision, Mission, and Philosophy

Statewide Vision

March 2008

Fellow Public Servants:

The old adage remains true: If you fail to plan, you plan to fail. So, in leading our state, we will apply strategic planning with an eye to future opportunity and prosperity. We must always be willing to critically reexamine the role of Texas State Government and assess the efficiency of its operations. This document specifies our mission and priorities, reflecting my philosophy of limited government and my belief in personal responsibility. Please use it as your agency prepares its Strategic Plan. In a properly-limited government, everything must be done with maximum efficiency and overriding fairness. Our first question should always be "what is best for the people of Texas?"

Throughout the strategic planning process and the next legislative session, policymakers will work to address our state's priorities and agencies will be asked for detailed information. I encourage you to provide not only open and complete information, but also offer your innovative ideas about how better to deliver government services.

Working together, I know we can address the priorities of our citizens. As my administration works to create greater opportunity and prosperity for our citizens, making our state and its people truly competitive in the global marketplace, we must remain focused on the following critical priorities:

> *Assuring open access to an educational system that not only guarantees the basic core knowledge necessary for productive citizens but also emphasizes excellence and accountability in all academic and intellectual undertakings;*
>
> *Creating and retaining job opportunities and building a stronger economy to secure Texas' global competitiveness, leading our people and a stable source of funding for core priorities;*
>
> *Protecting and preserving the health, safety, and well-being of our citizens by ensuring healthcare is accessible and affordable and by safeguarding our neighborhoods and communities from those who intend us harm; and*
>
> *Providing disciplined, principled government that invests public funds wisely and efficiently.*

I appreciate your commitment to excellence in public service and look forward to the outcome of this necessarily rigorous process.

RICK PERRY, GOVERNOR

Statewide Mission

Texas State Government must be limited, efficient, and completely accountable. It should foster opportunity and economic prosperity, focus on critical priorities, and support the creation of strong family environments for our children. The stewards of the public trust must be men and women who administer state government in a fair, just and responsible manner. To honor the public trust, state officials must seek new and innovative ways to meet state government priorities in a fiscally responsible manner.

AIM HIGH…WE ARE NOT HERE TO ACHIEVE INCONSEQUENTIAL THINGS!

Statewide Philosophy

The task before all state public servants is to govern in a manner worthy of this great state. We are a great enterprise, and as an enterprise, we will promote the following core principles:

- First and foremost, Texas matters most. This is the overarching, guiding principle by which we will make decisions. Our state, and its future, is more important than party, politics, or individual recognition.

- Government should be limited in size and mission, but it must be highly effective in performing the tasks it undertakes.

- Decisions affecting individual Texans, in most instances, are best made by those individuals, their families, and the local government closest to their communities.

- Competition is the greatest incentive for achievement and excellence. It inspires ingenuity and requires individuals to set their sights high. Just as competition inspires excellence, a sense of personal responsibility drives individual citizens to do more for their future and the future of those they love.

- Public administration must be open and honest, pursuing the high road rather than the expedient course. We must be accountable to taxpayers for our actions.

- State government has a responsibility to safeguard taxpayer dollars by eliminating waste and abuse, and providing efficient and honest government.

- Finally, state government should be humble, recognizing that all its power and authority is granted to it by the people of Texas, and those who make decisions wielding the power of the state should exercise their authority cautiously and fairly.

Statewide Goals and Benchmarks

Natural Resources and Agriculture

To conserve and protect our state's natural resources (air, water, land, wildlife, and mineral resources) by:

- Providing leadership and policy guidance for state, federal, and local initiatives;
- To maintain Texas' status as a leader in agriculture; and
- Encouraging responsible, sustainable economic development.

Benchmarks:

- Percent of regulatory permits processed while ensuring appropriate public input
- Number of animal disease outbreaks
- Number of food safety incidents from farm to fork
- Number of family farms
- Average time required in responding to natural disasters such as wildfires and hurricanes
- Percent contribution of agricultural sector to the gross state product

Economic Development

To provide an attractive economic climate for current and emerging industries that fosters economic opportunity, job creation, capital investment, and infrastructure development by:

- Promoting a favorable and fair system to fund necessary state services;
- Addressing transportation needs;
- Promoting a favorable business climate; and
- Developing a well trained, educated, and productive workforce.

Benchmark:

- Per capita gross state product

The Texas Animal Health Commission is dedicated to protecting the health of Texas livestock, poultry, and nontraditional livestock and fowl. By promoting productivity and assuring continued marketability for Texas animal agriculture, TAHC shares in the statewide priority goals of conserving the state's environment and fostering economic opportunity.

Texas Animal Health Commission Vision, Mission, and Philosophy

TAHC Vision

Through the cooperative efforts of the Texas Animal Health Commission, animal producers, and allied industry groups, the animal population of Texas is healthy and secure.

TAHC Mission

The mission of the Texas Animal Health Commission is:

- to protect the animal industry from, and/or mitigate the effects of domestic, foreign and emerging diseases;
- to increase the marketability of Texas livestock commodities at the state, national, and international level;
- to promote and ensure animal health and productivity;
- to protect human health from animal diseases and conditions that are transmissible to people; and
- to prepare for and respond to emergency situations involving animals

by conducting agency business in a responsive, cooperative, and transparent manner.

TAHC Philosophy

The Texas Animal Health Commission will carry out its mission with honesty, openness, and efficiency. We will use the best available resources, technology, and trained personnel to achieve the agency goals. We will listen to and respect the opinions and concerns of the people of Texas. We will encourage and promote open communication between all parties. We will strive to continuously develop new, or enhance existing relationships, among government, industry, and private citizens to realize our vision of a healthy and secure animal population in Texas.

External/Internal Assessment

I. Overview of the Agency Scope and Functions

Agency Overview

In 1893 the Texas Legislature established the Texas Livestock Sanitary Commission to fight the tick fever epidemic which at that time had threatened to cripple the state's economy. In 1959 the agency was renamed the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC). Over time, the Legislature has expanded TAHC's jurisdiction and animal health responsibilities beyond cattle. The list of animal health programs and diseases that TAHC is tasked to control continues to expand. Today, TAHC works to prevent, control, and eradicate disease in Texas livestock, exotic livestock, domestic fowl, and exotic fowl and its mission includes:

- protecting livestock and fowl from domestic, foreign, and emerging animal diseases;
- increasing the marketability of Texas livestock commodities worldwide;
- promoting and ensuring animal health and productivity;
- protecting human health from animal disease and conditions that are transmissible to people; and
- preparing for and responding to emergencies involving animals.

An increased awareness of the threat of agroterrorism attack, as well as the impact of natural disasters on animals, has expanded the agency's role in emergency management. The Governor added TAHC to the State Emergency Management Council in 2001 and to the Homeland Security Council in 2005. Because of the agency's expertise in animal health, the State Coordinator of the Governor's Division of Emergency Management designated TAHC as the state's lead agency for all animal issues involving emergencies – whether man-made disasters, acts of agroterrorism, or naturally occurring animal disease outbreaks. TAHC is specifically mentioned in the Texas Homeland Security Strategic Plan as a key agency to support the plan's object number 2 – to reduce vulnerability – by addressing disease monitoring, biological incidents, threat reporting, disease introduction, and laboratory analysis as they relate to Texas animal populations. The agency is also tasked to assist local jurisdictions in preparing for, responding to, recovering from, and mitigating against emergencies affecting animals and/or people.

Animal agriculture is critical to economic prosperity in Texas. As published in USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) report titled *2006 Texas Agriculture Statistics*, the value of Texas live animal and meat exports in 2006 was approximately $421.1 million with an additional $314.8 million in hides and skins. NASS reported $11.06 billion as the value of Texas cattle and calves, $153.4 million for goats, $113.4 million for sheep and lambs. Additionally, NASS reported $69.75 million as the value of all hogs in Texas, $72 million for chickens, $253.6 million for eggs, and $1.265 billion for commercial broilers. Texas ranked first nationally in:

- Cattle production – 14 million cattle and calves and 5.775 million feeder cattle
- Sheep production – 1.070 million sheep and lambs
- Goat production – 1.3 million goats
- Wool production – 4.9 million pounds

Additionally, Texas ranked third in hides and skins production, third in animal fats production, fourth in live animals and meat production, sixth in poultry production, eighth in dairy and milk production, and fourteenth in swine production. Although the NASS report does not provide statistics for exotic hoof stock production, or equine production, Texas is a national leader in production of those two groups as well.

As Texas hones its competitiveness in the global food market, TAHC programs support animal agriculture, focusing on the control and eradication of domestic diseases such as brucellosis, tuberculosis, and Aujesky's disease/pseudorabies and ensuring the basic infrastructure is in place to reduce the risk of newly emerging diseases, foreign animal diseases, exotic pests, and ectoparasites.

Texas has unique risks associated with its size and borders. A total of eight states share a border with Texas – four US states and four Mexican states. The Texas-Mexico shared border is approximately 1,248 miles in length. In addition, Texas has multiple land ports, sea ports, and international airports. Texas also imports more live animals than any other state, including approximately one million cattle per year from Mexico and approximately two and one half million cattle from other US states. Texas producers maintain within their inventories approximately fifteen percent of the national herd supplying approximately one third of the US supply of beef.

TAHC maintains a team of highly trained veterinarians, veterinary epidemiologists, inspectors, and a network of State-Federal Diagnostic Laboratories. TAHC works cooperatively with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and its subsidiary branches - Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and Veterinary Services (VS). TAHC and USDA employees work cooperatively in either leadership or assistance capacities working side by side in a seamless working relationship for most disease and animal health emergency programs.

Veterinarians and veterinary epidemiologists oversee the diagnosis, control, and elimination of diseases and assure appropriate tracing of the movement of exposed or infected animals to determine the origin of infection and minimize the transmission of disease. Animal disease surveillance is supported by the network of laboratories which are strategically located in the state.

Key Agency Functions

Six key functions of the agency in addressing animal diseases and parasites and emergency management are: (1) Prevention, (2) Surveillance, (3) Diagnosis, (4) Control, (5) Eradication, and (6) Emergency Management/Homeland Security.

Prevention

Preventing introduction or reintroduction of diseases through establishing and enforcing testing and certification requirements for entry of livestock and poultry into the state helps ensure that diseases which have been eradicated are not reintroduced and that existing diseases are not continually reintroduced. Some other prevention activities include education of producers in disease awareness, aiding producers in development and implementation of biosecurity measures, utilization of vaccines and preventive management practices, working with USDA and other state's animal health agencies to aid implementation of effective animal health programs in countries, such as Mexico, to reduce the disease risk from imported livestock.

Surveillance

The surveillance element or function is the most intensive of the six functions with respect to resources and personnel. Surveillance includes all activities designed and implemented to identify and locate any possible focus of infection or exposure to diseases of animal/poultry health significance in the livestock, poultry and exotic animal population. TAHC surveys animal populations for possible disease problems by collecting blood samples at livestock markets, on farms or ranches, and at slaughter plants. TAHC also analyzes private-paid test samples and specimens, identifies animals back to their herds of origin in various movement channels, and inspects the animals and/or samples collected for testing. Other surveillance activities such as testing in high incidence areas, collecting milk samples at dairy processing plants, collecting tissue samples at the time of slaughter, and working closely with commercial poultry operators who routinely perform disease surveillance and testing, all contribute to a strong surveillance element. Routine visual inspections and collections of external parasite specimens from livestock in concentration points are important for early detection of an intrusion of a foreign animal disease or pest. Additionally, TAHC foreign animal disease diagnosticians investigate all reports of potential foreign animal diseases in order to achieve early diagnosis of a foreign animal disease, should it be introduced into the state. TAHC maintains a 24/7 "on call" phone service to support effective and rapid disease surveillance and detection within the state.

Diagnosis

Once disease is suspected, a timely but accurate diagnostic procedure must be completed. It is critical that agency professional personnel carefully evaluate results of tests and examinations to differentiate misleading symptoms from actual disease. Intensive and thorough follow-up investigation to confirm or refute the existence of the disease in the targeted livestock operation is the essence of the diagnosis function. If the diagnosis of a regulated disease is confirmed, disease control and elimination procedures are discussed with the affected producer. Disease management plans are developed to achieve the desired results within a reasonable timeframe, and with the least disruption to the owner's normal management or operating procedures. Depending upon which disease is diagnosed, eradication by destruction of infected and exposed animals may be the most viable option for dealing with the disease. In such cases, the producer is typically indemnified for the appraised value of animals that have to be destroyed.

Control

When a regulated disease is confirmed, the agency acts to control the spread of the disease to other animals in the herd/flock and to other herds/flocks by limiting the movement of exposed or infected animals. Quarantines and hold-orders are the control measures for restricting infected, exposed, or otherwise suspicious livestock and poultry to a specific location. Written permits are then issued for movement and disposition of infected or exposed animals in a manner compatible with sound disease control practices. Usually the animals are permanently identified by tagging or branding as infected or exposed prior to movement. Vaccinations or other treatments, if applicable, are sometimes administered to exposed animals in order to minimize any further spread of the disease. If not completed as part of the diagnosis function, herd/flock plans are formulated in cooperation with the owner to improve management practices. Results of epidemiological studies are shared with the owner as to the most probable source of the disease and the methods to be used to eradicate and prevent reintroduction of the disease.

Eradication

Elimination or eradication of the disease causing agent from the animal populations is the final element or function of a successful animal health program. Complete elimination or eradication of the disease causing agent may require a number of program elements to be successful. Those elements may include humane euthanasia of the affected animals, controlled biosecure

slaughter and processing of exposed or infected animals to salvage the value of the products, and the support of business continuity when feasible. Various types of carcass disposal techniques may be utilized depending on the disease or condition. Adequate cleaning and disinfection of affected premises and equipment, as well as environmental applications may be necessary to ensure all disease agents, vectors, or pests have been eliminated.

Emergency Management/Homeland Security
TAHC's role in emergency management and homeland security activities continues to expand and is an important function performed by the agency, as it is charged to support all of the State of Texas and the Governor's Homeland Security initiatives as they relate to animals, including, but not limited to participation and support of:

- Texas Homeland Security Strategic Planning Initiatives
- Governor's Emergency Management Council activities
- State Emergency Management Plan and Annexes for Health and Medical Services, Evacuation, Mass Care, Agriculture, Public Works and Engineering, Donations Management, and others
- Texas Hurricane Evacuation and Shelter Plan (animal components)
- Texas Animal Issues Committee Plan
- Texas local and regional response planning as directed by the Governor
- National Response Network and affiliated national emergency security initiatives,
- Coordination of all local, regional, federal, and industry plans with the Governor's Division of Emergency Management (GDEM) plans
- Lead state agency for response to foreign animal or poultry diseases
- Lead state agency for response to disasters or emergencies involving animals
- Creation of templates for local animal issues planning

II. Organizational Aspects

A. Statutory Authority and Composition of Workforce

TAHC has specific statutory authority and responsibility to control and eradicate any disease or agent of transmission that threatens the livestock and poultry of Texas, as outlined in Chapters 161 through 168 of the Texas Agriculture Code, Vernon's Annotated Texas Statutes.

Thirteen Commissioners appointed by the Governor, representing all segments of the livestock, exotic livestock, and poultry industries as well as the public, oversee and guide the agency's activities. The Governor designates the Chair.

The Commissioners appoint an Executive Director who serves as the chief executive officer of TAHC and the chief veterinarian of the state of Texas. In concert with the Commissioners, animal producers, and allied industry groups, the Executive Director oversees Texas livestock and poultry regulatory functions to ensure that agency business is conducted in a responsive, cooperative, and transparent manner.

For the 2008 – 2009 Biennium, TAHC has an authorized workforce of 209 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs). Riders in the General Appropriations Act provide contingency authority for TAHC to add additional FTEs for programs related to animal identification or surveillance, control, or eradication of health pests or diseases, to the extent that federal funds are allocated

for salary costs; none of these contingent FTEs count against the agency FTE cap. Included within the FTE cap are seven fully federally funded laboratory positions serving the State-Federal laboratory system. TAHC is funded by a combination of state general revenue funds and federal funds, primarily from USDA.

The TAHC workforce is comprised of field inspectors, veterinarians, veterinary epidemiologists, laboratory personnel, and administrative staff. Although based in Austin, TAHC maintains a significant presence statewide with the majority of employees working in eight field "Areas" and four laboratories around the state.

Each Area is directed by a veterinarian and staffed with a supervising inspector, field inspectors and administrative support personnel. A field veterinarian, and a support field epidemiologist is assigned to cover each Area. All TAHC veterinarians – including the Executive Director – must hold a license to practice veterinary medicine in Texas. Field staff conducts livestock shipping and entry inspections to enforce entry requirements, conducts inspections at livestock markets, collects tissue samples at slaughter plants, and conducts on-the-farm, market and feedlot disease testing and surveillance, and collects external parasites for laboratory identification. In addition, field veterinarians, epidemiologists, and animal health technicians employed by USDA collaborate with TAHC staff in animal disease prevention, surveillance, diagnosis, control, and eradication activities.

TAHC operates four laboratories jointly with USDA. Each lab is overseen by a directing microbiologist and staffed with technicians and/or microbiologists who perform high volume serological testing on blood and serum samples submitted by field staff or veterinarians for the brucellosis, pseudobrabies, and tuberculosis disease control programs. Laboratory personnel perform tests for other states as well. USDA funds 100 percent of the cost for running out of State samples. Of the approximately `2.7 million tests performed by the four state-federal labs in fiscal year 2007, approximately 2.4 million were for Texas and 300,000 for other states.

In addition, the main laboratory conducts bacteriology on milk and tissue samples collected from animals suspected of brucellosis and identifies parasites of animal health significance such as fever ticks, mites, and screwworms.

In calendar year 2007, the TAHC workforce was comprised of the following:

African American	Hispanic American	Caucasian American	Male	Female
5%	13%	82%	62%	38%

JOB CATEGORY	PERCENT OF TOTAL EMPLOYEES
Officials/Administrators	8%
Professionals	59%
Technicians	11%
Administrative Support	22%

B. Organizational Structure by Strategy

TAHC's budget structure supports two goals, one comprised of three direct strategies and the second comprised of three indirect strategies. The three direct strategies support the agency's goal to protect and enhance the health of Texas animal populations, facilitating productivity and marketability while sustaining reduced human health risks. These three direct strategies are: (1) Animal Health Programs - Field Operations, (2) Diagnostic and Epidemiological Support Services, and (3) Promote Compliance and Resolve Violations.

The agency's three indirect strategies support the three direct strategies listed above and are comprised of the following: (1) Central Administration, (2) Information Resources, and (3) Other Support Services.

Strategy 01-01-01: Animal Health Programs – Field Operations

The core functions of the agency are performed by Animal Health Programs which include: Field Operations, Governmental and Industry Relations, the Animal Identification Program, Fowl Registration and Program Records. Leadership for TAHC Animal Health Programs-Field Operations is vested in the Assistant Executive Director for Animal Health Programs, a licensed veterinarian, who reports directly to the Executive Director. Included among these functions are records documentation and management activities which are essential to achieving the agency goal of protecting and enhancing the health of Texas animal populations.

Animal Health Programs – Field Operations

TAHC maintains a team of highly trained veterinarians, veterinary epidemiologists, inspectors, and a network of State-Federal Diagnostic laboratories. Veterinarians and veterinary epidemiologists oversee the diagnosis, control, and elimination of diseases and assure appropriate tracing of the movement of exposed or infected animals to determine the origin of infection and minimize the transmission of disease. Animal disease surveillance is supported by the network of laboratories which are strategically located to best serve the state of Texas industry and government.

The state of Texas is divided into eight "Areas", each with an Area office managed by an Area Director, who is a veterinarian that reports to the Assistant Executive Director for Animal Health Programs. A Supervising Inspector is assigned to each Area office and is charged with the responsibility of coordinating and supervising the work of the inspectors and administrative support staff. Animal Health Inspectors are assigned to cover specific geographic areas and Area offices are staffed with, or supported by, a state Field Veterinarian who supports disease program functions and assigns testing duties to Inspectors; federal field veterinarians from USDA Veterinary Services often collaborate with TAHC veterinarians and field staff. Ultimately, TAHC is responsible to assure that Texas meets animal disease prevention, surveillance, control, and eradication standards established by USDA for national animal health programs. Three main elements embody animal health program field operations functions – Animal Health Assurance, Animal Health Management, and Animal Health Emergency Response.

Animal Health Assurance

- Diagnose, control and eradicate domestic animal diseases
- Ensure effective disease surveillance activities
- Respond to animal health emergencies
- Provide public information and education services
- Monitor health certification of animal health populations

- Perform inspections at markets, slaughter facilities shipment checkpoints, livestock or poultry assemblies, and at other concentration points

Animal Health Management

- Conduct animal disease surveillance, testing, inspections, exams, and control activities
- Diagnose, report and respond to foreign or emerging diseases
- Prescribe health requirements for interstate and international movement
- Enforce Texas interstate entry requirements and movement restrictions of at-risk animal populations
- Manage infected, exposed, or high risk animals, herds, or flocks
- Conduct surveillance for ectoparasites and manage infestations as required
- Enter data such as animal identification, owner information, health certificates, and test results from a variety of disease programs into national and agency level databases

Animal Health Emergency Response

- Lead state agency for Texas animal emergency response activities
- First Responder for Foreign and Emerging Disease (FEAD) Activities
- Member of State Emergency Management Council
- Member of Texas Homeland Security Council
- Member of Texas Homeland Security Critical Infrastructure/Key Resources Protection Council
- Facilitator/Creator of community (city and county) Animal Issue Committees
- Creator/maintainer of county livestock Emergency Evacuation Holding Facility Database

TAHC Field Operations and Area Offices

TAHC has a central administrative office in Austin and eight Area offices providing coverage for all 254 Texas Counties. The Area offices are located in the following cities with jurisdiction over the indicated number of counties in parentheses:

Area 1 – Amarillo (49)

Area 2 – Crockett (20)

Area 3 – Ft. Worth (29)

Area 4 – Mt. Pleasant (29)

Area 5 – Beeville (40)

Area 6 – Lampasas (53)

Area 7 – Rockdale (20)

Area 8 – Hallettsville (14)

Governmental and Industry Relations

The Governmental and Industry Relations Specialist reports directly to the Executive Director and is responsible for:

- coordinating consistent communication with industry representatives, the legislature, legislative agencies, other state agencies, and professional organizations;
- monitoring and responding to requests for information from the legislature, Legislative Budget Board (LBB), and the Governor's Office and tracking state and federal livestock, poultry, and exotic animal legislation and regulation development.

Animal Identification Program

USDA has developed the National Animal Identification System (NAIS), which is a national program intended to identify locations where animals are kept, identify specific animals in the United States and record their movements over time. TAHC is responsible to develop and maintain a premises identification and registration system that meets the standards of NAIS. TAHC registers premises and maintains the premises system for livestock producers who volunteer to have their premises identified in the NAIS. Additionally, USDA has developed and begun implementation of *A Business Plan to Advance Animal Disease Traceability.* As the steps of the business plan are put into place, TAHC will be responsible to implement the components of the plan within the state of Texas. USDA publishes and maintains information regarding NAIS at the following website: http://animalid.aphis.usda.gov/nais/index.shtml.

The ability to successfully trace an animal disease to its source is critical to the health and economic well-being of commercial livestock and poultry industries in Texas and the United States. Animal health officials require accurate and complete information to respond effectively to animal disease events and to successfully conduct disease surveillance programs. Rapid response minimizes the potential spread of contagious diseases, and lessens the detrimental effects of disease events. TAHC emergency response capabilities can be improved through greater standardization of the data elements needed for animal disease control programs, as well as increased premises registration and animal identification.

The business plan is intended to enhance identification of animals and traceability to or from premises they have occupied for disease control purposes. The business plan identifies food animal species as those with highest priority for identification and traceability. As of June 2008, approximately 31,659 of an estimated 187,118 Texas premises have been registered.

Fowl Registration Program

The Fowl Registration Program is carried out by the agency field personnel, and primarily targets domestic fowl, such as chickens, turkeys, ducks, and game fowl raised for food, eggs, or agricultural exhibition. Dealers, distributors, or transporters of exotic or pet birds, however, must register if their birds are commingled or transported with domestic fowl, or are sold at the same public venue with domestic fowl. Fowl registration responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- performing inspections at markets, slaughter facilities, shipment checkpoints, fowl events or assemblies, and at other points of concentration of livestock and fowl;
- collecting and submitting diagnostic specimens as directed;
- assisting epidemiological investigations and conducting poultry disease investigations;
- issuing and verifying permits and providing general information to the public regarding the Fowl Registration Program;
- identifying flocks that need to be registered and assuring their registration.

Program Records

Program Records staff receive, input into databases and maintain records necessary to document specific state and federal disease eradication program activities; process documents affecting herd or flock status and documents related to quarantines or releases; perform data entry; and, provide permit support. Program Records responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- developing and maintaining data and records systems required for disease program standards;
- performing data entry so that data may be analyzed to monitor the accuracy and efficiency of the agency's disease management and eradication activities;
- managing records for the Fowl Registration Program, Fowl Surveillance program, Waste Food Feeder Registration, and Feral Swine Holding program;
- supporting records management functions for various Herd Status programs that include the Accredited Bovine Tuberculosis Free Herd, Bovine Brucellosis Certified Free Herd, Validated Swine Brucellosis Free Herd, and Qualified Pseudorabies Negative Swine Herd programs;
- issuing and monitoring Texas entry permit programs for domestic and exotic animals and fowl entering Texas from other states;
- entering data such as animal identifications, owner information, health certificates, and test results from slaughter charts into the USDA database known as the Generic Database (GDB).

Strategy 01-01-02: Diagnostic and Epidemiological Support Services

Two distinct elements comprise the organizational structure of this strategy: Epidemiology, and Laboratory Diagnostics.

The elements listed above are designed to provide epidemiological and leadership expertise, serological testing, microbiological confirmation, and parasite identification services for diseases and parasite infestations of regulatory importance to the animal agriculture industries in Texas.

Epidemiology

The State Epidemiologist and two field epidemiologists provide epidemiology services, consultation, and oversight to Area operations as needed to support to the various State - Federal disease eradication programs and to support other TAHC disease management programs. Epidemiology responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- providing oversight and consulting support related to diagnostic and epidemiological activities prior to a definitive diagnosis;
- interpreting lab results and determining which animals are at risk for spreading disease;
- conducting, directing or leading epidemiological investigations of disease incidents to determine source and distribution of disease, as well as identification of potentially exposed animal populations;
- making recommendations for management of diseased herds for elimination of disease;
- coordinating and performing risk analysis in collaboration with field staff, other TAHC staff, USDA, and other entities to evaluate and analyze safeguards to mitigate disease risks to an acceptable level that supports the Texas livestock, poultry, and exotic animal trade;
- advising agency staff, Commissioners, and industry leadership on emerging and re-emerging livestock disease issues, including recommendations regarding implementation of disease control and eradication methods;

- assisting agency personnel in developing surveillance, herd/flock disease management plans, educational and diagnostics evaluation objectives;
- providing assistance to field personnel and educational and training experiences to professional, producer, student, and special interest audiences;
- providing consultation to field veterinarians and Area directors regarding program herd/flock disease management procedures and the interpretation of standards and guidelines for classification of test results;
- identifying and providing recommendations on areas of deficiencies in surveillance, diagnostic, control, eradication, or prevention activities;
- Providing oversight and management of assigned agency disease control programs and serving as liaison with other state and federal agencies with respect to disease control programs.

Laboratory Diagnostics

Four laboratories, located in Austin, Fort Worth, Palestine, and Lubbock, comprise the TAHC laboratory diagnostic strategy; the Director of Laboratories reports to the Executive Director. Laboratory microbiologists and technicians conduct USDA approved serological tests to support cooperative programs for brucellosis, pseudorabies and tuberculosis control, providing TAHC veterinarians and epidemiologists with scientific tools for diagnosing disease.

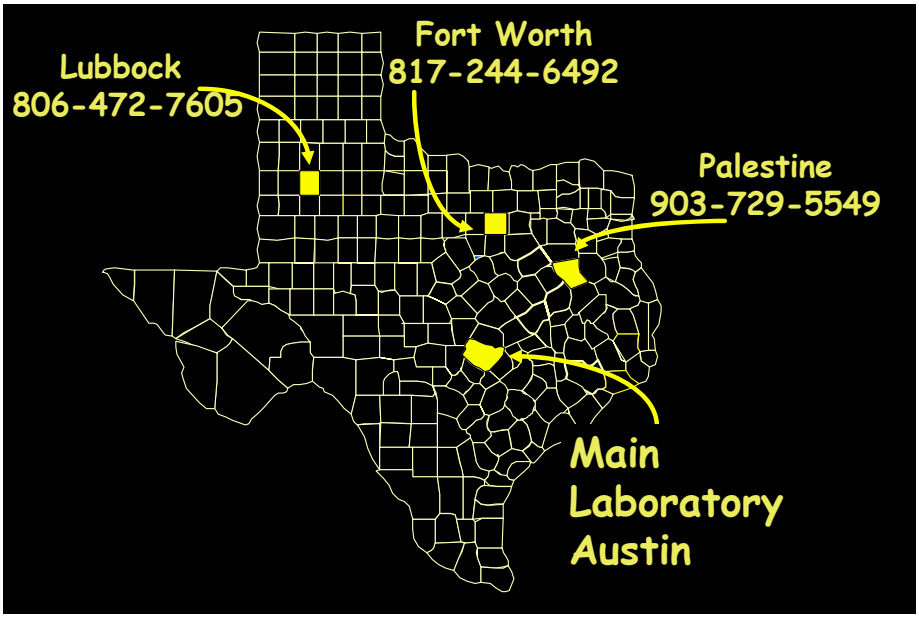
The main laboratory, located in Austin, is the only TAHC facility that provides bacterial culture capability, serological testing for bovine tuberculosis and parasite (tick, mites and fly larvae) identification. The regional laboratories in Fort Worth, Palestine, and Lubbock perform serological testing. TAHC laboratories also serve as regional laboratories by conducting brucellosis and tuberculosis testing for other states that do not have the laboratory capability to perform these tests. The costs for all testing of samples from other states are covered by USDA through cooperative agreements.

In the course of state fiscal year 2007, the TAHC laboratory system processed over 2.7 million test samples and is a national leader in many aspects of brucellosis and tuberculosis testing; laboratory personnel continue to evaluate new technologies and procedures for efficacy and efficiency and apply them as they are approved. The laboratories employ daily internal quality assurance procedures and yearly external NVSL proficiency testing to conform with internationally recognized laboratory quality standards.

Laboratory responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- establishing and maintaining a quality control program for laboratory integrity and employee safety;
- ensuring protocols and procedures to maintain sample integrity throughout the testing process;
- determining specifications for supplies, and ensuring vaccine and other biological products are properly shipped per state and federal regulations; and
- reporting serological results to producers and veterinarians in a timely manner; and
- supporting agency responses to foreign animal disease outbreaks.

TAHC State-Federal Laboratories



Strategy 01-01-03: Promote Compliance and Resolve Violations

The Promote Compliance and Resolve Violations strategy is under the stewardship of the General Counsel who reports to the Executive Director. In addition to investigatory functions, included within this strategy and function are agency communications and public information.

General Counsel

The General Counsel is responsible for:

- providing legal counsel and representation to the Commissioners and Executive Director and the agency regarding all aspects of TAHC internal operations, state and federal programs, agency personnel matters, agency operations, contracts, and Historically Underutilized Business programs, and rulemaking;
- providing legal information to executive management regarding administering and interpreting laws and rules providing authority for, or, impacting animal health programs;
- providing legal support of agency enforcement matters;
- providing guidance and training to the Commissioners and agency staff on ethics, public information, and open meetings information;
- supporting the agency, Commissioners, and Executive Director by coordinating with the Attorney General's Office in any potential litigation affecting those entities;
- providing legislative assistance to the Commissioners, Executive Director, Deputy Director for Administration and Finance, governmental relations staff, and other agency staff through legal advice, legislative and rule drafting, including legal analysis of federal and state legislation;
- conducting or coordinating administrative hearings;
- providing legal advice to the agency regarding open records requests and the Public Information Act, including preparing and processing requests for Attorney General Opinions, and providing advice to staff on whether or not documents may be released;

- providing legal support to the agency's Human Resources function and related activities; and,
- serving as liaison for the agency to the State Auditor's Office, and the State Office of Risk Management.

Legal Services and Compliance

The legal services and compliance function is performed in collaboration with field operations staff, the public, and other agency staff who report alleged violations to the general counsel or an agency investigator. The two agency investigators obtain written statements from parties involved in an investigation and file complaints in courts all over the state; a single legal assistant writes and distributes warning/demand/information letters. This investigatory and compliance function is responsible for:

- evaluating and investigating all alleged violations of agency requirements or complaints by field staff or from the public;
- receiving, reviewing, and investigating alleged violations of Commission regulations submitted by Field Operations staff on a Compliance Action Request (CAR) document;
- educating the public and TAHC staff on legal matters related to animal health programs;
- receiving, reviewing, and investigating complaints from the public;
- resolving minor infractions or offenses through warning letters;
- initiating compliance action as appropriate including:
    - Actions handled through the filing of a Class "C" Misdemeanor in the Justice of the Peace Court (because the Commission has a number of Class C Misdemeanor provisions in statute, this is the avenue most frequently utilized to enforce compliance);
    - Actions involving a felony offense which require prosecution by local authorities. (In the past, the Commission has filed several felony cases for indictment for alteration of a government document);
    - Actions handled through an Administrative Penalty process in which "Agreed Orders" are used to resolve issues.

Public Information and Communications

Agency communications are led by the agency Public Information Officer, who reports directly to the Executive Director. The communications and public information function, which is included within the strategy of promoting compliance and resolving violations, is responsible for:

- serving as the first point of contact for media to help them secure accurate and timely information;
- coordinating informational requests of the general public who seek information and statistics about the agency or animal health programs;
- providing accurate, consistent information about the agency and its diverse and growing animal health programs in a timely manner;
- preparing and distributing press releases, newsletters, reports, and interviews;
- developing and maintaining animal disease information for agency website;
- assisting executive management in outreach efforts by preparing presentations, brochures, and informational materials for distribution with the public;
- maintaining extensive contact lists of industry stakeholders to keep them apprised of state and federal animal health programs and agency initiatives
- serving as co-chair and facilitating activation and utilization of the Texas Public Information Committee as detailed in the Texas Foreign and Emerging Animal Disease Plan (FEAD – Appendix 3 to Annex O).

Strategy 02-01-01: Central Administration

The indirect strategy of Central Administration is comprised of four elements: Commissioners and Executive Director, Administration and Finance, Financial Services, and Human Resources.

Commissioners and Executive Director

Thirteen Commissioners appointed by the Governor, representing all segments of the livestock industry and the public, oversee and guide the agency's activities, including approving agency rules. The Commissioners appoint an Executive Director who oversees all key functions performed by the Texas Animal Health Commission in carrying out its core mission for all direct strategies as well as for all indirect strategies.

Administration & Finance

Administration & Finance is led by the Deputy Director for Administration & Finance, who reports to the Executive Director, and is responsible for all of the operational functions of the agency that indirectly support service delivery for all animal health programs. It is responsible for all financial management functions, including budget, accounting, purchasing, and other agency operating functions; the infrastructure needs of the agency, including office space, supply, printing, and postage; and the agency's information technology function, both in terms of computer hardware and the management of information technology software and applications projects. Administration & Finance is charged with:

- overseeing Financial Services, Staff Services, and Information Resources;
- administering and coordinating agency operations;
- providing support to the agency's strategic planning and appropriations processes (Agency Strategic Plan, LAR, AFR, Annual Operating Budget, etc.);
- providing leadership and coordination to the agency's business processes;
- defining, developing, and implementing standard agency operating policies and procedures;
- implementing and maintaining effective support systems to ensure efficient delivery of the agency's core mission;
- negotiating and planning with other governmental entities;
- establishing and maintaining a safe physical environment to carry out duties and responsibilities;
- providing a positive climate for professional growth and development;
- creating opportunities for staff involvement in policy development and decision making; and
- implementing procedures that provide for the continuity of agency functions in case of emergency or crisis situations.

Financial Services

Financial Services reports to the Deputy Director for Administration & Finance and is led by the Director of Financial Services who provides leadership and support to the budget and accounting staff. The goal of fiscal management is to process timely and accurate payments, to produce accurate and reliable financial information, to assist management in effectively allocating resources, and to ensure compliance with all state and federal rules and regulations – including adherence to generally accepted accounting principles. Financial Services is charged with:

- preparing biennial Legislative Appropriations Requests (LAR) and the itemized operating budget in accordance with the Agency Strategic Plan;
- preparing financial reports, including the Annual Financial Report (AFR), in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles per state and federal guidelines;

- managing the cooperative agreement process with the federal government to secure federal funding for animal health programs;
- managing and monitoring the agency's operating budget and the agency's authorized staffing and position summary;
- administering internal controls to ensure all payments to vendors, agency employees' salaries, benefits, tax deductions, and travel are processed in accordance with the General Appropriations Act and state and federal laws and regulations;
- maintaining control over cash and appropriation balances and ensuring funds are available in appropriations;
- managing quality control of USAS, USPS, and SPA to ensure data integrity;
- providing executive management with monthly budget status reports including position summary reports.

Human Resources

Human Resources reports to the Executive Director and is led by the Director of Human Resources who provides leadership and support for all human resources activities for the agency. Human Resources is charged with:

- recruiting highly qualified candidates and retaining a capable and committed workforce that is strategically focused to manage, monitor, and improve TAHC's capacity for excellence;
- directing, administering, and monitoring the agency's human resources policies, procedures, and programs and recommending solutions for human resources issues;
- ensuring agency human resources policies and procedures are compliant with state and federal laws, including but not limited to, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Texas Commission on Human Rights Act, the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, the Family Medical Leave Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the General Appropriations Act, and employment provisions of the Texas Government Code and the Texas Labor Code;
- recommending strategies and proposals to executive management regarding appointments, promotions, demotions, reclassifications, transfers, separations, and merit increases;
- counseling and advising staff on issues, rules, regulations, benefits, training and professional development, and all other areas of human resources management;
- overseeing the maintenance of human resources records and performing analysis and developing reports for use by executive management and federal and state oversight entities;
- interpreting state leave policies and other state and federal human resources related laws and regulations;
- providing advice and assistance to staff regarding state and federal salary and leave administration policies and procedures;
- developing methods and procedures for gathering, compiling and analyzing statistical human resources data and ensuring the confidentiality and integrity of data entered into USPS;
- serving as liaison with the Texas Workforce Commission, the State Auditor's Office, the State Classification Office, and other state entities with respect to all human resources policies and issues;
- listening to, recommending solutions for, or suggesting resolutions to personnel conflicts, disputes or grievances.

Strategy 02-01-02: Information Resources

Information Resources

Information Resources reports to the Deputy Director for Administration & Finance and is led by the Director of Information Resources who provides leadership and support for overseeing agency information resources, including telecommunications, in support of the agency strategic plan and coordinating the entire spectrum of technical information services across the agency. It provides general policy direction for agency information and telecommunications resources management in coordination with executive management. Information Resources is charged with:

- providing leadership and management of the agency's telecommunications and information systems and support staff;
- providing oversight of the agency information security management and disaster recovery programs;
- providing support for all agency desktops, laptops, printers, and all other computer peripherals used by agency staff;
- providing telecommunications support and training to all agency staff;
- providing help-desk and training support for all agency information and telecommunications resources;
- developing, managing, and maintaining physical databases so as to enhance software application performance;
- managing and maintaining the agency's network infrastructure;
- managing and maintaining all application and database servers, including the hardware as well as their operating systems;
- managing and maintaining the agency's electronic mail system including spam and virus control;
- performing regular backups of key agency electronic information;
- defining standard processes and methods in developing automated systems or new software applications and developing initiatives to increase efficiency by moving from paper-based data flow to electronic automated processes;
- preparing and coordinating the Information Resources Strategic Plan, Biennial Operating Plan, and IR Disaster Recovery Plan;
- maintaining the TAHC web site for public outreach, education, and transparency purposes.

Strategy 02-01-03: Other Support Services

Staff Services

Staff Services reports to the Deputy Director for Administration & Finance and is led by the Director of Staff Services who provides leadership and support for internal customer service, procurement and contracts, and infrastructure management. Staff Services is charged with:

- supporting the agency's purchasing, contract, and supply processes to ensure agency needs are met in a timely manner and are compliant with TPASS (including HUB Coordination), state, and federal regulations;
- managing the central office warehouse, supplies, tagged assets, including conducting Area office inventories;
- disposing of surplus property and providing an agency recycling program;
- overseeing the agency vehicle fleet in compliance with TPASS, state, and federal regulations;
- providing statewide facilities support and space management;

- coordinating the receipt and distribution of mail, including receipts of revenue for certificates of veterinary inspection;
- managing the production and distribution of agency certificates of veterinary inspection;
- printing, reproducing, and assembling agency documents and publications;
- overseeing records retention and coordinating agency forms;
- ensuring the safety and security of agency staff and designating an agency Safety Officer;
- overseeing employee identification cards;
- overseeing central office receptionist, USPS time-keeping, and workers compensation claims duties;
- maintaining and updating the agency veterinarian database.

C. Demographics and the TAHC Workforce

The majority of the TAHC workforce is headquartered outside large metropolitan areas where agriculture is the predominant way of life for rural Texans. Our animal health inspectors, veterinarians, laboratory staff, and Area office support staff live and work alongside their neighbors, often in the same small town where they grew up with their families. Their personal experience in animal agriculture and close connections with the local community are contributing factors to the agency's success in:

- Recruiting job candidates with relevant skills and knowledge;
- Establishing and maintaining effective working relationships with producers, livestock markets, local law enforcement agencies, community service organizations, and other stakeholders;
- Maintaining a manageable turnover rate;
- Managing travel expenses; and
- Providing rapid and effective emergency response.

Over the past several years, the agency's responsibilities have significantly expanded into a growing number of animal health programs, many of which are mandated by state and federal law, and all of which have significant real or potential impact on Texas' animal agriculture industries.

TAHC hopes that this strategic plan will provide additional visibility for the public to understand that, in addition to surveillance and control of Bovine Brucellosis and Bovine Tuberculosis, and surveillance, control and eradication of other bovine diseases such as Johne's Disease and Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), TAHC is engaged in many other animal health programs. The agency is charged to conduct many other surveillance, control, and eradication programs, including but not limited to:

- Avian Diseases (e.g., Avian Influenza (AI), Exotic Newcastle Disease (END), Pullorum-Typhoid (PT), Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT)) and Programs (e.g. the Fowl Registration Program)
- Swine Diseases (e.g., Brucellosis, Aujeszky's Disease (Pseudorabies), Classical Swine Fever (CSF)) and Programs (e.g. the Waste Food Feeder Permit Program and the Feral Swine Holding Facility Permit Program)
- Equine Diseases (e.g., Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA), Vesicular Stomatitis (VS), and West Nile Virus (WNV))
- Sheep and Goat Diseases (e.g., Scrapie, Brucellosis, and Tuberculosis)
- Exotic Livestock Diseases (e.g., Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), Brucellosis, and Tuberculosis)

- Texas Fever Ticks and naturally occurring Anthrax
- Animal Disease Surveillance and Reporting of Emerging Diseases and Zoonotic Diseases
- Emergency Management (e.g., Animal Disease Preparedness and Response, Natural Disaster Preparedness and Response, and Agroterrorism)
- Laboratory, Epidemiology, and Diagnostics
- National Animal Identification System

To fulfill the agency mission of protecting and enhancing the marketability of Texas' $10.9 billion/year animal agriculture industry, TAHC must:

- Recruit and retain highly qualified and well trained staff;
- Increase staffing and focus on succession planning;
- Achieve salary parity with other comparable employers;
- Provide disease and species-specific training;
- Equip employees with the resources necessary to rapidly and effectively respond to animal health emergencies;
- Maintain state-of-the-art laboratory technology and skilled staff;
- Operate with a reasonable and effective management-to-staff-ratio;
- Develop replacement and refresh strategies for the agency information technology infrastructure and vehicle fleet; and,
- Assure appropriate level and consistent general revenue funding.

Position classification changes made to the State Classification Plan during the last several legislative sessions have affected the salaries of a large percentage of TAHC's budgeted positions. As a result, previously established career ladders, mandated in the Texas Agriculture Code, Chapter 161.031(a), need to be modified, adjusted, or re-developed. This will be a challenging endeavor due to the agency's budgetary constraints and the required HR-to-staff ratio. TAHC has two HR FTE's, the HR Director and an HR Specialist. Adequate internal HR support is needed to ensure that recruitment and retention strategies are tailored to the agency's diverse programs and mission.

Further details on the agency's strategies for human capital management in the future are included in Appendix F. An agency organizational chart that portrays both the agency's functional structure and strategic structure is provided in Appendix B.

III. Fiscal Aspects

TAHC receives funding from both state and federal sources. In state fiscal year 2007, the agency operated on a budget of $13.6 million; within this total, $8.8 million were from the state's General Revenue Fund and $4.8 million in federal funding, most of which came in cooperative agreements awarded by USDA. Cooperative funding from USDA is usually awarded for specific disease programs and typically is granted for one-year periods. Most of the USDA cooperative agreements do not align with the state fiscal year and they often do not align with the federal fiscal year. Although the total amount of federal funding has been fairly consistent over the past five years, the amount awarded in each cooperative agreement has varied from year to year. In 2007, cooperative funding opportunities were changed to align with a calendar year, but this meant that our agency had almost no federal funds available for the period of October – December 2007 for fiscal year 2008. USDA is currently considering a change in 2009 so that

awards would begin on July 1, 2009 which would mean our agency would have almost no federal funds for the majority of state fiscal year 2009.

USDA contributes a significant amount of funding that supports TAHC's state-federal laboratory system which is not included within TAHC's appropriated budget. Some expenditures covered by USDA funds outside of TAHC's operating budget include, but are not limited to: courier service charges for sample delivery; supplies, test tubes, etc.; PRV and RAP testing; 4 trucks, fuel, telephone lines, copier machines, copy machine maintenance, and consumable supplies; and PCFA worksheets.

Adequate funding of animal health programs is essential to provide critical prevention, surveillance, diagnostic capabilities, and disease control or eradication activities. These activities are necessary to protect the Texas animal agriculture industry from disease risks and adverse financial impact and to meet national and international animal health standards. Basic infrastructure is crucial for preventing the introduction and dissemination of foreign animal diseases and pests, and preventing the re-establishment of previously eliminated diseases.

As described above, the TAHC is funded by a combination of state general revenue funds and federal funds provided through cooperative agreements with USDA. The following information relates to these cooperative agreements and the potential for continuation of the funding.

Federal Program	2007 Award	2008 Award	Future Funding
LPAI – Live Bird Markets	240,000	125,000	Expect continued funding at or below current level
CWD	-0-	100,000	No indication of continued funding beyond current award
NAIS	1,080,000	756,000	Expect continued funding below current level for 1-2 years
Brucellosis	2,376,000	2,087,929	Expect continued funding at or below current level for 1-2 years
RAP	162,500	142,798	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Scrapie	135,000	119,000	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Johne's	54,403	21,500	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Laboratory – TB	207,000	200,000	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Swine Health	175,500	175,500	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Laboratory – Brucellosis	286,400	251,676	Expect continued funding at or below current level
HPAI – Live Bird Markets	97,500	73,000	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Homeland Security	-0-	455,000	Expect continued funding at or below current level
FAD	139,300	139,300	Expect continued funding at or below current level

Federal Program	2007 Award	2008 Award	Future Funding
Tuberculosis	300,000	300,000	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Ticks	-0-	993,671	Expect continued funding at or below current level
Classical Swine Fever	233,250	233,300	Expect continued funding at or below current level

On February 1, 2008 Texas achieved Cattle Brucellosis Free status. A state must have zero infected herds for at least twelve consecutive months in order to achieve this status. Historically, as the majority of states achieve free status, funding (both state and federal) for that program decreases nationwide. TAHC's federal brucellosis funding has decreased from a high of $3.4 million in 1993 to the current $2.087 million. Based on the national brucellosis program standards and the experience of other jurisdictions, Texas will need to continue brucellosis surveillance through first point testing at livestock markets for at least more two years and slaughter surveillance for many years after achieving free status. In addition to the direct funding shown above, the USDA has provided several million dollars per year in indirect support that does not flow through the agency's budget. This includes items provided directly to TAHC such as supplies, telephone service, equipment maintenance, and express mail service. Any reduction in federal direct or indirect funding would result in a shortfall in funds for brucellosis surveillance, diagnosis, and disease eradication efforts.

USDA is moving toward supporting fewer labs nationwide, with the remaining labs serving as regional labs and supporting larger geographic areas. TAHC is working with USDA to provide regional laboratory support to include brucellosis surveillance samples from other states. USDA currently provides a cooperative agreement to pay for 100% of the cost of TAHC's Lubbock laboratory which processes samples submitted by New Mexico and Arizona in addition to slaughter blood samples for west Texas and the panhandle region. If this funding is not maintained, this lab will be closed and the out-of-state samples will not be processed by remaining TAHC laboratories.

Texas ranchers achieved a four-year-old objective October 3, 2006 when the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that the state has regained cattle tuberculosis-free (TB) status. This valuable status was lost in 2002 after two TB infected cattle herds were detected in Texas. Beginning in September 2003, more than 335,000 cows in Texas' 818 dairies, and nearly 129,000 beef cattle in 2,014 of the state's seed stock or purebred herds have been tested for cattle TB, to ensure that all TB infection had been detected and eliminated, and that effective herd level disease surveillance has been implemented.

In 2004 USDA approved a new tuberculosis blood test which could replace the more labor intensive confirmatory comparative cervical skin test. The TAHC Austin laboratory, under a cooperative agreement with USDA, serves as a regional laboratory for performance of this test, which is called the Gamma Interferon test. Costs for shipment of samples and performance of this test are covered under the cooperative agreement.

In 2008 the Governor's Division of Emergency Management (GDEM) granted the TAHC funding for homeland security activities. The majority of this funding will be spent to upgrade agency equipment (computers, telephone system, and field testing equipment); to develop and enhance state and local response plans; to conduct exercises to test these plans; and, to train agency personnel. None of this funding will be spent on salaries.

In addition to brucellosis and tuberculosis eradication programs for cattle, TAHC also had to deal with an outbreak of Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) in 2003, an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in 2004, an outbreak of low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI) in 2004, and an investigation of only the second confirmed case of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in the US in 2005, in a Texas cow. USDA continues to provide cooperative agreement funding to conduct surveillance for HPAI and LPAI because of the international concern about avian influenza and the possibility for introduction of a strain of HPAI that could cause human disease.

TAHC also conducts eradication programs for brucellosis and pseudorabies in swine, scrapie in sheep and goats, a control program for Johne's disease, and surveillance programs for early diagnosis of other domestic, foreign, and emerging diseases. USDA has begun to provide some funding for each of these programs.

A. Capital Authority – Capital Strengths and Weaknesses

Strength - Laboratory

To maintain high quality diagnostic services, the TAHC laboratory system continually evaluates new generation technology that will allow it to deliver more timely and accurate diagnostic services. As a part of their support of the state-federal laboratory system USDA has provided funding required to acquire and deploy new technology as it is adopted as the official standard.

To maintain high quality diagnostic services, the TAHC laboratories are continuously on the lookout for improvements being made to existing test methodologies and recent advances in biotechnology. Before implementation, new tools are evaluated for their cost effectiveness and scientific soundness; it is also necessary to measure its practical usefulness to regulatory animal health professionals and the level of supporting interest being generated within the various levels of the livestock industry.

For example, in June of 2008, TAHC executive staff met with a Kentucky university researcher who has developed a Western Blot application for equine infectious anemia (EIA) diagnosis. This assay is not a USDA approved test for EIA, but it does have potential for use in conjunction with the two official tests, the competitive enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (cELISA) and the agar-gel immunodiffusion (AGID), to assist in the diagnosis of weak positives and early infections.

Fluorescence Polarization (FPA) is now a routine test for livestock market card positives in Texas and is likely to become a confirmatory test for the national brucellosis slaughter surveillance program in the near future.

New methods for the identification of bacterial organisms other than *Brucella* that could be the cause of serological titers will continue to be explored for accuracy and cost efficiency. This technology would enhance the epidemiologist's ability to facilitate diagnosis; however, low incidence of these confounding isolates currently makes our reference laboratory, the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) in Ames, IA, the logical choice for now.

B. suis infected cattle are another source of hindrance to efficient brucellosis surveillance, no current serological test can differentiate this species, which is a dead-end-host for cattle, from infectious *B.abortus.* We're working on a project with NVSL-Ames to bank serum from *Brucella suis* infected cattle. The goal is to have samples available for evaluating assays to possibly

differentiate *B. suis* titers from those caused by other bacteria. There is no doubt we will see more and more cattle affected as the feral swine population increases and *Brucella* prevalence within that population continues to increase.

Weakness

Late in 2003 and early in 2004, the agency was able to utilize one-time homeland security funding from USDA to convert from a Macintosh environment to a PC environment to facilitate emergency management response communication. This funding is not available, however, for current or future computer replacements. From 2003 through 2007 TAHC received no general revenue funding for technology refresh or vehicles.

In light of the July 2005 State Auditor's Office audit of TAHC, the agency will continue to recommend a mechanism for the Legislature, LBB, and Governor's Office to authorize capital authority to the agency for the dual purposes of (1) refreshing its information technology infrastructure and (2) securing additional vehicles, or, replacing aging vehicles within its fleet.

Technology

Capital funding for investment in automation must continue to be a priority to keep the agency technologically current. Recent emergency response activities have demonstrated the need for a more robust geographic information system (GIS) to aid the agency with its disease surveillance, control, and eradication work. Agency management continues to face the challenge of maintaining and improving agency information systems with limited resources.

For fiscal year 2008 and 2009 TAHC was provided capital budget authority with the funding contingent on the receipt of earned federal funds in excess of the amounts specified in Article IX, Section 6.26. This funding has allowed TAHC to begin the process of replacing computer equipment, however, this funding has proven to be insufficient to completely restore an appropriate lifecycle refreshment. As TAHC develops its Legislative Appropriations Request during the summer of 2008, it will seek capital authority as an exceptional item in order to support the complete restoration of lifecycle replacement of technology.

Vehicles

Unlike many other state agencies which also have considerable field activities TAHC has not ever been able to acquire the resources necessary to provide a fleet of vehicles to staff. By leveraging federal funds, TAHC has developed a fleet of 20 vehicles, 12 of which are at the end of their life-cycle per TPASS guidelines (6 years or 100,000 miles) and an additional three are over 90,000 miles. Staff Services ensures regular maintenance is performed and the agency intends to keep each vehicle in service as long as it is cost effective and safe to do so. Although TAHC has 20 vehicles in its fleet, approximately eighty-five field employees are not assigned such a vehicle and drive their personal vehicles to conduct agency business; in state fiscal year 2007, approximately 1.1 million miles were driven by agency staff in personal vehicles in order to perform their regulatory functions and duties across all 254 counties in the state.

Historically, agency vehicles cost approximately five to ten cents less per mile to operate than reimbursement for personal vehicles used in state service. However, the cost efficiency is based on the life of the vehicle and the agency acknowledges that vehicle acquisition requires significant upfront resources, and capital authority. TAHC needs capital authority and funding to facilitate a replacement strategy for retiring and replacing aging vehicles or to increase the TAHC fleet size.

B. Non-Capital Fiscal Concerns

Mileage Reimbursement Rate

TAHC acknowledges and appreciates the efforts of the 80th Legislature in approving the agency's exceptional items requests. The approval of these requests has provided significant assistance to the agency in performance of its responsibilities. Because the funding and timing of cooperative agreements varies it is difficult to plan and budget for the anticipated increase in expenses for travel expenditures. During fiscal year 2008, TAHC travel reimbursement at a rate of 50.5 cents/mile will result in an estimated unappropriated additional cost of $6,000/month or $72,000 for the fiscal year. Any further increases in the reimbursement rate will result in additional unappropriated costs.

Compensation

While additional resources were provided during the 79th legislative session to improve competitiveness of compensation the agency could provide to its veterinary workforce and compensation increases were provided to state employees by the 80th legislature, TAHC continues to struggle to be competitive in the marketplace and to provide career advancement opportunities to staff at all levels of the agency. The agency will develop an exceptional item request to address this compensation need. See the Workforce Plan in Appendix F for additional information.

Changing Nature of Workload Driving Staffing Issues

On February 1, 2008 Texas achieved Cattle Brucellosis Free status under the National Brucellosis Program. This achievement fulfills a long-sought goal for the cattle industry of the state. The standards of the National Brucellosis Program require that, even though a state has achieved free status, the state must continue brucellosis surveillance to assure that all infection was truly eradicated and to detect any re-introductions of the disease. Therefore, Texas will be expected to continue brucellosis surveillance testing through first point testing at livestock markets for at least two more years and slaughter surveillance for many years.

If infection is not identified within the two year period following February 1, 2008, first point testing may be discontinued in 2010. After that time, the brucellosis related work load at the markets may be reduced. However, a continued TAHC presence at livestock markets will still be necessary, to provide for inspection of livestock for other diseases and pests of animal health significance such as examination of livestock for fever ticks, inspection of animals to assure compliance with tuberculosis testing and identification requirements, inspection, identification and testing under the swine brucellosis and pseudorabies programs, enforcement of intrastate animal health regulations, and assuring compliance with interstate importation requirements. Alternative brucellosis surveillance options may also need to be considered, which could include utilization of TAHC personnel at the markets.

Texas has eradicated diseases such as brucellosis and tuberculosis, however, prevention and surveillance activities must be sufficient to prevent re-introduction of the diseases as well as prevent introduction of other diseases of importance. While Texas has eradicated both of these diseases, they are present in other states and countries, which serve as reservoirs for re-introduction into our state. Increased emphasis on surveillance of livestock shipments into the state from or through the eight states (four US and four Mexican) that border Texas is critical.

The first-point testing program is the "early warning system" for the brucellosis program, enabling detection of infection prior to sale of cattle within the state. With the discontinuation of first-point testing, slaughter testing will become the primary method for brucellosis surveillance.

There is a key difference between first-point testing and slaughter testing. An animal identified through first-point testing as possibly infected is alive. This allows the agency to collect additional samples (blood, milk and tissue) and conduct additional diagnostic serologic and culture tests to determine if the animal is in fact infected with *Brucella abortus*. An animal identified through slaughter testing as possibly infected is no longer living and therefore additional testing of that animal is not possible. As a result, the process to be followed requires the identification of the herd the animal came from and conducting a whole herd test to determine whether or not infection is present in the herd. The traceability back to the original owner or farm of origin is also much higher in a first-point test positive versus a slaughter positive, because the animals are individually identified with permanent identification devices, are identified to an owner at the time of testing and market records improve traceability of the animals.

Texas cattle producer and veterinary organizations have requested that TAHC consider the development of a cattle trichomoniasis program. Trichomoniasis is a venereal disease of cattle, which causes significant economic losses to the industry. Although it is most commonly recognized in beef herds, dairy cattle are equally susceptible. The causative agent, *Trichomonas foetus*, is a protozoan parasite, causing infertility and early embryonic death. *T. foetus* typically spreads via infected bulls to cows; however, artificial insemination also poses a threat of transmission, if the semen was collected from an infected bull, because this organism can survive in frozen semen. Although the majority of cows will clear the infection in four to six months of sexual rest, some cows can become carriers and maintain infection through pregnancy and into the post-partum period. Once infected, bulls are considered to be infected for life and must be culled from the herd. Losses to cow-calf herds include cost of replacement bulls, loss of significant percentages of the calf crop, loss of genetic potential due to infertility and early embryonic death as well as culling, increased days-to-conception, and subsequently lighter calf weaning weights. This program would be primarily a surveillance and compliance program designed to prevent entry or sale of untested breeding bulls and restrict movement of infected animals only to slaughter.

In addition to shifting work emphasis, TAHC anticipates an ongoing need to redefine the skill set required of inspectors and veterinarians. Historically, TAHC staff was hired and trained to work with cattle as a part of the brucellosis and tuberculosis eradication efforts. While surveillance for these two diseases will continue, over time the list of diseases, agents and parasites of regulatory concern continues to grow. As a result, TAHC staff now regularly work with a variety of species (cattle, hogs, sheep and goats, horses, chickens and poultry, deer, exotic hoofstock, exotic animals…) and diseases (Johnes, pseudorabies, scrapie, equine infectious anemia, avian influenza, infectious laryngotracheitis, chronic wasting disease…), and regularly conduct disease investigations to detect introduction of foreign animal diseases. The ability, willingness, and knowledge to work with a variety of species and diseases are expanding requirements. Staff no longer deals almost exclusively with cattle producers, but must be knowledgeable about, and have the ability to conduct the agency programs and describe them to a variety of audiences. Staff is now also expected to participate in emergency management activities by participating in local planning and response and statewide prevention, surveillance, response and recovery efforts for disease and non-disease emergencies involving animals. The introduction of new computer applications, GPS equipment, digital cameras, hand held devices and radio frequency tags has resulted in steadily increasing need for computer literate staff as well as training and support for the new technologies. The ability to attract and retain staff with the required skills will require a commensurate increase in salary.

Finally, TAHC must continually evaluate the ratio of inspectors to veterinarians. While veterinarians command a higher salary, there are many tasks that can only be conducted by these animal medical professionals. Veterinarians can perform all the duties expected of lay inspectors, however, lay inspectors cannot perform many of the duties of veterinarians. Both skill sets are needed, however, it is critical that the agency be able to recruit, train and retain sufficient veterinary staff to meet the demands of the future. Any changes deemed appropriate will be made over time through attrition.

Cattle Fever Ticks

Cattle Fever Ticks and the disease they carry, Cattle Tick Fever (commonly called Texas Fever), was eradicated from the United States in 1943. To prevent re-establishment of fever ticks in Texas, a permanent quarantine zone has been maintained in Texas since that time to prevent reintroduction of fever ticks from Mexico, where both the fever tick and the disease Cattle Tick Fever are prevalent. USDA maintains a force of fever tick inspectors charged with preventing introduction and re-establishment of fever ticks in Texas.

TAHC also maintained a "tick force" until the early 1980s, at which time, through mutual agreement with USDA, the agency turned over most duties regarding tick control to USDA. This allowed USDA to focus on its duty to prevent introduction or re-introduction of diseases and pests which had been eradicated, and enabled TAHC to focus its resources on other disease eradication activities. Since then however, TAHC has continued to provide product for treatment of infested livestock, conducted inspections at markets and concentration points and provide support for eradication efforts when an incursion of fever ticks occurred. Unfortunately, USDA resources have not been sufficient to either prevent introduction of fever ticks, or eradicate outbreaks in recent years.

The state is currently experiencing a significant fever tick outbreak that began in 2004 and is ongoing. At the end of May, 2008 over 120 premises were under quarantine because they have been found to be infested with fever ticks. This is the highest number of infested quarantines since the mid 1970s. Additionally, wildlife hosts are playing a significant role in expansion of the fever tick outbreaks. There are also significant limitations on treatment options. TAHC and USDA are currently reviewing the fever tick program to identify potential options for containment and eradication of fever ticks from Texas. Possible management options under discussion include inspection and treatment of cattle and horses at concentration points in several areas of South Texas.

If this procedure is implemented, TAHC will be responsible for implementation and support of the inspections. Additionally, the agency is requiring treatment in expanded areas around infested premises and treatment of large numbers of wildlife on infested premises. It is very clear that additional resources – both fiscal and human – will be needed to regain control of this significant pest. Available federal resources are inadequate to address the problem. TAHC currently has 5 field staff deployed on a daily basis to fever tick activities in South Texas. Additional state resources will be necessary to eliminate the current incursions of fever ticks, push the pest back across the border, and prevent reintroduction. Agency needs will include funding for personnel, equipment, treatment products and operating expenses.

Information Technology Support

The role of technology in relation to accomplishing TAHC's mission has grown. With the introduction of electronics devices such as Personal Digital Assistants (Blackberry), Digital Cameras, Geographic Positioning Systems, Geographic Information Systems, and Radio Frequency Identification of livestock the technology support issues have grown significantly over

time. As directed by the 80th legislature the TAHC web page now enables constituents to access voice recordings of Commissioners meetings. In addition, the ADA compliant web page provides information to the public seeking TAHC mission oriented information. Inspectors across the state now conduct business with E-mail being a significant, if not primary, communication tool. With the added responsibility of Emergency Management, TAHC has created custom software to assist in the event of mass evacuations. TAHC has approximately 75% of its staff stationed across the 254 Texas counties; this requires significant travel to resolve technology issues. Productivity gains provided by information automation brings additional workload requiring additional staff to provide stable and consistent service.

Vehicle Inscription
Chapter 721 of the Texas Transportation Code prescribes requirements for placing an inscription on state owned motor vehicles. It would be helpful if the agency were included in the exemption list in § 721.003 of the Transportation Code in order to have the discretion to remove the inscription from a vehicle when appropriate to do so.

C. Use and Anticipated Use of Consultants

TAHC has not used consultants in the current biennium, and does not anticipate any need for consultants in the coming biennium.

IV. Technological Developments

The 80th legislature provided the first general revenue capital budget authority granted to TAHC in five years. With this funding, TAHC has begun to address issues related to the State Auditor's Office recommendations and Texas Administrative Code Chapter 202. TAHC is now updating and refreshing the aging computers, servers, and software. Security issues are also being addressed. The TAHC computing environment is changing to catch up to the complex and expanding information environment of Texas state government.

A. Impact on Current Operations

The Life cycle replacement policy for the aging servers and personal computers matches industry standards; however, funding has not been sufficient to fully implement this replacement policy. Full implementation would reduce the down time caused by "worn out" old computers, resulting in greater productivity for TAHC staff. The TAHC Central Office Apple Macintosh server environment has been updated to a Linux-based computing system. Down time is reduced while maintaining the legacy systems that support the TAHC mission.

Most TAHC computers were acquired with one-time homeland security funding from USDA and went into service during 2004. Many TAHC laptops are utilized in a rough and dirty field environment, which results in a high equipment failure rate. A high percentage of hard drive and LCD screen failures are occurring. In FY 2008 TAHC will replace forty-five of the approximately 180 computers. At the present funding level, the full refresh will require at least four years. A 4-year refresh will mean that the last laptops refreshed will be 8 years old.

Blackberry PDAs are now being employed by the agency. These portable units assist with emergency management communications and provide improved remote availability of staff to assist and serve the regulated community.

Computer-based and web-based training is proving to be a cost-effective means of enhancing the knowledge and skills of employees. Employees have gained confidence and proficiency in the use of the Internet, and are now using it as a tool not only for career development, but also for accomplishment of assigned job duties.

USDA developed computer-based training relative to emergency management. All agency staff has completed two training modules – (1) National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) and (2) Incident Command System (ICS); agency participation and completion in these two training modules was TAHC's first step in implementing the US Department of Homeland Security's National Response Plan (NRP). All newly hired staff are required to complete the training as well. Agency staff is now in the process of completing ICS 800 (National Strategic Framework) using a web based training module required of all "first responders".

TAHC staff provides information to the public on a variety of animal health issues. The use of PowerPoint presentation software and digital projection has made that activity much more effective, allowing staff to create professional presentations for a wide variety of audiences.

Global Positioning Systems (GPS) data provides an important tool for emergency planning and response, epidemiology, and coordination with other state, federal, and local government agencies. TAHC field personnel have received training in the use of GPS units and TAHC has begun to collect and use GPS location data as part of its disease management strategies.

Updated licensure for the TAHC Geographic Information System (GIS) has assisted with the Tick Outbreak in South Texas. TAHC generated GIS maps are referred to in organizing and planning Tick surveillance activities.

TAHC has installed, for the first time in its history, an Internet/Network firewall. This prevents "Cyber attacks" from being effective. Security is a primary focus for the Department of Information Resources. While no Computing system is ever 100% secure, implementation of the firewall has been a significant step forward in protecting TAHC data.

B. Impact of Anticipated Advances

The agency is working on projects which will enable capture and uploading of Radio Frequency Identification tag data for livestock. With funds provided by the USDA TAHC is acquiring and deploying software and scanners, which enable disease tracking by identifying animals tested for brucellosis, tuberculosis, pseudorabies, equine infectious anemia, Johne's disease, and transmissible spongiform encephalopathies, or treated for fever ticks.

TAHC anticipates replacing its Open Source POP3 email with Microsoft Exchange. This will add additional functionality of scheduling meetings and updating calendars for remote staff. A Blackberry server will be included to assist communications and scheduling with staff that travel extensively.

The agency is investigating additional Geographic Information System abilities to facilitate a quicker, more accurate response to disease outbreak.

Recently TAHC upgraded its External Web Page to the World Wide Web. It is ADA compliant and makes information readily available to the citizens of Texas.

C. Extent of Automation and Telecommunications

TAHC's network allows the transfer of data between multiple locations and hardware platforms. Tape backups of remote and local servers occur each day on the backup server located in the TAHC Austin office.

The Central Office server environment consists primarily of PC-Compatible computers running the Red Hat Linux operating system using Frame Relay connections to the central office via Cisco routers. The Area Office servers are primarily Apple eMacs and iMacs running the MAC OS X operating system. The Texas Department of Information Resources (DIR) provides the data network and is the Internet Service Provider for these connections. This allows TAHC to communicate, via e-mail and Web page, with Area offices, other agencies, and other entities across the state, nation, and globe. Through Wide Area Network (WAN) connections, TAHC can connect to a wide variety of both State and Federal computer systems and to the Internet. These connections allow the agency to offer services to persons outside the TAHC offices via the World Wide Web.

TAHC's external Internet webpage provides information and links to information of interest to the citizens of Texas and to the industries the agency serves. This information includes office locations and phone numbers, contact information, news releases, regulations, and statutes. The agency also maintains an internal Intranet site allowing web-based access to e-mail, databases, and internal correspondence for TAHC staff. Most agency documents, forms, and handbooks are available in electronic format on the Intranet. Employees can access information quickly without maintaining paper copies. Laboratory results are reported to Area offices via e-mail, reducing mail and telephone costs, while speeding up the notification of results. TAHC has toll-free "800" numbers for easy public access to the central office and the Area offices.

D. Current Hardware and Software Environment

TAHC Server Hardware Environment

TAHCs' computing environment has made progress since the last legislative session. The previous TAHC Macintosh server environment now consists of twenty-five servers. Of these, thirteen are located in the Austin Central office and twelve are located in TAHC Area and Laboratory offices. TAHC has acquired and deployed six Red Hat Linux servers, a SUN server hosting a Sybase database, and four Windows 2003 servers in the Austin Central Office. There remain two Macintosh servers. There are twelve servers in the TAHC Area and laboratory offices. Of these twelve servers, three are Windows 2003 and the other nine are Macintosh emacs. The field's Macintosh servers are well past the normal expectation for useful life.

TAHC Software Environment

The agency uses Microsoft Office XP as its productivity suite. TAHC has not been able to fund the Microsoft License and Service Agreement and the suite remains at the XP (2002) version. In addition, other productivity applications are used. These include Adobe Acrobat, Microsoft Visio, Microsoft Project, Street Atlas, and others.

Most of the software applications used by TAHCs' core animal health programs were custom applications developed several years ago, which although maintained, cannot be upgraded to

better utilize current technology and tools; many of these custom applications are beyond their life cycle and should be redeveloped to resolve issues of outdated tools or the need for greater functionality. TAHC presently has three primary databases: MySQL, SQL Server, and Sybase.

Geographic Information System (GIS)

Presently TAHC owns a workstation, plotter, Arcview software license, and maps stored on a portable hard drive. Addressing updated and sufficient equipment issues is important to a well-defined emergency response. Emergency Management is the driving force to improve GIS resources for TAHC. As funding becomes available, various initiatives will be addressed.

Desktops, Laptops, and E-Mail

In late 2003 and early in 2004, the agency was able to utilize one-time homeland security funding from USDA to convert from an Apple Macintosh environment to a PC environment. This funding did not allow for a refresh of aging equipment. Nor was capital authority available to facilitate the purchase of new equipment. With capital authority being granted by the 80th legislature the process of upgrading computing hardware and software was begun.

The TAHC authorized employee limit is 209 employees. In late 2003 and early 2004 TAHC purchased approximately 180 laptop and desktop computers. TAHC has begun the process of lifecycle replacing ninety-five percent of its laptops and desktops.

During the initial stages of email, TAHC installed Postfix, an open source POP3 protocol e-mail system. The email client installed on desktops and laptops is Eudora. SpamAssassin is a tool used to filter e-mail. Webmail PHP allows Internet access to e-mail on the TAHC mail server. MeetingMaker is the shared calendaring system.

TAHC has adopted Blackberry PDA's as a tool for communications and emergency management. It is important to upgrade the previous e-mail environment to improve communications and standardize the TAHC computing environment. Thus, TAHC is now beginning to focus on an upgrade to its e-mail system.

Computer Room

TAHC's Data Center operations are not included, with the twenty-seven largest agencies, in the Texas Data Center project. Originally, TAHC's Computer Room supported a few small computers. Due to insufficient budget, TAHC did not perform needed upgrades as the computing environment grew. Implementation of proper operating methods for securing TAHC data resources requires additional funding and a variety of new equipment.

V. Impact of Federal Statutes/Regulations

The USDA, through its *Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Uniform Methods and Rules*, and national program standards, requires state programs to include specific minimum elements for disease control and eradication. A state may enact more stringent regulations if needed to prevent or control diseases. All states are expected to collaboratively participate in cooperative disease control and eradication programs or face significant animal movement restrictions from USDA and other states. Movement restrictions would significantly reduce the marketability of Texas animals and increase the cost of market access.

TAHC and USDA-APHIS-VS cooperatively address a number of diseases, as detailed in the following federal regulations:

- Brucellosis (9 CFR, Parts 51 and 78)
- Tuberculosis (9 CFR, Parts 50 and 77)
- Pseudorabies (9 CFR, Parts 52 and 85)
- Fever Ticks (9 CFR, Part 72; 7 CFR, Part 2.80)
- Equine Infectious Anemia (9 CFR, Part 75)
- Johne's disease (9 CFR, Part 80)
- National Poultry Improvement Plan (9 CFR, Part 145 and 147)
- Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs):
  - Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (9 CFR, Parts 93, 94, 95, 96)
  - Scrapie in sheep and goats (9 CFR, Parts 54 and 79)
  - Chronic Wasting Disease in cervids (9 CFR, Part 55)

New national disease control programs, emergency management responsibilities, and trade agreements with foreign countries have a significant impact on TAHC. These new or expanded programs continue to stretch TAHC's already stressed resources to their limits. TAHC is expected to continue to protect Texas' animal industries from incursions of disease and ectoparasites from other states and countries and to be prepared to respond effectively to any accidental or intentional introduction of animal disease agents or animal pests.

After losing its accredited free TB status in 2002, TAHC worked to find any remaining tuberculosis infected cattle herds. This effort included improved slaughter surveillance, testing of breeding cattle exported from the state, increased whole herd testing (dairy and seedstock herds), and increased efforts to reduce exposure from Mexican origin cattle (feeder cattle and rodeo/roping cattle).

To regain credibility with trading partners and to identify any remaining TB infection in the state, Texas tested all dairies in the state for TB and tested over 2,000 purebred or seed stock herds, using mostly federal funds to support this effort. Through these efforts, Texas was able to regain accredited free TB status in the fall of 2006.

Significant TB problems currently exist in a number of other states. Because of these problems TAHC has imposed additional TB program testing and identification requirements on dairy cattle. These TB issues in other states cause increased workload for TAHC to trace and test animals that may have been exposed to disease. Current USDA interstate and international TB rules are outdated and in need of upgrading. USDA is expected to publish new proposed domestic and international TB rules in late 2008 or early 2009. If adopted, these new rules will likely require updating of TAHC rules and could impact agency workload. Additionally, it is anticipated that both New Mexico and California will lose their TB "free" status in 2008, which will require further due diligence by TAHC staff at markets and trade avenues for cattle across the state.

In February 2008 USDA granted Brucellosis Free Status to the State of Texas. This is a significant accomplishment that took many years of hard work and dedication by the cattle industry, countless hours by state and federal animal health staff and many millions of dollars in industry, state and federal funding. The fact that Texas has achieved free status does not mean that we can stop doing brucellosis work. The national brucellosis program standards provide

that states continue all the brucellosis program elements for at least two years after the state achieves free status. For Texas this means that, if the state can maintain its free status, the first point testing program could be stopped during 2010. Other elements of the program, such as milk surveillance testing and slaughter testing will be continued for years to come in order to assure that any remaining or introduced infection could be identified. Changes in the brucellosis program after two years of free status will enable the agency to shift some human and fiscal resources to other animal health program elements.

National industry and animal health groups are urging that additional national programs be developed, including a national CWD control program for cervids, a Johne's disease control program for cattle, a program for the monitoring and control of Low-Pathogenic Avian Influenza in poultry, and a national EIA program. The development of a program requirement to manage the interface between feral swine and domestic swine has been recently added to existing program standards for the PRV Eradication Program.

The 80th Legislature provided authority to the agency (HB2543) to regulate feral swine for disease control purposes. The agency is authorized to regulate holding facilities, feral swine movements and tests and testing for diseases of concern. The agency is in the process of developing rules for implementation of the provisions of HB2543.

Poultry diseases have assumed an increasingly important position in the past several years. Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT) is a continual animal health issue in poultry in Texas. Texas has experienced two outbreaks of Low Pathogenic Avian Influenza (LPAI), one episode of Exotic Newcastle Disease (END), and one episode of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) during the last six years. END and HPAI are foreign animal diseases and these disease outbreaks affected the marketability of poultry and poultry products for Texas and the entire US. Expansion of poultry disease surveillance requirements is anticipated during the next year or two due to the concern about H5N1 HPAI around the world. Additional state resource needs are anticipated.

Cattle Fever Tick incursions into areas outside the Cattle Fever Tick Eradication Quarantine Area have resulted in extraordinary efforts to contain and eliminate the fever tick outbreaks. Fever tick infestations resulted in formation of three Temporary Preventive Quarantine Areas in the formerly fever tick free areas of Starr County, Zapata County and the three county area of Dimmitt, Webb and Maverick Counties. These temporary preventive quarantine areas were imposed in an effort to contain the movement of fever ticks and enable eradication of the outbreaks. The number of fever tick infested premises has been at the highest level since the 1970s. TAHC and the USDA Tick Force requested additional funding to cover the costs of the expanding fever tick problem. USDA received an additional $5.23 million in March 2008 to aid in addressing the outbreak. This level of funding is inadequate to address the longstanding shortfall in federal funding for the fever tick program. TAHC received an additional $150,000 in general revenue funds for each year of the biennium to aid in the fever tick program efforts. The allocation for 2008 was expended to provide additional treatment product. The agency will request additional state resources during the next biennium. USDA agency management staff has questioned the level of state support for the fever tick program and has implied that funding should be on a 50/50 cost share basis. If USDA insists on this level of cost share, the cost of the fever tick program to TAHC would increase significantly.

VI. Other Legal Issues

Major needs were addressed in the sunset bill (HB2543) during the 80th legislative session. There are no major legislative needs at this time.

VII. Self-Evaluation and Opportunities for Improvement

As documented elsewhere in this strategic plan, Texas achieved Brucellosis Free Status in February of 2008. If the state is able to maintain this free status, the agency will be able to shift some of its human and fiscal resources to other animal health program and animal emergency management priorities. This shifting will occur slowly and over time, because of the requirements to continue brucellosis surveillance for a number of years into the future. First-point testing could be discontinued during 2010.

The responsibilities of TAHC have significantly increased as programs for disease control and surveillance have expanded, animal and premises identification systems have been initiated, and participation in emergency planning and response activities impacting animal health require more agency resources. Additionally, new disease challenges are emerging. Some are domestic diseases that are increasing in significance. Others are foreign diseases that may be imported as result of the exponential increases in international importations of animals and animal products. Our industries and our economy are threatened by diseases and pests that heretofore we only read about in disease text books or heard about in lectures. These new challenges will demand an expansion of expertise, dedication, commitment and resources if we are to be successful in addressing them.

A. Staffing and Resource Needs

Many of the animal disease control programs entrusted to TAHC are cooperative disease control programs with USDA. Traditionally, TAHC and USDA have jointly conducted these programs with a combination of state and federal staff. In recent years, USDA has experienced budget and staff reductions similar to cutbacks at the state level. In order for USDA to effectively respond to incursions of foreign animal diseases, it must detail staff from many states to outbreak areas. For example, in federal fiscal year 2003, Texas-based USDA staff was deployed to outbreak sites outside Texas 16% of the year. TAHC staff has had to take up the slack to perform animal disease activities in Texas that would have normally been performed by USDA staff. This type of deployment of USDA personnel from Texas is expected to continue whenever there are significant disease outbreaks anywhere in the country.

Since 1999, there have been seven foreign animal diseases diagnosed within the United States (West Nile Virus, Exotic Newcastle Disease, High Pathogenic Avian Influenza, Hemorrhagic Disease of Rabbits, Monkey Pox, Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, and Wildebeest Associated Malignant Catarrhal Fever). Unfortunately, there does not appear to be an end in sight for outbreaks of foreign or domestic diseases and these diverse activities related to disease control and eradication. All indicators suggest that Texas, like other states, will continue to see incursion of foreign and emerging diseases. TAHC anticipates that there will be expanded demands for additional disease surveillance and certification processes from trading partners who buy Texas animals and products.

Additionally, the state daily faces the threat of intentional introduction of a disease or agent. Texas is number one in the nation for cattle production and for sheep and goat production. The state also ranks high in equine production, swine production, poultry production, and has a very large and diverse exotic wildlife population. These factors make Texas an exceptionally vulnerable target. Texas also has a very long international land border and coast line that has historically not been a deterrent to illegal entry of animals or people.

Adequate funding is critical for TAHC to effectively perform the myriad animal health programs – particularly the Brucellosis First-Point Testing Program, the Fever Tick eradication program, and the TB program.

A number of future opportunities for TAHC are as follows:

Homeland Security and Emergency Management
TAHC staff will continue to develop and to strengthen working relationships with local government entities, Councils of Government and livestock industries in regard to homeland security and emergency management activities. As the lead state agency for animal-in-disaster issues, both the Department of Homeland Security and the Governor's Division of Emergency Management expect TAHC to work closely with its local, state, federal and industry partners to develop biosecurity protocols, complete vulnerability assessments, and refine animal disaster prevention and response plans.

Animal Disease Surveillance and Identification and Management of Emerging Diseases
There will be an opportunity to develop and implement a comprehensive animal disease surveillance system that will likely replace the current system which is comprised of multiple single disease surveillance programs. This effort has been initiated by USDA and will be put in place in the states. The surveillance system is designed to enable monitoring for many different diseases and compiling data to enable strategic planning for prevention, management, control or elimination of animal diseases. The system should be an early warning system for foreign and emerging diseases as well as a diagnostic tool to identify reoccurrence of old diseases.

Management of Diseases in Wild and Free-ranging Animals
Many of the regulatory livestock diseases have wild or feral animals as biological hosts. Examples include Brucellosis (bison and elk), Bovine Tuberculosis (White-Tail Deer), Swine Brucellosis and Pseudorabies (feral swine), Fever Ticks (White-Tail Deer, Elk, Nilgai), Avian Influenza (Migratory Waterfowl).

TAHC has authority to address diseases in livestock, exotic livestock, poultry and exotic fowl regardless of the species of animal in which the disease is found. If the agency is to effectively address diseases that affect both wild and domestic animals, it must forge effective cooperative relationships with other state agencies, particularly the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Inspection Fees and Fee Revenue
During the 78th Legislative Session, House Bill 3442 was passed to provide authority to TAHC to "charge a fee for inspections conducted by the agency." In the 79th Legislative Session, House Bill 1361 was passed to assist the implementation of NAIS in Texas and to authorize TAHC to develop a rule to collect a premises registration fee; in the same session, House Bill 1363 was passed to allow the Commission, by rule, to determine the fee for certificates of veterinary inspection. The Commission has enacted rules related to certificates of veterinary inspection; but, because of the resistance to the National Animal Identification System, both by members of

the legislature and by industry members, the agency does not have rules related to Texas' participation in the National Animal Identification System (NAIS).

B. Animal Disease Control and Eradication Programs

TAHC is engaged in many animal health programs beyond surveillance, control, and eradication of Bovine Brucellosis, Bovine Tuberculosis, and other bovine diseases such as Johne's Disease and Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE). TAHC is additionally charged to continue many other surveillance, control, and eradication programs, including but not limited to:

- Avian Diseases (e.g., Avian Influenza (AI), Exotic Newcastle Disease (END), Pullorum-Typhoid (PT), Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT)) and Programs (e.g. the Fowl Registration Program)
- Swine Diseases (e.g., Brucellosis, Aujeszky's Disease (Pseudorabies), Classical Swine Fever (CSF)) and Programs (e.g. the Waste Food Feeder Permit Program and the Feral Swine Holding Facility Permit Program)
- Equine Diseases (e.g., Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA), Vesicular Stomatitis (VS), and West Nile Virus (WNV))
- Sheep and Goat Diseases (e.g., Scrapie, Brucellosis, and Tuberculosis)
- Exotic Livestock Diseases (e.g., Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), Brucellosis, and Tuberculosis)
- Texas Fever Ticks and naturally occurring Anthrax
- Animal Disease Surveillance and Reporting of Emerging Diseases and Zoonotic Diseases
- Emergency Management (e.g., Animal Disease Preparedness and Response, Natural Disaster Preparedness and Response, and Agroterrorism)
- Laboratory, Epidemiology, and Diagnostics
- National Animal Identification System

Appendix F – Agency Workforce Plan to this Strategic Plan summarizes the myriad animal health programs, initiatives, and projects that TAHC staff are tasked to perform. The animal health programs described are not organized by priority, but are listed to provide additional summary level information about each program. The current priorities of the agency are: (1) to conduct tuberculosis and brucellosis surveillance at a high level to assure complete eradication of these diseases and conform to program standards; (2) to eliminate fever tick outbreaks and protect against re-establishment of fever ticks; (3) to prepare for avian influenza and ensure that our first-responder staff are appropriately equipped with personal protective equipment (PPE); and (4) to adequately staff the agency's growing emergency management function.

C. Regionalization

Regionalization issues will continue to redefine both suppliers and markets. "Disease not known to exist in this region" and "Disease known NOT to exist in this region" are two vastly different and important marketing statements. Today's livestock marketing requires a global perspective and requires statistically significant active surveillance thus allowing one to say that disease is known not to exist in this region. The World Trade Organization and NAFTA signatory countries, under the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures, are committed to recognizing disease-free or low disease incidence areas by adapting sanitary requirements to the health conditions from which a live animal or product originates. This is the basis for regionalization of disease risks in order to minimize disruption caused by unexpected disease outbreaks. States and countries may be divided into "regions" that are evaluated for the existence or non-existence of disease. The basic infrastructure of

practicing veterinarians and animal regulatory agencies that conduct surveillance to prevent, diagnose, control, and eradicate diseases and exotic pests must be supported by a competent and efficient individual animal identification system in order to support creditable animal health status claims.

TAHC, through its trained and experienced workforce, currently provides the necessary infrastructure that provides assurances needed for both domestic and international trade. As diseases are eradicated and within the limitation of current resources, TAHC will continue to address trade issues by utilizing surveillance to document that a disease is known NOT to exist in our region; however, enhancement of our animal identification and traceability system will need to occur to meet growing marketplace and international demands for process verification and disease traceability assurance.

D. Interagency Partnerships

TAHC has partnered with other state and federal agencies to address the needs of Texas producers and emergency management issues. Additional partnerships will be essential to provide efficient government service.

Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) TAHC and TDA are both committed to enhancing marketability and mobility of Texas livestock and the agencies cooperate on matters of joint interest concerning animal health, animal production, and marketing of Texas livestock. The two agencies agree to coordinate available resources and expertise to make international movement of healthy livestock easier.

Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) (Zoonosis Control Division and Meat Safety Assurance Division) TAHC and the Zoonosis Control Division and the Meat Safety Assurance Division of the DSHS are encouraging interagency interaction, cooperation, collaboration on common interests and challenges and exchange of information related to zoonotic diseases and animal disease issues of mutual interest. The two agencies continue to seek ways to promote a greater sense of unity, mutual support, and purpose.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) TAHC and TPWD share similar interests regarding animal health in Texas, specifically working on integrated strategies to manage the threats posed by fever ticks, CWD and TB to the Texas wildlife and the captive deer and elk industries. The two agencies share information and are working to develop improved interaction where the two agencies have complementary missions. TAHC provides training to TPWD cadets on diseases and agency regulations and TPWD has provided training to TAHC Compliance staff on effective investigative techniques.

Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (TVMDL) TAHC utilizes TVMDL services to minimize duplication, assure cost effectiveness, and ensure that all possible testing is performed in Texas. TVMDL is a member of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network, and as such, provides diagnostic services to TAHC and USDA in response to a foreign or emerging animal disease outbreak. The two agencies also work cooperatively to develop enhanced diagnostic infrastructure as well as to control and eradicate pullorum disease and fowl typhoid and other diseases in poultry and to implement other provisions of NPIP.

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) During the 78th Regular Legislative Session House Bill 3061 was passed and signed by the Governor which provides that TCEQ may not adopt a rule related to the disposal of livestock unless the rule is developed in

cooperation with and approved by the Texas Animal Health Commission. In addition, TCEQ is a key participant in animal health emergency planning and response activities.

Texas Department of Public Safety (TDPS) TAHC has an MOU with TDPS. TAHC has provided training documents for TDPS officers about TAHC regulations, and how to review health papers and permits required for entry of livestock into the state. TAHC conducts follow-up investigations whenever possible entry violations are reported by TDPS officers. TAHC notifies TDPS, when appropriate, of the location of Commission roadblocks or when special or night operations are conducted.

Governor's Division of Emergency Management (GDEM) TAHC is a member of the State Emergency Management Council, the State Emergency Response Team (SERT), and the DPS Disaster District Committees (DDCs) located throughout the State. As such, agency personnel work closely with GDEM to prepare for and respond to local government and state-level emergencies and disasters involving animals. As part of the emergency response system, TAHC will work with the Texas Homeland Security Council to address issues identified by them.

Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (TSBVME) While TAHC depends on the veterinary practitioner to recognize or diagnose regulatory diseases and report them to TAHC, the TSBVME ensures that only licensed veterinarians perform veterinary services, and that they perform them in accordance with appropriate standards.

Texas A&M University System (TAMU) TAHC staff provide training for students of the College of Veterinary Medicine. Staff of the College of Veterinary Medicine provides consultation concerning the efficacy of veterinary biologics. The Office of the Texas State Chemist works to protect Texas consumers and to help maintain an equitable marketplace for feed and fertilizer manufacturers. The National Center for Foreign Animal and Zoonotic Disease Defense (FAZD) and the Institute for Counter-measures Against Bioterrorism (ICAB) leverage TAMU resources to partner with TAHC and other state and federal partners to provide educational, research initiatives, and database/modeling systems to supplement and support existing emergency response plans.

Texas Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) In prior years, TAHC was designated as the lead agency for the agricultural assessment required for the state to be eligible for federal homeland security funding related to agriculture. TAHC worked with the College of Veterinary Medicine, TDA, DSHS, TVMDL, and USDA to complete the agriculture assessment. In 2006, the oversight of homeland security funding from the federal government to the state has moved from TEEX to GDEM.

TAHC has partnered with TAMU and Texas Veterinary Medical Association (TVMA) on a joint application for federal funding for homeland security issues to enhance the capability of the State of Texas to rapidly respond to terrorist incidents affecting the agriculture industry.

Texas Agrilife Extension Service (TAES) The TAES educates Texans in the areas of agriculture, environmental stewardship, youth and adult life skills, human capital and leadership, and community economic development. TAHC draws on and benefits greatly from the educational effort of the Extension Service in the area of animal health. TAHC is also an available resource for extension agents to use in conducting their programs.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)-Veterinary Services (VS) TAHC works hand in hand with USDA-APHIS-VS. The

missions of each are very closely related, with primary responsibility to safeguard resources from exotic invasive pests and diseases and to monitor and manage pests and diseases existing within our borders. Through cooperative agreements (federal funding), the federal agency is able to enhance its federal program accomplishments while its funding supplements the dollars allocated to TAHC through state funding.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) TAHC is dependent upon and works closely with USDA-FSIS to monitor for disease via the inspection of carcasses and the collection of samples at slaughter plants for disease testing. This surveillance program becomes even more important in the post eradication surveillance phase for diseases such as bovine brucellosis, tuberculosis and TSE's.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) NRCS partners with TAHC in a variety of response and recovery issues during natural and disease related disasters to protect soil, water, and other resources as necessary. NRCS and TAHC have worked cooperatively in recent disasters to support Texas livestock and poultry producers with carcass disposal and damage assessment issues. NRCS may also have a role in the fever tick eradication program by supporting brush control, improved grazing management and construction of game proof fencing.

VIII. Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBS)

The agency prepares and distributes information on procurement procedures in a manner that encourages participation in agency contracts by all businesses. The agency has a toll free telephone number available for use by all interested vendors to inquire about upcoming bids and forum opportunities. The agency uses the Texas Procurement and Support Services (TPASS) Centralized Master Bidders List/Historically Underutilized Business (CMBL/HUB) directory as its primary source for notification of procurement-related activities and opportunities. The agency posts bid information on the Electronic State Business Daily (ESBD), State Procurement Section of the Texas Marketplace, for procurement opportunities expected to cost $25,000 or more.

All specifications for bids are written to ensure the commodity or service is well defined and complies with industry standards and competitive bid requirements. Delivery schedules are verified to ensure they are reasonable and consistent with the agency's needs. Specifications are reviewed to ensure the requirements, terms, and conditions are clearly stated, reflect the agency's actual requirements, and do not impose unreasonable or unnecessary contract requirements.

TAHC has a HUB policy fully consistent with, and in support of, the mission, goals, and objectives established for Texas HUBs by TPASS for all bid solicitations as well as all competitive Requests for Proposals (RFP), Requests for Offers (RFO), and Requests for Qualifications (RFQ). HUB Sub-contracting Plans (HSPs) are required for all competitive solicitations of $100,000 or more and are strongly encouraged, but not required, for solicitations less than $100,000. The majority of TAHC HUB awards are for professional services, commodities, and for other services.

The agency is committed to encouraging and promoting HUB participation through actively soliciting HUBs in future competitive solicitations and through continuing its participation in

state-wide outreach activities. Solicitation instruments summarize TPASS's HUB goals and guides potential vendors to TPASS so that those eligible for HUB status may complete the TPASS application process and become certified as a HUB. The agency's RFP Guide and contract models include sections that spotlight the importance of HUB participation by qualified vendors in all competitive procurement processes. Historically, TAHC has not expended funds in heavy construction or building construction as the mission of the agency does not lend itself to expenditures for goods or services in these categories.

The agency has established a Mentor-Protégé Program, as required by Senate Bill 178, 76th Legislative Session, to provide contractors with a referenced list of certified HUBs for subcontracting. TAHC's program is also designed to help purchasers and other interested agency employees with the identification of qualified and certified HUB contractors and subcontractors in their geographic region. This program also matches HUB subcontractors with non-HUB prime contractors. Each formal bid invitation includes information declaring the agency's good faith effort to reach established HUB goals.

The Mentor-Protégé Program requires TPASS to design this program to foster long-term relationships between prime contractors and HUBs and to increase the ability of HUBs to contract with the state or to receive subcontracts under a state contract.

TAHC has adjusted its contracting goals for the HUB groups that were not underutilized. The agency strives to meet the overall or "unadjusted" goals under the disparity study.

Program on Subcontracting

Each written bid invitation includes documentation which explains the TAHC Historically Underutilized Business outreach and Good Faith Effort Program (GFEP).

All solicitations valued at $100,000 or more, whether via bids, RFPs, RFOs, or RFQs, require a HUB Subcontracting Plan (HSP) by all responding vendors. Additionally, TAHC RFP, RFQ, and RFO instruments include instructions for responding vendors to access TPASS's Centralized Master Bidders List (CMBL) so they may actively contact qualified HUB vendors who might provide subcontracting for the primary vendor based on relevant NIGP Class and Item commodity codes. Failure of a responding vendor to include a HSP when one is required is deemed by TAHC as a material failure to comply with the advertised specifications and disqualifies that responding vendor from receiving an award from the solicitation. Responses may also be rejected if the TAHC evaluation team determines that the HSP was not developed in good faith. However, the success or failure of the prime contractor to subcontract with HUBs in any specific quantity is not indicative of whether the contractor made a good faith effort.

The documentation explains specific goals, and declares that prime contractors are required to assist in the effort to reach or exceed these goals. If the prime contractor plans to use a subcontractor in conjunction with the contract, the agency requires the prime contractor to provide a list of HUB subcontractors who will be used and a completed HUB checklist which delineates specific steps the prime contractor took to make a good faith effort.

At the time of award, if the prime contractor has declared subcontracting will be done with HUBs, the agency's HUB Coordinator works directly with the Prime Contractor to establish procedures to ensure compliance with HUB reporting requirements.

Specific Programs

• The Mentor-Protégé Program matches HUBs and non-HUB contractors for potential subcontracting opportunities. This program also aids TAHC staff in identifying HUBs with whom to do business.
• Contractor and Vendor Outreach: TAHC Purchasing staff members participate in forums sponsored by business organizations, trade associations, special interest groups, and state agencies, such as the Economic Opportunity Forums sponsored by TPASS, to educate minority and woman-owned businesses about how they can earn more business with the State of Texas.
• Marketing Efforts: Bid advertisements are placed in minority and woman-owned newspapers from time to time to reach prospective vendors. These ads publicize the goods and services most frequently purchased by the agency and provide vendors with agency contact information.

Agency Goals, Objectives, Outcome Measures, Strategies, and Other Measures

Goal 01 – Protect/Enhance Texas Animal Health

To protect and enhance the health of Texas animal populations, facilitating productivity and marketability while sustaining reduced human health risks.

Objective 01-01

To minimize the impact of disease on Texas animal populations by maintaining or reducing known levels of diseases; and to enhance preparedness for emergency response by increasing staff activities devoted to emergency preparedness annually.

Outcome Measures

01-01.01	OC	Percent change in known prevalence of bovine brucellosis from the 1994 level
01-01.02	OC	Percent change in known prevalence of bovine tuberculosis from the 1994 level
01-01.03	OC	Percent change in known prevalence of swine brucellosis and pseudorabies from the 1994 level
01-01.04	OC	Percent change in known prevalence of equine infectious anemia from the 1994 level
01-01.05	OC	Percent change in the number of surveillance and enforcement activities
01-01.06	OC	Percent change in diseases and pests of animal health significance detected

Strategy 01-01-01 – Field Operations

Monitor, control and/or eradicate diseases and infestations through statewide field based animal health management and assurance programs.

Output Measures

01-01-01.01	OP	Number of livestock shipments inspected
01-01-01.02	OP	Number of surveillance inspections conducted
01-01-01.03	OP	Number of cases identified for evaluation and tracing to herds or flocks of origin
01-01-01.04	OP	Number of cases identified for determination of presence or absence of disease
01-01-01.05	OP	Number of herd management documents developed
01-01-01.06	OP	Number of animal movement records processed

01-01-01.07	OP	Emergency management response hours
01-01-01.08	OP	Number of foreign animal disease contacts and consultations

Efficiency Measures

01-01-01.01	EF	Average number of days from date of disclosure of suspicious case to location of herd or flock of origin
01-01-01.02	EF	Average number of days from identification of herd or flock to diagnosis

Explanatory Measure

01-01-01.01	EX	Number of restricted movement permits issued
01-01-01.02	EX	Percent of time in emergency preparedness training and activities
01-01-01.03	EX	Emergency management preparation hours

Strategy 01-01-02 – Diagnostic/Epidemiological Support

Provide epidemiological expertise, serological testing, microbiological confirmation, and parasite identification services for diseases and parasitisms of regulatory importance to the animal agriculture industries in Texas.

Output Measures

01-01-02.01	OP	Number of specimens processed through the State/Federal Cooperative Laboratory System
01-01-02.02	OP	Number of epidemiological investigation reviews completed
01-01-02.03	OP	Number of epidemiological consultations

Efficiency Measure

01-01-02.01	EF	Average time to conduct an epidemiological consultation

Strategy 01-01-03 – Promote Compliance

Promote voluntary compliance with legal requirements by providing education or information, and to resolve violations through effective use of legal enforcement and compliance activities.

Output Measures

01-01-03.01	OP	Number of compliance actions completed
01-01-03.02	OP	Number of compliance investigations conducted
01-01-03.03	OP	Number of hours expended in providing public information activities

Efficiency Measure

01-01-03.01	EF	Average number of days to complete a compliance action

Goal 02 – Historically Underutilized Businesses

The agency will continue to establish and carry out policies governing purchasing and contracting that foster meaningful and substantive inclusion of Historically Underutilized Businesses.

Objective 02-01

To include HUBs in the following percentages of the total value of contracts including subcontracts awarded annually by the agency in purchasing and contracting.

Procurement Category	HUB Goal
Special Trade	25%
Professional Services	95%
Other Services	15%
Commodity Purchasing	10%

Outcome Measure

02-01.01	OC	Percentage of total dollar value of purchasing, contracts, and subcontracts awarded to HUBs

Strategy 02-01-01 – Historically Underutilized Businesses

Continue to develop and implement plans to increase the use of HUBs through purchasing contracts and subcontracts

Output Measures

02-01-01.01	OP	Number of purchase orders issued directly to HUB vendors
02-01-01.02	OP	Number of contracts with HUB subcontracting
02-01-01.03	OP	Number of HUB forums attended
02-01-01.04	OP	Number of internal agency HUB training sessions conducted

Explanatory Measures

02-01-01.01	EX	Total agency dollars spent in HUB Procurement Categories
02-01-01.02	EX	Number of HUB Subcontracting dollars

Appendix A – Description of Agency Planning Process

The agency maintains on-going interaction with industry groups, producers, veterinarians, other government agencies, and other entities involved in animal health management activities. TAHC Commissioners are appointed to represent various stakeholders. All of these entities provide continual input on the agency's direction.

Each biennium, the strategic planning structure--goal, objective, strategies, and performance measures--is reviewed by agency management with input from TAHC Commissioners, agency staff, and industry groups.

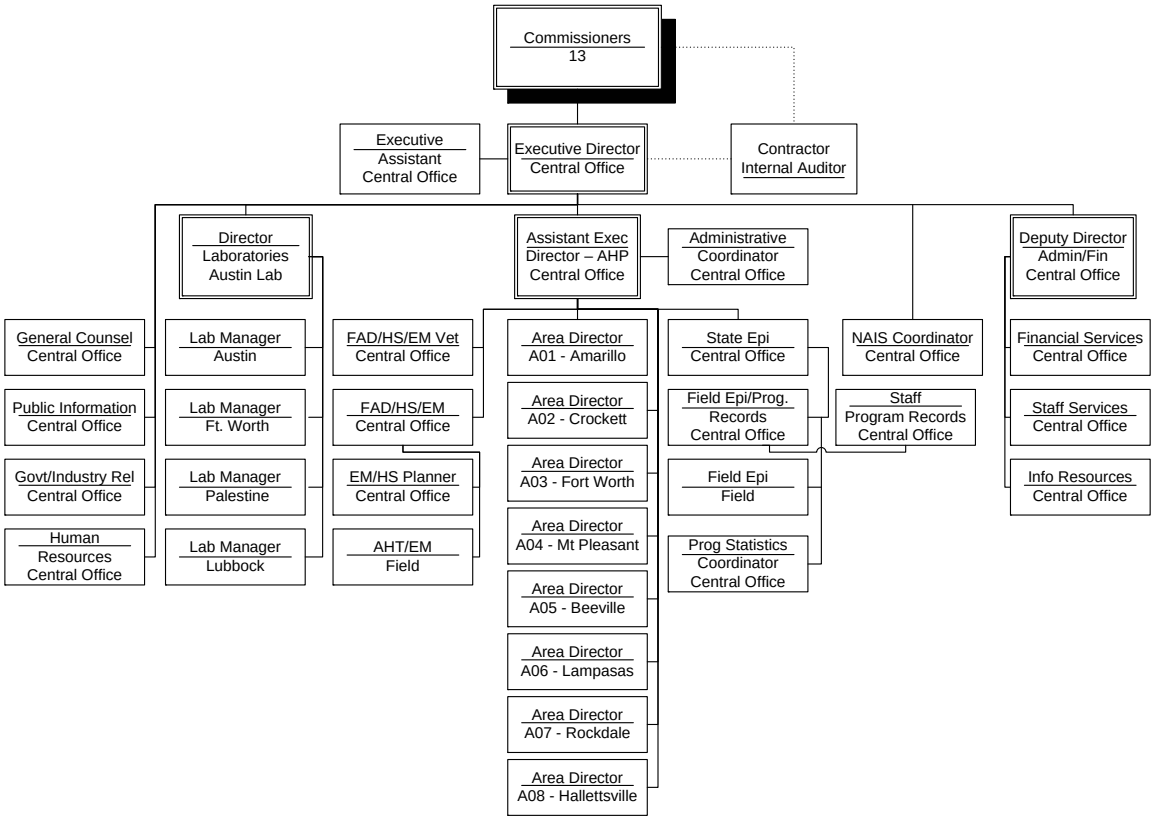
The Executive Advisory Team reviewed the agency's budget structure and suggested revising the budget structure to include a strategy for Emergency Management;

Upon reviewing the agency vision, mission, and philosophy statements, the Executive Advisory Team approved them without changes. The Team then thoroughly discussed and reviewed the agency direct strategies and prioritized the agency's work within those strategies for inclusion in this plan's External/Internal Assessment section. The agency's indirect strategies were reviewed within the context of planning for and anticipating resources required to adequately support the direct strategies.

The input collected from the variety of resources mentioned above was used to update and revise the previous Strategic Plan to develop the formal 2009 – 2013 Agency Strategic Plan. The input was invaluable in assessing where we have been, and where we are going. The process identified several emerging issues the agency will face in the future, which helped to identify ways that the agency can prepare for change and begin planning for the development of our Legislative Appropriations Request.

Appendix B – Agency Organizational Chart

Texas Animal Health Commission
Fiscal Year 2008



Appendix C – Five-Year Projections for Agency Outcome Measures

Outcome		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
01-01.01	Percent change in known prevalence of bovine brucellosis from the 1994 level	-100.00%	-100.00%	-100.00%	-100.00%	-100.00%
01-01.02	Percent change in known prevalence of bovine tuberculosis from the 1994 level	-100.00	-100.00%	-100.00%	-100.00%	-100.00%
01-01.03	Percent change in known prevalence of swine brucellosis and pseudorabies from the 1994 level	-75.00%	-80.00%	-85.00%	-85.00%	-85.00%
01-01.04	Percent change in known prevalence of equine infectious anemia from the 1994 level	-89.21%	-89.47%	-89.74%	-91.79%	-92.11%
01-01.05	Percent change in the number of surveillance and enforcement activities	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
01-01.06	Percent change in diseases and pests of animal health significance detected	-5.00%	-5.00%	-5.00%	-10.00%	-10.00%

Appendix D – Agency Performance Measure Definitions

The agency utilizes five automated systems to collect data related to performance reporting. Rather than duplicating this information throughout the document, it is presented here once. The individual measures refer to the system(s) used to calculate performance.

Generic Database (**GDB**), developed and owned by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, tracks individual animals and herds tested in national disease eradication programs. The data is collected on a variety of USDA and TAHC forms completed by state and federal employees and private practice veterinarians. Both state and federal employees maintain and update the data.

The Profiler System, developed by the TAHC, tracks summary information on herds managed under regulatory control due to a disease program. The data is collected on a variety of USDA and TAHC forms completed by state and federal employees and private practice veterinarians. TAHC personnel maintain and update the data.

The Human Resources Information System (**HRIS**), developed and owned by the TAHC, tracks information relating to the work performed by the agency's field force. The data can be analyzed by area, employee, location, species, disease, activity, and project. The data is collected on a TAHC form 98-33 (Travel Continuation Form) completed by specified field personnel. TAHC personnel maintain and update the data.

The Permit Tracker System (**PTS**), developed and owned by the TAHC, tracks all interstate entry permits issued and verified by TAHC personnel. TAHC personnel maintain and update the data.

The Laboratory System (**Lab**), developed and owned by the TAHC, tracks all samples tested. The data is collected on a variety of USDA and TAHC forms completed by state and federal employees and private practice veterinarians. TAHC laboratory personnel maintain and update the data.

The Legal and Compliance Access database, developed by the TAHC, tracks violations of agency regulations and actions taken. The data is collected on a TAHC form 98-44 (Compliance Action Request) completed by TAHC and DPS staff. TAHC central office personnel maintain and update the data.

Outcome Measures

Outcome 01-01.01	Percent change in known prevalence of bovine brucellosis from the 1994 level

Short Definition: The decrease in the 12 month accumulative number of known infected herds expressed as a percentage of the 12 month accumulative number of known infected herds for the base year of 1994.
Purpose/Importance: This measure provides an indication of the extent to which the agency's efforts have identified and reduced the incidence of bovine brucellosis in Texas.
Source/Collection of Data: Generic Database **(**GDB)--when a bovine herd is determined to be infected with brucellosis, a disease quarantine is issued. The disease quarantine is entered into the GDB status table by Area office personnel with a status code of 'Infect'. A herd remains on the Accumulative Herd list for twelve months after the last reactor is removed.
Method of Calculation: A percentage is obtained by dividing the difference between the 12 month accumulative number of known bovine brucellosis infected herds for the current year and the 12 month accumulative number of known bovine brucellosis infected herds for the base year by the 12 month accumulative number of known bovine brucellosis infected herds for the base year.
Data Limitations: As programs succeed and we approach total disease eradication, the disclosure of even a small number of new cases can result in a significant variance from the target.
Calculation Type: Noncumulative
Desired Performance: Higher than target (Because the target is a negative number, 'higher than target' would be a larger negative number.)
New Measure: No
Key Measure: Yes

Outcome 01-01.02	Percent change in known prevalence of bovine tuberculosis from the 1994 level

Short Definition: The decrease in the 12 month accumulative number of known infected herds expressed as a percentage of the 12 month accumulative number of known infected herds for the base year of 1994.
Purpose/Importance: This measure provides an indication of the extent to which the agency's efforts have identified and reduced the incidence of bovine tuberculosis in Texas.
Source/Collection of Data: Generic Database (GDB)--when a bovine herd is determined to be infected with tuberculosis, a disease quarantine is issued. The disease quarantine is entered into the GDB status table by Area office personnel with a status code of 'Infect'. A herd remains on the Accumulative Herd list for twelve months after the last reactor is removed.
Method of Calculation: A percentage is obtained by dividing the difference between the 12 month accumulative number of known bovine tuberculosis infected herds for the current year and the 12 month accumulative number of known bovine tuberculosis infected herds for the base year by the 12 month accumulative number of known bovine tuberculosis infected herds for the base year.
Data Limitations: Due to the shared border with Mexico, which has a high incidence of TB, Texas may not be able to fully eradicate TB until Mexico reduces or eliminates this exposure. As programs succeed and we approach total disease eradication, the disclosure of even a small number of new cases can result in a significant variance from the target.
Calculation Type: Noncumulative
Desired Performance: Higher than target (Because the target is a negative number, 'higher than target' would be a larger negative number.)

New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Outcome 01-01.03	Percent change in known prevalence of swine brucellosis and pseudorabies from the 1994 level

Short Definition: The decrease in the 12 month accumulative number of known infected herds expressed as a percentage of the 12 month accumulative number of known infected herds for the base year of 1994.
Purpose/Importance: This measure provides an indication of the extent to which the agency's efforts have identified and reduced the incidence of swine brucellosis and pseudorabies in Texas.
Source/Collection of Data: Generic Database (GDB)--when a swine herd is determined to be infected with swine brucellosis or pseudorabies, a disease quarantine is issued. The disease quarantine is entered into the GDB status table by Area office personnel with a status code of 'Infect'. A herd remains on the Accumulative Herd list for twelve months after the last reactor is removed.
Method of Calculation: A percentage is obtained by dividing the difference between the 12 month accumulative number of known swine brucellosis and pseudorabies infected herds for the current year and the 12 month accumulative number of known swine brucellosis and pseudorabies infected herds for the base year by the 12 month accumulative number of known swine brucellosis and pseudorabies infected herds for the base year.
Data Limitations: Due to the feral (wild) swine population in Texas, which have a high incidence of disease, Texas will have to maintain a heightened level of vigilance to eradicate these diseases. As programs succeed and we approach total disease eradication, the disclosure of even a small number of new cases can result in a significant variance from the target.
Calculation Type: Noncumulative
Desired Performance: Higher than target (Because the target is a negative number, 'higher than target' would be a larger negative number.)
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Outcome 01-01.04	Percent change in known prevalence of equine infectious anemia from the 1994 level

Short Definition: The decrease in the 12 month accumulative number of known infected herds expressed as a percentage of the 12 month accumulative number of known infected herds for the base year of 1994.
Purpose/Importance: This measure provides an indication of the extent to which the agency's efforts have identified and reduced the incidence of equine infectious anemia in Texas.
Source/Collection of Data--Profiler--when an animal is determined to be infected with equine infectious anemia, a disease quarantine is issued. The disease quarantine is entered into Profiler by Area office personnel with an action code of 'QH' (quarantined herd).
Method of Calculation: A percentage is obtained by dividing the difference between the 12 month accumulative number of known equine infectious anemia infected herds for the current year and the 12 month accumulative number of known equine infectious anemia infected herds for the base year by the 12 month accumulative number of known equine infectious anemia infected herds for the base year.
Data Limitations: As programs succeed and we approach total disease eradication, the disclosure of even a small number of new cases can result in a significant variance from the target.
Calculation Type: Noncumulative

Desired Performance: Higher than target (Because the target is a negative number, 'higher than target' would be a larger negative number.)
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Outcome 01-01.05	Percent change in the number of surveillance and enforcement activities

Short Definition: The change in the 12 month accumulative number of surveillance and enforcement activities expressed as a percentage of the 12 month accumulative number of surveillance and enforcement activities in the previous year.
Purpose/Importance: This measure provides an indication of the extent to which the agency has continued the level of surveillance and prevention activities.
Source/Collection of Data: HRIS
Method of Calculation: A percentage is obtained by dividing the count of the number of instances of activity code 008 (Inspection performed) plus activity code 004 (parasite samples) for the current fiscal year by the same count for the previous fiscal year.
Data Limitations: Any disease outbreak would result in additional investigations for that disease, and/or a decrease in other disease inspections, and therefore create a variance from target.
Calculation Type: Noncumulative
Desired Performance: Higher than target, would indicate increased surveillance and improved chances of early detection of an outbreak.
New Measure: Yes
Key Measure: No

Outcome 01-01.06	Percent change in diseases and pests of animal health significance detected

Short Definition The change in the 12 month accumulative number of diseases and pests of animal health significance detected expressed as a percentage of the 12 month accumulative number of diseases and pests of animal health significance in the previous year.
Purpose/Importance: This measure provides an indication of the extent to which the agency's surveillance efforts have identified diseases and pests (will increase the percent) and eradication efforts have been successful in eliminating diseases and pests (will decrease the percent).
Source/Collections of Data: Profiler
Method of Calculation: A percentage is obtained by dividing the count the number of records with an action code of HO (Form TAHC 97-04, "Order to Hold Animals on Premises" – ie. Formal movement restriction document presented to producer to allow diagnostic process to be completed while minimizing possible disease transmission from herd in question) for the current fiscal year by the same count for the previous fiscal year.
Data Limitations: Any disease/pest outbreak would result in an increase in reportable diseases and pasts and therefore a variance from target.
Calculation Type: Noncumulative
Desired Performance: Lower than target
New Measure: Yes
Key Measure: No

Field Operations Performance Measures

Field Operations – Output Measures

Output 01-01-01.01	Number of livestock shipments inspected

Short Definition: Number of livestock shipments inspected by TAHC personnel during the reporting period. This measure includes both vehicles stopped for inspection and the animals held in import pens in Mexico prior to shipment into Texas.
Purpose/Importance: This measures the agency's effort related to insuring compliance with inter- and intra-state movement requirements.
Source/Collection of Data: Field staff complete a TAHC Form 98-42 (Livestock Shipment Inspection Report) whenever they inspect a shipment. These forms are submitted to the Program Statistics Coordinator in the Central Office.
Method of Calculation: Quarterly, the Program Statistics Coordinator counts the TAHC Form 98-42s submitted during the period and prepares a summary report.
Data Limitations: An outbreak of a disease requiring a quarantine Area would cause an increase in surveillance in that Area and a resulting variance from targeted performance.
Calculation Type: Cumulative
Desired Performance: Higher than target
New Measure: No
Key Measure: Yes

Output 01-01-01.02	Number of surveillance inspections conducted

Short Definition: The number of inspections conducted by TAHC personnel at livestock markets, slaughter plants, fairs, racetracks, feedlots, premises, etc. during the reporting period.
Purpose/Importance: This measures the agency's general visual inspections of livestock for signs of disease.
Source/Collection of Data: HRIS
Method of Calculation: Count of the number of instances of activity code 008 (Inspection).
Data Limitations: Any disease outbreak would result in additional inspections and therefore a variance from target.
Calculation Type: Cumulative
Desired Performance: Higher than target
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Output 01-01-01.03	Number of cases identified for evaluation and tracing to herds or flocks of origin

Short Definition: The number of animals identified through serological tests conducted by TAHC field personnel or disclosure of lesions at slaughter during the reporting period that signal to TAHC personnel that tracing action and research must be conducted (signal animals).
Purpose/Importance: This measures the agency's effort to identify the original source of infection.
Source/Collection of Data: GDB, GDB COVSNAT and Profiler
Method of Calculation: GDB--number of animals on field investigation of test reactor forms (TAHC forms 91-28, 91-28S, and USDA form VS 6-35); plus Profiler—Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) with a reason of diagnostic, adjacent, or area; plus GDB COVSNAT—Scrapie Trace Animals

Data Limitations: Any disease outbreak would result in the identification of additional signal animals and, therefore, a variance from target. Anything that caused a dramatic increase or decrease in the number of animals moving through the market system could result in identification of additional infected animals.
Calculation Type: Cumulative
Desired Performance: Lower than target (Lower is desirable because it indicates that we are finding fewer cases than expected.)
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Output 01-01-01.04	Number of cases identified for determination of presence or absence of disease

Short Definition: The number of signal animals diagnosed through supplemental testing conducted by TAHC field personnel, plus the number of adjacent herds identified for testing, plus the number of foreign animal disease (FAD) investigations.
Purpose/Importance: This measures the agency's efforts to identify animals which may have been exposed.
Source/Collection of Data: GDB, Profiler and manual count
Method of Calculation: Number of adjacent herds pending testing plus Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) tests conducted with a reactor on the premise (these are also included in Number of cases identified for evaluation and tracing to herds or flocks of origin); plus manual count of FAD investigations; plus number of TB Gamma Interferon tests conducted
Data Limitations: Anything that caused a dramatic increase or decrease in the number of animals moving through the market system could result in identification of additional infected animals and, therefore, result in additional adjacent testing. Disease detection in different areas of the state will result in different levels of adjacent testing--herds in east Texas have more adjacent herds than herds in west Texas.
Calculation Type: Cumulative
Desired Performance: Lower than target (Lower is desirable because it indicates that we are finding fewer cases than expected.)
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Output 01-01-01.05	Number of herd management documents developed

Short Definition: The total number of herd management documents developed during the reporting period cooperatively between the herd owner or manager and agency personnel.
Purpose/Importance: This measures the agency's efforts to work cooperatively with herd owners and managers to establish a plan for testing animals.
Source/Collection of Data: Profiler
Method of Calculation: Count of the number of records with an action code of HP (herd plan) plus the records with an action code of ID (identified) or QH (quarantined herd) with a reason code of ITA (initial test agreement).
Data Limitations: This is a cooperative effort which requires the participation of the herd owner or manager. We have the authority to issue quarantines and hold orders but we cannot guarantee cooperation.
Calculation Type: Cumulative
Desired Performance: Lower than target (Lower is desirable because it indicates that we are finding fewer cases than expected.)
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Output 01-01-01.06	Number of animal movement records processed

Short Definition: This number includes incoming health certificates reviewed for compliance, Texas certificates issued for out-of-state shipments, permits issued allowing movement and commuter herd/flock agreements in effect.
Purpose/Importance: This measure provides an indication of the movement of animals into, within, and out of the state.
Source/Collection of Data: PTS and manual count
Method of Calculation: Staff Services count of the incoming health certificates; plus Permits Section count of Texas certificates issued for out-of-state shipments and commuter herd/flock agreements; plus PTS--permits issued.
Data Limitations: The number is dependent on the need of producers to move animals due to sale, climatic conditions, economic gain/loss, etc.
Calculation Type: Cumulative
Desired Performance: Higher than target
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Output 01-01-01.07	Emergency management response hours

Short Definition: The number of staff hours expended in response to an emergency management event in Texas.
Purpose/Importance: This measure addresses the emergency response hours spent by agency staff during an emergency management event or activity whether the emergency is a disease, or a natural or man-made event.
Source/Collections of Data: HRIS/WMS
Method of Calculation: The total number of hours recorded against the following project codes: 003 (Emergency Management Response – Natural or man-made) and 015 (Emergency Management Response – Disease) and any new project codes created to capture costs related to specific response events.
Data Limitations: This measure does not include hours expended in preparation and training.
Calculation Type: Cumulative
Desired Performance: Higher than target
New Measure: Yes
Key Measure: No

Output 01-01-01.08	Number of foreign animal disease contacts and consultations

Short Definition: The number of diagnostic contacts and consultations made by TAHC veterinarians in response to a possible or actual FAD investigation. Contacts and consultations may be via phone or in person and include any non-business hour diagnostic contacts made by USDA veterinarians as part of the TAHC surveillance and detection collaboration.
Purpose/Importance: This measures the agency's efforts to quickly provide comprehensive surveillance and coordinate response efforts for damaging diseases or conditions affecting livestock or poultry in Texas.
Source/Collection: HRIS/WMS
Method of Calculation: The total number of staff contacts and number of consultations recorded using activity codes 018 (Contacts/Lineups) or 020 (Consultation) with project codes 014 (Emergency Management Planning – Disease) and 015 (Emergency Management

Response - Disease) using any species or location code; and, non-business hours contacts or consultations by on-call USDA veterinarians on behalf of TAHC as calculated from the on-call reporting document.
Data Limitations: This data only measures contacts to determine if an actual FAD response investigation is warranted, and will not track the actual investigations. This measure does not include contacts or consultations for natural or man-made disaster activities nor does it include contacts or consultations related solely to FAD planning or training activities.
Calculation Type: Cumulative.
Desired Performance: Higher than target
New Measure: Yes
Key Measure: No

Field Operations – Efficiency Measures

Efficiency 01-01-01.01	Average number of days from date of disclosure of suspicious case to location of herd or flock of origin

Short Definition: The total number of days for all cases to trace signal animals to the herd or premise of origin during the reporting period divided by the number of cases traced to the herd or premise of origin during the reporting period.
Purpose/Importance: This measures how soon the agency is able to locate the herd or flock of origin--the quicker we make the determination, the quicker we can limit additional exposure.
Source/Collection of Data: GDB
Method of Calculation: An average is obtained by dividing the sum of the difference between the closure date and the initial date for all cases with a closure date in the reporting period by the number of cases with a closure date in the reporting period.
Data Limitations: The agency's ability to identify the herd or premise of origin is dependent on the quality of the record keeping of the entities that handled the animal (e.g. dealers, markets, feedlots...).
Calculation Type: Noncumulative
Desired Performance: Lower than target
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Efficiency 01-01-01.02	Average number of days from identification of herd or flock to diagnosis

Short Definition: The total number of days to diagnose diseases during the reporting period divided by the total number of cases during the reporting period.
Purpose/Importance: This measures how soon the agency is able to complete the diagnosis--the quicker we make the determination, the quicker we can proceed to releasing or quarantining the herd or flock.
Source/Collection of Data: Profiler
Method of Calculation: An average is obtained by dividing the sum of the difference between the quarantine or release date (once a diagnosis is made, the hold order is released or replaced with a quarantine, so this is the diagnosis date) and the hold order date for all herds and flocks quarantined or released during the reporting period by the number of herds and flocks quarantined or released during the reporting period.
Data Limitations: Adverse weather conditions can delay the follow-up testing required to complete the diagnosis. The length of time required to run diagnostic tests will impact this measure--a TB culture takes months to run.
Calculation Type: Noncumulative

Desired Performance: Lower than target
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Field Operations – Explanatory Measure

Explanatory 01-01-01.01	Number of restricted movement permits issued

Short Definition: The total number of restricted movement permits issued by TAHC personnel during the reporting period as a result of quarantines and hold orders on herds and flocks of origin.
Purpose/Importance: This measures the agency's efforts to contain diseases and insures that the agency is aware of movement of exposed and potentially exposed animals.
Source/Collection of Data: Profiler
Method of Calculation: A count of the number of the USDA form VS 1-27s (Permit for Movement of Restricted Animals).
Data Limitations: Any disease outbreak would result in additional quarantines which would result in the issuance of additional movement permits, resulting in a variance from target.
Calculation Type: Cumulative
Desired Performance: Lower than target (Lower is desirable because it indicates that we are finding fewer cases than expected.)
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Explanatory 01-01-01.02	Percent of time in emergency preparedness training and activities

Short Definition: The percentage of staff time spent in meetings and training that is related to emergency preparedness.
Purpose/Importance: This measures the extent to which agency personnel are trained, or train others, to deal with livestock issues related to emergencies. These emergencies would include natural and man-made disasters.
Source/Collections of Data: HRIS
Method of Calculation: A percentage is obtained by dividing the number of hours staff spend in activity codes 020 (consultation), 025 (meetings and training) and 075 (emergency management exercise) with a project code of 002 (Emergency Management Preparation – Natural or Man-Made) or 014 (Emergency Management Preparation – Disease) by the total hours staff spend in activity codes 020, 025 and 075.
Data Limitations: The travel expenditure cap may force the agency to limit the travel authorized for participation in these activities.
Calculation Type: Noncumulative
Desired Performance: Higher than target
New Measure: No (previously classified as outcome measure)
Key Measure: No

Explanatory 01-01-01.03	Emergency management preparation hours

Short Definition: The number of staff hours expended in planning and preparation activities related to emergency management in Texas.
Purpose/Importance: This measure addresses the planning and preparation hours spent by agency staff to be ready to respond in the event of an actual emergency event.
Source/Collections of Data: HRIS/WMS

Method of Calculation: The total number of hours recorded against the following project codes: 002 (Emergency Management Planning – Natural, or man-made) and 014 (Emergency Management Planning – Disease).
Data Limitations: This measure does not include hours expended in response activities nor does it include hours expended by agency staff in attending or delivering training related to emergency management.
Calculation Type: Cumulative
Desired Performance: Higher than target
New Measure: Yes
Key Measure: No

Diagnostic/Epidemiological Support Performance Measures

Diagnostic/Epidemiological Support Output Measures

Output 01-01-02.01	Number of specimens processed through the State/Federal Cooperative Laboratory System

Short Definition: Number of specimens processed--tests include brucellosis or pseudorabies tests conducted on blood samples collected at livestock markets or slaughter plants; brucellosis or pseudorabies tests to meet movement requirements, private sale, or herd certification requirements; brucellosis milk tests; blood samples from herds or flocks tested because they are adjacent to infected herds or are at increased risk; and the number of ectoparasite samples submitted for evaluation.
Purpose/Importance: This measures the agency's efforts to identify and/or confirm infection and infestation.
Source/Collection of Data: Lab
Method of Calculation: The sum of total samples processed plus total parasite ID from the lab report.
Data Limitations: The number of specimens processed is dependent on the number of specimens submitted.
Calculation Type: Cumulative
Desired Performance: Higher than target
New Measure: No
Key Measure: Yes

Output 01-01-02.02	Number of epidemiological investigation reviews completed

Short Definition: The number of disease investigation reports reviewed plus the number of epidemiological summaries or special studies prepared by the TAHC epidemiologists. These reviews are conducted to ensure that the investigation was complete and thorough.
Purpose/Importance: This measures the efforts of the agency's epidemiologists to confirm presence or absence of disease.
Source/Collection of Data: HRIS
Method of Calculation: Count of the number of instances of activity code 024 (epidemiological review) reported by the epidemiologists.
Data Limitations: Any disease outbreak would result in additional investigations resulting in a variance from target.
Calculation Type: Cumulative

Desired Performance: Lower than target (Lower is desirable because it indicates that we are finding fewer cases than expected.)
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Output 01-01-02.03	Number of epidemiological consultations

Short Definition: The number of consultations between the TAHC epidemiologists and other TAHC staff and herd owners. Epidemiologists provide subject matter expertise to staff making program related decisions.
Purpose/Importance: This measure reflects the time spent by TAHC epidemiologists in support of field staff and herd owners.
Source/Collection of Data: HRIS
Method of Calculation: Count of the number of instances of activity code 020 (consultation) reported by the epidemiologists.
Data Limitations: Any disease outbreak would result in additional interaction between the epidemiologists and field staff resulting in a variance from target.
Calculation Type: Cumulative
Desired Performance: Higher than target
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Diagnostic/Epidemiological Support Efficiency Measures

Efficiency 01-01-02.01	Average time to conduct an epidemiological consultation

Short Definition: The total number of hours spent in epidemiological consultation divided by the number of consultations conducted.
Purpose/Importance: This measures the average length of an epidemiological consultation.
Source/Collection of Data: HRIS
Method of Calculation: An average is obtained by dividing the sum of all hours reported in activity code 020 (consultation) by the epidemiologists by the sum of the number of consultations.
Data Limitations: Any disease outbreak would result in additional consultations which could result in a variance from target.
Calculation Type: Noncumulative
Desired Performance: Lower than target
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Promote Compliance Performance Measures

Promote Compliance Output Measures

Output 01-01-03.01	Number of compliance actions completed

Short Definition: Compliance actions completed include warning letters, penning letters, demand letters and investigations, which have resulted in filing injunctions with the Attorney

General, filing complaints with a Justice of the Peace, administrative proceedings, or administrative penalties.

Purpose/Importance: This demonstrates agency commitment to insuring statewide compliance with regulatory requirements. The compliance action request forms document the type of violation and identify the participants. The information shows the agency has undertaken an appropriate response to insure compliance.

Source/Collection of Data: The Legal and Compliance Access database, developed by the TAHC, tracks violations of agency regulations and actions taken. The data is collected on a TAHC form 98-44 (Compliance Action Request) completed by TAHC and DPS staff. Legal and Compliance personnel maintain and update the data.

Method of Calculation: The Legal Coordinator enters TAHC form 98-44s into the Legal and Compliance Access database. A report is then run to obtain the number of completed compliance actions.

Data Limitations: The number only provides information regarding non-compliance activities which have been discovered and documented.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

Desired Performance: Higher than target

New Measure: No

Key Measure: Yes

Output 01-01-03.02	**Number of compliance investigations conducted**

Short Definition: Compliance investigations, which involve field work by TAHC investigators, are more complex and time-consuming than the other types of compliance actions. These investigations are a subset of the compliance actions measure and indicate serious violations which need to be handled through legal enforcement.

Purpose/Importance: The number of investigations conducted allow the agency to develop the information related to compliance requests in order to most effectively arrive at a resolution. Results of the investigation may vary from sending a compliance letter to filing a complaint.

Source/Collection of Data: manual count

Method of Calculation: The Legal Coordinator counts the number of TAHC form 98-44s (Compliance Action Request) for which the requested action has been completed.

Data Limitations: This is count of the investigations conducted; it does not address the scope of the work required. Some investigations are very complex and time-consuming.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

Desired Performance: Higher than target

New Measure: No

Key Measure: No

Output 01-01-03.03	**Number of hours expended in providing public information activities**

Short Definition: Hours spent by field staff providing information in one-on-one settings, plus presentations to groups; plus the hours spent by the Public Information Department preparing news releases, newsletters, fact sheets, presentations, plus the hours spent making presentations and staffing exhibits.

Purpose/Importance: This measure addresses the hours spent by agency staff providing information to individuals and groups about agency services and regulations.

Source/Collection of Data: HRIS

Method of Calculation: A report is run against the HRIS, to report the sum of all hours coded to activity code 069 (Media Relations/Public Information) in addition to the total number of hours performed by the Public Information Department.

Data Limitations: Any disease outbreak would reduce the amount of time available for this type of activity.
Calculation Type: Cumulative
Desired Performance: Higher than target
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Promote Compliance Efficiency Measure

Efficiency 01-01-03.01	Average number of days to complete a compliance action

Short Definition: The total number of days required to complete a compliance action divided by the number of compliance actions completed during the reporting period.
Purpose/Importance: This demonstrates the agency's commitment to resolve compliance issues in a timely manner.
Source/Collection of Data: Legal and Compliance Access database
Method of Calculation: An average is obtained by dividing the sum of the difference between the completed date and the assigned date for all compliance actions completed in the reporting period by the number of compliance actions completed in the reporting period.
Data Limitations: The measure is a composite of the relative short time required to complete a compliance letter; a longer period to complete an investigation and then send a compliance letter; and the longest period to complete an investigation and initiate compliance action. The composition of each of those types of activities within the reporting period will impact the average.
Calculation Type: Noncumulative
Desired Performance: Lower than target
New Measure: No
Key Measure: No

Appendix E – Implementing the Texas Transformation

TECHNOLOGY ALIGNMENT FOR Texas Animal Health Commission 2009-2013					
TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE	**RELATED AGENCY OBJECTIVE**	**RELATED SSP STRATEGY/ (IES)**	**STATUS**	**ANTICIPATED BENEFIT(S)**	**INNOVATION, BEST PRACTICE, BENCHMARKING**
Email/Calendaring	All Objectives		Planned	Replacement of outdated non-standard Communications / Emergency software.	
Office Suite	All Objectives		Planned	Replacement of outdated Productivity Software.	
Laptop Refresh	All Objectives		Current	Replacement of outdated Equipment	
Rewrite Filemaker Pro Applications	Replace outdated custom developed software to improve supportability with a standard software product.		Planned	Improved ability to support applications and improve response times.	
LAB System Replace	To improve the tracking of results and communication of emergency status of disease positives.		Planned	Improved tracking of the disease testing process.	
Replace Sybase with MySQL Databse	Standardize data storage and reduce corrupt data liability		Planned	Minimize support issues	

Rewrite Permit Tracker	Track Permits Issued		Planned	To have supported documented source code.	
GIS	Tracking Disease migration to isolate source.		Current	Support Agency charge.	
Phone System Refresh	All Objectives		Planned	Refresh dated equipment.	
Data Line Upgrades	Improve Communication response times.		Planned	Support Agency Charge	
Router Upgrades	Improve Communication functionally.		Planned	Support Agency Charge	
RFID	Disease Management		Current	Support Agency charge in cooperation with USDA.	

Appendix F – Agency Workforce Plan

I. AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Texas cattle fever tick, a parasite less than an eighth of an inch in length, played a pivotal role in the 1893 creation of the Livestock Sanitary Commission, which in 1959 was renamed the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC). Since that time, TAHC and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) have worked cooperatively with livestock producers on animal health issues in furtherance of the agency's vision, mission, and philosophy.

Thirteen Commissioners appointed by the Governor, representing all segments of the livestock industry and the public, oversee and guide the agency's activities. The Governor designates the Chair.

The Commissioners appoint an Executive Director who supervises the agency's activities. The TAHC operating budget is prepared and approved by the Commissioners on an annual basis, whereas the TAHC Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR) is prepared and submitted to the Legislative Budget Board and Governor's Office for Budget, Planning, and Policy during the summer of each even-numbered year as part of the Strategic Planning and LAR processes. The State Legislature approves the operating budget and LAR and establishes policy which is implemented and executed by TAHC under the direction of the Executive Director and the Commissioners.

TAHC has specific statutory authority and responsibility to control and eradicate any disease or agent of transmission that threatens the livestock and poultry of Texas, as outlined in Chapters 161 through 168 of the Texas Agriculture Code, Vernon's Annotated Texas Statutes. The agency is vested with the responsibility of protecting all livestock, domestic animals, and domestic fowl from diseases stated in the statutes, or recognized as maladies by the veterinary profession. TAHC is authorized to act to eradicate or control any disease or agency of transmission for any disease that affects livestock, exotic livestock, domestic animals, domestic fowl, and exotic fowl, regardless of whether or not the disease is communicable. In order to perform these duties and responsibilities, TAHC is authorized to control the sale and distribution of veterinary biologics, except rabies vaccine; regulate the entry of livestock, domestic animals, and domestic fowl into the state; and, control the movement of livestock.

An increased awareness of the threat of agroterrorism attack, as well as the impact of natural disasters on animals, has expanded the agency's role in emergency management. The Governor added TAHC to the State Emergency Management Council in 2001 and to the Homeland Security Council in 2005. Because of TAHC's expertise in animal health, the State Coordinator of Emergency Management designated TAHC as the state's lead agency for all animal issues involving emergencies, including natural and man-made disasters and acts of agroterrorism, as well as naturally occurring animal disease outbreaks. TAHC also participates on the Emergency Management Steering Committee (formerly called the Texas Emergency Response Team), a joint effort between TAHC and USDA to prepare for and respond to foreign animal disease outbreaks and other disasters.

The TAHC workforce is comprised of field inspectors, veterinarians, veterinary epidemiologists, laboratory personnel, and administrative staff.

TAHC is funded by a combination of state general revenue funds and federal funds, primarily from USDA. For the 2008 – 2009 Biennium, TAHC has an authorized workforce of 209 full-time equivalent employees (FTEs). Riders in the General Appropriations Act provide contingency authority for TAHC to add additional FTEs to the extent that federal funds are allocated for salary costs; none of these contingent FTEs count against the agency FTE cap. Included within the FTE cap are seven fully federally funded laboratory positions serving the State-Federal laboratory system.

As Texas hones its competitiveness in the global food market, TAHC programs support animal agriculture, focusing on the control and eradication of domestic diseases such as brucellosis, tuberculosis, and Aujeszky's/pseudorabies and ensuring the basic infrastructure to reduce the risk of newly emerging diseases, foreign animal diseases and exotic pests.

Efficient and effective surveillance is supported by a modern and competent laboratory system. Veterinarians and Veterinary Epidemiologists oversee the diagnosis of diseases and assure appropriate tracing of the movement of exposed or infected animals to determine the origin of infection and minimize the transmission of disease.

At the height of the cattle brucellosis eradication campaign, more than 350 employees worked for the TAHC. Most of them were animal health inspectors who tested cattle for brucellosis. In the past decade, the TAHC has dropped its full-time equivalent workforce by more than 30 percent, while maintaining a basic infrastructure of cross-trained staff capable of handling a variety of diseases and species of animals.

Despite the reduction in agency staffing and funding over the past decade, TAHC's role in animal agriculture in Texas continues to expand and become more complex, particularly in light of its growing role related to emergency management. Within the constraints of our current human and financial resources, TAHC faces difficult decisions to prioritize its animal disease control and eradication programs, emergency management preparation and response events, and emerging diseases to determine which of those programs competing for limited resources to conduct at optimum level and which programs will be conducted at less than optimum levels. Continued escalation of the current fever tick outbreak in South Texas cattle and wildlife could require an increase in workforce personnel which would have to be requested as an exceptional item.

A. Agency Vision, Mission, Philosophy

Vision

Through the cooperative efforts of the Texas Animal Health Commission, animal producers, and allied industry groups, the animal population of Texas is healthy and secure.

Mission

The mission of the Texas Animal Health Commission is:

- to protect the animal industry from, and/or mitigate the effects of domestic, foreign and emerging diseases;
- to increase the marketability of Texas livestock commodities at the state, national and international level;
- to promote and ensure animal health and productivity;
- to protect human health from animal diseases and conditions that are transmissible to people; and,

- to prepare for and respond to emergency situations involving animals by conducting agency business in a responsive, cooperative and transparent manner.

Philosophy
The Texas Animal Health Commission will carry out its mission with honesty, openness and efficiency. We will use the best available resources, technology and trained personnel to achieve the agency goals. We will listen to and respect the opinions and concerns of the people of Texas. We will encourage and promote open communication between all parties. We will strive to continuously develop new, or enhance existing relationships among government, industry, and private citizens to realize our vision of a healthy and secure animal population in Texas.

B. Strategic Goal, Objective, and Strategies

Goal
To protect and enhance the health of Texas animal populations, facilitating productivity and marketability while sustaining reduced human health risks.

Objective
To minimize the impact of disease on Texas animal populations by maintaining or reducing known levels of diseases; and, to enhance preparedness for emergency response by increasing the staff activities devoted to emergency preparedness annually.

Strategy
Monitor, control and/or eradicate diseases and infestations through statewide field based animal health management and assurance programs.

Strategy
Provide epidemiological expertise, serological testing, microbiological confirmation, and parasite identification services for diseases and parasitisms of regulatory importance to the animal agriculture industries in Texas.

Strategy
Promote voluntary compliance with legal requirements by providing education/information, and to resolve violations through effective use of legal enforcement and compliance activities.

C. Impact of Growing Animal Health Programs on TAHC Strategies

New animal health management programs, existing animal health programs, and increased regulatory requirements, at both the federal and state levels, are expected to impact agency workload priorities and workforce structure over the next five years. TAHC must manage limited state and federal resources appropriated to the agency for a growing list of animal health programs, projects, and initiatives. The following list is not exhaustive and is intended only to provide a high-level view of the many programs impacting TAHC's resource and workforce needs.

TAHC Direct Strategy Animal Health Programs (including epidemiology, laboratory diagnostic support, and legal and compliance support)

1. Animal Disease Control and Eradication Programs

a. Bovine Diseases

i. Brucellosis. Few Texans recall the economic impact or public health risk that brucellosis or "Bangs" presented only two decades ago. Twelve years ago Texas had 230 brucellosis infected herds. Because of the hard work of Texas livestock producers, TAHC, and USDA-APHIS, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that Texas had achieved cattle brucellosis-free status on February 1, 2008. While the disease has been eradicated in the state, Texas must remain diligent in its surveillance efforts until the state has been classified as "free" for a number of years. To comply with the national brucellosis program standard, the agency will continue First Point Testing, a costly but necessary program, for at least two years to ensure the state maintains its free status. Additionally, swine brucellosis is prevalent in feral swine populations across the state. This disease can be transmitted from swine to cattle. Cattle are considered to be dead-end hosts for swine brucellosis, however, the cattle that contract the disease will be reactors on the cattle brucellosis test. Therefore, swine brucellosis in cattle complicates the cattle brucellosis surveillance program and may result in testing cattle herds to ensure that the herd is not infected with cattle brucellosis.

ii. Tuberculosis. Tuberculosis is a bacterial infection that can cause lesions in the lungs, lymph nodes or other internal organs. It can affect many mammalian species in addition to cattle, including bison, goats, deer, camels, antelope, and humans. In June 2002, Texas lost its Tuberculosis Accredited Free Status which had allowed Texas producers to move cattle interstate with fewer restrictions and lower expense. Texas once again received its Accredited Free Status from the U.S. Department of Agriculture on October 3, 2006, which allows Texas producers to move cattle interstate with fewer restrictions and at lower expense. The TAHC is working to prevent the reintroduction of cattle tuberculosis from Mexico and from other states that are experiencing infection, in order to maintain Texas' Accredited Free status.

iii. Johne's Disease. Johne's disease (pronounced "yo-knees") is a chronic and incurable intestinal infection of cattle and other ruminants. It spreads silently, primarily to calves. Symptoms do not begin until years after infection. Johne's is caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium avium* subspecies *paratuberculosis*. It is found in the small intestines, lymph nodes, uterus, milk, and feces. Animals are usually infected in the first few months of life by ingesting contaminated milk, water, or feed. Fetuses can also be infected in utero. The disease is diagnosed by either blood or fecal tests, or at necropsy.

iv. Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE). BSE, commonly referred to as "Mad Cow Disease", is a chronic, fatal degenerative disease affecting

the central nervous system of cattle. The disease belongs to a family of diseases known as the transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs). BSE was first diagnosed in 1986 in Great Britain. Since then, all but about 5,800 of the world's 189,000 cases have been detected in Great Britain. Epidemiological data suggest that BSE in Great Britain is a common-source epidemic involving animal feed containing contaminated meat and bone meal as a protein source. The causative agent is suspected to be from either scrapie-affected sheep or cattle with a previously unidentified TSE. Changes in rendering practices in the late 1970's to early 1980's may have potentiated the agent's survival in meat and bone meal. On August 4, 1997, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) established regulations that prohibit the feeding of most mammalian proteins to ruminants.

In May 2003, the disease was diagnosed in the state of Washington (in a cow of Canadian origin); in June 2005, the disease was detected in a domestically-born cow in the United States, and a second domestic case was diagnosed in the U.S. in March 2006. There are indications that BSE is the causative agent for a new variant of Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease in humans, that has been confirmed in 204 persons worldwide since 1995.

b. Avian Diseases

i. Avian Influenza (AI). The AI virus can cause clinical illness of widely variable severity in chickens, quail, ducks, geese, and guinea fowl, as well as a variety of other birds. There are many AI strains, and these are classified into low pathogenic (LPAI) and highly pathogenic (HPAI) forms, based on their ability to cause severe illness. Most AI strains are LPAI and typically cause mild clinical signs in infected birds. LPAI virus strains, however, are capable of mutating to HPAI viruses under field conditions. HPAI may be an extremely infectious. In rare cases, some strains may pose a danger to human health.

TAHC incurred costs of over $350,000 for overtime, travel, supplies, testing costs in responding to an outbreak of LPAI in Weimar and Carmine in the summer of 2002; no federal cooperative was available for that outbreak. An HPAI occurred in Texas in 2004 and an LPAI outbreak occurred in 2005. Both outbreaks were contained to small areas and both were successfully eradicated.

If AI mutated and became infectious to humans, the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) would be the lead agency; TAHC would continue to address disease in poultry, with advice from DSHS on human safety measures.

ii. Exotic Newcastle Disease (END). END is a foreign animal disease in the United States and is considered the most infectious disease of birds and poultry. A death rate up to 100 percent can occur in exposed and infected poultry flocks. An outbreak of END occurred in the El Paso area in April, 2003. Eradicating the outbreak and conducting widespread disease surveillance involved hundreds of hours of TAHC staff time. As a foreign

animal disease, the costs of overtime, travel, supplies and testing were covered under a federal cooperative agreement.

iii. Pullorum-Typhoid (PT). PT is caused by the bacteria *Salmonella pullorum* and can cause up to 100 percent death loss in infected birds and poultry. Fowl typhoid is caused by a different salmonella bacteria than the type which causes typhoid fever in humans. In April, 2004, a flock in Missouri was diagnosed with Pullorum. Prior to diagnosis, chicks that were offspring from that flock had been shipped to Texas. These potentially exposed birds were managed to assure that infection was not allowed to become established in the flocks that received the chicks. To prevent the introduction of disease, it is critical to know the health status of flocks from which birds or chicks originated. Reputable hatchers and breeders voluntarily enroll in the National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) program and maintain high health standards for their flocks.

iv. Infectious Laryngotracheitis (ILT). ILT is a contagious respiratory disease affecting fowl, pheasants, and turkeys which is characterized by gasping, neck extension and conjunctivitis (inflammation of the membrane around the eye).

v. Fowl Registration Program. During the 2003 Legislative session, House Bill 2328 was passed and signed into law. It required TAHC to develop a registration program for fowl sellers, distributors and transporters who do not participate in recognized poultry or fowl disease surveillance programs. The regulations related to this program are found in Title 4 Part 2, Chapter 54 of the Texas Administrative Code.

Permit fees are based on the size or type of poultry activity and permits are good for one year from the date of issue. Size of operations are verified either prior to initial registration or at the time of renewal. Inspections are documented on official TAHC forms; those fowl businesses in noncompliance may be subjected to criminal or administrative penalties.

TAHC is currently involved in a Live Bird Market (LBM) working group which includes state poultry industry leaders. The group is considering possible rule-making requirements for this emerging industry in Texas to help prevent the introduction of Avian Influenza or other infectious poultry diseases through these outlets. Presently, TAHC field staff monitors and inspects these facilities for compliance with “unofficial” agreements to ensure the continued viability of the poultry industry in the state.

c. Swine Diseases

i. Brucellosis. Swine brucellosis and Aujeszky’s disease, also known as pseudorabies (PRV) are the primary diseases of concern and economic consequence to Texas swine producers. Swine brucellosis, a zoonotic disease (transmissible from animal to man) of significance in the state, is caused by the *Brucella suis* bacteria. Sows may abort or give birth to weak piglets; the disease can move through a swine herd quickly because boars may transmit the disease during breeding. The majority of swine

brucellosis-infected herds have been found to be in the state's operations that are exposed to feral swine, or in facilities involving multiple owners in a single location. Infected boars, which can transmit the disease, are sometimes loaned or relocated by these herd owners, complicating disease detection, control and eradication.

Blood samples are collected from sows and boars at livestock markets and slaughter facilities, and tests for both diseases are conducted at TAHC laboratories. While Texas' commercial production swine industries are considered free of brucellosis and PRV, both diseases are endemic in feral swine populations.

ii. Aujeszky's/Pseudorabies (PRV). This disease, most often known as pseudorabies, is not related to rabies. It is caused by a herpes virus. In very young animals mortality may approach 100% due to central nervous system involvement, while feeder pigs may exhibit primarily respiratory problems. Pregnant sows may abort and older swine may have only flu-like symptoms. Survivors are lifelong carriers of the disease. The commercial swine industry in Texas has been considered pseudorabies-free since 2004. In Texas' transitional swine, infection now is limited to about 15 or fewer infected herds per year, but the epidemiological tracing can lead to the need to test hundreds of small swine herds. In some cases, the infection also is related to feral or wild swine.

USDA is working with states and the commercial swine industry to develop and implement a new strategy to reduce potential spill-over of brucellosis and PRV in feral swine or from transitional swine herds into commercial production swine. TAHC is responsible for implementing a national strategy in Texas.

iii. Classical Swine Fever (CSF). CSF, also known as hog cholera, is a highly contagious viral disease of swine. CSF was eradicated from the US in the 1970s. The disease is present in Mexico and many other countries in the world. It is considered a foreign animal disease in the U.S. Feral swine could serve as a reservoir for the disease. TAHC is conducting surveillance activities.

iv. Waste Food Feeder Permit Program. Texas law, House Bill 3673, effective September 1, 2001, prohibits Texas pigs from being fed food waste that contains meat or meat scraps. Furthermore, it is against the law to provide meat or meat scrap products for swine feeding purposes. When the feeding law went into effect in 2001, more than 611 swine producers were registered with the TAHC to feed food waste. Nearly seven out of ten of these producers fed meat scraps to their swine, which was permissible until September 1, 2001, provided the products were cooked thoroughly on the producer's premise prior to being fed to the animals. With the change in Texas law, swine producers who feed food waste have been prohibited from feeding meat products or meat scraps.

The TAHC now allows the feeding of unrestricted waste foods, such as vegetables, fruit, dairy items, or baked goods. About 300 facilities in Texas

currently are permitted to feed swine these products, and the permits must be renewed every two years. In 2008, TAHC passed rules requiring the testing of all waste-feeder swine for PRV and brucellosis by agency personnel prior to the permits being granted. TAHC and USDA-APHIS/VS personnel continue to make site inspections on a regular basis to ensure livestock health. Details of the program are contained in Title 4, Part 2, Chapter 55.3 of the Texas Administrative Code.

Potential reduction in USDA funding and/or a decrease in USDA manpower to help conduct the food waste feeder inspections could require TAHC to expend more resources than currently allocated to ensure the program is adequately managed.

v. Feral Swine Holding Facility Permit Program. This program was developed to facilitate the legal capture and removal of feral swine; no fees are associated with the program and details of the program are contained in Title 4, Part 2, Chapter 55.9 of the Texas Administrative Code. Current regulations require that feral swine trapped on a premise must test negative for brucellosis and pseudorabies within 30 days before being moved to a game preserve or site for hunting. An accredited veterinarian must draw the blood samples for the tests, at the owner's expense. The tests are not required if the swine are taken directly to a slaughter facility or to a livestock market for sale or slaughter. At the livestock market, the feral swine must be held for isolation, under quarantine, and be moved only to slaughter with a permit issued by the TAHC animal health inspector. The TAHC's feral swine regulations are intended to prevent the spread of brucellosis and PRV. Additional rules are being considered by the TAHC for feral swine as a result of Sunset legislation passed during the 80th Legislative Session.

d. Equine Diseases

i. Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA). EIA is the primary disease of concern for horses, donkeys, asses, and other equine and is a potentially fatal disease. The virus destroys red blood cells and is spread by blood-to-blood contact, not through close proximity. Therefore, the virus can be transmitted from an infected equine to an uninfected equine by biting flies, the use of unsterilized or contaminated medical instruments, through blood transfusion, or any other situation where infected blood is transferred to a susceptible animal. Under current regulations equine that enter the state, undergo change of ownership, or are commingled with other equine must have had a negative EIA test within the past 12 months. EIA positive equine must be isolated for life or destroyed. USDA is currently trying to develop a national EIA program, which if implemented, would likely impact TAHC laboratory processes, enforcement of interstate movement of equine, and other necessary diagnostic field activities, including testing of high risk equine populations in Texas done by TAHC staff or through a fee basis partnership with veterinary practitioners.

ii. Vesicular Stomatitis (VS). VS is a painful blistering disease of livestock, such as horses, sheep, swine and deer. The viral disease appears spontaneously and sporadically in the southwestern US and is thought to

be transmitted by sand flies and black flies. Signs of VS—which include blisters, open sores or erosions in an animal's mouth, on the muzzle, teats or hooves--mimic those of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), an extremely dangerous and highly contagious foreign animal disease that can affect cattle, sheep, swine and deer, but not horses. Laboratory testing is needed to differentiate between VS and FMD, or to determine if the animals had contact with a toxic plant or poison.

iii. West Nile Virus (WNV). WNV is an encephalitic disease and can cause death in a significant number of infected horses. An effective vaccine is available for use in horses. Because WNV affects humans, as well as birds and other animals, the Zoonotic Branch of the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS) is the lead agency in dealing with this disease.

e. Sheep and Goat Diseases

i. Scrapie. Scrapie is a fatal, degenerative disease affecting the central nervous system of sheep and goats. It is among a number of diseases classified as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs). Infected flocks that contain a high percentage of susceptible animals can experience significant death and production losses. Over a period of years the number of infected animals increases, and the age at onset of clinical signs decreases, making these flocks economically unviable. Female animals sold from infected flocks spread scrapie to other flocks. The presence of scrapie in the United States prevents the export of breeding stock, semen, and embryos to some other countries.

Texas is a participant in the USDA national scrapie eradication program which includes identification of premises that have sheep or goats, individual animal identification, quarantine and depopulation of infected and high-risk animals, genetic testing to determine susceptibility of animals in an infected flock, and live animal testing of exposed animals in an infected flock. The workload in Texas for this program has increased dramatically in the last two years. It is anticipated that the USDA will develop a more intensive scrapie eradication program for goats by 2010. Since Texas leads the nation in its goat population, an enhanced goat scrapie program will certainly increase TAHC staff responsibilities as it relates to testing goats.

ii. Brucellosis. As with other species, brucellosis - *Brucella ovis* - is a disease that can impact sheep and goat herds.

iii. Tuberculosis. As with other species, tuberculosis is a disease that can impact sheep and goat herds.

f. Exotic Livestock Diseases

i. Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). CWD is a transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) of deer and elk (cervids) in North America. The disease is endemic in wild white-tail and mule deer and elk in areas of Wyoming and Colorado and has been found in wild deer or elk in at least

five other states and in Canada. The disease has not been found in either wild or domestic cervidae in Texas, even though significant surveillance has been accomplished over the past several years.

Currently, the CWD program is a voluntary status program. USDA is in the process of developing guidelines and interstate movement for a national CWD program. TAHC staff is involved in an industry working group that is considering rule-making related to CWD surveillance in elk. Passage of any elk surveillance rules will impact agency involvement in this program.

ii. Brucellosis. As with other species, brucellosis is a disease that can impact many subspecies of cervidae.

iii. Tuberculosis. As with other species, tuberculosis is a disease that can impact cervidae.

g. Animal Disease Surveillance and Reporting

i. Emerging Diseases (equine viral arteritis, monkeypox, etc.). As some diseases are controlled or eliminated, others come to the forefront. Exotic diseases are introduced to the United States and become endemic. One recent example is West Nile Virus. It is critical that TAHC has the tools to recognize emerging diseases and that it has the capability to address such diseases in host species. Such action by TAHC is related to emergency management in that specialized training will be essential for surveillance, disease investigation, disease diagnosis, and disease management.

ii. Zoonotic Diseases and Public Health. TAHC has partnered with other state and federal agencies to address the needs of Texas producers and emergency management issues.

h. Texas Fever Ticks. The cattle fever tick, known as the *Boophilus annulatus*, and the southern cattle tick, *B. microplus*, are capable of carrying a protozoa, or minute blood parasite. When the tick feeds on cattle, it injects this protozoa into the bloodstream. The protozoa attacks red corpuscles, causing acute anemia, an enlarged spleen and liver, and rapid death in up to 90 percent of the affected cattle. The disease caused by the protozoa *Babesia bovis* or *Babesia bigemia* is known as “Cattle Fever.”

The Cattle Fever Tick Eradication Program (CFTEP) is a cooperative program between TAHC and USDA-APHIS-VS to ensure that fever ticks do not become reestablished in Texas or the rest of the country; USDA estimates that if the fever tick were to become reestablished in the Southeastern US, approximately $460 million dollars worth of meat and milk would be lost annually. The fever tick program’s cost-benefit ratio is $120 worth of benefit for every $1 spent.

Since the inception of TAHC, the agency has worked in concert with USDA and the cattle industry to eradicate the cattle fever tick from Texas and has established a permanent quarantine zone along the Texas-Mexico border to prevent reintroduction of the fever tick into its historic ranges. The Tick Force, comprised of TAHC and USDA personnel, has continued to identify new infested

premises within and along the quarantine zone that runs along the Rio Grande. In 2007, the TAHC expanded the fever tick quarantine zone to include three temporary quarantine areas where fever ticks had been detected. The quarantines were set up in a contiguous area of Maverick, Dimmit and Webb Counties, and in Starr and Zapata counties. In April 2008, the temporary quarantine area in Starr County was enlarged by another 24,000 acres, after fever ticks were located outside the quarantined area. TAHC will continue to increase participation in this program due to the recent accelerated introduction of fever ticks and the subsequent increase in the detection of affected premises throughout the region and other parts of the state.

The national Strategic Plan for the Fever Tick program for 2006 – 2011 has not been funded. On March 19, 2008, the USDA announced that $5.2 million of a $13 million request would be made available to control the outbreaks of fever ticks occurring outside the permanent quarantine zone between Texas and Mexico, enough only to address the program's most dire needs. At the end of May, 2008, the number of fever tick infested premises in Texas had increased to 124. This number is an historic high, since the Alice fever tick outbreak in the early 1970s. It is likely that additional infested premises will be identified. TAHC anticipates that significant support for budget and manpower increases will be needed in order to achieve the necessary funding to regain control of fever ticks and drive them back across the Rio Grande.

i. Anthrax. Anthrax is a reportable disease and TAHC is to be notified of confirmed and suspected cases. It is a naturally occurring disease with worldwide distribution. Grazing animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, exotic and domestic deer, and horses ingest anthrax bacteria when they consume contaminated grass. By the time the animal displays signs of disease, including staggering, trembling, convulsions, or bleeding from body openings, death usually follows. Domestic and wild swine are fairly resistant to anthrax, and although they may become ill, some of these animals recover fully. When an anthrax outbreak begins, veterinarians confirm the initial cases through laboratory tests conducted by the Texas Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory in College Station. Subsequent outbreaks are to be expected and may be diagnosed clinically based on disease signs and sudden death loss.

j. Other Diseases and Parasites (scabies, lice, screw worms, etc.). TAHC staff also work to keep pests, like scabies, lice, and screwworms from reoccurring as major livestock health hazards.

2. Emergency Management**.** All agency field offices, laboratories, and their personnel are an integral part of the overall state emergency management system; TAHC Area Management and field personnel are the primary links to local planning and response activities. TAHC is a member of State Emergency Management Council and of the Homeland Security Council, and participates in activities conducted by the State Operations Center (SOC), the 24 Disaster District Committees (DDC), and Animal Issues Branches of state incident management teams, if requested.

a. Animal Disease Preparedness. TAHC regularly updates the state's Foreign and Emerging Animal Diseases (FEAD) Response Plan in order to assure that response processes will enable the agency to rapidly and effectively respond to

disease incursions or bio-terrorism threats. TAHC has also assisted in developing a non-disease state animal emergency plan and is working with other emergency management personnel to develop local animal health emergency response plans. TAHC regularly and periodically participates in, or conducts, test exercises to improve emergency response capabilities.

b. Animal Disease Response. During the past several years, TAHC has responded to numerous foreign animal disease outbreaks, including Exotic Newcastle disease (END), Monkey Pox, highly-pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE); and malignant catharral fever (MCF). Additionally, TAHC has responded to two emerging or sporadic diseases – vesicular stomatitis virus (VSV) and low-pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI). TAHC and USDA have collaborated in conducting more than 100 foreign animal disease (FAD) investigations during the past two years while maintaining a 24-hour on-call capability for the public to report suspicious animal health situations. Meanwhile, the TAHC has continued to perform routine inspections, disease surveillance, control, and eradication activities.

c. Natural and Man-made Disaster Preparedness. Appointed to State Emergency Management Council in 2001 and to the Homeland Security Council in 2005, TAHC participates in activities conducted by the SOC managed by the Governor's Division of Emergency Management (GDEM). TAHC personnel participate, with USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS) personnel, to prepare for and respond to foreign animal disease outbreaks as well as other naturally- occurring and man-made disasters. TAHC also facilitates a quarterly meeting of the Emergency Management Steering Committee (EMSC) to prepare and plan for disease and non-disease disaster events.

d. Natural and Man-made Disaster Response. The Chief of the Governor's Division of Emergency Management (GDEM) has designated TAHC as the lead agency on the State Emergency Management Council for all animal issues during emergencies, including natural and man-made disasters, acts of agroterrorism, and naturally-occurring animal disease outbreaks. Examples of TAHC's role in emergency management include identifying owners of displaced animals; assisting local jurisdictions with restraint and/or capture of displaced livestock; establishing quarantines; disposing of carcasses; coordinating the evacuation and sheltering of animals, including pets; consulting with federal, state, and local officials on animal and public health concerns; and addressing chemical or biological agroterrorism issues. During fiscal year (FY) 2006, the TAHC staff was involved in animal evacuation and carcass disposal activities related to Hurricanes Rita and Katrina as well as the wildfires in the Texas Panhandle. During FY 2007 TAHC specifically participated in the Governor's Hurricane Katrina evacuation after-action review process, and as a result, assumed a leadership role in creating the animal portion of Texas' newly-developed state hurricane response plan titled, *Appendix 9 – Evacuation and Shelter Plan–Animal Care*. TAHC also participated in the state's response to Hurricane Dean during the same timeframe.

e. Agroterrorism. Agroterrorism is the malicious use of plant or animal pathogens to cause devastating disease in the agriculture sector. It may take the form of

hoaxes and threats intended to create public fear of such events. Because agriculture – and livestock in particular – accounts for a significant percentage of Texas' economy, a large-scale outbreak of a disease, such as foot-and-mouth disease, could seriously affect the state's economic health. Even the suspicion of the presence of certain diseases could result in such negative affects. Because Texas has the largest livestock industry in the country, an animal health emergency would have a significant impact on the U.S. agricultural economy as well. Economic effects could include international and interstate export bans, higher food prices, a drastic increase in demand, increased testing and regulatory requirements, and losses of billions of dollars in revenue. TAHC is a member of the Texas Critical Infrastructure/Key Resources Protection (CI/KR) Council along with a number of key Texas agriculture stakeholders.

f. ***Emerging Diseases.*** It is critical that TAHC has the tools to quickly recognize emerging diseases, pests, infestations, or threats, and that it has the capability to address such situations as appropriate. This is particularly critical since an emerging situation (i.e., a new form of an old disease) may not be initially recognized without an effective surveillance capability, thereby slowing the needed response.

3. Laboratories, Epidemiology, and Diagnostics**.** USDA-APHIS-VS and TAHC have developed and maintained a premier animal health laboratory system with state-of-the-art equipment operated by qualified, expert personnel to support state and federal cooperative programs. The TAHC laboratory system is a national leader in many aspects of brucellosis, tuberculosis and pseudorabies testing; over three-and one-half million samples were processed in FY 2007. Laboratory technicians and microbiologists run complex tests on blood, milk, and tissue samples, and identify pests such as ticks, mites and fly larvae, providing TAHC veterinarians and epidemiologists with scientific tools for diagnosing disease.

4. National Animal Identification System**.** The National Animal Identification System (NAIS) is a modern, streamlined information system that helps producers and animal health officials respond quickly and effectively to disease outbreaks or animal health events in the United States. The NAIS program - a voluntary State-Federal-Industry partnership - is beneficial because it helps to protect U.S. livestock and poultry from disease spread, maintain consumer confidence in our food supply, and retain access to domestic and foreign markets. USDA and TAHC are not requiring participation in the program. NAIS can help producers protect the health and marketability of their animals - but the choice to participate is theirs.

Animal owners who are interested in taking part in NAIS may participate in premises registration only, premises registration and animal identification, or all three components when the program is fully operational.

Approximately 31,680 Texas premises have been registered as of June, 2008. TAHC staff will need to continue outreach and training efforts to explain the national program to Texas premise owners in order to register the estimated 200,000 Texas premises within the benchmarks and timelines established by USDA.

II. Current Workforce Profile (Supply Analysis)

A. Critical Workforce Skills

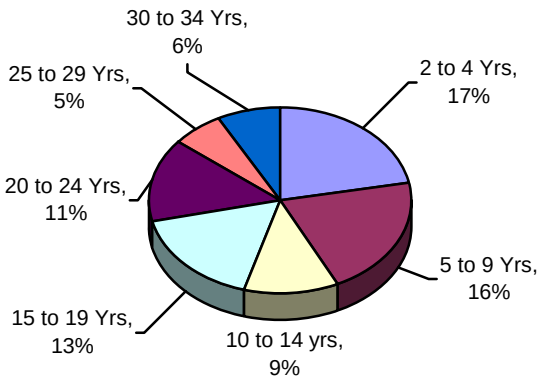
To fulfill the mission of the TAHC, employees must have a variety of necessary skills appropriate to their job functions.

✓Large-animal veterinarians ✓Epidemiological experts ✓Animal emergency response planning staff ✓Microbiologists and laboratory tech staff ✓Staff who have experience and expertise in the safe and effective evaluation and handling of livestock ✓Personnel with GIS knowledge/GPS skills ✓Financial/Accounting professionals ✓Experienced and knowledgeable support staff	✓Computer programmers, systems analysts, database administrators and webmasters ✓Staff skilled in customer service ✓Staff experienced in promulgating and enforcing rules and regulations ✓Grant writers ✓Interagency, interstate, and international relations staff ✓Project managers ✓Skilled managers and supervisors ✓Staff skilled and experienced in communication with industry representatives

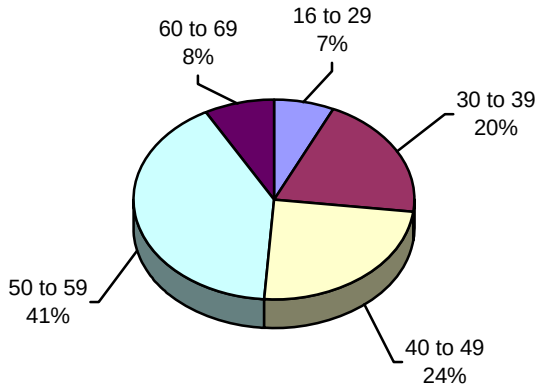
B. Workforce Demographics

The following charts profile the agency's workforce for fiscal year 2007. TAHC's workforce is comprised of sixty-two percent males and thirty-eight percent females. Seventy-three percent of employees are forty years of age or older, and forty-four percent of employees have at least ten years of service with the agency.

FY 2007 TAHC Tenure



FY 2007 TAHC Employee Age Breakdown



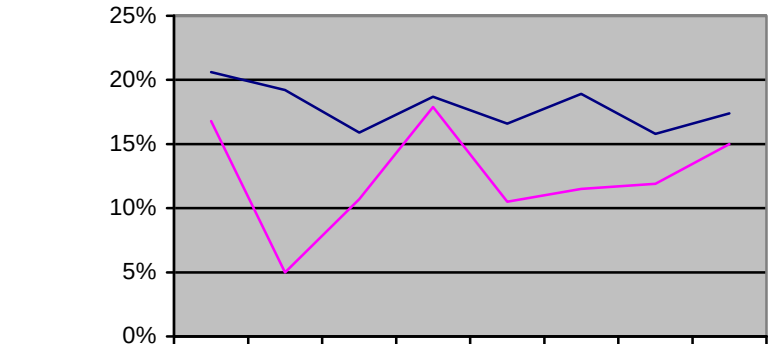
The following table compares the percentage of African American, Hispanic American, and Female TAHC employees for fiscal year 2007. The TAHC has been working to address the under-representation of African American, Hispanic American, and female employees by expanding its targeted recruitment resources.

JOB CATEGORY	African American TAHC %	African American State %	Hispanic American TAHC %	Hispanic American State %	Females TAHC %	Females State %
Officials/Administration	**0.0%**	**6.6%**	**0.0%**	**14.2%**	**16.7%**	**37.3%**
Professional	**6.6%**	**5.3%**	**69.6%**	**13.4%**	**19.2%**	**53.2%**
Technical	**8.4%**	**12.4%**	**12.5%**	**20.2%**	**62.5%**	**53.8%**
Administrative Support	**5.9%**	**11.2%**	**27.5%**	**24.1%**	**86.1%**	**64.7%**

C. Employee Turnover

Based on turnover statistics published by the State Auditor's Office for voluntary separations, involuntary separations, and retirements by agency including interagency transfers, the TAHC has a history of maintaining a turnover rate that is below the state's overall turnover rate, as illustrated in the following graph.

Turnover Rate Comparison: TAHC Versus Statewide



	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007
Statewide	20.60	19.20	15.90	18.70	16.60	18.90	15.80	17.40
TAHC	16.80	5.00%	10.70	17.90	10.50	11.50	11.90	15.00

Although the agency's overall turnover rate is reasonable and consistently below the statewide turnover rate, TAHC has begun to lose long-tenured staff with specialized skills and knowledge that are critical to its success in managing the health of Texas' livestock and poultry. The common reasons cited by TAHC separating employees have been "better pay/benefits," "no or little career advancement opportunities," and "retirement."

As shown in the following table for FY 2007 compiled from State Auditor's Office data contained in its E-Class application, the greatest area of turnover was with employees who have less than 2 years of service with the agency. This factor is consistent with the state overall. The next greatest area of turnover for TAHC was with employees who have from 25 to 29 years of service, or employees who have reached retirement eligibility. The table below shows the tenure breakdown as compared with state government as a whole.

Agency Tenure	TAHC Turnover Rate	State Turnover Rate
Less than 2 years	23.38%	34.6%
2-4 years	13.5%	11.7%
5-09 years	17.8%	9.8%
10-14 years	..0%	8.0%
15-19 years	6.8%	7.1%
20-24 years	0%	9.3%
25-29 years	21.8%	13.7%
30 to 34 years	18.6%	24.5%

D. Retirement Eligibility

TAHC continues to face the challenge of losing many of its long-tenured staff to retirement, and we expect this trend to continue through the next 5 to 10 years. With a projection of 45% of its authorized FTE's eligible to retire over that period of time, the agency must plan strategies for filling these vacancies with knowledgeable and skilled personnel.

III. Future Workforce Profile (Demand Analysis)

The United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS), is placing increased regulatory demands on Texas and other states that are facing critical animal health disease issues. In addition, the livestock industry in the State of Texas is setting high expectations for the TAHC to initiate stepped-up disease surveillance and regulatory enforcement on all disease programs. As a result, our animal health inspectors and veterinarians will become even more important to the economic viability of the livestock and poultry industries in Texas. It is critical for the TAHC to be able to recruit, hire and retain highly-skilled personnel to occupy these positions.

It is also clear that the TAHC must address the issues of competitive salaries and career ladders in order to mitigate the rate of loss of critical staff to other governmental agencies and to the private sector. Succession plans for retaining critical knowledge, skills, and abilities as long-tenured staff retires is also a major issue for the agency.

A. Critical Functions

- The TAHC needs to be able to attract and retain large animal veterinarians and veterinarians trained in epidemiology, a specialty area where a nation-wide shortage exists. Large animal veterinarians are becoming scarce as vet schools are graduating more students who opt to go into companion animal practice. A study done by the Association of American Veterinary Colleges indicated that fewer than ten percent of veterinarian students across the country are going into food-animal jobs. Experts say that twice that number will be needed to fill the vacancies that exist. In order to attract and retain large animal veterinarians and epidemiologists, the agency must pay at or above similar jobs in Texas state government, other states, USDA-APHIS, and comparable private entities for similar jobs.
- The emphasis of TAHC's animal health inspectors, veterinarians, and epidemiologists is shifting from a program geared toward cattle brucellosis and tuberculosis eradication

to one that encompasses a variety of species (cattle, hogs, sheep and goats, horses, chickens and poultry, deer, exotic hoofstock, and exotic animals) and a variety of diseases (Johnes, pseudorabies, scrapie, equine infectious anemia, avian influenza, laryngotracheitis, chronic wasting disease, etc.) The ability, willingness, and knowledge to work with a variety of species and diseases are expanding requirements.

- Adequate funding is needed to update and maintain agency career ladders. Without viable career ladders, it will become increasingly difficult to attract and retain qualified staff to perform animal health-related, administrative, laboratory, and support staff duties and responsibilities within the agency.
- It is imperative that the agency keep up-to-date with technological changes for animal disease tracking. Therefore, the agency must be able to recruit, hire, and retain staff who have the knowledge and expertise to understand, trouble-shoot, and update these technologies.
- Expert managerial skills and abilities are needed to continue strong leadership within the agency,
- Agency microbiologists and technicians must be equipped with state-of-the-art laboratory equipment in order for the agency to fulfill its mission of animal disease, detection, surveillance and eradication. Laboratory staff must receive pay that is comparable with the labor market and be trained to operate the equipment effectively.
- To be able to capitalize on funding that is available from various sources, including the Federal government, the agency must have skilled grant writers to assist us in securing needed funding.
- Each biennium the agency is asked to provide additional services and to handle new projects, many times without additional funding or funding sources. To ensure that these projects are accomplished with maximum efficiency, the agency needs to train or employ staff with project management skills and expertise.
- The need for animal emergency management planners to help the local jurisdictions develop sound animal emergency response plans will continue and grow in the future.

B. Expected Workforce Changes

- Due to the agency's increasing role in emergency management, all TAHC staff must be trained and ready to undertake new roles and responsibilities when animal emergencies arise. To do so, staff must be adequately trained in utilizing the federal government's incident command structure and be able to activate the structure to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property and/or natural resources as a result of either human or natural-phenomena caused events,
- A smaller ratio of veterinary and epidemiology staff-to-animal health inspectors is needed to be able to adequately manage domestic and foreign animal disease. With the growing list of animal species and disease types with which all staff must be knowledgeable, the veterinary and epidemiology role will dramatically increase.
- Animal health inspectors' and veterinarians' duties are evolving in another way also. Technological changes are occurring rapidly, with increased technological usage of Global Positioning Systems (GPS), Global Information Systems (GIS), laptop computers, hand-held tag-reading devices, etc. While these technological changes should aid field staff in the efficient and effective performance of duties, these are new skill sets that have been added to their jobs. It is expected that technological changes will continually alter their duties and responsibilities in the future.
- Field staff must be able to effectively communicate with market owners and livestock producers, and to educate them on agency rules and state/federal laws pertaining to

sale, movement, quarantine and disposal of livestock, poultry and exotic animals. This new skill set has become increasingly important during the last several years and will continue its importance in the future.

- Staff skilled in effective grant-writing will be crucial to ensure the agency is awarded funding from federal sources to perform the duties and responsibilities required of staff.
- Retirements of long-tenured staff with vast institutional knowledge of the workings of the agency and the livestock/poultry industry in Texas will leave the agency with knowledge gaps in its workforce

C. Anticipated Increases in Number of Employees Needed

- Additional FTEs may be needed to adequately perform the agency's emergency management duties and responsibilities.
- Additional information technology staff will be needed to plan, implement, trouble-shoot, and train staff to utilize new and evolving technologies.
- The increased responsibilities of the field inspectors, veterinarians, and epidemiologists due to new and emergency animal diseases and the livestock/poultry growth rate in Texas may increase the number of staff needed.
- Because of the continued complexities involved in recognizing, categorizing and effectively planning for eradication efforts of new and emerging animal disease, more veterinary and epidemiological staff will be required to face future demands.
- The continued effort to fight fever ticks in south Texas is stretching agency human and financial resources to its limit. With no end in sight, the agency may be forced to request a funding and FTE increase for this endeavor.
- The agency will also have to hire more people or outsource required EM activities related to "credentialing" of first responders, as currently directed by DHS.

D. Future Workforce Skills Needed

- Risk analysis and risk management skills for Epidemiologists.
- GIS development and GPS skills.
- Expertise in new and emerging diseases and foreign animal diseases.
- Safe and effective techniques for tissue and blood sample collection.
- Use of state-of-the-art laboratory equipment and diagnostic techniques.
- Use and maintenance of personal protective equipment to safeguard against highly infectious emerging diseases.
- Development and delivery of public information presentations.
- Collaboration, negotiation, and public relations skills.
- Strategic planning and business plan development and implementation.
- Supervisory and general management skills.

IV. GAP ANALYSIS

A. Anticipated Shortage of Workers

The agency's current FTE authorization may not be sufficient to address the increasing workload and expanding functions. Veterinarians and epidemiologists will be needed in greater numbers as the Texas Animal Health Commission's role in dealing with new and emerging animal diseases evolve. The agency's involvement in emergency response for the state of Texas continues to grow beyond the current FTE allocations in that area. Laboratory staff and

administrative support staff will need to be hired in sufficient numbers to meet regulatory and statutory requirements.

The continued effort to fight fever ticks in south Texas is stretching agency human capital to its limit. With no end in sight, the agency may be forced to request additional personnel for this endeavor.

Our ability to recruit and retain the needed staff will continue to be limited by the agency's state and federal funding.

B. Critical Skills Shortage

- Veterinarians, epidemiologists, laboratory staff, and animal health inspectors must develop increased skills and knowledge to work with new and emerging disease issues, to communicate with various producers and industry groups about the agency's programs, and must demonstrate skill in publicly addressing a variety of audiences.
- All staff will need to develop new technological skills to work with increasingly sophisticated databases and software, and GIS/GPS equipment.
- Management staff will need to enhance strategic planning skills and to develop skills in business process planning and execution.
- Grant writing skills for select staff will be required in the future.
- All staff must be familiar with and practiced in the use of an incident command structure so the agency will be ready and capable of fulfilling its emergency management demands that will be required.

V. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

TAHC will work toward achieving the following goals intended to address workforce competency gaps and the overall anticipated shortage of staff.

A. Organizational Structure

Goal: Ensure that staff is allocated appropriately to cover workload demands.
Action Steps:

- Analyze current allocation and geographic distribution of workers.
- Develop strategic reallocation or redistribution of workers based on analysis and projection of future mission priorities.
- Maintain a cost-effective management-to-staff ratio to ensure maximum productivity and accountability of workers.

B. Recruitment and Retention Strategies

Goal: Target key recruitment resources to attract qualified candidates, especially in those areas of under-representation in the agency's workforce.
Action Steps:

- Consider the establishment of externship opportunities for veterinary medicine and agricultural science students.
- Identify and contact potential resources for minority recruitment in all areas of the state.
- Identify factors that prevent the agency from competing with other employers and develop strategies to address those factors.

Goal: Maintain workplace quality-of-life and develop succession plans.
Action Steps:

- Continue to participate in the Survey of Organizational Excellence; analyze results and develop strategies to address areas needing improvement.
- Analyze reasons for employee turnover and identify trends.
- Update human resources policies and practices to address the findings of these analyses.
- Provide supervisory skills training.
- Identify positions for which succession planning is critical; focus skills and knowledge training on potential successors.
- Strive for salary parity with other state and federal agencies and the private sector.
- Consistently award merit salary actions for exceptional work performance.

C. Career Development and In-Service Training Programs

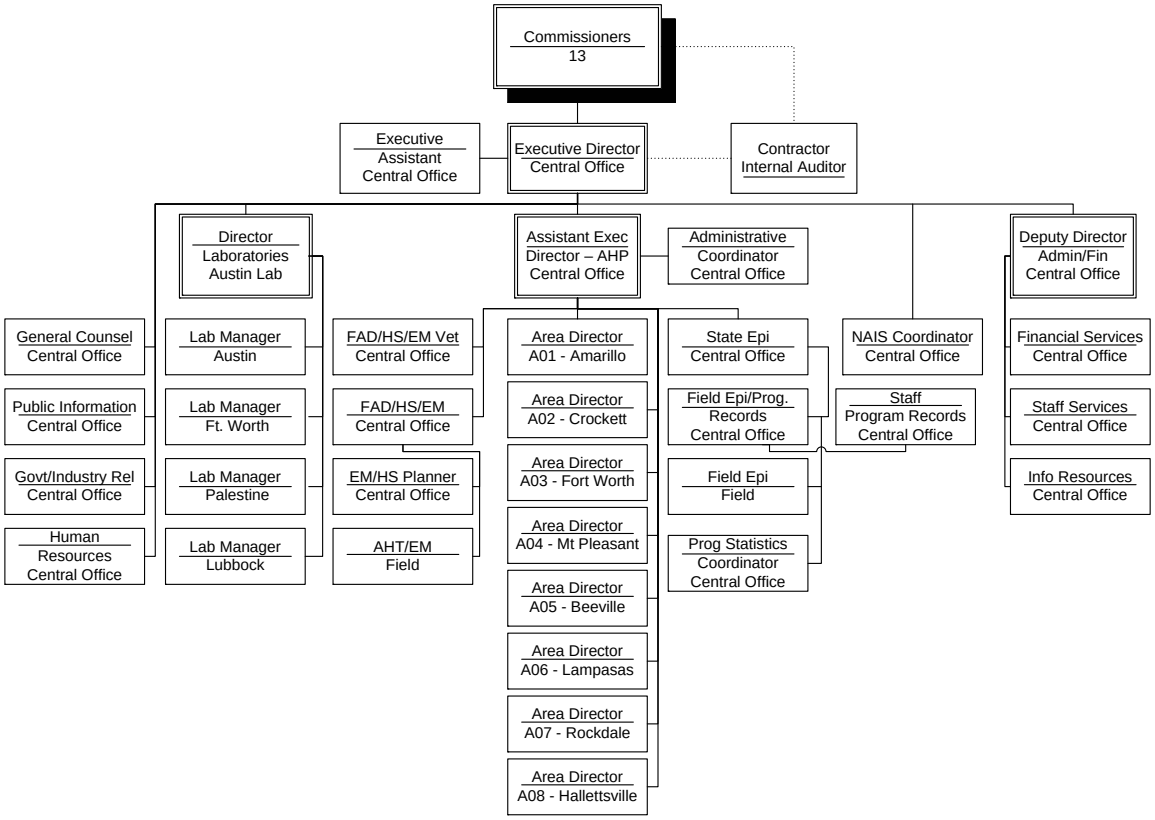
Goal: Ensure that staff is equipped with necessary and appropriate skills and knowledge to most effectively accomplish the agency's mission.

Action Steps:

- Provide training opportunities for veterinarians to achieve required continuing education units for veterinary licensing; to achieve designated epidemiologist status in a number of diseases; and, to update knowledge and skills in new and emerging animal diseases.
- Support and encourage staff attendance at job-relevant conferences and training programs.
- Establish specific job requirements for necessary skills development.
- Based on identified skill requirements, allow employees to utilize the purchased on-line training tool, *Mindleaders*.
- Conduct in-house management conferences to focus on leadership skills development and application.
- Encourage employees who seek new challenges by assigning special projects and providing cross-training.
- Ensure that TAHC managers participate in both internal and external seminars to enhance and further develop managerial skills.

VI. Current Organizational Chart

Texas Animal Health Commission
Fiscal Year 2008



Appendix G – Survey of Organizational Excellence – 2007 TAHC Report Summary

During October and November 2007, TAHC participated in the Survey of Organizational Excellence along with many other state agencies; the University of Texas conducts the survey and publishes the survey results and findings for each participating state agency.

SUMMARY:
TAHC had an exceptional response rate of 72% which consisted of 140 out of 195 who responded to the survey online. The following were reported as the agency's areas of strength and areas of concern:

Areas of Strength

- Strategic; Score: 380. Strategic (Strategic Orientation) reflects employees' thinking about how the organization responds to external influences that should play a role in defining the organization's mission, vision, services, and products. Implied in this construct is the ability of the organization to seek out and work with relevant external entities.
- Quality; Score: 378. Quality focuses upon the degree to which quality principles, such as customer service and continuous improvement are a part of the organizational culture. Quality also addresses the extent to which employees feel that they have the resources to deliver quality services.
- External; Score: 368. External looks at how information flows into the organization from external sources, and conversely, how information flows from inside the organization to external constituents. It addresses the ability of organizational members to synthesize and apply external information to work performed by the organization.
- Benefits; Score: 364. Benefits provides a good indication of the role the benefit package plays in attracting and retaining employees in the organization. It reflects comparable benefits that employees feel exist with other organizations in the area.
- Job Satisfaction: Score: 364. Job Satisfaction addresses employees' attitudes about the overall work situation. It looks at the degree to which employees intrinsically like their jobs and the total work environment, and it focuses upon both the job itself and availability of resources to do the job.

Areas of Concern

- Fair Pay; Score: 208. Fair Pay addresses perceptions of the overall compensation package offered by the organization. It describes how well the compensation package "holds up" when employees compare it to similar jobs in other organizations.
- Internal; Score: 319. Internal captures the flow of communication within the organization from the top-down, bottom-up, and across divisions or departments. It addresses the extent to which communication exchanges are open and candid and move the organization toward goal achievement.
- Change Oriented; Score: 336. Change Oriented secures employees' perceptions of the organization's capability and readiness to change based on new information and ideas. It addresses the organization's aptitude to process information timely and act upon it effectively. It also examines the organization's capacity to draw upon, develop, and utilize the strengths of all in the organization for improvement.

- Supervisor Effectiveness; Score: 336. Supervisor Effectiveness provides insight into the nature of supervisory relationships in the organization, including the quality of communication, leadership, thoroughness and fairness that employees perceive exists between supervisors and them. Measuring Supervisor Effectiveness helps organizational leaders determine the extent to which supervisory relationships are a positive element of the organization.
- Team Effectiveness; Score: 337. Team Effectiveness captures employees' perceptions of the people within the organization that they work with on a daily basis to accomplish their jobs (the work group or team). It gathers data about how effective employees think their work group is as well as the extent to which the organizational environment supports cooperation among employees.

Avg	12 Highest Scoring Non-TAHC Specific Questions
4.24	5. We know who our customers (those we serve) are.
4.00	74. I am satisfied with my holiday benefit.
3.99	4. We produce high quality work that has a low rate of error.
3.95	54. Harassment is not tolerated at my workplace.
3.94	69. I am satisfied with my sick leave.
3.94	70. I am satisfied with my vacation.
3.93	1. We are known for the quality of service we provide..
3.90	6. We develop services to match our customers' needs.
3.88	81. We understand the state, local, national, and global issues that impact the organization.
3.87	52. Our employees are generally ethical in the workplace.
3.85	80. We work well with the public.
3.83	83. Our web site is easy to use and contains helpful information.

Avg	13 Lowest Scoring Non-TAHC Specific Questions
1.96	65. My pay keeps pace with the cost of living.
2.87	61. Salaries are competitive with similar jobs in the community.
2.22	60. People are paid fairly for the work they do.
2.95	47. People who challenge the status quo are valued.
2.98	76. Information and knowledge are shared openly within this organization.
2.98	77. An effort is made to get the opinions of people throughout the agency.
3.00	55. I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to evaluate my supervisor's performance.
3.04	72. I am satisfied with my dental insurance.
3.12	73. I am satisfied with my vision insurance.
3.24	51. Favoritism (special treatment) is not an issue in raises or promotions.
3.28	58. I believe we will use the information from this survey to improve our performance.
3.32	75. I am satisfied with my Employee Assistance Program.
3.32	86. My organization encourages me to be involved in my community.

TAHC Specific Survey Questions:

Avg	Std Dev	Question
3.44	0.92	1. Agency management clearly communicates with staff on important issues affecting the agency's duties and mission.
3.64	0.85	2. Overall, I believe the agency was well represented and the results were positive during the last legislative session.
3.56	1.00	3. The agency's executive director has provided effective leadership and clear direction over the past year.
3.26	1.08	4. The schedule and availability of training are adequate to meet my career ladder training or continuing education requirements.
3.76	0.73	5. Human resources policies and procedures are generally reasonable and easy to follow.
4.20	0.61	6. The Brucellosis and bovine tuberculosis eradication program is an appropriate top priority for TAHC.
3.61	0.95	7. TAHC's increasing role in emergency management activities have been clearly defined to field staff.
3.75	0.74	8. Agency administrators are proactively addressing future prospects for agency functions after brucellosis is eradicated.
4. 39	0.63	9. It is important for TAHC to position itself as a key player on the US and international animal health scene.
3.37	0.94	10. The agency's current structure of field operations' areas and staffing is appropriate and effective.
3.61	0.85	11. The agency should begin to shift from a strong regulatory role toward a stronger customer service approach with producers ("we're here to help").
3.48	0.88	12. Central office, field, and laboratory staff respect and support each other's contributions to the agency's mission.
3.03	1.02	13. Our computer resources are reliable and productive.
3.74	0.87	14. My performance evaluation is a fair representation of my work and contributions to the agency mission.
3.53	1.09	15. My supervisor gives me constructive feedback on my performance throughout the year.
3.65	0.82	16. The public information office helps to make a positive impression for the agency.
3.78	1.06	17. My supervisor is honest and prompt in answering my questions and resolving my concerns.
3.14	1.06	18. TAHC is proactive in building employee morale through a positive communication style, training opportunities, and other supportive conditions of employment.
3.83	0.87	19. Overall, the positive aspects of working at TAHC generally outweigh the negative.