

# APHIS

# Strategic Plan

FY 2010-2015



United States Department of Agriculture  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

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# Message from the Administrator

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I am pleased to present the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Strategic Plan for 2010-2015. The United States—including the agriculture community—has faced many challenges and changes over the past several years: the global financial crises of 2008-2009, high unemployment rates, and the overall decline in global trade during this timeframe, the first since 1982. Addressing and managing these challenges and changes requires special attention from all of us who work in and with the agriculture community. At the same time, APHIS faces significant budgetary reductions in the years to come, and we must determine how to reduce spending while ensuring we maintain effective delivery of our core mission activities. We cannot continue business as usual.



Over the next 5 years, APHIS will make use of this strategic plan to manage its resources in a way that delivers the best outcomes, in the most cost effective manner, for everyone affected by its programs. The plan will help us to focus on our core missions areas, while finding ways to redesign and streamline processes and organizational structure to improve efficiencies.

APHIS has long been a performance-based organization that values the ideals of diversity, transparency, and inclusion; however we know that there is always room for improvement. Consequently, APHIS leaders have made cultural transformation a top priority. With its cultural transformation efforts, the agency is improving organizational performance through strong leadership, open communication, and employee engagement; providing civil rights services to APHIS employees and customer; the delivery of timely and cost-effective products and services; transparent and objective decision-making; and engagement and collaboration with stakeholders and other citizens. In today's world, States, tribes, industry groups, and small and non-traditional producers play an ever-increasing role in APHIS issues and decisions. Without good collaboration, APHIS would not be able to accomplish all that we do.

The APHIS Strategic Plan for 2010-2015 differs from previous plans by shifting its focus to more broadly defined priorities and maximizing the agency's available resources. These priorities align with those of the Secretary of Agriculture: supporting rural communities; protecting forests, rangelands, and private lands; expanding opportunities to develop and trade safe agricultural products, including biotechnology-derived agricultural products; and minimizing and preventing damage to the U.S. food supply from plant and animal pests and diseases. For each of these priorities, we have identified desired outcomes and the best means and strategies to achieve them.

I encourage you to take a close look at your program strategic plans and identify ways in which you can further align with the USDA and APHIS priorities. And most of all, I look forward to working with you to meet our evolving challenges as we continue to protect and promote the health and viability of American agriculture.

Gregory L. Parham, Administrator  
USDA-APHIS

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## Mission Statement

Protect the health and value of U.S. agricultural, natural, and other resources.

## Vision Statement

Advance the well-being of U.S. consumers by ensuring the health and availability of affordable food products and protecting forests and private working lands against devastating pests and diseases so that U.S. farmers, ranchers, and other citizens of our rural communities thrive and prosper.

## Core Values

APHIS strives to model the following core values, all of which are equally important to the success of our work.

- **Collaboration:** We recognize the need for, and wisdom in, working closely with partner groups—large and small, traditional and non-traditional—to get results.
- **Dedication to Public Service:** We take our commitment to the American public very seriously and believe in delivering the highest quality services possible.
- **Diversity:** We value diversity in our workforce, and we respect other people's views even when they are different from our own.
- **Fairness:** We strive to treat everyone equitably, with dignity and respect.
- **Innovation:** We seek better ways to get results by encouraging creativity and innovation.
- **Professionalism:** We earn respect through the knowledge, skills, abilities, integrity, and work ethic we bring to our jobs every day.
- **Responsible Stewardship:** We are careful stewards of all resources (including human, financial, and environmental resources) entrusted to us.
- **The Best Science:** We bring the best science to bear on all we do while acknowledging that other factors are also important in making decisions.
- **Transparency:** We communicate clearly and consistently about the development and implementation of our policies and regulations to all interested parties.

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## Strategic Plan Framework

As part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), APHIS was established in 1972 to consolidate the department's plant and animal health functions under a central mission: protect the health and value of American agriculture. While, nearly 40 years later, the overall APHIS mission remains the same, American agriculture has changed significantly. And with that change, the scope and complexity of APHIS' work, responsibilities, and partnerships has expanded and evolved in countless ways.

To meet the multi-faceted needs of today's agricultural sector, APHIS has identified four strategic goals, with eight supporting objectives, that will guide the agency's priorities and work over the next 5 years.

### **Goal 1: Support rural communities**

- Objective 1.1 – Implement agricultural pest and disease management programs, including those in affected rural areas
- Objective 1.2 – Protect and promote animal welfare

### **Goal 2: Protect forests, rangelands, and private lands**

- Objective 2.1 – Reduce threats to forests and private working lands

### **Goal 3: Expand opportunities to develop and trade safe agricultural products, including biotechnology-derived agricultural products**

- Objective 3.1 – Enhance the regulatory framework that allows for the safe development of genetically engineered organisms
- Objective 3.2 – Facilitate safe agricultural trade through international standard setting and effective management of sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) issues

### **Goal 4: Minimize and prevent damage to the U.S. food supply caused by plant and animal pests and diseases**

- Objective 4.1 – Monitor the health status of U.S. agricultural resources
- Objective 4.2 – Develop and implement programs to address plant and animal pests and diseases of concern
- Objective 4.3 – Provide diagnostics and technical support to enhance pest and disease programs, including emergency response capabilities for these pests and diseases

The APHIS goals and objectives closely align with and contribute to the USDA Priority Goals, as outlined by Secretary Vilsack earlier in 2010 and described in the Department's strategic plan (see [www.ocfo.usda.gov/usdasp/sp2010/sp2010.pdf](http://www.ocfo.usda.gov/usdasp/sp2010/sp2010.pdf)).

In order to meet the agency’s goals and support the USDA priorities, APHIS is following a strategic process similar to that of the department. Specifically, APHIS is using performance measures to track progress in attaining each objective and its overarching goal; these measures specify baseline information and long-term performance targets for each objective. The plan also includes “strategies and means,” which describe the actions APHIS needs to take to accomplish the strategic goals. Lastly, the plan includes an “external risk factors” section for each strategic goal that highlights possible challenges APHIS may encounter in making progress on its goals.

By following this established process and remaining committed to the strategic goals of both the agency and the department, APHIS can plan for and use resources in such a way that optimizes the results of its efforts. This includes managing personnel, information technology, and specialized emergency and homeland security resources effectively; considering environmental responsibility in all of our work and supporting “green” operations; and consistently monitoring our efforts for maximum performance and efficiency.

In doing so, we can ensure that APHIS continues to adapt proactively as new challenges arise—ably supporting the growth and productivity of American agriculture today and for the many generations ahead.

# Strategic Goal 1:

## Support Rural Communities



One cannot think about agriculture without thinking about rural America. After all, rural communities support

America's agricultural producers both economically and socially. If rural communities are undergoing hardship, then farmers, ranchers, and other producers are as well. The health of our rural communities is so closely linked with the prosperity of our agricultural sectors that to ignore one seriously jeopardizes the other. Therefore, it is vital that APHIS continue to play an integral role in supporting these communities.

APHIS protects valuable agricultural assets and other natural resources in different ways. APHIS employees work internationally to prevent the spread of pests and diseases, conducting pre-clearance inspections of agricultural products being imported into the United States. APHIS supports farmers and ranchers across the United States by reducing damage caused by plant and animal pests and diseases. Programs such as these ensure that the agricultural sector of the U.S. economy remains strong and productive. This, in turn, means that rural communities are better able to thrive and prosper.

Other ways APHIS supports rural economies include our work to help producers reduce agricultural losses due to wildlife and our efforts to protect the welfare of animals through enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act.

APHIS has a longstanding commitment to helping producers reduce agricultural losses caused by wildlife. One example of this work is the agency's efforts to reduce or eliminate damage from beaver dams in rural communities. These dams not only cause farmers' crops and pastures to suffer (due to standing water), but also negatively impact acres of timber, rural roads, and bridges; drainage control structures; buildings; septic systems; and even unfiltered municipal drinking water sources.

Wildlife damage mitigation experts remove beavers and dams to protect these valuable resources. In fact, in 2009, there were 17 States actively involved in APHIS beaver damage mitigation efforts, and the value of these protected resources was estimated at more than \$111 million. APHIS costs associated with protecting these resources was approximately \$5.3 million, resulting in a benefit/ cost ratio of about 21 to 1.

By reducing damage caused by wildlife to a variety of rural resources (e.g., crops, livestock, and infrastructure), APHIS helps farmers, ranchers, and other producers in small communities thrive and prosper. Economic research has determined that the indirect benefits of agricultural protection impact many segments of the rural economy, not just individuals involved in direct production. This economic "multiplier" effect can be significant for rural communities.

In addition, APHIS is responsible for ensuring the humane care and handling of animals used in research, exhibited to the public, bred for commercial sale, or transported in commerce. The public has demonstrated increasing levels of concern about the health status of dogs sold by individuals over the Internet and by foreign dealers. The questionable health status of these dogs erodes general public confidence in this industry, hurting even reputable individuals selling dogs. More than 85 percent of the domestic licensed dealers that sell dogs are family owned and operated in rural locales. APHIS inspection and enforcement activities focusing on problematic dog dealers are key to keeping reputable small family operations viable and thriving.

**OBJECTIVE 1.1 – IMPLEMENT AGRICULTURAL PEST AND DISEASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS, INCLUDING THOSE IN AFFECTED RURAL AREAS**

**Strategies and Means**

To implement agricultural pest and disease management programs in rural areas, APHIS:

- Places the majority of wildlife damage mitigation specialists in rural communities.
- Invests in wildlife damage research that concentrates on preventing specific types of wildlife damage (e.g., repellents and immunocontraceptives).
- Collaborates with other Federal and State agencies in monitoring and managing emerging wildlife disease issues.

**Performance Measures**

1.1.1 National average ratio of benefits to costs of beaver damage mitigation efforts

Baseline 2009		Target 2015	
21:1		24:1	
2006	2007	2008	
6:1	12:1	17:1	

**OBJECTIVE 1.2 – PROTECT AND PROMOTE ANIMAL WELFARE**

**Strategies and Means**

To protect and promote animal welfare, APHIS:

- Ensures the humane care and treatment of animals covered under the Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act through inspection, enforcement, and monitoring for regulatory compliance.
- Conducts training, outreach, education, and other non-regulatory activities through the Center for Animal Welfare.
- Assists local communities during natural disasters by helping to coordinate evacuation, transportation, emergency sheltering, veterinary care, search and rescue, reunion, and recovery services for pets and other animals.
- Evaluates new and existing technology, such as thermal and digital imaging, that can be used to evaluate physical and environmental conditions to assess and improve the well-being of animals.

1.2.1 Percent of licensees and registrants in substantial compliance with the Animal Welfare Act<sup>1</sup>

Baseline 2009		Target 2015	
97%		95%	
2006	2007	2008	
N/A	97%	99%	

**External Risk Factors**

External factors that may impact APHIS’ ability to fulfill its mission in these areas include:

- Increasing wildlife populations;
- Greater fiscal hardships for State natural resource and agricultural agencies and other cooperators;
- Rising numbers of natural disasters;
- Increased demand for more APHIS consultations on animal welfare and cruelty issues;
- Climate change and its potential associated impacts, including increased agricultural pest and disease outbreaks; and
- General economic strains, including rising unemployment and inflation, and its negative impacts on rural communities.

<sup>1</sup> Due to increased inspection and enforcement efforts for problematic dog dealers, the agency will likely initially experience lower compliance levels as new entities are inspected. The 2009 baseline has been revised from the earlier reported baseline in the Agency’s FY 2012 Explanatory Notes.

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## Strategic Goal 2:

### Protect forests, rangelands, and private lands

**A**PHIS conducts plant and animal health programs to prevent, control, or eliminate plant and animal pests and diseases of concern to American agricultural and natural resources, in cooperation with various Federal and State agencies, industry, and producers with operations of all sizes. The detection and management of these pests and diseases has protected and enhanced agricultural products and natural resources in many rural areas, including forests, rangelands and private lands.

APHIS plays an important role in protecting the Nation's forests, as well as traditional agricultural crops, fruits, and vegetables, from plant pests and diseases. One pest causing damage to our Nation's forests is the Asian long horned beetle (ALB). ALB is a pest of significant concern because it causes damage to hardwood trees. ALB was first detected in Chicago, IL, in 2003 and has since been detected in other parts of the United States like New York and Massachusetts. Economists estimate that in New York and New England alone, the annual contribution of forest-based manufacturing, forest-related tourism, and recreation is about \$19.5 billion. In addition to protecting our forests for social and environmental benefits, APHIS' ALB program protects a significant sector of local economies.

APHIS is increasing detection activities so that infested trees can be quickly identified and removed, thereby reducing the ALB's further spread and overall program costs and economic and environmental impacts. The agency is also educating the public (i.e., recreational campers, consumers, etc.) regarding the risks associated

with transporting firewood, a common activity that contributes to the spread of forest pests.

As climate disruption occurs, APHIS is also at the forefront of examining the ways in which these climatic changes may impact the range and severity of a variety of known plant pests, as well as emerging plant pests and diseases.

#### **OBJECTIVE 2.1 - REDUCE THREATS TO FORESTS, RANGELANDS AND PRIVATE LANDS**

##### **Strategies and Means**

To reduce threats to forests and private working lands, APHIS protects natural resources by detecting and combating invasive plant pests. APHIS also is an active participant in the National Invasive Species Council, which coordinates and ensures cost-efficiency and effectiveness for Federal activities related to invasive species. Through effective Federal-State partnerships, APHIS has protected many natural environment and forest health resources, resulting in annual net benefits to society. More specifically, APHIS:

- Uses pest surveys to detect infested trees, trapping techniques to determine pest presence, and protective treatments for exposed trees to eradicate and prevent natural forest pest spread (e.g., survey efforts, quarantine measures, and regulatory program to limit further spread of the European gypsy moth, a highly destructive forest pest).

- Conducts regulatory activities to restrict the human-assisted movement of regulated materials that may harbor other forest pests.
- Carries out eradication activities to control the spread of forest pests such as the ALB and the European gypsy moth.
- Leads outreach efforts to educate the public on what to do if they find a pest and how they can help to prevent the spread and establishment of the pest in non-quarantined areas.
- Advances technology to enhance pest management efforts, examining, for example, the potential impacts of climatic changes on its programs by increasing its participation in technical working groups on climate disruption and developing a USDA Framework Initiative to identify the anticipated impacts of climate disruption on various programs, including those involving private working lands and forests.
- Partners with USDA's Forest Service, State departments of forestry and natural resources, and stakeholders (both traditional and non-traditional) and actively seeks ways to expand those partnerships in order to support and strengthen pest management efforts.

### 2.1.2 Dollar value of damage prevented by the gypsy moth program per dollar spent

Baseline 2009		Target 2015	
1.85		1.75 <sup>2</sup>	
2006	2007	2008	
1.63	1.72	1.79	

### External Risk Factors

A number of outside factors may affect APHIS' ability to achieve Goal 2. These include:

- Extreme weather, climate fluctuation, or environmental change beyond the natural range of variability that affects ecological productivity and resilience;
- Increasing animal populations and urban development and sprawl;
- The success and level of participation in markets for ecosystem services;
- Budgetary, legal, and regulatory constraints; and
- International crises or homeland security issues that alter domestic program allocations or immediate public needs.

### Performance Measures

#### 2.1.1 Percentage of annual target area treated for ALB

Baseline 2009		Target 2015	
100% Targeted 14 sq miles/completed 14 sq miles		100% Target 12 sq miles	
2006	2007	2008	
100% Targeted 39 sq miles/completed 39 sq miles	90% Targeted 39 sq miles/completed 35 sq miles	100% Targeted 29 sq miles/completed 29 sq miles	

<sup>2</sup> Drop in dollar value is expected for 2015 based on the prediction of higher infestations due to the gypsy moth life cycle flow.



## Strategic Goal 3:

Expand opportunities to develop and trade safe agricultural products, including biotechnology-derived agricultural products

**O**ver the past 22 years, total U.S. agricultural trade with the rest of the world (imports and exports) has increased 192 percent. While this expansion in global trade has created new economic opportunities for U.S. producers, jobs and the economy continue to be central issues facing the country. The National Export Initiative (NEI) sets a goal to double U.S. exports over the next 5 years as one way to encourage job growth in the United States.

APHIS has dedicated resources, strategically placed around the world, helping to protect U.S. agricultural and natural resources from the ubiquitous threat of pests and diseases. These employees provide important assistance to APHIS in accomplishing three objectives related to safe agricultural trade.

**First**, they work closely with foreign governments to prevent the spread of high-risk pests and diseases, including but not limited to screwworms, fruit flies, cotton pests, foot-and-mouth disease, classical swine fever, and other emerging transboundary pests and diseases.

**Second**, they strengthen our efforts to protect and expand overseas markets for U.S. agricultural goods that are blocked or limited by unfair technical and regulatory barriers.

**Third**, they broaden APHIS' safeguarding system by working with foreign governments,

particularly in developing countries, to improve their capacity to detect and respond to emerging pests and diseases at their origin, thereby preempting the global spread and potential introduction of such pests and diseases into the United States.

In addition to traditional agricultural trade, APHIS is a world leader in ensuring the safe development of genetically engineered (GE) plants and plant products. Thus, the United States has tremendous opportunities to increase its exports of such products. A vital component to supporting strong exports is having a regulatory system that continues to provide for the safe development and use of biotechnology in agricultural systems and the environment.

APHIS provides a strong, science-based regulatory system to ensure that GE products are developed and tested in safe conditions and do not pose a threat to agriculture and the environment. To support these efforts, APHIS recently initiated a Biotechnology Quality Management System (BQMS) Program. This program provides compliance assistance to the regulated community, helping industry leaders identify the critical control points within their management systems to enhance compliance with USDA-APHIS regulations. This proactive and collaborative approach paves the way for greater success in safely developing and exporting safe agricultural products.

A second initiative APHIS has undertaken is a review of its petition process. After GE products have been developed and tested safely, it may no longer be necessary to regulate them. A company must petition the agency to change the regulatory status of its GE products. APHIS reviews the petition, analyzing scientific data supplied by the industry, before determining a final ruling. APHIS is examining its petition review process to improve efficiencies and update its standard operating procedures and guidance documents. By increasing efficiency in the petition process, safe GE products can enter the marketplace more quickly, allowing for greater export opportunities.

**OBJECTIVE 3.1 – ENHANCE THE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK THAT ALLOWS FOR THE SAFE DEVELOPMENT OF GENETICALLY ENGINEERED ORGANISMS**

**Strategies and Means**

APHIS continues to improve the science-based approach to regulating agricultural biotechnology products derived from new technologies in order to enhance the regulatory framework that allows for the safe development of GE organisms. More specifically, APHIS:

- Enhances biotechnology compliance by working with applicants through the agency’s BQMS Program, helping to prevent GE products from co-mingling with non-GE products and creating confidence in the U.S. export market.
- Performs targeted inspections of field tests and thoroughly evaluates all potential noncompliance incidents, as well as facilities, equipment, records of

developers, and potential incidents reported by permittees.

- Improves the petition deregulation process by increasing efficiency and updating its standard operating procedures and guidance documents, which will allow safe GE products to enter the marketplace more quickly, provide additional export opportunities, and ensure that the handling of petitions is transparent and predictable to the public while delivering high-quality assessments to meet APHIS mission objectives.
- Enhances its ability to create timely and high-quality documents in support of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements through increased staff capacity, training in NEPA processes and procedures, collaboration with external experts, and increased outreach to stakeholders and interested parties.

**Performance Measures**

3.1.1 Number of companies/institutions participating in the BQMS Program

Baseline 2009		Target 2015	
5*		45 (cumulative)	
2006	2007	2008	
N/A	N/A	N/A	

\*The BQMS program began in FY 2009

3.1.2 Percent of field release inspections in which permittee or notifier achieves regulatory compliance<sup>3</sup>

Baseline 2009		Target 2015	
95%		95%	
2006	2007	2008	
98%	97%	99.1%	

3.1.3 Cumulative number of GE plant lines reviewed by USDA and found safe for use in agriculture<sup>4</sup>

Baseline 2009		Target 2015	
78		100	
2006	2007	2008	
70	74	76	

**OBJECTIVE 3.2 – FACILITATE SAFE AGRICULTURAL TRADE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL STANDARD SETTING AND EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY (SPS) ISSUES**

**Strategies and Means**

As a leader and partner in international standard setting, APHIS actively influences and contributes to the development of global animal and plant health standards, emphasizing a practical, risk-based approach for managing pest and disease risks in trade. More specifically, APHIS:

<sup>3</sup> Due to differences in fields inspected (not the same fields or applicants are inspected each year) and the number of inspections conducted, BRS has seen variation in the percent of compliant inspections in the reported years. Due to this variability, we believe that 95% provides an appropriate baseline from where to measure percent compliance throughout the year.

<sup>4</sup> USDA revised the calculation methodology for this performance measure and discovered that a previous deregulation of a plant line was accounted for in the wrong fiscal year. The data for 2007 was off by one and the following years were adjusted accordingly

- Plays a leadership role in the development and adoption of sensible, science-based international standards, which benefit all trading partners including the United States.
- Takes a lead in resolving SPS issues to keep export markets open and, when countries use SPS issues to detain or refuse entry to particular shipments, intervene to work with the trading partner and get the SPS issue resolved.
- Enhances services to facilitate increased exports.
- Ensures that agency import rules and regulations align with international standards.
- Assists foreign countries with building their plant and animal health capacities, offering expertise to other countries that helps build the capacity of trading partners to adequately safeguard their resources and trade safely with other countries, including the United States.
- Pursues opportunities to showcase the benefits of U.S. agricultural products to foreign consumers and build local support for export markets.
- Develops SPS negotiation strategies for technical meetings with trading partners.
- Partners with international standard-setting bodies to promote safe, predictable, and fair global agricultural trade.

## Performance Measures

### 3.2.1 Number of direct APHIS interventions resulting in release of U.S. cargo

Baseline 2009		Target 2015	
370*		275	
2006	2007	2008	
N/A	240	250	

\*FY 2009 was an outlier year. Improvements in tracking SPS issues and field reporting in addition to dealing with trading partners' concerns about the H1N1 pandemic resulted in an increased number of resolved SPS export issues compared with previous years.

### 3.2.2 Overall value of protected and expanded agricultural trade (exports) ensured through the removal of technical animal and plant health barriers

Baseline 2009		Target 2015	
\$1 billion		\$1.75 billion	
2006	2007	2008	
N/A	N/A	N/A	

### 3.2.3 Number of plant and animal health export certificates issued to support the export marketing of U.S. agricultural products

Baseline 2009		Target 2015	
640,000		711,000	
2006	2007	2008	
N/A	N/A	N/A	

### 3.2.4 Number of foreign officials from high-risk regions trained in plant health, animal health, transboundary diseases, and/or veterinary epidemiology\*

Baseline 2009		Target 2015	
67		100	
2006	2007	2008	
20	24	24	

\*Training refers to standard U.S.-based courses offered through APHIS' International Technical and Regulatory Capacity Building office.

## External Risk Factors

America's ability to expand opportunities to develop and trade safe agricultural products, including biotechnology-derived agricultural products, maybe affected by a number of external factors. These factors include:

- The failure of "change management" efforts to shift existing agricultural production technology practices toward more sustainable production methods;
- Evolving scientific advances and industry practices;
- Resistance both at home and abroad to foods produced through the use of biotechnology;
- The effects on worldwide food security from global climate change and the increasing variability of the weather; and
- Political instability in food-insecure countries.

## Strategic Goal 4:

Minimize and prevent damage to the U.S. food supply caused by plant and animal pests and diseases

**F**ood security is an important focus of USDA and APHIS. Protecting the animal and plant resources that make up the U.S. food supply is essential to ensuring that America's children have nutritious, high quality, and affordable food.

An important pillar of our Nation's food protection system is to preserve the health of domestic animal resources. APHIS is developing a flexible regulatory framework around animal disease traceability that States and tribes can use to develop their own specific interstate animal disease traceability systems. APHIS is also actively increasing its involvement with the *One Health* movement, which focuses on the convergence of people, animals, and the environment. The *One Health* initiative recognizes the fundamental benefits of connecting the health of animals with the health of people and the viability of ecosystems and is designed to enhance a multi-disciplinary, collaborative approach to effectively monitor, detect, and respond to animal health concerns.

Plant pest monitoring and management is another key pillar in food protection systems. APHIS must remain vigilant in protecting the country's many plant food and nursery stock resources. Once plant pests or diseases are detected, APHIS must be ready to respond using effective tools and practices and ensure strong and proactive coordination within the agency and with other Federal agencies, States, tribes, industry, and stakeholders. APHIS must also collaborate effectively with industry to ensure

that producers use long-term, sustainable strategies in crop production practices after the crisis has passed.

Most importantly, APHIS must continually reevaluate its list of major exotic pest threats, since plant threats from around the world continue to increase. It must continually track and update its priorities and develop systems that allow it to respond in a timely manner to new plant health threats. By doing so, APHIS is better able to use resources in ways that yield maximum results.

### **OBJECTIVE 4.1 – MONITOR THE HEALTH STATUS OF U.S. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES**

#### **Strategies and Means**

To monitor the health status of U.S. agricultural resources and prevent the introduction of plant and animal pests and diseases, APHIS:

- Conducts surveillance and detection efforts to track the prevalence of pests and diseases in U.S. agriculture.
- Reports to U.S. trading partners surveillance and detection information that demonstrates the prevalence of a pest or disease in the United States or regions of the United States.
- Collaborates with industry, States, and tribes to develop effective regulatory solutions to significant animal and plant health issues.

- Scans global data to identify trends in the movement and spread of harmful animal and plant pests or diseases.

### Performance Measures

4.1.1. Value of damage prevented and mitigated annually as a result of timely detection due to plant and animal health surveillance efforts

Baseline 2009		Target 2015	
\$1.05 billion		\$1.67 billion	
2006	2007	2008	
N/A	\$1.37 billion	\$1.38 billion	

## OBJECTIVE 4.2 – DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS TO ADDRESS PLANT AND ANIMAL PESTS AND DISEASES OF CONCERN

### Strategies and Means

To develop and implement programs to address plant and animal pests and diseases of concern, APHIS:

- Collaborates with Federal, State, and local officials, tribes, industry, and other stakeholders on prevention, early detection, and emergency response efforts to find pests and diseases should they reach the United States and to determine an appropriate course of action to prevent their spread.
- Develops control and eradication programs, with the assistance of State governments and industry participants, for invasive pests and diseases that have become established.
- Limits the natural and artificial spread of pests through various control techniques, including regulating certain products and commodities in interstate and foreign trade.

- Requires veterinarians who perform accredited services on behalf of the Federal government to renew their accreditation (the internationally recognized gold standard for laboratory quality assurance) every 3 years and to complete APHIS-provided continuing education on specific animal health and disease issues.
- Works to eliminate brucellosis from the Nation’s cattle population, changing its disease surveillance strategy from one that focuses on disease detection and elimination at the State level to one that ensures the continued absence of disease in the domestic cattle population at the national level.

### Performance Measures

4.2.1 Percentage of exotic fruit fly outbreaks eradicated in the United States

Baseline 2009		Target 2015	
100%		100%	
2006	2007	2008	
100%	100%	100%	

4.2.2 Value of damage prevented and mitigated in the U.S. grape industry as a result of the European grapevine moth (EGVM) program

Baseline 2009		Target 2015	
\$2.5 billion		\$2.7 Billion (APHIS projects that EGVM will be eradicated by 2015)	
2006	2007	2008	
N/A	N/A	N/A	

4.2.3 Number of veterinarians completing Federal accreditation continuing education modules

Baseline 2009	Target 2015



N/A		59,000
2006	2007	2008
N/A	N/A	N/A

4.2.4 Percent reduction of the number of bovine brucellosis slaughter surveillance samples (in 50 States and 3 Territories)

Baseline 2009		Target 2015
N/A		50%
2006	2007	2008
N/A	N/A	N/A

**OBJECTIVE 4.3 – PROVIDE DIAGNOSTICS AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO ENHANCE PEST AND DISEASE PROGRAMS, INCLUDING EMERGENCY RESPONSE CAPABILITIES FOR THESE PESTS AND DISEASES**

**Strategies and Means**

To enhance pest and disease programs, including emergency response capabilities for these pests and diseases, APHIS:

- Partners with universities and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to develop operational methods and provide diagnostic support to address agricultural pest and disease concerns.
- Enhances coordination of emergency response efforts with Federal, State, tribal, and local partners.
- Expands emergency response educational efforts within the agency to ensure that we are able to participate and respond to natural disasters and other emergency events.
- Builds emergency response capacity (i.e., the National Animal Health Emergency Response Corps and the National Animal Health

Laboratory Network), including All Hazards<sup>5</sup>, in the event of an animal or plant emergency that would otherwise quickly drain Federal resources.

- Trains State and local personnel to assist with detecting and reporting plant pests and diseases and actively participates in the *National Response Plan* framework.
- Uses an expanding number of International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 17025 accredited export tests at its National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL).

**Performance Measure**

4.3.1 Percentage of diagnostic test methods conducted by NVSL that are ISO 17025 accredited\*.

Baseline 2009		Target 2015
44%		80%
2006	2007	2008
8%	30%	39%

(\*ISO 17025 is the main standard used by testing and calibration laboratories.)

**External Risk Factors**

APHIS’ ability to minimize and prevent damage by plant and animal pests and diseases maybe impacted by several external factors. These factors include:

- The effectiveness of Federal, State and local organizations in monitoring the health status of agricultural resources; and
- Increased risks of pest and disease introductions through globalization and more open trade practices, climate disruption, and unusual weather patterns.

<sup>5</sup> All Hazards refers to any incident caused by terrorism, natural disasters, or any chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive (CBRNE) accident.





# Management Initiatives

## OVERVIEW OF MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES

The power of APHIS' cultural transformation is realized through the agency's strategic management initiatives. These initiatives encompass the agency's commitment to improving organizational performance through strong leadership, open communication, and employee engagement; providing civil rights services to employees and customers; the delivery of timely and cost-effective products and services; transparent and objective decision-making; and engagement and collaboration with stakeholders and other citizens.

### **Initiative I: Strengthen leadership, promote open communication, and engage and develop employees**

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Our agency's success depends on the diverse backgrounds, skills, knowledge, creativity, and dedication of our employees. While APHIS has long been a performance-based organization that values the ideals of diversity, transparency, and inclusion, recent input from employees at Town Hall meetings have made APHIS senior leaders aware that improvements are still needed. A similar sentiment has been echoed by employees across USDA. Consequently, APHIS leaders, along with all of the Secretary's top leadership, have made cultural transformation a top priority.

APHIS and its sister agencies in USDA's Marketing and Regulatory Programs (MRP) have

established clear goals and action plans in the areas of Leadership, Communications, and Career Management. These goals have been documented in the MRP Cultural Transformation Action Plan.

APHIS also recognizes that effective succession and workforce planning will ensure leadership continuity in key agency positions. To be successful, employees and leaders must not only be scientifically and technically competent, but also have effective interpersonal skills. APHIS established a Talent Management and Leadership Development Board to guide succession planning and leadership development across the agency. This executive board has developed a succession plan that provides information and processes to ensure a systematic approach to the agency's succession planning.

APHIS must have solid recruitment and retention plans to ensure that a diverse and wide pool of candidates is available to serve the agency's mission. This also means building an employee population that is representative of the people we serve by increasing representation in underrepresented groups, such as veterans and people with disabilities.

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## **Initiative 2: Provide Civil Rights Services to APHIS employees and Customers**

APHIS leadership has established civil rights as a pillar to its cultural transformation efforts. APHIS will change the direction of equal employment opportunity, civil rights, and program delivery through a comprehensive approach. This approach will assure an increase in early resolution usage in program civil rights and equal opportunity complaints; a reduction in inventory of program civil rights complaints; and an analysis of field operation for systemic improvement. Specific goals, performance objectives and indicators have been established by the Assistance Secretary for Civil Rights to ensure progress and are presented in Appendix A.

## **Initiative 3: Improve the timeliness and/or cost effectiveness of APHIS products and services**

An organization with the most diverse, motivated, and knowledgeable employees can still fail if its systems and processes are weighed down by outdated and unnecessary bureaucracy.

APHIS will examine key business processes on an annual basis to ensure continual process improvements in terms of timeliness and cost. This Business Process Improvement (BPI) Initiative will use a variety of formal process improvement models, including Lean Six Sigma, to better document and analyze its current processes, determine where issues or concerns exist, and develop solutions to streamline them. The key business processes being reviewed in 2011 provide some examples of the types the agency will review on an annual basis:

1. **GE Product Deregulation Petition Process**  
Improve the speed and predictability of the petition process while preserving well-supported decision-making.
2. **Veterinary Biologics Licensing**  
Increase predictability of the licensing process for the regulated industry.
3. **IES Enforcement**  
Optimize the processing of enforcement actions in order to encourage regulatory compliance.
4. **Employee Relations Process**  
Improve the employee relations process to gain efficiencies without losing quality.
5. **Rulemaking**  
Streamline the rulemaking process to gain efficiencies without losing quality.
6. **Import/Export Decision-making**  
Optimize the procedures for exporting animals so that the procedures are convenient for the exporters and cost effective for both APHIS and the exporter.

APHIS is also investing significant time and training resources in Lean Six Sigma methodologies to develop its own in-house expertise in applying this analytical framework to future process reviews. This short-term investment is expected to yield long-term savings as APHIS continues to examine and improve its business processes.

## **Initiative 4: Use transparent principles and processes to make and implement decisions**

When agency managers make decisions, they must be confident that the criteria or models they use to aid them are thorough and robust. Decisions must be sound and universally accepted as transparent, objective, professional, efficient, and independent.

APHIS' decision-making models must take into account many of the constraints that agency managers face: traditional "industry" pressure, non-traditional stakeholder concerns, ever-tightening budgets at both the Federal and State levels, and a plethora of unofficial communication channels—e.g., Web 2.0 technologies—that can make it difficult to have consistent messaging.

For example, one APHIS program uses a decision-making framework for significant events and/or program issues. This framework includes a decision-making coordination function that ensures the framework is applied consistently and appropriately, and that decisions are recorded, documented, and implemented. Additionally, the program plans to establish a central repository for all program and regulatory decisions, making this repository available to all employees.

Another APHIS program is exploring the use of Decision Lens, a new decision-making tool, to prioritize and evaluate decision criteria. This tool is designed for individual and group decisions and can be used to ensure continuous organizational improvements.

Still another APHIS program has developed its own specific tool to provide science-based guidance to decision makers. The TAIO (Tool for the Assessment of Intervention Options) takes a multidisciplinary approach to systematically and consistently evaluate information during an animal health event. Experts in the fields of epidemiology, economics, and statistics collaborated to develop this tool, which is intended to be used on an interactive basis during a crisis as events unfold. The dynamic tool helps to better inform the science-based portions of a decision and assess the relative efficiencies for the use of scarce funding dollars.

APHIS also conducts program evaluations to monitor the effectiveness of its programs and the impacts of its decisions and policies. A program evaluation is a systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and using information to determine the effectiveness and efficiencies of an organization's programs.

APHIS will continue to develop and use sound decision-making models and conduct program evaluations to ensure that program and regulatory decisions are:

- Educated and scientifically valid;
- Transparent, objective, and timely;
- Accurately recorded, documented, and available to employees and the public, if applicable; and
- Consistently monitored for their effectiveness and impacts on the organization.

#### **Initiative 5: Engage and collaborate with a broad spectrum of stakeholders and other citizens**

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APHIS' cultural transformation embraces inclusion, such as the voices of our nontraditional stakeholders, as a way to foster a seamless relationship between government, business, and citizens. APHIS' success as an organization hinges on its ability not only to carry out our programs effectively, but also to garner stakeholder support for them. To do that, it is critical for us to know what is important to our stakeholders and how they will react to our policies and programs. We also need to be mindful that our activities and regulations can impact audiences and stakeholders we've never before considered.

Therefore, it is essential that APHIS look for proactive ways to incorporate traditional as well as non-traditional stakeholder engagement into our everyday operations. That is, the agency

needs to be open and transparent, regularly communicate with, and consider the opinions of, all interested parties, including:

- State entities
- Industry/producer groups and academia
- Industry, public, and consumer interest groups
- Small and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers
- Tribal nations
- Other Federal cooperators
- All other interested citizens

Also, there must be a more diverse level of engagement with these stakeholders. No longer is it reasonable to simply provide information (in one direction) to these groups or individuals. There must be greater dialogue and types of interaction in order to ensure that APHIS accomplishes its mission successfully.

As a result, APHIS has adopted a multidimensional *Stakeholder Engagement Spectrum* framework to guide its efforts in seeking input from stakeholders. This model embraces a full range of public participation processes to enable stakeholders to receive program and policy information, get answers to questions, and partner with us throughout the decision-making process to develop effective and innovative alternatives and solutions to issues.

The *Stakeholder Engagement Spectrum* will focus on improving processes related to:

- **Outreach:** one-direction information sharing
- **Information Exchange:** two-way sharing of information and opinions
- **Recommendations:** advice or suggestions
- **Agreement:** mutually acceptable solutions

- **Stakeholder Action:** empowering stakeholders to take action

By bringing all perspectives to the table earlier in the decision-making process, APHIS can create opportunities for more diverse viewpoints to be shared and debated. Our hope is that, by encouraging discussions around critical issues and their impacts on our wide array of stakeholders, decisions will not only be technically feasible, but also economically viable, socially acceptable, and environmentally compatible. Stakeholders and citizens will gain broader knowledge about our policies, programs, and their underpinnings, and decisions will be balanced and sustainable.

### Performance Measures

Maintain positive scores on Human Capital Assessment and Accountability Framework Indices for:

#### Job Satisfaction

Baseline 2010	Target 2014
69.8%	69.8%

#### Talent Management

Baseline 2010	Target 2014
61.7%	61.7%

#### Leadership & Knowledge Management

Baseline 2010	Target 2014
58.8%	58.8%

#### Results Culture

Baseline 2010	Target 2014
55.9%	55.9%

\* OPM administers the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey every other year during each even numbered year.

# Appendix A: CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITMENT

The following table represents the USDA Goals, Performance Objectives and Goal Indicators as they pertain to Agency Leadership commitment to improving civil rights in APHIS.

Civil Rights Performance and Accomplishment Report			
Goal	Performance Objectives		Goal Indicators
Commitment of Agency Leadership/ Strategic Integration	Leadership	Held managers, supervisors and other employees accountable for ensuring that USDA's customers and employees were treated in accordance with USDA'S civil rights policy and applicable legal requirements.	<p>APHIS commitments to USDA's civil rights goals and obligations are included in the Strategic Plan. The commitment includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Employees are notified of the requirements of Departmental Regulation (DR) 4300-010, "Civil Rights Accountability Policy and Procedures," issued January 18, 2006.</li> <li>2. Annual performance appraisals for managers and supervisors include an evaluation of their contributions to USDA's commitment to civil rights and equal opportunity, and adherence to civil rights policy.</li> <li>3. A representative sampling of performance plans (signed copy) shows evidence of EEO elements for all levels</li> <li>4. Provide a list and identify finding of each employee case where disciplinary action or corrective action was taken relating to civil rights or retaliation and indicate the timeframe in which the action was taken.</li> <li>5. APHIS submits succinct narrative rationale with documented evidence to determine compliance with the above indicators using the appropriate scoring elements.</li> </ol>
Secretary's Commitment	Secretary's Commitment	Took affirmative steps to implement each of the areas illustrated by the Secretary.	<p>APHIS implements Secretary's Commitment:</p> <p>The Secretary's commitment of successful transformation includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An inclusive workplace environment where there is equity of opportunity and all employees are empowered to reach their full potential</li> <li>2. Modernization of technology and systems that will enable us to provide the highest level of service;</li> <li>3. A commitment by USDA employees to improving USDA's past and future record of civil rights, including expanding outreach efforts to socially-disadvantaged farmers and ranchers;</li> <li>4. Systems of accountability that encourage all employees to achieve high standards of performance and customer service; and</li> <li>5. A renewed commitment to creating diversity in the workforce and succession planning.</li> </ol>
Implementation of Secretary's Commitment	Agency's Commitment to Diversity	Took Affirmative steps to implement each of the six (6) component areas illustrated by Diversity Road Map and ensured that goals and timelines are accomplished accordingly.	<p>APHIS Implements the Diversity Road Map to meet all requirements and timelines</p> <p>USDA's Diversity Road Map has specific goals, activities, and timelines, organized around the following (6) components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Leadership Accountability and Commitment</li> <li>2. Outreach and Partnerships</li> <li>3. Recruitment and Hiring</li> <li>4. Retention and Promotion</li> <li>5. Diversity Training and Awareness</li> <li>6. Employee Development and Recognition</li> </ol>

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# Appendix B: Program Evaluations

The following table highlights some of the evaluations that influenced APHIS' strategic goals.

Program Evaluations Used To Develop the Strategic Plan				
Goal	Evaluations/ Analyses	Brief Description	What Was The Effect?	Date
Goal 1	Licensing of Problematic Dealers (OIG)	Examines ways to improve the APHIS enforcement process against dog dealers in violation of the AWA	APHIS accepted all of the 14 recommendations and has developed an Action Plan that focuses on improved inspections and greater punishment to problem dealers	March 2010
	Review of Random B Dealers (GAO)	Reviews the management of APHIS Random B Dealer activity	APHIS recently responded to the recommendations	September 2010
	Review of National Rabies Management Program (PPD)	Examines strategic focus of the NRMP; evaluates current strategies for success against long-term goals, and seeks ways to increase the efficiency of program operations	Currently reviewing evaluations and findings	August 2010
Goal 2	EAB Regulatory Review – EAB Regulatory Staff	Annual review of EAB regulatory activities to ensure consistency in program delivery and to update regulatory protocols	Updated compliance agreements and modified protocols for movement or regulated articles	FY 2010
	EAB Science Review – EAB Technical Working Group	Annual look at research results including survey and diagnostic protocols, new or improved technologies, evaluations of risk levels, and risk mitigation methods	Modified survey strategies and refined focus for research activities (biological control agents)	FY 2010
Goal 3	BRS Petition Review (PPD)	Documents current procedures and makes recommendations on areas for improvement in APHIS' petition assessment process for determining the status of GE organisms. (According to 7 CFR 340.6, APHIS has 180 days from the receipt of a completed petition to issue a decision on the GE organism; at present BRS petitions take well over 180 days and external stakeholders have raised concerns.)	APHIS is currently analyzing the report to determine the areas of highest priority. This analysis will be incorporated into Phase II – analysis of alternatives and implementation of improved processes and procedures.	May 2010
	BRS Web Site Usability Review (BRS/PPD)	Assessment of BRS Web site (conducted by a contractor), including direct stakeholder feedback via focus groups, to make site more user friendly	Due to lack of stakeholder participation in the focus groups, the contract was modified, and the contractor gave recommendations on design and functionality based on their Web site expertise as well as their experience in working with other USDA agencies.	June 2010



Program Evaluations Used To Develop the Strategic Plan				
Goal	Evaluations/ Analyses	Brief Description	What Was The Effect?	Date
Goal 4	NVSL/CVB (Ames) Management and Culture Review (PPD/MRPBS)	Review/follow-up on progress made during the 2009 Management and Culture Review at CVB and NVSL to gain a deeper understanding of the issues and challenges of these organizations	TBD	In progress
	European Grape Vine Moth (EGVM) Risk Assessment (CPHST/PERAL)	Assessment of treatment efficacies on all life stages of EGVM	TBD	September 2010
	EGVM Economic Impacts (PPD)	Economic analysis of EGVM and affected commodities in California	TBD	
	Citrus Black Spot (APHIS HQ/SPHD, field personnel, and technical working group)	Preliminary evaluation of delimiting areas for citrus disease, fungicide regimes, and trapping technology to determine best management practices	TBD	In progress
	Animal Disease Traceability Evaluation (APHIS HQ/PPD)	Preliminary evaluation of proposed regulatory framework, based on input from public meetings with industry, State, and tribal animal health officials	TBD	September 2010



# Appendix C: Cross-Cutting Programs

APHIS' work often cuts across jurisdictional lines within APHIS and the USDA, with other Federal agencies, and with State, local, and private partners. This table lists the primary partnerships that will enable APHIS to reach the outcomes in this Strategic Plan.

Cross-cutting Programs		
Goal	APHIS Primary Program	External Organizations
Goal 1	Animal Welfare, Wildlife Services	Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, various tribes, various State game & fish agencies, various NGOs, 37 State wildlife agencies, AFWA, USGS, Center for Disease Control, NAHLN, Colorado State Diagnostic Laboratory, Native American Fish and Wildlife Society, Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Animal Rescue and Sheltering Coalition, and State animal welfare authorities, Office of Laboratory and Animal Welfare, Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International, Office of the Inspector General, State departments of agriculture, local law enforcement
Goal 2	Plant Protection and Quarantine	National Cotton Council, cotton grower foundations (State and regional), State regulatory officials from 17 cotton-producing States, Agriculture Research Service, National Institute for Food and Agriculture, Farm Service Agency, Forest Service, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Interior-FWS, Sanidad Vegetal (Mexico), National Plant Board, State of Florida, State of Texas, State of Arizona, State of California, State of Hawaii, and various California county departments of agriculture
Goal 3	Biotechnology Regulatory Services, Veterinary Services, International Services	Food and Drug Administration, Environmental Protection Agency, USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of State, Foreign Agricultural Service, Center for Disease Control, FAO, Land Grant Universities: UGA, CSU, Cornell University, University of Delaware, University of Maryland, Veterinary Corps.; Agricultural Research Service, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, International Science Technology Center –Gov't of Canada, UK.; AMS, National Organics Program
Goal 4	Plant Protection and Quarantine, Veterinary Services, Wildlife Services, International Services, MRPBS-Investigative and Enforcement Services, Policy and Program Development	State plant health agencies, State animal health agencies, Environmental Protection Agency, Health and Human Services, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice, Department of Defense, USDA-FSIS and NIFA, DOE, U.S. Department of Commerce, DOI, U.S. Department of State, 57 State and university veterinary diagnostic laboratories, American Association of Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory Diagnosticians, National Cotton Council; cotton grower foundations (State and regional); State regulatory officials from 17 cotton-producing States; ARS; CSREES; FSA; FWS; Sanidad Vegetal (Mexico)

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# Appendix D: Strategic Consultations

APHIS consults regularly with external groups about the effectiveness of its programs and the need for improvement. While many of these consultations are not conducted expressly for the purpose of developing or updating program plans, the consultations influence programs' strategic goals, objectives, strategies, and targets.

Strategic Consultations			
Goal	Date	Who	Purpose
Goal 1	Annually	National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee	Secretary's Advisory Committee provides guidance from diverse stakeholders interested in the Wildlife Services program
	Annually	American Sheep Industry Western Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies	To share issues and learn stakeholder needs
Goal 2	April – July – October 2010	APHIS-PPQ, Asian Long horned Beetle Program; New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and New York City Department of Parks and Recreation	Quarterly management board meeting to represent current project plans and accept feedback and suggestions on direction. In response to suggestions, program plans are modified as needed.
	November 9, 2009	USDA, APHIS, PPQ, ALB program, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation; Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources; U.S. and State legislators; City of Worcester; Towns of Holden, Shrewsbury, Boylston, and West Boylston	To present the strategic plan for FY 2010 to those impacted by the ALB program in Worcester County, MA. The meeting served to present program plans and revise said plans based on feedback from those present.
	September 2009	Wood packaging materials industry, the public, various Federal and State agencies	A series of public meetings were held to gather input and comment on potential regulatory approaches that APHIS might adopt to mitigate pest movement with wood packaging materials
	August 2009	National Plant Board and APHIS PPQ	Dialogue with the National Plant Board about strategies to address the firewood pathway. A multiparty taskforce has been convened to work with APHIS-PPQ to develop a comprehensive, multiparty strategy for firewood.
Goal 3	August 10-14, 2009	World Organization for Animal Health Regions of the Americas Committee on Veterinary Medicines (CAMEVET)	To review implementation of the harmonized documents in member countries and to participate in the development of worldwide standards through the chapters relevant to veterinary products of the Terrestrial and Aquatic Animal Health Code of the OIE
	April 29-30, 2009	Issue-focused meeting with stakeholders and the public	An issue-focused public meeting on a proposed rule to solicit feedback on revisions to the existing regulations regarding the importation, interstate movement, and environmental release of certain GE organisms
	November 18-19, 2008 Ongoing	Mexican federal and state government officials, APHIS, California Department of Food and Agriculture, San Diego and Imperial County Agricultural Commissioners	Development of joint action plans for surveillance and suppression of Asian citrus psyllids along both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border
Goal 4	April 21, 2009	ARS, APHIS, DHS, CSREES	To review research initiatives taking place in various agencies and determine where collaborative efforts could increase efficiency and where priorities should be focused
	Quarterly	NAHLN Coordinating Council, which includes representatives from VS, NIFA, and multiple State animal health officials and laboratory directors	Strategic planning and implementation of veterinary diagnostic testing under NAHLN to increase capabilities and capacities for early detection, rapid response, and appropriate recovery from animal health emergencies