



April 11, 2022

Dr. Rosemary Sifford  
Chief Veterinary Officer  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service  
1400 Independence Ave. SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Dr. Sifford,

The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) writes to you requesting Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostician (FADD) training be essential for travel and reinstated at Plum Island as quickly as possible.

As you know well, NASDA represents the commissioners, secretaries, and directors of the state departments of agriculture in all 50 states and 4 U.S. territories. State departments of agriculture are responsible for a wide range of programs including food safety, combating the spread of disease, and protecting against new and emerging foreign animal diseases. To this point, I am hearing from several of my member states their frustration that training at Plum Island isn't to be reinstated until September 2022. This is a surprise to all given the goings-on with HPAI and the ever-present threat of Foot and Mouth Disease and African Swine Fever (ASF).

Foreign Animal Disease Diagnosticians (FADDs) are critical to safeguarding the health of the nation's agricultural animals and the national and global food supply. FADDs are listed to international trade partners as part of the country's surveillance apparatus and are essential to the early detection and response to foreign animal diseases in our country.

The two-week training course to receive FADD certification to state and federal veterinarians has not been offered since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. During that period, there has been turnover in state and federal veterinarians which has diminished our ability to deploy FADDs for investigations across many states. With threats like those listed above, we all need to have FADD trained veterinarians now more than ever.

NASDA strongly urges USDA to kickstart institute training for individuals who have come on board during COVID-19 and who need the essential skills in detecting and managing foreign animal disease outbreaks. More importantly, we certainly hope that this can be initiated well before September 2022

The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture considers FADDs an essential and fundamental part of the ability to protect animal agriculture and our food supply. We respectfully ask that USDA/APHIS/VS give emphasis and consideration to these positions as

they are part of the USDA/APHIS/VS and State collaborative efforts to mitigate the damaging consequences of incursions of foreign animal diseases.

As always, we appreciate you, your team and your good work. Thank you for your consideration on this important matter.

Sincerely,



**Ted McKinney**  
*Chief Executive Officer*

Thank you, Dr. Joffard \_\_\_\_\_  
Ted

Cc: Kevin Shea, Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA