

ANIMAL HEALTH

PREVENTING & PROTECTING AGAINST FOREIGN ANIMAL DISEASES

NASDA is committed to working with intergovernmental agencies and industry stakeholders to foster a collaborative approach to animal health initiatives. State departments of agriculture regulate and oversee animal health programs in the state, while being the first line of defense against animal disease outbreaks.



BACKGROUND

An outbreak of a foreign animal disease could cripple the entire agricultural sector with long-lasting ramifications for the economic viability of U.S. livestock production. Timely prevention, identification, control, and, where appropriate, eradication of animal diseases is essential to U.S. agricultural production, food security, public health, animal welfare and international market access.

State departments of agriculture recognize the importance of cross-agency collaboration to accomplish the goal of safeguarding animal, public and environmental health comprehensively. During the pandemic, our nation leveraged animal health infrastructure through a coordinated one health approach to support the COVID-19 pandemic response while also ensuring the safety of the country's food supply. NASDA acknowledges with animal-human diseases accounting for nearly 60 percent of all human diseases and 75 percent of all emerging infectious diseases being zoonotic, we must adapt and recognize the bi-directional movement of high-consequence diseases and be prepared to prevent and mitigate such occurrences.

Establishing strong animal health collaboration could save billions worth of losses in the future from economically devastating diseases, such as mad cow disease, foot and mouth disease, avian and swine influenza and classical African swine fever. For example, during the 2015 outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza rapid coordination and confirmation allowed for depopulation of infected flocks and the establishment of safety protocols around infected farms. This outbreak had a \$3.3 billion economic impact on the U.S. economy, according to Farm Econ LLC.

More recently the highly contagious viral disease affecting both domestic and feral hogs, African Swine Fever (ASF), has been detected in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. ASF is a devastating, deadly disease that would have significant impacts across the food supply chain. There is no treatment or vaccine available for this disease. The only way to stop this disease is to depopulate all affected or exposed swine herds. If ASF were to hit the U.S., the National Pork Board estimates it could cost the U.S. pork industry as much as \$8 billion a year.

The 2018 Farm Bill established a three-tiered program to deliver the development and timely deployment of all measures necessary to prevent, identify and mitigate the potentially catastrophic impacts an animal disease outbreak. NASDA supports fully funding these critical



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programs including the National Animal Vaccine and Veterinary Countermeasures Bank, the National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program and the National Animal Health Laboratory Networks. Established networks among animal disease programs will help foster the success of these necessary and timely actions to prevent the negative impacts of disease outbreaks.



LEGISLATIVE ACTION

HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING SUPPORT

Customs and Border Protection Agricultural Quarantine and Inspection Program

Customs and Border Protection agriculture specialists, technicians, and canine teams play a vital role in both trade and travel safety and prevent the introduction of harmful foreign animal diseases and exotic plant pests and diseases into the U.S.

Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program Enhancement Act (H.R. 2447 & S. 2215)

The bill helps address the shortages of food animal veterinarians practicing in undeserved areas. NASDA supports this legislation.

Healthy Dog Importation Act (H.R. 4239 & S. 2597)

The Healthy Dog Importation Act would increase oversight to prevent disease introduction from imported dogs. NASDA supports this legislation.

NASDA'S LEGISLATIVE REQUESTS

As Congress considers animal health initiatives, NASDA recommends the following criteria:

- **Support funding for state and federal animal health infrastructure** at levels that enable personnel to facilitate early detection of diseases and deploy surveillance, response and control activities. Well supported programs and infrastructure directly prevent and mitigate domestic and foreign animal diseases.
- **Increase investment in science-based research** needed to advance diagnostics, vaccines, and other response or treatment options to current or emerging animal diseases.
- **Enhance outreach, education and implementation of science-based biosecurity protocols.**
- **Support enhanced coordination between USDA-APHIS-Veterinary Services and regional state alliances.** A coordinated nationwide animal health network ensures an integrated approach to prevention, preparedness, response and recovery to livestock disease outbreaks.
- **Recognize the rights of state jurisdictions** to adopt and enforce statutes, regulations, or policies that may be more restrictive than federal requirements.
- **Respect and recognize the importance of a One Health approach** of collaborating to accomplish the goal of safeguarding animal, public and environmental health comprehensively.

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