



REMINDER

NAFV Active Members:

This is a friendly reminder that 2020 NAFV dues were to be renewed by January 31, 2020.

If you have not done so, please submit your Active Membership dues ASAP. We will be cleaning up our NAFV rolls by the end of the first quarter.

For those not in USDA, we have also made a monthly-contribution program available via Paypal. Information on that is available on our site at:

<https://nafv.org/payment-options>

If you have recently retired as a federal veterinarian in good-standing, please contact the NAFV office so that we can update your account.

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IMPORTANT: NEW CONTACT INFORMATION FOR NAFV ATTORNEY, MR. WILLIAM G. HUGHES

Our NAFV General Counsel, Mr. Bill Hughes has recently changed his contact information. All NAFV members wishing to get in touch with him should reach out to him at the new contact information below.

Phone: 202-740-2380

Email: whughes@nafv.org

OIE-Listed Diseases, Infections and Infestations in Force in 2020

Source: OIE

Resolutions passed by the International Committee and recommendations issued by the Regional Commissions instructed the OIE Headquarters to establish a single OIE list of notifiable terrestrial and aquatic animal diseases to replace the former Lists A and B.

The aim in drawing up a single list was to be in line with the terminology of the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Agreement of the World Trade Organization, by classifying diseases as specific hazards and giving all

listed diseases the same degree of importance in international trade.

In order to create a single list of notifiable diseases, the OIE defined criteria to examine the inclusion or not of a given disease in the OIE single list that were approved in May 2004.

In 2005, the first single list composed of former lists A and B was used, and in the same year, an Ad Hoc Group on disease and pathogenic agents notification was organized to examine diseases according to the adopted criteria for listing diseases, and proposed a new list of diseases meeting the criteria that entered into force in 2006.

The list is reviewed on a regular basis and in case of modifications adopted by the World Assembly of Delegates at its annual General Session, the new list comes into force on 1 January of the following year. For year 2020, the list includes 117 animal diseases, infections and infestations, and can be found at the following link: <https://bit.ly/2SockfO>.

Sheep and goat diseases and infections

- + Caprine arthritis/encephalitis
- + Contagious agalactia
- + Contagious caprine pleuropneumonia
- + Infection with *Chlamydia abortus* (Enzootic abortion of ewes, ovine chlamydiosis)
- + Infection with peste des petits ruminants virus
- + Maedi-visna
- + Nairobi sheep disease
- + Ovine epididymitis (*Brucella ovis*)
- + Salmonellosis (*S. abortusovis*)
- + Scrapie
- + Sheep pox and goat pox

Swine diseases and infections

- + Infection with African swine fever virus
- + Infection with classical swine fever virus
- + Infection with porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome virus
- + Infection with *Taenia solium* (Porcine cysticercosis)
- + Nipah virus encephalitis
- + Transmissible gastroenteritis

Equine diseases and infections

- + Contagious equine metritis
- + Dourine
- + Equine encephalomyelitis (Western)
- + Equine infectious anaemia
- + Equine influenza
- + Equine piroplasmosis
- + Infection with African horse sickness virus
- + Infection with equid herpesvirus-1 (EHV-1)
- + Infection with equine arteritis virus
- + Infection with *Burkholderia mallei* (Glanders)
- + Venezuelan equine encephalomyelitis

Avian diseases and infections

- + Avian chlamydiosis
- + Avian infectious bronchitis
- + Avian infectious laryngotracheitis
- + Avian mycoplasmosis (*Mycoplasma gallisepticum*)
- + Avian mycoplasmosis (*Mycoplasma synoviae*)
- + Duck virus hepatitis
- + Fowl typhoid
- + Infection with avian influenza viruses

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The annual subscription rate is \$50.00 for United States and Canada and \$70.00 for foreign mailing, payable by January 1 each year. Subscriptions are not available to those eligible for membership.

Any veterinarian employed full time by the federal government may become an active member. Dues are \$260.00 annually, payable annually, semiannually, PayPal (annually or monthly), or by federal payroll deductions (eligibility for payroll deduction is limited to USDA veterinarians --of \$10.00 authorized by signing USDA Form AD 1054 (FSIS) or SF 1187 (APHIS)). Uniformed veterinarians dues are \$160.00 annually. *Active duty* uniformed veterinarians-- please contact the NAFV office.

Associate membership is granted to active members when they retire from federal service. Associate members pay no dues. Associate members receive the NAFV newsletter by email.

The National Association of Federal Veterinarians is a non-profit corporation and the purposes for which it is formed are to promote the veterinary profession, to improve the professional efficiency and material interests of the members, to acquaint the public with the activities of veterinarians in the federal service, and to cooperate with the American Veterinary Medical Association, the United States Animal Health Association and other similar groups with common interests.

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Meeting Wrap-Up: AVMA Veterinary Leadership Conference

In early-January, NAFV sponsored our member Dr. Megan Schmid (APHIS-VS) to attend the annual VLC conference. In addition, current NAFV President Dr. Barb Porter-Spalding and NAFV President-Elect Dr. Deanna Brown also attended the biannual AVMA House of Delegates session. Below, Dr. Schmid drafted a summary of her experience as NAFV's Emerging Leader delegate.

Each year, NAFV sponsors an "emerging leader" to attend the VLC and gain leadership skills, towards a greater goal of ensuring that early-to-mid-career veterinarians are equipped with the leadership skills necessary to lead tomorrow's agencies. If you are interested in receiving this sponsorship in the future, please contact our NAFV national office to receive the necessary information.

By Megan Schmid, DVM

This past January I had the privilege to attend AVMA's leadership conference held in Chicago, IL. This conference is held over four days and offers a variety of opportunities from observing the AVMA House of Delegates voting on various topics relevant to our profession, to networking with leaders from across the country and all veterinary careers paths, and a diverse selection of lectures.

When I applied to attend this conference, I most looked forward to attending the lectures. I mapped out my schedule and prepared to focus on these presentations. Being an inherent introvert, I did not look forward to the networking aspect touted by the conference website. However, I found it very enriching to speak with veterinarians who have carved out unique paths in our profession. And the conference format (conversation topics at lunches, time in between lectures to ask questions) made the interactions easy.

I love working for the USDA, and I believe in our mission. Through this conference I got to see leadership in action – representatives in the House of Delegates, veterinarian entrepreneurs, fellow state and federal veterinarians – how they put their



Pictured (L-R): Dr. Katherine Waters (AAFSPHV), Dr. Megan Schmid, & Dr. Deanna Brown

leadership skills into practice. Speaking with this diverse group of people gave me additional perspectives and ideas on how to better supervise remotely, how to encourage employees to suggest new ideas, and how to reduce unnecessary barriers that hinder our abilities to accomplish our mission. I know the employees in my unit appreciate and have benefited from the adjustments I have made since attending. I highly recommend attending this event if you have the opportunity in the future.

Additional Slaughter Classes Included in FSIS National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System Surveillance

Source: [FSIS Constituent Update January 10, 2020](#)

The National Antimicrobial Resistance Monitoring System (NARMS) is an interagency, partnership between state and local public health departments, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The NARMS surveillance system tracks changes in antimicrobial resistance (AMR) of select food-borne bacteria found in ill people (CDC), retail meats (FDA), and food animals (USDA). The FSIS NARMS program focuses on two post-slaughter sampling points -

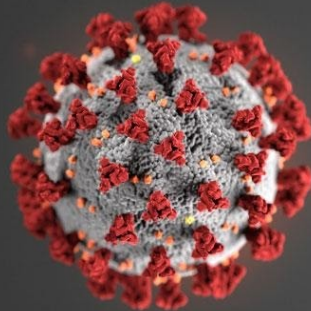
intestinal cecal contents and meat, poultry, and fish samples, both collected at slaughter establishments. Cecal content samples are analyzed for *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*), and *Enterococcus*. Food animals that are sampled include young chickens, young turkeys, dairy cattle, beef cattle, market hogs, and sows. FSIS performs phenotypic AMR analyses and/or whole genome sequencing (WGS) on all *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* isolates and a fraction of *E. coli* and *Enterococcus* isolates in support of NARMS.

Beginning in February 2020, FSIS will expand cecal sampling beyond young chickens, young

turkeys, dairy cattle, beef cattle, market hogs, and sows to include veal, sheep, goat, and lamb. FSIS will also perform AMR analysis on *E.*

coli and *Enterococcus* isolates obtained from Siluriformes samples and *Salmonella* isolated from mesenteric lymph nodes (MLN) from cattle selected for cecal sampling. In addition, FSIS laboratories will test a subset of cecal content isolates from bovine and swine for Carbapenem Resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE). FSIS will also assess bacterial AMR diversity within a sample by analyzing multiple bacterial colonies.

World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) [Questions and Answers](#) on the 2019 Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)



Picture courtesy of CDC

•What causes COVID-19?

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a family of RNA (ribonucleic acid) viruses. They are called coronaviruses because the virus particle exhibits a characteristic ‘corona’ (crown) of spike proteins around its lipid envelope. CoV infections are common in animals and humans. Some strains of CoV are zoonotic, meaning they can be transmitted between animals and humans, but many strains are not zoonotic.

In humans, CoV can cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as [Middle East Respiratory Syndrome](#) (caused by MERS-CoV), and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (caused by SARS-CoV). Detailed investigations have demonstrated that SARS-CoV was transmitted from civets to humans, and MERS-CoV from dromedary camels to humans.

In December 2019, human cases of pneumonia of unknown origin were reported in Wuhan City, Hubei Province of China (People’s Rep. of). A new CoV was identified as the causative agent by Chinese Authorities. Since then, human cases, most of them with travel history to Wuhan or Hubei region, have been reported by several provinces in China (People’s Rep. of) and by a number of other countries. For up to date information please consult the [WHO web-site](#).

The CoV which causes COVID-19 has been designated as SARS-CoV-2 by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses (ICTV); this is the scientific name. The virus may also be referred to as “the COVID-19 virus” or “the virus responsible for COVID-19”. COVID19 refers to the disease caused

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(Continued from Pg. 3, "COVID-19")

by the virus.

•Are animals responsible for COVID-19 in people?

The predominant route of transmission of COVID-19 appears to be from human to human.

Current evidence suggests that the COVID-19 virus has an animal source. Ongoing investigations are important for identifying the animal source (including species involved) and establishing the potential role of an animal reservoir in this disease.

Yet, to date, there is not enough scientific evidence to identify that source or to explain the route of transmission from an animal source to humans.

Genetic sequence data reveals that the COVID-19 virus is a close relative of other CoV found circulating in *Rhinolophus* bat (Horseshoe Bat) populations. There is the possibility that transmission to humans involved an intermediate host.

Priorities for research to investigate the animal source were discussed by the OIE informal advisory group on COVID-19 and were presented at the WHO Global Research and Innovation Forum (11-12 February 2020) by the President of the OIE Wildlife Working Group. The outcomes from the discussion of the OIE informal advisory group on COVID-19 can be found at the [link](#).

•Are there any precautions to take with live animals or animal products?

Although there is uncertainty about the origin of the COVID-19 virus, in accordance with advice offered by the WHO, as a general precaution, when visiting live animal markets, wet markets or animal product markets, general hygiene measures should be applied. These include regular hand washing with soap and potable water after touching animals and animal products, as well as avoiding touching eyes, nose or mouth, and avoiding contact with sick animals or spoiled animal products. Any contact with other animals possibly living in the market (e.g., stray cats and dogs, rodents, birds, bats) should be avoided. Precaution should be taken to avoid contact with animal waste or fluids on the soil or surfaces of shops and market facilities.

Standard recommendations issued by WHO to prevent infection spread include regular hand washing, covering mouth and nose with the elbow when coughing and sneezing and avoiding close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness such as coughing and sneezing. As per general good food safety practices, raw meat, milk or animal organs should be handled with care, to avoid potential cross-contamination with uncooked foods. Meat

from healthy livestock that is cooked thoroughly remains safe to eat. Further recommendations from WHO can be consulted [here](#).

Based on currently available information, travel or trade restrictions are not recommended.

•Are there precautions to take with companion animals?

Currently there is no evidence that pets or other domestic animals can be infected with COVID-19 virus, nor is there evidence that pets or other domestic animals might be a source of infection to people with COVID-19.

The World Small Animal Veterinary Association provides more detailed information on companion animals and COVID-19 at the following link: [World Small Animal Veterinary Association](#).

•What is the OIE doing?

The OIE is in contact with its Regional Representation in Asia and The Pacific, the OIE Delegate for China (People's Rep. of) and the National Veterinary Service, the [OIE Wildlife Working Group](#), as well as [FAO](#) and WHO, to gather and share the latest available information. The OIE is closely liaising with its network of experts involved in current investigations on the source of the disease. Rumours and unofficial information are also monitored daily.

Given the similarities between COVID-19 and the emergence of other human infectious diseases at the human animal interface, the OIE informal advisory group recommends that work should be undertaken to better understand the dynamics around wildlife trade and consumption, with a view to developing strategies to reduce the risk of future spillover events.

•What are the Veterinary Authority's international responsibilities in this event?

The detection of COVID-19 virus in animals meets the criteria for reporting to the OIE through WAHIS, in accordance with the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* as an [emerging disease](#).

Therefore, any detection of the COVID-19 virus in an animal (including information about the species, diagnostic tests, and relevant epidemiological information) should be reported to the OIE.

It is important for Veterinary Authorities to remain informed and maintain close liaison with public health authorities and those responsible for wildlife, to ensure coherent and appropriate risk communication messages and risk management.

It is important that COVID-19 does not lead to inappropriate measures being taken against domestic or wild animals which might compromise their welfare and health or have a negative impact on biodiversity.

New Experimental Vaccine for African Swine Fever Virus Shows Promise

Source: American Society for Microbiology | 01/23/2020

Summary:

Government and academic investigators have developed a vaccine against African swine fever that appears to be far more effective than previously developed vaccines. The research appears this week in the *Journal of Virology*, a publication of the American Society for Microbiology.

Currently, there is no commercially available vaccine against African swine fever, which has been devastating the swine industry in Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia. African swine fever virus (ASFV) is highly contagious and often lethal to domestic and wild pigs. Outbreaks have been quelled -- more or less -- "by animal quarantine and slaughter," according to the report. (Humans are not susceptible to ASFV.) In the study, both low and high doses of the vaccine were 100% effective against the virus when the pigs were challenged 28 days post-inoculation.

The research was motivated by the 2007 outbreak of African swine fever in the Republic of Georgia, said principal investigator Douglas P. Gladue, PhD, Senior Scientist, Plum Island Animal Disease Center, Agricultural Research Service, US Department of Agriculture. "This was the first outbreak in recent history outside of Africa and Sardinia -- where

swine fever is endemic -- and this particular strain has been highly lethal and highly contagious, spreading quickly to neighboring countries." This is also a new strain of the virus, now known as ASFV-G (the G stands for Georgia).

The 2007 outbreak was also the genesis of the African swine fever that has been spreading through Eastern Europe and east Asia, said Manuel V. Borca, PhD, also a Senior Scientist at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center.

There is limited cross-protection between strains of African swine fever, likely because the antigens and degree of virulence differ among them, and none of the historical experimental vaccines have been shown to be effective against ASFV-G, said Dr. Gladue.

So the investigators at Plum Island Animal Disease Center set out to develop a vaccine. Part of the process of developing whole virus vaccines involves deleting virulence genes from the virus. But when the researchers deleted genes similar to those that had been deleted in older ASFV strains to attenuate them, "it became clear that ASFV-G was much more virulent" than the other, historical isolates, because it retained a higher level of virulence, said Dr. Gladue. The investigators then realized they needed a different genetic target in order to attenuate ASFV-G.

They used a predictive methodology called a computational pipeline to predict the roles of proteins on the virus. The computational pipeline predicted that a protein called I177L could interfere with the immune system of the pig. When they deleted this gene, ASFV-G was completely attenuated.

More work needs to be done to meet regulatory requirements for commercialization, said Dr. Gladue. But "This new experimental ASFV vaccine shows promise, and offers complete protection against the current strain currently producing outbreaks throughout Eastern Europe and Asia."

Story Source:

Materials provided by [American Society for Microbiology](#). Note: Content may be edited for style and length.

Journal Reference:

Manuel V. Borca, Elizabeth Ramirez-Medina, Ediane Silva, Elizabeth Vuono, Ayushi Rai, Sarah Pruitt, Lauren G. Holinka, Lauro Velazquez-Salinas, James Zhu, Douglas P. Gladue. **Development of a highly effective African swine fever virus vaccine by deletion of the I177L gene results in sterile immunity against the current epidemic Eurasia strain..** *Journal of Virology*, 2020; DOI: [10.1128/JVI.02017-19](#)

FSIS Posts FY 2020 Annual Plan

FSIS has posted to the agency's website its fiscal year (FY) 2020 Annual Plan, the fourth annual plan aligned with [FSIS' 2017-2021 Strategic Plan](#). The annual plan details the ways the agency will achieve its strategic goals over the next fiscal year.

In its introduction, Administrator Carmen Rottenberg had this to say:

I am proud to publish the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Annual Plan of the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). This is the fourth annual plan released under the FSIS 2017-2021 Strategic Plan. It outlines how the Agency will continue to work toward our strategic goals over the next fiscal year.

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In keeping with our efforts to modernize inspection systems, business practices, and policies, much of our work for FY 2020 builds upon data collection and program evaluations completed during FY 2018 and FY 2019. We will implement science-based recommendations from program evaluations to drive sampling programs for microbiological and chemical hazards, ensure robust systems to verify humane handling, and improve how Agency directives and notices are delivered to field personnel. We will also capitalize on 2 years of consumer research studies to deliver targeted food safety messages aimed at addressing the most common unsafe food handling practices and preventing foodborne illness. The Agency will continue this systematic, data-driven approach to evaluation and modernization in FY 2020 as we take a closer look at foreign material and undeclared allergen recalls.

FSIS will continue to focus our surveillance on the processes and facilities that pose the highest risk to public health. To enhance transparency to con-

sumers and industry, we will increase the number of establishment-specific data sets that are publicly available. Through outreach to small and very small establishments, we will provide training and resources to support small businesses in meeting food safety and humane handling requirements.

To effectively identify and respond to outbreaks of foodborne illness, we will continue to collaborate with State and Federal partners to modernize laboratory infrastructure and improve communications. As we embrace evolving science and technology, we are poised in FY 2020 to explore the use of new laboratory and information technology to quantify foodborne pathogens.

At the heart of any annual plan is its people. As we continue to work toward achieving operational excellence, it is the dedicated day-to-day work of FSIS employees that drives us closer to our public health goals and our vision that everyone’s food is safe.

The FY 2020 Annual Plan is available at <https://bit.ly/2Ps3tb3>.

APHIS Takes Next Step Toward Paperless Clearance of Agricultural Imports

Source: APHIS | 01/31/2020

January 31, 2020—The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is announcing next steps for implementing the APHIS Core Message Set in the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE).

APHIS and U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) work together to keep damaging plant pests and animal diseases out of the United States. APHIS, along with many other U.S. government agencies, requires importers to file specific information with CBP about the products they are bringing into the country. This information helps APHIS and CBP make timely science-based decisions about the admissibility of imported commodities. ACE streamlines the import process into a single portal system designed to electronically collect and distribute import data traditionally collected on paper, consolidating it and adding data elements into what are known as message sets.

Beginning in August 2020, APHIS will activate Core Message Set flags in ACE. That means, importers and brokers using ACE to submit electronic customs entries that include APHIS-regulated plants, plant products, animal products, or live dog imports will have to use the APHIS Core Message Set to provide APHIS-required import data for those items. This phase does not include other live animal imports.

Using ACE and the APHIS Core Message Set has many advantages over submitting paper entries. Because all of the data CBP and APHIS need to quickly clear incoming shipments is immediately available in ACE, we can help troubleshoot any issues before they cause delays at the port of entry, resulting in fewer holds and faster release times.

Using ACE and the APHIS Core Message Set also helps to protect U.S. farms and forests from damaging plant pests and devastating foreign animal diseases. With access to more infor-

mation about incoming agricultural products, APHIS and CBP can focus resources on shipments that pose a higher risk of introducing pests or diseases. That means, we are better able to stop the introduction of diseases like African swine fever, which could devastate U.S. agriculture and our economy.

For help getting started with the APHIS Core Message Set or to ask questions about submitting import data for a specific product type, please send an email to ace.itds@usda.gov. Stakeholders who are not equipped or do not wish to file customs entries in ACE may still submit paper documents. The Federal Register notice may be viewed [here](#). Comments on the notice will be accepted for 30 days. To learn more about ACE and the APHIS Core Message Set, go to www.aphis.usda.gov/ace.

Original Article: <https://bit.ly/3caIFP3>

Organization Files Lawsuit to Stop New Swine Inspection System

In a [press release dated June 27, 2019](#), the NAFV expressed its support for the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service New Swine Inspection System (NSIS). NAFV's members constitute the nation's largest block of scientific and technical expertise in the area of food safety and slaughter inspection.

The NSIS places more emphasis on the critical control points for contamination and uses microbiological testing in addition to visual inspection to ensure slaughter processes are producing safe foods. The new system does not relinquish any "power" to slaughter plants - FSIS will have all the same authorities to enforce food safety standards as before. The NSIS is a step forward in improving the slaughter inspection systems of the US to provide safe food to the public.

However, some groups perceive the NSIS to be at odds with their particular interests. Some of them have banded together to oppose this inspection system. See the lawsuit immediately below.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA SAN FRANCISCO DIVISION

CENTER FOR FOOD SAFETY; FOOD & WATER WATCH, INC.; PETER VAN GORDER; and ROBIN MANGINI;
Plaintiffs,

v.

SONNY PERDUE, in his official capacity as the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture;
MINDY BRASHEARS, in her official capacity as the Deputy Under Secretary for Food Safety;
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE; and FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE;
Defendants.

Case No. 3:20-cv-00256

COMPLAINT FOR DECLARATORY AND INJUNCTIVE RELIEF (ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE ACT CASE)

INTRODUCTION

1. The plaintiff non-profit organizations, Center for Food Safety (CFS), Food & Water Watch, Inc. (FWW); FWW member Peter Van Gorder; and CFS and FWW member Robin Mangini, (collectively, Plaintiffs) bring this action against the above-listed Defendants (individually and collectively Defendants) for their issuance of new rules that vitiate this country's food-safety inspection system for swine in slaughter plants, effectively turning it over to the slaughter companies themselves. Defendants' New Swine Inspection System (NSIS) rules also lift prior limits on slaughter-line speeds, allowing plants to move swine carcasses past government inspection-program personnel (hereinafter, inspectors or Program employees) at speeds that neuter the mandatory government's critical appraisal of swine carcasses and parts. Defendants approved these dangerous regulatory rollbacks, despite the fact that contaminated pork may cause as many as 1.5 million cases of foodborne illnesses, 7,000 hospitalizations, and 200 deaths in the United States each year.
2. As a result of all of these changes—which will essentially eliminate much of the government inspection of ninety-three percent of the domestic pork supply—the health and welfare of the named plaintiffs, as well as that of CFS and FWW's members, are seriously endangered by adulterated and unwholesome pork product. The named plaintiffs and the groups' members have already been forced to spend money and will continue spending money in an attempt to avoid pork from animals slaughtered in plants likely to switch to NSIS.
3. The rules cannot stand and should be permanently enjoined. They are ultra vires and contrary to the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA or the act), 21 U.S.C. §§ 602-695 (2018). Further, they are otherwise contrary to constitutional right, power, privilege, or immunity and arbitrary and capricious, an abuse of discretion, or otherwise not in accordance with law in violation of the Administrative Procedure Act (APA), 5 U.S.C. §§ 551-559, 701-706 (2018)

Secretary Perdue Announces New FSIS Leadership

Source: FSIS | 02/25/2020

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today announced the appointment of Paul Kiecker to serve as Administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). Mr. Kiecker will be assuming the role following the departure of Administrator Carmen Rottenberg, who is departing federal service after a career spanning two decades.

"Ensuring the safety of America's food supply is USDA's most important responsibility, and one that Carmen carried out with dedication and vision. I know she will continue her passion for food safety in the private sector," said Secretary Perdue. "Carmen is a true public servant and ushered in an era of modernization at the Food Safety and Inspection Service. This mission and drive will continue and advance with Paul Kiecker in his new leadership role. USDA's food safety team is the best in the world and works tirelessly to safeguard the food we serve our families every single day."

Carmen Rottenberg served as Administrator since May of 2018 but led the agency since August of 2017. As Administrator, Rottenberg spearheaded efforts to modernize the agency and implemented several key initiatives to target foodborne illness. Through her leadership and oversight, an unprecedented level of collaboration was achieved with federal, state and municipal agencies and other stakeholders.

"My colleagues in FSIS are among the best and brightest in federal government, and I am confident that the Agency will continue to "do right and feed everyone," long after my last day in this office," Carmen Rottenberg said. "Each and every day our FSIS team displays unparalleled commitment to decision making that is both protective of public health and supportable by science and data. They are public servants in the truest form of the term. It's been a thrill and absolute joy to work with Secretary Perdue and this USDA team, and I'm so proud of all we have accomplished."

"I am thankful to have had the opportunity to work so closely with Carmen over the past



Pictured: Ms. Rottenberg & Mr. Kiecker

year," said Deputy Under Secretary Mindy Brashears. "Her leadership and food safety expertise will be greatly missed within the Department, but I am excited to see her succeed in her new ventures ahead. As we move ahead into 2020, I am confident in the direction of the agency as we have experienced senior staff who are ready to step into new leadership roles."

Background:

Paul Kiecker was named Deputy Administrator for the FSIS in May of 2018 and served as the Agency's Acting Administrator until January of 2019. Throughout his 30 years with FSIS, he has been committed to a strong public health vision that has guided him to overcome obstacles, identify opportunities for improvement, manage resources efficiently, and achieve food safety objectives to prevent foodborne illness.

Since joining FSIS in 1988 as a food inspector, Kiecker has served in a number of roles at the agency, including Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Office of Field Operations. He came to Washington, D.C. to serve as Executive Associate for Regulatory Operations, after serving as the District Manager in Springdale, AR and Madison, WI, as well as Deputy District Manager in Madison, WI. Kiecker's experience with FSIS also includes work with the Office of Investigation, Enforcement, and Audit, where he has served as a Compliance Investigator and as Supervisory Compliance Officer.

Federal Veterinarians - Are You Prepared?



As you know, Federal Veterinarians are critical in ensuring the nation's food safety and animal/livestock health with innumerable food safety initiatives, guidelines through FSIS, APHIS, DHS, CDC, and FDA, and various animal health programs. Many federal veterinarians also have the dual role of a manager, supervisor or officer within their respective agency. **This leaves you extremely susceptible to allegations, complaints, or potential lawsuits- just for doing your job.** Are you emotionally, financially and legally prepared to become the subject of an adverse administrative action, disciplinary proceeding, or civil lawsuit?

The following is based off a real claims scenario from a federal veterinarian in which attorney fees totaled nearly \$115,000.

Picture this: You are the subject of an Internal Controls Staff investigation of employee accountability for the unsanitary conditions found at one of the meat processing plants you supervise, which had its operations suspended and resulted in the agency recalling over 50,000 lbs. of meat. The findings of the investigation lead the agency to propose your removal from federal service based on a charge of neglect of duty, alleging that you failed to perform your regulatory and supervisory duties at the meat processing plant. While you argue that your actions were consistent with sanitation guidelines, the agency maintains its position and issues a final decision to sustain that charge. You are forced to appeal and litigate your removal before the Merit Systems Protection Board, or risk losing your livelihood.

Without FEDS Protection:

You spend months paying out hourly fees to expensive federal employment attorneys in an attempt to defend yourself against the charges. The stress of the unknown begins to take a toll on your personal life, and as your savings begin to dwindle, you are forced to make the difficult decision to resign from federal employment in the best interest of your family's needs and finances and must begin looking for a new career.

Total out of pocket costs: \$112,702.04

With FEDS Protection:

You are assigned your own personal attorney specializing in federal employment law and MSPB appeals, paid for entirely by your PLI policy. Although it still takes months, your attorney handles all of the stressful paperwork and procedures, and succeeds in winning the appeal. You continue to be gainfully employed by your federal agency without loss in pay or grade and support your family as before.

Total out of pocket costs: \$280

The bottom line is, allegations are unsettling. If one is made against you - whether it comes from plant workers, special interest groups, politicians, members of the public, co-workers, subordinates or managers – the challenge is having the necessary finances and expertise to defend yourself successfully. FEDS Professional Liability Insurance provides you with both legal defense and indemnity protection against allegations arising from your federal position, so you can do your job with peace of mind.

FEDS Protection is Affordable:

\$1,000,000 Policy Limit; \$280 Annual Premium*

\$2,000,000 Policy Limit; \$380 Annual Premium*

50% Agency Reimbursement

All managers & supervisors are eligible for up to 50% agency reimbursement for a net cost of only \$140 per year.

***You must enter discount code "NAFV" for this pricing.**

Surplus lines taxes apply.

Your FEDS policy must be in place prior to any allegations or complaints in order for coverage to apply, so don't delay.

Enroll today at www.fedsprotection.com or call 866.955.FEDS.

MMWR - Autochthonous Chagas Disease

Weekly / February 21, 2020 / 69(7);193–195
Missouri, 2018

Authors: George Turabelidze, MD, PhD; Archana Vasudevan, MD; Christian Rojas-Moreno, MD; Susan P. Montgomery, DVM; Molly Baker, MPH; Drew Pratt, MS; Susanne Enyeart

Summary

What is already known about this topic?

Locally acquired cases of Chagas disease are exceedingly rare in the United States. Only 28 autochthonous infections were documented from 1955 to 2015.

What is added by this report?

In 2017, a blood donation in Missouri screened positive for antibodies to *Trypanosoma cruzi*, the parasite that causes Chagas disease. Based on the epidemiologic, clinical, and laboratory data, the reported case likely represents the first documented autochthonous case of Chagas disease in Missouri.

What are the implication for public health practice?

Although most documented cases are among persons originally from Latin America, health care providers and public health professionals should be aware of the possibility of locally acquired Chagas disease in the southern United States.

Full report: <https://bit.ly/2HZgRiR>

MMWR: Travel-Associated and Locally Acquired Dengue Cases — United States, 2010–2017

Weekly / February 14, 2020 / 69(6);149–154

Authors: Aidsa Rivera, MS; Laura E. Adams, DVM; Tyler M. Sharp, PhD; Jennifer A. Lehman; Stephen H. Waterman, MD1; Gabriela Paz-Bailey, MD, PhD

Summary

What is already known about this topic?

The four dengue viruses are transmitted by *Aedes* spp. mosquitoes and are common causes of acute febrile illness in travelers visiting the tropics.

What is added by this report?

During 2010–2017, a total of 5,387 dengue cases were reported from U.S. states; 93% were travel-associated. Locally acquired cases were reported from Hawaii (250 cases), Florida (103), Texas (24), and New York (one).

What are the implications for public health practice?

Travelers to the tropics should protect against mosquito bites by using insect repellents, wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants, and taking actions to keep mosquitos out of their residences. Clinicians should remain vigilant for and report suspected dengue cases to local health authorities.

Full report: <https://bit.ly/2TiEnwz>

Federal Select Agent Program Update

On January 21, 2020, the Federal Select Agent Program (FSAP) published its annual report of aggregate program data, the [2018 Annual Report of the Federal Select Agent Program](#).

Now in its fourth year, this report continues to provide the American public with insight into the regulatory activities of the program. The content includes a look at both the regulatory functions of

FSAP, as well as compliance with the select agent regulations at laboratories across the nation. The report also highlights FSAP's efforts to engage with the regulated community throughout the year in order to ensure regulatory compliance.

- As in previous years, the report summarizes aggregate program data in areas such as:

(Continued on Pg. 11, “Federal Select Agent Program...”)

(Continued from Pg., 10, “Federal Select Agent Program...”)

- Numbers and types of registered entities
- Security risk assessments performed
- Number of inspections conducted
- Top registered select agents or toxins, by agency
- Key observations related to inspection findings and compliance with the select agent regulations
- Identifications and transfers of select agents or toxins
- Thefts, losses, and releases of select agents or

toxins

- Publications and outreach activities

The annual publication of this report reflects the program’s ongoing commitment to increasing transparency and understanding of the program.

The full report, along with an infographic summarizing the key findings, is now available online at <https://bit.ly/32wHhSM>.

US Outbreaks of Zoonotic Diseases Spread between Animals & People in 2019

Below is a selected list of 2019 outbreaks of human infections, from CDC, linked to contact with animals and animal products in the United States. This list is not comprehensive, and outbreaks may have occurred that are not included here.

- **Animal Products 2019**
[Pig Ear Dog Treats](#) – Multidrug-resistant *Salmonella* I 4,[5],12:i:-
- **Dogs 2019**
[Pet Store Puppies](#) – *Campylobacter* Infections
- **Poultry 2019**
[Backyard Poultry](#) – *Salmonella* Infections
- **Reptiles and Amphibians 2019**
[Pet Turtles](#) – *Salmonella* Oranienburg infections
- **Small Mammals 2019**
[Pet Hedgehogs](#) – *Salmonella* Infections

2020 Mileage Reimbursement Rates

Source: [FSIS](#) | January 2020

The General Services Agency (GSA) has released new increased rates for reimbursement of [Privately Owned Vehicle](#) (POV) Mileage for 2020. The rate table below shows the new rates that have been officially published on the GSA website. Employees requesting reimbursement for the use of a POV on or after January 1, 2020, are to use the applicable rate from the table below for their reimbursement calculation.

Modes of Transportation	Effective/Applicability Date	Rate per mile
Airplane*	January 1, 2020	\$1.27
If use of privately owned automobile is authorized or if no Government-furnished automobile is available	January 1, 2020	\$0.575
If Government-furnished automobile	January 1, 2020	\$0.17
Motorcycle	January 1, 2020	\$0.545
Relocation		
Standard mileage rates for moving purposes	January 1, 2020	\$0.17

Refer questions to the appropriate Federal Agency Travel Administrator (FATA), or the Financial Services Center (FSC) Customer Contact Center at 1-800-949-3964 (option 5) or FSCGeneral@usda.gov.

Federal Veterinarians Protect and Improve Public and Animal Health and Welfare

Welcome New Members

Dr. Emily Beaty, FSIS, MSU UNK, Augusta, GA
Dr. Craig Brininger, FSIS, ILL '11, Peoria, IL
Dr. Angel Cunningham, FSIS, UNK, North Pole, AK
Dr. Kary Walters, FSIS, GS-12, CSU '99, Parker, CO (Recommended by Dr. Glenn Hansen)
Dr. Rachel Lawrence, ARMY, TEN '13, Murfreesboro, TN (Recommended by Dr. Taylor Opel)
Dr. Jacquelyn Mariano, FSIS, UF '19, Orlando, FL
Dr. David Marquez, ARMY, TEX '13, APO, AE
Dr. Ann McBride, APHIS-AC, GS-12, NCSU '92, Raleigh, NC
Dr. Michael Penn, FWS, OSU, Lamar, PA
Dr. Stephanie Ringler, APHIS, GS-12, LSU '19, Butler, PA
Dr. Joseph Thomas, APHIS, NCU '13, Litchfield Park, AZ (Recommended by Dr. Don Beckett)
Dr. Michelle Verant, NPS, MIN UNK, Ft. Collins, CO

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