



# FEDERAL VETERINARIAN

VOLUME 77, NUMBER 7 & 8

JULY/AUGUST 2020

## REMINDER

### Members:

**Make sure that your NAFV records are up to date! Now that our election is open, we will be verifying your votes with our records. If your account is not up-to-date, it could potentially impact your whether or not your ballot is approved.**

**To update your profile, please scroll all the way down to our latest email and select to "update profile". You will find this below our signature. With any questions, please contact the NAFV National Office.**

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## GENERAL COUNSEL'S COLUMN:

### Information for Supervisory Public Health Veterinarians, and others

*By William G. Hughes, Esq.*

NAFV has been trying for some time to have FSIS improve the way it deals with disruptive food inspectors and consumer safety inspectors. This minority creates problems for supervisors, co-workers and the regulated companies. Too often certain supervisors, managers and LERD refuse to address the issues properly and appear to cast blame on the SPHVs regardless of the facts. There has been some improvement recently, particularly in most districts.

One problem that persists and that is beyond the control of agency managers is abuse of the filing of frivolous EEO and work place violence complaints against SPHVs. As disruptive as they can be, all complaints have to be processed. These are often filed when a supervisor takes necessary corrective action against poor performance or misconduct. The complaints are filed to harass, intimidate and punish the SPHV for doing his or her job properly. The mere act of filing, however unfounded, leads to the supervisor having to respond to a complaint and usually to make an affidavit explaining the SPHV's version of events. While filing complaints is considered a right, the way they are handled compounds the problem. Sometimes the WPV and EEO staffs are too willing to give unwarranted credibility to the complainant. It is worse when those in the supervisory chain do not support the SPHV, but automatically support the union employees. In any case the processing of these complaints is time consuming, and often embarrassing, and disconcerting to the accused. It is worse when co-workers support the accuser

against the supervisor and join in the false statements.

NAFV urges those involved in these case to realize that credibility is not an election, based solely on numbers, but should be based on logic, motive, relative credibility, and the truth.

SPHVs should be aware that being falsely accused is often the price of being a federal supervisor, should not be taken personally, or cause interference with the continued performance of supervisory duties. Do be careful about anything that may appear to be reprisal, but also be aware that filing a complaint is not a free pass to future misconduct or poor performance.

### **Advice and Suggestions: Do not make yourself vulnerable.**

- 1) Avoid all physical contact. Even such things as the innocent touching on a shoulder to get someone's attention in a noisy environment has led to WPV complaints. Do not raise your voice, even be cautious when trying to talk in a noisy environment. Never show frustration or anger.
- 2) Do not discuss personal matters, either yours or someone else's. This is especially true about marital and dating status, family, health not related to the job, religion, politics, weapons, and physical appearance-including compliments.
- 3) Do not joke about anything that could possibly be misinterpreted, either by over sensitivity or deliberate misinterpretation.
- 4) Make sure that for any action taken against an employee, that you

*(Continued on Pg. 2, "General Counsel's")*

**The Federal Veterinarian**  
(ISSN 0164-6257)

1910 Sunderland Pl., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036-1608

is published bimonthly by, and in the interest of, the National Association of Federal Veterinarians and their members to whom it is emailed free. Correspondence should be addressed to:

**Executive Vice President**  
**National Association of**  
**Federal Veterinarians**  
1910 Sunderland Pl., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036-1608

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(Continued from Pg. "General Counsel's")

have a legitimate reason to have done so. Be sure to counsel and to involve a union representative when necessary.

- 5) Never refer to individuals as girls, boys, or even ladies. Men and women are the appropriate terms.
- 6) Keep good records of controversial situations. Keep them and important supporting documents separately in addition to your government computer. It can be cleansed or taken.

**If interviewed or asked to make a statement or affidavit:**

- 7) Answer the questions carefully, making sure you respond to what is being asked.
- 8) Be factual. Don't guess or speculate. You don't know what documents may contradict you, or what other witnesses may state. If you don't remember, say that you "don't remember- at this time". That keeps the door open for remembering later. The worst thing is the appearance of being untruthful.
- 9) An interview is important, but signing a statement or affidavit is much more so. That's what is official. Do not sign anything regardless of any pressures being placed on you, unless you are

prepared to live with it. You may not just edit a statement or affidavit, you have the right to re-write anything necessary to tell your version of events accurately and completely.

- 10) You are required to cooperate, but that does not mean that you have to do everything the investigator says, or to compromise your telling the complete truth, or your other rights. The investigator is not a judge. Your statement will be sent to other authorities.
- 11) Remember that the WPV and EEO offices probably have no idea of what initials mean, even basic ones used on the job every day. Spell things out at least at the first mention.
- 12) Identify individuals by full name and title, being sure to differentiate between agency employees and plant employees. Do not refer to anyone by just their first name. Many consider that to be demeaning, especially in a formal document.
- 13) Feel free to contact me to review your situation and to give more specific advice.

With any questions, please reach out to Mr. Bill Hughes. Reminder that his contact information has recently changed. Please see his updated contact info in the box to the left.

**NAFV MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

**Did you know that the NAFV has a scholarship fund available to children of current or deceased NAFV members who are attending veterinary school?**

The NAFV Memorial Scholarship Fund was founded in October 1975 and is managed by a Fund membership committee. The Fund committee successful applicants from sons or daughters of members or deceased members of NAFV who are accepted or enrolled in a recognized school of veterinary medicine. Proof of matriculation is required.

NAFV members whose children are interested in taking advantage of this scholarship opportunity should contact the NAFV National Office for application information. Applications will be reviewed and approved by the NAFV Board of Directors.

**To make a tax-deductible donation to the Fund, please visit:**

<https://bit.ly/3lfvXi4>

## NAFV @ WORK: NAFV EVP Submits Comments on Senate Whitepaper, “Planning for the Next Pandemic”



### NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FEDERAL VETERINARIANS

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June 26, 2020

The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP)  
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Alexander:

I applaud the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) efforts to re-evaluate the nation’s public health infrastructure and develop legislation to prepare for the next pandemic.

**The White Paper [“Planning for the Next Pandemic”](#) describes recent disease outbreaks, such as Zika, Ebola and Avian Influenza - all zoonotic diseases transmitted from animals. This paper correctly reflects the threat our country is constantly facing, as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that 3 out of every 4 new, or emerging human infectious diseases come from animals. Recognizing that animal, human, and environmental health are inextricably linked, future pandemic legislation *must* direct and require coordination among federal agencies to achieve a level of preparedness that will safeguard public health and the food supply against infectious disease outbreaks.**

**I urge the Senate HELP Committee to 'help' pass the *Advancing Emergency Preparedness through One Health Act of 2019*, (S. 1903/H.R. 3771), a bill that would direct the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Department of Agriculture (USDA) to develop a coordinated One Health framework across the entire federal government. Such sustained and permanent inter-agency coordination will integrate and leverage federal assets at USDA, HHS, and other agencies to prepare for and prevent the next zoonotic disease outbreak. That urgently needed coordination would increase government economic efficiency by allowing collaborative projects and responses rather than each agency operating alone and often in a vacuum.**

As COVID-19 has taught us, jurisdictional silos of congressional committees, federal agencies or disciplines do not prepare us for emerging zoonotic disease outbreaks. Unfortunately, past pandemic legislation (<https://tinyurl.com/yb35an39> , pp.4 - 14)) has failed to break down those silos to allow collaborative, joint oversight of human, animal, and ecological health. We urge the Senate HELP Committee and other relevant congressional committees, to “break” down these silos through legislation that directs inter-agency, multisectoral, and trans-disciplinary pandemic preparedness.

*(Continued on Pg. 4, “EVP Letter to Senate HELP”)*

(Continued from Pg. 3, *EVP Letter to Senate HELP Committee*)

While there are small initiatives for such One Health coordination being led by individuals within multiple Federal agencies, including the CDC One Health office, the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services' One Health Coordination Center, the FDA One Health Initiative and EPA One Health Community of Practice, sustained, inter-agency coordination necessary to prevent, prepare for, and respond to zoonotic disease outbreaks is not in place. **The U.S. was not and is not prepared!** As urged in the *National Blueprint for Biodefense: Leadership and Major Reform Needed to Optimize Efforts*, (<https://tinyurl.com/y6wofoha>), greater intergovernmental agency and public health coordination is required to achieve a “single, comprehensive, and harmonized strategy”.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a real-time case study of the importance and urgent need for such a coordinated One Health approach. Because veterinarians are highly-trained experts practicing at the intersection of public health and animal health, they have significant experience with disease detection and eradication. Indeed, protecting public health is in the Veterinary Hippocratic Oath. **Veterinarians serve in a range of roles and agencies across the government and must be brought to the table as part of pandemic preparedness and response efforts.** Currently, USDA National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) veterinary laboratories are leading COVID-19 human testing in many states (<https://tinyurl.com/yb7hqjlr>) and veterinary researchers are among those working to develop a vaccine to protect people against COVID-19. Yet there is no structure in place to insure animal health input in public health decision making. This *must* be corrected.

I agree with this assessment and recommend pandemic legislation that directs the HHS and the USDA to develop a One Health framework for integrating departments, programs and activities in a government-wide approach to addressing infectious disease outbreaks as called for in the One Health Act of 2019. Developing this framework will help the federal government identify gaps in surveillance, diagnostics, medical treatments, and workforce preparedness, as well as the regulatory barriers that impede collaborations and economic efficiencies among agencies, not only in times of emergency, but in every day, normal operations.

**Now, more than ever, after seeing the devastation of the current zoonotic disease pandemic, the federal government must adopt a coordinated, One Health framework to prepare for and respond to the next infectious disease outbreak.** I urge the HELP Committee to embrace and approve the One Health Act of 2019 so it can proceed to the Senate floor for a full vote.

Respectfully,  
Joe

Joseph Anelli, DVM  
443-677-9001

## ACVPM Announces Exam Application Openings

The American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine (ACVPM) seeks new Diplomates to join some of the most distinguished veterinary professionals in preventive medicine and public health at national and international levels. The board certification exam application window is NOW OPEN and closes August 31, 2020 for the ACVPM exam offered in June 2021.

Do you have at least 4 years' experience and knowledge in the area of veterinary preventive medicine? Looking for an avenue to further your professional career? Have a personal goal of learning more? Then the ACVPM exam might be your next step. Here is an 11 minute video outlining the benefits of ACVPM board certification. It takes time to apply, including finding an ACVPM Diplomate Sponsor and this video will help you streamline the application process and learn about the qualification requirements.

For more information, visit [www.acvpm.org/page/acvpm-exam](http://www.acvpm.org/page/acvpm-exam) or reach out to Dr. Erik Topping with questions.

Erik H. Topping DVM, MPH, DACVPM  
admin@acvpm.org





# 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](http://www.fedsprotection.com) or call 866.955.FEDS.**

## FSIS Announces New Group Retention Incentive

By Mariana C. Barros-Titus, NAFV | July 2020

NAFV reviewed [FSIS Notice 34-20](#), which describes the new Group Retention Incentive for In-Plant Veterinary Medical Officers/Public Health Veterinarians, and also queried our membership (via our Regional Coordinators) for any feedback they may have on the program. The following questions were conjured up from these efforts.

### Question 1) Why has there been a decreasing model implemented?

- First, the logic for the decreasing model assumes that base salaries will increase throughout their careers. There are exceptions to this such as being reassigned to a location with a higher or lower locality rate, etc. As such, smaller percentages may not necessarily reflect smaller amounts. For some PHVs in the later-career steps, they will be receiving lesser percentage incentives, but given that their base salaries will be higher, this should level out. As PHVs ascend through the GS-12 steps, this incentive is meant to serve as an additional carrot.

### Question 2) Why hasn't this been extended to those in their 12th & 13th years? Can there be at least an agreement signed in those years, so that they know down the line (contingent on funding) they will be eligible for such?

- Essentially, the program was designed under the current resources available. As such, decisions were made to make it feasible to extend the timeline of incentives, and there wasn't enough funding allocated to cover everyone, in every year of service. Unfortunately, for those in that 12-13 year range, they are suffering the consequences of funding limitations. Regarding service agreements, those were put into place under as per OPM rules and regulations. According to OPM rules and regulations, any type of incentive pay that is provided as lump sum, as is being offered to the later-career PHVs, needs to be accompanied by a service agreement signed the year prior. This is the reason that those receiving lumpsums (at year 15, 20, 25, etc.) will have to sign service agreements, while those in the earlier categories will not.

### Question 3) Is there an application for this program? How will it be monitored?

- There is no application process for this program.
- Each year (in July), HR staff will calculate the service year group for all in-plant veterinarians to determine if the veterinarian falls into one of the eligible groups. PHVs can inquire about their service year group by emailing [PHVIncentives@usda.gov](mailto:PHVIncentives@usda.gov). A review of the calculation can be requested if the PHV believes there is a discrepancy with the service year group that was originally calculated by HR. Notably, there will not be retroactive pay in the event that your service timeline has been recalculated.
- For those in the milestone group, FSIS will be reaching out to those veterinarians. PHVs may choose to accept or deny the one-year service agreement, without penalty. For retiring veterinarians who sign a service agreement the year before, there is also no penalty. Simply, if the year of ser-

vice is not reached, PHVs will not receive the lumpsum after completing the one-year service agreement.

### Question 4) FSIS has been allotted \$7.5M in special appropriations intended to address PHV recruitment and retention. How much of this funding will be spent by the new incentives being offered.

- Essentially, in their models, the offering of this group incentive will use the remaining funds. As such, NAFV needs to start looking for opportunities to acquire additional funding for continued incentive offers.
- NAFV will be following up with FSIS on the status of this funding and will share any information received with membership.

### Question 5) How many PHVs are in each eligible category?

- Based recent FSIS calculations, there are 191 PHVs that will be receiving the bi-weekly incentive this year (July 2020-June 2021). There are 39 PHVs that were eligible to sign the service agreement to receive a lump sum payment in July 2021.

As NAFV continues to provide feedback and support for this program, we have become aware that many of you are having questions related to the formulas used to calculate your length of service. FSIS provided the following information on that:

*"The service year group is the amount of time the veterinarian has been with FSIS/OFO, in an in-plant position, and in a paid status; including the 'probationary' period. For example, any time in a Leave Without Pay (LWOP) status, would not count towards the employee's service year group. Any time in a Frontline Supervisor position, EIAO, DVMS, or other non in-plant position would not count towards their service year group."*

### Policy context:

NAFV was involved in efforts through the Congressional Veterinary Caucus and with the support for the AVMA Government Relations Division to secure no-year funding in FY18 specifically designated to address the chronically-high vacancy rates that have been plaguing FSIS OFO. These efforts amounted to \$7.5M being awarded to FSIS to address recruitment and retention for PHVs and SPHVs. These funds are what have been allocated to create the recruitment & retention incentives, CE reimbursement, and other recent efforts put forth by the agency.

NAFV will continue policy efforts aimed at advocating for continued appropriations that support such retention incentives. In addition, we continue to work with the Veterinary Caucus and other stakeholders to shed light on the importance of having an equipped federal veterinary workforce. As the leading employer of veterinarians in the Federal Government, FSIS is a primary focus of such efforts.

Active and Associate members who are interested in engaging in this effort with us should contact the NAFV National Office for information on how to join our NAFV Legislative Committee.

## USDA Confirms SARS-CoV-2 in Mink in Utah

Source: [APHIS](#) | 08/17/2020

The United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) today announced the first confirmed cases of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19 in humans) in mink at two farms in Utah. These are the first confirmed cases of SARS-CoV-2 in mink in the United States. The affected farms also reported positive cases of COVID-19 in people who had contact with the mink.

After unusually large numbers of mink died at the farms, the Utah Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory completed necropsies on several of the affected animals. Samples were forwarded and tested presumptive positive for SARS-CoV-2 at the Washington Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory. Both laboratories are members of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network. The presumptive positive samples were then sent to NVSL for confirmatory testing.

Mink were known to be susceptible to SARS-CoV-2, as the virus was discovered in mink on multi-

ple farms in the Netherlands. Those affected farms also experienced an increase in mink deaths. Affected mink farms have also been identified in Spain and Denmark. USDA has closely monitored these outbreaks and recently issued a document containing [guidance for farmed mink in the United States](#).

There is currently no evidence that animals, including mink, play a significant role in spreading the virus to humans. Based on the limited information available to date, the risk of animals spreading SARS-CoV-2 to people is considered to be low. More studies are needed to understand how different species may be affected by the virus that causes COVID-19, and whether animals may play a role in the spread of the virus.

NVSL serves as an international reference laboratory and provides expertise and guidance on diagnostic techniques, as well as confirmatory testing for foreign and emerging animal diseases. Such testing is required for certain animal diseases in the U.S. in order to comply with national and

international reporting procedures. The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) considers SARS-CoV-2 an emerging disease, and therefore USDA must report confirmed U.S. animal infections to the OIE.

USDA announces cases of confirmed SARS-CoV-2 in animals each time it is found in a new species. All confirmed cases in animals in the United States are posted at [https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/sa\\_one\\_health/sars-cov-2-animals-us](https://www.aphis.usda.gov/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth/sa_one_health/sars-cov-2-animals-us).

People with COVID-19 can spread the virus to animals during close contact. It is important for people with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 to avoid contact with pets and other animals to protect them from possible infection.

For more information about COVID-19 and animals and recommendations for animal owners, visit CDC’s COVID-19 and Animals page at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html>.

### American Public Health Association Supports the Creation of a Health Defense Operations Budget

APHA joined a [letter to House and Senate Appropriations Committee leaders](#) in support of the creation of a Health Defense Operations budget for certain public health programs at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other key federal health security programs. The goal of the proposal is to ensure that key programs to **prevent, detect and respond** to public health threats domestically and globally are robustly funded to ensure federal, state and local health departments can adequately respond to future public health emergencies. Programs covered under the proposal would include key global health, public health preparedness, laboratory and other health security programs at CDC, public health preparedness and response programs and activities under the HHS Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response as well as select programs at the National Institutes of Health and the Food and Drug Administration. The proposal was recently discussed and received a relatively positive response at a House Appropriations Committee hearing related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

June 9, 2020

The Honorable Richard Shelby  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room 5-320, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20540

The Honorable Nick Rahall  
House Committee on Appropriations  
401 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20545

The Honorable Patricia Leahy  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room 5-320, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20540

The Honorable Kay Granger  
House Committee on Appropriations  
407 The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20545

Dear Chairman Shelby, Chairwoman Lowey, and Ranking Members Leahy and Granger:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we write in strong support of a Health Defense Operations budget designation to increase investments in public health and pandemic preparedness before the next pandemic occurs.

We applaud Congress for your quick response to COVID-19 by providing critical emergency supplemental funding during the pandemic. These investments are necessary to fund the robust response to the health crisis. We believe it is crucial that these investments are leveraged to ensure we are better prepared moving forward. The Health Defense Operations designation would recognize and support the indispensable role key programs play in our national health security.

As a result of supplemental COVID appropriations, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is now able to invest in depleted state and local public health infrastructure: new laboratory networks, and modernized data systems. Additional CDC funding can build investment in global health security, as it has done already clear that a health threat is never more than a plane ride away. The National Institutes of Health is using its supplemental funding to conduct early vaccine and therapeutic research to build the basic SARS-CoV-2 knowledge base and develop new rapid and accurate diagnostic tests. The Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority is using its supplemental funding to invest in COVID-19 medical countermeasures by rapidly accelerating the development and manufacturing processes using public-private partnerships. The Strategic National Stockpile is procuring and distributing supplies needed by public health and health care providers all across the country.

These investments will be crucial as agencies begin to take the necessary steps to combat the coronavirus and get our economy back to work. However, as you are aware, these supplemental appropriations are by their very nature temporary. While we believe that there will be a day when we emerge from COVID-19 with safe and effective treatments, we know that this will not be the last infectious disease outbreak. We must ensure that the investments made in our core public health infrastructure and health security programs are maintained and used to prevent the next pandemic.

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## LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS: NAFV Signs On To Animal Agriculture Coalition Letter to House Committee on Appropriations

June 29, 2020

Chairwoman Nita M. Lowey  
U.S. House of Representatives  
House Committee on Appropriations  
2365 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chairman Richard Shelby  
U.S. Senate  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
304 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

Ranking Member Kay Granger  
U.S. House of Representatives  
House Committee on Appropriations  
1026 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Vice Chairman Patrick Leahy  
U.S. Senate  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
437 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

The undersigned groups urge you to ensure adequate funding for Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Agriculture Quarantine Inspection (AQI) at U.S. international ports of entry.

The global COVID-19 pandemic threatens to disrupt agriculture inspections, which are critical to preventing the introduction of plant and animal pests and diseases that could devastate American agriculture.

The \$1 trillion U.S. agriculture sector is a crucial component of the American economy. CBP agriculture inspectors perform critically important agricultural inspections every day at the nation's ports of entry to prevent the entry of foreign plant and animal pests and diseases.

Foreign pests and diseases, such as African swine fever, which has killed more than one out of every four pigs globally, would have a devastating effect on American agriculture if they reached our shores.

Agriculture inspection of international passengers and cargo is carried out by CBP's Agriculture Specialists, Technicians and Canine Teams. These CBP personnel

are ordinarily funded by AQI user fees, collected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and transferred to CBP to cover salaries and expenses of the inspectors. The global COVID-19 pandemic has caused a precipitous downturn in international travel and lowered cargo imports. International air travel alone has fallen by nearly 98%. Maritime shipping is down nationally by double-digit percentages year-on-year, with drops in volume varying from seaport to seaport. And virtually all seaport passenger travel has halted, with the 2020 tourism season virtually eliminated.

This unprecedented decline has resulted in such dramatically reduced AQI user fee collections that even the APHIS' user fee reserve fund will be depleted by the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2020. With user fee collections not expected to rebound for the foreseeable future, the shortfall in funding for AQI at the ports of entry through the end FY 2021 is estimated to be \$630 million.

We urge Congress to ensure that the essential work of CBP agriculture inspectors continues uninterrupted throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We depend on AQI to ensure that America's agriculture sector remains safe from foreign animal and plant pests and diseases. It is inconceivable that Congress would risk widespread damage to U.S. agriculture and the overall economy by not funding these inspections.

Respectfully submitted,  
(...)  
National Association of Federal Veterinarians

To view a copy of the letter and the full list of organizations involved in this effort, please see the link below.

<https://bit.ly/3I4h3Qq>

### Global Survey: One Health Networks and Workforce Response to COVID-19



The objective of this collaborative study is to describe the contributions of the diverse workforce to the COVID-19 pandemic and the connection of One Health networks (OHNs) to workforce response activities. The results will expand the understanding of the value of a One Health approach and the role of OHNs. Results will be utilized to develop targeted interventions to improve workforce capacity for public health response to the COVID-19 and future pandemics.

#### **PARTICIPATE IN SURVEY**

Participation is voluntary. By submitting your answers, you consent to the use of this data for the research purposes indicated. For more information, please see the [Participant Information Sheet](#).

This is a project of the One Health Commission ([OHC](#)) and the One Health European Joint Programme ([OHEJP](#)), in partnership with the World Health Organization's Global Outbreak and Response Network ([WHO-GOARN](#)).



## ICYMI: FSIS Published Guidance on Return-to-Work Plan for FSIS Field Employees Who Have Self-Certified

Since March 20, 2020, FSIS has allowed all employees who meet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-defined [criteria for being at higher-risk of severe illness with COVID-19](#) to self-certify their health status with their supervisor. Supervisors have been authorized to approve telework to telework-eligible employees or to grant Weather and Safety Leave, which is a form of paid Administrative leave. After initial self-certification, employees have been required to have a conversation with their supervisor at least once every two-week pay period to discuss if the employee needs to continue to self-certify based on their medical condition and the current COVID-19 situation at their place of work.

Both FSIS and a significant portion of the regulated industry have taken steps to mitigate occupational risks associated with COVID-19. FSIS is now providing face coverings (cloth and disposable masks), face shields, and hand sanitizer to FSIS in-plant personnel (IPP). FSIS IPP are now required to wear a face covering in conjunction with a face shield (once available) and supervisors have been instructed to enforce this policy. In addition, FSIS-regulated establishments have been directed by the President’s Executive Order and invocation of the *Defense Production Act* to utilize [CDC and OSHA’s Guidance for Meat and Poultry Processing Workers and Employers](#).

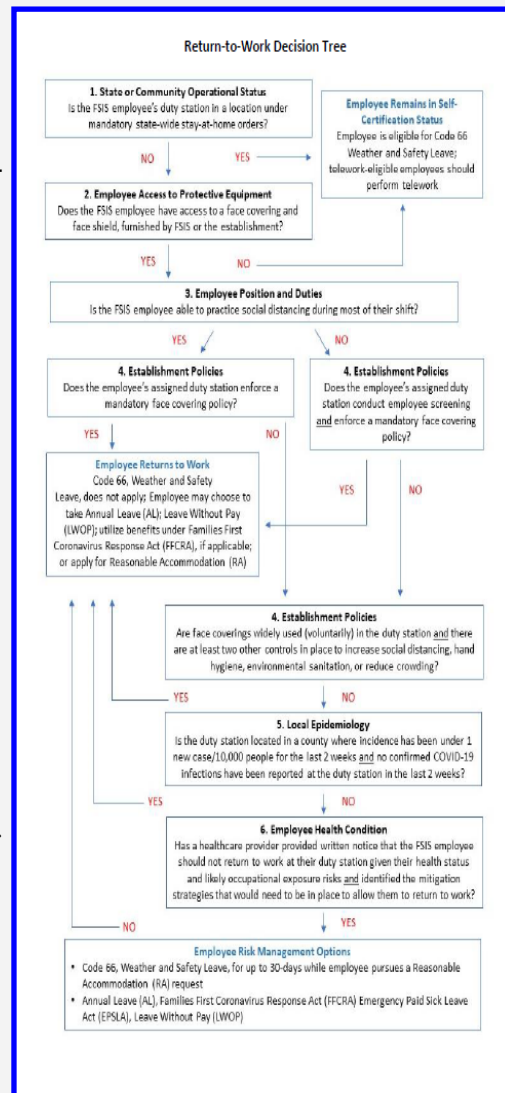
This guidance describes engineering and administrative controls that establishments can implement to help mitigate the risk of COVID-19 to employees. With appropriate controls in place, FSIS employees’ risk of COVID-19 exposure at FSIS-regulated establishments is currently being mitigated to varying degrees. Employees who are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 may now be able to return to their duty stations by following the plan outlined in this document.

The purpose of this document is to

- 1) describe the process for determining which employees identified as being at higher-risk can return to work and
- 2) describe risk management options that employees identified as being at higher-risk can utilize, regardless of whether they are able to return to work.

This document applies to any FSIS employee who works within one or more FSIS-regulated establishments.

For the full memo, please see <https://bit.ly/2Q4EMBE>.



### ADDITIONAL RESOURCE: FEDERAL OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

The purpose of the FOH Contact Page is to communicate questions and concerns regarding occupational health services for your organization. It is not intended to address personal concerns or issues. If you are experiencing a crisis situation, please call 911 (or the appropriate authorities) promptly.

<https://foh.psc.gov/contactus/contactus.asp>



## IMAGES WE WILL REMEMBER:

*“Federal Veterinary work-life during the times of COVID-19”*

Earlier in July, NAFV President-Elect Dr. Deanna Brown, sent us a picture of her in her inspection essentials during the 2020 COVID-19 outbreak. As a Front-Line Supervisor, Dr. Brown has worked extremely hard over the past few months to ensure that the plants in her circuit have adequate coverage. NAFV is thankful to Dr. Brown and all of the PHVs and SPHV's continuing to ensure that food safety standards are continued to be met, even during a pandemic.

## Assessing the Value of PCR Assays in Oral Fluid Samples for Detecting African Swine Fever, Classical Swine Fever, and Foot-and-Mouth Disease in U.S. Swine

Beemer, Oriana; Remmenga, Marta; Gustafson, Lori; Johnson, Kamina; Hsi, David; Antognoli, Maria Celia  
*PLoS ONE* (2019) 14(7):e0219532  
 DOI: [10.1371/journal.pone.0219532](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0219532)  
 S&P – CEAH: July 2019 (online)

### Introduction

Oral fluid sampling and testing offers a convenient, unobtrusive mechanism for evaluating the health status of swine, especially grower and finisher swine. This assessment evaluates the potential testing of oral fluid samples with real-time reverse-transcriptase polymerase chain reaction (rRT-PCR) to detect African swine fever, classical swine fever, or foot-and-mouth disease for surveillance during a disease outbreak and early detection in a disease-free setting.

### Methods

We used a series of logical arguments, informed assumptions, and a range of parameter values from literature and industry practices to examine the cost and value of information provided by oral fluid sampling and rRT-PCR testing for the swine foreign animal disease surveillance objectives outlined above.

### Results

Based on the evaluation, oral fluid testing demonstrated value for both settings evaluated. The greatest value was in an outbreak scenario, where using oral fluids would minimize disruption of animal and farm activities, reduce sample sizes by 23%-40%, and decrease resource requirements relative to current individual animal sampling plans. For an early detection

Scenario	1	2	3	4
Short description of scenarios and objectives	Outbreak response, assess control area disease status every 5 days for up to a 97-day outbreak	Outbreak response, assess surveillance zone disease status every 21 days for up to a 97-day outbreak	Active national surveillance for early detection, sampling every 3 days for one year	Active national surveillance, sampling weekly for one year
Total sample size per premises	720 up to 1,260 <sup>1</sup>	72 up to 315 <sup>1</sup>	4,392 to 7,686 <sup>1</sup>	520 to 832 <sup>2</sup>
Pen-level prevalence that can be detected with 0.95 probability	20% (by design)	20% (by design)	20% (by design)	46 to 100% <sup>3</sup>
Cost of total sample size per premises	\$36,000 to \$63,000	\$3,600 to \$15,750	\$219,600 to \$384,300	\$26,000 to \$41,600
Number of premises	25 to 50 <sup>4</sup>	61 to 81 <sup>5</sup>	156 to 240 <sup>5</sup>	268 <sup>2</sup>
Premises-level prevalence that can be detected with 0.95 probability	1 in N (premises in control area)	2% (by design)	2% (by design)	4.1% to 8.4% <sup>6</sup>
Total sample size per scenario	Up to 18,000 to 63,000	4,392 up to 25,515	685,152 to 1,884,640	181,000 <sup>2</sup>
Cost of total sample size per scenario	\$900,000 to \$3,150,000	\$219,600 to \$1,275,750	\$34,257,600 to \$92,232,000	\$9,050,000
Total cost including follow up costs for non-negative samples <sup>7</sup>	\$900,000 to \$3,150,000	\$219,650 to \$1,290,170	\$34,261,050 to \$93,254,250	\$9,050,950 to \$9,150,760

<sup>1</sup> Range of samples represents the full range from previously outlined low and high sensitivity values and the sampling required over time to meet the scenario objectives.  
<sup>2</sup> Based on average number of rope samples submitted per premises (10 to 16) and average number of premises submitting to large swine veterinary diagnostic laboratories in the U.S.  
<sup>3</sup> Assumes equal distribution of rope samples among 3 barns per premises and the full range of sensitivity values.  
<sup>4</sup> Sampling all premises in the control area.  
<sup>5</sup> Alternatively, a lower level of sampling per farm and sampling more farms could give the same prevalence detection threshold at the premises level, but reduce prevalence detection threshold at the pen-level.  
<sup>6</sup> Calculated assuming the among pen prevalence threshold that needs to be detected on each premises is 20% within a three day period to compare results to scenario 3.  
<sup>7</sup> Sum of cost of total sample size per scenario for initial testing and range of total costs for follow up and confirmatory testing for initial samples with non-negative results

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0219532.t004>

system, sampling every 3 days met the designed prevalence detection threshold with 0.95 probability, but was quite costly.

### Limitations

Implementation of oral fluid testing for African swine fever, classical swine fever, or foot-and-mouth disease surveillance is not yet possible due to several limitations and information gaps. The gaps include validation of PCR diagnostic protocols and kits for African swine fever, classical swine fever, or foot-and-mouth disease on swine oral fluid samples; minimal information on test performance in a field setting; detection windows with low virulence strains of some foreign animal disease viruses; and the need for confirmatory testing protocol development.

To view the full article, please see:  
<https://bit.ly/2Qok3sC>

**2020 NAFV BOD ELECTION:  
Submit your vote by October 1st!**

**2020 BOD Election Roster:**

- President-Elect (1 Seat)
- Secretary/Treasurer (1 Seat)
- FSIS Representatives (3 Seats & 3 Alternates)
- APHIS Representatives (2 Seats & 2 Alternates)
- Other-Agency Representative (1 Seat & 1 Alternate)
- Military Representative (1 Seat & 1 Alternate)

The NAFV Board of Directors (BOD) is the governing group that designs the vision for our association and approves the methods through which our mission is met. The Board of Directors determines the actions and policies of the association by majority vote at regular meetings or by unanimous vote at other times. The Board of Directors is the ultimate governing body of the association. Each BOD serves a term of two years.

NAFV Elections are held every two years, and the members elected to serve this election will begin their term on January 1, 2021.

**Only current NAFV Active, Associate, and Honor Roll members in good-standing can vote in this election.** For any inquiries regarding your current membership status, please contact the NAFV National Office at [nafv@nafv.org](mailto:nafv@nafv.org) or 202-223-4878.

The 2020 election packet with your individual ballots have been emailed. If you have not received an election packet and your ballot, please contact us ASAP. The election packet includes the candidate list for the positions listed below, along with a ballot at the very end. Please limit ballot submissions to one per-member.



**2020 Nominations and Election Process Timeline**

**July 1, 2020:** Receive Nominations

**August 15, 2020:** Distribute Ballots

**October, 2020:** Voting Ends

**November 1, 2020:** Ballots Counted

**November 15, 2020:** Results Announced

**January 1st, 2021:** Newly elected officers and members of the board of directors shall begin their terms and serve for two years.

Read BOD Descriptions



2020 NAFV BOD Election Packet & Ballot

\*Required Question(s) Progress:

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE VOTE**  
All voting members should vote in this section.

**\* 1 PRESIDENT-ELECT VOTE**  
Please select 1 for each seat below. Write-ins can be inserted into 'other' selections.

Dr. Rachel Cezar

Dr. Robert "Bob" Simer

Other

**\* 2 SECRETARY TREASURER VOTE**  
Please select 1 for each seat below. Write-ins can be inserted into 'other' selections.

Dr. John Sanders

Write-in below

Comment

500 characters left

[Continue >](#)

**NAFV HONOR ROLL MEMBER OBITUARY**

**DR. HENRY J. KAUTMAN**



NAFV has learned of the passing of Dr. Pete Kautman, as he was widely known, back on February 25, 2020. He was 72 and had been born and lived in McGregor, Iowa, most if not all of his life. He had received his DVM from Iowa State University in 1972.

Pete is survived by his long term companion Mary Greener, three siblings and two pets. He spent time traveling and always enjoyed activities on the Mississippi River.

He had a long and successful career with FSIS, USDA in Iowa, and had been retired for a number of years. He had been very active in NAFV and was Regional Representative for the former North Central Region for many years, serving NAFV members and being a liaison with all levels of FSIS management up to and including several administrators. As such he worked closely with NAFV leadership, and especially the undersigned who was proud to call him a friend. He was always a pleasure to work with, knowledgeable, effective, and with a great sense of humor.

Obituary is available here: <https://bit.ly/2CWp4p5>

# Federal Veterinarians Protect and Improve Public and Animal Health and Welfare

National Association of Federal Veterinarians  
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 1910 Sunderland Place  
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 Washington, DC 20036

## Welcome New Members

**Dr. Sarah Logan**, FSIS, GS-12, MIC '16, Liverpool, NY  
**Dr. Robert Fathke**, ARMY, E-8, VT '15, Ft. Collins, CO  
**Dr. Kelly Flanagan**, FSIS, GS-12, UF, Gainesville, FL  
**Dr. Kristen Johnson**, FSIS, GS-12, MO '20, Hackett, AK  
**Dr. Marc Knobbe**, ARMY, O-5, KSU '05, Washington, DC  
**Dr. Sarah Logan**, FSIS, GS-12, MIC '16, Liverpool, NY  
**Dr. Stephen Miller**, FSIS, GS-12, MO '98, Marshall, MO  
**Dr. Anna Mullins**, ARMY, O-4, UNK, New Market, MD  
**Dr. DeShawn Penturf**, FSIS, GS-12, OKU '83, Murfreesboro, AK  
**Dr. Patricia Raythe**, FSIS, GS-12, ISU '19, West Des Moines, IA  
**Dr. Dana Stewart**, FSIS, GS-12, MI '20, Gladstone, MI  
**Dr. Suzanne Todd**, ARMY, UNK, Gunpowder, MD  
**Dr. Lori Walter**, ARMY, UNK, UNK, Parkland, FL

## Welcome New Affiliates

**Dr. Alison Kaufman**, NY DOH, COR '99, Clinton Corners, NY

## Welcome New Student Affiliates

**Joshua Turse**, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY  
**Mirella Lopez**, FSIS MALAK, UC '23, Turlock, CA

## Active Members We Have Lost Touch With

We have lost touch with the following list of members. If you know them, please prompt them to reach out to us at 202-223-4878.

- |                      |                     |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| • Roy Burns          | • John D. Long      |
| • Leonard Beohland   | • William T. Melton |
| • Douglas Carmichael | • Lewis Mitchell    |
| • Richard Elliott    | • Daniel Novilla    |
| • Robert Gilkerson   | • David Norman      |
| • Bettina Helm       | • Jeffrey L. Nulph  |
| • Mohammad Khan      | • Darryl Reynolds   |
| • Lennis C. Knight   | • Donald Savage     |
| • Michael R. Kollar  | • James L. Wilkus   |
| • Stephen Lewis      | • Noreen R. Walsh   |