**AVMA recommendation:** $877,417,000 in the fiscal 2015 Agriculture Appropriations bill.

The Obama administration’s budget request cuts funding to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) by 3.6 percent, which will severely limit the agency’s ability to carry out important public health and food safety functions. The president’s budget includes for the first time a “rent” charge of $43,076,000 for APHIS to use certain facilities. Previously, the U.S. Department of Agriculture covered this rent charge within the secretary’s budget.

### Fiscal 2015 Agriculture Appropriations Bill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>AVMA Recommendation</th>
<th>President</th>
<th>House</th>
<th>Senate</th>
<th>PL</th>
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<td>$821,721,000</td>
<td>$877,417,000</td>
<td>$834,341,000</td>
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### Recent Funding History

<table>
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<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>Pre-sequestration</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>PL</th>
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<td>2014</td>
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<td>$756,214,215</td>
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<td>2009</td>
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### Key points:

- **APHIS plays a central role in safeguarding the health of U.S. agriculture and protecting the health and welfare of our nation’s livestock and companion animals.**
- **APHIS protects $165 billion of value of livestock, poultry and specialty crops.**
- **APHIS facilitates agricultural trade and regulates imports of agricultural products to prevent the entry of potentially harmful animal and plant pests and diseases.**
- **APHIS works to prevent 160 animal diseases from entering the country and to eradicate harmful and economically devastating diseases.**
- **APHIS ensures the veterinary biologics available for the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of animal diseases are pure, safe and effective.**

### APHIS supports key programs and services that protect public and animal health

**Animal Disease Traceability system (ADT).**

Knowing where diseased and at-risk animals are, and when and where they’ve been is important to ensuring a rapid response when animal disease outbreaks take place. An efficient and accurate ADT helps reduce the number of animals involved in an investigation, the time needed to respond and the cost to producers and the government. Disease surveillance and international services facilitate the ability for APHIS to ease market access and help protect U.S. animal agriculture. A functioning ADT makes efforts to trace diseases back to their sources more efficient, thus reducing the cost and minimizing the impact of disease outbreaks.

APHIS works with the USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) to ensure that animal identification is collected at slaughter. APHIS is also using its resources to: finalize traceability monitoring and its enforcement plan; start an official identification tag retirement pilot project; and conduct traceability training for livestock market inspectors and accredited veterinarians.

**International programs integral to U.S. trade.**

Exports are the difference between profitability and loss for American farmers and ranchers. APHIS places a high priority on issuing permits for plant and animal exports and imports. U.S. agricultural exports reached a new record of $140.9 billion last fiscal year. In fact, the period from 2009 to 2013 is the strongest five-year period for agricultural exports in U.S. history.

APHIS is working to eliminate all remaining barriers to export markets related to **Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE),** commonly referred to as “mad cow disease.” In May 2013, the World Organization for Animal Health upgraded the U.S. risk classification for BSE to “negligible,” meaning it believes that U.S livestock producers have taken appropriate measures to protect public and animal health. Within the next four years, APHIS will engage each of the 48 countries that have restrictions on U.S.-origin beef that are inconsistent with the new U.S. status. APHIS is developing strategies to persuade these trading partners to drop their restrictions.
National Veterinary Accreditation Program (NVAP). The NVAP provides privately licensed veterinarians with training so that they may assist federal veterinarians in controlling animal diseases. These veterinarians are also authorized to certify the health status of livestock and other animals.

APHIS administers the National Animal Health Monitoring System to collect, analyze and disseminate data on animal health, management and productivity across the United States.

The National Animal Health Lab Network (NAHLN) is a multifaceted network comprised of federal, university and state veterinary diagnostic labs that is run by APHIS in cooperation with the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians. The NAHLN has established a framework for surveillance and an emergency response system (not research) that provides critical and ongoing resources for lab testing, surveillance, information management, quality assurance and the development and validation of new tests that focus on various diseases. It does this by using common testing methods and software platforms to process diagnostic requests and share information. The NAHLN labs are trained and proficient in standardized testing protocols for the following diseases: avian influenza, bovine spongiform encephalopathy, chronic wasting disease, classical swine fever, exotic Newcastle disease, foot and mouth disease, pseudorabies virus, scrapie, swine influenza virus, and vesicular stomatitis virus.

The National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa, and Plum Island in New York, are full-service veterinary diagnostic labs that provide a wide variety of information and services centered on the diagnosis of domestic and foreign animal diseases, support of disease control and eradication programs, and the reagents for diagnostic testing, training and lab certification. The NVSL is recognized as an international reference lab for specific animal diseases of importance to the Americas, including: avian influenza, anthrax, pseudorabies, contagious equine metritis, equine encephalomyelitis (eastern, western, and Venezuelan), foot-and-mouth disease, swine influenza, and West Nile encephalitis.

APHIS’ Center for Veterinary Biologics (CVB) regulates the manufacturing and distribution of veterinary biological products to prevent, diagnose and treat animal diseases. Veterinary biologics are used in a variety of animals, including livestock, pets, fish, birds, and wildlife. CVB has made it possible for important new technologies and systems to reach the market faster. CVB is focused on increasing its ability to receive submissions for new vaccines from manufacturers and approve them for marketing electronically. About 70 years ago, there were about a half-dozen products available. Today, there are nearly 2,000 licensed veterinary biological products designed to prevent, diagnose or treat more than 200 different diseases in over 35 animal species. This ever-expanding array of veterinary biologics leads to better animal health care and reinforces the need for strict regulation so that we can better protect animal and human health and our environment.

National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS). The NVS provides states tribes and territories with the tools they need (such as animal vaccines, antivirals, therapeutic products or response support services) to combat animal disease outbreaks. In an animal health emergency, the response must be fast and well-coordinated to keep the disease from spreading. Within 24 hours of an outbreak, the NVS can dispatch critical resources that animal health officials need onsite.

APHIS Animal Welfare maintains its ongoing efforts to protect vulnerable animals from predation and stop the inhumane treatment of those covered by the Animal Welfare and Horse Protection Acts. APHIS is working to cut the rate of horse soring in half within two years—from around 500 cases in fiscal 2013 to 250 in 2015. “Soring” is the cruel and inhumane practice of inflicting pain in walking horses to achieve a high-stepping gait in the show ring. APHIS Animal Welfare plans to add inspectors and case workers in 2014 and 2015 to bolster the enforcement process and manage the cases.

APHIS Wildlife Services is standing up the National Feral Swine Management Program using $20 million of its fiscal 2014 budget to initiate plans to control and eliminate feral swine. More than 40 states are overrun by feral swine, which has resulted in an estimated $1.5 billion in damages each year, of which more than half of that is direct damage to agriculture. Feral swine are a threat to animal and human health; crops and livestock; rural, suburban and urban properties; and natural resources.

Aside from leading the federal government’s efforts on feral swine, APHIS Wildlife Services also runs the National Rabies Management Program to prevent the further spread of wildlife rabies and eventually eliminate terrestrial rabies in the United States. It does this through an integrated program that involves the use of oral rabies vaccination targeting wild animals. In addition, the National Wildlife Research Center, the research arm of the APHIS Wildlife Services program, finds solutions to challenging wildlife damage management problems related to agriculture, natural resources, property, and human health and safety. A recent example of the center’s important work is related to the development of a snake trap for invasive Burmese pythons that have become well established in southern Florida. In some locations, the snakes have become top predators that feed on native wildlife and out-compete native species. The center hopes to work with an interested company to manufacture the trap to rid the state from these snakes. Invasive species are one of the leading causes of worldwide biodiversity loss.