



**\$15 million in new funding for the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) in the FY 2017 Agriculture Appropriations bill is requested by the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians (AAVLD), the United States Animal Health Association (USAHA) and the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).**

**Budget Justification:**

- \$15 million in new or additional funding is needed to raise NAHLN's operational level to a required state of readiness, with capabilities and capacity for surveillance of and response to diseases introduced naturally or as a result of bioterrorism. Current funding as provided in the FY 2016 omnibus permits NAHLN to function at marginal levels. This funding was authorized in the 2014 Farm Bill.
- The federal government's investment in the NAHLN is leveraged over six times by direct state appropriations.
- NAHLN plays a direct role in protecting a safe, stable and nutritious food supply; and will play an essential role in responding to a biological attack affecting animals or people. An example of the critical surveillance role NAHLN plays was evident during the 2015 highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreak that devastated the U.S. poultry industry. NAHLN laboratories operated 24/7 to test poultry samples which provided results needed to allow for rapid depopulation of infected flocks, surveillance testing of samples from surrounding areas to halt spread of the virus and testing to establish freedom from disease to allow continuity of business during the outbreak and repopulation of farms and resumption of trade after the outbreak.
- Increased funding will improve compliance with Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD-9) by 1) expanding surveillance and surge capacity of the NAHLN by increasing the number and level of participating state laboratories; 2) additional development of the infrastructure for electronic transmission of data between sample collectors, laboratories and state and federal databases; and 3) increasing efficiency and effectiveness of lab personnel training nationwide.

**NAHLN is Essential to the Health of Animal Agriculture, Bioterrorism Surveillance and the U.S. Economy:**

- The NAHLN enables laboratories to test for economically devastating and potentially zoonotic diseases such as mad cow disease, foot-and-mouth disease, avian and swine influenza, and classical swine fever; it serves as our nation's most vital early warning system for emerging and foreign animal diseases.
- Without the NAHLN and the early disease detection it provides, an outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) could cost US agriculture an estimated \$128 billion. This includes decreased revenues for corn and soybeans of \$44 billion and \$24.9 billion, respectively. This loss translates into roughly 154,000 jobs over the course of the outbreak.\*

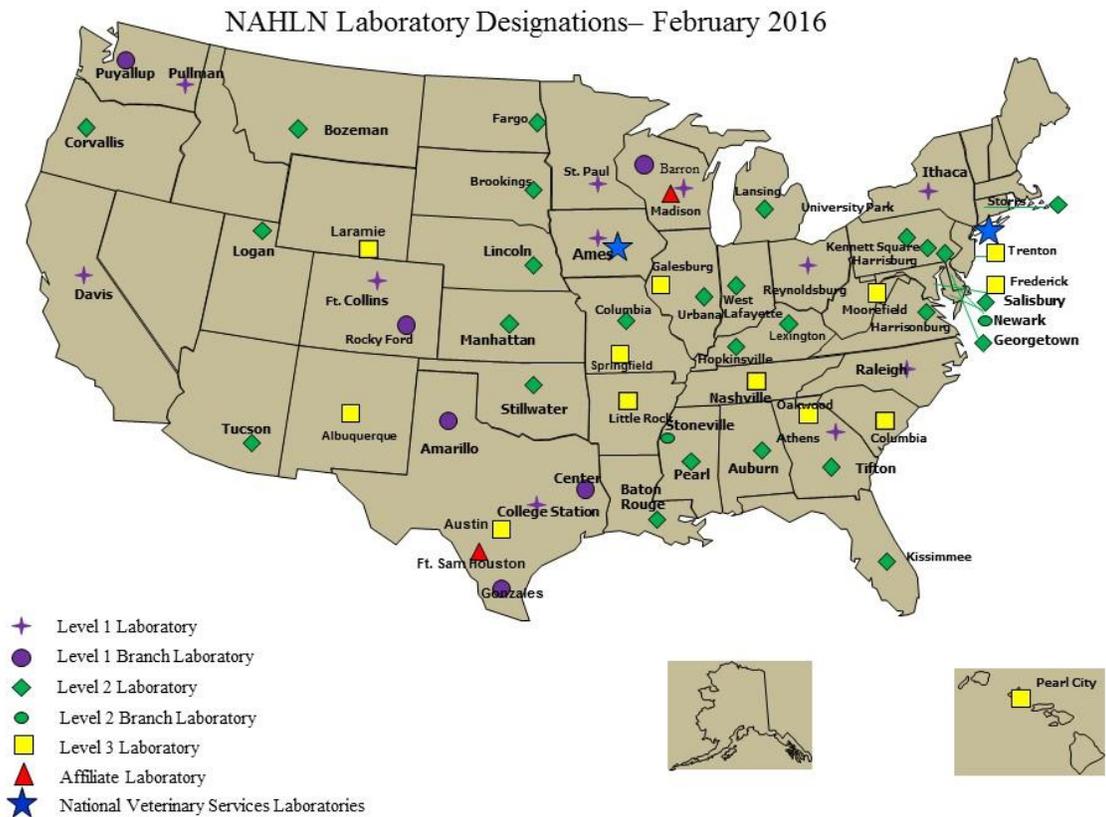
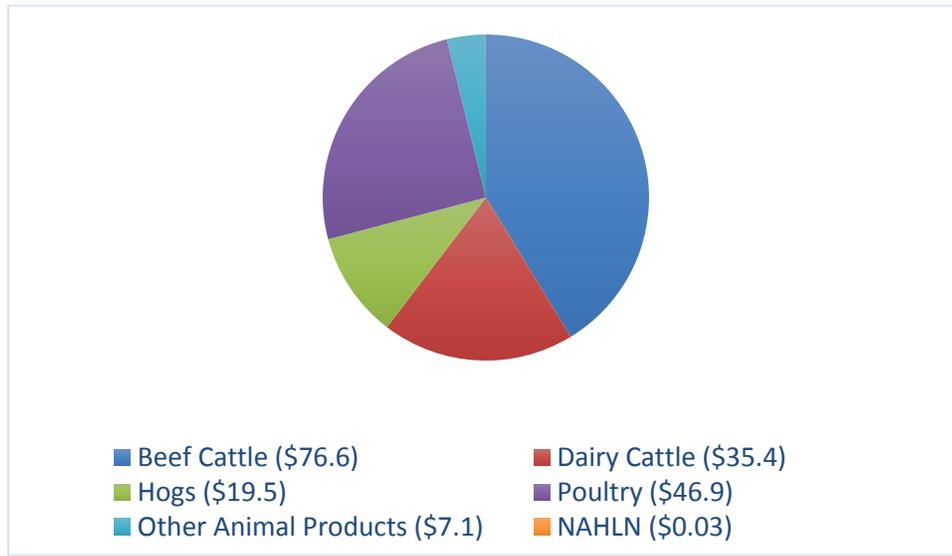
**Background:**

- NAHLN was developed in response to the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002, and HSPD-9 to "develop nationwide laboratory networks for food, veterinary, plant health and water quality that integrate existing Federal and State laboratory resources, are interconnected, and utilize standardized diagnostic protocols and procedures". The budget that is needed for a fully functional NAHLN is \$30 M.
- During the past 12 years the NAHLN, composed of federal, university, and state veterinary diagnostic laboratories, has established the framework of a surveillance and emergency response system (not research) that provides critical and ongoing resources for laboratory testing, surveillance, information management including data analysis and sharing, quality assurance with an auditing system and the development and validation of new tests.
- A failing grade was given to the nation for its ability to respond to and recover from a biological attack, natural disaster or animal disease event as required by HSPD-9<sup>1</sup>.
- The 2015 USDA Economic Research Service estimated the cash receipts of the U.S. animal industries at \$185.68 billion. Funding the NAHLN at \$30 million would represent only a 0.016 percent federal investment for disease surveillance to protect essential agriculture animal food industries.

*\*Economy Wide Impacts of a Foreign Animal Disease in the United States, Dermot Hayes, Jacinto Fabiosa, Amani Elobeid and Miguel Carriquiry, Working Paper 11-WP 525, November 2011, Center for Agricultural and Rural Development, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011-1070, [www.card.iastate.edu](http://www.card.iastate.edu)*

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# Cash Receipts by Selected Commodity, 2015 (in billions of dollars)



Map Demonstrating the Existing NAHLN Framework

<sup>i</sup> August 2011 GAO report and a report from the Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Proliferation and Terrorism.