



# Animal Health Program Strategic Plan

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The Oregon Department of Agriculture's (ODA) Animal Health Program, under the direction of the Oregon State Veterinarian, is responsible for protecting the health of Oregon livestock. This responsibility is carried out through four primary statutory responsibilities – Livestock Disease Control and Response, Animal Disease Traceability (ADT), Animal Emergency Planning and Response, and the State Meat Inspection Program. Three additional programs with similar missions – Animal Health Laboratory, Commercial Feed Licensing, and Animal Rescue Entity Licensing – also exist within the Animal Health Program.

This Strategic Plan was developed to provide direction and guidance as the Animal Health Program grows and matures, within the guidance of the ODA's larger agency strategic plan. While the agency's strategic plan is integral to everything that the Animal Health Program does, a handful of the specific actions of each agency objective are particularly applicable to the Animal Health Program. These specific actions are included in the first section of this strategic plan. Additional program-wide objectives are included after the agency-wide objectives, followed by specific objectives for three of the four statutory responsibilities. The State Meat Inspection Program will be included in this plan at a later date.

In developing this plan, the program staff elected not to place a timeline on the plan, but rather to treat it as a living document, with some objectives being relatively short-term, while others may outlast the careers of many of the staff that contributed to the development of this plan. As a living document, this plan will be revisited and revised periodically to ensure that the objectives of the Animal Health Program continue to align with the agency's objectives, as well as with the legislature's intent for the responsibilities given to the Animal Health Program, and where necessary, the intent of USDA programs with which the Animal Health Program aligns.

## ODA Agency Strategic Plan Priority Objectives

The below actions come from the agency's strategic plan published in 2018. While the Animal Health Program is committed to implementing the entire agency plan, the actions highlighted below are of particular importance to the Animal Health Program.

### KEY OBJECTIVE 1 – OPERATE AS A ROLE MODEL ORGANIZATION

- Employees show a high level of confidence and respect for fellow employees and for program and ODA leadership.
- The Animal Health Program continues to increase efficiency and effectiveness through adoption of technology.
- The Animal Health Program manages safety risks and responds to safety concerns raised by employees. Employees feel safe while doing their jobs and feel supported in leaving a situation where they feel unsafe. Employees feel equipped with the tools needed to lessen the chance of confrontations that can lead to safety concerns.
- The Animal Health Program has organizational capacity to continue key operations even when faced with unexpected events such as animal disease outbreaks, computer failure, or extreme weather.

### KEY OBJECTIVE 2 – OPERATE IN A CULTURE OF COMPLIANCE & SUPPORT

- Progressive compliance actions lead to conformity with Oregon laws.
- Inspections document high rates of compliance.
- Develop data systems to improve compliance tracking.
- Implement compliance tools that are consistent across employees, program wide.
- Develop new and innovative communications that effectively convey the intended message and are clearly understood by stakeholders.

### KEY OBJECTIVE 3 – EMBRACE A CULTURE OF COLLABORATION

- The Animal Health Program takes proactive steps to engage all audiences/stakeholders.
- The program continues to forge deeper and more effective collaboration with key stakeholders on subjects such as legal, non-legal, rulemaking, and public comments.
- The program works to reach out to new partners and interested parties to engage them in the Animal Health Program's work.

### KEY OBJECTIVE 4 – FOSTER EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE

- Employees hold themselves and each other accountable for results.
- Employee accomplishments are recognized regularly by peers, managers, and department leadership.
- Employees know what their professional development needs are and what is available to them.
- Foster an environment that promotes work life balance within the Animal Health Program.
- Develop tools such as desk manuals and standard operating procedures (SOPs) for each position.

- Employees are cross-trained to provide assistance within animal health and other FSAH programs as needed.

#### **KEY OBJECTIVE 5 – PROVIDE EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE RECOGNIZING THE DIVERSITY OF OREGON AGRICULTURE**

- We solicit and learn from customer feedback regarding services provided and the approach taken to navigate difficult issues.
- Collaborative efforts where the Animal Health Program is involved result in increased benefits to Oregon livestock producers.
- Ensure policies and procedures are customer oriented.
- Improve work flows to promote reliable delivery of customer orders.
- Build organizational capacity to continue key services to customers even when faced with unexpected events such as computer failure or extreme weather.
- Strive to help organic, small farmers, and direct-to-consumer farmers feel served by the Animal Health Program.
- Learn how to better facilitate collaboration between diverse parties to benefit Oregon agriculture.

#### **KEY OBJECTIVE 6 – CONNECT & PROMOTE OREGON FOOD & AGRICULTURE AS A VALUED EXPERIENCE FOR CONSUMERS & AN EXCITING CAREER CHOICE**

- Expand partnerships between the Animal Health Program and youth communities.
- Adopt communications strategies, platforms, and messages that resonate with diverse customers and the public by identifying how various audiences receive and access information.
- Communicate with youth about animal health topics and career opportunities available to them.
- Increase partnerships such as those with OSU, including the Small Farms Program.
- Encourage employees to connect with the communities they live in about animal health and its opportunities.

#### **KEY OBJECTIVE 7 – STRIVE FOR CLEAR, CONCISE, & INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION**

- Stakeholder support increases over time due to increased understanding of the Animal Health Program's work.
- Public awareness of program work increases over time.
- Compliance increases due to the regulated community's increased understanding of regulations.
- Animal Health employee knowledge of all ODA programs increases.
- Utilization of and engagements with ODA communications increases.
- Continue producing, and converting our publications to plain language and an easy to digest format.
- Utilize new methods to effectively communicate to evolving (and traditional) audiences.
- Develop and implement Animal Health Program strategic communication plan that assesses and prioritized communication work products and initiatives targeting a diverse audience.
- Ensure employees understand the services available from the information office and the importance and value of using those services.

## General Animal Health Program

- Employees and managers are knowledgeable about and consistently implement state and federal laws, rules, and policies that govern the work of the Animal Health Program.
  - Inspection reports reflect a complete and thorough inspection process, documenting any compliance issues, and providing a clear pathway to compliance when appropriate.
  - Rules and regulations are consistently enforced, beginning with outreach and education, and continuing to enforcement action if necessary.
- The Animal Health Program regularly solicits input from stakeholder groups (species associations, advisory groups, veterinary groups).
  - District Veterinarians serve as liaisons to species stakeholder groups.
  - District Veterinarians forge relationships with county extension agents in their district and serve as liaisons to the agency with those counties.
- Animal Health Program staff understand the functions of the entire program, helping other staff when needed.
  - Office staff provide meaningful office support for all Animal Health programs.
  - Staff training is provided on program functions within the Animal Health program as well as other ODA programs that interact with Animal Health.
- The ODA Animal Health Program adopts a culture of innovation and forward-thinking.
  - The Animal Health Program Innovates cost-effective, new ways to deliver service and control costs.
  - The Animal Health Program regularly makes use of data to improve how we deliver our program services.
- The Animal Health Program prioritizes employee safety, wellbeing, and personal and professional development.
  - The Animal Health Program manages disease exposure and other physical safety risks likely to be encountered in the work environment. Employees are properly trained and equipped to protect themselves from disease exposure and feel supported in assessing risk and leaving a situation that is not safe.
  - All animal health employees regularly participate in career development trainings.
  - Veterinarians participate in at least one technical educational opportunity/Continuing education event per quarter.
- The Animal Health Program develops a Strategic communications plan guiding program communication, improving our reach into diverse and underserved livestock producers.
  - Rebuild Animal Health Program website to provide easy access to information.
  - Ensure publications are available in appropriate languages based on target audiences.
  - Animal Health Program annual report is developed targeting veterinarians and stakeholders to share the important work the AH program is doing .
- Collaborate with other ODA programs (Food Safety, Market Access, Weights and Measures) to assist all producers including organic, small farm and direct to consumer production operations.
- The Animal Health Program develops and implements a multi-year Training and Exercise program based on the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) guidelines.

- Quarterly veterinarian in-service events are paired with tabletop exercises and/or drills based on ODA and USDA disease response plans with participation from response partners (USDA APHIS VS/WS, ODFW, etc).
- Annual Agency Operations Team/ Incident Management Team (AOC/IMT) exercises are held to strengthen the agency's ability to provide a coordinated response to emergencies.
- Regular Incident Command System (ICS) and emergency response trainings are held for ODA employees and partner agencies as needed.

## Livestock Disease Control and Response

- The ODA Animal Health Program maintains and utilizes a robust disease response framework.
  - The ODA disease response plan is updated to reflect current response practices providing an implementable response framework for all reportable diseases.
  - Individual disease response playbooks are developed for likely diseases (FMD, ASF, HPAI, RHD, SARS-CoV-2, etc).
  - Industry-wide Secure Food Supply plans are implemented utilizing a common biosecurity platform across all livestock species.
  - Mental health support for responders and livestock owners is available to be included in all disease responses.
  - Response plans are exercised by ODA staff annually to ensure they are updated and understood by all staff.
- ODA District Veterinarians are trained and equipped to respond to any reportable disease safely and appropriately.
  - Veterinarians maintain equipment required for immediate initiation of a foreign animal disease response in their state-vehicle.
  - Veterinary disease response trailers are equipped with supplies and equipment to sustain a 5-person team for a minimum of 72 hours of immediate disease response. Trailers are pre-positioned with each veterinarian and maintained to ensure all equipment and supplies are current and usable.
  - Respiratory protection and hazard mitigation programs are maintained, ensuring staff are equipped and understand how to correctly utilize appropriate PPE for any foreseeable hazard.
- Veterinarian disease reports and ODA disease investigations ensure protection of Oregon's livestock industry and facilitate early detection of new or emerging disease threats.
  - Disease reporting data is systematically utilized to drive control strategies and future rulemaking.
  - Automated disease incidence reports for all reportable and notifiable diseases are published regularly (monthly/quarterly).
  - ODA District Veterinarians and other staff respond to disease reports in a consistent manner based on established guidelines for each disease.
- Develop a comprehensive education and outreach program providing easy to understand information on regulatory diseases and biosecurity.
  - Provide assistance to county fairs, 4-H extension, and FFA in developing Fair biosecurity and disease response plans.
  - Continue to build and enhance certifications programs such as NPIP and US-SHIP to represent a value-add for participants and consumers
  - Provide support to the Oregon FFA Veterinary Science Career Development Event.
  - Send a quarterly electronic newsletter to Oregon accredited veterinarians providing disease and program updates.
  - Send at least one topic per quarter to species topic groups on GovDelivery.

- Prioritize outreach to youth livestock exhibitors (4-H/FFA) about diseases of concern and biosecurity principles through OSU Extension Service and Oregon FFA Association.
- Work with university and community college animal science and veterinary technology programs to provide outreach and education to college students.
- Develop a library of written outreach materials available in English and Spanish, providing targeted biosecurity information to small and diverse livestock producers.
- Create quick reference materials (infographics, fact sheets, etc) for high-consequence regulatory diseases focused on prevention and early detection.
- Utilize and promote a One-Health approach to livestock disease prevention and control in Oregon.
  - Establish a statewide One-Health committee, working collaboratively towards a fully coordinated one-health disease response in Oregon.
  - Utilize One-Health approach in ODA disease response and control activities, integrating livestock health with human, wildlife, and environmental health.
- Encourage meaningful stakeholder engagement in ODA's animal disease planning and response activities.
  - Develop a structure for organized stakeholder engagement in disease planning, surveillance, and response activities.
  - Meet annually with Poultry industry group to ensure communication and coordination around Avian Influenza prevention, surveillance, and response planning.
  - Meet biennially with Trich advisory committee to review current status of trich control in Oregon and seek industry input on future control strategies.

## Animal Disease Traceability

- The Animal Health Program sets an example within Oregon and nationally in the development and implementation of a functional Animal Disease Traceability program.
  - Animal Health Employees participate in national ADT standard workgroups.
  - ODA continues to exceed national traceability standards.
  - Complete all national priority trace events successfully in 30 minutes or less.
- Enforce Oregon's ADT laws through a climate of enforcement through outreach.
  - Establish a consistent approach to investigation and enforcement of ADT violations.
  - District veterinarians provide periodic inspections at livestock shows/fairs, providing outreach/education on import requirements and ID regulations while enforcing applicable rules/laws.
  - Seek industry and regional support to develop a program to allow import requirement exemption for Oregon exhibitions based on traceability and vet inspections at show.
  - Review implementation of pasture permit program with stakeholder input to ensure the program meets current needs while ensuring compliance with necessary regulations.
- Encourage meaningful stakeholder engagement in ODA's animal disease traceability activities.
  - Develop an organized ADT stakeholder group including representatives from the veterinary and livestock communities representing each major program species.
  - Seek support from the regulated community in developing a plan for implementing ADT improvements.
- Develop a comprehensive education and outreach program providing easy to understand information on Oregon laws and implementation of modern traceability technologies.
  - Develop a library of written outreach materials available in English and Spanish, providing targeted information to small and diverse livestock producers.
  - Create quick reference materials such as FAQ and fact sheets on the implementation of RFID and electronic regulatory documents targeted to accredited veterinarians.
  - Support Oregon livestock industry with information and resources to implement national ADT requirements.
  - Host and participate in regular webinars and in-person meetings to provide information on ADT requirements and available resources.
  - Update the Animal Health Program website to provide easy to navigate information on ADT regulations, available resources, and animal import requirements.
  - The Animal Health Program sends a quarterly digital Newsletter to veterinarians and livestock producers focused on Animal Disease Traceability.
  - Provide regular outreach through Oregon agricultural university and community college programs and youth programs (4-H/FFA) on traceability topics.
  - ODA district veterinarians, supported by the ADT coordinator develop relationships with Oregon livestock markets serving as liaisons on traceability topics with the markets and contracted accredited veterinarians.
- Encourage professional development of Animal Health program employees in modeling the utilization of available ADT technologies in their everyday work.

- Field personnel are well versed with OVIS and provide meaningful support to practicing veterinarians in the adoption of electronic regulatory documents.
- Field personnel are proficient with LF and UHF RFID technology providing technical support to accredited veterinarians and livestock producers in the adoption of RFID technologies.
- Field personnel utilize electronic records for all field work completed, serving as role models to the regulated industry.
- Animal Disease Traceability coordinator provides subject matter expertise in traceability to program staff and customers.
- The Animal Health Program continues to seek improvements in electronic systems to streamline processes and improve customer service and access to services.
  - Develop an online application portal providing premises registration applications, official ID orders, and pasture permit applications.
  - Utilize available technology to streamline the pasture permit application review and approval process.
- Support the voluntary adoption of modern traceability technologies including RFID and electronic records by Oregon veterinarians and livestock producers, utilizing a value-added approach.
  - Continue to provide short-term RFID loans to veterinarians and livestock producers interested in exploring the adoption of RFID technology.
  - Provide long-term RFID reader loans to Oregon accredited veterinarians.
  - Support implementation of RFID and electronic records at livestock markets through enhancement of existing market infrastructure and technical support to market owners and contracted accredited veterinarians.
  - Collaborate with Oregon's livestock industry and third-party verifiers to build support for the implementation of standards-compliant traceability in the marketplace.
  - Encourage the use of OVIS and third-party eCVI platforms by Oregon accredited veterinarians to achieve 90% electronic regulatory document usage by 2025.

## Animal Emergency Planning & Response

- Encourage meaningful stakeholder engagement in ODA's animal emergency planning activities.
  - Form a statewide Disaster Animal Response stakeholder group including representatives from the veterinary, animal control, animal rescue, and emergency response communities.
  - Develop the stakeholder group to serve as a statewide resource to counties and local organizations seeking to advance animal emergency response within Oregon.
- Maintain updated, usable statewide animal evacuation and sheltering response plans in compliance with ORS 401.975-401.978.
  - Update and maintain statewide animal evacuation and sheltering plans, ensuring that current best practices are included.
  - Develop an animal evacuation and sheltering toolkit based on state plans to serve as templates for county response plan development and implementation.
  - Compile an animal disaster communications toolkit for counties to provide communications templates for inclusion of animals in local disaster communications.
- Support counties in the development of local animal disaster response capabilities including animal response plans, County Animal Response Teams (CARTs), and technical assistance.
  - Provide technical assistance to counties in developing animal response plans and County Animal Response Teams.
  - Support the creation of network of County Animal Response Teams in each county capable of providing animal response within their counties and throughout the state under mutual aid.
  - Provide support and regular communications to county ESF11 leads and animal response teams to improve through a statewide CART communications platform such as GovDelivery or a list-serve.
- Develop a robust statewide ESF-11 response capability including all state agencies with responsibilities under ESF-11 in the state Emergency Operations Plan.
  - Develop a state ESF-11 working group including all agencies under ESF-11 to support coordination of activities under ESF-11 during a disaster response.
  - Ensure a minimum of three highly trained and experienced ESF-11 liaisons are available to staff the ESF-11 desk at the State ECC.
  - Develop the capacity to fully staff and ESF-11/agency operations center within ODA in a major disaster operation.
  - ODA District veterinarians forge relationships with county emergency managers and OEM regional liaisons in their district to serve as liaisons during disaster responses.
  - All animal health employees have participated in ICS 100 & 200 training.
  - District Veterinarians and program coordinators have participated in ICS 300 & 400 training.
  - The Animal Health Program can staff a Type 4 Incident Management Team during an emergency.

- Re-develop the Oregon Veterinary Emergency Response Team (OVERT) to ensure a pool of highly-trained and experienced veterinarians is available to support animal emergency response operations throughout Oregon.
  - Include disaster and disease response equally in OVERT's mission.
  - Seek input from existing OVERT members on strategic direction for OVERT to ensure continued success.
  - Improve OVERT trainings and utilization of OVERT members to ensure member retention.
  - Advertise OVERT opportunities to veterinarians and technicians throughout Oregon.
  - Develop a strategic partnership between OSU Carlson College of Veterinary Medicine and OVERT.
- Develop a comprehensive outreach and training program providing easy to understand information on animal emergency response to county emergency managers, ESF11 personnel, and response teams.
  - Coordinate regular webinars and virtual trainings with counties to provide development resources for county personnel and response teams.
  - Hold regional animal disaster response trainings for CARTs throughout the state.
  - Coordinate one statewide training events per year for animal disaster response.
  - Develop and utilize outreach and educational materials focused on emergency preparedness for animal owners, identifying and utilizing existing materials when available.
- Coordinate with OVMA and OSU CVM to develop a state veterinary emergency response certification under AVMA guidelines.