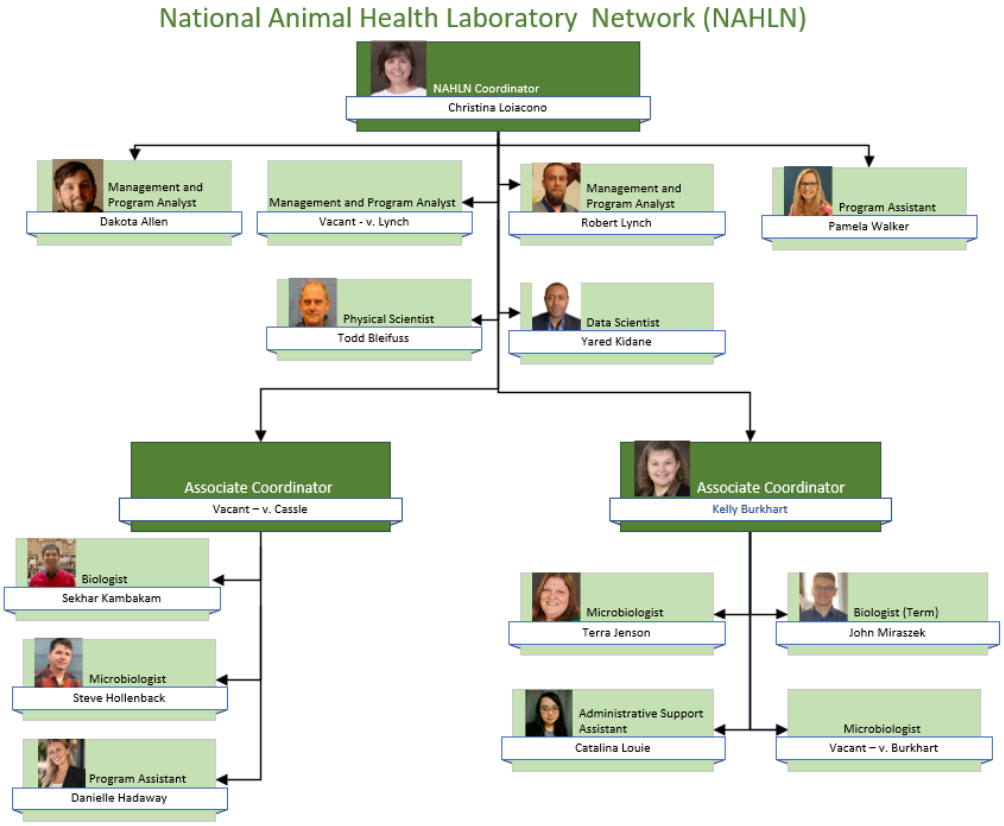
United States Department of Agriculture

National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) Update Fiscal Year 2026

NAHLN Laboratories

- *66 NAHLN laboratories in 43 states*
- 36 Level 1 laboratories (24 Main and 12 Branch)
- 25 Level 2 laboratories (22 Main and 3 Branch)
- 2 Level 3 laboratories
- 3 Affiliate laboratories

NAHLN Program Office Team



NAHLN Challenges over the last year and a half

- Government Shut Down October 1 – November 12, 2025
- Staffing loses due to the deferred resignation program and job transitions.
- Outbreaks: HPAI, NWS, VSV, PRV (resolved)
- Cooperative Agreement Delays due to new internal review requirements.
- Contracting delays due to a lack of understanding by contracting officers of what a laboratory does.
- Requirement to transition 3 Cooperative Agreements to contracts by March 2027.

New NAHLN Laboratory Requirements- Raising the Bar

- All Level 1, 2, 3, (Main and Branch), Affiliate and Specialty Laboratories must meet the new requirements by t October 2027.
- Any new laboratory being evaluated for NAHLN approval must meet these requirements prior to NAHLN approval.
- **Requirements:**
  - Full Accreditation by a 3rd-party (AAVLD, ISO17025)
    - Intent to include NAHLN diseases upon next accreditation audit.
  - Acceptable laboratory information management system (LIMS) with electronic results messaging vetted successfully.
  - Minimum of 2 disease approvals with molecular assays.
  - Minimum Capacity of 400 PCR tests per 8 hr. shift
  - Annual Exercise Scenario (Activated NAHLN Laboratories will be exempt).

Electronic Messaging – Quality Improvements

- NAHLN Strategic Priority!
- Increased usage of the message monitoring tool created and hosted by Iowa State University's Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (Level 1)
- Increased use of the QC dashboard developed by the NAHLN Program Office.
- The QC Dashboard was expanded to include data sent to the LMS Test environment. Allows labs to correct their own messages before reaching out to NAHLN IT. Results in improved quality of production messages.
- Developing an automated results-deduplication process using the Observation Identifier (OBX-21). This will replace the current email-based deletion requests and help streamline the workflow.
- A message vetting protocol has been developed that leverages the Message Monitoring Tool, the test QC Dashboard and standardized vetting submission forms and results to report for each NAHLN disease. The forms and results are available to the labs through the portal library. This protocol empowers the labs and creates a more streamlined and efficient vetting process.
- Exercises were held for ASF and FMD Tetracore kits that included the use of the new message vetting protocol.

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Response

- 58 NAHLN Laboratories continue in activated status for the on-going outbreak.
- HPAI Outbreak Testing- Over 1.7 million PCR tests provided by NAHLN laboratories
  - Domestic birds, associated with outbreak
    - Total PCR: 753014(Feb. 2022 – Sept.2026) FY26 PCR: 193378
  - Dairy Cattle
    - Total PCR: 452,436 (April 2024 – Sept.2026) FY26 PCR: 153330
    - FY26 ELISA: 74,204
  - Wild bird testing-estimated
    - Total PCR: 222,839 (Feb. 2022 – Sept.2026) FY26 PCR: 60,864

New World Screwworm Response

- NAHLN laboratories in Southern Border states are standing ready to assist NVSL with the morphologic evaluation of flies from traps set by Veterinary Services in CA, NM, AZ, and TX.
- NVSL developed an SOP and training as well as a proficiency test (PT) for fly evaluation. Three NAHLN laboratories have individuals who successfully completed this PT.
- Additional training and a PT has been developed by NVSL in collaboration with ARS for both fly and larva evaluation. The first in-person training was completed September 28th-29th and included individuals from 3 NAHLN laboratories.
- The NAHLN Program Office developed a results messaging guide and modified the current Indefinite Delivery/ Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contracts to include a price for morphologic evaluation.
- NAHLN Program office worked with NVSL, EMRS and the TVMDL vendor to establish order messaging for New World Screwworm.
- NAHLN Program office continues to facilitate results reporting in conjunction with Iowa State University NAHLN laboratory to obtain LOINCs for counting tests as the number of dyes in use expands.

NAHLN Surveillance and Response Testing

- In fiscal year 2026, NAHLN laboratories participated in surveillance programs for African swine fever/classical swine fever (ASF/CSF), Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR), bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), Foot and Mouth Disease/Seneca Valley A virus (FMD/SVA), influenza A virus in swine (IAV-S), pseudorabies virus (PRV), and scrapie. NAHLN laboratories also provided significant testing support in response to the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) outbreak in poultry, wild birds and cattle.

Disease/Agent	FY2025	FY2026	# of NAHLN Laboratories Currently Approved for Testing
	Samples or Animals Tested		
ASF/CSF	16,399	28,595	53
AMR	4,449	4,337	40
BSE	22,147	20,133	4
FMD/SVA	2,257	1,563	50
IAV-A wild bird	90,629	60,864	64
IAV-S	18,663	14,649	46
PRV	34,428	24,986	26
Scrapie	24,795	21,298	18
vND	8,282	7,826	62
HPAI/LPAI (avian)	228,567	194,551	64
HPAI (cattle - PCR)	255,441	153,330	64
HPAI (cattle - ELISA)	96,196	74,204	38
VSV	0	110	8

NAHLN Farm Bill

- In fiscal year 2026, funding for the NAHLN Farm Bill program increased to $10 million per year.
- APHIS hosted Listening Session to gather stakeholder input on how these new funds should be used to strengthen national, regional, and local capabilities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to animal disease outbreaks.
- The NAHLN Farm Bill was distributed directly to each Main NAHLN laboratory for operational support.
- The hope is that a new Farm Bill will increase the funding amount authorized and cap indirect costs for NAHLN.

NAHLN-NBAF Partnership

- Our five (5) scientists are tasked with evaluating local, regional, national, and international threats and ensuring the NAHLN laboratories have the tools necessary to diagnose emerging threats.
- Each Scientist has initiated regional meetings and other communications with stakeholders to discuss strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.
- A Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) framework has been developed and tested across the regional host laboratories. The goal is to harmonize the outbreak response workflow for the NAHLN by testing the capacity and capability of laboratories under multiple stressors. The final framework will be available to NAHLN laboratories for customizable use.
- The Partnership Scientists are developing a risk assessment protocol that can be implemented on the regional level to identify vulnerabilities in NAHLN response to emerging/re-emerging disease threats.
- Progress for both the COOP and the Risk Assessment protocol were presented at the AAVLD/NAHLN Laboratory Emergency Management Committee meeting October 16, 2026.

APHIS Laboratory Portal (*NAHLN Portal)*

- The APHIS Laboratory Portal continues to be an important asset for NAHLN through successful partnership with Datastream Connexion funded through a cooperative agreement managed by the Kansas Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, a Level 1 member of the NAHLN.
- The Portal is the main means of identifying the correct contacts at NAHLN laboratories. It is crucial for NAHLN laboratories to maintain and verify personnel information.
- The portal provides additional support for SOP distribution, Deviation Request management, PT registration and completion (NAHLN and APHIS PTs), Library with access to presentations and information, Management of NAHLN Drills.
- Recent enhancements include self-service account creation, security role updates, and PT registration updates.
- The training module has been redesigned to improve usability and expand online training options.
- Additional vendor-driven updates have been implemented to streamline overall site performance.
- Automated website functions such as deadline reminders for PT registration and results entry have been added.
- Critical personnel changes, such as updates to the Laboratory Director, are now flagged for the NVSL Director's Office and the NAHLN Program Office.
- PT result reports have been better organized to support scoring by the NVSL PT Managers.
- Improve the process for offering PT retakes by making retake options and deadlines clearly visible to participants.

FY2026 NAHLN Budget

Funding Source	Disease	Activities include	FY2026 Requested	FY2026 Allocated	FY2026 Obligated
BASELINE FUNDING					
Cattle Health (2626VSDN0319CTTLHBSE101USDA)	BSE	*Fee-for-service testing*	$500,000	$500,000	$386,252
Equine Cervid Small Ruminant (2626VSDN0319ECSRHSCRE01USDA)	Scrapie	*Fee-for-service testing*	$730,000	$730,000	$730,000
Swine (2626VSDN0319SWINHNAHL01USDA)	CSF/ASF; FMD/SVA	*Fee-for-service testing*	$891,000	$891,000	$450,235
Zoonotics (26XXVSDN0319ZOODSNAHL01USDA)	IAV-S	*Fee-for-service testing*	$437,729	$437,729	$403,000
FAD (26XXVSDN0319EMGYPNAHL01USDA)	FAD Investigations	*Fee-for-service testing; moved from Vet. Dx.*	$200,000	$200,000	$200,000
Vet Diagnostics	not disease or commodity specific	*Lab infrastructure support LIMS Integration* *APHIS Portal* *NAHLN Program Office operating costs*	$6,644,614	$6,644,614	$6,209,003
Interagency Agrement with NIFA	*Level 1 labs (17.6)*	*$242,000/lab, $152,000/1 lab*	$4,266,000	$4,266,000	$4,266,000
BASELINE FUNDING TOTAL			$13,669,343	$13,525,993	$12,644,490
ADDITIONAL FUNDING					
AMR (26XXVSDN0319ZOODSAMRE01USDA)	AMR	*Fee-for-service testing* *Sequencing at NVSL*	$300,000	$300,000	$299,992
NWS (25XXVSDN0319EMGYCSCWMDMSURV)	NWS	*Fee-for-service testing*		$175,000	$175,030
Avian Health (25XXVSDN0319EMGYCAVIN05HPAI)	HPAI	*Fee-for-service testing*	$0	$7,500,000	$4,897,274
Dairy Cattle Emerging Event (24XXVSDN0319CCCEMAVIN05CLSV)	HPAI	*Fee-for-service testing*	$0	$4,671,436	$7,419,947
Farm Bill		*Non-competitive funding (added to*	$10000000	$10,278,241	$9,534,924
ADDITIONAL FUNDING TOTAL		*Infrastructure)*	$10,300,000	$22,924,677	$22,327,167
TOTAL FUNDING			**$23,969,343**	**$36,450,670**	**$34,971,657**

FY2026 NAHLN Budget-Vet Diagnostics Detailed Break Down

Activity	FY2026	FY26 Allocated	FY2026 Obligated	Comments
Laboratory Infrastructure Support Agreements	$5,055,000	$9,321,000		
Laboratory Infrastructure Support Agreements (IAA	$4,266,000			
Level 1 labs (24)		$5,808,000	*$5,808,000*	$242,000/lab
Level 2 labs (22)		$3,300,000	*$3,300,000*	$150,000/lab
Level 3 labs (2)		$200,000	*$200000*	$100,000/lab
Total	$9,321,000	$9,308,000	$9,308,000	
LIMS Integration Agreement ISU	$122,000	$122,000	$66,529	6-month cooperative agreement
APHIS Laboratory Portal Agreement	$262,000	$272,000	$151,538	6-month cooperative agreement
Total	$384,000	$394,000	$218,067	
COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT TOTAL	$9,705,000	$9,702,000	$9,526,067	
NAHLN Program Office operating costs	$1,500,000	$1,500,000	$1,472,698	
TOTAL	$11,205,000	$11,202,000	$10,998,765	