Farm Bill Priorities for Animal Health

The AVMA supports a Farm Bill that prioritizes research, protects animals from pests and disease, makes smart investments that benefit food safety and security, and advances U.S. animal agriculture. Our key priorities are as follows.

1. Establish a proactive strategy for early detection and rapid response to animal pest and disease outbreaks that protects animal health and preserves U.S. animal agriculture.
   - Authorize and fund an Animal Pest and Disease Program to allow USDA APHIS to effectively prevent and respond to animal disease outbreaks through cooperative agreements with the states that allow essential flexibility for their unique needs.
   - Bolster the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN). This coordinated partnership of Federal, State, and University-associated animal health and diagnostic laboratories is our vital early warning system against animal disease outbreaks.
   - Authorize the development of a high-consequence livestock vaccine stockpile with initial priority to Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). FMD is a highly contagious virus with severe economic impacts, and the U.S. is ill-equipped to fight an outbreak.

2. Recommit to USDA’s Research, Education, and Economic (REE) mission area. Federal investments in REE advance agriculture productivity, animal health and welfare, nutrition, food safety, and lead to a stronger agricultural economy.
   - Further invest in USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture’s (NIFA) Continuing Animal Health and Disease Research Programs. These capacity grants promote essential animal health research in agriculture communities and universities nationwide.
   - Reauthorize the Food Animal Residue Avoidance Databank (FARAD). This program provides scientifically-based withdrawal advice following extra-label drug use, environmental contamination, or agroterrorism to prevent residues in animal-derived foods.
   - Reauthorize the Veterinary Services Grant Program, which works to develop and sustains veterinary services in rural America.
   - Reauthorize the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), a competitive, peer-reviewed program that fields innovative approaches to the worst problems facing animal agriculture. Direct attention to specific areas including advancements in vaccines, sampling methods, stock vigor and viability, animal welfare, and humane depopulation.
   - Continue support for the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR) to leverage public-private partnership dollars and deliver a huge value for taxpayers.
   - Commit to additional research in animal drugs for Minor use and Minor Species.

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