



MODEL PLAN: State Animal Health Network (AHN) Activation

The language below is a practical model plan (template) for use by State Animal Health Organizations and their Emergency Management Plan writers to use as guidance as they draft language to describe the activation protocols for their state Animal Health Network as an appendix or attachment under the appropriate Annex or ESF in their current State Emergency Management Plan.

Example: (arrangement in your state may vary from the framework in this example)

<u>State Plan Name</u>	State of _____ Emergency Management Plan
<u>ESF</u>	ESF 11 (or Annex N): Agricultural and Food Defense
<u>Appendix</u>	Appendix 3: Animal Disease Response
<u>Attachment</u>	Attachment IV: State of _____ Animal Health Network Activation Plan

~~~~~

**State of \_\_\_\_\_ Animal Health Network Activation Plan**

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this annex is to define and outline the operational concepts, responsibilities, and procedures to effectively activate the state Animal Health Network in the event of an emergency in which food or feed products, animal health issues, including zoonoses, may be compromised. This section is applicable to all Animal Health Network principals (Points-of-Contact) at the offices of the state veterinarian, state cooperative extension, feed manufacturer organizations, feed retailers and other local, state and federal agricultural partners.

The State of \_\_\_\_\_ Animal Health Network’s goal is to fulfill a U.S. Department of Homeland Security capability of Animal Disease Emergency Support, whose main priority is to protect, prevent, detect, respond to and recover from threats and incidents that would result in the disruption of industries related to U.S. livestock, other domestic animals, and wildlife. This capability also serves to protect, prevent, detect, respond to, and recover from endangered food supply, public health (zoonoses), and domestic and international trade.

The State of \_\_\_\_\_ Animal Health Network is an emergency communications tool that may be activated by the state animal health veterinarian or the state public health veterinarian when there is a critical need to communicate to non-commercial livestock and poultry owners through retail feed retail outlets across the state.

**Situation:**

In the event of an emergency in which human and animal health may be compromised by disease, the Animal Health Network, and it’s partnerships of extension educators, feed manufacturers and local feed retailers, can be activated to increase the state veterinarian’s capability of reaching underrepresented groups of non-commercial livestock and poultry owners with vital animal-disease alerts such as confirmed disease reports,

stop movement, quarantine, best biosecurity practices, and critical animal health information in a timely manner.

## Concept of Operations

### **STATE LEVEL**

#### State Veterinarian:

Prior to activating the network, the state animal health veterinarian will host a teleconference or webinar that may include appropriate state and federal agencies, state and national commodity organizations and agricultural industry partners. The state veterinarian may choose to collaborate with appropriate agency and industry partners to determine the objectives, language and geographical area in the state where Animal Health Network activation would be beneficial. The state veterinarian will lead the process of drafting the language on the Animal Health Network alert/message. The development of the alert/message may best be accomplished in consultation with scientists and educators of the commodity group and cooperative extension to ensure the language is appropriate for the non-commercial/hobby/back-yard animal owner target audience.

Once the language to the message is crafted the state veterinarian will use at least two (2) communications methods (i.e., email and telephone call) by which to activate the Animal Health Network. The state veterinarian will issue the alert message to the designated distribution POC at the state cooperative extension service or feed manufacturing organization (directly to feed retailers in some states). It is important that the state veterinarian also sends alerts to a secondary POC serving as back-up to ensure the alert message is delivered in a timely manner.

*NOTE: Along with all AHN alerts state veterinarians should provide detailed information about the incident your web page to notify local veterinarians and county extension agents/educators on a timely basis. State veterinarians should include text in the alert/message that animal owners are encouraged to contact their local veterinarian or county extension agent/educator for addition information about the incident in an effort to manage the potential surge of calls that the state veterinarian may receive.*

#### Distribution Points-of-Contact (POC): AHN Model 1 and AHN Model 2

As soon as the alert is received from the state veterinarian, the Distribution POC will pass along the alert to the appropriate list of extension educators/agents who will convey the message to feed retailers (AHN Model 1) or to feed manufacturers (directly to feed retailers in some states) who will convey the message to their respective feed retailers (AHN Model 2) within the designated geographic region of which the Animal Health Network is asked to reach.

**AHN Model 1: POC at the State Cooperative Extension Service** – Some states have chosen to have local county extension educators/agents to enlist, train, and maintain a state-of-readiness among local feed retailers who will disseminate the critical alert or message to their customers including non-commercial livestock and poultry owners.

**AHN Model 2: POCs at each Feed Manufacturer** – Some states have chosen to establish relationships with feed manufacturers who have agreed to enlist, train, and maintain a state-of-readiness among their respective local feed retailers who will disseminate the critical alert or message to their customers including non-commercial livestock and poultry owners.

#### Enlisting Local Feed Retailers as Part of the Animal Health Network

County Extension Agents/Educators or Feed Manufacturer POCs must develop a relationship with the feed retailers and inform them about the goals, purpose, and protocols of the Animal Health Network. Information to help inform feed retailers is available at <http://animalhealthnetwork.org> . Once local feed retailers' are committed to participate in the Animal Health Network, it is imperative that multiple methods of contact information are recorded to improve connectivity (i.e., phone, cell, fax, email, text messaging). The maintenance of this contact information will be one of the duties of the local extension agent/educator (AHN Model 1) or feed manufacturer POC (AHN Model 2) to ensure they are up-to-date. It is the responsibility of the local extension agent/educator or Feed Manufacturer POC to maintain a database and report the number (not the names) of participating feed retailers to the state veterinarian.

County Extension Agents/Educators or Feed Manufacturer POCs must relay the alert/message received from the state veterinarian's office to their current list of local feed retailers.

Annual Test/Exercise of the Animal Health Network:

Like all Emergency Management Plans, the Animal Health Network plan must be exercised in order to maintain a practical state of readiness. A test-retest model for exercising the Animal Health Network should be executed annually during National Preparedness Month (September). The FAZD Defense Centers is currently available upon request to support Annual Test/Exercises with an on-line data entry tool at <http://AnimalHealthNetwork.org/forms> .

---

Support information is available at <http://AnimalHealthNetwork.org> and by contacting Dr. Andy Vestal at the FAZD Defense Center, a Department of Homeland Security, University Center of Excellence at Texas A&M University, 979-862-3013 [t-vestal@tamu.edu](mailto:t-vestal@tamu.edu)