

THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
FEDERAL VETERINARIANS

WELCOME TO OUR Newsletter

ISSUE #9 | VOLUME 92

NAFV Public Practice Networking Event at the AVMA 2026

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A Letter to our Members,

This year, NAFV has achieved significant milestones by fostering stronger collaboration among practitioners, promoting excellence, and creating valuable opportunities for learning and networking.

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<https://members.nafv.org/application-to-join>

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the purposes for which it is formed are to
promote the veterinary profession, to improve
the professional efficiency and material
interests of the members, to acquaint the
public with the activities of veterinarians in the
federal service, and to cooperate with the
American Veterinary Medical Association, the
United States Animal Health Association and
other similar groups with common interests.

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The Role of the National Association of Federal Veterinarians

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) measures employee engagement and satisfaction with their workplaces, or in other words morale. The FEVS serves as a tool for employees to share their perceptions in many critical areas including their work experiences, their agency, and their leadership. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) and its Office of Employee Experience (OEX) use the results of FEVS to inform efforts and the initiatives currently underway with the "Best Places to Work in the Federal Government" ranking according to the Partnership for Public Service on employee satisfaction, engagement, and morale—all of which support and inform USDA's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan and the Secretary and Deputy Secretary's FY2022 priority to "Make USDA a Best Place to Work."

And this is where an association such as the National Association of Federal Veterinarians (NAFV) can come in. Today's veterinarians are the only doctors educated to protect the health of both animals and people. These dedicated professionals apply their medical skills not in "private practice" but in "public practice" in the service of every American through the many programs administered by the federal government. Though federal veterinarians touch the lives of every American every day, many feel under-compensated, underappreciated, and overworked. These feelings can contribute to high employee turnover rates, which impact overall morale of the team, the health and wellness of Americans, and the agency's bottom line. Many times, there are significant gaps between the perceptions of an agency's executive leadership and the realities of mid-level management. This can be even worse when including agencies rank and file grassroots employees.

The majority of NAFV members (and most of the veterinarians employed by the federal government) work for the USDA. The results of FEVS indicated that morale is USDA is low, ranked 16 of 17 large federal agencies, only slightly better than the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). When you look at the sub-agency rankings our major membership comes from the Food Safety and Inspection Service (ranked 298 out of 411) and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (ranked 294 out of 411). For those working there, this may not come as a surprise. But, how can these agencies benefit from working with NAFV, as an association of managers and supervisors? There are finer points of job satisfaction that the FEVS cannot measure. The impact of mandatory deployments on people's job satisfaction, for example. When that deployment is seen as furthering the mission of the agency, it can be a positive motivating factor; however, if that mandatory deployment is seen as making up for an agency's failure to fill critical vacancies, it has just the opposite effect on morale.

When deployments are viewed as unequal because certain individuals seem to be exempt from deployment, then it can negatively impact moral and the sense of accomplishment. This level of detail can't be reached by the FEVS, but through consultations with our members and executive leadership, these insights can be addressed. In many cases, just hearing a third party explain the situation can make all the difference in how the issue is perceived. In service of these public servants, the NAFV strives to serve both veterinarians and the agencies they work for by facilitating communication, making suggestions for improvements, and working collaboratively to address issues of concern. This advocacy includes emphasizing professionalism and expertise in federal service but also promoting continuing education, teamwork and morale, and a standard of excellence. NAFV can work with you to improve it and your professional working environment.

NAFV can approach agency senior leadership with your concerns and possible solutions, not as a union but as an organization that represents you as medical/scientific professionals. Our goal is to enhance your work-life balance, productivity, impact to instill a positive sense of accomplishment. Lifting veterinarians positively impacts their teams and, in-turn, agencies. Boosted morale translates into productivity gains and pride in a job well done, making all the difference in our personal and professional lives.



National Association of Federal Veterinarians

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A Letter to Our Members

From the NAFV Executive Vice President

One of the greatest privileges of serving as your Executive Vice President is having the opportunity to work on behalf of our members every day. Whether advocating for a stronger federal veterinary workforce, engaging with congressional and agency leaders, developing policy proposals, or communicating the important work federal veterinarians perform, every effort is focused on one goal: strengthening our profession and supporting the people who serve it.

I wanted to take this opportunity to share some of the work your National Association of Federal Veterinarians has been undertaking over the past several months and where I believe our greatest opportunities lie in the months ahead.

The challenges facing federal veterinary medicine continue to grow. Emerging animal diseases, workforce shortages, increasing demands on our public health infrastructure, and the growing recognition of One Health all underscore the critical importance of maintaining a strong federal veterinary workforce. These issues are no longer future concerns—they are today's realities—and your Board of Directors has continued working to ensure that the voice of federal veterinarians is heard where important decisions affecting our profession are being made.

One of our highest priorities remains implementation of the USDA Rural Veterinary Action Plan (RVAP). NAFV has consistently advocated for moving this important initiative from planning to implementation. The Plan provides a thoughtful roadmap for addressing long-standing shortages in both public and private veterinary medicine through improved recruitment, retention, education, and workforce development. However, a plan alone cannot solve these problems. Continued leadership, sustained funding, and a long-term commitment will be required to translate its recommendations into meaningful improvements for the federal veterinary workforce.

Closely tied to this effort has been our continued advocacy for more competitive federal veterinary compensation. During the past several months, we completed a comprehensive white paper comparing federal veterinary salaries with compensation currently offered by private practice, corporate veterinary medicine, and industry. The findings confirmed what many of us have experienced firsthand. Private employers increasingly offer compensation packages that include signing bonuses, student loan repayment assistance, relocation benefits, production incentives, retention bonuses, flexible work schedules, and salaries that substantially exceed those available in federal service.

Federal veterinarians perform work that is essential to the nation's biosecurity, food security, public health, animal welfare, and international trade. Yet federal compensation has not kept pace with the marketplace. Ensuring that federal agencies remain competitive in recruiting and retaining highly qualified veterinarians remains one of NAFV's central advocacy priorities, and we will continue supporting efforts to improve salary authorities, recruitment incentives, retention tools, and other personnel flexibilities available to federal agencies.

Beyond workforce issues, NAFV continues working with congressional offices, federal agencies, veterinary organizations, and other partners to identify legislative opportunities that strengthen public veterinary medicine. Our discussions have focused on implementation of the Rural Veterinary Action Plan, expanding veterinary workforce development programs, improving recruitment and retention authorities, and strengthening



national veterinary preparedness for future animal health emergencies. While meaningful change often requires persistence, we continue to make the case that investing in the federal veterinary workforce is an investment in America's food security, public health, and national biosecurity. Recent animal disease events have reinforced just how important these efforts are. The continuing Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza response, the ongoing threat of African swine fever in the Caribbean region, and the northward spread of New World screwworm all demonstrate that disease outbreaks rarely wait for the government to build the workforce needed to respond. Recognizing the value of experience, NAFV recently offered to assist USDA Veterinary Services and veterinary leaders in Texas by organizing experienced retired federal veterinarians who expressed a willingness to support New World screwworm response efforts should additional personnel become necessary. Many retired members immediately volunteered their expertise, reflecting the extraordinary commitment that federal veterinarians continue to demonstrate long after retirement.

Communicating with our members and promoting the contributions of federal veterinarians has also remained a major focus this year. These communications not only keep members informed but also educate policymakers, veterinary students, and the broader profession about the indispensable role federal veterinarians play in protecting America's agriculture, food supply, public health, animal health, and national security. Looking ahead, NAFV will continue strengthening relationships with Congress, USDA, other federal agencies, AVMA, veterinary colleges, and our many partner organizations. We will continue advocating for implementation of the Rural Veterinary Action Plan, improved compensation and recruitment authorities, expanded workforce development, and policies that ensure the federal veterinary profession remains prepared to meet the biological challenges of the future.

Over the course of my career, I have had the privilege of working alongside outstanding federal veterinarians during some of the most significant animal and public health events of our time. Those experiences have included the United Kingdom's Foot-and-Mouth Disease outbreak response and the extensive preparedness efforts undertaken here in the United States afterward; the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic; Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza; bovine spongiform encephalopathy; monkeypox; COVID-19; and many other national and international animal health emergencies. Every response has reinforced the same lesson: our nation's greatest asset is not simply laboratories, vaccines, diagnostic tests, or technology—it is experienced people.

As we continue strengthening NAFV, I would also encourage members to consider serving in one of our elected leadership positions. This year we will be electing a President-Elect, Treasurer, and Board of Directors representatives from several agencies. Our Association has always benefited from members who are willing to step forward and contribute their ideas, experience, and leadership. Serving as an officer or board member is an opportunity to help shape the future of federal veterinary medicine, advocate for your fellow members, and ensure that NAFV continues to be a respected voice for our profession. Together, we can accomplish even more on behalf of federal veterinarians and the profession we all serve.

None of these accomplishments would be possible without your continued support and engagement. Whether you serve in the field, a laboratory, headquarters, academia, the military, another public practice setting, or are enjoying a well-earned retirement, your expertise and dedication are what make this Association strong. Every success we achieve reflects the collective experience, professionalism, and commitment of our membership. Thank you for your continued support of NAFV and, more importantly, for your service to our nation. I look forward to working with all of you in the months ahead as we continue strengthening the federal veterinary profession and advancing the interests of those who have dedicated their careers to public service.

With appreciation,

Dr. Joseph Anelli
Executive Vice President
National Association of Federal Veterinarians

Calling for...

NAFV LEADERSHIP RECRUITMENT

“Great leaders don't create followers; they create more leaders.”

We encourage members to consider serving in one of our elected leadership positions. This year we will be electing a President-Elect, Treasurer, and Board of Directors representatives from several agencies.

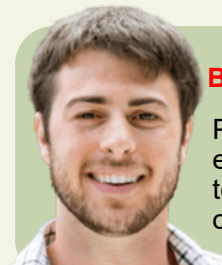
Our Association has always benefited from members who are willing to step forward and contribute their ideas, experience, and leadership. Serving as an officer or board member is an opportunity to help shape the future of federal veterinary medicine, advocate for your fellow members, and ensure that NAFV continues to be a respected voice for our profession.

If you have ever considered becoming more involved, I encourage you to submit your name for consideration. Your perspective and experience are valuable, and new leaders bring fresh ideas that help our Association continue to grow and evolve. Together, we can accomplish even more on behalf of federal veterinarians and the profession we all serve.



NAFV President- Elect

The President-Elect prepares to assume the full responsibilities of the presidency, including understanding the association's current projects, policies, and strategic plans.



Board of Directors Representatives

Providing strategic direction, ensuring the organization adheres to its mission, and overseeing overall governance policies.



Secretary-Treasurer

Oversee all financial transactions, including income, expenses, and budgeting. Keep accurate and up-to-date financial records and documentation.



This provide an opportunity to improve federal veterinary medicine while serving fellow members.

if you are interested, please send us an email at nafv@nafv.org.

NAFV ACTIVITIES & ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2025-2026

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY INITIATIVES



NAFV continues exploring legislative opportunities that strengthen public veterinary medicine, improve workforce development, and enhance national preparedness for emerging animal disease threats.



The National Association of Federal Veterinarians continues to advocate for the federal veterinary profession through policy development, legislative outreach, professional communications, workforce initiatives, and partnerships with organizations that share our commitment to protecting animal health, public health, food security, and national biosecurity.

Workforce Advocacy

NAFV has made implementation of the USDA Rural Veterinary Action Plan one of its highest priorities. Throughout the past year, the Association has continued discussions with USDA leadership, Members of Congress, AVMA, and other stakeholders to encourage timely implementation of the Plan's recommendations and strengthen the federal veterinary workforce. Recognizing the growing challenges in recruiting and retaining veterinarians, NAFV also completed a comprehensive white paper comparing federal veterinary compensation with private-sector salaries and benefits. The report provides data supporting continued efforts to improve federal recruitment, retention, and compensation authorities.

Emergency Preparedness

During the New World screwworm response, NAFV organized an offer to make experienced retired federal veterinarians available to USDA Veterinary Services and state animal health officials should additional surge capacity become necessary. The response from retired members demonstrated the extraordinary depth of expertise that remains available within our Association.

Communications

The NAFV website continues to serve as an important resource for members by providing regular updates on federal employment issues, legislation, animal disease outbreaks, One Health initiatives, retirement issues, and developments affecting federal veterinary medicine.

Professional Partnerships

NAFV continues working collaboratively with USDA, AVMA, veterinary colleges, Congress, and numerous allied organizations to strengthen recognition of the essential role federal veterinarians play in protecting America's agriculture, food supply, public health, and national security.

Looking Forward

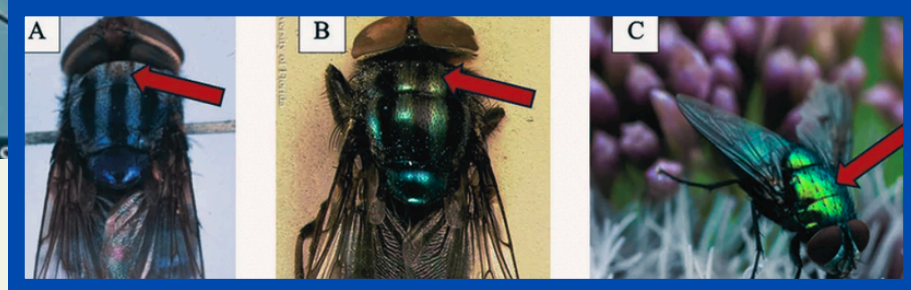
Over the coming year, NAFV will continue focusing on implementation of the Rural Veterinary Action Plan, competitive compensation for federal veterinarians, recruitment of the next generation of public practice veterinarians, legislative advocacy, and strengthening the Association's ability to serve its members. Together, these efforts reflect NAFV's continuing commitment to ensuring that federal veterinarians have the resources, recognition, and professional support needed to meet the biological challenges of today and tomorrow.



Models can't yet tell you exactly when New World screwworm will reach your area. Cattle movements, weather and reporting will decide how far — and how fast — it goes.

As social media fills with maps and predictions about how far New World screwworm might spread this summer, many livestock producers are asking the same question: When will it get to me?

She argues producers should focus on understanding how the pest moves and what management steps can slow it down or keep it out of their herds in the first place. Meteorologist Matt Makens explains weather patterns act as both a barrier and bridge for screwworm activity. For producers, that may be the most important line to keep in mind through the rest of the warm season.



HOW TEMPERATURE AND RAINFALL AFFECT SCREWORM SURVIVAL

Weather does not just influence screwworm activity — it helps determine where the pest can survive, reproduce and spread. Makens explains temperature thresholds can dictate screwworm development. Pupa development cannot proceed below about 58°F and halts above 110°F, while adult survival and reproduction are most favorable around 81.5°F. That means much of the southern U.S. is warm enough during summer to support at least temporary fly survival and movement.

In contrast, hot and dry conditions tend to suppress survival and reproduction. That is an important distinction for livestock producers who may assume the hottest areas automatically face the greatest danger. Makens suggests the higher-risk zone is really where warmth and wetness overlap — especially where recent rainfall has improved soil moisture and where livestock are exposed through wounds or other openings attractive to egg-laying flies.

[**Source here:**](#)



NEW WORLD SCREWORM ADDING TO OVERBURDENED, UNDER-FUNDED US HEALTH SYSTEM

BY: SANDRA SANCHEZ

SCREWORM UPDATES:

Although the chance of New World screwworm infecting humans is extremely rare, Dr. Tyler Evans, CEO and co-founder of the Wellness and Equity Alliance, says the threat is adding to an overburdened U.S. health system.

In the latest episode of Border Report Live, Evans, who is chief medical officer for the alliance, says this is a time of “syndemics when different endemics are coming together.” Evans told South Texas correspondent Sandra Sanchez and host Rudy Mireles that the current Ebola outbreak is taking its toll on public health efforts at a time when global health resources have been cut back.

And now a dozen cases of New World screwworm have been detected in animals in the United States, including Texas and New Mexico.

Evans said U.S. officials also need to rely and defer to scientists on the best ways to eradicate New World screwworm — a parasitic fly that lays its larvae in wounds and open sores and can kill livestock in a matter of weeks. And he urges politicians not to fight or disagree over methods and information, which can lead to misinformation and put the public at risk. Humans can get infections from the flies, he said, which can be noted by a very foul odor, usually in sores where the larvae burrow its screw-like teeth.

He said vulnerable populations, such as the homeless, need regular health checkups. And funding needs to continue flowing to research organizations to maintain public health.

The Washington Post reported Friday that staffing and funding at the U.S. Department of Agriculture could be contributing to a rise in U.S. cases of New World screwworm north of the border. The Post says that since January 2025, nearly 2,000 employees have left USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), which is responsible for inspections and detections of the parasitic fly.

The Post says the Trump administration also cut \$382 million from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, which had helped with screwworm eradication efforts in Central America.

[Source here:](#)



Professional Liability Insurance: Federal Employees

Many federal employees don't fully understand their professional liability exposure — until they are suddenly facing a disciplinary proceeding, an adverse administrative action, or even a civil lawsuit. Even if allegations are ultimately dismissed, the cost of mounting a legal defense can be financially overwhelming.

Professional Liability Insurance (PLI) from FEDS Protection is designed to help protect federal employees when the unexpected happens.

Allegations can quickly trigger agency investigations or legal action. In these situations, having experienced and dedicated legal counsel is not a luxury — it is a necessity. It is important to understand that an agency attorney represents the agency, not you. Their role is to protect the agency's interests, which may not align with your own.

A FEDS Protection (PLI) policy can help safeguard your career by ensuring you have legal representation focused on your defense. Coverage may apply to civil lawsuits, administrative actions, and criminal investigations arising from acts, errors, or omissions performed while rendering your federal employment duties.

There is no open enrollment period to wait for — but coverage must be in place before any incident or allegation occurs. Don't wait until it's too late.

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The National Association of Federal Veterinarians (NAFV) is a constituent body of the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA). As an advocate for veterinarians in federal service, NAFV emphasizes professionalism and expertise in federal service, while promoting continuing education, teamwork, and a standard of excellence.

We are inviting all State, City, & Local Affiliates to join our organization for only \$75 annually membership fee.

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To make sure you're getting the most out of your membership, make sure that you have access to our member-only-portal on our site. You'll be able to access the information listed. Our website has tons of information for you on:

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