

USDA Accomplishments Under the Bush Administration

2001-2008

Enhanced the Protection and Safety of the Nation's Agriculture and Food Supply

USDA has unique and critical responsibilities to provide the consumer with a healthy food supply and a secure agricultural production system. USDA ensures that the Nation's meat, poultry and egg products are safe, wholesome and labeled accurately and safeguards America's animal and plant resources from invasive pests and diseases. Since September 11, 2001, the Bush Administration strengthened programs aimed at securing the Nation's food and agriculture infrastructure from terrorist attack.

Enhanced Safety and Security of the Nation's Food Supply

- Developed and distributed the first Agriculture and Food (Meat, Poultry and Egg Products) Sector-Specific Plan that established a coordinated approach to national priorities, goals and requirements for critical infrastructure and key resource protection.
- The Strategic Partnership Program Agroterrorism Initiative was developed in collaboration with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Department of Homeland Security, and Department of Health and Human Services' Food and Drug Administration. This initiative enhanced working relationships with State, local and private sector partners to make the nation's food safer.
- In response to President Bush's National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza, USDA formed the Avian Influenza Joint Working Group to coordinate an inter-agency effort at USDA and with the Federal Government's effort to prepare for and respond to an influenza pandemic.
- USDA developed vulnerability assessments for selected domestic and imported food products. These assessments have been used to determine the most vulnerable products, likely agents, potential sites for deliberate contamination and to develop countermeasures. Since 2004, USDA has conducted 14 vulnerability assessments of meat, poultry, and egg processing systems to provide a risk-based approach to preventing an intentional attack on the food supply.
- USDA has conducted approximately 3 million food defense verification procedures in federally inspected establishments since 2005, averaging 115,000 a month.
- In 2001, USDA established the Consumer Complaint Monitoring System that records, analyzes, and tracks consumer complaints to identify possible food hazards and terrorist attacks on the food supply. This year, the system was enhanced to incorporate an analytical tool to improve the ability to detect intentionally or unintentionally introduced foodborne threats.
- 34 country's meat, poultry or processed egg inspection system have achieved USDA equivalence, of which 29 actively import to the United States.
- USDA developed and launched the Import Alert Tracking System to monitor the identification and handling of illegal shipments of imported foods. In 2008, 347 shipments from 43 countries have been identified and tracked.

- ☑ USDA implemented a voluntary marketing agreement in California for leafy green handlers aimed at reducing the threat of pathogen contamination such as E.coli during the production and handling of leafy greens. USDA carefully monitors this effective program that reassures consumers of the quality and safety of California produce.

Reduce the Number and Severity of Agricultural Pest and Disease Outbreaks

- ☑ USDA developed a real-time PCR test for Asian soybean rust—which rapidly and accurately detects rust spores in the field.
- ☑ USDA established The National Animal Health Laboratory Network—a national network of non-Federal public animal diagnostic laboratories that help rapidly and accurately detect foreign animal diseases.
- ☑ USDA provides support and direct funding to The National Plant Diagnostic Network— a 50 State network of Land Grant University based plant diagnostic laboratories.
- ☑ In 2003, USDA successfully contained an outbreak of Exotic Newcastle Disease in California and the western United States.