National Bio & Agro-Defense Facility
Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IS NBAF?
The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is working with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to open the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF) in Manhattan, KS. USDA will own and operate NBAF. This state-of-the-art facility will be a national asset that helps protect the nation’s agriculture, farmers and citizens against the threat and potential impact of serious animal diseases.

NBAF will replace the Plum Island Animal Disease Center (PIADC), a biosafety level-3 facility that is more than 65 years old. Currently, USDA’s Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) conduct foreign animal disease research, training and diagnostics in this facility. ARS and APHIS will transfer their missions from PIADC to NBAF and will operate the facility jointly.

NBAF construction is complete. Commissioning — the testing of all the facility’s systems — is expected to be complete later this year in 2022. The full science mission transfer from PIADC in New York to NBAF in Kansas will still take at least a couple of years.
WHY DOES THE U.S. NEED NBAF?

Protecting livestock and agricultural interests also protects the economy. Agriculture, food and food processing contribute more than $1.1 trillion to the U.S. economy’s gross domestic product per year. In addition, 10 percent of jobs — about 20 million — have some ties to agriculture.

At NBAF, USDA will conduct comprehensive research, develop vaccines and anti-virals, and provide enhanced diagnostic and training capabilities to protect the nation from animal diseases that are:

- **Foreign or transboundary** — those that could enter the U.S. from another country.
- **Emerging** — are new or not well known.
- **Zoonotic** — normally exist in animals but can infect humans.

According to the World Health Organization, more than 70% of new and emerging infectious diseases in humans are zoonotic. USDA will expand its scientific work at NBAF and be the first in the U.S. to provide maximum biocontainment (biosafety level-4) laboratories capable of housing large livestock to develop vaccines and diagnostics for zoonotic diseases. NBAF will be a critical component of USDA's priority to develop vaccines and countermeasures for — as well as the early detection of — diseases that threaten livestock, other animals and food from the nation’s farms and fields.

WHAT SCIENCE WILL BE DONE AT NBAF?

NBAF is in a unique position to do diagnostics and training, as well as research and veterinary countermeasure development for foreign, emerging and zoonotic diseases in large livestock within the safety and security of this next-generation facility. The Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (FADDL) and the Foreign Animal Disease Research Unit (FADRU) at Plum Island will transfer their science to NBAF. FADDL employees are involved in prevention, surveillance, diagnosis and response to these diseases, including the expertise to manage two vaccine banks. FADRU and two new USDA units — the Foreign Arthropod-Borne Animal Disease Research Unit (FABADRU) and the Zoonotic and Emerging Disease Research Unit (ZEDRU) — will focus on research and countermeasures for high-consequence animal diseases.

In addition, NBAF will have a **Biologics Development Module** that will enhance and expedite the transition of new innovations from research to commercially-viable countermeasures.

HOW MANY USDA EMPLOYEES WILL WORK AT NBAF?

NBAF will eventually have about 400 USDA personnel. As of August 2022, about 240 team members have been hired to support NBAF operations. About 50 operational positions remain to be hired, and the rest will be part of our science teams. Watch [USAJobs](https://www.usajobs.gov) and follow NBAF on [Twitter](https://twitter.com) and [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com) for regular updates.

HOW DOES NBAF ENGAGE WITH THE COMMUNITY?

NBAF is actively engaged with the local media and the community providing updates by request and representing USDA NBAF at various local, state and regional events. Please send all questions and requests for NBAF presentations to [nbaf@usda.gov](mailto:nbaf@usda.gov).